



Summary of Conclusions of the 35th Session of the Human Resources Network

05-07 July 2017
UNIDO Vienna, Austria

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Annex 1 - List of Participants

1. INTRODUCTION

1. The Human Resources Network held its 35th session from 05-07 July 2017, hosted by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in Vienna, Austria. The meeting was co-chaired by Ms. Eva Mennel, Director, Human Resources, UNICEF, Mr. Mark Levin, Director, Human Resource Development Department, ILO and Mr Victor Kisob, Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources UN Secretariat.
2. The Agenda was adopted as reflected in the table of contents.
3. The documents and presentations of the closed HR Directors experience exchange session on 05 July 2017 were made available **separately**.

2. Briefings and updates

a. Update from the CEB, HLCM and its Committees and Networks

4. Updates on the recent discussions and decisions at CEB, HLCM, Procurement Network and the Finance & Budget Network were given to the HRN.
5. During the first regular CEB meeting in April 2017 in Geneva, the new UN System Leadership Model was endorsed, and the SG's prospective gender Parity Strategy were briefly presented in the discussion.
6. In March 2017 the HLCM convened for its 33rd session in Budapest. A key agenda item was the presentation of existing Administrative Operative Service Centers, including discussions on best practices and potential enhanced collaboration. HLCM decided to conduct further work to elaborate on what it needs to further open up the Service-Centers to others.
7. Further, Members of the HLCM expressed support for the adoption of the United Nations system leadership model for submission to the CEB. During the session, the Draft HR Strategic work plan has been presented to the HLCM. The work plan has been noted with appreciation, and the HRN was requested to work out further details.
8. During the last meeting of the Procurement Network in March 2017 in Geneva, a study on the biggest expenses for the organizations was presented. In order to gain a better understanding of the results, the need for further in-depth research was requested by the Network members.

9. The last Finance and Budget (FB) Network took place in June 2017 in New York. The Network has expressed appreciation for the work of the ASHI Working Group and requested its continuation. A decision to implement a dedicated Insurance Working Group was postponed to a later date, depending on the progress and results of the ASHI WG.

b. Report from the Field Group

10. The Field Group (FG) reported on the latest development of its activities and briefed the HR Network on the last meeting of the Group (June-2017). UNDP, UN, UNICEF, UNCHR, WFP, UN-Woman, UN Department of Civil Service UNFPA, and PAHO participated in the particular last meeting. 768 duty stations have been reviewed, among them 50 duty stations outside of the regular ICSC schedule due to emerging risks and changing situations.

11. The HR Network:

- ***thanked the CEB Secretariat for the update from the CEB, HLCM and its Committees and Networks***
- ***expressed appreciation for the work and update of the FG***

3. Joint Facility on Job Classification and Reference Checking

12. During the last HLCM session, the concept has been discussed, endorsed and the ongoing initiative encouraged. Document CEB/2017/3 (para 35) refers.
13. The UNDP HR Director updated the HRN on the ongoing initiative on establishing a joint facility on job classification and reference checking. All interested agencies will be invited to use none, one or both services. The facility will locate its administrative hub in Bonn using advanced IT-infrastructure. This will enable operations from different duty stations and Headquarters.
14. UNDP and UNV emphasized that this is a collective initiative by all interested agencies. The offer of UNDP and UNV to host the initiative administratively had been gratefully accepted.
15. In the subsequent discussion, the positive impacts of aligning these services towards One UN were stressed. Respectively the Network emphasized the importance of consistent quality of the work done by the facility. The Network emphasized the aspect of trust in the system when it comes to delicate procedures like reference checking. Furthermore, the members of the Network expressed appreciation for the possibility of effective screening on personal misconduct.

16. The Network:

- *expressed appreciation for the work thus far and thanked UNDP and UNV for offering to administrative host the Centre continuation*
- *took note of the organizations that expressed their interest for these services and their willingness to contribute*
- *was invited to attend a workshop to co-design the new centre during the week of 4th of August in New York*

4. Budget for Local Salary Surveys 2018/19

17. The UN Secretariat briefed the HR Network on the Draft of the Budget for Local Salary Surveys. The UN Secretariat expects to conduct 59 comprehensive Salary Surveys and approximately 300 interim surveys in 2018/2019.

18. Different models including for the geographic location to provide the services are currently under review. The UN Secretariat highlighted that consultations on the Draft Budget are yet ongoing and will be shared with interested organizations in due course. Organizations, in the subsequent discussion, were supportive of the suggestion to look into service provision from suitable European locations, for reasons of cost control and better communication.

19. The Network:

- *confirmed that the prospective proposal should take into account all relevant cost of conducting the service, including those borne by coordinating entities in the different field duty stations*
- *looked forward to receiving a final revised budget proposal from the UN Secretariat*

5. End-to-end review on pension processing

20. Some members of the HR Network participated in the End-to-end review on pension processing by UNJSPF in New York. UNJSPF has continued working on the End-to-end review sending an individual report to every organization that participated in the review. Further, a summary report with high-level recommendations including among others the digitalization of the entire process, will be presented in July at the Pension Board.
21. The UNJSPF highlighted the high demand on the communication tool and the tutorial videos. It was further stated that additional implementations and improvements were being worked on.
22. Several Organizations highlighted the necessity of accelerating the process. In this regard, clear allocation of responsibility as well as objectives and milestones were noted.
23. Several agencies expressed the immanent need to enhance communication with staff and management in deep field stations. They committed to work closely with the Pension Fund to ensure early information about prospective downsizing exercises and other events potentially resulting in unexpected workload changes for pension administration.
24. UNJSPF stressed the fact that in the headquarters KPI on pension processing have improved significantly. The aspect of difficult communication in the deep field stations will be addressed through modern electronic communication. During the next Pension Board meeting the UNJSPF will ask for the funding of a pilot-project on some of the above mentioned recommendations.
- 25. The HR Network:**
- *expressed appreciation for launching the new UNJSPF Website and*
 - *agreed to provide upfront information to the Pension Fund on any major expected workforce changes.*
 - *The UNJSPF agreed to further enhance communication of planned steps to improve end-to-end processing of pension benefits.*

6. ISSUES UNDER DISCUSSION BY THE ICSC

26. The members of the Network were informed about the topics at the upcoming commission session starting at the 10. July in Vienna. This part of the session aimed at information sharing and discussion, actual positions and decisions being documented in the statements of the HR Network during the ICSCS session.

a. Post Adjustment Matters

27. The members of the Network were presented an overview on the latest Post Adjustment Survey conducted in 2016. The results were reviewed by AQPAQ in its 39th session and approved of being in line with the procedure. Subsequently to the results of the survey, implications on salaries were presented. The ICSC emphasized that the entire data will be transparent and the ICSC Secretariat will remain available for any question unanswered. Further it was highlighted that another CRP on the Post Adjustment changes in Geneva will be released by the ICSC Secretariat shortly.

28. *The HR Network:*

- *stressed the need for more transparency in implementing the methodologies and concrete support in explaining the complex statistical calculation of Post Adjustment to staff*
- *highlighted the findings – both statistical and regarding legality of the results in several duty stations – of a recent study by Geneva-based organizations. Unexpected changes and lack of transparency would endanger the confidence of the staff in the system.*

b. Use of Staff categories including NPO

29. The ICSC Secretariat presented the summary of the Working Group on the future use of staff categories. The focus of the working-group has been primarily on the National Professional Officers, looking into the nationality criteria of nationality, the current restrictions regarding work content and the use of NPOs at HQ-stations. Some flexibilization on this, while preserving the international character of the organizations, had been advocated for by the organizations.

30. The report from the Working Group contained two options. One of them was to remain with the status quo. The other one suggested to re-name NPO to Locally-Recruited Professional Officers, and consider, under certain conditions, applicants from nationalities other than the one at the duty station for job applications.
31. With regard to the General Service category, the working-group did not see significant changes necessary to the standards established in 2010.
32. For the Field Service category, the working-group discussed the standards at length. The alignment of the F5 and F6 category with the P3 and P4 category was considered by the working-group. Further a new definition of the category was proposed, presented to the Network and will be presented to the ICSC for discussion.
33. ***The HR Network:***
 - ***expressed appreciation for work done by the working group. A recent JIU study, published in 2016 on Global Service Centers, was highlighted by participants. This particular study highlights the potential positive impacts of integrating NPOs in the Service Centers. Organizations stressed the need and opportunity of reforming this very important category of staff and advocated more modern, creative and bold options. The renaming of the NPO to Local Professional Officers was seen as properly reflecting such change.***
34. Some field-based organizations indicated that NPOs in fact are already applying for and entering positions in different countries, and they are a crucial talent pool improving the talent pipeline in field-based settings. This was seen as another driver for reform that meets operational realities and ensures regulatory clarity to further guarantee transparency and fairness.

c. Hardship Classification Methodology Review

35. The organizations were presented an update on the recent discussions between ICSC Secretariat, organizations, and staff representatives on adjustments of the Hardship Classification Methodology Review. It was stated that the main proposed changes would pertain to the weighting of the different hardship factors. The favored model by the working group weights all different categories of interest for the hardship classification shall be equal (except for climate being one level below the rest). This model would be presented to the commission.
36. Another aspect of discussion has been the alignment of the Health Risk Methodology with the Hardship Classification Methodology. In this regard, the working group is in close collaboration with the UN Medical Service.

37. The HR Network:

- ***re-confirmed the need for a comprehensive review of the ICSC methodology for hardship classification. Particular attention should be given to revising the weighing of the security, isolation and health hardship factors. The Network committed to further collaboration with the Medical Directors in order to strengthen comprehensive input to assessments of health factors in field duty stations.***

d. Pensionable Remuneration

- 38.** The ICSC Secretariat presented a summary of its review on pensionable remuneration. It was emphasized, that there might be the need to further elaborate the options in a working-group planned for the end of this year or early beginning of next year.
- 39.** Further, some organizations asked for additional explanations on the potential impact on staff ideally in forms of models regarding the different options.
- 40.** The ICSC confirmed that explanations and models will still be expanded. With regard to potential impacts, the complexity of pensionable remuneration was pointed out, wherefore the impacts will also be complex and of multi-faced nature. Any change in the scales should therefore be carefully examined to avoid unintended consequences.
- 41.** The Network expressed appreciation for the summary. ***It looked forward to a joint thorough review of the scales, highlighting in particular the importance of carefully assessing the impact on the Pension Fund sustainability and the administrative burden in case of transitional arrangements.*** With a view to acquired rights of staff, any negative impact for staff members would need to be avoided.

7. Duty of Care in high-risk duty stations

- 42.** UNDP and IOM, as the Network focal points in the taskforce, presented the recent progress of the workgroup on the Duty of Care in high-risk duty stations. This workgroup represents a multidisciplinary effort including staff counsellors, medical experts and security functions which had been established by the HLCM at its 33rd session.

43. The members of the Network were presented four main recommendations to strengthen the Duty of Care in high-risk duty stations. Four recommendations were highlighted of greatest interest to the HR community, namely a pre-deployment package and system-wide resilience briefing (Recommendation 1 and 2), as well as training and support to Managers operating in high-risk environments' (Recommendation 3 and 11) (Duty of Care Interim Report).
44. During the presentation, further elaboration was given regarding the details of the recommendations. Incorporating the recommendations in the operational work stream is envisaged by the HLCM meeting in April 2018, requiring active engagement from the HR Network and its members.
45. Due to the high amount of work and under consideration of the One UN – strategy, the workgroup has asked the members of the HR Network for its support with the upcoming challenges. Further, the members of the Network had been asked to share relevant procedures and other material that are already used in the individual organizations with the working group.
46. **The Network:**
- *expressed appreciation for the work and*
 - *reaffirmed its commitment to further support the workgroup on its work.*

8. AOB

a. Draft Gender Parity Strategy

47. The HR Network was presented an update from the representatives of the UN Secretariat on the recent progress on the Gender Parity Strategy. Since the last HR Network meeting a task-force led by the EOSG of the UN Secretariat has continued its work to finalize the Gender Parity Strategy. The taskforce has identified six work streams, which have been highlighted to the HR Network at the last session.
48. During the following discussion, the HRN expressed the need for further clarification on timeline, responsibilities and a clear distinction as to what recommendations pertain to the UN Secretariat and which ones are supposed to have system-wide impact. While the Network appreciated procedural update, a more substantive and structured involvement of the Network and HLCM, was seen as beneficial, in particular to ensure that recommendations are accepted and useful in the context of different agency environments and mandates.

49. The Network:

- *took note on the progress and*
- *expressed its keen interest in further substantive, structured involvement prior to finalization of recommendations with system-wide impact.*

b. Public Holidays in various UN Organizations (at request of ICAO)

50. At request of ICAO, the Network has shared and reviewed the holiday systems in the various UN Organizations in regard to the holidays in specific cultural settings, including Chinese New Year. In consideration of the vast amount of different national and cultural holidays within the member states of the United Nations, many organizations shared provisions including “floating holidays”, allowing staff to choose one or several leave days based on important dates in their cultural context. Duty stations can use these holidays adaptively to meet cultural and national needs of the staff.

9. Closure

51. The dates and venue of the next (36th) HR Network meeting would be announced after appropriate consultations with possible hosts.

Annex I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Org.	Name	Title
UN	Mr. Victor Kisob	Acting ASG for Human Resources Management
UN	Mr. Maxim Golovinov	Human Resources Policy Officer, PCSS, OHRM
UN	Ms. Chhaya Kapilashrami	Director, Department of Field Support/Field Personnel Division
ILO	Mr. Mark Levin	Director, HR Development Department
UNESCO	Ms. Annick Grisar	Chief, HR Policy, Partnerships and Administrative Law Section
ICAO	Mr. Vincent Smith	Director, Bureau of Administration and Services
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PAHO	Dr. Luz Marina Barillas	Director, Human Resources Management
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UNFPA	Mr. Michael Emery	Director, Division of Human Resources
UNFPA	Ms. Sarah Rose	Human Resources Policy Specialist
UNOPS	Ms. Victoria Campbell	HR Advisor, Talent Management, Organizational Development

Org.	Name	Title
WFP	Mr. Andrew Patterson	Chief, HR Policy and Compliance Branch
UNAIDS	Mr. Roger Salla-Ntounga	Director, HR Management Department
UNAIDS	Mr. Jonathan Ball	Chief, HR Policy and Talent Management
UNRWA	Mr. Brian Gleeson	Director of Human Resources
UNRWA	Ms. Nadine Kaddoura	Chief Human Resources Operational Services Division
UN Women	Ms. Fiona Bourdin Farrell	Human Resources Director
CEB	Mr. Michael Rosetz	Senior Inter-Agency Advisor on HR Management
OPCW	Mr. Eoghan Hennessy	HRS Specialist and Advisor (Head, HR Services Section)
OSCE	Mr. Andrzej Antoszkiewicz	Deputy Director & OSCE Ethics Coordinator
CTBTO	Ms. Ndeye Ngone Wague	Head, Recruitment and Staff Development Unit
CFC	Ms. Rebecca Hinchliffe	Human Resources Assistant
UNSSC	Ms. Claire Messina	Deputy Director, Programme Management & Business Development
ICSC	Ms. Regina Pawlik	Executive Secretary
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ICSC	Mr. Yuri Orlov	Chief, Salaries and Allowances Division
ICSC	Mr. Ibrahim Yansaneh	Chief, Cost of Living Division
FICSA	Mr. Diab El-Tabari	FICSA President
FICSA	Ms. Gemma Vestal	FICSA General Secretary
FICSA	Mr. Imed Zabaar	President of the IAEA Staff Association
CCISUA	Mr. Fraser Mcilwraith	General-Secretary, CCISUA; President UN-CTSU