

REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Introduction

1. The Standing Committee on Human Resources Management (HRM – see Appendix 1 for participants) met virtually on 18 January 2023 and in-person on 8 February 2023 to address its agenda and elected Marjorie Manduli (UNFCCC) as rapporteur at the 76th Council in Valencia.
2. The SC participants agreed that the existence of a staff association / union is important within any organization, particularly to foster a good, constructive relationship with the HR department. After all, the staff association / union, management, and the HR department are the custodians of organizational culture. HR traditionally holds the keys to, for example, the values, norms, staffing roster and conflict management. Staff associations / unions need to be proactive and progressive to achieve the best possible working environment for their members. The SC participants further agreed that staff associations / unions must be prepared to have uncomfortable conversations when necessary.
3. A UNIDO case study seemed to show a cost-driven exercise requiring staff “to do more with less and faster”. This is impossible for a workforce already pushed to its limits. Staff associations / unions must reserve the right to be conservative, by refusing to change the status quo to the detriment of the staff; the established ICSC-approved framework has been in existence for several decades and a recent review confirmed that it remained fit for purpose.

Activities in 2022

4. HRM considered the outstanding issues related to implementing the [decisions of the 75th session of the FICSA Council](#); in the light of FICSA/C/75/D/6, HRM agreed on the need for FICSA to continue to take a conservative approach towards expanding the existing contractual framework. FICSA consistently participated in and monitored discussions by ICSC, CEB, HLCM and the HR Network on this issue, and would continue to report any relevant updates to HRM.
5. HRM also agreed on the need to establish a technical committee on contractual personnel issues, following up on FICSA/C/75/D/7, and discussed terms of reference identified in 2022. A pilot workplan and related deliverables would be defined so that the 77th FICSA Council could make a comprehensive assessment of the project.

Recommendation

- The FICSA Executive Committee should assist the Standing Committee on Human Resources Management to complete the terms of reference for and establish a technical committee on issues related to contracts falling outside of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) contractual framework, which would operate on a pilot basis until the 77th session of the FICSA Council, with a view to converting it to a permanent technical committee should its value be sustainable.
6. The continued misuse of interns was also discussed. One member asked that difference be made between unions and staff associations during discussions as Unions have more power and selective bargaining rights which associations do not have (further addressed under AOB).

Latest updates

7. The most important development at the level of the UN common system was ICSC's decision on parental leave; its terms are shown in the table below.

Leave type	Current policy	New policy
Maternity leave	16 weeks	26 weeks
Paternity leave	4 weeks (<i>staff serving in family duty stations</i>) 8 weeks (<i>staff serving in non-family duty stations</i>)	16 weeks
Adoption leave	4/8 weeks (<i>based on the age of the adopted child</i>)	16 weeks

8. The UNIDO case study demonstrated a lot of negative tendencies, such as posts being reduced in grade. A procedure called broad banding was a method of banding job classifications to multiple grades and linking them to an incumbent based on experience, service time, and academic background. The use of Officers-in-Charge for vacant posts seemed to have been institutionalized as well, which could be a way of recruiting without advertising. Members reviewed other unfair practices being used in their respective organizations such as different treatment for G and P staff, use of consultants and individual service agreements (contractual/consultancy contracts), unfair job description classifications, lack of consideration of internal candidates, pre-selected candidates, low consideration of G staff, covertly awarding GS positions to employees with Masters degrees and leveraging their qualification for de-facto professional work, as well as cronyism and hiring bias.
9. Finally, practices that bent, but did not break, the rules seemed to be increasingly used, such as advertising locally recruited posts on an international platform when a big enough pool of local talent was available. GS-category staff that would consider themselves unfairly treated by not responding to a local vacancy announcement, which is clearly a, de-facto, international [GS] recruitment, could challenge that through appeals and administrative tribunals. In the absence of a court ruling, the practice remains a grey area.

10. HRM also highlighted the issue of abolished positions. Members would like to see rules to specify a process for abolition, including reclassifying National Professional Officer (NPO) positions as IP-position. The FICSA President urged staff representatives to become knowledgeable about their organizations HR policies and applicable rules, and the check them to see if challenges were necessary. The onus was on staff representatives to help to ensure that their organizations were applying the rules and regulations properly, as well as ensuring that agreed common-system practices were being implemented. She also urged representatives to reach out to FICSA if they felt a need for training of staff representatives.
11. A member asked why different grade levels were used. If the UN were to phase out certain levels, it should explain the reasons they were no longer required or desired. Personnel planning was identified as a general problem across all members.
12. The incoming HRM leadership team would review the many contributions related to recruitment, placement, and career, as well as the data supplied, and use them to prepare for a more targeted discussion at the 77th FICSA Council.

Unionizing the non-regular work force

13. A case study showed how the UNIDO Staff Union had supported the organization's non-regular workforce to unionize. This workforce comprised about 86% of the total personnel. A strong positive proposal was made to the Director-General, detailing all the ensuing benefits. Forming such an association required a great deal of volunteerism self-determination. It was important that such new unions/associations did not necessarily rely on established staff unions/associations to carry out staff-management relations work on their behalf.
14. While an association /union of non-regular workers could become an associate member of FICSA, the legal implications would still need to be explored. HRM would seek background material on establishing such associations from the UNIDO delegation for publication on the FICSA website.

Changes in working culture

15. HRM considered nine trends prevalent among HR professionals across multiple sectors, scoring them based on their experience ([Presentation](#) held during Council).
 - a. quiet hiring (disapprove: 62%; neutral: 33%; approve: 5%).
 - b. hybrid flexibility (disapprove: 5%; neutral: 14%; approve: 82%).
 - c. delivering purpose, flexibility, and career opportunities (disapprove: 0%; neutral: 21%; approve: 79%).
 - d. expanding talent pipelines (disapprove: 6%; neutral: 11%; approve: 83%).
 - e. healing covid trauma (disapprove: 0%; neutral: 29%; approve: 71%).
 - f. diversity, equality, inclusion (disapprove: 5%; neutral: 11%; approve: 84%).
 - g. emerging technologies (disapprove: 27%; neutral: 33%; approve: 40%).
 - h. algorithmic bias (disapprove: 62%; neutral: 23%; approve: 15%).
 - i. Gen-Z skills gap (disapprove: 6%; neutral: 31%; approve: 63%).

Other business

16. HRM members discussed their experience with flexible working arrangements (Including remote working arrangements, flexible hours, compressed week, etc.), noting cases of staff members resigning rather than returning to their duty station. In addition, they considered the difference between a union and an association, particularly focusing on the collective bargaining mechanisms which were available to Unions (such as Joint Advisory Committee requirements, or similar).
17. HRM acknowledged both representation and cultural issues relating to the use and misuse of interns in the UN system, a recurring topic. Their conditions of service differed widely. While some organizations allowed, for example, interns to travel on mission (including issuance of a UN laissez passer) and to receive compensation and/or stipends, others did not.
18. HRM met in a joint session with two other FICSA standing committees (on Professional Salaries and Allowances and on Staff–Management Relations) to discuss the issue of overtime.

Recommendations

- **Bearing in mind the need for a sound work–life balance for staff, the FICSA Executive Committee should evaluate the input provided by FICSA members through the survey on overtime worked by staff in the Professional and National Professional Officer categories, address any concerns identified from the survey and raise them in all relevant fora, including during the upcoming review of the compensation package for UN staff by ICSC.**
- **FICSA ExCom should communicate and inform to all staff representative bodies regarding guidance on overtime for locally recruited staff contained in the ICSC review of categories of staff, and the terms of the Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA), which is not designed to cover overtime for staff on missions or official travel.**

Nomination of officers and core group members

19. The following delegates were elected as HRM officers:
 - Daniella Salmon (WHO/HQ) as Co-chair
 - Tracy Tollmann (UNFCCC) as Co-chair
 - Alessandra Marcorio (UNGSC) as Vice-Chair
 - Innocent Mugabe (WHO/HQ) as Vice-Chair

Appendix 1. Participants

Officers

Chair/Coordinator	Steven Eales (UNIDO)
Vice-Chair/Vice-Coordinator	Daniella Salmon (WHO/HQ)
Vice-Chair/Vice-Coordinator	Alessandra Marcorio (UNGSC)
Rapporteur	Marjorie Manduli (UNFCCC)
FICSA President	Tanya Quinn-Maguire (UNAIDS)
Member, FICSA Executive Committee	Tracy Tollmann (UNFCCC)
Regional Representative	Benito Harris Koubemba Mona (WHO/AFRO)

Staff association/union

AP-in-FAO	Line Kaspersen, Florence Tartanac, Vanda Ferreira Dos Santos, Wadzanai Garwe
FAO/WFP-UGSS	Susan Murray, Dina Franchi, Luca Vecchia, Marc Brown, Enzo Giorgio Lalli
IAEA	Anthony Alozie, Houcine Mhadhbi
ICAO	Helena Debussy, Sonia El-Sakka
ILOTG	Cristina Pierini, Zakaria El Ghormli
IMO	Folake Odulana, Lionel Shen, Ivana Goode, Shereen Barry
OSCE	Nizar Zaher
PAHO/WHO	Pilar Ramon Pardo, Eliane Pereira dos Santos, Glenda Lopez
SCBD	Veronique Allain
UNAIDS	Andrea Palazzi, Carlos Garcia de León Moreno
UNESCO	Federica Delconte, Vivian Zaccaria, Lina Oweis, Denis Pitzalis
UNFCCC	Sarah Klinghammer, Tracy Tollman, Mary Jean Abrazado, Marsha Cheddi
UNGSC	Cosimo Lunedì, Salvatore Brunori, Annarita Palumbo
UNICTF	Maria Del Rocio Martin
UNIDO	Osadolor Akpata
UPU	Stephane Vuillemin, Silvia Baratech, Franck Landauer, Magali Vifian, Leolinda Dieme, Birahim Fall
WHO/AFRO	Valerie Harmell Nganga Banzouzi
WHO/EMRO	Tonia Rifaey, Mina Nagy
WHO/EURO	Anita Stefin, Kay Miller
WHO/GSC	Khalid Aizat, Hazim Ahmed, Liana Michael Abdullah
WHO/HQ	Innocent Mugabe, Neddy Mafunga
WHO/SEARO	Kumar Ravinder, Ritesh Singh

WHO/WPRO

Modesto VI Beligan

Members with associate status

CTBTO

Maria Zelda Rojas

CERN

Catherine Regelbrugge, Joel Lahaye

OPCW

Arshad Qadri, Begimai Sataeva

Associations with consultative status

EMBL

Dienty Hazenbrink

WIPO SC

Faizan Ul-Haq

Federation with observer status

FUNSA Guinea

Lucie Gnongo Beavogui, Bangaly Kaba
