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United Nations
Educational, Scientific
and Cultural Organization

215 EX/5.IV.A Add.

Executive Board

Two hundred and fifteenth session

PARIS, 5 October 2022
Original: French

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

**FOLLOW-UP TO DECISIONS AND RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD
AND THE GENERAL CONFERENCE AT THEIR PREVIOUS SESSIONS**

PART IV

HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES

ADDENDUM

COMMENTS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL STAFF ASSOCIATION OF UNESCO (ISAU)

SUMMARY

A. Human Resources Management Strategy

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 215 EX/5.IV.A).

1. ISAU remains perplexed by the content of the new Human Resources Management Strategy and by the manner in which it was developed. We were hoping to see a document with clear objectives, bold measures and innovative ideas aimed at revitalizing human resources management at the Organization and at solving chronic problems. Instead, we have found a hollow draft strategy with vague objectives, reflecting a lack of effort and inspiration, if not outright apathy, on the part of the Bureau of Human Resources Management (ADM/HRM).

2. In July 2022, despite the very short time limit (one week) given to us by ADM/HRM, ISAU submitted its detailed comments on the draft Human Resources Management Strategy for 2023–2027. Our criticisms were focused and constructive, and we made concrete proposals to include



Job: 202202656

measures which would improve the draft strategy. It is with great regret and frustration that we note today that none of our observations and proposals have been taken into account in the document submitted to the Executive Board. Despite what the document claims, therefore, the Administration cannot be considered to have conducted genuine consultations in order to develop its Human Resources Management Strategy. This is a clear sign of ADM/HRM's unwillingness to collaborate, truly and effectively, in order to build a better UNESCO.

PART I: UPDATE ON 2021-2022 INITIATIVES OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR 2017-2022

Geographical mobility 2021/2022 exercise

3. It is true that there have been improvements in the implementation of the 2021/2022 geographical mobility exercise as compared to that of 2019. It was better organized and the support and follow-up provided by ADM/HRM throughout the various stages in the process are noticeable. However, the number of reassignments remains very low. Indeed, out of the 179 posts included in the mobility exercise, there were only 46 reassignments, making for a proportion of only 26%. We therefore feel that the enhanced-mobility objective set out in the Human Resources Management Strategy which is coming to an end has unfortunately not been achieved. We encourage the Administration to review the system of deferment for personal and operational reasons, as well as the resetting of the standard duration of assignment (SDA) where there is a job change. These measures are often taken in order to get around the mobility requirement for staff in the Professional category and above, which often results in a feeling of injustice and inequality among colleagues.

4. In addition, we regret that three months before the end of the 2017–2022 strategy, no functional mobility has taken place, even though this practice could have provided career advancement opportunities, especially for staff in the General Service category.

Recruitment

5. ISAU welcomes the improvement in the recruitment timeline for P-1 to P-4 posts. However, we are worried about the timeline for more senior-level posts, which is still far from the 130-day objective set by the Executive Board. What measures does the Administration plan to take in order to close this gap?

6. ISAU has submitted its comments on geographical distribution and gender parity in a separate document.

Introduction of new and/or updated HR policies

7. ADM/HRM was considering the adoption of flexible working arrangements to support staff work-life balance. However, the revised telecommuting policy is surprisingly more rigid and restrictive than the one in place before the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, despite the lessons which should have been learned over the past two years and the opinions expressed by our colleagues in the corresponding survey conducted by ADM/HRM. For example, staff can telecommute for a maximum of two days per week, whereas previously telecommuting was permitted for up to three, or even five, days per week. It is unfortunate that decisions seem to have been based on outdated habits and inertia rather than on empirical and rational grounds. The "staggered working hours" policy, for its part, does not meet staff expectations. Indeed, it is difficult to conceive of flexibility when the basic time slots established are from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

8. ISAU welcomes the measures taken to improve the working conditions of service-contract holders. However, it is necessary to address the question of their job insecurity and to regularize long-term service-contract holders.

Occupational Health and Safety framework

9. ISAU will be paying close attention to the results of the United Nations health survey which was conducted at UNESCO. Indeed, the data from this survey should be used by ADM/HRM in the development of the long-awaited workplace well-being policy.

UNESCO Internship Programme

10. We would like to emphasize, once again, the importance of identifying appropriate sources of funding in order to launch the paid internship programme as soon as possible, and we encourage Member States to intensify their efforts to that end. It makes sense to do this, not only with a view to improving the geographical distribution of staff, but also with a view to providing appropriate compensation for the valuable work done by our young colleagues.

11. Pending the establishment of a paid internship programme, document 215 EX/5.IV.A states that “managers are being encouraged to consider and facilitate to the extent possible requests for internships from candidates from under- and non-represented countries”. Do the Organization’s officers really comply with these instructions? Are their efforts monitored and assessed?

12. ISAU applauds the integration of the recommendations issued by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) with regard to interns and encourages the Administration to continue its efforts in this regard.

PART II: DRAFT HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR 2023-2027

General comments

13. This draft strategy, which almost exclusively consists in formulating very general, or even abstract, principles, is excessively vague and lacks substance. There are essentially no new elements as compared to the preliminary proposals submitted by the Administration at the 214th session of the Executive Board. We are surprised that the Administration could submit such a hollow document for adoption. A detailed human resources management strategy and workplan should have been presented to the Board at its 215th session in order to be implemented as of January 2023.

14. The lack of any concrete measures is alarming. ADM/HRM maintains that the objective is to separate the Human Resources Management Strategy from the workplan. However, not only would such a distinction be artificial; it would also not absolve ADM/HRM of its responsibility to develop a real strategy rather than a mere collection of vague sentences and meaningless objectives.

15. It is extremely important that specific measures be taken to remedy current problems, such as ADM/HRM’s lack of transparency and its non-involvement in recruitment, the lack of career development, and the job insecurity of long-term temporary staff. How can progress be assessed and the strategy be properly implemented if no concrete actions are defined?

16. In respect of this point, we wish to note that the proposals for a human resources management strategy for 2017-2022 set out in document 200 EX/5 Part IV (B) were much more detailed than the current draft strategy prepared by ADM/HRM. They included many tangible measures concerning, for example: the recruitment and selection process; the learning strategy; and the adjustment of the duration of contracts so that they are valid for five, instead of two, years.

17. In addition, ADM/HRM had originally intended to “commission an evaluation of the current strategy during the course of 2023, for analysis and presentation in 2024”, which means that it would have been obligated to submit a detailed human resources management strategy far before the evaluation of the previous one. Thus, the fact that the report on the evaluation conducted by the Division of Internal Oversight Services (IOS) will be submitted to the Board at its 216th session should in no way constitute an impediment to the development of a detailed human resources management strategy with a clear workplan and timeline. Why is ADM/HRM postponing this task?

General comments

18. We agree that ADM/HRM must have adequate human and financial resources in order to accomplish its mission. ISAU has emphasized this on many occasions, in particular at the previous session of the Executive Board. However, this cannot and should not be used as an excuse for ADM/HRM to compromise with a human resources strategy which perpetuates current problems and fails to fulfil promises and expectations. This should certainly not be a condition for the implementation of a human resources strategy adopted by the Member States of UNESCO. We are therefore concerned about the use of the “resources argument” in three scenarios where ADM/HRM mentions the importance of the availability of financial resources and expressly states that implementation of the Human Resources Management Strategy is dependent on this availability.

19. In addition, instead of becoming more involved and taking on more responsibility, as called for by ISAU, ADM/HRM is, we are astonished to note, trying to absolve itself of any responsibility when it states that “human resources management is a collective responsibility, and that for an HR Strategy to be successfully implemented, it must have the buy-in of the whole of the Organization”. Statements of this nature have no place in a human resources management strategy because they dilute responsibilities at a time when Member States and staff need transparency and clarity in this area. This reveals, at the very least, that ADM/HRM leadership is unwilling to take a truly innovative approach to personnel management. Moreover, we are convinced that if a strategy includes measures which are fair and transparent and which take into account the concerns and well-being of the staff, staff will most certainly subscribe to it.

20. The goal of the new human resources strategy needs to be more specific. The statement that the strategy for 2023–2027 will “work to put in place the optimal systems to ensure more efficient human resources processes across the Organization” is devoid of any concrete meaning.

21. Since the Administration admits that the strategy “covers the entire workforce of UNESCO (including personnel on non-staff contracts)” and that “this inclusive approach was a critical element highlighted throughout the consultations”, the strategy needs to describe specific measures for solving the chronic problem of job insecurity caused by the types of contract used by the Organization.

22. Paragraph 25 mentions that the development of the human resources strategy will take into account a series of surveys, decisions and reports. However, once again, we see no proposals for concrete measures aimed at effectively implementing the recommendations made by the various interested parties.

23. ADM/HRM says that it “will lead and facilitate the effective management of its workforce”. Here again, no concrete measures have been put forward.

24. With regard to overarching aim 1, in order to “attract talented, qualified, and diverse candidates”, the step which ADM/HRM should take first, and which we insist must be explicitly stated in the new human resources strategy, is that of becoming fully involved in the recruitment process.

25. Overarching aim 2 is to “adapt for the future by ensuring agile and flexible ways of working”. ISAU is very sceptical about this aim, given the new and more restrictive policy on flexible working arrangements which was recently established. We would therefore like to know what concrete measures will be included in the new strategy to effectively and significantly build on the “lessons from [the] COVID-19” pandemic.

Conclusion

26. Certainly, ISAU can agree with the basics of the draft, as well as with some of the ideas it contains (including those related to “promot[ing] an organizational culture of accountability”, “promot[ing] and support[ing] positive relations between managers and personnel”, “support[ing]

professional development”, and so on). However, we regret the absence of specific actions and measures, such as those proposed by ISAU in document 214 EX/5.III.A Add. We also regret that a workplan and timeline for implementation have not been included in this draft strategy.

27. It would be inappropriate to describe this Human Resources Management Strategy as ambitious, given the absence of specific measures concerning important matters such as recruitment, career development, performance management, and the regularization of long-term temporary staff. The vast majority of staff members feel that these matters are handled quite arbitrarily; we have often said that this arbitrariness is brought on by ADM/HRM’s lack of involvement. We therefore request that concrete measures be included in the strategy which is to be submitted at the 216th session of the Executive Board.



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United Nations
Educational, Scientific
and Cultural Organization

215 EX/5.IV.A

Executive Board

Two hundred and fifteenth session

PARIS, 9 September 2022
Original: English

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

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PART IV

HUMAN RESOURCES ISSUES

SUMMARY

A. Human Resources Management Strategy

Pursuant to 41 C/Resolution.63 of the General Conference, **Part I** of this document provides a progress report on the 2021-2022 initiatives outlined in the Human Resources Management Strategy for 2017-2022.

In accordance with 214 EX/Decision 5.III.A, **Part II** of this document presents the framework of a draft Human Resources Management Strategy for 2023-2027. This document also takes stock of 212 EX/Decision 5.IV.B and 212 EX/Decision 21.I.

Decision required: paragraph 35.



Job: 202202214

Background

1. This document is submitted pursuant to 41 C/Resolution 63 and 214 EX/Decision 5.III.A and is presented in two parts:

- **Part I:** provides a progress report on the 2021-2022 initiatives of the Human Resources Management Strategy for 2017-2022, notably an update of the skills inventory exercise, the geographical mobility exercise, the internship programme, learning and development initiatives, and the development and implementation of new policies, processes, and initiatives.
- **Part II:** presents the framework of a draft Human Resources Management Strategy for 2023-2027 taking into account the debates of the 214th session of the Executive Board (214 EX/Decision 5.III.A). The draft also takes stock of 212 EX/Decision 5.IV.B and 212 EX/Decision 21.I.

PART I: UPDATE ON 2021-2022 INITIATIVES OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR 2017-2022

2. Documents [41 C/46](#) and [212 EX/5.IV.A](#) reported on the major achievements and initiatives implemented since 2017 under the current (2017-2022) Human Resources Management Strategy. A progress update on the 2021-2022 initiatives is provided below. Some of these activities will continue, and be incorporated into the new Human Resources Management Strategy (2023-2027).

Geographical Mobility 2021/2022 exercise

3. In July 2021, the second geographical mobility exercise was launched, including staff who are due for reassignment as well as volunteers. In total, 47 staff moved from one duty station to another: 25 between field offices, 11 from Headquarters to the field and four from the field to Headquarters. The majority of the moves were at equal grade, while six were promotions. The mobility was mainly in the Education Sector and in the Culture Sector. Lessons from the first exercise were taken into account, including the adoption of all recommendations of the IOS evaluation of the first exercise. The second geographic mobility exercise was therefore shorter and more streamlined, with greater involvement of the ADGs and Directors, and systematic communication and support measures to staff. HRM provided extensive feedback to staff, particularly those for whom posts could not be identified, and the timing of the moves was also reviewed and extended to allow for better planning for staff and their families.

Recruitment

4. Since January 2022 and in application of 41 C/Resolution 64 “*Recommendations of the Executive Board on geographical distribution*”, the target of 50% of external appointments to geographical posts from non- and under-represented Member States has been achieved and even exceeded (59%). This has resulted in a significant decrease (-7) in the number of under-represented countries, i.e. 64 in June 2021 compared to 57 in June 2022.

5. The recruitment timeline has also seen a notable improvement since April 2022 with an average of 137 days (over the last three months) for international professional posts (P-1 to P-4 level), however for more senior-level posts (P-5 and above level), the average timeline is higher (243 days) which may be attributed, in part, to longer outreach efforts for certain positions and also the time involved in obtaining government clearance for Director/Heads of field office posts.

6. More detailed information on progress achieved with regard to improving geographical distribution and gender parity can be found in document: [215 EX/5.IV.C](#).

Introduction of new and/or updated HR policies

7. In April 2022, a policy on **Flexible Working Arrangements** was issued. This policy introduces the possibility to request two new flexible working modalities: staggered working hours and breaks for external learning activities. This policy provides all personnel (staff members and employees on other contract types such as Service Contracts, volunteers, interns, etc.) the opportunity to request telecommuting and staggered working hours, thus providing more equitable conditions of service. The purpose of flexible working arrangements is to support the better balancing of the needs of the individual and those of the Organization. It is part of an overall well-being framework to foster work-life balance, an enabling and inclusive organizational culture and positive employee experience. To accompany the issuance and consistent application of the policy, information sessions for personnel were conducted as well as a series of communication sessions for managers to guide and accompany them in the application of the policy while taking into account the varying exigencies of programmes, services and the conditions specific to the duty station. A brochure on Frequently-Asked-Questions for personnel and managers also supports the implementation of the policy.

8. Building a review of the Service Contract contractual modality and extensive consultations with field offices, institutes and Headquarters entities, the **Service Contract** policy was revised to provide for enhanced conditions of service applicable personnel. The policy aligns UNESCO with the best practices in the United Nations common system and provides a more effective and flexible contractual modality suited for the operational and administrative needs of the Organization, improving the well-being of the Service Contract employees. The revised conditions of service include, but are not limited to, enhanced leave entitlements (for example paid sick leave, a carry-forward of leave upon contract extension, exceptional special leave without pay), breastfeeding arrangements, salary advance, eligibility for telecommuting, staggered working hours, part-time work and separation payments. As part of the well-being framework, UNESCO is exploring options for a medical scheme for all Service Contract holders, either through a service provider or through the participation in the medical scheme of another United Nations common system organization.

9. The new conditions of service of Service Contracts will apply from 1 January 2023. Meanwhile, HRM is working closely with each field office to prepare for this change, and to advise on the HR contractual modality most suitable for the types of functions and Organizational needs.

Occupational Health and Safety framework

10. UNESCO continues to actively participate in the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Forum, established by the High-level Committee on Management (HLCM), which will serve as the basis of its Occupational Health and Safety framework. The Forum's primary objective is to develop activities to mainstream Occupational Health and Safety as a fundamental component of how Organizations meet their obligations towards staff and non-staff, including their duty of care.

11. Over the reporting period, the Occupational Health Service has continued to monitor the health and well-being of UNESCO personnel as part of its mandate all the while intervening with proactive initiatives, advising, and accompanying personnel (even outside office hours) through the COVID-19 crisis which is still ongoing. Over the last year, the Occupational Health Service has been particularly focused on preventive medicine. Its staff are being trained in different fields of occupational medicine (e.g. sleep improvement, managing fatigue, stress, diet and nutrition, ergonomics, etc.), to develop better and more diverse in-house expertise on workplace health. Psychological consultations have also been introduced for staff at Headquarters. A United Nations-wide health survey was launched in UNESCO (covering the period June-August 2022), in order to assess and respond to the current health and social security risks faced by United Nations employees, and to better understand the impact of the pandemic on the physical and mental health of United Nations staff. The results will enable UNESCO to align with the United Nations Strategy on OHS, and will be used to evaluate the impact of the activities and policies currently in place at UNESCO and orient future prevention programmes.

Learning and Career Development initiatives

12. The **Skills Inventory exercise**, launched in 2021, continues. To date, some 700 skills and competencies have been mapped and pilot initiatives in the Education and the Social and Human Sciences Sectors, the UNESCO Institute of Statistics, and the Bureau of Human Resources Management are underway. The exercise will also be instrumental in identifying skills and expertise that are not being used but are relevant for programme and service delivery; ways to maintain, nurture and retain staff with critical expertise; upskilling; and developing strategic partnerships with other United Nations agencies (pools/rosters).

13. Training on **People Management and Supervisors Programme** continued in 2022 bringing the total number of staff trained to 149 since the Programme's inception in 2021. The Programme which aims at developing capacity in staff coaching, feedback, conflict and change management has received positive feedback from participants. Building on the positive results of the [2021 Global Staff Survey](#) for learning and development opportunities, **online trainings** both bespoke and System-wide have been expanded and are available to staff including: Ethics at UNESCO; Gender Equality at UNESCO; Greening UNESCO Environmental awareness and action; Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by United Nations Personnel; UNESCO Cyber Security Fundamentals; UNESCO competency framework; United Nations Human Rights Responsibilities; etc. **Induction sessions** are taking place once per quarter, in English and French, to those new to the Organization and includes a general presentation of the Organization, its history, mandate, functions, overview of the Sectors/Services as well as UNESCO's role within the United Nations system. It also includes presentations on learning opportunities, performance, and corporate IT tools and applications. These are complemented by online **Orientation Talks** also aimed at newly hired personnel (staff and non-staff) year-round which consist of a series of themed presentations led by a subject expert. **Language classes** were also transitioned from face-to-face to hybrid delivery in order to be able to include field colleagues with some 243 participants enrolled for the 2021/22 academic year.

Human Resources Partnerships

14. As at 30 June 2022, UNESCO counts 175 staff and experts financed by external partners, of whom 89 are at Headquarters and 86 in the field. These partnerships are composed as follows: Junior Professional Officers (34), Secondees (17), Loans (17), Stand-by personnel (6), Sponsored Trainees (25), UN Volunteers (28), African Union Volunteers (2) and UNESCO Volunteers (38). Such personnel supplement in-house talent, bringing with them external expertise and contributing to the intellectual and cultural diversity of the Organization.

UNESCO Internship Programme

15. HRM, in close collaboration with DBS, is finalizing the development of an integrated platform for managing the internship process, from recruitment to contract management. The new platform, which is currently under testing, integrates the major stages of the Internship Programme, using existing tools such as SuccessFactors for recruitment and IRIS/SAP system for contract management workflows. The new platform is being developed in anticipation of a paid internship programme, which still requires the identification of appropriate funding sources. The new platform is expected to be launched by end September 2022.

16. UNESCO has been actively participating in the United Nations Youth 2030 Task Team on Strengthening Internships, established in June 2021. UNESCO has integrated nearly all of the JIU recommendations (JIU/REP/2018/1), including providing access to learning opportunities through UNESCO's learning management platform, the provision of an on-boarding support (monthly "Meet and Greet" Induction Sessions, regular Brown Bag Lunch talks, induction playlist in MyLearning, and the updated webpage Internship Hub). UNESCO interns are entitled to annual and sick leave, have access to recourse mechanisms for workplace conflict, and have the opportunity to contribute to the evaluation of the internship, with their supervisor. These initiatives have received very positive feedback from UNESCO interns. One outstanding issue for UNESCO interns, however, is the lack

of a stipend or a transport/meal allowance, which some other United Nations agencies have in place. In this regard, and pending the implementation of a paid internship programme, managers are being encouraged to consider and facilitate to the extent possible requests for internships from candidates from under- and non-represented countries.

17. While the Internship Programme is designed to provide talented students worldwide the opportunity to work in a multi-cultural international environment in their selected field of expertise, it also contributes to the capacity-building of talented young professionals from diverse backgrounds, including from non- and under-represented countries, and thereby contributes to the strategic objectives of the draft HR Management Strategy for 2023-2027.

Enhanced Communication, Monitoring and Reporting

18. HRM continues to meet quarterly, at a minimum, with the ADGs and Directors of Sectors/Bureaux/Offices/Institutes, to discuss HR staffing and planning. HR Dashboards, which are updated monthly, provide UNESCO leadership with an overview of key HR indicators including workforce composition, sector-specific progress on meeting geographic and gender targets, vacancy rates, and retirement dates, among other things. Member States also have access to key HR data and statistics of UNESCO's workforce via the new *SharePoint* platform for Member States. Separately, an online information and exchange platform has been established for Administrative Officers and Assistants, who also meet each month to review a specific topic (appointments, on-boarding, benefits, HR applications, insurance, separations, etc.) in order to continuously build and maintain knowledge on HR policies and practices. In June 2021, with the official launch of the new HRM Intranet site, a mobile-friendly monthly newsletter announcing latest HR news and events for staff at large was introduced. This has been particularly appreciated by field personnel.

Simplification of key HR processes

19. Considerable progress has been achieved over the last years with regard to improving HR processes and systems. 2019 and 2020 saw the streamlining of the Internal Justice System with the development and implementation of a revised Disciplinary procedure and the revised Statutes of the Appeals Board. In January 2020, with the introduction of a new Performance Management policy, the *MyTalent* Performance tool was revamped to make it more user-friendly for staff and managers. However, the major achievement during this reporting period was the introduction in 2019 of a fully integrated e-recruitment platform ("SuccessFactors") for staff recruitments. This end-to-end platform provides a better candidate/employer experience in managing applications and selection decisions. Further enhancements to HR systems and solutions (including digital business solutions) to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of HR processes have been limited due to lack of investment, however such improvements will continue to be a main area of focus in the new Strategy for 2023-2027.

PART II: DRAFT HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR 2023-2027

Introduction

20. The UNESCO Human Resources Management Strategy 2023-2027 should set out an ambitious five-year approach to improve the way in which UNESCO, as a whole, develops, supports and elicits the best from its workforce in order to deliver on its mandate. The three overarching aims and related strategic objectives proposed here should, together, achieve the vision for the Strategy by the end of 2027, provided the requisite resources are prioritized for its implementation.

21. This proposal has been developed following broad consultations across the Organization and with dedicated focus groups. The Strategy will be further refined based on the deliberations of the 215th session of the Executive Board and the findings of the evaluation of the 2017-2022 HR Strategy, requested by the Executive Board at its 214th session. The findings of the evaluation will be presented to the Executive Board at its 216th session. On the basis of these elements, as well

as the outcomes of the consultations, the Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM) will develop a workplan with timelines for the implementation of the Strategy.

A Strategy for the Entire Workforce that Builds on Lessons and Progress to Date

22. The 2017-2022 HR Strategy focused on ensuring that UNESCO has the capacity to effectively deliver the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The 2023-2027 Strategy will continue to support and further develop initiatives and processes to support this ambition. It will additionally work to put in place the optimal systems to ensure more efficient human resources processes across the Organization, particularly in support of the field reform process.

23. Critically, the upcoming HR Strategy must build upon progress to date and lessons from the current HR Strategy. One such lesson is that human resources management is a collective responsibility, and that for an HR Strategy to be successfully implemented, it must have the buy-in of the whole of the Organization. It was to solicit that ownership that broad consultations – which included personnel and managers at Headquarters and in country and regional offices, staff associations, and other key stakeholder groups – contributed to the Strategy’s development. With this in mind, the Strategy covers the entire workforce of UNESCO (including personnel on non-staff contracts). While there remains a rationale for differing contract types in a workforce with the demands of an organization such as UNESCO, this inclusive approach was a critical element highlighted throughout the consultations, particularly from those based in country and regional offices and personnel on non-staff contracts.

24. The draft Strategy incorporates other lessons learned, including the need to balance ambition with the reality of finite human and financial resources and ensure that decision-making is data-driven. Many of the potential activities and initiatives stemming from the Strategy will require additional resources. To this end, an HRM workplan and attendant budget should clearly match activities to costs and capacity. Member States play a critical role in shaping and supporting the implementation of the Strategy, as they will also be called upon to review and approve the associated budget for its implementation.

A Strategy that considers Broader Processes

25. The draft Strategy has been developed with regards to, and builds on, elements of the UNESCO HR Strategic Transformation. It is also aligned with, and grounded in, other relevant strategies/approaches of the Organization, *inter alia* the [41 C/4 Medium-Term Strategy](#); the [41 C/5 Programme and Budget](#); the sustainability of the field network; the findings of the [2021 Global Staff Survey](#); and the corporate risk mitigation efforts. Further elements that have been considered in the development of the Strategy include the recommendations of the Working Group on Geographical Distribution, relevant Executive Board decisions¹, the January 2022 UNESCO Advisory on Organizational Culture Recommendation Report (IOS), as well as Oversight, JIU, internal audit and evaluation recommendations.

26. Additionally, broader United Nations system frameworks and initiatives have been taken into consideration, including the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy; the Secretary-General’s “Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being” Programme; the United Nations’ Strategic Action Plan for Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for All; and the Secretary-General’s Report on Multilingualism. The ongoing Future of the UN System Workforce (“UN Future of Work”) will also feed into the Strategy, which includes *inter alia* the impact of COVID-19 on flexible ways of working and contractual modalities for all types of personnel.

¹ Relevant Executive Board decisions include *inter alia* the following: 212th session: 212 EX/Dec.5.IV.B; 212 EX/Dec.21.I; and 214th session: 214 EX/Dec.5.III.A.

I. OUR VISION

27. By 2027, UNESCO is an agile and desirable place to work which attracts and retains qualified and talented individuals who are motivated to deliver on UNESCO's mission and programmes.

II. OUR MISSION

28. In supporting the implementation of the Strategy and its Vision, HRM will lead and facilitate the effective management of its workforce, to achieve the UNESCO mandate, mission, and goals while ensuring a conducive working environment for all personnel.

III. STRATEGIC AIMS AND CROSS-CUTTING CONSIDERATIONS

29. Three broad strategic aims cover the various focus areas that need further attention moving ahead from the current Strategy. The aims have been further refined based on the consultations and strategic objectives defined under each that cover the different areas that require focused attention. A workplan will elaborate details of how each strategic objective will be achieved during the five-year period.

STRATEGIC AIMS

1

Attract and retain talent and expertise
to effectively deliver UNESCO's mandate,
including by promoting inclusion and diversity.

2

Adapt for the future
by ensuring agile and flexible ways of working.

3

Attain better results and impact,
including by focusing on the well-being
of UNESCO's workforce.

IV. OVERARCHING AIM 1

Attract and retain talent and expertise to effectively deliver UNESCO's mandate, including by promoting inclusion and diversity.

30. Key to ensuring that the Organization can deliver on its mandate is ensuring an expert and diverse workforce that can fill the various positions in UNESCO both at Headquarters and in regional and country offices. Identifying qualified individuals and providing the necessary support, training, and professional development opportunities to personnel (regardless of contract type) throughout their careers with UNESCO is critical. An enabling organizational culture and environment is necessary to attract and retain talent.

Strategic objectives:

- (i) Attract talented, qualified, and diverse candidates. To this end, identify current and future gaps in the skills and expertise required for effective programme delivery. Work to fill those gaps by building talent pools and launching effective outreach programmes.
- (ii) Foster an organizational culture that respects and enables inclusion and diversity, including by improving experiences across the workforce at key career moments from

joining the Organization (induction/on-boarding) to career transition (changing positions, promotions, mobility) and up until leaving the Organization.

- (iii) Promote an organizational culture of accountability, including through results-based management, which encourages and rewards outstanding individual and team performance.

V. OVERARCHING AIM 2

Adapt for the future by ensuring agile and flexible ways of working

31. While the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about more flexible ways of working, further improvements can be made to ensure that UNESCO is able to adapt to future challenges and opportunities. Identifying ways to better support field operations particularly in emergency settings, including through the decentralization and increased efficiency of HR and operational support systems, will be essential.

Strategic objectives:

- (i) Improve the Organization's agility and flexibility, including through more rapid support to field operations; continue reviewing the varied contractual frameworks and related conditions of service to promote more agile ways of working and building on lessons from COVID-19.
- (ii) Review and adopt more effective HR structures/partnerships which will better assist managers and personnel to improve performance and operations, with tailored support to country and regional offices.
- (iii) Review and implement enhancements to HR systems and solutions (including digital business solutions) to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of HR processes.

VI. OVERARCHING AIM 3

Attain better results and impact, including by focusing on the well-being of UNESCO's Workforce

32. Improved results and impact for the Organization requires prioritizing the well-being of the workforce and ensuring that systems provide effective support to personnel and managers. Managers will be assisted in improving their leadership skills with concerns between managers and staff addressed early on, including through refining performance management.

Strategic objectives:

- (i) Ensure a safe and healthy work environment, including by putting in place an occupational health and well-being framework that supports all personnel.
- (ii) Promote and support positive relations between managers and personnel, including by strengthening managers' leadership skills, improving performance management systems, and providing rapid HRM support to managers and personnel when needed.
- (iii) Support professional development through peer mentoring, training/learning, and career planning, including by helping to identify opportunities such as mobility and short-term or temporary assignments.

VIII. IMPLEMENTATION AND ADAPTATION

33. The Strategy should be flexible, to adapt to changes and/or organizational priorities. A five-year workplan with timeline for implementation will outline specific initiatives and activities for each strategic objective. The proposed initiatives should be realistic and achievable in terms of human and financial resources.

34. A mid-term review of the Strategy will help to ensure any necessary adaptations, with an evaluation being undertaken in advance of the development of the next strategy.

Proposed draft decision

35. In light of the above, the Executive Board may wish to adopt a decision along the following lines:

The Executive Board,

1. Recalling 212 EX/Decision 5.IV.B, 212 EX/Decision 21.1, 41 C/Resolution 63 and 214 EX/Decision 5.III.A,
2. Welcomes the progress achieved in the implementation of 2021-2022 initiatives of the UNESCO Human Resources Management Strategy for 2017-2022;
3. Notes and endorses the framework of the draft human resources management strategy for 2023-2027, and requests the Director-General to present to it at its 216th session the new UNESCO Human Resources Management Strategy for 2023-2027, taking into account relevant discussions at its 215th session and the findings of the Internal Oversight Service (IOS) evaluation of the UNESCO Human Resources Management Strategy for 2017-2022.