



UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

CEB

**Chief Executives Board
for Coordination**

CEB/2022/HRN/5
23 June 2022

Summary of Conclusions of the Human Resources Network Directors Retreat

Table of Contents

Adoption of the Agenda.....	3
i. Opening and Welcome.....	3
ii. Racism, Diversity & Inclusion	3
iii. Future of Work, Update & next Steps.....	4
iv. Flexible Work and Future Work Modalities	4
v. Expectations for upcoming ICSC comprehensive Compensation Review.....	5
vi. Strategic Workforce Planning	5
vii. HR Analytics.....	5
viii. HR Professionalization.....	6
ix. Discussion on further practical Cooperation and HR Matters	6
List of Participants.....	8

Adoption of the Agenda

i. Opening and Welcome

1. The Human Resources Network held its 41st session from 20-22 June 2022, hosted by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in Geneva. The meeting, held in retreat format, was co-chaired by Ms. Martha Helena Lopez, Assistant Secretary-General, Human Resources, UN Secretariat, Mr. David Bearfield, UNDP, Ms. Jennifer Linkins, WHO, Mr. Andre Bogui, ILO, and Ms. Cathy Bennet, UNHCR.
2. The agenda was adopted as reflected in the table of contents.
3. The list of participating organizations and their representatives at the meeting is provided in Annex 1.
4. The Network Co-Chairs announced personnel changes among the organizations and welcomed new participants to the HR Network session.
5. Network members had the chance to raise points not yet on the agenda and have an open discourse on how others perceive them. Most of the participants were interested to further discuss the enhancement of agility at the workplace, as well the handling the implications of remote work and Covid-19. A dominant strategy was to make vaccinations mandatory and set clear indications of what is expected from staff regarding office presence while explaining the reasons. Participants also pointed out that with teleworking now being common managers will need to adapt new leadership styles.

ii. Racism, Diversity & Inclusion

6. The aim of this session was to brief the HRN on the discussions and conclusions of HLCM, to update on currently ongoing inter-agency initiatives and to share experiences on current Diversity & Inclusion practices upon which the next steps in the area of racism is going to be agreed upon. This especially is an important topic as the Secretary General identified these important issues at CEB and HLCM and all executives need to pay attention to the topic.
7. During the open discussion organizations shared their main challenges resolving the problems at hand. The most common ones mentioned were creating an enabling environment, coming up with a holistic interagency framework and changing the overall language to create an inclusive culture and awareness for each individual's role in the UN Network. To efficiently solve these challenges a need for data and measurements was identified. One participant made the point that a business case would help in the process and that there needs to be an initiative to speak to help victims to speak up without the fear of retaliation. Multiple organizations pointed out internships and paying interns as a way to grant marginalized groups more possibilities to start working at the UN. IT was also suggested to the focus on monitoring results and progress to make organizations accountable for creating diversity.
8. *Conclusion: The HR Network agrees to*
 - a) *Initiate a Working group as requested by HLCM, to collect best practices, identify gaps and approaches to collectively work on Racism, Diversity & Inclusion*
 - b) *Focus the initial work on preparing a draft for a common Glossary and Principles*

iii. Future of Work, Update & next Steps

9. The goal of this session was to brief HRN on the discussions and conclusion of HLCM on its Future of Work Taskforce. This includes a briefing on the current TF status, a presentation and discussion of the current draft papers (“Work-Life Harmony” and “Right to disconnect”) to prepare for final consultation, and brief presentations and discussions on other elements and products.
10. In the discussion following the presentation of “Work-Life Harmony” , a number of participants emphasized an observed change in the expectations in particular of younger staff members, and more broadly the change in the nature of society in respect of fundamentals of work. There is a larger focus on flexibility within working hours and care for flexible working arrangements. This obviously had implications on management styles, discouraging micromanagement and focusing on professional growth of staff members.
11. After the presentation “Right to disconnect” network members suggested a title change given that the term “right” might not be correctly understood in this context. A focus of the discussion was on the necessity for core working hours in the context of ensuring required tasks and meeting coordination at the workplace. Furthermore, leadership needs to act as a role model to create a stronger connection with the new working culture. While it was seen as possible to design a “Right to disconnect” in the spirit of enhanced work-life harmony, it would still be a necessity to overrule that in case of critical and emergency settings.
12. *Conclusion: The HR Network*
 - a. *Thanked the colleagues involved in this workstream for their efforts*
 - b. *Suggested a revision of the title “right” to disconnect*
 - c. *Endorsed the key principles underpinning the document while suggesting further work to streamline and synthesize, and invited its members to provide further detailed written comments to the drafting team as warranted.*

iv. Flexible Work and Future Work Modalities

13. The aim of this session was to compare current practices, developments and experiences on broad issues regarding flexible work and future of work. It included recent amendments to flexible work rules and regulations with a focus on remote working specifically (working outside of the duty station), organizational and systematic solutions and support mechanisms and opportunities for organizational changes. Furthermore, approaches and initiatives to enhance flexible working were presented by UNICEF and other participants.
14. A large part of the discussion centered around reasonable duration for work outside of the duty station within the current Common System framework, taking into account legal and tax-related implications as well as perceptions and expectations by Member States. It was agreed to continue this sharing of experiences in the coming months.
15. *Conclusions: The HR Network*
 - a) *Agreed to continue the experience exchange on the matter, with an initial focus on arriving at joint terminology and definitions as an underpinning for further harmonization of practices where justified*

- v. Expectations for upcoming ICSC comprehensive Compensation Review
 - 16. In this session a first preparatory discussion to frame the HRN's positions for the upcoming ICSC Comprehensive Compensation Review was held. This was a natural continuation of the agenda item before, seeking to identify what specific points in our compensation merit broader review in the more flexible and volatile work settings. Also, this was an opportunity to reflect more broadly on the HRN's working relationship with ICSC.
 - 17. Comments regarding compensation call for further modernization of the category system of G and P positions to create career paths across categories. Others emphasized the modernization of qualification requirements pointing out that rigid educational requirements don't always meet the requirements for job success and may hamper diversity and inclusion.
 - 18. Conclusions: *The HR Network*
 - a) *Agreed to create a working group in preparation of the upcoming ICSC Compensation Review, noting that such Working Group should also seek input and views of the Finance & Budget Network.*
- vi. Strategic Workforce Planning
 - 19. During the session experiences on current practices and developments for strategic workforce planning were exchanged. WFP and UNDP did present in more detail how they are approaching the topic and answered question from the attendees.
 - 20. It was felt important to thoroughly research and clarify changes to the workforce. WFP ensures this through a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches in which HR defines and gives direction to move forward. Through functional reviews of HQ, regional and country offices the strategic outlook was formulated. The planning process is owned by the Finance Department to ensure the link to the budgeting process. UNDP shared their experience in trading off internal versus external (consultancy) expertise. A broader view on management review is warranted by installing a talent management review group instead of leaving all of the responsibility in the hands of a line manager.
 - 21. In the subsequent discussion, other organizations briefly shared their experiences with the topic. It was also noted that an informal group was exchanging practices more intensely, an approach that should be encouraged.
 - 22. Conclusion: *The HR Network*
 - a) *Agreed to formalize an Interest Group on Strategic Workforce Planning, noting that the UN Secretariat agreed to chair such group for the coming 12 months.*
- vii. HR Analytics
 - 23. The topic of the session was how to advance data analytics in the field of HR at inter-agency level. This included a presentation / update on the current potential of existing inter-agency statistics, as well as a discussion of potential inter-agency cooperation in areas such as cross-entity benchmarking, member states reporting or data-driven policy formulation.
 - 24. Organizations confirmed the topic as being timely and concluding from the discussion there seems to be different kind of maturity levels regarding tool, systems and positions. A lot of organizations highlighted the practicality a framework and automation would have on what they share with their different target audiences, for example harmonizing on what you are allowed to share

because of privacy rights. Some members pointed out that the right training is necessary for the position of a data analyst to be functional as often times the position is hard to fill. Training was endorsed by other organizations while others recommended to set up a function internally to work on statistics, dashboards and systems. One of the biggest advantages observed was to take out emotions from sensitive topics like diversity, facilitating discussion by having an objective overview over the situation.

25. *Conclusions: The HR Network*

- a) *Endorsed the presented CEB dashboard.*
- b) *Supported the creation of a new HR Network Analytics Interest Group, requesting the CEB Secretariat to coordinate a co-chairing of that group.*

viii. HR Professionalization

26. The aim of the session was to re-initiate the discussion on how HR professionalization can be driven in a pragmatic and focused manner. UNDP and WHO shared their thoughts, plans and experiences for wider discussion with the Network, especially on how they use CIPD to certify their HR staff members.

27. A lot of organizations saw CIPD as the best choice for certification of HR capabilities. Alongside sustaining that, they foresaw centralization of recruitment in their organization and a menu of different options for professionalization as proposed by UN as relevant issues. A variety of options beside CIPD would help to manage costs. IAEA pointed out that only if a larger number of staff members from each organization undergo the program, it would make a difference. Exceptionally important would not only be the strategic knowledge gained, but the outsider's perspective on organizational workings, helping to keep the UN modern and competitive. Others emphasized that the specific UN and International Organizations environment would still need to play a significant role in any HR professionalization efforts.

28. *Conclusions: The HR Network*

- a. *Agreed to establish a Working Group to further develop HR professionalization efforts, to be co-led by UNDP and WHO.*

ix. Discussion on further practical Cooperation and HR Matters

29. The aim of this session was to provide a space for a more general discussion on further collaboration and reflecting on "ways of working" in the Network, including topics such as enhanced cooperation in administering crisis situations such as Ukraine, potential for joint procurement and LTA, advancing mutual recognition and an outlook and general planning of activities in the 2nd half of 2022.

30. On the topic of enhanced cooperation all organization agreed that the working stream preparing the Flexible Working Model Policy did a good job and helped them to create guidelines within their own organizations. The resulting harmonization was appreciated and future consistency endorsed.

31. The biggest potential for joint procurement and LTA is in saving time in the procurement process and getting the best value for the best price for the whole system. To achieve that organizations declared that they need the knowledge of what outside providers the others are using. Although the UN Global Market exists, a survey among all organizations would help clarifying the current situation. When organizations use the same systems and one does implement a new feature the other should get the same benefit without paying for it a second time.

32. Organizations pointed out that there is already a lot of mutual recognition, as that was the very nature of the UN Common System that is applied in the HR area. On top of that, network members recognized that even though organizations have different policies, most of them build on the same principles and are developed after experience exchange. Further proactive mutual recognition would be best in recruiting, meaning that organizations share their talent pool, recognize learning and mandatory programs and leveraging the potential of better aligned HR-related procurement processes.
33. Regarding the Outlook and general Planning for 2022 to 2023 it was proposed to establish three different categories of groups: interest groups, working groups, standing groups. The names are not fixed and suggestions will be taken into account. The interest groups are a place where loose collaboration can take place though firmly anchored in and reporting to the HR Network. If there is a need for a concrete task force a working group will be established, which is time bound and as soon as its task is done will be discontinued. The working group would be chaired by a director, but should consist of all other levels of staff as well. The Network was reminded of the established HR Policy Repository.

34. *Conclusions: The HR Network*

- a) Confirmed the importance of advancing Mutual Recognition*
- b) Agreed to concentrate these efforts on three areas: (a) the expansion of mutually-agreed expert rosters, (b) the mutual recognition of mandatory training courses and (c) the enhancement of HR-related joint procurement by increasing transparency of HR service LTA through the UN Global Marketplace.*
- c) Agreed to continue its collaboration between session through the following interest groups: (1) HR Analytics, (2) Strategic Workforce Planning, (3) Performance Management and Staff Engagement and (4) Talent sourcing, outreach and assessment.*
- d) Agreed to create the following working groups: (1) HR Professionalization, (2) Preparation of upcoming ICSC compensation review and (3) any continuation of work of the "Future of Work" Taskforce as warranted.*

List of Participants

Organizations	Name
UN	Ms. Martha Helena Lopez
FAO	Ms. Greet De Leeuw
	Mr. John McInnes
UNESCO	Ms. Kazumi Ogawa
	Mr. Ieng Srong
ITU	Mr. Diego Ruiz
IOM	Mr. Michael Emery
	Mr. Conor Tierney
IFAD	Ms. Candida Sansone
IAEA	Mr. Peter Frobel
UNDP	Mr. David Bearfield
UNICEF	Mr. Magassa Bandjoukou
	Mr. Yuichi Kawamoto
UNHCR	Ms. Catty Bennet Sattler
	Mr. Stephan Ulrich Grieb
UNFPA	Ms. Josephine Mbithi
ITC	Ms. Helen Kwon-Karaul
UNFCCC	Ms. Zephora Weru
UNWOMEN	Ms. Maria de la Luna
IDLO	Ms. Yumiko Thomas

Organizations	Name
OSCE	Mr. Micheal Conneely
ICAO	Ms. Tolulope Olamide Agiri
WFP	Ms. Fetlework Asseged Yegletu
	Ms. Camilla Dupont
UNRWA	Mr. Antonino Brusa
	Ms. Maria Traficanti
UNOPS	Ms. Victoria Campbell
UNICC	Mr. Frederic Laval
IMO	Ms. Liya Dominic
UNAIDS	Ms. Alison Holmes
WIPO	Ms. Adelaide Barbier
UPU	Ms. Louise Razafy
WHO	Ms. Jennifer Linkins
ILO	Mr. Andre Bogui
CEB	Mr. Michael Rosetz
	Mr. Ben Riemenschneider