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**204 EX/21
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PARIS, 11 April 2018
Original: French

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.)

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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.

Recommandation 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.

Recommandation 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!

PARIS, 9 March 2018
Original: French

Item **21** of the provisional agenda

NEW AUDITS BY THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR

**SHORT-FORM AUDIT REPORT ON
UNESCO'S INTERNAL HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES**

SUMMARY

This document is the short-form report of the External Auditor's audit report on UNESCO's internal human resources management procedures as set out in document 204 EX/21.INF.6, pursuant to Article 12.4 of the Financial Regulations.

Action expected of the Executive Board: proposed decision in paragraph 31.

Job: 201800378

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AUDIT OF INTERNAL HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

> **DISCLAIMER**: This executive summary was drawn up by the External Auditor at the Secretariat's request in order to optimize translation costs and facilitate discussion by the governing bodies. Only the long-form report is authoritative in terms of exact content and the nature and scope of the External Auditor's findings and recommendations.

1.   In view of the time allotted for the audit, the external auditors selected a limited number of procedures in order to be able to study their implementation in detail. The fact that human resources management procedures are vital to UNESCO's smooth functioning, that UNESCO services have spontaneously mentioned that some of those procedures are a source of concern, and that an initial rapid analysis hinted at possible ways to optimize such procedures led the External Auditor to select: (A) individual performance evaluation; (B) selection and appointment of heads of field offices; (C) project appointments (PA); (D) internal transfers and (E) post reclassification.

2.   Since the audit focused on a limited number of procedures, its aim was not an overall analysis of human resources management, which could not be conducted without also studying, in particular, the recruitment policy for staff members (with a fixed-term appointment (FT)), and skills management. The report nonetheless presents three major findings:

   –   serious weaknesses in terms of accountability, which neither the methodology nor the evaluation software used, although each could be improved, can explain;

   –   significant potential for simplifying and rationalizing the procedures studied;

   –   a post reclassification procedure that has been diverted from its original aim.

B.   Individual performance evaluations: indispensable improvements accompanied by effective governance at the Organization's highest level

3.   The performance evaluation system was revised in July 2014 following the introduction of MyTalent software and a new standard for the 2014-2015 biennium. The standard explicitly links individual performance with that of the Organization. The main expected results and/or the responsibilities of each individual must be consistent with the performance targets/expected results of the team or unit concerned, and must contribute to it (the cascade principle). They must be defined in accordance with the SMART approach, and be: (a) **S**pecific and concise; (b) **M**easurable, in relation to specific indicators/results; (c) **A**ttainable (achievable by the deadlines set); (d) **R**ealistic and (e) **T**imely (to be carried out within a specific time limit).

4.   The performance evaluation cycle has in principle two stages: definition of the expected results and the competency plan before 31 March of the first year of the biennium; evaluation of the results achieved before 31 March of the first year of the following biennium.

5.   The supervisor provides a global assessment based on a four-level scale in which the numbers 1 to 4 correspond respectively to: "exceeds the goals", "fully meets expectations", "partially meets expectations", "does not meet expectations". The report is then sent to the second-level supervisor who reviews it and adds his or her own comments, as necessary.

6.   The external auditors observed that while the individual performance evaluation system follows good practices by incorporating an initial planning phase, it does not follow them with regard to the performance evaluation itself. The procedure should include monitoring throughout the year, with an evaluation at the end of the year. Furthermore, **analysis of the evaluation files demonstrates that in most cases there is a failure to understand the principles of cascading and individualized**

goal-setting, since the goals are most often a simple copy of the strategic axes or items in the post description.

7.   **The audit revealed an unusually low rate of completed individual evaluations.** The rate during the last biennium (2014-2015) was only 58%, which is significantly less than the 85% obtained by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The vast differences between sectors, six of which had 84% or more validated cases, while in five sectors less than 33% of staff had been evaluated, and between locations, practically eliminates any systemic methodological causes or technical software problems and points rather to a failure of supervisors to meet their commitments.

Graph No. 1. Rate of validation of performance evaluations, by sector
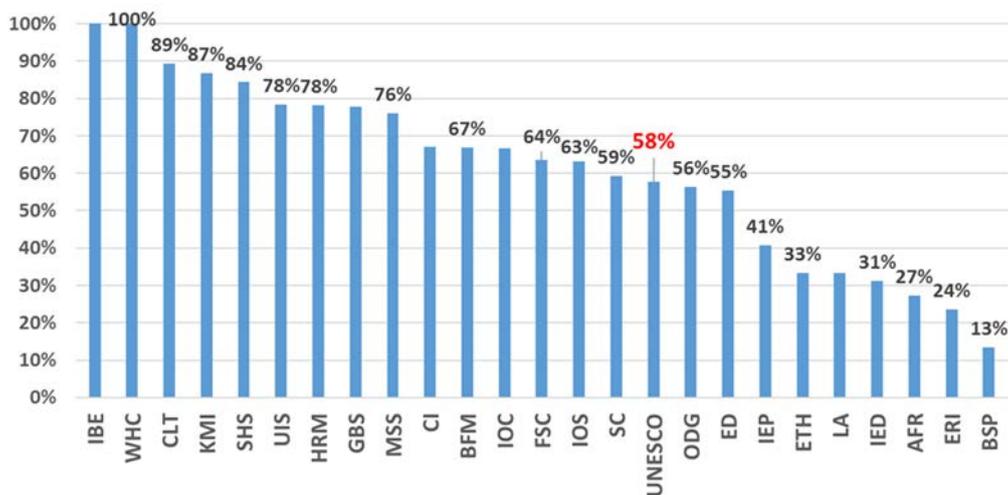
Source: External Auditor, from the MyTalent database

8.   **The non-submission of individual goal plans for the 2016-2017 biennium prefigures the failure of the evaluation procedure under way**: by the deadline of 31 March 2016, only 35% had been finalized and that figure reached 64% on 31 October 2017, namely, at the end of the biennium. In addition to the fact that no plan was submitted for one quarter of the staff, the definition of goals for another quarter of the staff during the last phase of the two-year period is hardly meaningful.

9.   **The grades given for the 2014-2015 biennium, all of which tended towards excellence or the full satisfaction of goals, are too optimistic.** Out of a total of 1,245 staff members (FT and PA) whose evaluation was validated, 157 received a grade of 1; 1,071 a grade of 2; only 13 received a grade of 3; and two received a grade of 4, or, respectively, 13%, 86%, 1% and 0.2% of staff members with validated evaluations. This distribution is more a sign of supervisors avoiding addressing the question of under-performance than of the actual extent to which staff members attained their goals. Such a situation, although not specific to UNESCO among United Nations system organizations, is an obstacle to good human resources management and affects the image that the Organization projects to the outside world, and especially to its Member States.

10.   The sectors questioned all mentioned that staff members and managers had experienced technical difficulties and criticized the MyTalent software, which is apparently not completely reliable. The auditors, who were given administrator privileges during the audit, did not encounter any difficulties in using the software. They also tested the software from the viewpoint of supervisors and employees undergoing evaluation. They concluded that the software had been greatly improved since it was initially installed, but could still benefit from becoming more user-friendly and more flexible. Nevertheless, as presently configured, the software can still be used by staff and supervisors. **Even though it could be improved, MyTalent should not be used as an excuse** for the poor execution of performance evaluations.

11.   Given the importance of the individual performance evaluation for the Organization, the External Auditor considers it vital that UNESCO consolidate its individual evaluation procedure. To do so, staff must engage with the process, through the **widespread use of staff training**, in particular for managers, in the setting and realization of individual goals, and through a **commitment to accountability at the Organization's highest level**.

12.   Managers must make the definition of goals and monitoring of goal attainment a management tool. This requires frequent access to the individual performance evaluation files of their colleagues, which should be made as easy as possible.

13.   The process of monitoring individual performance must finally become much more dynamic and be regarded by staff as an ongoing, or even permanent, requirement. To attain this, **the evaluation cycle should be shortened from two years to one**. Interim measures should be introduced beginning with the 2018-2019 cycle.

14.   In summary, the External Auditor's requirements and recommendations in this field are aimed at: greater staff commitment to the importance of accountability, including the obligation of training; making the grading system more credible; making heads of sectors more responsible for ensuring that all their staff respect the performance evaluation process; and energizing the process by making it annual, thus nearly continuous. Commitment to a culture of performance by supervisors and line staff must become one of the Organization's priorities.
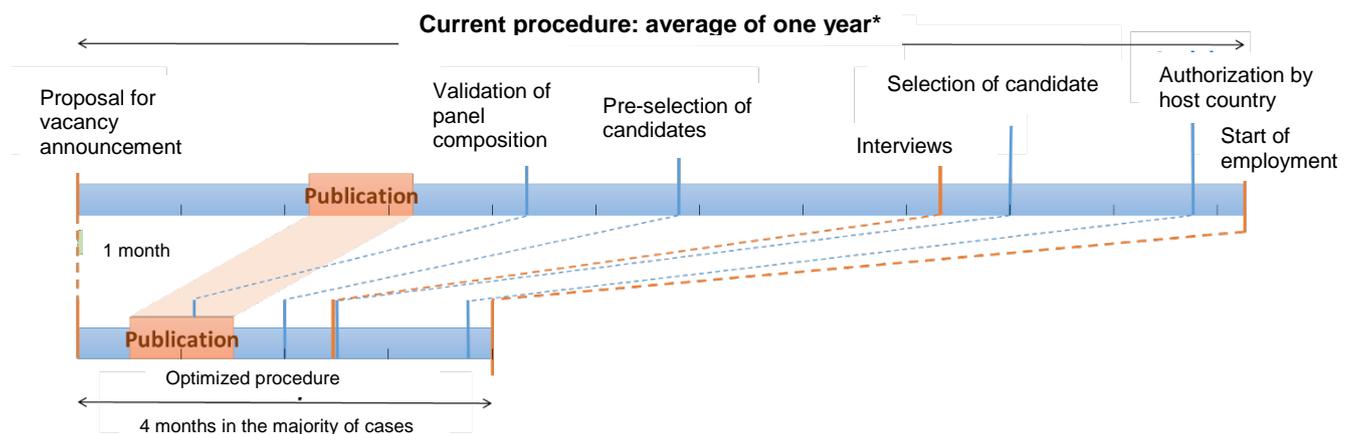
C.   Recruitment of heads of field offices and project appointment staff: a drastic reduction in delays is possible

15.   The auditors examined the process for recruitment of heads of field offices, an average of 10 of whom are replaced each year, and of project appointment (P.A.) staff, for which recruitment is continuous.[1] Those processes appear to be exceedingly long: **the average vacancy for posts of head of field office is greater than 13 months, and it takes more than six months to recruit a project appointment employee**, whose contract will not last longer than two years.

16.   The audit revealed that recruitment procedures involved multiple sequential stages and required incessant hand-overs between services, which made long waits between each stage inevitable and, in the end, a considerable amount of wasted time. For example, the stages involved in the validation process prior to the publication of a post vacancy for a head of field office takes nearly two months on average; the time between the last day that the vacancy notice is posted and the candidate interviews is five months on average for heads of field offices and two months for project appointment staff.

17.   In addition, in the case of recruitment of heads of field offices, the external auditors observed that for some stages, a higher degree of validation than that provided for under the procedure is sought, for example, for the drafting of a vacancy notice and the formation of the panel, which adds to the delay.

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[1]   UNESCO employs approximately 350 persons under contracts of this kind.

Graph No. 2: Procedure for recruitment of a head of field office

Current procedure: average of one year*

Proposal for vacancy announcement

Validation of panel composition

Pre-selection of candidates

Selection of candidate

Authorization by host country

Interviews

Start of employment

Publication

1 month

Publication

Optimized procedure

4 months in the majority of cases

* Average length of time, excluding transfers and procedures declared **unsuccessful**
Source: External Auditor

18. **The External Auditor has issued suggestions and recommendations that should enable UNESCO to reduce recruitment delays by 50% or 75%.** With regard to the two types of recruitment considered, simplification of administrative procedures, delegation of authority at the appropriate level, refocusing of selection panels on their basic function and planning for the examination of applications will make the procedure more efficient, limit the amount of waiting time involved and enable it to be completed much more rapidly. Simplification of the procedures will also lead, with the elimination of superfluous tasks, to cost savings.

19. In particular, with respect to recruitment of heads of field offices, implementation of a simplified procedure in the initial stage, using as little paper as possible, and assigning intermediate decisions to the Director of the Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM) and the Director of the Division of Field Support and Coordination (FSC) (or the Office of the Director-General, when a liaison office is involved) would be the best policy. In the case of project assignment recruitments, administrative verifications should be conducted earlier in the procedure and should be streamlined.

20. The External Auditor also endorses the recommendation made by the internal auditor[2] to draw up generic post descriptions, which should be used both for vacancy announcements and for candidate questionnaires.

21. **Advance recruitment planning should also be implemented** in any case where the need for recruitment is known in advance so that prior notice can be used as a means of limiting post vacancies.

22. Some of the recommendations, in particular No. 14 relating to host country approval for heads of field offices, require the **involvement of Member States**, which are both stakeholders in the procedure and direct beneficiaries of UNESCO's action.

23. Furthermore, the External Auditor points out that recruitment of heads of field offices ends in failure in nearly one case out of four, either because the candidate withdraws his or her application, the candidate does not obtain the endorsement of the host country, or UNESCO does not select a candidate from the applications submitted. The latter reason is the most frequent and the result is that the procedure is declared unsuccessful, the post is again opened for recruitment and the recruitment time is therefore considerably lengthened. It is surprising that UNESCO does not manage to find quality candidates for locations that are not always the least attractive. Such a situation should only arise from time to time if UNESCO implemented a **forward-looking management system for filling such posts**, based on identification and follow-up of staff with

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[2]   See Audit report IOS/AUD/2015/07 of September 2015, concerning the recruitment procedure for international staff.

managerial potential within the Organization and on a search for appropriate profiles within the United Nations system.

D. Internal mobility and recruitment: conduct regular reviews of staff and build up pools

24. In addition to the aforementioned recruitment difficulties, the audit also revealed that the internal transfer procedures are currently too complicated and disparate to enable active internal mobility. Aside from transfers arising from reorganization, which represent a substantial portion of internal mobility, internal mobility is essentially based on competitive recruitment procedures which, in one third of cases, lead to the selection of an internal candidate. Mobility is regarded by UNESCO as the result of various transfers made for various reasons, and not as an organized policy in itself.

25. The External Auditor has made several recommendations concerning the **establishment of pools** and the introduction of **regular staff member reviews**. Implementation of those recommendations will help to optimize the processes of recruitment and internal mobility by making them easier, secure and more predictable. It will also provide UNESCO with important benefits in terms of human resources management: by highlighting skills and professional development, UNESCO will have a greater chance of identifying talent that it can mobilize in the medium term and will lend visibility to staff members' own professional development. This will lead to a significant increase in the Organization's performance and flexibility.

E. Post reclassification: a procedure that has gone off track

26. A post reclassification occurs when, following evaluation of an updated post description, a post is classified at a higher or lower grade, owing to a significant increase or decrease in the complexity of the duties and responsibilities that the administrator in charge assigns to it.

27. Between 1 January 2015 and 1 January 2018, 209 post reclassifications, about which the decisions had been made prior to 1 October 2017, were scheduled to take effect at UNESCO.[3] Of those reclassifications, 125 concerned vacant posts and 84 occupied posts. Among the vacant posts, 104 were downgraded while all the occupied posts were upgraded, usually to a higher grade within the same category.

28. Reclassification methods at UNESCO are **doubly unusual compared to other United Nations agencies**. First of all, reclassification may be requested by the incumbent. Secondly, in most of the other agencies the promotion, without any competitive process, of an incumbent whose post has been reclassified is usually limited to certain cases, or sometimes prohibited outright. At UNESCO it is standard practice.

29. **The reclassification procedure at UNESCO, which has too often been applied to occupied posts, no longer makes sense.** Such reclassified posts do not actually reflect an organizational development but rather represent promotions without competition, in posts that have not significantly changed in nature. To avoid such circumvention and transform reclassification into another tool for mobility, **the External Auditor recommends**, in addition to eliminating the incumbent's option to request reclassification of his or her post, **that post reclassification should always involve competition.**

30. The External Auditor also studied slowdowns in the procedure and the anomaly of retroactivity of the dates on which the decisions take effect, and has made recommendations in that regard.

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[3] The decisions taken into account by the audit date up to 30 September 2017, although their effective date may be later than that date.

Proposed decision

31. The Executive Board may wish to adopt a decision as follows:

The Executive Board,

1. <u>Having examined</u> documents 204 EX/21 Part VI and 204 EX/INF.6,

2. <u>Expresses its satisfaction</u> to the External Auditor for the high quality of his report;

3. <u>Invites</u> the Director-General to report on the progress made in the implementation of the recommendations in her report on the follow-up to the recommendations of the External Auditor.

Comments by the Director-General

The Director-General thanks the External Auditor for his audit report on UNESCO's internal human resources management procedures. She accepts the vast majority of the recommendations made therein and will report on the progress of their implementation in accordance with the usual practice. She nevertheless wishes to draw attention to Recommendation No. 14 regarding host country approval for the appointment of directors and heads of field offices, and which requires the involvement of Member States. The Director-General also wishes to draw attention to Recommendations Nos 15, 16, 18, 19 and 20 on which detailed comments are provided in response to the questions raised.

Details in Annex II.

ANNEX I

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation No. 1.   The External Auditor recommends simplifying the evaluation procedure by eliminating the validation of the evaluation by the second-level supervisor, except in the case of an appeal or at the request of the staff member evaluated. (priority 2)

Recommendation No. 2.   The External Auditor recommends making the software MyTalent more user-friendly and distributing a simplified user guide. (priority 2)

Recommendation No. 3.   The External Auditor recommends bolstering the obligation to respect the deadlines set for the stages of the evaluation process by coercive measures and incentives. Among them, if the first stage in which the staff member being evaluated has to draw up a set of objectives 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)

Recommendation No. 4.   The External Auditor recommends making the performance evaluation more credible by adding, between "entirely meets expectations" and "partially meets expectations", an additional evaluation choice, to read: "satisfactory, progress must (or may) still be made in attaining objectives". (priority 1)

Recommendation No. 5.   For all supervisors, the External Auditor recommends providing access to the individual performance evaluations of all colleagues for whom they have a supervisory responsibility, either direct or indirect, to enable them to monitor attainment of objectives. (priority 2)

Recommendation No. 6.   The External Auditor recommends clarifying, for all UNESCO staff members, the principles to be respected in defining their performance objectives and those of their colleagues, by recalling: that the objectives must be consistent with the SMART framework; that attainment of the objectives must be able to be clearly linked to each person's individual acts; that the objectives must follow the principle of "cascading", i.e., demonstrating a connection with the Organization's expected results, to which such objectives must contribute. (priority 1)

Recommendation No. 7. The External Auditor recommends monitoring specifically in MyTalent the rate at which UNESCO staff is covered by a competency development plan. (priority 3)

Recommendation No. 8.   The External Auditor recommends clarifying the links between evaluation and salary increases and ensuring consistency in the Human Resources Manual. (priority 2)

Recommendation No. 9.   The External Auditor recommends making compulsory for all staff the announced training on individual performance evaluation, focusing on both the 2016-2017 evaluation process and the setting of individual objectives for the 2018 evaluation process. (priority 2)

Recommendation No. 10.   The External Auditor recommends including as a priority for Assistant Directors-General (ADGs) a goal of 100% of evaluations completed on time for staff members under their authority. (priority 1)

Recommendation No. 11.   The External Auditor recommends (i) changing from a biennial to an annual evaluation schedule, beginning in 2020; (ii) planning a transition for the 2018-2019 cycle with an interview to readjust objectives and assess results, which should take place at the half-way point, at the start of 2019 at the latest. (priority 1)

Choice and appointment of heads of field offices

Recommendation No. 12. The External Auditor recommends further simplifying the recruitment procedure for heads of field offices with a view to limiting the validations required at each stage, assigning interim decisions to the Director of the Office of Human Resources Management (DIR/HRM) and the Director of the Division of Field Support and Coordination (DIR/FSC) and maintaining, in practice, the planned level of validation. (priority 1)

Recommendation No. 13. With regard to the recruitment of directors/heads of field offices, the External Auditor recommends limiting the composition of the selection panel to three people in general, four people if special expertise is needed, and determining the panel composition, at the latest, by the time the job posting is removed, and, at the same time, drawing up the meeting schedule for the panel (interviews one month after removal of the job posting). (priority 2)

Recommendation No. 14. The External Auditor recommends formalizing the process of official prior authorization by the host country for directors/heads of field offices, whereby it would be agreed that, in the absence of any objection from the host country within six weeks of the official notification, the director/head of the field office could assume his or her functions. (priority 1)

Recommendation No. 15. The External Auditor recommends establishing a pool of managers who would be capable of assuming, in the short- or medium-term, the duties of director/head of field office, for example, by identifying, selecting and monitoring appropriate professional profiles at UNESCO and, more broadly, within the United Nations system. (priority 1)

Project appointments (PA)

Recommendation No. 16. In respect of project appointments, the External Auditor recommends entrusting the selection of candidates to a maximum of two people in general, three people if special expertise is needed, appointing them as soon as the vacancy notice is posted and holding interviews with the candidates less than one month after the deadline for applications. (priority 2)

Recommendation No. 17. The External Auditor recommends planning for validation of project appointments by the Bureau of Financial Management (BFM) by verifying that the necessary funds are available while the vacancy notice is posted and by specifying the maximum amount. (priority 3)

Recommendation No. 18. The External Auditor recommends establishing, through campaigns to recruit individuals with skills for which UNESCO has a regular need, a pool of external candidates qualified for project appointments. (priority 2)

Internal transfers

Recommendation No. 19. The External Auditor recommends conducting an annual review of staff by managers, and an annual review of senior management by the Senior Management Team to identify staff for possible transfer, and to identify managers demonstrating potential with a view to enrolling them in a career development programme to prepare them to assume increasing responsibilities at Headquarters or in the field. (priority 1)

Recommendation No. 20. The External Auditor recommends holding one or two annual internal job opening campaigns to enable the Organization's staff to position themselves as candidates for some of the vacant posts or for posts that are likely to be vacated owing to the transfer or departure of individuals who have shown interest in a move. (priority 2)

Post reclassification

Recommendation No. 21.   The External Auditor recommends restricting reclassification initiatives to supervisors only. (priority 2)

Recommendation No. 22.   The External Auditor recommends systematically holding internal competitions for reclassified posts, whether they are occupied or not. (priority 1)

Recommendation No. 23.   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). (priority 3)

Recommendation No. 24.   The External Auditor recommends drawing up a model reclassification request form which would be composed of the most frequently asked questions concerning background information about the post and its funding. (priority 3)

Recommendation No. 25.   The External Auditor recommends eliminating the possibility of retroactive reclassification that takes effect prior to the date on which the reclassification decision was made. (priority 2)

**PRELIMINARY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN,
BY RECOMMENDATION**

Audit recommendations	Preliminary implementation plan and comments	The recommendation will require additional resources for implementation (YES/NO)	Estimated date for the implementation of the recommendation
Recommendation No. 1: The External Auditor recommends simplifying the evaluation procedure by eliminating the validation of the evaluation by the second-level supervisor, except in the case of an appeal or at the request of the staff member evaluated. (priority 2)	<u>Recommendation accepted</u>. Will be considered when reviewing the Performance Management Policy scheduled to take place during 2018.	YES (refer to No.°11)	For perf. cycle 2020
Recommendation No. 2: The External Auditor recommends making the software MyTalent more user-friendly and distributing a simplified user guide. (priority 2)	<u>Recommendation accepted</u>. The guide has already been simplified for the overall Performance Appraisal 2016-2017 and will be further simplified for setting objectives 2018-2019.	NO	February 2018
Recommendation No. 3: The External Auditor recommends bolstering the obligation to respect the deadlines set for the stages of the evaluation process by coercive measures and incentives. Among them, if the first stage of having the staff member being evaluated draw up a set of objectives is not completed by the deadline, the task	<u>Recommendation accepted</u>. For setting objectives 2018-2019, the workflow will remain open for the supervisors until the objectives are set for the staff member.	NO	February 2018

Audit recommendations	Preliminary implementation plan and comments	The recommendation will require additional resources for implementation (YES/NO)	Estimated date for the implementation of the recommendation
should be assigned to his or her supervisor who would be given access to MyTalent software. (priority 2)			
Recommendation No. 4: The External Auditor recommends making the performance evaluation more credible by adding, between "entirely meets expectations" and "partially meets expectations", an additional evaluation choice, to read: "satisfactory, progress must (or may) still be made in attaining objectives". (priority 1)	Recommendation accepted. Will be considered when reviewing the Performance Management Policy scheduled to take place during 2018.	YES (refer to No.°11)	For perf. cycle 2020.
Recommendation No. 5: For all supervisors, the External Auditor recommends providing access to the individual performance evaluations of all colleagues for whom they have a supervisory responsibility, either direct or indirect, to enable them to monitor attainment of objectives. (priority 2)	Recommendation accepted. This is already an existing feature. Briefing and detailed guides will be done for managers to instruct them on how to find the information.	Yes. Refer to 11	February -June2018
Recommendation No. 6: The External Auditor recommends clarifying, for all UNESCO staff members, the principles to be	Recommendation accepted. Guides already exist on how to set SMART objectives. Training sessions will be held for reinforcement in setting objectives 2018-2019.	Temporary assistance for the development of the e-learning module.	Information session for setting objectives in February-March. 2018.

Audit recommendations	Preliminary implementation plan and comments	The recommendation will require additional resources for implementation (YES/NO)	Estimated date for the implementation of the recommendation
respected in defining their performance objectives and those of their colleagues, by recalling: that the objectives must be consistent with the SMART framework; that attainment of the objectives must be able to be clearly linked to each person's individual acts; that the objectives must be "cascading", meaning that they demonstrate a connection with the Organization's expected results, to which such objectives must contribute. (priority 1)	An e-learning module will also be developed and made available on *MyTalent*.	Approximately $20,000	E-learning module by August 2018.
Recommendation No. 7: The External Auditor recommends planning for validation of project appointments by the Bureau of Financial Management (BFM) by verifying that the necessary funds are available while the vacancy notice is posted and by specifying the maximum amount. (priority 3)	Recommendation accepted. This is already a mandatory requirement and monitoring of this aspect will be reinforced to ensure all individual plans include a competency development plan. In addition, HRM will take steps this year to ensure that learning is aligned with the individual competency development plans.	Yes. Refer to 11	By end 2018
Recommendation No. 8: The External Auditor recommends clarifying the links between evaluation and salary increases and	Recommendation accepted. Will be further clarified and reinforced by way of communication to managers and staff. This will be further facilitated by the introduction of an annual appraisal exercise.	Yes. Refer to 11	February-March 2018

Audit recommendations	Preliminary implementation plan and comments	The recommendation will require additional resources for implementation (YES/NO)	Estimated date for the implementation of the recommendation
ensuring consistency in the Human Resources Manual. (priority 2)			
Recommendation No. 9: The External Auditor recommends making compulsory for all staff the announced training on individual performance evaluation, focusing on both the 2016-2017 evaluation process and the setting of individual objectives for the 2018 evaluation process. (priority 2)	Recommendation *partially* accepted. Agree with the need to train staff and managers on the process however, mandatory training will be difficult to impose however training/ training/info. session campaigns will be reinforced. Will also make available training videos for those who do not attend skype or face-to-face trainings.	Yes. Temporary staff for production of training video. Cost $20,000.00	Face-to-face and skype trainings – February. – March 2018. Training video by August 2018.
Recommendation No. 10: The External Auditor recommends including as a priority for Assistant Directors-General (ADGs) a goal of 100% of evaluations completed on time for staff members under their authority. (priority 1)	Recommendation accepted. To be included in 2018-2019 objectives. Quarterly reporting to be provided to the SMT on compliance rates.	Yes. Refer to 11	Objectives entered by March 2018. Monitoring and reporting on quarterly basis
Recommendation No. 11: The External Auditor recommends (i) changing from a biennial to an annual evaluation schedule, beginning in 2020; (ii) planning a transition for the 2018-2019 cycle with an interview to readjust objectives and assess results, which should take place at the half-way	Recommendation accepted. (i) will be considered when reviewing the Performance Management Policy scheduled to take place during 2018 and implemented as from perf. cycle 2020; (ii) as a transitional measure, a mid-term review (currently voluntary) will be strongly encouraged beginning 2019 providing managers and staff the opportunity to discuss	In order to implement successfully all of the 11 recommendations, there is need for a full time P staff responsible for Performance Management.	(i) for perf. cycle 2020 (ii) early 2019

Audit recommendations	Preliminary implementation plan and comments	The recommendation will require additional resources for implementation (YES/NO)	Estimated date for the implementation of the recommendation
point, at the start of 2019 at the latest. (priority 1)	objectives, expected results and progress achieved and readjust as applicable.		
Recommendation No. 12: The External Auditor recommends further simplifying the recruitment procedure for heads of field offices with a view to limiting the validations required at each stage, assigning interim decisions to the Director of the Office of Human Resources Management (DIR/HRM) and the Director of the Division of Field Support and Coordination (DIR/FSC) and maintaining, in practice, the planned level of validation. (priority 1)	Recommendation implemented/superseded: The procedure has already been simplified since October 2017 (Ref. AC/HR/59 of 01/11/2017). The preparation and processing of the vacancy notice has been streamlined. The preselection is conducted by DIR/HRM and DIR/FSC for Directors/Heads of Field Office posts. The interview Panel is set up and chaired by Director FSC (except for posts in AFR, where the Panel is chaired by ADG/AFR). HRM is committed to continuous evaluation and process improvement in the recruitment process.		
Recommendation No. 13: With regard to the recruitment of directors/heads of field offices, the External Auditor recommends limiting the composition of the selection panel to three people in general, four people if special expertise is needed, and determining the panel composition, at the latest, by the time the job posting is removed, and, at the same time, drawing up the meeting	Recommendation _partially_ accepted: Composition of panels have recently been revised ref. the updated recruitment policy of 01/11/2017. However, further efforts will be deployed in line with the recommendation. This will require consultations with FSC and AFR and will require a revision of the HR Manual (by end Mar. 2018). With regard to a specific timeline, the new policy foresees a target timeline of 130 calendar days for the completion of the process, with clear timelines for each step of the process.		Revision of HR Manual by March 2018.

Audit recommendations	Preliminary implementation plan and comments	The recommendation will require additional resources for implementation (YES/NO)	Estimated date for the implementation of the recommendation
schedule for the panel (interviews one month after removal of the job posting). (priority 2)			
Recommendation No. 14: The External Auditor recommends formalizing the process of official prior authorization by the host country for directors/heads of field offices, whereby it would be agreed that, in the absence of any objection from the host country within six weeks of the official notification, the director/head of the field office could assume his or her functions. (priority 1)	Recommendation accepted: Since there is no official process in place formalizing the procedure of obtaining Government clearance for appointments of Directors/Heads of Field Offices, this recommendation is accepted and welcomed.		By Sept. 2018
Recommendation No. 15: The External Auditor recommends establishing a pool of managers who would be capable of assuming, in the short- or medium-term, the duties of director/head of field office, for example, by identifying, selecting and monitoring appropriate professional profiles at UNESCO and, more broadly, within the United Nations system. (priority 1)	Recommendation _not_ accepted: However, we do recognize the need to increase awareness of temporary assignments/ opportunities in the field. To be discussed further with FSC.		

Audit recommendations	Preliminary implementation plan and comments	The recommendation will require additional resources for implementation (YES/NO)	Estimated date for the implementation of the recommendation
Recommendation No. 16: In respect of project appointments, the External Auditor recommends entrusting the selection of candidates to a maximum of two people in general, three people if special expertise is needed, appointing them as soon as the vacancy notice is posted and holding interviews with the candidates less than one month after the deadline for applications. (priority 2)	Recommendation partially accepted: The recruitment procedure for PA is flexible and it is important to maintain this flexibility. The process is not similar to the appointments to fixed-term posts. There is no formal pre-selection committee with a defined composition. However, an indication of the maximum number of members a Panel should be composed of could be included in the HR Manual Item and communicated to managers (with recommendation No.°17).		
Recommendation No. 17: The External Auditor recommends planning for validation by the Bureau of Financial Management (BFM) of project appointments by verifying that the necessary funds are available while the vacancy notice is posted and by specifying the maximum amount. (priority 3)	Recommendation accepted: This should be clearly communicated to managers. HRM & BFM to issue an information note on the recruitment process of PA's.		First quarter 2018
Recommendation No. 18: The External Auditor recommends establishing, through campaigns to recruit individuals with skills for which UNESCO has a regular need, a pool of external candidates	Recommendation _not_ accepted. The hiring of PAs is delegated to Sector ADGs/Bureaux and Heads of Field Offices. PAs are hired for specific projects. Should such a Roster be necessary, they should be constituted and managed by Sectors/Bureaux on the basis of their needs for specific profiles. To maintain		

Audit recommendations	Preliminary implementation plan and comments	The recommendation will require additional resources for implementation (YES/NO)	Estimated date for the implementation of the recommendation
qualified for project appointments. (priority 2)	such a centralized, corporate roster for PA experts in HRM would require significant unplanned additional resources.		
Recommendation No. 19: The External Auditor recommends conducting an annual review of staff by managers, and an annual review of senior management by the Senior Management Team to identify staff for possible transfer, and to identify managers demonstrating potential with a view to enrolling them in a career development programme to prepare them to assume increasing responsibilities at Headquarters or in the field. (priority 1)	Recommendation _not_ accepted: Please note that a review of the Mobility Policy – which foresees transfers at equal grade (geographical and functional) for international and above level staff is currently ongoing with an estimated date of implementation foreseen for Sept. 2018. One of the proposals is that the Mobility Programme would be an annual exercise.		
Recommendation No. 20: The External Auditor recommends holding one or two annual internal job opening campaigns to enable the Organization's staff to position themselves as candidates for some of the vacant posts or for posts that are likely to be vacated owing to the transfer or departure of individuals who have shown interest in a move. (priority 2)	Recommendation _not_ accepted: The internal advertisement of posts would require approval of the General Conference (ref. amendments to Staff Regulations). To note, movements of staff at equal grade features in the new Mobility Policy currently under review – which it is proposed will be carried out on an <u>annual</u> basis.		

Audit recommendations	Preliminary implementation plan and comments	The recommendation will require additional resources for implementation (YES/NO)	Estimated date for the implementation of the recommendation
Recommendation No. 21: The External Auditor recommends restricting reclassification initiatives to supervisors only. (priority 2)	Accepted *in principle*. This requires the abolition of the Staff Rule 102.2 to be approved by the Director-General, and will require prior consultations with ACPP and Staff Unions. Interrelated with Recommendation No. 22.		The consultations on Staff Rule 102.2 will be carried out jointly with the consultations for the Recommendation No. 22 in the framework of the review of the current classification policy. Hence 2020 as estimated implementation date.
Recommendation No. 22: The External Auditor recommends systematically holding internal competitions for reclassified posts, whether they are occupied or not. (priority 1)	Accepted *with the proviso* that the implementation of this recommendation will require amendment to Staff Regulation 4.2 (which excludes competition from the reclassification process), subject to approval by the General Conference. The recommendation as such will also be subject to extensive consultations on the nature and scope of the review with management, the ACPP and other stakeholders including Staff Unions.	YES, approx. $10,000 for full comparative review of classification policies across the UN system.	Not before 2020 as this implies the amendment of the Staff Regulation 4.2 subject to approval by the General Conference.
Recommendation No. 23: 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). (priority 3)	Recommendation accepted. To be included in the revised classification policy as a prerequisite for a complete request for the review of the classification level of a post, i.e. a condition for the admissibility of a reclassification request.		June 2018 as part of the reclassification template.

Audit recommendations	Preliminary implementation plan and comments	The recommendation will require additional resources for implementation (YES/NO)	Estimated date for the implementation of the recommendation
Recommendation No. 24: The External Auditor recommends drawing up a model reclassification request form which would be composed of the most frequently asked questions concerning background information about the post and its funding. (priority 3)	Recommendation accepted. The template should include questions on all the information required for an informed post evaluation for classification purposes including budgetary information from the originating Sectors/Services and BFM.		June 2018
Recommendation No. 25: The External Auditor recommends eliminating the possibility of retroactive reclassification that takes effect prior to the date on which the reclassification decision was made. (priority 2)	Recommendation accepted *on the condition* that all reclassified posts shall be opened for internal competitive recruitment.		Linked to the review of the current classification policy. Hence 2020 as estimated implementation date.