Supplementary Guidance

ON THE

Enabling Environment Guidelines

FOR THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

IN SUPPORT OF

The Secretary-General's System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity

UN WOMEN

CONTENTS

CEB	United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination
CV	curriculum vitae
DGACM	Department for General Assembly and Conference Management
DFS*	Department of Field Support
DM*	Department of Management
DPKO*	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FWA	Flexible Working Arrangement
GFP	Gender Focal Point
HR	Human Resources
HQ	Headquarters
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IMO	International Maritime Organization
ITC	International Trade Centre
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
LGBTIQ+	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer
LESA	Local Expatriate Spouse Association
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OHRM*	Office of Human Resources Management
SLWOP	special leave without pay
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDOCO	United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNLOCK	United Nations Laboratory for Organizational Change and Knowledge
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOG	United Nations Office at Geneva
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNOV	United Nations Office at Vienna
UNSDG	United Nations Sustainable Development Group
UNSSC	United Nations System Staff College
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

*As of 1 January 2019, as part of the ongoing UN reforms, these departments have been restructured and renamed.

The Department of Field Support and the Department of Management have been reorganized into the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance (DMSPC) and the Department of Operational Support (DOS). The Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) has been renamed the Office of Human Resources (OHR).

The newly formed Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) has combined the strategic, political and operational responsibilities of the previous Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and the peacebuilding responsibilities of the Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO).

The Department of Peace Operations (DPO), formerly the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), serves as an integrated center for United Nations Peace operations responsible for preventing, responding to and managing conflict and sustaining peace in the context of mandates in countries where peace operations under its purview are deployed.

The attainment of gender parity at every level of the United Nations system continues to be a high priority for the UN. The Secretary-General's System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity, launched in September 2017, offers a variety of recommendations on how to make gender parity a reality for the UN. One of these recommendations is to provide system-wide guidance on the creation of an enabling environment that promotes a more diverse, inclusive and respectful work environment—both as a precursor to achieving gender parity and a key to sustaining it.

A year since the launch of the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) is proud to present its *Supplementary Guidance on Enabling Environment Guidelines for the UN System*. These comprehensive guidelines have been created by UN Women in cooperation with the Human Resources Network of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the UN Secretariat's Office of Human Resources Management.

This document has been developed in a highly consultative and participatory process, including Gender Focal Points across the UN System, UN-GLOBE, the Inter-agency Support Group for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other stakeholders. We remain deeply appreciative for such interagency collaboration; it will take all of us working together to achieve our shared goals.

By gathering our collective wisdom, we have been able to compile a comprehensive set of good practices that serve a wide range of implementation needs. This supplementary guidance is divided into six interconnected sections in pertinent areas impacting the inclusion of a diverse and gender-balanced workforce: recruitment, talent management, workplace flexibility, family-friendly policies, standards of conduct and implementation. The good practices should apply to all personnel working for the UN, whether as staff, consultants, contractors, interns or UN volunteers.

An enabling environment is achieved only if everybody is included and it is created through organizational change. By fostering a safe, discrimination-free and supportive workplace in which employees have an equal opportunity to both serve and contribute to the UN mandate, we also clear a path for the advancement of careers and the balance of personal and professional commitments. We as UN Women continue to support this change.

The time for gender parity is now. UN Women fully recognizes the need for a comprehensive and holistic approach, and that reaching gender parity is not just about changing numbers, it is also about changing the way we work. For the UN to reach maximum impact, it is critical that we foster and achieve a workforce that is responsive to the needs of a diverse world. This can be done through an inclusive organizational culture, the achievement of which is supported by both the Enabling Environment Guidelines and its comprehensive supplementary guidance. However, any guidance without implementation is a bird without wings; everyone's efforts are needed for all of us to be able to fly. I invite you to be a change-maker. Let us start today.

— Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka
    Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of UN Women

Following the recommendation entailed in the Secretary-General's System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity,[1] UN Women has developed the enabling environment guidelines in coordination with the Human Resources Network of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), and the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM).

This supplementary version provides recommendations and good practice examples to support UN entities in not only achieving gender parity, but also fostering a more inclusive and diverse workforce and culture. Recognizing the different starting points of the UN entities in their efforts to build an enabling environment, the guidance is not intended to be prescriptive, but rather presents a diverse set of actions through good practice examples from within and outside the UN context.

A consultative and participatory system-wide approach was taken in developing the guidelines. Gender Focal Points across the UN system have provided good practice examples, which are highlighted in each section. Additionally, feedback from members of the CEB HR Network, UN-GLOBE, the Inter-agency Support Group for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and others have also been incorporated. More examples shared at the inter-agency workshops on promoting an enabling environment, organized by UN Women, were also incorporated into concrete actions to assist entities in determining how to most effectively foster an enabling environment.

The supplementary guidance is divided into six sections focusing attention on pertinent areas impacting the inclusion of a diverse and gender-balanced workforce: recruitment, talent management, workplace flexibility, family-friendly policies, standards of conduct and implementation.

The first section, Recruitment, is divided into two subsections: Outreach and Recruitment, focusing on outreach to potential applicants and application processes, and Selection Process, discussing how applicants are evaluated and selected. The Talent Management section explores ways an organization can support personnel at all levels in professional and personal growth, such as through inclusive leadership programmes and trainings.

Workplace Flexibility details efforts that can help foster diversity and support personnel in balancing personal and professional commitments. The Family-Friendly Policies section explores this further, by suggesting measures to enhance policies and practices specific to parental leave, breastfeeding/bottle-feeding, care issues and mobility. Finally, the Standards of Conduct section draws attention to preventing and addressing misconduct, as well as more general actions that can be taken to promote a respectful and harmonious workplace.

Additionally, the guidance examines overarching issues regarding implementation, including steps for change management and key factors for successful implementation, to allow ease in utilizing former sections and implementing them in the most effective and efficient way possible.

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS

RECRUITMENT

01.
Strengthen targeted outreach by advertising diversity and inclusion.

02.
Redesign job descriptions, application forms and processes to maximize candidate pools.
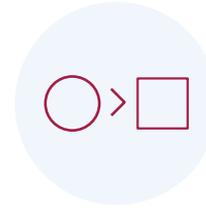
03.
Permit staff movement between grades and categories, provided applicants meet the qualifications for the job.

04.
Mitigate bias in the selection process.

05.
Utilize temporary special measures, when applicable.

06.
Strengthen accountability for selection decisions and compliance with diversity targets.

TALENT MANAGEMENT

07.
Develop and deliver comprehensive onboarding for all new employees.

08.
Harness mentoring networks and informal support systems to foster a sense of inclusion.

09.
Provide consistent career development opportunities as well as training and learning programmes for all personnel.

10.
Develop and deliver inclusive leadership programmes and trainings for staff at all levels.

11.
Formalize succession planning to include mandatory exit interviews and handover notes for staff prior to separation.

WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY

12.

Foster a culture supportive of work-life balance and flexibility.
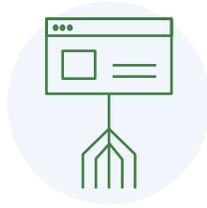
13.

Streamline process to request, facilitate and track FWA usage through an online enterprise resource planning/ management system or other digital tools.

14.

Respect core hours and encourage personnel to be offline after working hours and while on leave.
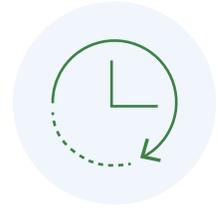
15.

Offer part-time employment options.

FAMILY-FRIENDLY POLICIES

16.

Aim to standardize parental leave to afford all parents, gestational and non-gestational, an equal post-birth paid leave entitlement of six months.

17.

Explore sustainable funding sources to provide adequate resources for hiring replacement personnel for backstopping parental leaves and other extended staff leave periods, and provide strengthened guidance on timelines for handover and training for reintegration.

18.

Consider providing parental leave to personnel on select types of long-term consultancy contracts.

19.

Enhance parental leave policies by addressing circumstances that may impact the utility and/ or duration of leave and allowing parents to get a lien on their post when applying for special leave without pay.

20.

Ensure a breastfeeding/ bottle-feeding policy is in place that allows adequate time off for breastfeeding/bottle-feeding, and designates a lactation space.

21.

Expand childcare and education grant options to better accommodate personnel with children under the age of 5 and create financial support for staff caring for an ageing relative or dependent with a disability.

22.

Provide additional allowances, leave and flexibility to support staff members addressing family care issues, such as eldercare and care for family members with disabilities, including temporary disabilities.

23.

Ensure mobility policies take a supportive and sensitive approach to staff and their families, particularly with respect to gender, LGBTIQ+ and disabilities.
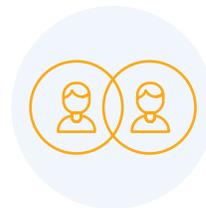
24.

Expand opportunities for recognized partner employment and facilitate mobility of dual UN career couples.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

25.

Create and support a culture of respect, zero tolerance and accountability for discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment and abuse of authority.

26.

Collect data to track misconduct prevalence, as well as reporting and accountability measures.

27.

Actively show support for and build an accessible, diverse, inclusive and safe workplace for all personnel.

28.

Mitigate everyday biases.

29.

Foster an environment that promotes diverse discussions in order to maximize collaboration and productivity.

30.

Enhance the accessibility, inclusivity and safety of meetings and events to ensure they are welcoming to diverse participants.

01.
Introduction

A. CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

The United Nations is founded on principles of equal participation and has core values of professionalism, respect for diversity and integrity. According to Article 8 of its Charter, "The United Nations shall place no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs."[2]

Therefore, cultivating a work culture where all people can work irrespective of their sex, race, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, sex characteristics, disability or any other status/identity and be respected and enjoy equal opportunities is of fundamental importance to the UN's credibility, legitimacy and ability to operate efficiently and effectively.

With the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development committing to "leave no one behind" and the ongoing reform process striving to improve efficiencies, the UN is being propelled to make a transformational change and determine ways to maximize the full potential of its personnel. Achieving a gender-balanced, diverse and inclusive workforce has been identified as a key element of this process.[3] This guidance further supports reform efforts by facilitating the harmonization of human resources (HR) policies, sharing of good practices, identification of gaps and strengthening of policy implementation.

An enabling environment promotes diversity and inclusion through fostering a safe, discrimination-free and supportive workplace in which employees have an equal opportunity to both serve and contribute to the UN mandate, and to advance careers and balance personal and professional commitments.

In order to successfully develop and implement measures to promote an enabling environment, key concepts regarding power and intersectionality should first be understood.

> **"A UN that makes status more influential than competency, makes grade more powerful than delivery and makes role and title more important than how you behave ... is a UN way off the 'Chart'-er. We must change that: change how we hold and manage power, change our discourse on power, our arrangements of power, and change the iconography of power in-house, particularly—but not only—the way in which it attaches to identity."**

—Kate Gilmore, United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights

> **"There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single issue lives."**

—Audre Lorde, US civil rights activist

Inequality, like discrimination, does not occur along a single axis but rather is intersectional. Prioritizing one issue is an unsustainable approach that only works for the benefit of one self-interested group and tends to pit minority groups vying to be heard against one another—a 'zero-sum game' that will never result in inclusion and equality. Often, when examining multiple forms of exclusion, it can be seen that they are all interconnected.[4]

An intersectional approach allows for a comprehensive examination of the complexities of human identity and an understanding of the network of informal hierarchies and power dynamics that work together to create these issues.[5]

B. GUIDANCE METHODOLOGY

> "Good practices guidelines for an enabling and inclusive organizational culture are developed by the CEB [United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination] Human Resources Network, OHRM [Office of Human Resources Management] and UN Women and shared with each entity to incorporate into existing policies, monitoring and implementation."
>
> —Secretary-General's System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity[6]

In addition to the thematic areas of workplace flexibility, family-friendly policies, and standards of conduct covered in the *Enabling Environment Guidelines for the United Nations System*, this supplemental guidance expands to include sections on recruitment and talent management. Furthermore, the guidance includes a section on implementation that reviews cross-cutting elements that will strengthen and enhance the execution of these recommended measures.

The recommendations that follow are drawn from UN system-wide inputs including:

- The inter-agency working group on enabling environment, with over 30 participants from across the UN system, which participated in the process leading up to the Secretary-General's System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity (from January to September 2017).

- An inter-agency workshop on promoting an enabling environment, organized by UN Women in November 2017, which brought together over 100 Gender Focal Points (GFPs), Focal Points for Women and Human Resources experts from across the UN to discuss key elements of creating an enabling environment, bringing in external good practices on issues such as managing career breaks, engaging men, building a flexible work culture, diversity and inclusion, expanding parental leave and providing childcare. In October 2018, a follow-up workshop was held and further feedback and inputs on the draft guidelines were collected from GFPs.

- Regular engagement with the GFP network for system-wide good practice examples, lessons learned and suggestions for improvement.

- The United Nations System Chief Executives Board (CEB) Human Resources Network meetings in March and July 2018 to collect feedback on the draft guidance, including through a written request in September 2018.

- The United Nations System Chief Executives Board (CEB) Task Force on Addressing Sexual Harassment within the Organizations of the UN System.

- UN-GLOBE, a system-wide inter-agency staff group advocating for the equality and non-discrimination of LGBTIQ+ staff in the UN system and its peacekeeping operations.

- The Inter-agency Support Group for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

- The UN Laboratory for Organizational Change and Knowledge (UNLOCK) case study series on "Delivering Successful Change on Diversity and Inclusion in the UN". UNLOCK is a programme of the UN System Staff College (UNSSC) that seeks to promote a culture of change and innovation in the UN system.

C. TERMINOLOGY

These supplementary guidelines broadly apply to all personnel in the UN system, which includes all those working for the UN, whether as staff, consultants, contractors, interns or volunteers, working at headquarter locations or in the field. However, the scope of certain recommendations relate to policies and actions specific to staff members. In these cases, "staff" will be referred to, rather than "personnel".

To ensure a clear and common understanding, please note the following definitions:

- "Sex" refers to biological and physiological characteristics, whereas "gender" refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for individuals based on the sex they were assigned at birth.

- "Gender identity" refers to each person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth or the gender attributed to them by society. It includes the personal sense of the body and expressions of gender, including dress, speech and mannerisms.

- "Transgender" is used by some people whose gender identity and, in some cases, gender expression, differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. Trans, transgender, gender diverse and gender nonconforming may be used as "umbrella terms" representing a variety of words that describe an internal sense of gender differing from the sex assigned at birth, whether one feels male, female, another gender or no gender.[i]

- Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities[7] (CRPD) defines "persons with disabilities" as inclusive of "those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others." Further, the preamble of the CRPD states that "disability is an evolving concept and that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others", therefore references to "persons with disabilities" should be understood to include also those with temporary disabilities.

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[i] The definitions for sex, gender, gender identity and transgender have been extracted from the IOM and UNHCR reference document "Terminology Guidance: Glossary of Terms". The complete glossary can be found on the UN-GLOBE website: **http://www.unglobe.org/resources/**.

02.
Recruitment

Recruitment is the entrance into the UN and serves as the initial introduction to its core values, codes of conduct and organizational culture. It is therefore of paramount importance to achieve a qualified, competent and diverse staff population. By promoting a diverse talent pool and guaranteeing a hiring process that maximizes the organization's ability to identify the most suitable and best-qualified candidates and minimizes bias, recruitment can ensure that staff composition reflects the organization's principles of equality.[8]

01

RECOMMENDATION

Strengthen targeted outreach by advertising diversity and inclusion.

A review of staff selection across the UN system[9] found that women comprised less than half of applicants at each of the Professional levels and higher. The UN system should therefore reflect on its ability to attract women candidates to the same degree as men. Similarly, data analysis of other underrepresented groups' representation throughout the recruitment process should be carried out to gain better information on their application and success rates.

To understand pull factors in attracting women applicants, Pricewaterhouse Coopers' study "Winning the Fight for Female Talent"[10] conducted an online survey with 3,934 geographically diverse women from a range of job sectors on what elements they considered important when applying for a job. The study found that:

- **61 per cent of women look at the diversity of the leadership**

- **67 per cent look at whether there are positive, relatable role models for them**

- **56 per cent look at whether the organization publicly shares its progress on diversity.**

These results reflect the importance of enhancing the visibility of women and other underrepresented groups, particularly at senior levels, strengthening an organization's branding, transparency and messaging to attract a diverse applicant pool.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Increase sourcing efforts of underrepresented candidates through channels including social media, LinkedIn and university career websites, in particular for functions and roles where their representation is low.

- Utilize thematic networks for outreach of job postings to attract more diverse talent.

- Build partnerships with relevant professional associations to ensure targeted outreach to potential qualified candidates.

- Ensure that public images on the UN website, public messaging and event promotion reflect a diverse staff composition including representation of diverse races, ethnicities, sexual and gender identities, persons with disabilities, etc. This should reflect the broad spectrum, including the majority, so as not to send a message of tokenism and that diversity in all its forms is welcomed and encouraged.

- Portray images of underrepresented groups in job sectors with lower levels of diversity—e.g. showing women in information technology (IT) or logistics roles and men in administrative support and HR.

- Use inclusion statements in job advertisements and in the careers section of the organization's website. Specificity in these statements such as mention of women, persons with disabilities, trans and gender non-confirming individuals, further strengthens messaging that the organization welcomes diversity in all its forms.

- Develop accessible materials specifically targeting underrepresented groups and reflecting the organization's active efforts to recruit diverse candidates.

- Strengthen targeted outreach by engaging former and current staff of underrepresented groups to serve as experienced advocates, increasing awareness of the possibility of working for the UN in their field of expertise.

For example, female UN peacekeeping personnel who have returned home from service could engage in an awareness-raising and experience-sharing event targeted at women in their national security institutions and, by doing so, strengthen women's role in peacekeeping.

- Develop efforts utilizing women leaders in non-traditional female roles (e.g. IT and security) to engage in outreach at universities to discuss the work of the United Nations and encourage women students to take up courses in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) where they are currently underrepresented.

- Institute internal head-hunting to identify and encourage qualified candidates from underrepresented groups to apply.

GOOD PRACTICES

Diversity promoted on websites

The **International Organization for Migration (IOM)** has a webpage, which is referenced in all vacancy notices, dedicated to diversity and inclusion, highlighting the organization's commitment to diversity and existing policies and accommodations for the needs of staff, particularly for parents and families, women, LGBTIQ+ staff, staff with disabilities and diversity of nationality and ethnicity. Information includes a link to commitments the IOM has made at Programme level for the Global Disability Summit 2018, an online form for a webinar on diversity at IOM, and links to the UN-SWAP (United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women) and the UN Secretary-General's System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity. Further, IOM's vacancy notices include a list of non-represented Member States and encourages nationals of those countries and qualified female candidates to apply. (see the IOM "**Diversity and Inclusion**" webpage[11]).

The **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)** highlights work-life balance practices on its employment page and features gender-related

stories and videos, including outreach material specifically developed to showcase women in the organization (see the IAEA "**Women at the IAEA**" webpage[12]).

The **World Meteorological Organization (WMO)** has a webpage on gender equality that includes WMO's legislative commitments to gender parity and mainstreaming, gender policies, profiles of prominent women in the WMO community and an animation of the organization's progress towards gender equality (see the WMO "**Gender Equality**" webpage[13]).

The **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** emphasizes the core values and expectations when working for UNHCR, including diversity and inclusion. The video "inclusion and diversity in UNHCR" highlights why inclusion and diversity are vitally important to UNHCR and raises awareness of biases, particularly in the recruitment stage (see the UNHCR "**What to expect working at UNHCR**" webpage[14]).

The employment webpage of the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** highlights its gender, diversity and inclusiveness priorities and reports on its strategies for gender parity as well as diversity and inclusion (see the UNDP "**Jobs – Gender and Diversity**" webpage[15]).

Utilize thematic networks for outreach

The **International Maritime Organization (IMO)** utilizes specific maritime forums and networks, such as the Pacific Women in Maritime Association, as an outlet for posting vacancy notices to widen outreach, particularly to women. To further increase diversity in visibility and capacity, IMO established the position of IMO Focal Point for Women in Maritime. Through engagement with seven regional associations for women in the maritime sector across Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, the Middle East and the Pacific Islands, the Focal Point leads the gender and capacity-building Programme on the Integration of Women in the Maritime Section (IWMS) to strengthen worldwide maritime communication to support career development for women in the maritime field.

The **United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)** has strengthened the diversification of vacancy announcement outreach through partnerships with regional and local specialized platforms, such as their partnership with engineering associations. By using strengthened female representation on outreach materials, UNOPS social media specifically targets female followers, particularly from the global south that are in fields such as engineering, procurement and leadership. Following these communication efforts, UNOPS social media accounts saw an increase of 3,000 new relevant female followers. Personnel are encouraged to actively share and refer vacancy announcements among their networks, and vacancy announcements are required to state provisions for flexible working arrangements.

To find many qualified female applicants for perceived male dominated roles, the **World Food Programme (WFP)** focuses its recruiting efforts through thematic networks. For example, to attract female candidates to aviation positions, the agency shares work opportunities with technical institutions and associations in the sector.

The **Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport launched the Women in Logistics and Transport (WiLAT)** network in 2013 to increase outreach to women and support their career development.[16] In its first year, the network grew to over 1,600 members in 14 countries. The network aims to promote the status of women in Supply Chain, Logistics and Transport fields through promoting career development opportunities and field vacancies.

Women in Aviation International (WAI) was formally established as a non-profit organization in 1994 to encourage and advance women in aviation career fields and interests.[17] WAI provides year-round resources such as educational outreach programmes, statistics on women in aviation careers and regularly updated aviation job vacancies. The accomplishments and contributions of women in aviation are promoted and celebrated through the WAI Pioneer Hall of Fame.[18]

02

RECOMMENDATION

Redesign job descriptions, application forms and processes to maximize candidate pools.

Application forms can be the first interaction candidates have with an organization. For the majority of the UN system this would be the P-11/PHP form, which includes queries on age, height, weight, gender (identity),[ii] marital status and number of dependents (including whether they are biological, step, or adopted), as well as on salary history.

Pre-employment inquiries about demographic factors unrelated to job functions or diversity efforts send the wrong message on what criteria applicants are being evaluated by and create uneasiness in applicants about how these factors influence the selection process and may make them unnecessarily vulnerable to conscious/ unconscious discrimination by the wide range of people who will review candidate profiles. Inquiring about salary history may create a cycle of inequity and lower salaries.

Application forms are recommended to be in accessible online formats, such as a Word format of the P11 form for persons with disabilities, especially those using screen readers. Further, application forms should contain only essential criteria and broad competencies, and organizations should examine ways to be more inclusive regarding required information. Current options for reporting gender reflect the traditional binary of female/male and provide no options for gender nonconforming or transgender applicants. Australia, Canada, Denmark, Germany, India, Malta, Nepal, New Zealand and Pakistan offer gender markers other than "F" (female) and "M" (male),

such as a "third gender" category or an "X" option on passports and official documents.[19]

Studies show that women do not apply for jobs unless they perceive themselves as fully qualified for all job requirements, while men apply even when they see themselves as meeting only 60 per cent of the requirements.[20] Thus, it is recommended that job descriptions only include skills and experience pertaining to the specific position rather than general criteria. For example, while field experience is relevant for many UN jobs, its inclusion when not critical to the job functions can act as a strong deterrent to female applicants.

Streamlining the application process and mentioning in the application that reasonable accommodation, which is defined in Article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments where needed in a particular case that do not impose a disproportionate or undue burden, is available during the recruitment process can make the application process easier and help increase the number of applicants. It should be noted that when recruitment systems are not accessible, candidates, such as those with vision impairments, are not able to apply for positions.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Consider which information is required at which stage of recruitment and consider removing irrelevant sections in PFP/PHF/P11 and other forms. For example, information on marital status and dependents is currently collected in application forms, although it is only needed to calculate the benefits for candidates if selected. Information on height and weight are unlikely necessary information to collect on personnel at all.

- Consider moving required demographic information to the end of forms, in order to send the message that experience and qualifications are the primary considerations.

- Consider streamlining the application process to facilitate submission of applications, while still soliciting key criteria required to screen candidate eligibility. For example, consider allowing candidates to submit generic CVs or apply using their LinkedIn profile, while requiring them to provide information on educational attainment and UN experience that would facilitate review.

- Avoid eliciting information on previous salary as it can perpetuate the gender pay gap.

- Consider evaluating part-time/unpaid/ voluntary positions as relevant experience. For example, some UN agencies do not recognize unpaid work when assessing years of experience.

- Ensure only the essential qualifications for the job are mentioned in vacancy announcements and job descriptions, rather than non-essential criteria, as mentioned above and in the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity.[21]

- Encourage underrepresented candidates to apply. Specific reference to various dimensions of diversity, such as sex, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, nationality, and disabilities, send a stronger message than generic statements.

- Ensure that application formats are accessible to all individuals, including persons with disabilities.

- Use gender-inclusive language and language that places all individuals regardless of sexual orientation or gender identification at the same level, in job descriptions, such as providing both the masculine and feminine forms of gendered nouns and pronouns.

- Discuss and promote, when possible, workplace flexibility in job descriptions to communicate a supportive environment for those with caregiving or other personal responsibilities.

[ii] Most UN forms only allow for the identification of gender based on the binary male/female rather than the range of gender identities, including but not limited to transgender and gender nonconforming.

- Share the organization's commitment to provide reasonable accommodation and reassure candidates that this will not have bearing on the hiring decision. Ask candidates about their needs for reasonable accommodation during the recruitment process. This information can also be used to track the number of applicants and hired personnel with support needs.

- Ensure opportunities for candidates to engage with the organization are inclusive to all candidates. Track and share reporting of who receives these opportunities by various diversity demographic data. Compare this against past results to spot trends. If gaps are found, implement new outreach strategies to be more inclusive.

- Consider standardizing the titles of candidates to only relate to profession, education, or gender, such as Ms., Dr., Prof., etc. rather than to the marital status, i.e. Mrs.

GOOD PRACTICES

Using gender-inclusive language in job descriptions

The Gender Decoder tool (**http://gender-decoder. katmatfield.com/**) reviews job descriptions to identify gendered words that may make candidates feel excluded and thereby limit the applicant pool. The free tool can be used for any document to eliminate bias-triggering language, and it is particularly useful for vacancy announcements in UN official language that use grammatical genders. **GenderTerm**, developed by **UN Women**, is a searchable gender-inclusive lexicon in English, French and Spanish (**http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/ genderterm**) that can be used to ensure terms are gender-inclusive.

Identity-blind screening

The **American Alliance of Museums (AAM)** used an identity-blind screening application process by asking applicants to eliminate key information including name, address, names of schools and graduation date in their résumé. Each résumé was given a number for reference, and names of applicants were not revealed until the interview stage of the process. Reviewers remained more neutral in their evaluations, and the Director of Human Resources at AAM noted: "It has changed our mindset as an organization. We are more aware of hiring biases. We have clarified our evaluation criteria. And because we have taken a collaborative approach to blind hiring, I think it has improved the candidate's experience with our hiring process."[22]

Diversity in internship programmes

In 2018, the **International Organization for Migration (IOM)** piloted a Diversity Internship Programme in response to the high costs of an internship for participants, particularly those from countries that are not part of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development-Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC). The programme engages 12 young professionals from non-OECD-DAC nationalities, with specific attention to non-represented Member States. Selected candidates receive a monthly allowance, which is adjusted to the cost of living of their duty station, and the organization covers all air travel and visa fees. IOM has no restrictions on hiring interns as consultants or staff immediately after their internships.

In 2016, The **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)** launched an internship program targeting LGBTIQ+ university students and students from disadvantaged social groups to provide training and professional experience. The program emphasizes the importance of diversity and allows these students to participate in meetings and discussions to have their voices heard in the organization.

Targeting underrepresented groups

In collaboration, the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** and **United Nations Volunteers (UNV)** created the Talent Programme for Young Professionals with Disabilities to support the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the development sector and to build a talent pipeline of young professionals with disabilities for jobs in areas related to the Sustainable Development Goals. The programme recruits young professionals with disabilities for assignments with UNDP country, regional and headquarters offices. These assignments are 12 months in duration, with the possibility of extension for 6-12 months.

Distinguishing between essential and non-essential information and criteria

The **United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)** has removed questions on salary history, number of dependents and family status from recruitment profiles. Similarly to UNOPS, the **International Labour Organization (ILO)** has removed unnecessary information such as marital status, dependents and salary history from its initial recruitment forms.

Inclusive job advertisements

The non-profit **Working Families** leads the way in helping organizations and employees build enabling and flexible environments that enhance productivity, creativity and well-being for everyone. The "happy to talk flexible working" logo was designed to be displayed on job advertisements to inform potential candidates that the organization is open to negotiating flexibility. The logos are free to use, and Working Families also provides simple guidance on job design and what types of flexible working arrangements may work best for organizations.[23]

03

RECOMMENDATION

Permit staff movement between grades and categories, provided applicants meet the qualifications for the job.

Current staff rules and regulations in some UN entities restrict the movement of staff between grades and staff categories—such as prohibitions against applying for posts that are more than one grade higher or General Service staff applying for Professional-level posts. These barriers not only narrow candidate pools but can also lead to demotivated staff who feel they lack opportunities and mobility for career advancement within the UN.

Removing barriers, such as minimum time in post requirements, could have a particularly positive impact on the representation of marginalized groups who may have experienced additional challenges to their career advancements.

Mandatory breaks in contract modalities are often applied to those on unsecure or unremunerated contracts, such as consultants and interns, for whom breaks in employment can be debilitating. This can be further exacerbated for those with disabilities or family with disabilities.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Allow candidates to apply for positions where they fulfil the requirements, as recommended by the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity.[24] This would include, but is not limited to, removing any restrictions on applying for posts more than one grade higher, moving from General Service to Professional staff, reducing minimum time in post requirements for underrepresented groups, and removing mandatory breaks between contract modalities, such as for personnel moving from consultancies to staff posts, and has already been done with regards to UN Volunteers (UNV).[25]

- Communicate this approach so that it is widely understood, and in a manner that is inspiring for career growth at the UN.

GOOD PRACTICES

Fewer restrictions on internal applicants' ability to apply for posts

The **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)** states in its Policies and Procedures Manual[26] that "selection decisions are based on the consideration as to which applicant best meets the core and functional competencies required for the post in question. Therefore, no restrictions other than those established in this policy are placed upon staff members appointed in one category (e.g. in the General Service category) to apply to any vacant post in another category (e.g. in the professional or National Officers categories), if they have the required functional and core competencies and meet the other selection criteria for the post (e.g. academic background, language, experience)."

The **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**'s recruitment policy has a similar provision: "Internal candidates are eligible to apply for any higher-level positions for which they meet the minimum academic and experience requirements. The candidate must meet all the requirements of the position."

Additionally, the recruitment policies of **International Organization for Migration (IOM)** and **United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)** allow candidates to apply for positions where they fulfil the requirements, including for posts more than one grade higher, and with no restrictions placed on any personnel appointed in one category or contract modality to apply to the other category/contract modality.

Shortened mandatory break in service for staff with disabilities

The **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)** has set a precedent by shortening the mandatory break in service for staff with disabilities on temporary contracts from three to one month to prevent undue harm generated by the lack of income and residency.

04

RECOMMENDATION

Mitigate bias in the selection process.

Unconscious biases are social stereotypes, simplistic images and distorted truths about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness. They stem from a normal human tendency to organize social worlds through categorization. Far more prevalent than conscious prejudices, unconscious biases unintentionally exist in everyone and are often incompatible with one's conscious values.

Hiring processes are particularly vulnerable to unconscious bias, as reviewers must make quick judgements in reviewing numerous applications and this can impede hiring for a diverse and innovative workforce. Unconscious bias can hinder the fair evaluation of CVs, assessments, interview performances and letters of recommendation as well as in-job performance assessments. This can inadvertently lead to recruiters hiring the candidate most similar and familiar to them rather than the most qualified and beneficial to the organization.

Addressing unconscious bias in the overall staff population is further discussed in section 6b on Harmonious workplace.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Require hiring managers to be trained on eliminating unconscious bias in job application processes, including job design, job descriptions and vacancy announcements.

- Ensure that all interview panel members receive training on unconscious bias and diversity to increase awareness, understanding of organizational priorities, such as the attainment of gender parity, and how hiring decisions will impact this progress. Make viewing the video "**UNbiased: Mitigating Unconscious Bias in Recruitment**" a mandatory requirement for all panellists.

- Consider removing or masking personal information, such as marital status and number of children, from hiring managers during the selection process. Demographic information relevant to increasing diversity, such as sex, nationality, race, ethnicity, disabilities, sexual and gender identities, should be monitored and accounted for by the HR department.

- Ensure diversity and gender balance within interview panels, as recommended in the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity.[27] While most UN entities stipulate having at least one woman on panels, this may not be sufficient, nor does this necessarily equate to providing gender dimensions to the selection process. On the latter, consider using Gender Focal Point expertise in oversight bodies to integrate gender dimensions.

GOOD PRACTICES

Video training on unconscious bias

To build awareness on the detrimental impact of unconscious bias in the recruitment process and how to mitigate it, the **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)** and the **International Organization for Migration (IOM)** created a video, "**UNbiased: Mitigating Unconscious Bias in Recruitment**", that reveals the many ways in which unconscious biases shape everyday decision-making and contextualizes how these assumptions contribute to gender inequalities in the workplace.[28] One such statistic shared is that "where equally qualified candidates were considered, mothers were 79% less likely to be hired."

Additionally, the video provides concrete tips on how to identify and challenge these biases in recruitment processes:

1. **RECOGNITION:** Recognize your own unconscious bias and that of the panel and take concrete steps to mitigate this.

2. **PRIMING:** Prime your brain to make decisions based on objective criteria before looking at an applicant's qualifications. Have each panel member fill in the evaluation template individually to avoid 'groupthink'.

3. **IMPARTIALITY:** Put aside your gut feeling towards some candidates, in particular during the first five minutes of the interview, making sure you guide all candidates equally, both in your tone and in follow-up questions and comments. Allowing for a pause during interviews gives panellists a chance to discuss any biases and refocus on the job criteria before concluding the interview.

4. **DIVERSITY:** Out of the best-qualified candidates, choose the candidate that would bring the most diversity into the team in terms of gender, geography and background. Make sure to have the facts about the team composition to be able to do this. Teams with 70 per cent or fewer members of the same gender/nationality/ethnicity perform better than more homogenous teams when the leadership is inclusive.

5. **ACCOUNTABILITY:** Collect data disaggregated by sex and nationality at all stages of recruitment and include them in the final recommendation file to the head of the organization. The data should tell you where you start and how you are doing moving forward.

Interview panel diversity and training

The **United Nations Office of Project Services (UNOPS)** includes a section on unconscious bias in their Competency-Based Interview (CBI) trainings. The Convener, usually the Hiring Manager, and the HR representative on the panel need to be CBI certified to participate in the panel. A recruiter network was also established to ensure consistency and robustness of selection, whereby diverse and trained CBI panel members are made available when needed. The same recruiter network also provides inputs to new tools and methods for recruitment.

UN Women has developed training on managing unconscious bias during recruitment and selection processes, and all operations managers have undergone the training.

05

RECOMMENDATION

Utilize temporary special measures, when applicable.

Temporary special measures have been used in various settings[iii] and have had legislative support in the UN since 1991. They were first introduced "in view of the limited progress achieved despite the numerous recommendations it had made in previous years and the many General Assembly resolutions on the matter, the adoption of more specific measures for the advancement of women was essential."[29]

Subsequent Secretary-General's Bulletins[iv] containing temporary positive measures to support the advancement of women were consolidated and eventually superseded by ST/AI/1999/9 "Special Measures for the Achievement of Gender Equality." To achieve the most direct impact on progress towards gender parity, vacancies in the Professional category and above (where gender parity has not been met) are mandated to "be filled when there are one or more women candidates, by one of those candidates", when "her qualifications are substantially equal or superior to those of competing male candidates."[30]

Special measures have been repeatedly upheld through UN Tribunal jurisprudence in cases of both male and female complainants.[v] In its seminal judgment on the use of special measures, "the Tribunal conclude[d] that Article 8 permits the adoption of reasonable affirmative action measures for the improvement of the status of women".[31]

The implementation of special measures has been hampered, however, by its lack of integration into subsequent staff selection policies. It is recommended that instruction on special measures be cross-referenced in all applicable documents, such as gender parity strategies and policies guiding staff selection procedures, to ensure its effective implementation.

Equally important are accountability mechanisms, including regular follow-up and reporting, in ensuring special measures are effectively implemented.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Treat candidates of underrepresented groups from all UN entities as internal candidates. Consider eventually expanding to cover all candidates from the UN Common System.

- Require written justification from the hiring manager when job openings fail to yield a minimum per cent of applications from underrepresented groups. In the absence of a strong justification, based on the assessment by the Director of Human Resources and the Head of Organization, job openings should be extended or reopened.

- Specify consequential or remedial actions, such as removing hiring responsibilities or non-renewal of appointment, to enhance accountability.

- Update and strengthen the administrative instruction on special measures for the achievement of gender parity, as appropriate.

- Apply special measures to downsizing when possible.

GOOD PRACTICES

The **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**'s Gender Parity Strategy 2013-2017 included the following special measures to address gender gaps:

- Reduction of the time in post requirement for internal women candidates for P-4 and P-5 positions.

- Bureaux[vi] that fell below 45 per cent women would only nominate women for candidate pools and participation in the LEAD (young leaders) programme.

- Targeting men for General Service positions in the interest of increased gender balance at that level.

At the **United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCR)**, female candidates can apply for 12 positions at a higher grade per compendium until gender parity is achieved. Subject to the availability of a sufficient number of candidates who fully meet the requirements of the position, there should be a minimum of three candidates on the shortlist and at least two-thirds of the shortlisted candidates must be female. The manager's justification will be required if less than two-thirds of the shortlisted candidates are female. Also, when two or more candidates fully meet the requirements of a position and are considered equally qualified, preference will be given to female candidates until gender parity is achieved.

[iii] The 2013 Rwandan Parliamentary elections ushered in a record-breaking 64 per cent of seats won by women candidates. This increase was a result of gender-sensitive constitutional quotas, requiring a minimum of 30 per cent women in all decision-making organs. Available at: **http://www.rw.one.un.org/press-center/news/ women-secure-64-cent-seats-rwandan-parliamentary-elections**.

[iv] As of 5 January 1996, ST/SGB/220, ST/SGB/226, ST/SGB/227, ST/SGB/229, ST/SGB/232, ST/SGB/237 and ST/SGB/252 were consolidated and superseded by ST/AI/412. ST/AI/412 was then superseded by ST/AI/1999/9.

[v] Among a few of these examples of jurisprudence are: UN Administrative Tribunal Judgments Nos. 671 (1994), 765 (1996), 958 (2000), 1056 (2002), 1302 (2006); and UNDT/2011/098, UNDT/2011/099, UNDT/2012/080, UNDT/2012/125, UNDT/2014/068.

[vi] UNDP's organizational structure is divided into Bureaux covering different regions and thematic areas of work. Available at: **http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/about-us/organisational-chart.html**.

06

RECOMMENDATION

Strengthen accountability for selection decisions and compliance with diversity targets.

Gender Focal Points (GFPs), Focal Points for Women[vii] and UN-GLOBE Focal Points are a valuable resource for hiring managers in providing a gender-sensitive approach to the selection process. While most GFPs have terms of reference indicating they should play an important role in the staff selection process, most entities reported their staff selection systems only stipulated that women (not necessarily GFPs) be represented on interview panels and review bodies.[viii] In order to promote diversity and strengthen the understanding that this role is to provide substantive guidance irrespective of one's personal gender, entities are encouraged to maximize the gender diversity of GFPs and encourage the designation of men to this role as well, as women currently make up over 90 per cent of GFPs.

Additionally, it should be noted that most GFPs carry out this role in addition to their core functions and may not have the availability to serve on panels consistently. Therefore, a more sustainable and systematic means of integrating gender perspectives into the process might be to designate and appropriately train a member/s of oversight bodies (e.g. central review boards, rotation panels).

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Provide hiring managers with up-to-date data on current demographics, including information on anticipated retirements and vacancies, with a goal of planning progress towards diversity targets based on expected opportunities. Demographic data should be reviewed at each stage of the recruitment process to assess if remedial actions such as re-advertising the post due to a lack of diverse candidates is needed. Business intelligence tools, such as Dashboards available on the organization's intranet, can be clear and accessible tools in this regard. Collection of information on gender identity and personnel with disabilities should also be included to facilitate more comprehensive analysis of demographics.

- Require the Head of Departments/Offices to acknowledge the relevant gender and geographic parity targets and how their selection decision will impact progress towards these targets before such decisions are made. Ensure real and concrete accountability measures with consequences for lack of action.

- Ensure diversity in selection panels and review committees.

- Ensure GFPs/Focal Points for Women play a role in the selection processes, e.g. to monitor compliance with measures related to gender parity, offer guidance to panel members, and/or review the selection decision to ensure due consideration has been given to female candidates. Provide Focal Points with sufficient time, resources and access to senior management to carry out these functions. Given the time-consuming nature of recruitment, integrating this role into the review/oversight body is advisable.

- Hiring managers should be required to submit a written justification to the Head of Human Resources and Head of the respective UN entity if a candidate of an overrepresented gender is selected for posts/positions at levels where gender parity has not been achieved.

GOOD PRACTICES

Setting targets and indicators

The **World Health Organization (WHO)** requires supervisors with recruitment responsibilities to set targets for gender equality in staffing and to report in this regard at the end of the Performance Evaluation Cycle. In addition, the **WHO Accountability Compact for Assistant Director Generals in Headquarters (HQ)** includes an indicator on gender equality in staffing.

Dashboards to help inform hiring decisions

Several UN entities, including **UN Women** and the **United Nations Office of Project Services (UNOPS)** have made available to all staff HR Dashboards that provide diverse statistics on personnel demographics, including sex, contract type and nationality.

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vii These terms are synonymous. The term "Focal Points for Women" is used by the UN Secretariat, and is guided by the Secretary-General's (ST/ SGB/2008/12) "Departmental focal points for women in the Secretariat." The term "Gender Focal Points" is used by the remainder of the UN system.

viii 57 per cent of entities reported requirements for female representation on interview panels, while only 4 per cent specified Gender Focal Point (GFP) participation and 39 per cent reported they had requirements for neither. 88 per cent of entities reported having a requirement of female representation on review bodies, but only 12 per cent required GFP participation. UN Women (2016). *Status of Women in the United Nations System*. New York: UN Women.

Involving the GFP in hiring decisions

The Focal Point for Women at the **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)** reviews recruitment files at the P-5 and D-1 levels, prior to submission of the file to the Deputy High Commissioner and High Commissioner for Human Rights, to ensure that women are given due consideration in the process. Between 2016, when the procedure was first introduced, and 2017, when it was institutionalized in OHCHR's gender parity implementation plan, the representation of women at P-5 level increased by 5 per cent.

The **International Trade Centre (ITC)** has integrated the following measures into its hiring procedure:

- GFP briefs the Executive Director on progress towards parity through quarterly and year-end reports, including simulations and projections on upcoming selection decisions.

- GFP maintains a "ITC Gender Scorecard" on the internal learning and development portal, the official gender parity-monitoring tool for hiring managers to access real-life parity data "at their fingertips" for each professional level. Hiring managers must declare that they are aware of the gender balance implications of each selection on corporate targets.

- Human Resources closely monitors applications received from women and, where warranted, extends deadlines for underrepresented higher-level professional positions to allow additional outreach.

- ITC's job openings have explicit text emphasizing ITC's commitment to diversity and work-life balance, as well as welcoming applications from persons with disabilities.

- Interview panels systematically consider gender sensitivity as a criterion in selection. For instance, Central Review Bodies and the Executive Director receive a table of gender parity statistics at each step of the selection process, with the final unranked list of recommended candidates normally including at least one woman.

03.
Talent Management

Talent management is a key part of an organization's commitment to recruit, hire, retain and develop the most talented employees in the job market.[32] Integrated talent management programmes support personnel in developing competencies to become more effective and efficient in the workforce and to prepare for higher-level responsibilities. Such programmes should be considered an organizational investment yielding gains in efficiency and productivity.[33]

07

RECOMMENDATION

Develop and deliver comprehensive onboarding for all new employees.

The onboarding process—through which new hires learn about the demands and culture of their new jobs—sets the tone for an employee's experience with an organization. According to the Society for Human Resource Management, 69 per cent of employees are more likely to stay with an organization for three years if they experienced a cohesive structured onboarding programme, and those employees register 50 per cent greater new-hire productivity.[34]

Onboarding provides an opportunity for organizations to establish expectations and instil values, including respect for diversity, integrity and professionalism and upholding the Code of Conduct. For the new employee, it is their first chance to gauge the strengths and weaknesses of the organization and to connect personal values and experiences with its mission and mandate.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Develop and deliver an orientation programme on a scheduled, regular basis to familiarize new employees with the organization, including expectations to uphold and promote the discrimination-free and inclusive culture of the entity, standards of conduct, responsibilities and resources for reporting misconduct, requesting reasonable accommodation, family-friendly policies (parental leave, breastfeeding/bottle-feeding, special leave without pay – SLWOP), information relevant LGBTIQ+ staff including information on UN-GLOBE and local laws, information on reasonable accommodation and flexible working arrangements (FWAs), including clear guidance on requesting such accommodation and positive messaging on the organization's efforts to promote a flexible working environment.

- Schedule one-on-one time between new employees and experienced staff members during their first week/s. This will allow time for new colleagues to become familiar with people and the workplace and increase potential for intradepartmental cooperation.

- Consider partnering with other UN agencies and international organizations working to develop country-level information regarding living conditions at each duty station to avoid repetitions and increase cost effectiveness. This should also include information of particular importance to women and LGBTIQ+ personnel and personnel with disabilities.

- Consider pairing new employees with a current staff member who could serve as an informal guide and resource during their acclimation period.

GOOD PRACTICES

Induction platform and programmes

The **Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM)** has developed a Global Induction Platform that can tailor onboarding training and needs based on grade, duty station and whether the staff member is new to the UN system, and if they are managing staff. Based on the incoming staff member's inputs, a personalized induction plan is created and the platform generates the core curriculum, recommended readings, courses and tasks into a timeline ranging from 6 weeks prior to arrival to 3 weeks after. The platform can be found at **https://induction.un.org/**.

The **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)** uses its Induction Programme for Newcomers to promote respect for diversity and inclusion. The mandatory week-long programme provides an opportunity for newcomers, inclusive of staff and non-staff. The programme includes a presentation on gender and diversity, which stresses WIPO's commitment to a respectful workplace, diversity and inclusion.

The **United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)** offers a virtual orientation programme called "Discover UNOPS". Offices are encouraged to establish "buddy systems" for newcomers. External candidates filling key leadership roles are brought in for a one-week induction at HQ whereby they meet relevant function representatives, including talent management and policy.

The **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** has a corporate onboarding programme for all personnel, which, among others, includes virtual monthly webinars 'Welcome to UNDP'. During these webinars, new staff get a brief overview of UNDP's history, mission, and vision, get introduced to available tools and resources to smoothly come on-board and begin their work effectively, as well as have an opportunity to meet senior managers from the organization and get valuable advice from them.

08

RECOMMENDATION

Harness mentoring networks and informal support systems to foster a sense of inclusion.

Professional connections and networks play a large role in available career opportunities. Research[35] has shown that social styles often have a gender dimension, attributed to the difference in socialization of women and men dictated by cultural and social norms. Generally, men tend to build broader networks that give them a wider range of opportunities for gaining knowledge and professional advancement, while women's networks tend to focus on deeper connections within a smaller social circle. Research[36] suggests that unconscious preference leads people to favour those most similar to themselves, which often means that underrepresented groups are left out of these natural networks.[37]

Informal networks, including support groups and mentoring programmes, tend to connect through horizontal engagement across vertical silos to collaborate with and support one another. McKinsey found that informal networks contain more information than formal hierarchies and matrix structures.[38] These networks can be leveraged to mobilize talent, provide support and spread knowledge in a cost-efficient way. Mentoring can provide a low-cost informal complement or alternative to organized trainings that can benefit all employees, but particularly underrepresented staff. Yet, while 56 per cent of UN entities reported having mentoring programmes, only 19 per cent of these have programmes specifically targeted towards women.[39]

As valuable as they are in providing staff support and a sense of community, ad hoc networks often lack diversity, are short-lived and may be unknown to management.[40] By institutionalizing and providing the necessary infrastructure for mentorship and support networks, organizations can empower informal networks to transform organizational culture. They can equally engage and encourage all staff, which the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity notes as having a significant impact on retention, progression and network-building.[41]

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Provide guidance to staff on how to successfully organize networks. Identify leadership responsible for managing the network and building its collective capabilities, such as through knowledge-sharing and facilitating interactions among members.

- Support mentoring programmes that cross-cut organizational hierarchy by having senior staff learn from newer employees and vice versa and encourage horizontal networking across vertical structures through peer-to-peer exchanges on matters such as work-life balance.

- Encourage networks to integrate cross-cutting themes, such as gender and disability.

- Motivate staff participation in these networks by offering incentives such as off-site team building and recognizing staff who contribute distinctive knowledge.

- Build an inter-agency network that allows mentorship across UN entities. This will expand the pool of diverse leaders and increase support for career advancement of underrepresented groups. Include mentoring and coaching guidance in Management and Leadership Programmes to empower managers and leaders to systematically and consistently integrate these into their daily practice and foster a culture of inclusion. Additionally, consider including mentoring responsibilities in manager performance appraisals, such as serving as a mentor or supporting implementation of mentorships among their personnel.

GOOD PRACTICES

Mentoring programmes

The **International Trade Centre (ITC)** collaborated with the **International Telecommunications Union (ITU)** to launch the pilot ITC-ITU Joint Mentoring Programme for women (JMP) in 2018 as part of this commitment to gender parity and to promote a gender-inclusive workplace. Given the success of this pilot, ITC is considering launching a full JMP in 2019 as a one-year talent development programme offering support and guidance to volunteer mentors and mentees, as part of its wider plan to improve career development, job satisfaction and the retention of women at ITC.

The **International Labour Organization (ILO)** mentoring programme aims to foster dialogue and knowledge-sharing to assist managers in addressing their learning objectives and achieving their goals. The programme currently involves ILO mentors and mentees working together for a set period on issues that they define as important.

UN Women has established a training for mentoring pairs that discusses mentoring support methods and how to most effectively mentor and be mentored. After the training, mentoring pairs provide peer support and career coaching for a year, in which they apply the training methods to effectively developed leadership skills in mentors and competency and career development skills in mentees. The UN Women Leadership Charter and the UN Leadership Framework are highlighted during the training to maximize the diversity of participants.

In 2017, **UN-GLOBE** launched a mentorship programme to encourage and support the careers of LGBTIQ+ individuals in the UN system. Staff, consultants and interns interested in support and guidance on their UN career will be paired with an experienced LGBTIQ+ staff member. The goal is to solidify the presence of LGBTIQ+ staff at all levels in the UN system.

The **Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM)** has held speed-mentoring sessions, where female mentees at junior and mid-levels had the opportunity to have one-on-one conversations with senior female mentors about career development and advancement, work-life balance and addressing informal barriers in the workplace. The experience showed the importance of senior leaders both setting the tone for and valuing such activities. Staff have provided positive feedback and have found these spaces for discussion and reflection useful.

WhatsApp group

UN-Habitat's Women's Network is an informal WhatsApp group for all UN-Habitat women staff to post job openings, advice on work-life balance, updates of events and other relevant information. Recently, the Executive Director and the Deputy Executive Director joined this group in order to follow and understand the experiences of women in the organization.

United Nations Staff College (UNSSC)'s Learning Managers Forum is a WhatsApp Group representing over 40 UN entities. The group provides an outlet for sharing information, good practices, and calls for inter-agency collaboration on initiatives.

Employee resource groups

UN(dis)Abilities is a UN staff group that brings together UN staff with disabilities, as well as UN staff that have family members with disabilities. The informal support group provides the opportunity for these staff members to connect, share ideas and support one another. Staff members also have the opportunity to share good practices regarding policies and accommodations available at the UN.

Google's community outreach and talent engagement effort to improve diversity across the company encourages staff to participate in Employee Resource Groups, support networks representing social, cultural and minority groups. Currently, 13 support networks receive financial support from the company and allow employees across the globe to connect and share their values and ideas for supporting diversity at Google.

Reverse mentoring

CISCO's formalized reverse mentoring programme aims to change the traditional roles of mentor and mentee. The mentor is a newer employee of the organization at the junior or mid-level, while the mentee is a senior staff member. Individuals are paired to achieve the best mix of people from different backgrounds to expose staff to different working styles and experiences in the organization. The programme aims to strengthen a diverse and inclusive culture.

Gender Parity
Making It Happen

More
data

Affirmative
action used
to recruit
— Quote —

Org Culture
Recruitment
policies.

09
RECOMMENDATION

Provide consistent career development opportunities as well as training and learning programmes for all personnel.

Organizations that invest in their talent through training and development are viewed more favourably by employees, leading to higher levels of retention and employee engagement.[42] Furthermore, career development provides internal mobility opportunities.

Pricewaterhouse Coopers' report, "Modern Mobility: Moving Women with Purpose",[43] found that while 60 per cent of multinational organizations researched use global mobility to create career development opportunities and 71 per cent of women want to work outside of their home country at some point in their career, only 16 per cent of these organizations have women proportionately represented and only 22 per cent are actively working to increase female mobility.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Ensure that a minimum of staff time is dedicated to learning, such as in UNFPA which recommends 12 days a calendar year or UNAIDS which recommends 5 per cent of staff time.

- Encourage equitable access to opportunities for stretch assignments, job swaps, loans, secondments, inter-agency and internal detail assignments, SURGE (Supporting UNHCR Resources on the Ground with Experts) missions or collaboration with other UN and non-UN entities, to the extent possible, especially for underrepresented groups, aimed at strengthening expertise and building professional networks.

- Consider allowing staff to keep a limited-time lien on their posts when moving inter-agency on a secondment. Ensure greater flexibility around the duration of secondments to other agencies.

- Provide and promote internal learning opportunities, including those focused on work-life balance, strategies for balancing career and caregiving responsibilities and parental leave planning.

- Develop targeted skills-building programmes, e.g. training to address intersectionality in substantive work areas, transformative leadership for gender diversity and women's rights, management training, strategic thinking, negotiation and public speaking skills, conflict prevention, self-confidence, stress management and tackling self-imposed barriers.

- Provide specialized career counselling to help individual employees identify professional opportunities and encourage coaching for all underrepresented personnel.

- Build inter-agency career management frameworks and initiatives to increase opportunities.

- Encourage developmental conversations between managers and staff as part of the performance management and development culture.

- Support and facilitate a decision on the additional category of non-family duty stations where eligible dependents may still choose to join the staff member.

GOOD PRACTICES

Staff exchange programmes

Many UN entities, such as the **International Maritime Organization (IMO)** and **UN Women**, offer staff the opportunity to participate in job swaps and detail assignments in order to explore and lend expertise to other areas of work. Job swaps are typically for a minimum duration of one year to maximize the experience and learning process, and once the swap period is completed, staff members return to their previous functions.

Since 2014, the **International Organization for Migration (IOM)** has offered a programme that allows General Service and National Officers from countries that are not part of OECD-DAC to participate in staff exchanges. These consist of 30-day missions to other duty stations to work and learn under the guidance of an experienced staff member (coach) in the field. Priority areas for staff exchanges are HR, finance and resource management as well as procurement, as these are areas where the organization has identified a need for staff development.

The **Civil Service Job Share Finder site** (**https://www.civilservicejobshare.service.gov.uk/**) is an online job-share database which helps civil servants find and manage information so that they can make compatible job-share matches with other civil servants. It helps civil servants find other civil servants with whom to form successful job share partnerships. The site was launched in 2015 at an International Women's Day Event at the Ministry of Justice in London. It was originally conceived to support maternity and paternity leave returners to the Civil Service who wished to job share to achieve a better work-life balance.

More than 2,340 civil servants have registered on the site, with 76 colleagues, including 58 senior female civil servants successfully finding job share partners. Since its release, other civil servant user groups who could benefit from job sharing have been identified. For example, those with caring responsibilities; those who are looking to take partial/phased retirement; those who have a disability and are looking to job share for 'job carving' advantages. The Civil Service Job Share Finder was shortlisted in the **Workingmums.co.uk** Top Employers Awards 2018 in the Innovation in Flexible Working Category.

Specialized career counselling

The **International Maritime Organization (IMO)** provides a Career Development Officer to all staff. Staff are not only provided guidance and counselling on their career development and career development opportunities available, but they are also given opportunities to engage in mock interviews. The Career Development Officer provides feedback on the interview to further improve skills and performance of staff members.

Setting aside time for learning and development

UNFPA recommends its personnel use twelve days of Learning Time per calendar year. The time can be used towards learning activities, evaluations and assessments of learning needs, practice related to the learning activities and/or taking leadership for innovations and performance improvement resulting from a learning process.

The **UNAIDS** People Development Policy recommends that 5 per cent of working hours be dedicated to learning and development. When pursuing development activities that are related to longer-term career goals, staff members may apply for special leave without pay. UNAIDS has also instituted an annual mandatory learning objective, formal or informal, on gender that needs to be set by every staff member, usually at the beginning of the performance management cycle.

The **IMO**'s External Studies Programme provides staff members with the opportunity to build their technical skills and increase qualifications to enhance personal development, maximize contribution to the Organization and integrate new knowledge, ideas and approaches into their work.
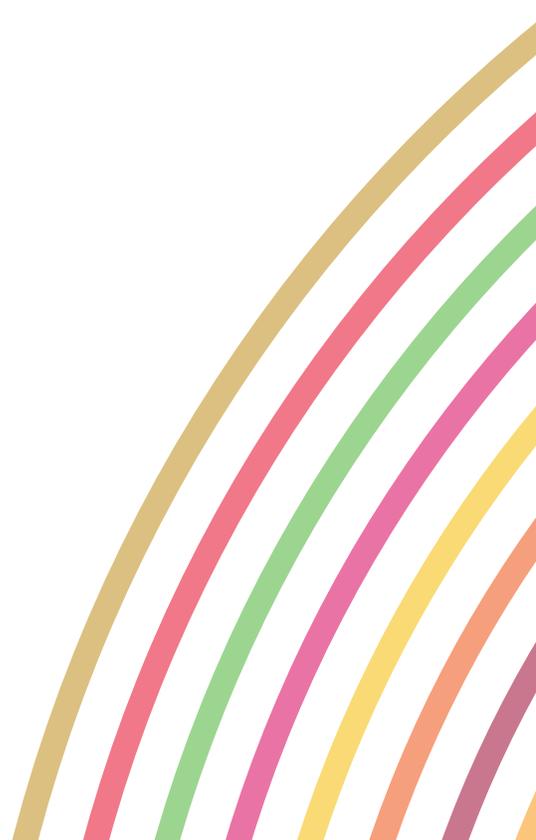
10 RECOMMENDATION

Develop and deliver inclusive leadership programmes and trainings for staff at all levels.

Effective leadership programmes can increase workplace productivity and talent retention and improve succession planning and the bottom line.[44] However, identifying who has leadership potential is often based on an image of those at the top of the organization. A recent report[45] synthesized 71 studies' testing reactions to people acting assertively. The study found that women, on average, are penalized for showing the same assertive behaviour as men, particularly verbal forms such as taking a dominant stance. Similarly, racial stereotypes can impact the perceived ability of individuals to be effective leaders. Inclusive leadership programmes and trainings that ensure diverse participation can deconstruct harmful stereotypes that hold underrepresented staff back from leadership positions and create opportunities for internal talent.[46]

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Require gender parity and participation from underrepresented groups in non-gender-specific leadership programmes and trainings.

- Encourage expanding leadership trainings to personnel at junior level (e.g. P-3/NOC)[ix] to increase their representation in the talent pipeline.

- Increase inter-agency leadership programmes in order to expand networking opportunities.

GOOD PRACTICES

The EMERGE programme

The **EMERGE – Programme for Emerging Women Leaders**[47] was co-created by 11 UN Common System entities (ILO, ITU, OCHA, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNOG, UNSSC, WHO and WIPO) to address the specific needs of high-potential mid-level female staff aiming at strengthening leadership competence and style to take on greater responsibilities. The nine-month leadership development programme blends workshops, mentoring, coaching and leadership challenges, as well as raising self-awareness. Through EMERGE, the implementing entities contribute to reaching gender parity and increasing women's empowerment at all levels in the UN system by supporting female staff in the crucial transition to senior positions.

EMERGE has the following objectives:

- Develop a deeper understanding of the interconnections between sex, gender, culture and leadership

- Reinforce and apply political acumen, negotiation and influencing skills

- Explore, establish and draw on networks and cultivate strong connections with peers from across the UN system

- Address work-related challenges affecting performance and career development.

United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC) Leadership Programmes

The **Leadership, Women and the UN programme** is open to P-4 and P-5 women across the system to further refine their leadership potential while networking and learning from each other's experiences. The course covers leadership approaches, gender and cultural dimensions of leadership and UN experiences.[48]

The **UN Leaders Programme** is designed for staff at the Director level (D1/D2) to explore dimensions of leadership with specific discussions on day-to-day work, authority and the dynamics of relational authenticity, leadership resilience and global and regional challenges.

The **Effective Change Leadership Programme** supports supervisors and managers to effectively implement organizational change through the combination of self-paced study and two-day face-to-face workshops.

The **UN Emerging Leaders Experience** is an intensive four-day programme for P-3 and P-4 staff focused on developing their leadership potential. Participants explore their own leadership strengths and weaknesses through 360° assessments, while learning about leadership skills, leading in the UN and managing negotiation through peer-to-peer exchange, role play, case studies and interactive reflection to create a rich and proactive learning environment.

[ix] NOC- National Officer, level C, which equates approximately to the P-3 level among international Professional staff.

The INSPIRE programme

The **World Food Programme (WFP)'s** Women's Leadership Development and Career (INSPIRE) programme is targeted to women from P-4 to D-1 and National Officers at all levels in the field. It is a three-day training session with one year of group coaching and peer mentoring. Since its inception in December 2013, 164 women have completed the programme.

UNAIDS leadership programme for women

This leadership programme for women has invited participants across all grades to tap into their leadership potential, gain essential knowledge on unconscious bias and learn about effective influencing strategies to reenergize and inspire women staff members towards their personal growth and career objectives. Additionally, **UNAIDS** reported that 50 per cent of its participants in the UNSSC's UN Leaders and in the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) Leadership Skills programmes were women staff at the P-5 to D-2 levels.

UNDP's Development Programme for Women – Emerging Leaders

UNDP developed a virtual development programme for women—UNDP staff at G7, NOA-NOB, P1-P2 levels who aspire to become leaders and managers. Implemented in partnership with Envisia Learning and eCornell, the programme features the latest research in leadership development, motivation and engagement, development and career management, and women in leadership roles.

11

RECOMMENDATION

Formalize succession planning to include mandatory exit interviews and handover notes for staff prior to separation.

Formal succession planning eases the transition between staff members for teams and managers. Handover notes can retain important information and accelerate a new staff member's advancement to key roles. Exit interviews play an undervalued role in understanding and improving management and organizational culture, including highlighting areas that are supportive or problematic in achieving inclusivity and equality. Mandatory exit interviews ensure that the results are reported and analysed over time to identify trends and patterns that may otherwise be difficult to recognize. Yet, exit interviews were found to be used by only 70 per cent of UN entities, and only 30 per cent of them were reportedly mandatory. Of the 40 per cent of entities with non-mandatory exit interviews, only 15 per cent were systematically completed.[49]
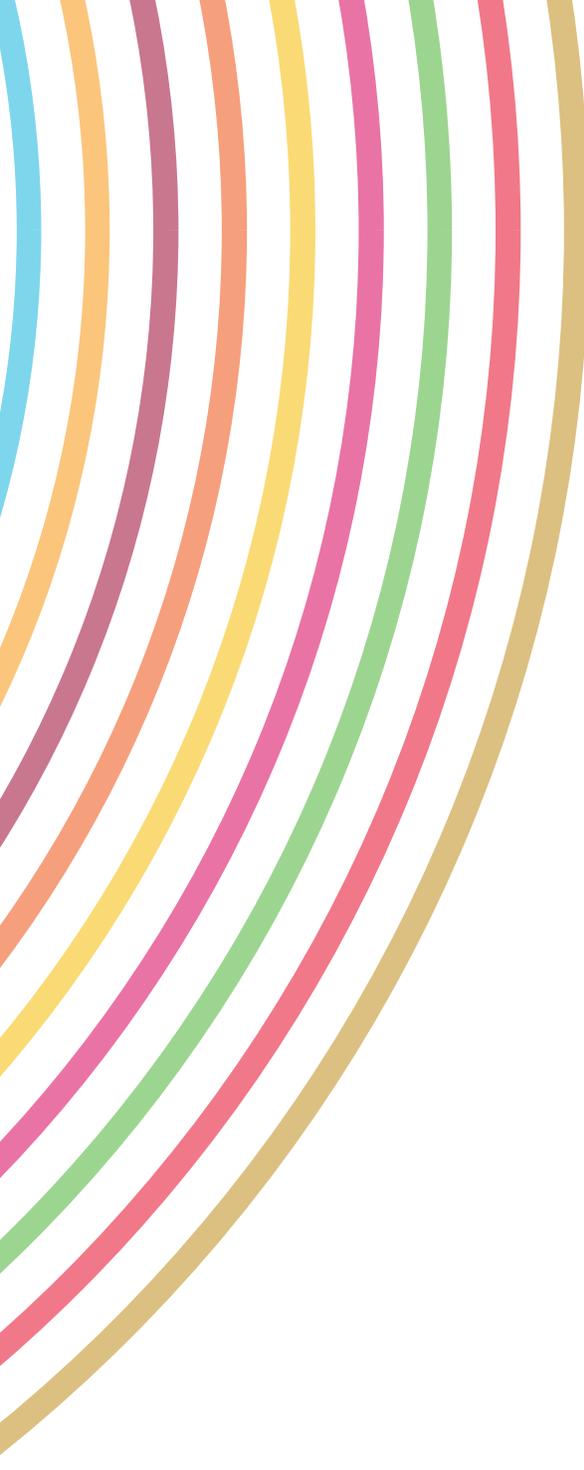
CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Conduct exit interviews for all out-going personnel, providing an in-person option as well as an online survey for collecting feedback that is anonymized for confidentiality and integrating a gender-sensitive approach.

- Introduce mechanisms to address patterns or trends that emerge from the exit interviews to help guide policy (especially around work environment, reports of bullying, harassment and/or abuse of authority).

- Systematize and encourage the use of handover notes to support staff transitions.

- Analyse and use data at the inter-agency level to explore possible separation and retention trends of the UN system.

GOOD PRACTICES

Mandatory exit interviews

After seeing a significant number of women separating from service before reaching retirement, and a growing gap between female appointment and separation, the **United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB)** called for a mandatory exit questionnaire. A modified gender-sensitive template for this is available from UN Women for entities to adapt to their own purposes.

Since 2015, the **ITC** has implemented anonymous, online mandatory exit questionnaires to better understand why staff separated from the organization and how management could improve the experience of staff members. The process is administered by the ITC Gender Focal Point (GFP). Staff have the option of requesting a follow-up exit interview with the GFP, protected by confidentiality.
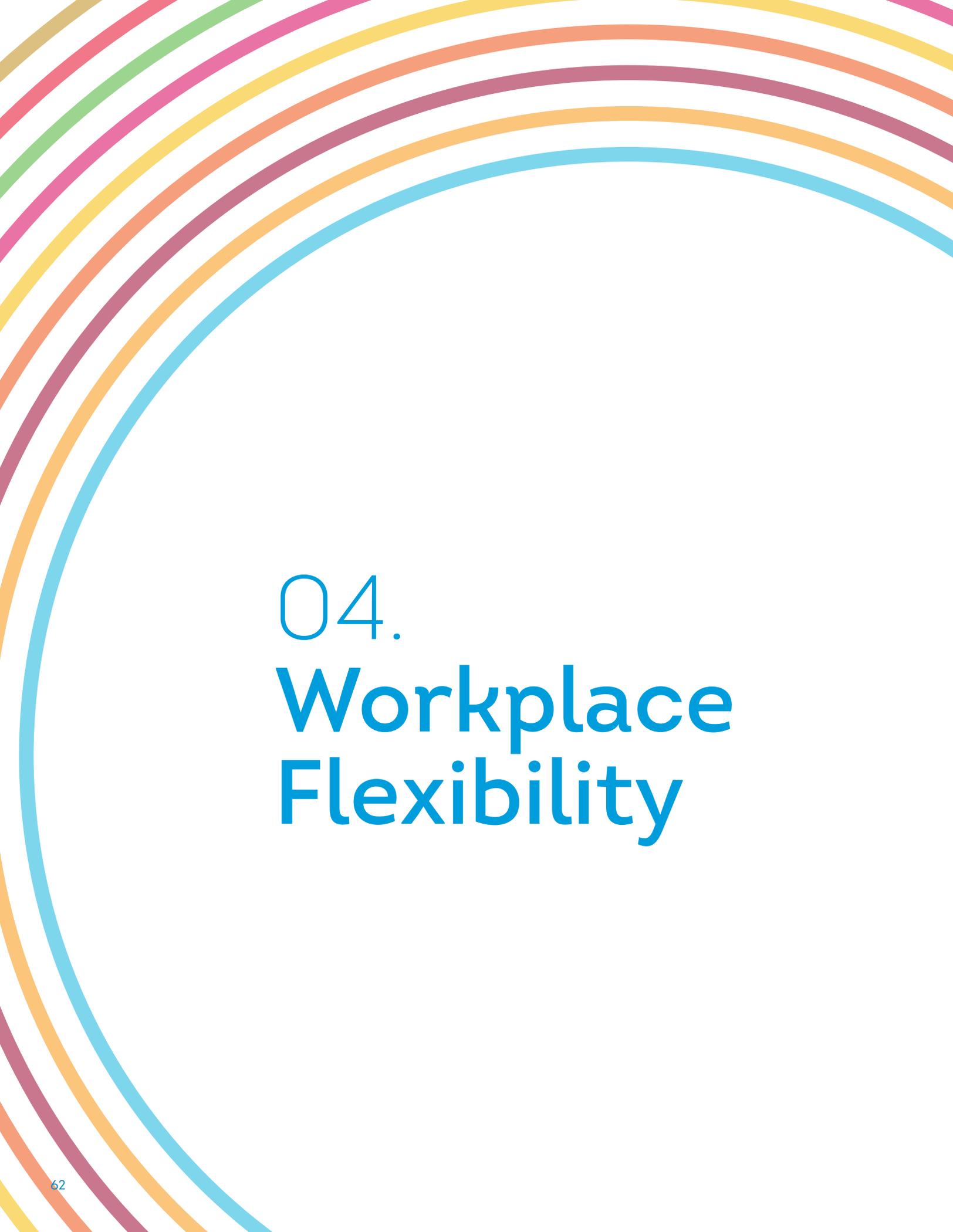
# 04.
Workplace Flexibility

Workplace flexibility is a mutually beneficial arrangement between personnel and their managers in which both parties agree on when, where and how work is executed.

When designed and implemented with consistent policies and procedures, a flexible working arrangement (FWA) can greatly benefit the workplace.[50] These benefits include:

REDUCED ABSENTEEISM AND INCREASED WELL-BEING:

FWAs reduce unscheduled absences by providing the necessary time-off for staff to care for themselves and their families. In terms of psychological and physical well-being, reported benefits include reduced stress, a greater sense of control, a pleasant work environment and the ability to better integrate a healthy lifestyle into daily routine.[51] According to two-thirds of HR professionals, the quality of employees' personal/family lives is positively affected as a result of implementing FWAs, and 91 per cent of HR professionals believe implementation of formal FWAs has a positive impact on employee morale, including job satisfaction and engagement.
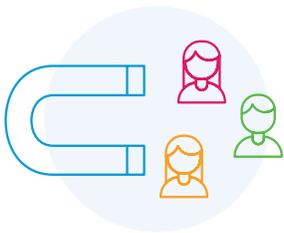
ATTRACTION AND RETENTION OF AN ENGAGED AND DIVERSE WORKFORCE:

FWAs can increase recruitment and retention, including among personnel with disabilities, personnel with dependents with disabilities and personnel who are unable to commute into the office. While the desire for flexibility has been well documented among millennials[52]—those born after 1980—it is important to note that all age groups desire and benefit from increased flexibility.[53] A study by Catalyst found that the mean age of high-potential employees who reported that FWAs were very or extremely important to them was 41 years old, an age at which it is likely that childcare and eldercare will require staff, often women, to make difficult choices between professional and personal commitments.[54]

For the UN's international workforce, these care issues—such as ailing parents or dependents—may require staff presence in a country other than their duty station. Flexibility is important to all personnel. For many women it is a key factor as they consider whether and how to juggle their career advancement with family aspirations.[55] This life stage tends to align with mid-management levels and likely contributes to the dramatic drop in female representation at senior levels.[56] A Pew Research Center study found that 50 per cent of men found it somewhat or very difficult to balance family life and work responsibilities.[57] For persons with disabilities and personnel with family and/or children with disabilities, the ability to work flexibly can be a deciding

BUSINESS CONTINUITY:

FWAs can support business continuity by allowing personnel to work remotely in certain situations that might otherwise preclude them from coming into work (e.g. transport strikes, extreme weather conditions, unforeseeable events). Additionally, such arrangements can ease the strain on personnel observing religious holidays, which may require fasting, and send a positive message of workplace accommodation for diverse religious practices.

INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY FROM A RESULTS-DRIVEN APPROACH BASED ON TRUST, EMPOWERMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY:

Both a cause and result of trust between personnel and managers, FWAs promote results-driven management in lieu of micro-management and dispel the notion that office presence is of utmost importance. Attitude, dedication and work ethic drive responsibility and productivity, regardless of physical location. Counter to common fears that staff will work less if doing so from home, a recent study by Oxford University Press reported that people working from home achieved a 13 per cent productivity improvement over their office-based counterparts.[58]

DECREASED OPERATING COSTS:

By increasing employee productivity, reducing facility costs, lowering absenteeism and reducing turnover, organizations can save on multiple fronts. An analysis of over 250 case studies found that companies reduce operating costs by more than USD 10,000 per year for every person who telecommutes half time.[59]

CURRENT FWA OPTIONS

The four most common forms of FWAs in the UN system are shown below. The various options offer a range of applications that can serve some contexts and/or entities better than others. For example, the compressed work week option, while not widely used in headquarters locations, could be more applicable for those in the field or hardship locations compared to telecommuting. However, this is not to say that the applicability of telecommuting in field locations should not also be explored to its fullest extent, particularly given its potential utility for pregnant staff who may be required to leave their current duty station months prior to delivery.

In addition to these, 100 per cent of UN organizations offer special leave without pay (SLWOP) to staff on fixed, permanent and continuous appointments and 96 per cent report offering the option to work part time, some in the form of job-sharing.[60]

01

STAGGERED WORKING HOURS

Staff members are expected to be present during a core period of the working day. The core period will be set at each duty station. Staff must complete the balance of working hours for each day before, after, or partly after the core period.

02
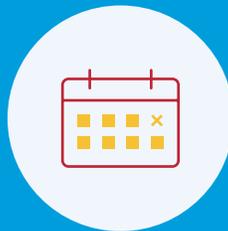
COMPRESSED WORK WEEK

All the hours that would normally have been worked during a period of 10 working days are compressed into nine working days by distributing among these days the hours that would otherwise have been worked on the tenth day. The redistribution of normal working hours allows staff members, every other week, to take off the last day of the normal work week.

03
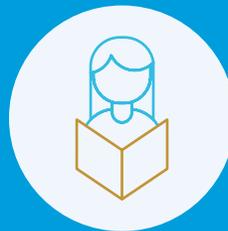
SCHEDULED BREAK FOR EXTERNAL LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Staff members wishing to attend courses relevant to their professional development at universities or other institutions of learning may request breaks of up to three hours per day for a maximum of two days per week. The hours spent away from work during a particular week must be made up during that week.

04

WORK AWAY FROM THE OFFICE (TELE-COMMUTING)

Where consistent with the nature of the work involved, staff members may spend up to two days per week working from an alternative work site, provided they have access to the necessary equipment and may always be reached by telephone or email.

Source: OHRM 2015[61]
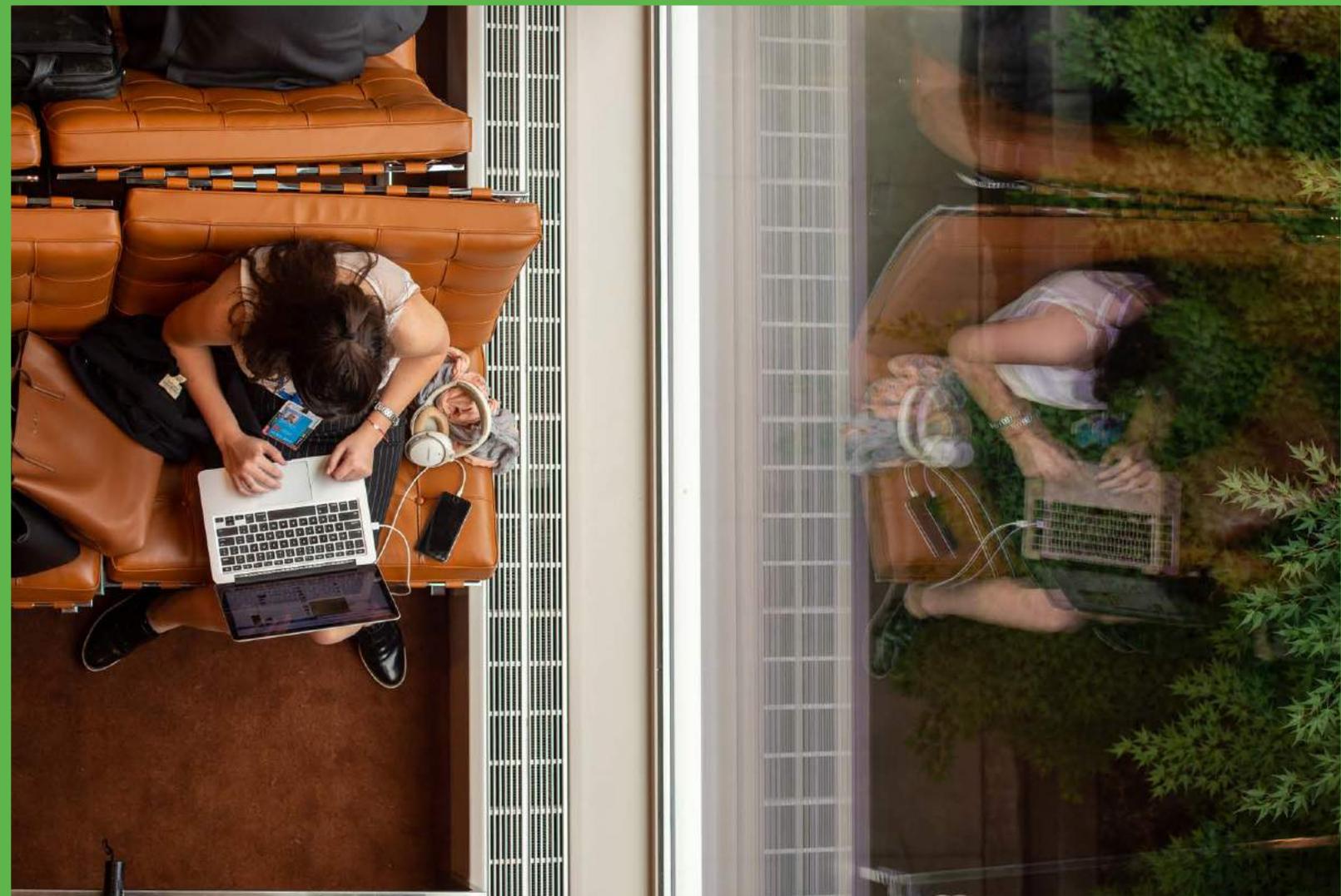
12

RECOMMENDATION

Foster a culture supportive of work-life balance and flexibility.

General Assembly resolutions[62] have requested efforts to "enhance the understanding and implementation of the principles of work-life balance and a flexible workforce across the Secretariat". The Secretary-General's Bulletin on FWAs encourages managers and staff to "rethink the manner in which the work is currently performed and how it could be done in different and better ways for all concerned by using flexible working arrangements."[63]

When shifting to a more flexible working environment, it is important to be mindful of current workplace culture. For personnel, there is a fear of how managers will perceive their performance and dedication if they are not physically present, and how this may subsequently impact their career trajectory. For managers, there is concern with how to supervise personnel working remotely and/or how outputs may be impacted. Managers play an important role in countering these fears and promoting a positive culture around FWAs. By regularly demonstrating support through communications and using flexible arrangements themselves, as well as adopting an effective management style that transcends physical presence with clear guidance on rules and expectations, managers can create a culture of acceptance and trust conducive to maximizing the utility of FWAs.

The ability to connect via videoconference, email or mobile applications ensures supervisors can effectively manage and communicate with colleagues outside the office. Modern technologies offer a variety of tools and platforms to support FWAs and virtual collaboration. In recent years, more and more enterprise applications

have migrated to web-based platforms, allowing external and secure access to applications, intranet sites and portals from anywhere. Many UN agencies have moved to cloud-based storage and allow remote access to intranets and Sharepoints necessary for work. These improvements facilitate the ability to telework not just from home in the same duty station, but from anywhere, including another country, which some UN entities such as UNDP have specifically envisaged telecommuting to encompass.

Clear parameters for FWA usage must be defined and communicated to ensure its application is done in a fair and consistent manner. Failure to do so may create unrealistic expectations from staff or managers, or result in imbalanced usage that could unfairly burden team members present in the office.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

For the organization:

- Encourage each entity to issue an internal communication stipulating that the response to requests for FWA should as a default be positive, bearing in mind the functions of the job, onsite work requirements and the prerogative of a manager to ensure coordination across team members' schedules.

- Encourage senior management at the global, regional, national and local levels vocalize support for FWAs at all stages of planning and implementation to foster their success and cultural entrenchment.

- Speak positively about FWAs as a way to be more effective and deliver better results not only as a way to balance work and life (e.g. take care of sick children).

- Ensure that there is a mechanism to gather information annually about FWA implementation. In cases where managers or personnel report challenges, HR should assist in finding solutions.

- Disseminate good practices to help guide others and showcase benefits.

- Indicate, if possible, required office presence time and/or possibilities for FWAs in vacancy announcements.

- As needed, provide laptops and associated equipment or install relevant software on home/private computers to be used by staff working remotely. This includes providing personnel with disabilities the necessary technology they require to telework, such as screen readers and voice recognition software.

For managers:

- Recognize good performance and productivity, not time spent in the office.

- Set a good example by using FWAs, when possible. Discuss possibilities using FWAs within your team so that everyone is engaged in a collective effort.

- Provide clear guidance on the rules and expectations of FWA usage, particularly regarding an output timeline. Provide feedback throughout the timeline.

- If appropriate, develop an organized office schedule or standard operating procedure (SOP) to ensure requisite coordination and communication.

For personnel:

- Be reachable and responsive when working remotely. Clear contact information should be provided for colleagues to conveniently contact the personnel working remotely as if they were working only a few desks away.

- Provide clear indications of work plans and results to the manager.

- Save work on the cloud-based system to allow for remote access, if necessary.

- Adhere to organizational guidance of safe and secure network connectivity when working remotely.

GOOD PRACTICES

Responding positively to FWA requests

The **International Trade Centre (ITC)** launched a revised work-life balance system in 2018, with a new e-system for the request, approval and monitoring of FWA options. This includes a time-bound approval process for FWAs: supporters and approvers need to respond to a FWA request within five working days. If no action is taken in this timeframe, a default positive response will be sent by the system from ITC. The ITC Executive Director also established four guiding principles for staff members and managers to follow in the use and management of FWA at ITC:

- Staff members who request FWAs will get a fair hearing before a decision is made;

- Managers will adopt a default positive stance to FWAs and support/approve requests to the maximum extent possible;

- FWAs should be tailored to the needs of staff members to the maximum extent possible; and

- Staff members and managers shall accept mutual responsibility for the efficient management and productive use of FWAs and adhere to the Work Life Balance (WLB) Code of Conduct.

Championing FWA usage

In the fall of 2018 the **United Nations Office of Geneva (UNOG)** released the video "**Flexible Working Arrangements/Réaménagement des modalités de travail**" to showcase the different FWAs being used by employees.[64]

Mandatory training for supervisors

The **UN Secretariat** has developed guidelines and conducts mandatory training of supervisors to ensure consistency in implementation.

UNDP has developed a Leader's Guide on Flexible Working Arrangements to help them understand and manage FWA more effectively, and often includes sessions on FWA management as part of manager trainings.

FWA support materials and resources

The **Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM)** has developed several support materials on FWAs for both managers and staff to ensure successful implementation. These include guidelines, worksheets, reports and statistics to assist the process of preparing, requesting and implementing FWAs for all staff and managers. Two guides are provided, one for managers on FWA implementation and another for staff on the FWA submission process.[65]

The **UN Secretariat's** HR Portal provides **Tools for Collaboration** that enable staff to access resources for supporting FWAs and virtual collaboration.[66] These web-based platforms—including enterprise social networking and collaboration, web-based document repository and messaging services—ease the use of FWAs for both staff and managers, especially for staff who opt for telecommuting.

13 RECOMMENDATION

Streamline process to request, facilitate and track FWA usage through an online enterprise resource planning/management system or other digital tools.

Submission of FWA requests through an online enterprise resource planning (ERP)/management system allows offices to efficiently track and evaluate requests and arrangements, providing useful data to support the impact FWAs have on productivity, absenteeism, retention and work-life integration. Monitoring FWAs through an ERP provides uniformity to identify trends, including the areas of under-usage, impacts of FWAs on absenteeism, retention and costs and obstacles to full implementation.

Many UN agencies currently use paper-based FWA request forms that require the supervisor's signature, and sometimes also that of the head of office. This format may deter staff and managers from formally reporting usage, since it does not track percentage of rejected requests, and can dissuade staff from requesting and managers from granting permission. It is recommended that FWA requests be streamlined by using the same format as leave requests in their ERP online system. An example workflow follows:

TEAM DISCUSSES FWA OPTIONS

- Manager provides information about FWA policies and procedures
- Staff member determines applicability and if appropriate, determines which FWA to request

STAFF MEMBER SUBMITS REQUEST IN ERP

- Manager reviews request
- Staff submits request (type of FWA, duration, purpose)

REQUEST REVIEWED AND MONITORED

- Manager approves or rejects request (with specific justification provided*)
- If approved, staff implements FWA and provides regular updates on progress to manager. Attendance focal point or HR focal point tracks use.

* If the proposal is unacceptable, manager will be supportive and suggest alternatives. If performance concerns are the basis for the denial, manager will be direct and honest with staff. Manager should encourage the employee to rework the proposal, if possible.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Establish uniformity across the organization by having requests for FWAs submitted through the organization's ERP/management system, as with other types of leave requests.

- Give clear instruction on expectations and processes using ERP systems, including messaging that its usage will help provide data on the utility of FWAs for staff, thereby strengthening its support and implementation.

- Track, monitor and effectively report on the use of FWAs with disaggregation by sex, age, locality, type of FWA, contract type, grade and national/international staff. In cases of repeated denial of requests, HR works with the manager to discuss obstacles and explore solutions.

- Quantify the return on investment that flexibility in the workplace provides through analytics, such as trends from ERP and staff surveys.

- Require managers/units/offices not using FWAs to provide justification to the next level of management and clear explanation to their staff on the reasons behind the decision.

- Monitor requests and provide annual reports on FWA usage to recognize best practices.

GOOD PRACTICES

Use of internal platforms for requesting and tracking FWA usage

The **International Maritime Organization (IMO)** has introduced an updated FWA policy that incorporates a SharePoint form and workflow for the review, approval and recording of FWA requests. The form is accessible on the IMO intranet page. Feedback thus far on using the platform has been positive. Suggested adjustments to the request form are regularly documented and then changed accordingly. These adjustments include a more comprehensive responsibility section for Line Managers and a provision to indicate that they have discussed and received approval from directors, instead of directing a workflow to the directors.

The **International Labour Organization (ILO)** has included the approval process for both regular and ad hoc teleworking in its ERP system and is able to produce data on teleworking trends, which are regularly monitored.

Use of internal platforms for requesting and tracking FWA usage

A 2017 review by the **Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM)** of FWA usage in the UN Secretariat found that 'telecommuting' is currently the most frequently used option, and its usage has more than doubled since 2015.[x] Results evidenced the broad appeal and importance of FWAs for all staff, with women comprising 58 per cent of users and men 42 per cent.

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[x] Telecommuting usage in the UN system increased from around 900 staff members in 2015 to 2,300 in 2017. See: United Nations (2018a). Reports and Statistics. HR Portal. Available at: **https://hr.un.org/page/flexible-working-arrangements/reports-and-statistics**.
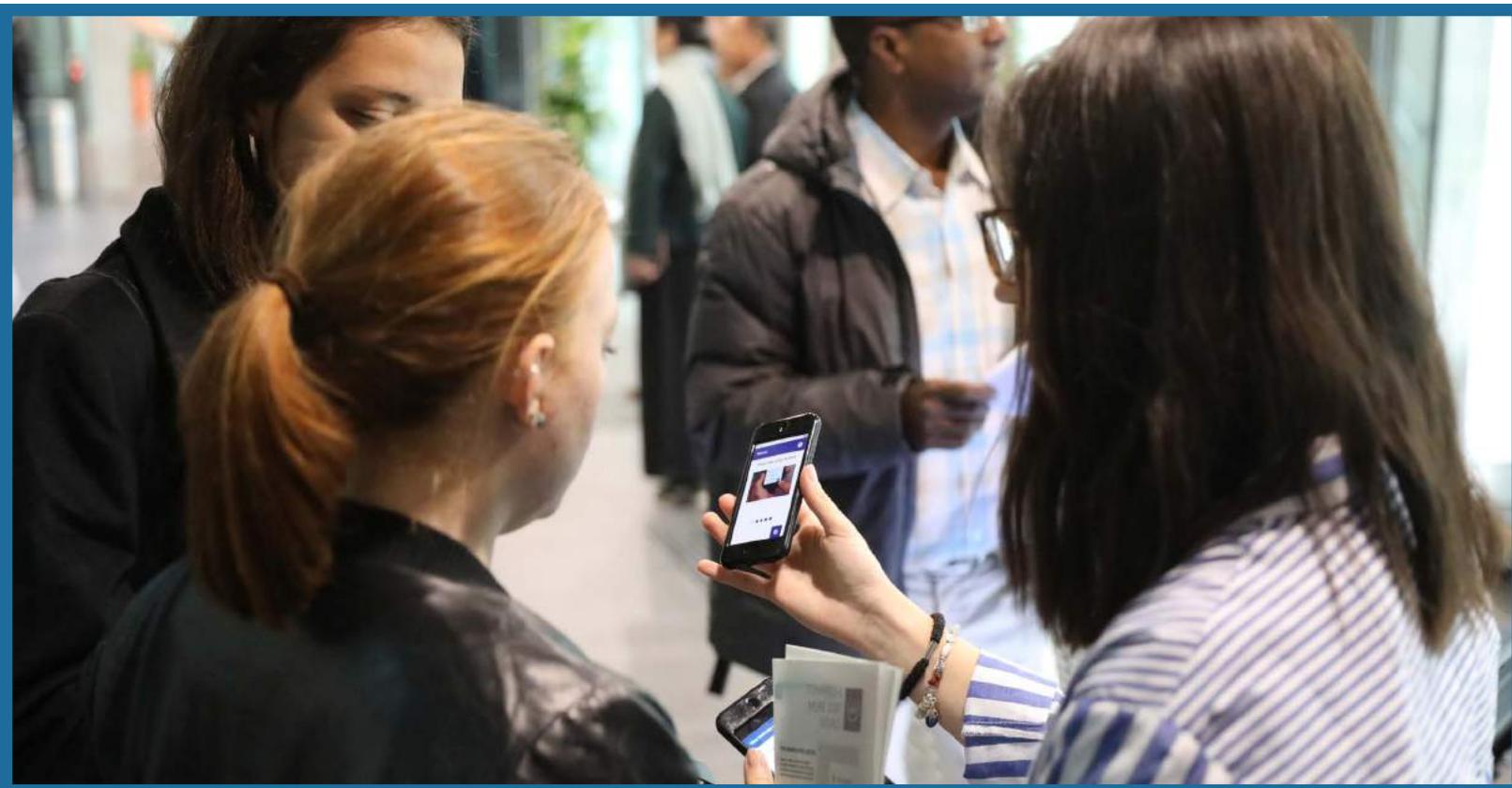
14

RECOMMENDATION

Respect core hours and encourage personnel to be offline after working hours and while on leave.

'Core hours' refers to the hours of the day when personnel are expected to be available to respond to work-related tasks and responsibilities. 'Working hours' refer to the hours of business operation for the organization. For example, the core hours established for the UN Secretariat HQ are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.,[67] while the official working hours are from 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. Personnel are expected to work the number of hours per day established under the common work week.

The 'forever on' culture, where colleagues are connected to work via laptops and smartphones, means there is less time to disconnect and reboot. For an international organization with staff frequently working across time zones, respect for working hours can be challenging, but it is nevertheless important. One UN agency's global workforce survey revealed that 52 per cent of respondents indicated that they are "regularly expected to respond to phone calls and emails outside of reasonable work hours" and 46 per cent of respondents indicated they are "able to achieve a good work-life balance".

A group of Stanford business professors has estimated that workplace stress has added between USD 125 and 190 billion per year to healthcare costs in the United States, amounting to between 5 and 8 per cent of total costs.[68] Overwork accounted for USD 48 billion of that.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Schedule periodic staff meetings, if possible, at consistent and predictable times during core working hours and on working days for staff, with teleconference possibilities.

- Be mindful when sending email communications after normal working hours and do not expect to receive a reply until the resumption of respondents' core working hours unless situations require otherwise.

- Limit phone calls after working hours to emergency situations.

- Explicitly allow flexibility for staff who have to connect to personnel in other time zones (e.g. ask/allow personnel to take meetings and calls from home if meetings are before or after the core working hours).

GOOD PRACTICES

After-hours communication delays or bans

A 2014 study by the **University of British Columbia** found that checking emails less frequently significantly lowered daily stress compared to times of unrestricted use.[69] That same year, German automaker **Daimler** implemented a 'mail on holiday' policy, which deletes emails sent to employees on vacation, notifying the sender that they can email an alternate colleague if it is an emergency or resend the email once the employee has returned to work.[70]

Others have promulgated such efforts at the national level. In France, a law went into effect in 2017 requiring companies with more than 50 employees to establish hours when staff should not send or answer emails. Notably, this law was prompted by a study linking the excessive technology use to health problems, including sleeplessness.

15

RECOMMENDATION

Offer part-time employment options.

Part-time employment, as recommended for consideration in the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity,[71] allows existing staff to adjust their work schedules to less than full-time work. While part-time employment does not constitute an FWA—because compensation and benefits packages, including health insurance and leave entitlements, are impacted accordingly—it generally provides flexibility for staff-specific circumstances.

Evidencing the utility of such arrangements for women, WIPO reported that, of the 14 per cent of staff who used part-time working arrangements in 2015, 94 per cent were women.[72] Currently, women are more likely to utilize part-time work, parental leave and other non-standard working patterns, which may have implications for career opportunities and advancement. However, this is not to say that part-time options would not benefit others as well, who would like to balance work-life issues or are not able to commit to a full-time work schedule.

It is important that workload be adjusted commensurately with part-time arrangements. Anecdotal feedback[xi] has indicated that staff are often expected to deliver full-time work output in a condensed work period, particularly those at 80 per cent.

The challenge facing employers is to develop part-time work options that do not condemn employees to low-quality jobs and leave women with limited career opportunities but rather ensure flexibility is part of the work mainstream.

[xi] Feedback from Gender Focal Points in the UN system and during the Expert Group Meeting on Enabling in Environment, November 2017.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Make provisions, where visa and other logistical considerations permit, for part-time work arrangements. Part-time work is most commonly implemented at 50 per cent or 80 per cent of time arrangements and normally approved for periods up to one year at a time. However, other arrangements that would allow for more varied applications could be explored.

- As recommended in the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity,[73] "for entities that access regular budget funds, flexibility should be given so that funds are not returned where a post is part-time rather than full-time (disincentivizing the use of part-time employment) but can be utilized in other ways."

- Explore expansion of part-time arrangements for temporary appointments and, when the work and timelines permit, present this as an option to potential consultants or pro-bono contractors in developing their contracts.

GOOD PRACTICES

Job-sharing programme

The **International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD)** developed a job-sharing programme in which two staff members at the same grade level who hold the same type of contract may perform the same functions of a position on a 50:50 basis.

Benefits for part-time staff

The **International Trade Centre (ITC)** offers 50 and 80 per cent part-time staff the benefits granted to full-time staff members, pro rata, as stipulated in ITC/AI/2018/03 and ITC/AI/2018/04, including maternity leave at 50 or 80 per cent of the salary and allowance payable to full-time staff members. Part-time staff are eligible for full medical insurance with a subsidy 50 or 80 per cent of that given to those working full-time. Since 2018, these part-time work options may also be combined with FWAs in compliance with ITC business and working hours.

05.
Family-Friendly Policies

In addition to workplace flexibility, family-friendly policies are those that further enable staff to effectively balance personal, family (i.e. having a child, caring for an ageing relative or self-care during life-changing events) and professional commitments as needed throughout the span of their career. The scope of these policies includes not only personnel with children but should be supportive of broader care issues such as elder or dependent care. Additionally, the supportive nature of these policies should not come at the expense of personnel who do not have children, elder or dependent care issues.

Such policies have been shown to be strong drivers of employee engagement and often constitute a make-or-break point in terms of retention and career progression for staff. Google found that when it increased maternity leave by 33 per cent, the rate at which mothers quit was halved.[74] Costs of employee turnover are significant for organizations, ranging from 100 per cent to 150 per cent of a person's base salary, which includes separation and replacement costs (hiring and training) as well as lost productivity costs.[75] When a person leaves an organization, their network of connections made both internally and externally is detached from the company, and knowledge gained while in the position is lost.[76]

Strong family-friendly policies are central to an organizations' competitiveness as an employer and its ability to function efficiently. Organizations that provide staff with sufficient support to balance their professional and personal lives are more likely to attract a wider range of quality candidates[xii] and have staff with higher levels of organizational commitment, job satisfaction[77] and, on average, more productive and present work practices.[xiii]

[xii] "Generation X and Y represent 45% of the current workforce who are demanding more flexibility to manage personal and professional goals. Applicants are asking companies about workplace flexibility options before accepting a position." The Ohio State University. Undated. Flexible Work Arrangement Toolkit. p. 2. Available at: **https://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/centers/cwf/individuals/pdf/FlexibilityToolkitFinal.pdf**.

[xiii] "Recent research findings support a strong business case for the adoption of FWA policies as such policies lead to higher productivity, increased job satisfaction, greater organization commitment, higher financial performance, and better labor retention." Stroup, C. and J. Yoon (2016). What Impact Do Flexible Working Arrangements (FWA) Have on Employee Performance and Overall Business Results? Cornell University ILR School. Available at: **https://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google. com/&httpsredir=1&article=1121&context=student**.

16 RECOMMENDATION

Aim to standardize parental leave to afford all parents, gestational and non-gestational, an equal post-birth paid leave entitlement of six months.

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Inclusive parental leave is not only a women's issue. Standardized parental leave, as indicated in the SG's System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity,[78] is a key component of creating a more enabling environment. Fathers increasingly expect employers to provide paid paternity leave, with one study[79] reporting that 89 per cent of men stated this was important. In July 2015, UN-GLOBE —the inter-agency staff group advancing equality and non-discrimination of LGBTIQ+ UN staff—released "Guiding Principles and Proposals on an Inclusive Parental Leave Policy" and has made advocating for equitable parental leave one of its priorities. Millennials—78 per cent of whom are part of a two-career couple—will make up 75 per cent of the US workforce in the next 10 years, outgrowing traditional policies perpetuating a primary-caregiver model.[80]

Strengthened parental leave also serves as a key measure to accelerate gender parity progress. Allowing and encouraging non-gestational parents to share the responsibilities of parenthood in a more present and consistent way helps mitigate the 'motherhood penalty', where women's career advancement is diminished by having children.

The overall trend of the representation of women in the UN system has shown sharp declines between the P-2 and P-3 levels and the P-4 and P-5 levels, resulting in women comprising 37.5 per cent of staff at the P-5 level.[xiv] This potentially correlates with women in their childbearing years and during the time period they are likely to face eldercare issues. More systematic implementation and analysis of exit surveys would help identify whether women are leaving for care issues (see Recommendation

11 in section on Talent Management). An inclusive policy that allows additional leave may increase the retention and career advancement of women who might otherwise leave to care for their families or in search of workplaces with more supportive policies. Standardized leave also neutralizes any stigma and assuages potential managerial fears of hiring women in their childbearing years as all staff in need will have equal access to extended leave.

Establishing a singular parental leave policy of equal length, provided that specific pre- and post-delivery needs[xv] of the gestational parent are covered additionally (including insurance and leave), would standardize the varied maternity, paternity, adoption and surrogacy policies currently in place throughout the UN system. By providing a parental leave option that is inclusive of mothers and fathers, biological, adoptive, foster parents and same-sex partners the UN would support all new parents in their decision to start a family.

A gender-neutral, singular parental leave breaks the social norm of the mother as the default 'primary caregiver' that is perpetuated by women receiving more leave than men. It gives non-gestational parents equal access to this role and encourages more equitable parenting. It has been shown that fathers who take paternity leave are "more likely to be involved in childcare-related activities than fathers who do not do so. Further evidence suggests that children with fathers who are 'more involved' perform better during their early years than peers with less involved fathers."[81] It is important to note that for singular leave to function as such, leave allowances cannot be transferrable between parents and will not be reimbursed for monetary value if unused.

The purpose of parental leave is not solely to recover from the process of gestation and delivery. It is a critical time for parents to bond with and nurture their child and adjust to their

new roles and responsibilities. Sufficient time for bonding is particularly important for adoptive and foster parents as it may take longer. This includes not just newborn adoptees but also children adopted or fostered at an older age who may need additional time to acclimate and form healthy attachments to caregivers. In most UN organizations, however, adoptive parents currently receive the shortest parental leave, and Temporary Appointments are not typically entitled to Adoption or Surrogacy Leave. All parents, not only gestational mothers, benefit from sufficient time to build family dynamics that will ease caregiving burdens further along the way.

Language is an important dimension of modernizing the UN's parental leave policies. A singular 'parental' leave recognizes the equal and shared role parents want to and should play in their children's lives and, importantly, it does not make assumptions on family structure. Transmen bearing children is a possible situation and therefore birth-related language should be non-binary for true inclusion. Current nomenclature has at times forced HR across the UN to apply 'adoption' leave to parents through surrogacy and 'paternity' leave to the non-gestational mother in a same-sex, dual-career couple where the other parent has taken maternity leave. Furthermore, such specific reference and the application of parental leave to same-sex couples and single parents of all genders recognizes the diverse ways families are formed and promotes an inclusive culture.

To put these efforts in a global context, several countries have adopted extensive and flexible parental leave standards. New Zealand recently extended its parental leave entitlement from 18 to 22 weeks in July 2018, and has passed legislation to further extend it to 26 weeks as of 1 July, 2020. Additionally, gender-neutral language regarding the various forms of leave was adopted.[82]

Finland offers 158 parental leave days in addition to the 105 weekdays maternity leave and 54 weekdays paternity leave. Parental leave can be used either by one parent or shared between them.[83] In Sweden, parents are entitled to 480 days of paid parental leave at 80 per cent of their normal pay on top of 18 weeks for mothers and 90 days for fathers when a child is born or adopted, and an additional monthly child allowance is provided until a child reaches the age of 16.[84]

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Develop a proposal for implementing a standardized paid parental leave policy of six months, including cost estimates, funding proposals, risks if not executed and potential benefits to increasing retention and improving diversity. Inter-agency knowledge-sharing and joint advocacy are recommended to strengthen proposals for change.

- A system-wide review of parental leave entitlements by the International Civil Service Commission may be considered to facilitate consistency in application.

- In the meantime, consider implementing the following: (1) adding two months of special leave with full pay to the maternity leave for women in hardship duty stations, which would help address situations when airlines have restrictions on travel for pregnant women, and (2) establishing the default response to requests to use annual leave right before or after the maternity leave, telecommuting, or part-time work is positive. A negative response is to be justified.

- Ensure senior leaders express support for non-discriminatory parental leave policies and act as role models by taking their full parental leave: When those in senior and executive leadership roles take parental leave, it sends a positive message of the importance of work-life balance and sets the tone for policy change by encouraging others to do the same without fear of retaliation or stigma.[85]

- Revise policies as appropriate to indicate that "parental leave" applies to adoption, surrogacy and emergency or foster care and recognize such parents' equal need to bond with their children.

- Eliminate 'primary caregiver' language, which reflects the assumption that families will have one main caregiver supported by a partner with few or no caregiving responsibilities. Striking this language from a policy sends a clear message supportive of parenting.

- Remove requirements for service minimums to be eligible for parental leave.

GOOD PRACTICES

Revised parental leave policies

The **United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)** and the **World Health Organization (WHO)** were the first entities to augment their maternity leaves, citing a need to align these with their recommendation on exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of a child's life. In addition, in January 2018, UNICEF announced its extension of leave for non-gestational parents (fathers, adoptive parents and parents through surrogacy) to four months.

UNAIDS, the **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** and the **World Food Programme (WFP)** have also supplemented the standard 16 weeks of maternity leave with 8 weeks of special leave with pay, to bring it to six months. In December 2017, WFP extended its leave entitlement for non-birth parents to 10 weeks and extended maternity leave to its consultants and short-term staff. In May 2018, UNAIDS announced in its Gender Action Plan 2018-2023 that "the introduction of a single parental leave policy will be pursued to apply equally to all staff, irrespective of gender identity and mode of becoming a parent, which additionally provides pre- and post-delivery leave for the birth parent".[86]

Variances in the governance structures of different entity types will mean the path to implementing this recommendation will vary, but there are commonalities in those that have led the way that can help guide this process for all. Executive leadership's support and championing of the issue, alongside advocacy from staff groups such as UN-GLOBE and UN Feminist Network, have played a critical role in each of the cases where parental leave has been extended.

As members of a UN Common System, there is a collective responsibility for entities to uphold the recommendations emanating from its authoritative bodies on children and health. Therefore, there is a reputational risk for all, as continued misalignment of internal policies and external recommendations undermines the UN's role as a standard-setter.

Enhancement of adoption and surrogacy leave policies

In January 2018, **UNHCR** enhanced the Administrative Instruction on Parental Leave by introducing eight weeks of Special Leave With Full Pay (SLWFP), which will be granted upon request immediately upon exhaustion of 16 weeks of Maternity and 10 weeks of Adoption and Surrogacy Leave. In addition, the possibility of reduced working hours at 75 per cent (while being remunerated at 100 per cent) has been extended to Adoption and Surrogacy Leave until the child is one year old, or from the date of the child's arrival in the staff member's home.

RECOMMENDATION 17

Explore sustainable funding sources to provide adequate resources for hiring replacement personnel for backstopping parental leaves and other extended staff leave periods, and provide strengthened guidance on timelines for handover and training for reintegration.

Although several entities have policies in place indicating that temporary appointments are to be used to backstop maternity leaves,[xvi] many of these policies fail to indicate either sustainable budgetary resources to make this implementable or specific timelines to facilitate this in an efficient manner. When funds are not secured to ensure replacement coverage of staff going on leave, effective implementation of parental leaves is impaired and there is a deterrent for hiring managers to take on staff in their childbearing years—particularly women, who are currently afforded the most leave.

Further, lack of replacement coverage may cause resentment among colleagues who are being asked to absorb the workload of the absent staff members. In cases where multiple staff may be on leave at the same time, the loss of human resources could debilitate small departments and units. For extended leaves to achieve maximum benefit and minimum disruption for staff taking the leave and managers and teams releasing them, allocated resources for a temporary replacement and handover guidance should be in place.

[xvi] Examples include ST/AI/2010/4/Rev.1, para 2.2c and UNDP TA Guidelines, para 1.4 b.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Consider establishing a reserve fund—sometimes referred to as a 'corporate replacement fund' or 'general temporary assistance fund'—preferably sustainably sourced as a percentage of staff costs. Alternatively, funding can come from the operating budget of the department with the staff member on leave, either as the first means of funding with the reserve acting as a backup or vice versa. The danger with using operating budgets is that this exacerbates potential manager concerns over hiring staff in their childbearing years unless done systematically across the organization.

- Ensure policies are in place that specify when the use of a replacement ends, as well as supportive measures to ease handover to temporary support and reintegration of staff on leave. Such measures should include the following:

  - Parental leave should be requested at least 10 weeks before delivery, or at the earliest possible time, so the organization can begin coverage and handover procedures. Parental leave policies should be considered with respect to a more flexible telecommuting policy and options for part-time working arrangements following the parental leave period, which are especially important for single parents.

  - The temporary cover should start before the parental leave starts, if possible, and continue for a few weeks after it finishes to ensure smooth handover.

  - Temporary covers should be hired for extended leaves preferably using either the temporary appointment modality, but on an expedited basis, to ensure timely placement (duration of 'extended', such as 2+ months, to be determined); or as a detail/stretch assignment opportunity for internal staff, thereby offering an opportunity for career development.

  - Training should be offered, when needed, on how to best maximize parental leave benefits and train managers on the details and expectations of the benefits and policy offerings.

  - Family Focal Points should be designated in HR who can help guide staff and managers through the process. Consider creating a dedicated web page for new parents which includes information on relevant policies, contact information on Focal Points, experiences of other parents, and other relevant information.

GOOD PRACTICES

Creating a reserve fund

Replacement funds, also referred to as corporate replacement funds, could be reserved at a percentage of staff costs. The **World Food Programme (WFP)** builds it in as a percentage of staff costs. The new compensation package for international Professional staff members, and the savings made as a result, enabled the **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** to enhance its parental leave policy.

The **International Maritime Organization (IMO)** has created a temporary employee budget line to cater to extended periods of absence of a staff member. A provision was made under the Termination and Benefit Fund to backstop staff on extended sick leave periods. The first three months of absence are provisioned for within the staff costs budget that is specifically allocated for temporary resources. Periods extending beyond three months are provisioned from a separate fund that has been proportionately set based on historical trends of long-term staff absences.

Transition guidance

In April 2017, The **United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG)** released transition/handover guidance for managers on facilitating the reintegration of staff following maternity leave. This follows feedback from staff members that their return to work has not always been well managed. A number of measures covering pre- and post-parental leave are provided (see next page).

UNOG [PARENTAL] LEAVE: ENSURING BUSINESS CONTINUITY AND THE REINTEGRATION OF [PARENTS] INTO THE WORKPLACE*

Prior to departure on [parental] leave

01 At the latest, one month before the start of the [parental] leave, the supervisor and the staff member should have a meeting to discuss the staff member's current functions, responsibilities and ongoing projects and the measures that the supervisor will be putting in place to ensure the continuity of work during [their] absence. If the staff member's tasks are to be assigned to one staff member or divided among several, this should be clearly outlined for the purposes of ensuring a smooth transition.

02 The supervisor is invited to outline in writing the measures that will be put in place during the staff member's absence with a clear indication of who will be responsible for what tasks. Any transfer of supervisory functions should also be clarified.

03 The staff member is invited to provide [their] supervisor with a hand-over note that can be shared with the staff who will be assuming [their] functions during [their] absence on [parental] leave. [The staff member] is also encouraged to inform [their] regular interlocutors (clients, counterparts, etc.) of the dates of [their] absence and name(s) of colleague(s) who can be contacted in [their] absence to ensure continuity of service.

04 The supervisor and the staff member are invited to discuss the possibility of keeping the staff member in copy in important email exchanges relating to [their] current functions, responsibilities and ongoing projects during the [parental] leave.

05 The supervisor is invited to inform all relevant staff in the office of the measures put in place, including any modification of reporting lines and relevant dates.

* Note: Language adjusted to be gender-neutral and inclusive of all parental leave, with changed text indicated by brackets.

Upon return from [parental] leave

06 The supervisor is responsible for facilitating the full reintegration of the staff member into the workplace upon [their] return.

07 Relevant staff in the office should be informed in advance of the staff member's return and the supervisor should make all necessary arrangements to facilitate the resumption of the staff member's regular functions, including among staff that [the staff member] supervises. The supervisor is invited to involve other team members in facilitating the staff member's return from [parental] leave.

08 Immediately after the staff member's return, the supervisor is invited to meet with the staff member and inform [the staff member] of any changes to the structure of the office, business processes, reporting lines or in [their] functions and responsibilities.

09 Subject to the exigencies of service, the supervisor is invited to discuss the possibility of flexible working arrangements with the staff member and to support any such request.

10 Should the staff member wish to breastfeed, the supervisor should support [their] request to identify a daily time as per the provisions of ST/SGB/2003/14 for the purpose of breastfeeding or expressing milk. The timing of the daily absences is set by the needs of the staff member in consultation with the supervisor to achieve the optimal balance with the needs of the service.

11 Supervisors shall ensure that the staff member maintains as much as possible of [their] previous portfolio to facilitate the smooth transition back to work.

12 Supervisors should familiarize themselves with the relevant policies and may seek guidance from HRMS on any related matters.

ESTONIA

Top photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown, Bottom left photo: UN/Manuel Elias, Bottom right photo: UN/Laura Jarriel   91

18 RECOMMENDATION

Consider providing parental leave to personnel on select types of long-term consultancy contracts.

Consultants are forming an increasing proportion of UN personnel.[87] Providing more security and benefits to this growing constituency can increase organizational efficiency and efficacy. Increasing equality between staff and non-staff personnel will contribute to a more harmonious and equitable workplace.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Provide clear criteria on the consultants who would be eligible for such benefits—e.g. duration of contract, international/national. If resources are limited, a phased approach could be implemented.

- In order to make a case for extending parental leave benefits to consultants, consider developing a proposal reviewing the importance of consultants to the organization's workforce.

GOOD PRACTICES

Extending parental leave to local hires

The "**Framework for Individual Service Agreement (ISA)"** of the **United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)** states that maternity leave of up to 16 weeks may be granted, subject to budget limitations, to locally recruited consultants (regular ISA holders for a continuous period of 12 months or longer) and "ad hoc workers who have completed 12 months or more of full time service". Additionally, regular ISA holders may be granted paternity leave for a maximum period of four weeks within the first year following the birth of the child.

The **United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)** has made maternity, paternity and adoption leaves available to personnel on the Individual Contractor Agreement (ICA) modality, with benefits equivalent to those offered to staff.

Expanding medical insurance coverage

The **World Food Programme (WFP)** recently announced an improved medical insurance plan for short-term staff and consultants. The plan includes coverage towards pregnancy-related medical expenses and delivery and 16 weeks of paid compensation for pregnancy. The Medical Insurance/Coverage Plan for Supernumeraries (MCS) benefit related to pregnancy includes the following:

- A total period of 16 weeks (80 working days) of paid compensation as long as the expected date of delivery (EDD) is within the contract duration. This period can commence six weeks prior to the EDD, based on the medical certificate. The post-delivery confinement period shall be for a minimum of 10 weeks.

- Enhanced coverage that includes medical expenses related to pregnancy reimbursable at 80 per cent. Expenses for delivery are covered with a limit of USD 10,000 and include care for the newborn. In case of any complications during delivery (including C-section), the expenses are considered in-patient care (i.e., the limit of USD 10,000 will not apply).

19

RECOMMENDATION

Enhance parental leave policies by addressing circumstances that may impact the utility and/or duration of leave and allowing parents to get a lien on their post when applying for special leave without pay.

Unforeseen circumstances that are not accounted for in parental leave policies have led to an unfortunate diminishment of leave entitlements. Even foreseen situations, such as the birth of multiple infants or children with disabilities, are often not accompanied by commensurate adaptations that would allow parents with greater demands more time for recovery, adjustment and bonding. This also holds true for the subsequent recommendation on breastfeeding/bottle-feeding policies. With more comprehensive and flexible policies, these circumstances can be handled effectively and uniformly, preventing unnecessary confusion and complications.

Offering job security and flexibility post-parental leave has been shown to increase staff loyalty and retention.[88] Under current circumstances, it is often women who are faced with the choice of returning to work or caring full-time for their children in the first year. Therefore, a policy providing job security to those requiring special leave without pay (SLWOP) will prevent them from having to make this difficult choice between personal and professional commitments and can positively impact gender imbalances and retention.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Include a provision in parental leave policies to allow parents to have a lien on their post when requesting SLWOP following their parental leave for up to 12 months.

- Consider other arrangements for enhancing the flexibility of parental leave (e.g. doubling the period of parental leave at half pay and pro-rated benefits) and extending leave for single parents.

- Consider providing additional leave in the case of multiple infants to accommodate increased demands and recovery needed.

- Stipulations for the following circumstances into parental leave policies would help maximize the amount of time granted. These may require detailed analysis of cost implications and may be implemented as a "special measure" rather than a "benefit and entitlement":

  - If babies are overdue, leave should be extended to make up for this time. Alternatively, this measure would not be needed if parental leave policies removed the requirement for the gestational parent to start their leave two weeks from their estimated due date, often unnecessarily diminishing their time with their child post-delivery. Gestational parents should be allowed, with clearance from their doctor, to work for any period of time that they are able and willing up until the birth of the child.

  - In cases where the commencement of parental leave for gestational parents must begin prior to the estimated due date, the pre-delivery period should not be deducted from the standardized parental leave. This should include cases where a gestational parent's assignment is in a duty station that does not have adequate medical facilities (which could include "family duty stations"), and therefore they must travel to their home country or another duty station to deliver. Currently

in such cases, due to travel restrictions preventing pregnant women from traveling six weeks before their due date, they must commence their parental leave months before delivery, significantly shortening the amount of leave spent with their child.

  - All post-delivery hospital stays, for births with and without complications, should not be counted towards the standardized parental leave.

  - If babies are born prematurely or have complications at birth requiring extended stays in the hospital post-birth, leave should be extended from the period the child is released from the hospital.

  - Any period of sick leave due to illness or complications arising out of pregnancy occurring four weeks or more before the pre-birth leave should not have an impact on the duration of maternity leave. In accordance with UN medical rules, certified sick leave cannot be approved in the six weeks prior to the estimated due date for staff cleared to work up to two weeks before the delivery date. Therefore, staff are required to either use their annual leave or, if deemed unfit to work by the UN Medical Services, will be required to commence their leave immediately.[89]

  - Consider administering leave as individual working days rather than a continuous period. Alternatively, this could be implemented by not counting official holidays that fall within this period towards parental leave, as leave should not be taken for two simultaneous purposes.

  - In the unfortunate event of an adoption 'disruption', the leave taken while parenting the child will remain as adoption leave without impinging on the adoption leave entitlement when entering into a new adoption.

  - In the unfortunate event of a child dying during or shortly after birth, the staff member should be entitled to the full duration of their parental leave to assist with emotional and medical recovery.

GOOD PRACTICES

Special leave with lien

The **UNDP**'s Special Leave Policy provides that "special leave with full pay or partial pay is granted with a specific lien on the post the staff member held prior to going on special leave". A locally recruited staff member is normally granted Special leave against a specific post, usually the post he/she held prior to going on Special leave, for a period up to one year. A lien against a specific post can be exceptionally extended for a maximum period of two years subject to approval of the Resident Representative or the Director of the Unit. For internationally recruited staff members holding a Permanent Appointment (PA), Continuous Appointment (CA) or Fixed-Term Appointment (FTA), a special leave of less than six months will normally be granted against a specific post.

The **International Maritime Organization (IMO)** offers provision under its Staff Mobility Programme for periods of up to two years of absence or SLWOP and is accompanied with lien.

Flexible paternity leave

The **IOM** allows paternity leave to be taken at any time within the first year from the birth. The leave may be taken in one continuous period or in multiple periods. Leave is extended to an additional four weeks, from 16 to 20 weeks total, in the case of an exceptional circumstance such as disability, injury or illness of the child.

Additional leave for multiple births

The **International Labour Organization (ILO)** Staff Rules and Regulations (January 2018) stipulate an additional two weeks of maternity leave for twins and an additional four for triplets or more (article 8.7, para. 1a). The **International Organization for Migration (IOM)** extends maternity leave to an additional four weeks, from 16 to 20 weeks total, in the case of multiple births.

20 RECOMMENDATION

Ensure a breastfeeding/bottle-feeding policy is in place that allows adequate time off for breastfeeding/bottle-feeding, and designates a lactation space.

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While most UN entities have breastfeeding/bottle-feeding policies in place, a review of UN System-wide policies[xvii] found that three entities provided no time off for breastfeeding/bottle-feeding and four others reported offering less than two hours per day. Another reported a lack of onsite designated space for breastfeeding and only five entities have included provision for additional time off for multiple infants in recognition of the increased time demands.

Further, it should be noted that some parents using adoption and surrogacy induce lactation through hormonal therapy, despite not having gestated their children. Additionally, while there is a biological necessity to provide breaks from work for lactating parents to sustain breastmilk production, consider expanding policies to ensure they do not stigmatize or disadvantage those unable to, or who do not wish to breastfeed. Provide parents an equal opportunity to nourish and bond with their infants through alternative means, such as bottle-feeding formula or expressed/purchased/donated breast milk. This would include extending the policy to all parents, not just lactating mothers, and using inclusive terminology such as "breastfeed/bottle-feed".

[xvii] In 2016, UN Women surveyed the 35 United Nations system entities on their gender parity-related policies and practices and received 27 responses.

Disconcertingly, no policy specifies how workload should adjust commensurately to accommodate this time off. Feedback from UN system Gender Focal Points and Focal Points for Women indicates that women are often still expected to deliver 100 per cent of their work in 80 per cent of the time, placing an undue burden on mothers transitioning back into the workplace.

The benefits of supportive breastfeeding/bottle-feeding policies and practices include:

PRODUCTIVITY:
Employees who breastfeed register fewer absences and instances of tardiness (compared to mothers who do not breastfeed) because their infants tend to be more resistant to sickness.[90]
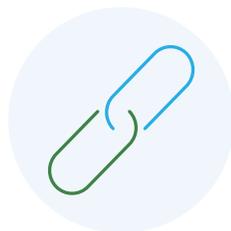
ORGANIZATIONAL LOYALTY:
When employees are supported, specifically with family and health, by their organization, they often feel increased loyalty to the organization.[91]

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION:
Organizations with effective breastfeeding/bottle-feeding programmes show higher retention rates of female employees: 94.2 per cent compared to the national average of 59 per cent.[92]

JOB SATISFACTION:
Effective programmes demonstrate support for employees and their health and increase employees' workplace satisfaction and morale.[93]

BREASTFEEDING/LACTATION SPACE GUIDANCE

The space allocated should:

- have a door that can be locked from the inside with a place to sit and a flat surface, other than the floor, to place the breast pump and other supplies

- have good lighting, a comfortable temperature and proper ventilation

- be clean and provided with cleaning wipes and paper towels

- have an electrical outlet

- be accessible to persons with disabilities

- NOT be a bathroom

Ideally the space would also have:

- a sink with running hot and cold water, as well as soap

- a refrigerator solely for storing breastmilk

- a microwave for sterilization of breast pump parts

- a comfortable chair, table, clock and mirror

- an easy-to-clean floor

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Consider expanding breastfeeding/bottle-feeding policies to be inclusive of all parents wishing to feed their infants through whatever means they choose.

- Consider adopting breastfeeding/bottle-feeding policies that allow time off, preferably at least two hours per day, for breastfeeding and expressing milk.

- Include additional time off for multiple infants in breastfeeding policies.

- Designate a breastfeeding/lactation space that complies with the suggested minimum conditions indicated on the previous page. If space is limited—or the size and/or current demographics of personnel do not necessitate a permanent breastfeeding/lactation space—a plan should be in place for what space could provide these conditions when the need arises. The plan could be to convert an existing space on a temporary basis, or the installation of a stand-alone temporary structure.[xviii]

- Stipulate supportive measures in travel policies to facilitate staff travel while breastfeeding/bottle-feeding and caring for infants.

GOOD PRACTICES

Providing a suitable lactation room

While identification of a suitable lactation space should be mandatory in all UN premises, consideration should also be given of the overall setting and additional challenges that it may pose. For example, given the extensive building complex of the Palais des Nations, **UNOG** decided in

January 2018 to add an additional breastfeeding room for staff who had problems walking a long way to the statutory room of the building. The additional room was built by UN Geneva staff. Plans to augment facilities in a new building to be constructed in the coming years are under way.

Time off for breastfeeding/bottle-feeding

UN Women provides a checklist on how to best coordinate appropriate arrangements for staff members who breastfeed. The recommendations state that such staff members should:

- Discuss breastfeeding/bottle-feeding arrangements with their supervisor

- Send a formal request in writing to their supervisor, copying HR

- With an agreement in place, make appropriate arrangements for breastfeeding/bottle-feeding

- Further consider additional FWA arrangements to accommodate their breastfeeding/bottle-feeding.

Additionally, based on the global health recommendations set out by the **World Health Organization (WHO)** and **UNICEF**, the policy establishes the following working arrangements for staff members who breastfeed:

- For infants under six months old: Approx. 30 minutes (twice daily) to breastfeed the child/express milk plus reasonable commuting time allowance of approx. 60 minutes, twice per day

- For infants from six months to two years old: Approx. 30 minutes (twice daily) to breastfeed the child/express milk and no commuting time allowance.

[xviii] See, for example, **https://www.mamava.com/**.

21 RECOMMENDATION

Expand childcare and education grant options to better accommodate personnel with children under the age of 5 and create financial support for staff caring for an ageing relative or dependent with a disability.

Reducing the financial burden of childcare and maximizing the time parents are able to spend with their children can decrease stress, increase job satisfaction and retain staff with children. Currently, per International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) guidelines,[xix] staff cannot avail themselves of the education grant benefit until children enter formal schooling after 5 years of age. The exorbitant costs of childcare in some of the most populous UN duty stations (New York, Geneva, Vienna, Rome) place a significant financial burden on parents.

Given that tertiary education typically comprises the most expensive period covered by the current education grant scheme, it is not recommended this change in starting age be accompanied by a requirement to use the grant continuously. Therefore, the updated policy would allow parents to choose to use their entitlement to cover infant/ toddler day care, opt out for four years during primary or secondary education— for which the child would be eligible for public education—and then resume their entitlement to cover the four years of tertiary education.

Alternatively, or in addition to, organizations may consider offering to reimburse a percentage of day-care costs. This reimbursement mechanism could also be broadened to cover associated costs for caring for ageing parents and/or dependents with disabilities.

[xix] "As regards the minimum age, in most organizations the grant was payable if the child were 5 years of age or older at the beginning of the school year or if the child turned 5 within three months of the beginning of the school year." United Nations. 2010. *Report of the International Civil Service Commission for the Year* (2010). A/65/30, para. 52.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- When feasible, ensure on-site crèche (nursery or infant day care) availability for children or a percentage reimbursement of costs for crèche where there is no facility. While highly desirable, the reality is that many duty stations cannot readily and comprehensively offer such a resource to their staff. If a crèche is available at HQ but not at the field duty stations of an organization, this could serve as a deterrent for working parents to apply for non-HQ appointments and cause field staff to feel there is a double standard in the benefits afforded to them and HQ staff. Therefore, reimbursement of childcare costs could be a more equitable implementation of the above recommendation and allow maximum flexibility for staff to elect their preferred form of childcare.

- Pool resources between UN entities in larger duty stations to create a subsidized day-care facility. Other non-UN international organizations and donor entities could be invited to participate.

- Negotiate expanding the flexibility in the start time of the education grant to support staff with children under 5 years old, without requiring continuous usage of the grant. Such flexibility may also include choosing which part of the child education (preschool, secondary school or tertiary education) to use the grant for as long as the cumulative number of years during which the grant is used does not exceed an agreed number of years.

- Consider translating entitlements that enable staff to send their children to school to similarly be used to support staff with other care expenses, e.g. nursing home care for ageing parents and/or residential care for family members with disabilities.

GOOD PRACTICES

Childcare facilities for staff

Eight UN entities reported offering childcare facilities to staff. Among these, the **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)**, the **International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)**, the **World Food Programme (WFP)** and the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** have some of the best-developed programmes, ranging in capacities (from 30-60 children) and coverage of care (from 3 months to 8 years old).

UNESCO's Day Nursery provides care for children between the ages of 12 months (providing they can walk unaided) and 3 years of all personnel, including members of Permanent Delegations, consultants and other international agencies established in Paris. Additionally, the **Children's Club** provides care for children between the ages of 3 and 8 once a week and during the school holidays.[94]

22

RECOMMENDATION

Provide additional allowances, leave and flexibility to support staff members addressing family care issues, such as eldercare and care for family members with disabilities, including temporary disabilities.

During an employee's time with an organization, different family care needs may arise. Data shows that age and stage in life impact which benefits are most important. Younger employees place a higher importance on back-up childcare, on-site childcare and childcare assistance while older employees tend to value eldercare more.[95] A comprehensive approach to addressing care issues outside of parental leave is needed to address diverse staff needs.

Particularly for staff members who are single, care demands can become unmanageable without supportive and flexible work policies, and in turn staff can be forced to seek more supportive environments elsewhere. According to the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)'s Public Policy Institute, the rate of employee caregiving is increasing, and more employees, employers and caregiving experts are challenging how caregiving is viewed in the workplace compared to other family responsibilities.[96] Policies focused on parental status have become the main policies addressing family needs, but employers are increasingly acknowledging caring for an ageing parent or a sick sibling as part of that same continuum.

For staff with family members with disabilities, additional leave and flexibility can provide invaluable support in managing increased demands, such as more frequent medical visits or the need for a UN staff member to accompany a family member with a disability on a mission if no other option is available. Consideration of the wide

range of disabilities should be accounted for in policy coverage, particularly psychosocial and intellectual impairments, which are often less recognized. Support for staff with disabilities who are also caregivers is referred to in Section 4 under flexible working arrangements (FWAs).

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Ensure special leave with full or partial pay options can be utilized for various care needs including, but not limited to, family illness and attending to the needs of children/family members with disabilities.

- Facilitate the use of SLWP/SLWOP/annual leave for ongoing care circumstances such as for ageing parents or family members with disabilities including, but not limited to, physical, psychosocial and intellectual.

- Explicitly allow the use of flexible working arrangements, especially working from an alternative location, for staff to meet their care needs (e.g. when staff have a sick parent in a different country).

GOOD PRACTICES

Special leave for various care needs

As a separate leave entitlement from uncertified sick/family emergency leave standard across the UN system, the **World Food Programme (WFP)** allows staff up to a maximum of five days in any leave year period to attend to the special needs of child(ren) whose disability is recognized by the Programme.[97]

UNDP's policy on flexible working arrangements envisages telecommuting from another location/country.

23 RECOMMENDATION

Ensure mobility policies take a supportive and sensitive approach to staff and their families, particularly with respect to gender, LGBTIQ+ and disabilities.

The nature of many UN organizations' work requires a system of staff rotation to deliver on their mandates and build the capacities of staff. Therefore, for all staff to be able to enjoy equal access to opportunities for career development and advancement it is critical to ensure mobility policies do not disadvantage any staff—particularly those least represented—in terms of participation. The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) recognized in its 2004 "Joint Guidance Note on the Employment of Expatriate Spouses" that "the lack of facilities for the employment of expatriate spouses/partners...[is] a serious hindrance to the UN system's ability to recruit and retain the highest qualified specialists for overseas assignments, particularly women".[98]

Progress towards gender parity at non-headquarters locations lags behind that at HQ.[99] The lack of women in the field has a direct impact on the UN's ability to achieve gender balance at senior levels, given the mobility requirements often required of P-5 and higher posts. It is sometimes assumed that women's numbers are low in the field because they are not suited to the work environment or lack the desire to work in challenging settings. However, attention must be paid to the ways current mobility policies may disadvantage groups such as women, people who identify as LGBTIQ+, persons with disabilities and those with primary care duties, particularly if they are single parents. Single parents are often the sole responsible caretaker, and therefore when on mission, they must hire full-time care. It is important that mobility policies recognize these circumstances and the financial costs that may incur from work-related travel.

Mobility challenges also exist for same-sex couples whose marriages or legal partnerships are not recognized in all duty stations. Legal sanctions against homosexuality, transgender individuals and those with gender expressions that do not conform to local expectations in some host countries can place LGBTIQ+ staff, partners and children at risk of imprisonment and discrimination, even in some places that are currently classified as family duty stations.[xx] UN-GLOBE has established recommended measures for enhancing mobility for LGBTIQ+ staff, highlighted in the good practices section below.

Furthermore, staff with disabilities and staff who have dependents with disabilities face mobility challenges regarding access to health care facilities, accessible schools and accessible workplaces.

Mobility policies should not assume that staff with these concerns do not wish to work in duty stations that present challenges but should ensure policies address the distinct challenges that often complicate their decisions and mitigate these.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Communicate decisions on staff mobility at least six months prior to the move and schedule moves for months following the completion of the school year or otherwise accommodate family needs.

- Include family members in the security and other pre-deployment trainings/sessions for staff (especially in case of hardship family duty stations) as part of the 'duty of care' obligation. Pre-deployment trainings should incorporate a gender, LGBTIQ+ and disabilities perspective and address specific safety and security concerns, and reference resources such as UN-GLOBE.

- Inclusion of gender and diversity information in preparatory materials should be made for all duty stations and made widely available for all staff, to aid in their consideration of mobility opportunities. These should include comprehensive information on resources and key services available in the duty station.

- Identify which family duty stations are friendly for LGBTIQ+ staff and LGBTIQ+ children, as well as staff with disabilities and staff who have dependents with disabilities. This information should be integrated into the mobility placement process at an early stage, without prejudice to the desire of staff to serve in hardship duty stations or duty stations not friendly for people who identify as LGBTIQ+.

- Work with the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) to redefine the factors that classify duty stations as family and non-family, by reviewing security concerns and the availability of certain necessary services for staff or family members who are female, LGBTIQ+, or have disabilities.

- Consider discussing with host governments the ability of the family to stay in the previous duty station for a limited time, move to the closest HQ duty station, or a regional location with family-friendly living conditions in cases of potential moves that present safety concerns for staff's families, or in case of a move to duty stations with no acceptable schooling and healthcare facilities, particularly those able to address the distinct medical needs of women and transgender staff and staff with disabilities.

- Provide support, including in areas such as housing, schooling and medical facilities, to arriving staff and families as a common UN service. Such support could be facilitated through websites, such as WFP's Humanitarian Booking website (**https://humanitarianbooking.wfp.org**), which helps personnel find accommodation, UN clinics, flights and UN driver assistance in remote duty stations.

[xx] A current mapping of legal sanctions by country can be found at **http://www.equaldex.com/**.

- Ensure that the travel policy facilitates 'single parent' staff member's ability to travel on official mission, by providing reimbursement of overnight daycare cost so that single parents do not have to incur personal expenses to conduct official business.

- Consider providing a travel allowance for dependents that would allow staff to bring their family to a rest and recuperation (R&R) station if far from the country where a family is based, or allow for an alternative R&R station that welcomes all types of families and identities.

- Encourage participation of Gender Focal Points in discussions on policies related to rotation and mobility.

- To the fullest extent possible, offer free and accessible Wi-Fi to personnel in all duty stations to facilitate their continued connection to family and social support networks in their free time.

GOOD PRACTICES

Managing mobility fairly

The **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** has mandatory mobility for international professional staff. It is committed to managing its mobility in a "fair and efficient manner", and in its People Strategy 2016-2021 has committed to "Strive towards making UNHCR a family-friendly organization as an element of individual resilience, in particular within the context of mandatory mobility and high-risk assignments". UNHCR has scheduled two Standard Assignment Length expirations at 30 June and 31 December, which coincide with average school breaks.

Taking personal circumstances into account

Rather than after placements have been made, the **World Food Programme (WFP)**'s mandatory mobility policy takes personal circumstances into account during the application phase and provides consultations with the medical office to flag health conditions of staff and/or their dependents (including spouses) that may limit their mobility. Personal circumstances include health condition of the staff member and/or of recognized dependents, the need for appropriate school facilities and status as a single parent. Opportunities are provided for staff to appeal assignments.

In 2015, **UNICEF** finalized a mobility policy that reduced the Tour of Duty from four to three years in order to enhance feasibility for staff with specific necessities to apply or rotate. It is hoped that facilitating reassignments of internal staff will promote diversity in duty stations.

Preparatory information booklets

UNHCR provides country-specific "Preparatory Information for UNHCR in High-Risk Duty Stations" for staff who may be considering applying to or will be/have recently been deployed to high-risk duty stations to support personnel in making well-informed decisions when preparing for mission. Diversity and gender-specific information is also provided, informing staff of laws that may be particularly challenging for staff of certain sexual orientations or marriages. Regarding disability, access is also discussed, and additional resources are provided for staff with further questions on this topic.

The following Mobility recommendations are from **UN-GLOBE's Recommendations for an Inclusive Workplace for Trans and Gender Non-conforming Staff Members, Dependents, and Other Stakeholders of the UN System.**[100]

If mobility is dependent on serving in hardship duty stations, it is the responsibility of the organizations of the UN system to ensure either:

A. The safety of trans and gender nonconforming staff members and their dependents, as well as the safety of staff members with trans or gender nonconforming spouses and dependents, in the assigned hardship duty station;[xxi] or

B. The option of serving in a hardship duty station where the trans staff member and/or trans dependents will not be violating any local laws that specifically target trans and gender nonconforming individuals. If this cannot be found, this should in no way negatively impact the career progression of trans and gender nonconforming staff.

UN-GLOBE also has five mobility-specific recommendations (Recommendation 19, 20, 21, 22 and 23), which are excerpted below.

- During the duty station reassignment process, all staff shall be granted comprehensive information from the office of human resources on the conditions of life expected in the new proposed duty stations for LGBTIQ+ persons[xxii] (Recommendation 19).

- A LGBTIQ+ staff member or staff member with LGBTIQ+ dependents (in the case of family duty stations) should have the right to refuse to accept an assignment in a country based on personal safety concerns and be provided with a suitable alternative that does not raise such personal safety concerns (Recommendation 20).

- Before the move to a new duty station, organizations shall ensure that any legal issues that may arise with the host country because of the staff member's sexual orientation, trans identity or gender expression, or that of a dependent of a staff member, is handled promptly with the host government (Recommendation 21).

- If visas are not granted or forthcoming in family duty stations, even if the staff

member has already settled in the station, the organization shall offer the staff member who is unable to obtain dependent visas because of their LGBTIQ+ identity, entitlements corresponding to staff who maintain dual households and cover the costs of any trips outside the duty station that a dependent of staff must take in order to renew the visas (Recommendation 22).

- In situations where the dependent of the staff member is on a short-term visa, organizations shall grant either a waiver, if so requested by the staff member, that will allow this person to apply to other posts immediately (or after serving for an abbreviated length of time but not the full expected term), or secure for this person another post (Recommendation 23).

See also UN-GLOBE's "Mobility Proposals" (2015) found **here** and on their website.

[xxi] Trans and gender nonconforming individuals are particularly vulnerable because of their gender identity and/or expression.

[xxii] UN-GLOBE can assist in this regard, as it is collecting a database of information on service in different duty stations.

24 RECOMMENDATION

Expand opportunities for recognized partner employment and facilitate mobility of dual UN career couples.

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Further to the above recommendation, increasing opportunities for spousal employment is likely to strengthen gender diversity in non-HQ locations by facilitating the relocation of staff members and their families. Efforts should also be made to maximize the availability of such support to same-sex couples and to partners who may have a disability or dependents with disabilities, given their more limited options for mobility.

The organizational imperative for supporting spousal mobility is amplified in the context of two UN staff members. Studies have found that couples working for the same organization correlate with positive outcomes of increased retention and commitment to work.[101] Actively supporting the mobility of couples within the organization is a key component to strengthening the UN's image as a family-friendly employer.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Update the existing administrative instructions/policies on spousal employment, per the recommendation of the System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity.[102]

- Explore the feasibility of negotiating with host countries the issuance of work permits/visas for working spouses/partners.

- Negotiate agreements with other international organizations, including UNV, pro-bono or low-bono assignments, for working spouse/partner opportunities.

- Ensure that working spouses/partners from UN system entities have access to career and professional development resources available in organizations through targeted distribution of vacancies and other measures.

- Consider the introduction of a study grants scheme for spouses/partners.

- Revisit the establishment of a Local Expatriate Spouse Association (LESA) in duty stations where it does not exist to provide a spouse/partner with support and strengthen networking.

- Pool together consultancy opportunities among UN entities in a duty station with targeted distribution of spouses/partners of UN employees unable to work in the host country.

- To the extent feasible, facilitate placement of dual UN career couples in the same duty station.

- Provide maximum consideration in cases of dual UN career couples, where both spouses/partners are UN system staff members, for staff to work remotely from the duty station where their spouse/partner has been assigned.

- Support options for spouses to telework on an extended basis. This should not be limited to dual UN-career couples but all staff whose spouse working for another organization has had to relocate. Telework arrangements need not continue indefinitely, but they are recommended as an interim solution to help preserve staff job security and provide managers with continuity.

GOOD PRACTICES

Employment guide for UN Secretariat staff

The **UN Secretariat** has released a "Guide to Employment of UN Secretariat Staff Members",[103] which provides answers to FAQs on work permits and job opportunities and provides additional resources in context-specific guidance for several duty stations including Addis Ababa, Abidjan, Arusha, Bangkok, Beirut, Brindisi, Geneva, Nairobi, New York, Santiago and Vienna.

Local Expatriate Spouse Associations

Local Expatriate Spouse Associations (LESA) exist in several duty stations, with two of the most active being **NYLESA** in New York (**http://www.nylesa.org**) and **UNKLESA** in Nairobi (**http://www.unklesa.org/**). LESA supports the integration and employment of spouses and partners of UN staff, is a valuable channel for information sharing and provides a community of support to help ease transitions for families to a new duty station.

Legal Recognition of Partners

In August 2014, following the Secretary-General's advised revision to the policy on personal status (ST/SGB/2004/13/Rev.1) to legally recognize same-sex unions, **UN-GLOBE** released **instructions on how to get your partner recognized**[104] providing information on recognizing legal unions by the staff member's current location where the legal union was officiated, rather than their country of nationality, where their union may not be legally recognized. UN-GLOBE provides a non-exhaustive list of benefits from having a partner recognized by an organization and a template letter for staff members to send to their Human Resources Office to ask for recognition of their legal partner.

Encouraging staff mobility

The **World Food Programme (WFP)** encourages mobility of staff members across geographic locations (including hardship duty stations) and, where possible—in line with the provision on spouse employment, when both spouses are staff members of the Programme—makes reasonable efforts to facilitate the assignment of both spouses to the same duty station. However, as WFP's operational requirements always take precedence, the relationship of a spouse with a staff member should not be construed to constitute an obligation on the part of the Programme towards the spouse.

Pro-bono programme for spouses

To promote mobility to HQ duty stations, the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** has successfully implemented a pro-bono programme for spouses whereby qualified spouses can work for UNDP for up to six months.

06.
Standards of Conduct

UN personnel are required to adhere to the Standards of Conduct for International Civil Service.[105] These standards include guiding principles that encourage value-based behaviours to eliminate misconduct, especially harassment, in the workplace and uphold the reputation of the organization. This section is structured around two dimensions, (1) addressing and preventing misconduct and (2) proactive ways an organization can foster a diverse, harmonious workplace.

> **"Harassment of any kind offends the principles of what we stand for as an organization and undermines our core values and our work."**

—Secretary-General António Guterres[106]

This section addresses misconduct broadly, with a focus on preventing and addressing such behaviours in the workplace. Sexual harassment is a form of misconduct that results from a culture of discrimination and privilege, based on unequal gender relations and power dynamics. This, along with all other forms of misconduct, have no place in the United Nations.

Committed to upholding a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment, strengthen victim-centred prevention and response efforts, and foster a safe and inclusive working environment across the UN system, the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) established, in November 2017, the CEB Task Force on Addressing Sexual Harassment within the Organizations of the United Nations System. The Task Force brought together senior officials from more than 40 UN entities. It identified harmonization of sexual harassment policy, improvements in sexual harassment reporting and data collection, and enhanced awareness-raising, outreach and communication as priority areas for system-wide action.

The Task Force developed and approved a set of concrete measures to address the issue of sexual harassment within the organizations of the UN system in a coordinated, coherent and effective manner. Additionally, the Task Force established the following definition of sexual harassment:

> **Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offence or humiliation, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. Sexual harassment may occur in the workplace or in connection with work. While typically involving a pattern of conduct, sexual harassment may take the form of a single incident. In assessing the reasonableness of expectations or perceptions, the perspective of the person who is the target of the conduct shall be considered.**

CEB TASK FORCE TO ADDRESS SEXUAL HARASSMENT WITHIN THE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UN SYSTEM[xxiii]
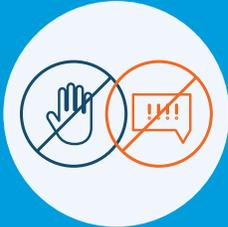
Harmonization of sexual harassment policy

- **UN SYSTEM MODEL POLICY ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT:** The Model Policy includes, among others, model provisions for formal and informal reporting of sexual harassment, prevention, support to affected individuals, and protection against retaliation. It is expected that organizations will issue their own policy document, adapting the Model Policy as a common base to align with their specific institutional and legal frameworks. It is expected that the sexual harassment policies among the CEB entities will comply with the spirit and the principles agreed within the CEB Task Force.

Improved sexual harassment report and data collection

- **SCREENING DATABASE "CLEARCHECK:"** The Screening Database is a critical system-wide tool to avoid the hiring and rehiring of individuals whose working relationship with an organization of the system ended because of a determination that they perpetrated sexual harassment. The Database also allows for the inclusion of individuals with pending allegations of sexual harassment who leave the organization before the completion of the investigation and/or disciplinary process.

- Mechanism for **SYSTEM-WIDE COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA** to ensure timely and accurate reporting and evidence-based policymaking.

Enhanced awareness-raising, outreach and communication

- **MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT FOR UN EVENTS:** The Model Code of Conduct serves as an important instrument to prevent sexual harassment during and in relation to UN events. It is a tool for communicating to both an internal and external audience the standard of conduct that is expected at UN organised or sponsored events and how an attendee of such an event can raise a complaint if they experience or witness conduct by another attendee that does not meet this standard. An Implementation Guide has also been developed to assist UN system entities to effectively implement the Code.

- **COMMON GUIDE FOR MANAGERS:** This practical Guide assists managers to fulfil their obligations to prevent and respond to sexual harassment in the workplace by providing a checklist of measures to take, possible signs of sexual harassment to watch out for and principles to follow when being approached with a complaint. Available at: **https://www.unsystem.org/content/guide-managers-prevention-and-response-sexual-harassment-workplace-0**.

25

RECOMMENDATION

Create and support a culture of respect, zero tolerance and accountability for discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment and abuse of authority.

The Secretary-General has repeatedly emphasized that the UN must take a zero-tolerance approach to harassment and has called for system-wide action that goes beyond implementing and redesigning mechanisms and measures for tackling sexual harassment, by driving cultural change to ensure a workplace where harassment is never tolerated, abusers are held accountable and staff feel free to report incidents, regardless of their level or position of power.[107] As stated in the ST/SGB/2008/5, "Prohibition of discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority", the United Nations "has the duty to take all appropriate measures towards ensuring a harmonious work environment, and to protect its staff from exposure to any form of prohibited conduct, through preventive measures and the provision of effective remedies when prevention has failed."[108]

The 2016 U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Report found that one in four women will be a victim of sexual harassment in the workplace. According to the 2016 Trades Union Congress Report, four in five women do not report sexual assault or harassment behaviour. Of those that do report, 80 per cent said their situations did not change, and 16 per cent of those said that going to their supervisor about the behaviour made their situation worse.[109] Research has shown that when women are underrepresented in the workplace, they are more vulnerable to sexual harassment.[110] Sexual harassment and other forms of misconduct, such as bullying, are entrenched in power imbalances. The prevalence of bullying in the workplace[xxiv] is correlated with positions of power and abuse of power, which can stem from or be exacerbated by gender inequality. The Workplace Bullying Institute's 2017 National

Survey of workplace bullying in the United States found that 61 per cent of bullies were in management positions, and 70 per cent of perpetrators were men; 60 per cent of targets were women.[111]

The EEOC found that the most effective way to change organizational culture and mitigate gender inequalities is through the leaders of the organization.[112] Several factors have been found to contribute to harassment in the workplace, including power disparities, isolated or decentralized workplaces, a tolerance for alcohol and employees who believe the rules do not apply to them.[113] Managers should be aware of these factors and openly commit to removing these influences and foster a workplace culture of respect, zero tolerance and accountability for harassment. There is no diplomatic immunity or special circumstances in the United Nations regarding misconduct.[114] Organizations should do everything possible to prevent misconduct and have the appropriate mechanisms and structures in place to handle reports of misconduct.

Creating a workplace of respect and accountability involves all levels of the organization. Leaders should hold one another accountable to empower a workplace culture where misconduct is not tolerated and where targets of harassment will be treated fairly and compassionately. Coworkers can create and establish norms in their daily practices that treat co-workers with respect and intervene when misconduct takes place. On a personal level, each individual can commit to speaking up when something is seen and practicing fair and respectful behaviour of personnel.[115] Changing culture does not lie with one group, but with each member of an organization. This effort may begin with the senior leaders, but it must come from every individual to create a truly inclusive and respectful workplace.

Personnel at any level can experience, witness or be confided in by someone who has experienced misconduct. Identifying misconduct is not always black and white, and a general lack of knowledge, training and education when it comes to misconduct in the workplace can make it difficult for individuals to immediately process and respond to unwanted behaviour. When an employee or supervisor makes a lewd comment or discriminatory joke, people may not know if this qualifies as misconduct and how to respond. The bigger the power differential in an employment relationships, the greater the risk of misconduct.[116]

Interns, one of the most vulnerable groups, are more likely not to report inappropriate behaviour, even informally to their supervisor, because of fear that their reputation and career possibilities will be damaged.[117] Alongside policies and victim-centered frameworks with proven track records of accountability and retaliation, mandatory robust training focused on misconduct should be available across the organization to familiarize employees with the formal and informal mechanisms for reporting misconduct and increase awareness on what constitutes harassment and what to do when harassment is seen in the workplace.

By promulgating consistent and correct knowledge of policies and procedures, these trainings increase awareness and when coupled with diligent and swift handling of reported incidents will instill confidence in the systems of the organization to provide support and seriously handle reports of misconduct in the workplace. Training specifically targeted towards those most vulnerable, such as interns, should be available and include training to recognize and call out unwanted behaviours, such as specific examples of misconduct in the workplace and response options. All personnel should feel empowered to call out misconduct and be equipped with the understanding and responses to do so effectively.

xxiv "According to the Workplace Bullying Institute (WBI), bullying is four times more common than either sexual harassment or racial discrimination on the job." Comaford, Christine (2016). 75% of Workers Are Affected By Bullying – Here's What To Do About It. Available at: **https://www.forbes.com/sites/christinecomaford/2016/08/27/the-enormous-toll-workplace-bullying-takes-on-your-bottom-line/#6ac141555595**.

The EEOC Report also found that bystander training and workplace civility training are the most effective trainings for combatting harassment. Incivility is often an antecedent to workplace harassment, as it creates a climate of "general derision and disrespect" in which harassing behaviours are tolerated.[118] **Workplace civility trainings** often include an exploration of workplace norms, including a discussion of what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate behaviours in the workplace, and a skills-based component, including interpersonal skills training, conflict resolution and training on effective supervisory techniques.[119] Currently, the UN offers such trainings in an ad hoc manner. Regular trainings that link skills buildings with the Code of Conduct can be an effective method for reinforcing cultural norms and values of the UN.

Bystander intervention training has long been used as a violence prevention strategy. The training has shown how to change social norms and empower those trained to intervene with peers to prevent assaults from occurring.[120] However, the impact is dependent on integrating the training within a comprehensive framework of prevention that is designed to lower the threshold of recognition of sexual harassment and deploy examples and typical situations in which sexual harassment takes place that clarify the ambiguity associated with how sexual harassment is defined.[121] This includes modelling through practice and demonstrations, such as video vignettes or scenarios where bystanders have effectively assisted a target and participants can apply the skills learned. Most bystander intervention trainings employ at least four strategies:

1. **CREATE AWARENESS** - enable bystanders to recognize potentially problematic behaviours.

2. **CREATE A SENSE OF COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY** - motivate bystanders to step in and take action when they observe problematic behaviours.

3. **CREATE A SENSE OF EMPOWERMENT** - conduct skills-building exercises to provide bystanders with the skills and confidence to intervene as appropriate.

4. **PROVIDE RESOURCES** - provide bystanders with resources they can call upon and that support their intervention.[122]

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- All UN personnel should be provided with a holistic harassment prevention programme, including training on issues of, but not limited to: gender, sexual orientation, race, disability, power, discrimination, conscious and unconscious bias and understanding a victim/survivor-centred approach to address sexual harassment and misconduct (specifically, workplace civility training and bystander training).

- As at the UN Secretariat, encourage all personnel to familiarize themselves with a policy/policies on prohibited conduct (such as SG/SGB/2008/5 and the CEB Model Policy on Sexual Harassment) and the internal justice system. Help can be sought from, among others, a manager, the HR practitioner of the unit, the Ombudsman's Office for impartial help and informal conflict resolution, the Staff Counsellor's Office for dealing with stress and discomfort, or a member of the Conduct and Discipline team in peacekeeping missions. In the case of an ethical dilemma, the Ethics Office should be contacted.

- Managers should make it clear that there is 'zero tolerance' for any form of harassment or abuse. Reach out for instance to the designated Gender Focal Point in the department/office/mission and discuss how work relations can be strengthened.

- Sustain and support awareness-building initiatives and communications promoting a culture of zero-tolerance for discrimination and harassment. Regularly inform UN personnel of the efforts being undertaken, making clear what kind of behaviour is expected from personnel at all levels and reinforcing the message and actions that perpetrators will be held accountable.

- Provide clear and accessible resources to guide personnel in preventing, recognizing and reporting misconduct including details on the benefits and limitations of various reporting options (formal and informal).

- Develop a comprehensive training for new personnel, including interns, that discusses what forms of misconduct can occur in the workplace and suggest tactics on how to respond from the perspective of the victim or as a bystander.

- Develop a robust manager training that focuses on how to proactively prevent all forms of misconduct in the workplace, effectively enforce the code of conduct, manage conflict and ensure accountability to provide a safe and discrimination-free workplace.

- Include mandatory performance objectives, including annual reporting of accomplishments, in performance management reviews to monitor managers' efforts to promote diversity and a workplace culture of respect, zero tolerance and accountability.

- Those serving in roles where they will professionally support individuals who report misconduct should receive training in empathetic listening and vicarious trauma, and they should be aware and have up-to-date knowledge about resources available to support victims/survivors and bystanders, as well as the informal and formal procedures and their potential outcomes.

- Senior leadership and HR commit to consulting with survivor advocates, annually reviewing data and listening to the voices of victims/survivors and bystanders, making necessary adjustments to policies and practices based on findings and feedback. Periodic "testing" of the reporting system, to determine how well the system is working, might also be considered.

- Provide and ensure accessibility of available resources for victims of sexual assault and personnel who are witness to, or approached by, a victim of sexual assault.

- Ensure that UN entities have mechanisms in place to provide and/or reference available legal assistance to victims, such as the Office of Staff Legal Assistance (OSLA) or external resources providing legal assistance, such as the Time's Up Legal Defense Fund.[123]

GOOD PRACTICES

Manager accountability in performance reviews

The **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** has instituted a mandatory people management goal for all supervisors, which includes, among others, the following criteria: (1) Tangible steps to promote gender equality in UNDP, such as work to eliminate gender biases and ensure equal opportunities, as well as to create and maintain an inclusive and respectful working environment free from any form of bias, harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination and abuse of authority, and (2) Ensure that all supervisees have completed mandatory online courses on time. Heads of offices are also required to submit an annual certificate to the UNDP Administrator confirming that they have complied with the provisions of the respective policies and completed and implemented action plans to prevent and address sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA).

Awareness-raising initiatives

In May 2018, **United Nations Office at Geneva (UNOG)** Director-General Michael Møller launched the "Say no to sexism" initiative to counter casual sexism at UN Geneva.[124] The term "casual sexism" denotes behaviour or attitudes that foster stereotypes based on gender and perpetuate unequal treatment of others, usually women, and those perceived not to conform to gendered expectations of behaviour, such as women perceived to be too masculine, or men perceived to be too feminine. Casual sexism feeds into a culture and a mindset in which de facto discrimination becomes part of everyday life and is accepted and tolerated, which in turn facilitates harassment and abuse. The initiative not only consists of awareness-raising and outreach activities, but also empowers staff to counter casual sexism and speak out against these harmful actions. Visuals used to raise awareness about the issue show staff support for the initiative and promote UN Geneva as a sexism-free zone are available online.[125] The initiative has received widespread positive feedback, with staff reporting increased awareness and highlighting its utility in promoting discussion around this important issue.

The "**Say no to sexism**" initiative's objectives are to:

- Position UN Geneva as a sexism-free zone;

- Raise awareness of the harm done by casual sexism;

- Encourage and empower UN staff to counter casual sexism.

In the fall of 2018, **UN Women** and **ILO** together published a brief, "Ending Violence and Harassment Against Women in the World of Work."[126] The brief discusses 10 important steps for organizations to take to eliminate violence and harassment in the workplace and contribute to positive and respectful working environments. Emerging good practices from around the world are also provided to share success stories and encourage adoption of the impactful initiatives.

The *It's On Us*[127] initiative for US colleges and high school campuses recognized the need to change the cultures of educational institutions. It is premised on the idea that sexual assault is not just about a victim and a perpetrator. It calls upon everyone to do their part to be a part of the solution—if students, faculty and campus staff are empowered to be part of the solution to prevent sexual assault and are given the tools and resources to do so, their role as engaged bystanders will make a significant difference in changing the educational culture. The *It's On Us* initiative focuses on three core pillars: increasing bystander intervention, reinforcing the need for consent and creating an environment to support survivors. The initiative was successful due to its multi-faceted approach of using a widescale awareness initiative with a robust local organizing model to engage people both online and offline.

Gender-based violence campaign

Every year from 25 November to 10 December, in consultation with women's human rights advocates across the world, **Rutgers Center for Women's Global Leadership** designs and circulates the 16 Days Campaign theme. The 2018 theme "End Gender-based Violence in the World of Work" built on the momentum and achievements from the 2017 campaign theme "Together We Can End Gender-based Violence in Education," which included over 700 organizations in 92 countries. Each campaign sets a target; in 2018, it was to push for systematic change and accountability. The campaign provided a forum in which organizers can develop and share new and effective strategies, creates tools to pressure governments and institutions to implement commitments made to eliminate violence against women, and strengthens work around violence against women.

To commemorate the 2018 campaign, the **UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women (UN Trust Fund)** held a fundraising event in the hometown of the #MeToo movement, Santa Monica, California, bringing together a power-house of survivors, dignitaries, UN officials, gender experts and Hollywood celebrities.

UN Women's UNiTE campaign leads the UN's **16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence** to further mobilize people across the world to create change.

Trainings on addressing harassment in the workplace

In 2018, the **United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)** organized a series of harassment awareness workshops for personnel, staff and non-staff, as a joint effort by the UNIDO Staff Council, Department of Human Resources Management and the Gender Office. The workshops were aimed at promoting a culture change in the organization regarding harassment, abuse of power and discrimination and creating a common organizational understanding of what constitutes harassment and what to do if one experiences or witnesses harassment. A clear message to senior management and the participants from the workshops was the need for more transparency and communication about actions taken in response to reporting harassment, with due regard to confidentiality of the parties involved.

In response to a significant number of workplace harassment allegations, the **Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADPW)** created a mandatory training for all employees, focused on mutual respect in the workplace. The training included discussions on individual differences related to diversity and cultural characteristics, identifying and resolving workplace interpersonal conflict, roles and expectations of employees and leaders and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) laws, employment policies and procedures. The training was followed by an additional mandatory training for all executives, supervisors and lead personnel, on practical implications of EEO laws and tools and techniques to address inappropriate behaviour. A "boot camp team" was also established to address specific misconduct issues in groups through one-on-one coaching and group training. During the first three years LADPW offered the training programme, the number of internal EEO complaints rose, likely due

to employees developing a greater understanding of their rights and where to go to file complaints. Since that time, however, complaints have decreased by 70 per cent.[128]

Green Dot is a national violence prevention programme focused on providing bystanders with the strategies and techniques they need to: (1) identify situations that can lead to acts of violence (represented on incident maps by a red dot); and (2) intervene safely and effectively. A green dot represents "any behaviour, choice, word, or attitude that promotes safety…and communicates utter intolerance for violence."[129] Schools around the US have used the Green Dot programme to train faculty and students, and Middlebury College has created a Green Dot pledge for all matriculating students to agree to cultivate "respect and responsibility for self, others, and [the] shared environment."[130] As a result of the Green Dot training, bar and restaurant owners hosted trainings, developed policies, created relevant messaging in their signs and bulletins and offered educational activities such as Green Dot trivia, contests and competitions to drive cultural change. Both staff and patrons acquired new skills to respond to potential harassment or violence.[131]

Strengthening victim/survivor support networks

The **UN Secretariat** provides personnel with a 24-hour helpline called "Speak up" that allows staff to speak confidentially with an impartial and trained individual. By providing personnel with information on protection, support and reporting mechanisms, the helpline serves to empower personnel in making informed decisions on action. The helpline can be reached via phone at +1 (917) 367-8910 or through email: **speakup@un.org**.

The **Investigations Division of the Office of Internal Oversight Services** takes responsibility for investigating all complaints of sexual harassment, and implements a streamlined, fast-tracked procedure to receive, process and address complaints. A specialized team focusing on the investigations of sexual harassment has

been created in 2018. **Callisto** is a non-profit organization that develops technology to combat sexual assault and harassment. The unique matching system securely connects victims of the same perpetrator to identify repeat offenders and connects victims with a Callisto Options Counsellor who can help them navigate their next steps. Callisto is present at 13 US campuses and has expanded into the professional sector. Due to the cyclical nature of many perpetrators of sexual assault and harassment, the reporting platform detects repeat perpetrators across sectors and provides pathways to support for victims. The client relationships with the Options Counsellors are structured so that any client-counsellor communications would be privileged.

The Time Is Now: addressing sexual harassment

UN Women publication _Towards an end to sexual harassment: the urgency and nature of change in the era of #MeToo_ seeks to contribute to shaping business as unusual and is intended to support policy makers, employers, and activists by sharing UN Women's varied work on the topic. The publication affirms that sexual harassment is a violation of human rights and a form of discrimination rooted in historic power imbalances and male-dominated culture. Sexual harassment manifests and reproduces sex and gender inequalities of power that intersect with other dimensions of inequality. The publication offers support through "Ten Essentials of addressing sexual harassment", which include the centrality of the concept of "unwelcomeness" and work to support bystander interventions. It provides guidance and "Core elements of policy and practice on sexual harassment", such as starting by naming the problem; building a culture of respect, equality and diversity in senior positions; learning from evidence and research; ensuring prompt and appropriate responses to reports of sexual harassment; providing transparency in processes and outcomes; and ensuring that the rights of victims/survivors are clear, documented and known.

26

RECOMMENDATION

Collect data to track misconduct prevalence, as well as reporting and accountability measures.

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Data can be a powerful tool for social change. Collecting data system-wide improves the accuracy of reporting and informs evidence-based policymaking. Data that encompasses all types of misconduct—and is then disaggregated by duty station/ department, level/contract type, nationality, sex, age, race/ethnicity, disabilities, sexual orientation and gender identity—better identifies trends in misconduct, which in turn helps to inform the evolution of organizational policies and procedures to ensure they address key areas of weakness.[132]

Confidential surveys can provide a better understanding of prevalence, as well as gauge staff awareness of policies, procedures and resources available. Proper survey design can strengthen response rates (particularly in settings where personnel may not feel comfortable disclosing information), and utility of information gathered. Therefore, the following tips are offered to strengthen survey design and implementation.

TIPS ON PREVALENCE SURVEY DESIGN

01   Anonymity of the survey should be clearly stated.

02   Survey should be administered by a third party if possible to further protect anonymity and encourage responses.

03   Provide contextual examples of harassment when querying on prevalence such as: "Have you ever experienced someone purposely touching you or brushing up against you in an unwelcome, sexual way?", rather than asking "Have you ever experienced harassment?". Consider including questions related to gendered forms of harassment, such as: "have you been harassed for the way you dressed?" "Have you been harassed for acting too feminine/masculine?" Studies have found that in the absence of examples respondents may be reluctant to label inappropriate behaviours as harassment. Further, providing examples will provide greater detail of the types and frequency of unacceptable behaviours that occur.

04   Survey questions should be developed with a view to informing outcomes.

05   Survey design should be an inclusive process to ensure applicability in cross-cultural contexts, such as incorporating minorities into the steering group and testing the survey with different profiles (age, race, culture, etc.).

06   Complement surveys with qualitative data to ensure the full spectrum of data is captured.

07   Demographic profile information should be collected to facilitate disaggregation, while preserving anonymity. This is of particular importance, given the documented increased incidence of harassment experienced by marginalized groups, including but not limited to LGBTIQ+, persons with disabilities, people of colour and women.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Conduct anonymous surveys on a regular basis to establish a baseline and measure improvements, taking into consideration the above guidance on design and administration. Survey data should then be disaggregated by demographic information, including sex, age, contract type, national/international staff, etc. to identify possible disparate trends.

- After the end of any harassment investigation, the victim/survivor and bystander should be invited to participate in a survey or user interview regarding their experience throughout the process. This information should be gathered and analysed within and across agencies, as part of the process to review and monitor how policies and procedures are working.

- Once analysed, the data collected and actions taken should be shared with the head of entity, staff, executive boards (or other governing bodies), and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General to foster greater transparency and accountability.

GOOD PRACTICES

The Australian Human Rights Commission

In 2016, the **Australian Human Rights Commission**, at the request of 39 Australian universities, conducted a national survey of university students on sexual assault and sexual harassment prevalence and reporting.[133] The survey also examined the efficacy of university services and policies geared towards addressing sexual harassment and assault on campus. Over 30,000 students were surveyed. In addition to quantitative data, qualitative data was also received via written submissions.

The survey found that around half (51 per cent) of students were sexually harassed at least once in 2016, and survey results revealed that women experienced sexual assault and harassment at a disproportionately higher rate than men. Women were almost twice as likely to be harassed than men in 2016 and were more than three times as likely to be sexually assaulted in 2015 or 2016. The survey also found postgraduate students were twice as likely as undergraduate students to have been sexually harassed by a faculty member of the university. The majority of students who were sexually assaulted or harassed in 2015 and 2016 did not formally report the incident to the university for reasons including not believing the incident was serious enough or not knowing where or how to make the report. The survey revealed that only 6 per cent of students believed the university was doing enough to offer and promote clear and accessible information on harassment policies and support and reporting services.

The Commission concluded the survey results with recommendations for how the universities should proceed based on the outcomes, including providing education and other resources for students with the greatest risk of experiencing sexual harassment or assault and promoting an institution-wide culture rooted in inclusivity, gender equality, respect and accountability.
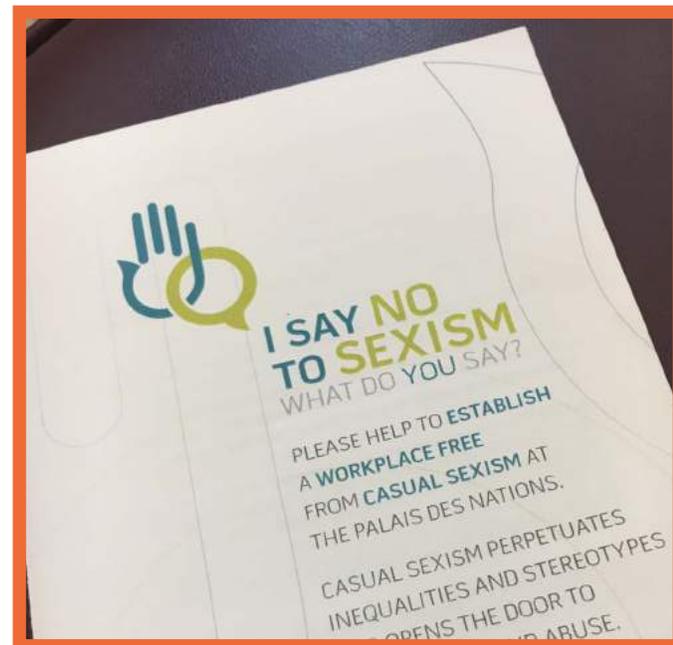
27 RECOMMENDATION

Actively show support for and build an accessible, diverse, inclusive and safe workplace for all personnel.

As the world's largest intergovernmental organization, the UN has a truly diverse workforce. With constructive engagement, this richness of diverse backgrounds and views can become an asset to the organization's performance and workforce well-being.

Having personnel in an organization from similar backgrounds—whether cultural, gender, skill set or geographical—can result in restricted capacities and narrow perspectives. Diversity is catalytic in stimulating new ways of innovative thinking that increase the quality of ideas and solutions groups produce. As a global, standard-setting institution, the UN has the potential to showcase itself as an example of an inclusive international actor that welcomes differences and diversity.

An inclusive and accessible work environment is a precursor to recruiting diverse personnel. This also includes making camp life for those in the field more gender-friendly, such as by ensuring inclusive common/welfare areas where women feel welcome and safe. There are also improvements that can be made that would make camp life more supportive for all personnel. For example, bathroom access that would not require personnel to leave containers. This is particularly important for women, who may face security concerns by venturing outside at night. Kitchenettes would enable staff to better care for their dietary needs, and readily available Wi-Fi would support them in maintaining connection and contact with family and social support networks. This may include accessible and gender-inclusive bathrooms, as well as ensuring that physical infrastructure office premises not only meet prescribed

standards of accessibility for personnel with disabilities, but move beyond it. These changes should not be made only to accommodate existing or incoming staff but doing so from the outset sends a powerful message that the organization invites and values diversity. It is essential that the understanding of inclusion and accessibility goes beyond environmental accessibility and includes information, communication and technological accessibility.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Provide continuing opportunities for staff exchange and messaging on the importance of diversity to their work and overall organizational efficiency and effectiveness, in addition to diversity training during onboarding, mentioned in Section 3 on Talent Management.

- Promote the use of inclusive language that is respectful when referring to various groups. UN for All, an inter-agency training initiative, has **resources on inclusive language** available online.[134]

- Display supportive signs and posters on office walls and as desktop screen savers. Nudge theory, a concept in behavioural science, suggests that positive reinforcements and indirect suggestions can influence behaviour for groups and individuals.[135] UN for All has created **downloadable posters** that can be used in this regard.[136]

- Articulate an organization-wide diversity and inclusion statement and strategy with desired outcomes, targets and benchmarks to measure progress, indicating responsibility for implementation. Be clear in messaging to avoid misconceptions.

- Ensure a wide range of staff and external stakeholders are given the opportunity to contribute to the formulation of strategies by creating a space for diverse viewpoints to be heard and considered in the strategy-making process.

- Designate a senior diversity and inclusion officer attached to the organization's leadership office to support the development of a diversity and inclusion statement and strategy and drive implementation and results. Ensure that sufficient time is allocated for this position. In the absence of permanent resources, consider piloting a 12-month trial by recruiting a consultant or a temporary staff member.

- Integrate diversity and inclusion into the goals of staff with managerial responsibilities in performance assessments and monitor and discuss progress.

- Include an assessment of managers' efforts to uphold diversity in recruitment processes and foster an inclusive environment within their teams as part of a 360° performance feedback.

- Adopt a policy on reasonable accommodation, appointing a focal point and establishing sustainable funding to cover reasonable accommodation expenses, such as through a percentage of staff or travel costs. Such provisions will ensure equal opportunities to participate in trainings, missions, transfers and mobility among duty stations. Ensure information on how to request reasonable accommodation is clear and accessible.

- Take steps to ensure that the workplace, including work stations and meeting rooms are accessible to persons with disabilities.

- Ensure that accessible single-use bathrooms are gender inclusive.

- Provide assistive technology, such as screen readers for personnel who are visually impaired, keystroke navigation and/or voice recognition software, and services such as an interpreter, closed captioning, phone with captioning and/or computer-aided transcriptions.

- Ensure that all websites, platforms, documents and publications are accessible. Images, tables and boxes associated with image should be designed for accessibility. Websites should also be designed for users to navigate without a mouse, such as the arrow keys to navigate. Further guidelines on making information and technology accessible are available from the **Centre for Excellence in Universal Design**.[xxv]

GOOD PRACTICES

Diversity trainings

UN for All has developed learning modules that cover basic human rights principles and how they translate into diversity and inclusion practices in the workplace. They also raise awareness about sexual orientation and gender identity, disabilities, mental health and substance abuse. To date, more than 8,000 UN system personnel in around 80 countries have participated in the training.[137]

Gender-sensitive communications

The **Department of Public Information (DPI)** has developed a user-friendly "Gender Checklist for Content Creators" to help in the creation of gender-balanced and inclusive stories. Guidance is provided to help creators frame gender positively and equitably in their narratives and visual products.

UN Women offers GenderTerm, a searchable gender-inclusive lexicon (**http://www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/genderterm**) that can be used to ensure terms are gender-inclusive. The lexicon is available in English, French and Spanish.

The **Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM)** has worked alongside the **UN Department of Management (DM), DPI** and **UN Women** on a project entitled "Supporting gender equality in multilingual

contexts" to produce gender-inclusive language guidelines in the six official languages of the UN and related resources, activities and training courses on how to apply them. The guidelines are available through this multilingual website: **http://www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/**.

Accessibility for all

The 2010 **World Health Organization (WHO)** Policy on the Employment of Persons with Disabilities aims to complement the organization's technical efforts and align with the mandate of the WHO Task Force on Disability to encourage and facilitate WHO programmes and projects organization-wide to be designed and implemented taking into account the needs of persons with disabilities. In recognizing that it is in the organization's interest to recruit and maintain a diverse and skilled workforce that is representative of the diverse nature of society, which includes persons with disabilities, WHO commits itself to providing equality of access to employment through the policy. In order to safeguard the rights of persons with disabilities to be treated with dignity and respect and to enjoy equal terms of conditions of employment, the policy discusses topics such as rights protection, reasonable accommodation, selection and recruitment, career development and learning opportunities, working environment, continuous efforts and confidentiality of information.

Accenture's "No Barriers" programme in Argentina has worked to make the idea of equal opportunity for all a reality.[138] The programme has led to 100 per cent accessibility in Accenture buildings and special software is readily available for persons with visual or hearing impairments. Internal and external Accenture websites provide transcripts for all videos displayed and Accenture has created a team that focuses on ensuring all online resources are accessible to everyone.[139]

[xxv] Available at: **http://universaldesign.ie/Technology-ICT/Universal-Design-for-ICT/**.

Public championing and transparency on diversity and inclusion

The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** publishes an annual report on diversity and inclusion that provides an account of the institution's efforts to promote a more diverse and inclusive working environment for all employees. The report links diversity and inclusion objectives to management's key goals for the fiscal year, such as policy solutions for membership, creating an enabling environment for staff, improving core outputs, strengthening governance and boosting resources. It further measures progress against a set of benchmarks for 2020 in terms of staff representation by geography and gender for each department. The report is discussed by IMF's Executive Board.

The **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** has undertaken an unprecedented comprehensive evaluation of its contribution to disability-inclusive development during the period 2008-2016 to assess how internal policies and procedures have advanced the workforce, work environment and organizational culture towards disability inclusiveness. This has included the adoption of a Diversity and Inclusiveness Strategy (April 2014), which specifies measures to promote employment of people living with disabilities and efforts to recruit Young Global Leaders with Disabilities for Sustainable Development through the UNDP JPO (junior professional officer) Service Centre and internship programmes. Under UNDP leadership, the **UN Development Operations Coordination Office (UNDOCO)** has also issued guidance for UN Common Premises, including a whole chapter on accessibility in 2016.

In March 2018, the **International Labour Organization (ILO)** developed a Champion Gender Equality tool to provide ideas and support managers in understanding what they can do to champion gender equality. Human resources, along with substantive inputs from the Gender, Equality and Diversity Branch, created a brochure, available in English, Spanish and French, and held a week-long campaign raising visibility around the issue. The tool has helped foster a dialogue between managers and personnel around the ILO Gender Action Plan and efforts towards achieving gender parity. ILO has offered to share the tool with all UN entities.

28 RECOMMENDATION

Mitigate everyday biases.

As discussed in Section 2 on Recruitment, unconscious bias is an unavoidable result of the brain's tendency to organize the world through simplistic categorization. If left unmitigated, these unconscious associations can drastically change outcomes and relationships, and situations may be unconsciously reconstructed to conform to these biases. Understanding and challenging unconscious biases is essential for improving day-to-day interactions with colleagues and building a diverse and inclusive work environment.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Disseminate free online training tools, bias testing and information on micro-aggressions and micro-affirmations to all personnel to increase individual awareness. Harvard University, for example, has created an **implicit bias test** as well as other useful tools.[140]

- Encourage personnel to stand-up against bias and discriminatory attitudes and practices, including sexist jokes, racist remarks and stereotypes in formal and informal work contexts. Recognize and reward those who do.

- Create space for personnel to propose new ideas to foster diversity and inclusion in the office. Organize informal briefings and team meetings on various aspects of diversity and inclusion to promote discussion around these issues. Invite experts from other international organizations, the private sector and academia to facilitate discussions. Gender Focal Points/Focal Points for Women, UN-GLOBE and UN Feminist Network representatives should also be engaged.

- Require diversity when selecting participants for trainings, ensuring diversity across various dimensions (gender, geography, grade, etc.) whenever possible.

- Challenge entrenched organizational attitudes and practices that reproduce homogeneity through changing seating arrangements in meetings, rotating speaking orders and chairs of meetings and creating space for groups who tend to speak less (e.g. women, junior colleagues, non-native English speakers) to take the floor if they so wish.

GOOD PRACTICES

Engaging male personnel in gender parity initiatives

The **UN Women** programme HeForShe, originally launched in 2014, has rolled out an effort to engage male staff as allies in gender equality efforts. Since its launch, it has engaged millions of global activists and been the subject of more than 2 billion conversations on social media, with activities reaching every corner of the globe. A dedicated platform to track sign-ups has been created.[xxvi]

Developing accountability guidelines

The **MenEngage Alliance** developed the "MenEngage Alliance Accountability Standards and Guidelines" centred around the belief that developing a more systematized accountability process will enhance the network's ability to ensure that members embody their principles and do not act in a manner that undermines their collective work or the integrity of the alliance. The MenEngage Alliance recognizes 'accountable' to mean:

- Being critically aware of one's own power and privilege.

- Being open to constructive criticism.

- Being responsible for one's actions.

- Following through on what is said will be done.

- Acting to address behaviour or beliefs of individuals and groups both inside and outside the workplace that go against the MenEngage Core Principles.

- Openly acknowledging any harm caused and developing and implementing solutions to atone. This definition emphasizes that being accountable is a proactive responsibility, meaning that the onus falls on the individual to behave in a manner consistent with the MenEngage Principles and Code of Conduct.

xxvi   Available at: **https://www.heforshe.org/en/un**.

To complement the guidelines, the MenEngage Alliance has developed an Accountability Training Toolkit that includes four practical sessions and supporting tools based on existing gender-transformative methodologies for advancing prevention and response to breach in conduct.

Unconscious bias trainings

After investing in a series of women leadership programmes with positive but slow progress, **Pricewaterhouse Coopers** engaged in a series of initiatives to change its organizational culture rather than make interventions exclusively targeting women. It developed "Open Minds", an e-learning package on unconscious bias that seeks to change the behaviour of individuals and thus the culture of the organization. Learners can sign up for 32 twice-weekly emails, which suggest that they "do something different". They are challenged to take a small, tangible action designed to expand their behavioural flexibility. Some actions are simple, such as "sit somewhere different in the meeting room", while others are more challenging, for example, "seek advice from someone new" or "really listen to someone without butting in". Open Mind materials and techniques have also been integrated into PwC's people management programmes, such as performance reviews, promotion decisions and recruitment processes.

Mandatory training on unconscious bias and gender sensitivity has been offered to **World Meteorological Organization (WMO)** staff since 2015 in the form of face-to-face sessions, in partnership with UN Women. These sessions have consisted of lectures and interactive discussions on (1) understanding unconscious biases and their impact on behaviour and (2) building an inclusive organizational culture through inclusive leadership.

The end goal of these mandatory trainings is to stimulate WMO senior managers to lead by example in changing mindsets, addressing inequalities and creating a more diverse and inclusive workplace. A special session has been held on the link between gender and WMO's mandate on weather, water and climate, as well as on practical actions staff could undertake to implement the WMO Gender Equality Policy and Gender Action Plan.

The **Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM)** has organized several training activities to address unconscious bias and engage men in the efforts to achieve gender equality. These trainings have included workshops on unconscious bias. Workshops on gender equality for men offered a safe space for male colleagues to reflect on masculinity and on the key role they can play to help achieve gender equality. In 2018, DGACM has offered "gender stereotyping" sessions, one addressed to senior managers and another to staff at all levels, with a view to fostering discussion and exchange on gender stereotyping and its impact on organizational culture.

The **United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS)** has offered capacity building opportunities, including mandatory online gender and unconscious bias awareness training, barbershop sessions for men to discuss and learn more about the importance of changing organizational culture, and training for field staff on response to security incidents of sexual assault and harassment. The barbershop session provided an opportunity for men to discuss and share their reactions and concerns about changes expected of them. Since the introduction of these trainings alongside the gender strategy, the representation of women in the Division increased from 14 per cent to 20 per cent.

The **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)** regularly offers a workshop on inclusion, diversity and unconscious bias to all staff, with a focus on managers and Appointment Board members. Around 140 WIPO staff members, mostly P-4 and above, have attended the workshop since it was first offered in 2015. WIPO has also opened the workshop to other Geneva-based international organizations when space is available.

The **United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)** has integrated unconscious bias into several trainings, such as their Leadership Programme. Currently, UNOPS is developing a training that focuses specifically on inclusive leadership. Additionally, it provides guidelines to senior leaders on what is expected from them in terms of inclusive leadership.

29

RECOMMENDATION

Foster an environment that promotes diverse discussions in order to maximize collaboration and productivity.

A diverse workforce offers challenges and alternatives to ideas, resulting in more efficient and innovative problem-solving and improved quality of final outcomes.[141] Dissent is characteristic of teams with diverse thinkers, and it is essential for developing breakthrough ideas. However, diverse groups can also be more prone to conflict. Needless to say, unresolved or chronic conflict among colleagues is counterproductive, can impede the conduct and quality of work and is associated with poor mental health, which is discussed in the **UN System Mental Health and Well-being Strategy**. In the Strategy's analysis of the 2015 United Nations staff well-being survey, 49 per cent of respondents reported symptoms consistent with a mental health condition, and one of the top five takeaways from the survey was the correlation between higher levels of perceived occupational conflict and mental health symptoms.[142] When conflict does arise, it is important for managers and personnel to recognize the problem and be aware of measures for resolution. In order to promote a harmonious workplace, managers and personnel must understand how to professionally and collaboratively engage with dissent to prevent conflict, while also bearing in mind tools to ensure discussion and working relationships remain respectful and courteous.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Create an initiative/policy, such as the OHCHR Dignity@Work[143] example below, that fosters informal, diverse and open exchange between personnel at all levels to create a more respectful and inclusive work environment.

- Implement measures to prevent and handle conflict, should it arise, such as providing conflict-resolution training.

- Consider the importance of allocating communal physical space(s), such as a common lounge or dining area, in order to promote the informal exchange and networking of colleagues. The lack of such a space inhibits personnel's ability to engage across departments and levels.

- Ensure that health insurance covers flexible options for mental health support, such as remote therapy through Skype or telephone, as this is of particular importance for staff in locations with limited options.

Additionally, there are many actions that can be taken at the managerial and individual levels to help foster an environment respectful of diverse persons and thought.

For managers:

- Remain attentive to how colleagues interact and be vigilant for changes in personnel behaviour towards each another.

- Act promptly and treat the issue as a priority if conflict, or the potential for this, has been reported by personnel.

- When approached by a colleague with a conflict, be an engaged and objective listener making sure not to express opinion or speculate about the facts. Follow the entity's procedures on reporting further, if needed.

- Be sure to have a clear understanding of the existing resources and protocols for addressing misconduct and share this information widely with personnel. This should include where to refer concerned parties to competent professionals who can further address the issues, such as the Office of the Ombudsman and Mediation Services or Human Resources.

- Encourage personnel to avail themselves of any programmes on working effectively in multicultural environments, such as those offered by the Division for Organizational Development of the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM).

For managers and personnel alike:

- Keep an open mind when working with colleagues by managing emotions effectively and ensuring interpersonal behaviour shows respect for others.

- Understand the perspectives of colleagues and handle people and situations with diplomacy and tact.

- Address conflicts constructively as they arise rather than let them fester. If comfortable doing so without fear of harm or retribution, communicate directly with people in the conflict and take action to prevent recurring issues.

- Be open to admitting to, and working to overcome, personal mistakes or inappropriate behaviours.

- Behave consistently, respectfully, empathetically and fairly towards colleagues at all times.

GOOD PRACTICES

In search of diversity initiatives for senior managers, comprised mostly of white men, consultancy firm **Mott MacDonald** began a reverse-mentoring programme where a senior manager is paired with a minority junior grade staff (minority ethnic background, disability and/or openly LGBTIQ+). The programme has two aspects, with junior staff given a standard mentoring opportunity while hiring managers learn and better understand diversity in the workplace. It offers a safe space for staff to exchange perspectives and learn about their colleagues. All participants in the programme provided feedback that supported the programme and recommended it to colleagues.

Introducing a policy on dignity at work

Through a two-year participatory process led by the Deputy High Commissioner, the **United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)** developed a Dignity@ Work Policy and Action Plan to fully implement the UN Policy on Prohibition of discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment and abuse of authority (ST/SGB/2008/5). The Policy, approved by the High Commissioner in November 2017, reaffirms that "with respect to all its places of work, OHCHR has a policy of ZERO TOLERANCE for abuse of authority, discrimination and harassment – including sexual harassment." It is premised on the organization's duty of care towards personnel and combines efforts to address prohibited conduct effectively with measures to establish a dialogue that builds the trust of personnel and capacity of managers. Through a strong framework for accountability, especially of managers, short-term and long-term measures are enforced in three areas: generating information on the prevalence and incidence of prohibited conduct within OHCHR, preventative and corrective measures.

Some of the most relevant features of the policy are:

- Consultative processes that formulated the policy: two internal surveys, several conversations in an informal setting with the Deputy High Commissioner and the establishment of a Task Force of staff members who volunteered to conduct research and propose measures to senior management.

- A focus on dignity and not just one form of prohibited conduct, with the aim of ensuring that all staff feel equally valued and respected.

- Establishment of a trained network of Dignity Contacts to actively signpost options for staff members affected by prohibited conduct, which increases staff confidence that their rights will be upheld and ensures clarity about their options for action. Other measures are envisaged under the policy, including providing staff with a list of possible interventions by the Office when cases of misconduct are reported, as well as ensuring information in reported cases is aggregated and anonymized.

- Additional steps undertaken to make sure all staff are aware of the zero-tolerance policy include: all-staff messages from the High Commissioner; inclusion of the Dignity@ Work Policy as an agenda item for all-staff meetings and management meetings for staff with supervisory responsibilities; and inclusion of Dignity@Work and related policies in staff induction/orientation materials and sessions and in the OHCHR Code of Conduct.

- Staff with responsibilities for the implementation of different aspects of the Policy have the Deputy High Commissioner as an additional reporting officer in their personal performance appraisal system.

Focal Points on respect in the workplace

The **International Office for Migration (IOM)** has Respectful Workplace Focal Points (RWFP) in regional offices and some large country offices. Some RWFPs in regional offices also cover country offices within their respective region. The RWFPs are nominated by their colleagues to act as neutral, first-line responders of IOM and then trained in conflict prevention and conflict management. Their role is to offer consultations at the local and regional level, facilitating dialogue between those involved in a workplace issue. However, RWFPs are not independent ombudspersons and do not conduct mediation, informal fact-finding on cases or any other follow-up. If the situation requires additional intervention, the consultation will be referred to the ombudsperson. The RWFPs are bound by the same Code of Ethics of the International Ombudsperson Association. This means that when they carry out their role they remain informal, neutral and confidential.

Conflict Management Programme

The **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)** has conducted a mandatory conflict management programme since 2014, which contributes to better understanding and respect for diversity and inclusion at the workplace. The programme provides practical tools and opportunities for staff at all levels to practice dealing with difficult situations.

30

RECOMMENDATION

Enhance the accessibility, inclusivity and safety of meetings and events to ensure they are welcoming to diverse participants.

It is important for event planning processes to consider how to best engage a broad audience and ensure its presentation and organization promote diversity and inclusion. Incorporating accessibility, inclusivity and safety into the planning of meetings and events can help create an event where everyone feels welcomed.

The aforementioned UN Events Code of Conduct developed by the CEB Task Force to Address Sexual Harassment within the Organizations of the UN System serves to create a safe space. When the Code of Conduct is indicated from the initial promotion of the event, the expectations of behaviour are clear.

CONCRETE ACTIONS

- Implement the Model Code of Conduct to Prevent Sexual Harassment During on Relation to UN Events, developed by the CEB Task Force to Address Sexual Harassment within the Organizations of the UN System.

- Consider creating a pragmatic implementation guide or manual on how to make events and meetings inclusive, accessible and safe in your organization, based on the guidance above. This manual should be distributed to all personnel in the organization.

- Reference and direct individuals to the Code of Conduct on event invitations and all other promotional materials to ensure invitees are aware of the guidelines on making the event a safe space and the behaviours expected of them.

- Make all efforts to create diverse and gender-balanced panels. For senior leadership who have committed to be International Gender Champions (**https://genderchampions. com/**), ensure adherence to the Panel Parity Pledge to "no longer sit on single-sex panels". The International Gender Champions Representation Impact Group has also recently launched a "Gender Responsive Assemblies Toolkit" that provides Heads of Organizations, Member States, civil society and staff actions on agenda-setting, participation, governance, working environment and decision-making to accelerate, achieve and sustain gender equality.

- Design inclusive communications materials, such as by using diverse images in photos and gender-inclusive language.

- Ensure RSVP forms are accessible. Consider asking for any accommodation needs.

- Include accessibility and reasonable accommodation needs in the event budget.

- Ensure that the event space is accessible and safe for all persons, including gender-inclusive and wheelchair-accessible bathrooms, wheelchair-accessible building, a variety of seating and table options, audio technology availability and sufficient parking and transportation.

- Request interpreters and captioners for the event, if possible.

- If needed and feasible, assign an Access Coordinator to the event planning team.

- When choosing the event location, keep in mind the availability of a breastfeeding/lactation space that complies with the minimum conditions indicated in the Family Friendly Section. If no space exists, consider converting an existing space on a temporary basis or request an installation of a stand-alone temporary structure.

GOOD PRACTICES

Creating inclusive, accessible and safe events

The **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)** Secretariat developed a Code of Conduct for its conferences, meetings and events in 2017 and adopted a zero-tolerance approach towards harassment, including sexual harassment. The Code of Conduct sets out clear expectations for professional, respectful behaviour from all attendees, including UN personnel, government officials, observers and the media. It complements internal UN policies on discrimination and harassment, which exclusively apply to UN personnel. It explains what constitutes sexual assault, provides examples of unacceptable behaviour, outlines the reporting mechanism and introduces relevant contact persons.

To further and continuously strengthen an inclusive culture, the Code of Conduct is referenced by the Executive Secretary during the opening session and spread via various communication channels. These efforts at the very minimum will be maintained in an effort to ensure UNFCCC conferences, meetings and events are inclusive, safe and harassment-free for everyone.

In response to the request from the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022, the **United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)** created Disability Inclusive Meetings: An Operational Guide for the planning and coordination of meetings that are fully inclusive of participants with diverse disabilities. Throughout the three chapters—Key concepts of disability-inclusive meetings, Planning disability-inclusive meetings, and Conducting disability-inclusive meetings—the guide offers comprehensive suggestions for meeting organizers at all levels.

Provide lactation spaces for nursing mothers

Cobo Center, a meeting and convention facility, provides lactation stations at the facility, free to use during all events.[144] Since the pods are portable, the Center is able to move a pod closer to event rooms to accommodate the needs of attendees. The mobile pod features a bench, fold-down table, an electrical outlet for plugging in breast pumps, space for a stroller and a door that locks.

Mamava,[xxvii] a lactation space design company, offers a selection of freestanding lactation pods, including a portable one suitable for events, a mobile locator app, and an engaged digital community. They have a mission "to create a healthier society through a changed cultural perception of pumping and breastfeeding that affords every woman the opportunity to nurse her child regardless of her circumstances" and are committed to providing mothers with "a private, clean, and comfortable place to use a breast pump or breastfeed – anywhere, anytime."

[xxvii] Available at: **https://www.mamava.com/**.

07.
Implementation

While it is up to each UN entity to decide the approach it will take to integrating the measures of the present guidance, doing so through a change management framework is recommended. This section provides an introduction to understanding the process by which change can be successfully created, managed and sustained, while highlighting cross-cutting elements to strengthen implementation.[xxviii]

PHASE 01

PREPARE FOR CHANGE

01 Identify your starting point and destination

A. Understand the current and desired future state of diversity and inclusion within the organization.

B. Senior management should establish and communicate their clear vision and direction for diversity and inclusion efforts to engage staff with a set of priorities in this regard.

02 Assess the need for change in the organization

A. Seek input from all levels of staff: engage with stakeholders in various forms of dialogue and information exchange to frame the challenges and opportunities of implementing diversity and inclusion. Ensure that your consultations reflect the diversity of staff composition and include Focal Points for gender, disabilities and UN-GLOBE Coordinators, if present in the organization.

B. Through the use of staff engagement surveys, assess key areas in need of improvement as well as areas of strength from which lessons learned can be drawn and leveraged. Use of a survey will also facilitate creating a baseline by which to measure progress. The survey should include questions on engagement, perceptions, well-being, career development, work-life balance and family-friendly policies, including mobility, leadership, gender awareness, harassment and discrimination.

C. In addition to the above, use diverse types of data sources including informal focus group discussions and formal interviews to gain further insight into the organization. Individuals surveyed should reflect the diverse composition of personnel in the organization.

03 Create a case for change

- What is driving this change and why is it needed?

- What benefits do we expect to see? (qualitative & quantitative; internal & external benefits)

- How will the change affect me and what is my role in the process?

- What are the consequences of not changing expediently?

PHASE 02

PLAN/DESIGN CHANGE

04 Create a roadmap with specific actions, targets and timelines

A. Conduct a gap analysis to identify what actions and resources are needed to bridge the current and desired states. There are many tools to assist in this regard, a few examples of which can be found **here**.

B. Develop concrete and measurable targets and actions in response to evidence gathered in the earlier stage. These targets and actions should be feasible and operationalized within the timeline. For elements requiring further research, resources and/or planning, future commitments to address these long-term areas should be communicated clearly to personnel to ensure they see their feedback is being considered.

C. Establish Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and a process by which to measure them.

D. Indicate resources needed and specify sustainable funding sources for the duration of the measure.

E. Align/integrate this plan with existing planning documents such as Gender Action Plans and Strategic Plans.

F. Integrate targets and actions into staff performance plans to increase motivation and accountability.

05 Determine which departments/divisions will be responsible for each action and/or target to strengthen ownership and accountability

A. Engagement of all personnel in all departments will be required to build a fully inclusive, respectful and equal organization. It is essential that all understand their roles and responsibilities in contributing to an enabling environment.

B. Communicate roles and responsibilities clearly to all staff and revise job descriptions to reflect these changes for new hires.

PHASE 03

IMPLEMENT CHANGE

06 **Follow the roadmap, led by senior leaders and change agents leading diversity and inclusion (D&I) efforts in your organization, such as Gender Focal Points and HR, who have the relevant skills and competencies**

A. Consider leadership, accountability, communication skills and emotional intelligence when identifying responsible actors and change agents.

B. Support those who are leading the change effort through training, coaching and mentoring to build their skills.

C. Establish regular ongoing opportunities for leading change agents and staff to communicate and check-in with one another and explore potential synergies and collaborations between their efforts, such as through establishing interdepartmental working groups that meet regularly.

D. Communicate efforts with personnel on a regular basis so they are aware of what is being done.

PHASE 04

SUSTAIN CHANGE

07 **Proactively monitor the progress of targets and evaluate impact to sustain desired outcomes**

A. Create concrete, systematic measurements (e.g. report on diversity and inclusion efforts through performance management tools, 360° appraisals of managers, diversity targets) to track progress and evaluate the effectiveness of implemented measures.

B. Personnel should be provided with diverse and regular opportunities to give their feedback, through both informal and formal channels, as well as be updated on the progress of measures.

C. Measure and report, both internally and externally, on progress using data disaggregated by particular groups, such as by sex, nationality and persons with disabilities.

D. Use evidence-based results to adjust change initiatives and implementation strategies as needed.

E. Establish accountability in cases where progress is not realized or sustained for further improvement.
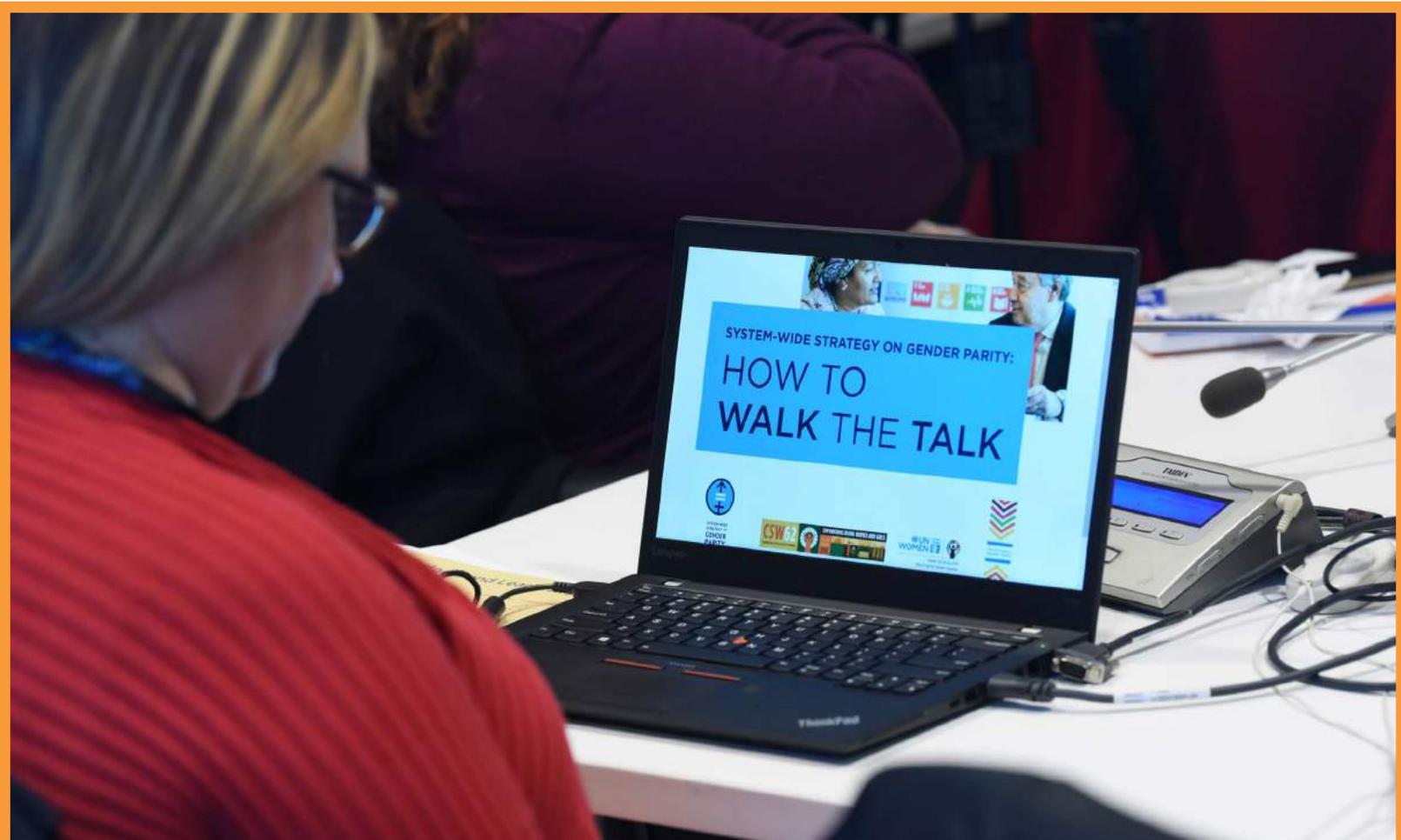
The following factors have been highlighted as key elements to strengthen the implementation of the recommended measures, which in turn will support the achievement of outcomes to reach diversity and inclusion across the UN system.

01. AN INCLUSIVE AND PARTICIPATORY APROACH

Fundamental to effective change management is the engagement of staff at all levels in planning and implementing change. An inclusive process will more likely be able to incorporate and address the concerns of all staff, particularly those of minorities and lower grade levels. Collective involvement in the change process increases a sense of ownership and accountability. Consequently, personnel will be motivated to commit to organizational change.

Distributing authority → **Sense of ownership** → **High motivation to change**

Invite all levels of staff and stakeholders

Personnel's input helps diagnose organizational climate and culture and can provide innovative ideas on overcoming potential barriers to change. Engagement of all personnel across organizations—such as increasing the responsibility of employees, soliciting feedback and involving employees in decision-making—can increase personnel's interest and motivation to commit to an organizational change they have co-created.

Provide various forums and formats for staff to share their ideas and provide feedback

Varied platforms are needed to engage personnel of diverse backgrounds, locations and levels. Actively reaching out to those less likely to engage in group settings, through inclusive messaging and creation of diverse opportunities to provide feedback (focus groups, Yammer discussion boards, surveys, etc.) can facilitate multi-stakeholder access and engagement and demonstrate organizational empathy in strengthening interpersonal relationships and creating an inclusive environment. Storytelling can be a powerful tool to showcase the benefit of efforts, where staff can share the importance and effect of diversity and inclusion (D&I) implementation.

Highlight champions

Champions are change agents who exemplify effective action in co-creating change. These change agents tend to employ a formal process to recruit, train and 'deploy' them throughout the organization. It is an effective way to both communicate and engage staff about the upcoming change as well as get feedback from those who are affected. Organizational recognition and rewarding of the efforts by the change agents can highlight important drivers of change and motivate others to follow. UNIDO publicly acknowledges change champions through its Gender Equality Mobilization (GEM) Awards, which recognize exceptional efforts to prioritize gender equality and gender-responsive behaviour in employee's work.

Emotional engagement can navigate organizational change in two ways: creating empathy to compel people to act in the desired ways that substantial change demands and reducing resistance to change.

02 EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT

Emotionally engage and motivate staff

Personal testimony is an effective tool to motivate staff towards organizational change. Providing opportunities for underrepresented staff to share their experiences can increase empathy as well as urgency for creating a more enabling and inclusive environment. Sharing personal accounts also contributes to raising awareness, educating on the need for diversity and inclusion and combatting discrimination and bias.

UN for ALL, a voluntary learning and development programme on diversity and inclusion by UN Cares, provides a safe space for LGBTIQ+ staff members to share personal stories and raise the LGBTIQ+ community's voice on experiences of stigma and discrimination in the UN system. By using empathy in the UN for All programme, UN Cares raises awareness, increases advocacy and ultimately changes mindsets and behaviours.

Reduce resistance

Change can create increased fear and anxiety, resulting in people becoming sensitive and prone to be resistant. Addressing resistance, demystifying the process, countering misconceptions and providing emotional support can facilitate acceptance.[145]

03 INVOLVEMENT OF SENIOR LEADERSHIP

As has been emphasized throughout the guidance, senior leadership is pivotal for creating an enabling environment and managing change. Recognizing that new United Nations leadership qualities, skills and working methods are needed to meet the challenges of the ambitious and integrated 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the United Nations System Leadership Framework was developed under the auspices of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) to establish a common United Nations leadership culture aligned with achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The framework is not merely a tool for human resources management, but also an important vehicle through which to foster broader cultural change within United Nations system organizations. The leadership qualities outlined in the framework can be embedded in all areas of work of the United Nations system, at all levels and in all functions and locations (see next page).[146]

THE UN SYSTEM LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK ESTABLISHES THAT UN LEADERSHIP:

- is **norm-based,** promoting, protecting and defending United Nations norms and standards contained in international treaties, resolutions and declarations

- takes a **principled** approach at all levels, always maintaining constructive engagement with all stakeholders on the most sensitive of issues and never discriminating, fearing or favoring in the face of pressure and push-back

- is **inclusive** and respectful of all personnel and stakeholders, embracing diversity and rejecting discrimination in all its forms

- is mutually **accountable** within the system, to beneficiaries—especially the most vulnerable, excluded or marginalized— and the public beyond, for the causes the organization serves and the way it conducts its work

- is **multidimensional**, engaging across pillars and functions, connecting knowledge and experience, and ensuring coherence in support of the fully integrated SDG framework

- is **transformational** at all levels, supporting the overall mission to achieve positive change as well as the significant change effort to implement the 2030 Agenda while leaving no one behind

- is **collaborative**, reflecting the interdependent imperatives of the United Nations Charter and the comprehensive nature of the 2030 Agenda, seeking collective "as one" thinking, joined-up approaches and solutions, and recognizing that better connecting universal goals to people-centred initiatives requires investment in collective United Nations efforts to achieve them, and

- is **self-applied**, so that United Nations principles and norms are exhibited in the behaviour and interactions of all leaders.

Champion D&I and break down silos

The System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity recommends all Heads of UN entities join the International Gender Champions and make specific, concrete and ambitious commitments on enhancing gender equality and parity within their organizations.[147]

Furthermore, sharing efforts to promote diversity and inclusion will help communicate that this is a priority for the organization and motivate staff to do their part. These actions increase trust in leadership, by promoting a culture of integrity, transparency and fairness.

Senior management can also play an active role in breaking down silos by promoting intra-departmental collaboration, coordination and communication as well through vertical hierarchies.

DPKO/DFS through the Office of the Chief of Staff established a Gender Champions Group drawing on staff across all units and all levels to help monitor and guide the implementation of the Gender Parity Strategy. The group decided to meet monthly to ensure that implementation continued in a consistent manner. The group provided feedback on planned initiatives in order to maximise impact. The Group was chaired by a senior leader (D2), included the participation of the Chief of Staff, and involved 12 other members from GS to D1 level, both men and women. The group was recently reviewed, and Champions noted that they appreciated the opportunity to contribute to this agenda and the detailed information they received about progress towards targets and implementation. They observed that the champions have kept Gender Parity on the agenda, have taken ideas back to the own work areas, and have helped prioritise a significant suite of activities and well as refining and strengthening those activities.

Managerial training

Coaching and capacity development trainings can be helpful tools for senior and mid-level managers to gain the necessary skills needed to support change management, diversity and inclusion. These could include training in participatory methods, communication skills, unconscious bias and awareness-raising. The United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC) offers several leadership courses, which are highlighted in the Talent Management section.
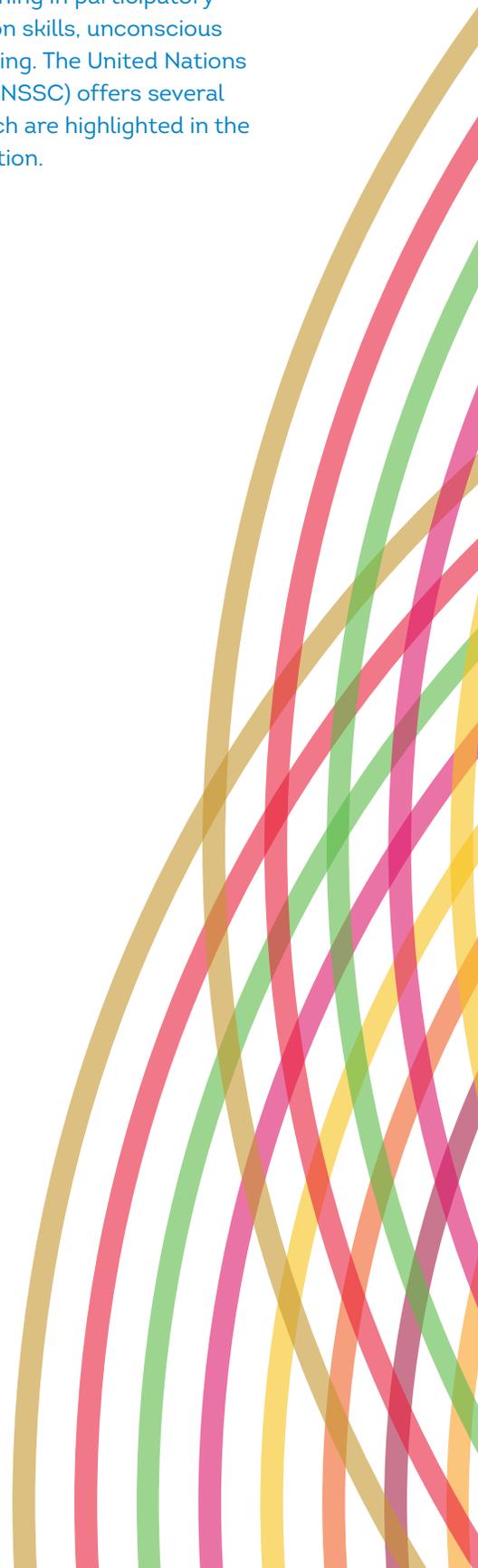
COMMUNICATIONS AND ADVOCACY TIPS

As expressed by UN-LOCK, "Successful change on diversity and inclusion requires the creation of ongoing opportunities for dialogue between stakeholders about the change. Communicating information about the change is important, but there is plenty of evidence that a top-down, 'tell' approach to communication is not enough to change attitudes and behaviour. Instead it is the process of ongoing collective inquiry and dialogue that sits at the core of successful change."

In order to increase collective support for change, consider the following communication tips:

01 **Present the business case for diversity and inclusion, and/or proposed change.** The rationale for each recommendation in the present guidance has been provided at the beginning of each recommendation that could be used in this regard.

02 **Use data to evidence the need for change in the organization.** Often those not disadvantaged by current conditions may be unaware of disparities and a need for change. Help illuminate these by providing clear data and trends.

03 **Engage senior leadership** in championing the desired change.

04 **Openly address concerns and reframe the issue**. Change can instigate feelings of uncertainty, such as concerns about job security and conditions of merit being undermined. Organizations based on meritocratic values are often most vulnerable to the "paradox of meritocracy"[148] , where managers tend to believe they are objective and therefore disregard their own biases and show greater unintentional bias. Useful tips on how to address bias and merit arguments can be found in "<u>In the Eye of the Beholder: Avoiding the Merit Trap.</u>"[149]

05 **Create opportunities for dialogue between personnel.**

06 **Communicate how feedback is being addressed** by the organization.

07 **Follow-up** on how these have changed perceptions and if and what further actions may be needed.

04 ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability is a necessary mechanism to catalyse progress. Through the performance appraisals of staff and the use of management tools that allow for staff feedback, accountability mechanisms can also be an opportunity for transparency, communication and learning. As part of the Dignity@Work Policy's action plan, a 360° evaluation was introduced for all staff with management responsibility to assess managers' performance in ensuring a working environment free from discrimination, harassment and abuse of power.

TIPS FOR CONDUCTING A SUCCESSFUL 360° EVALUATION

- A 360° evaluation, by definition, should include the perspectives of a manager's supervisees, peers and superiors.

- Sample sizes should be large enough to protect the anonymity of respondents.

- The evaluation process should be fully understood by all participants. Raters should comprehend the need to provide constructive, honest and concise feedback designed to help the person or team being evaluated to grow professionally.

- When designing statements/questions, frame them accurately as individual perceptions rather than qualities of the manager, i.e. instead of asking raters to evaluate if their manager is a good listener, ask if they feel like their opinions are heard.

- Anonymized feedback should be presented as given by respondents and not distilled or simplified to protect managers from criticism.

- Aggregate results should be shared with the manager, who should discuss these further with staff.

- At an organizational level, managers' 360° evaluations should be reviewed comparatively, and where managers exhibit strength, their efforts and good practices should be showcased for the benefit of all. Additionally, a peer-mentoring system between managers might be considered to facilitate mutual learning of successful managerial skills.

- The evaluation should be used for the purpose of growth and development by providing post-360° coaching, if necessary, to participants so that feedback can be discussed in a safe environment. This highlights that the goal of the feedback is to identify areas to work on and possible training and growth opportunities.

- Resources permitting, 360° evaluations should be administered by an experienced third-party provider to further protect anonymity and encourage participation.

- Follow up on feedback received. For managers, this could mean targeted coaching or training. In cases where mismanagement or conflicts have been identified, a remedial action plan should be proposed and efficacy evaluated afterwards.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are critical steps to track progress and report on the implementation of the strategy and outcome. Regular analysis of progress provides essential information on how to improve, strengthen and/or revise current efforts. Progress and outcomes that are transparent and open to the public will increase accountability and motivate others. Progress that is measured using data disaggregated by groups, including sex, nationality and persons with disabilities will increase understanding of how implementation is impacting particular groups and prevents some groups from being left behind.

The System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity recommends that "Each UN entity should establish an internal oversight mechanism to monitor the progress of its department, offices, and missions, prescribe remedial actions when necessary, and report performance semi-annually to the head of the UN entity. All progress should be updated on the public website, which will in the first stages be Secretariat-specific and will be broadened to cover the common system."[150]

Establish accountability to review and update relevant assessments and timelines for reporting on progress

Establishing regular review of targets and measures of progress by the Head of Organization and senior management is essential to enforce accountability and sustain momentum. Reviews of progress should include analysis of successful drivers of change and explain major gaps between expected outcome and results.

Integrating Gender Equality and Rewarding Progress

The Gender Equality Seal was launched in 2011 to incentivize UNDP Country Offices to integrate gender equality into all aspects of their development work. Participating UNDP Country Offices can achieve Gold, Silver or Bronze level certification by meeting standards in seven areas (management systems, in-house capacities, enabling environment, communications and knowledge management, programmes, partnerships and gender impact/results). The Seal serves as a learning platform to help UNDP Country Offices establish baselines, enhance strategies, document innovations and showcase the impact of interventions for gender equality. Since its launch, the Seal has worked with 57 UNDP Country Offices and expanded to support more than 400 public and private organizations in implementing the programme to close persistent gender gaps in the workplace, including eliminating gender-based pay gaps, eradicating sexual harassment at work and using inclusive, non-sexist communication. The Seal brings credibility and visibility to Country Offices, and through a systematic and measurable approach, transforms culture to harness and realise the full potential of personnel.

05. COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP

Creating change requires collaborative efforts to achieve integrated and cohesive results. In the UN context, this includes partnering beyond one's organization to connect to the wider UN system and relevant actors. Partnerships with other UN agencies, civil society, Member States, subject matter experts in the private sector and other key stakeholders can maximize resources and make a greater impact.

Proactively engage with other UN entities and key stakeholders

The System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity has mobilized collective UN efforts to attain gender parity by 2028, and thereby increased potential opportunities for collaboration. Entities are encouraged to reach out to agencies that share a commonality such as location, entity type (i.e. specialized entity, funds and programmes, training and research) and size (small departments and offices often face shared challenges). By discussing similar challenges and solutions found, lessons learned are shared and efforts improved. Partnering can also ease resource burdens and maximize the reach of programmes (e.g. an inter-agency mentoring or leadership programme).

Participate in system-wide gender and diversity networks

The Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE) is a network of Gender Focal Points (GFPs) in UN offices, specialized agencies, funds and programmes. IANWGE advocates and promotes system-wide gender mainstreaming, implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda.[151]

Gender Focal Points

Gender Focal Points (GFPs) and Focal Points for Women[xxix] work closely on issues of gender equality, parity and/or gender mainstreaming within their organizations and are an invaluable resource in guiding efforts on these fronts.

UN Women regularly provides information sessions, capacity-building workshops, useful guidance and resources to support Focal Points in carrying out their functions. Regular convening of the system-wide network of Focal Points has strengthened inter-agency sharing of good practices, progress made and understanding of key challenges. Given the varying levels of expertise among GFPs, they are strongly encouraged to contact the Focal Point for Women

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[xxix] These terms are synonymous. The term "Focal Points for Women" is used by the UN Secretariat, and is guided by the Secretary-General's (ST/SGB/2008/12) "Departmental focal points for women in the Secretariat". The term "Gender Focal Points" is used by the remainder of the UN system.

in the UN system, housed at UN Women and reachable at **focalpoint.forwomen@unwomen. org**, with any questions they may have and to ensure they are on the contact list to receive regular updates.

Despite the valuable guidance and information offered by GFPs, they have at times been underutilized or, conversely, overextended— both of which undermine this important resource. For example, despite the guiding document for UN Secretariat Focal Points for Women stating that Focal Points are to participate in the staff selection process, they are frequently excluded. Additionally, Focal Points have reported being overextended and underresourced, as they often carry out these functions in addition to their primary roles.

To meet the UN-SWAP indicator on gender architecture,[152] Focal Points need clear Terms of Reference (ToR) aligned with existing policies related to their functions. ToR should include specification of time allotted to Focal Point duties and the provision of commensurate resources. UN Women has sample ToR available upon request. GFPs are also required to have a grade level sufficient for access to senior management (P-4 and higher). They should be provided with opportunities to provide feedback to internal policymaking processes and have direct access to management, especially in aspects directly impacting the organization's progress towards gender parity, such as staff selection.

GFPs and Focal Points for Women may be appointed in a different manner depending on the entity. A participatory approach can strengthen their role and legitimacy. For example, at OHCHR, the Focal Point for Women and Alternate Focal Point for Women are chosen by staff through a voting process to advance the rights and well-being of female staff. They carry out their functions on a voluntary basis and are not necessarily part of the organization's gender architecture, although they cooperate closely.

Entities are also strongly encouraged to pursue gender diversity in their GFP representation and encourage the designation of male Focal Points in order to counter perceptions that gender is a 'women's issue'. Given the shared advocacy and efforts on issues such as standardized parental leave and mobility, Gender Focal Points should consider liaising with UN-GLOBE Coordinators within their organization, and if none are present consider their establishment.

ANNEX I

UNLOCK's change management framework

The United Nations Laboratory for Organizational Change and Knowledge (UNLOCK) created a change management framework based on case studies of five UN diversity and inclusion initiatives (UNHCR, UNDP, UNCares, UNAIDS and UNDSS).[153] The framework defines three phases, broken down into 12 elements, for achieving change management. Within each phase, key elements are highlighted that, when considered throughout each phase, strengthen the change process.

For complete details on the case studies please see "Case Study Series: Delivering Successful Change for Diversity and Inclusion in the UN". (**https://www.unssc.org/sites/unssc.org/files/casestudy4.pdf**).

UNLOCK'S CHANGE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

PHASE 1: Prepare for change

01.
Adopt a change mindset

02.
Think system, not silo

03.
Engage the head; do not forget the heart
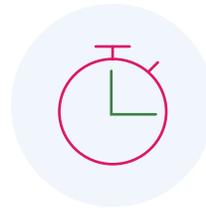
04.
Know your starting point

05.
Enable leadership at all levels

PHASE 2: Design change
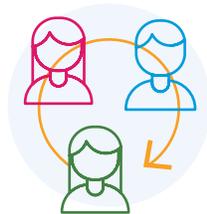
06.
Co-create the change

07.
Design for empathy

08.
Communicate for dialogue as well as information

PHASE 3: Implement change
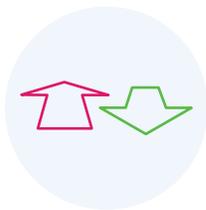
09.
Push and pull on accountability and implementation

10.
Do not underestimate the skills and experience required

11.
Learn from others

12.
Monitor and measure impact

1 Executive Office of the Secretary-General (2017). System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity. p. 34.

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