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Item 21 of the agenda

NEW AUDITS BY THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR

PART VI

**AUDIT REPORT ON UNESCO INTERNAL
HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PROCESSES**

ADDENDUM 2

COMMENTS BY THE INTERNATIONAL STAFF ASSOCIATION OF UNESCO (ISAU)

SUMMARY

**VI. Short-form audit report on the internal processes of
UNESCO's human resources management**

Pursuant to Item 9.2.7 of the UNESCO Human Resources Manual, the International Staff Association of UNESCO (ISAU) submits its comments on human resources issues (document 204 EX/21 Part VI.)

1. ISAU has examined the audit report on the internal processes of UNESCO's human resources management. The report was absolutely essential and it reveals the inefficiencies in human resources management.

Evaluation of individual performance

2. It is essential to establish a reliable and durable system. The auditors denounced "*a failure to understand the principles of cascading and individualized goal setting*" that shows that both the staff and the supervisors were confused owing to the lack of proper training. The abnormally low completion rate of evaluations may be explained by the fact that staff were under the impression that the evaluations were almost useless, as there was no correlation between evaluation and career progression, or between poor performance and sanctions. The fact that almost 99% of evaluations either "exceed expectations" (13%) or "fully meet expectations" (86%) shows that the system is unreliable and does not reflect the reality of performances. MyTalent software that is more flexible and more user-friendly is essential in achieving a better rate of completed individual evaluations.



3. ISAU would like to be involved in the process of reforming internal human resources management. We put forward below our comments on the recommendations by the External Auditor as well as the responses by the Administration.

Recommendation No.3

4. Although we agree with the auditor's recommendation "*to bolster the obligation to respect the deadlines set for the stages of the evaluation process by coercive measures and incentives*", we are in complete disagreement with his proposal stipulating that "*if the first stage in which the staff member being evaluated has to draw up a set of goals is not completed by the deadline, the task should be assigned to his or her supervisor who would be given access to MyTalent software (priority 2)*". If the employee's responsibility is indeed to set their objectives, this cannot be entrusted to their supervisor without risking a conflict of interest. It is a supervisor's responsibility to ensure that those being supervised meet their obligations.

Recommendation No.9

5. ISAU does not understand why, according to the Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM), in terms of training in the process of individual evaluations, it would be "difficult to impose compulsory training".

Recruitment of heads of field offices and project appointment (PA) staff: a drastic reduction in delays is possible.

6. ISAU subscribes to the recommendations by the External Auditor that aim to significantly reduce delays in recruitment of heads of field offices and PA staff.

Recommendation No.15

7. The external auditors call for the creation of "*a pool of managers who would be capable of assuming, in the short- or medium-term, the duties of director/head of field office*". We do not understand why the Administration does not accept this, and would like it to be explained and justified. The issue of skill pools in fact affects the entirety of staff management.

Recommendation No.18

8. The auditor recommends the creation of "*a pool of external candidates qualified for project appointments*". ISAU does not agree with the principles put forth by HRM to refuse this recommendation, namely:

- (a) the fact that PA staff would be recruited for specific projects and,
- (b) that this measure "would require significant unplanned additional resources".

9. The reasons that have been put forward are inadmissible since PAs come under staff, and their recruitment cannot escape the general recruitment arrangements for fixed-term appointments. Similarly, the fact that such recruitment is delegated to the Assistant Director-Generals (ADGs) cannot in any way excuse HRM from its obligations to oversee issues affecting recruitment and the management of the Organization's staff, including geographical distribution. In that respect, we must emphasize what seems to us to be a lack of transparency and legibility.

Internal transfers

Recommendation No.20

10. The non-acceptance of this recommendation for the reason that the internal advertisement of posts would require approval by the General Conference is not admissible. If it should so happen

that the recommendation by the External Auditor is well founded, authorization by the General Conference must be requested!

Reclassification of posts

11. Recommendations No. 21 to No. 23 are inadmissible as they are opposed to a just and efficient management of staff!

Recommendation No. 21

12. Recommendation No. 21 denies members of staff the opportunity to initiate a reclassification request. However, in most cases where the supervised person requests a post reclassification directly from HRM, it is because the supervisor has already refused it for a reason deemed unfounded by the supervised person. ISAU is strongly opposed to the application of this recommendation.

Recommendation No. 22

13. *“The External Auditor recommends systematically holding internal competitions for **occupied reclassified posts**”*. ISAU considers that occupied reclassified posts are reclassified by those who hold these posts, and consequently, this makes all reclassifications uncertain and fragile in terms of the career prospects of members of staff.

Recommendation No. 23

14. *“The External Auditor recommends setting up a system whereby the supervisor confirms the availability of funding prior to transmission of a request for reclassification to the Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM)”*. The application of this recommendation is tantamount to admitting that staff who should legitimately be reclassified, in view of the tasks that they effectively carry out for the Organization, would be denied the most fundamental right of being remunerated accordingly.

15. Within the context of Recommendation No. 20 on internal job openings, ISAU would recommend that the Organization ensure funds for the reclassifications that could be used within the framework of these campaigns. This would require upstream planning by HRM.

Recommendation No.25

16. ISAU rejects the *“recommendation by the External Auditor to eliminate the possibility of retroactive reclassification that takes effect prior to the date on which the reclassification decision was made”*, which should not be related to the Organization’s financial situation. All work deserves payment!