RESOURCE, FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY MATTERS

Agenda item 6

For consideration

REPORT OF THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR ON THE MANAGEMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

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NOTE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

This document is submitted to the Executive Board for consideration

The Secretariat invites members of the Board who may have questions of a technical nature with regard to this document to contact the WFP staff focal point indicated below, preferably well in advance of the Board's meeting.

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Should you have any questions regarding matters of dispatch of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact Ms I. Carpitella, Administrative Assistant, Conference Servicing Unit (tel.: 066513-2645).

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Report of the External Auditor on the Management of Human Resources

Executive summary

This report presents the results of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India's audit on "Management of Human Resources" in the World Food Programme (WFP).

Challenging working and living conditions in hardship duty stations, uncertainties in funding, a decentralised structure are some of the key drivers to Human Resources (HR) planning and implementation in WFP. The main objective of the audit was to assess mainly whether the HR policies are aligned to WFP's dynamic staffing needs and that they are supported by credible and transparent processes that build trust among the staff. Our audit spanned the WFP Headquarters in Rome, seven Country Offices (COs) and four Regional Bureaux (RBs).

Workforce Planning
'Preparing for Tomorrow Today: WFP Strategy for Managing and Developing Human Resources: 2008-11' framed the key HR goals for the Programme. The workforce planning was to be strengthened by regular staffing reviews to ensure that staff and office structure meet current and future needs. A reporting framework would enable staff projections.

The field offices view Structure and Staffing Review (SSR) essentially as a tool to explore staffing options amidst uncertain funding situations. The actual staffing in the COs was not driven by the results of SSRs; it was in fact, determined in a budgeting process through individual project plans/management plan and more importantly, on the COs' ability to resource the projects. The SSR's utility as a feeder into corporate workforce planning was not being achieved. We were informed that a project for development of workforce plan has been initiated.

While the Human Resources Division (HR Division) is accountable for HR decisions, the actual authority to raise and manage the staff structure lies with the COs/RBs. HR planning is closely tied with the funding model and its consequences. HR planning and implementation should be seen as a corporate responsibility and not only as an HR Division domain. A management review of actual implementation of the project plans, including that of the staffing element, is not in place to reinforce accountability of the COs.
We recognize that decentralisation is seen as critical to WFP's field operations. We also feel that there should be an oversight on the delegation of HR accountabilities to ensure consistency in decisions, that together remain faithful to corporate goals and culture.

Staffing decisions
Our review of staffing decisions- reassignment, promotions and recruitment showed that the decisions were not adequately supported by documented justification and feel that a system of structured feedback to staff on reassignment/promotion decisions would increase transparency in the processes, and enhance among the staff, faith in the processes.

Recruitments to regular positions were found to often follow a closed loop, drawn mainly from short-term contract holders. It conveys a message that procuring such a contract is the first step to fixed-term appointment. This feeder of contract holders is not sourced through an open contracting process. Together, the recruiting process

would preclude the breadth of competition necessary to attract best of talent. This also may limit the Programme's ability to meet its diversity targets in staff composition.

Performance evaluation

A web-based system: Performance and Competency Enhancement Programme (PACE) supports annual performance evaluation of staff. We found tardiness in completion of PACE. Lack of familiarity with the previous software is one issue. More critically, PACE is not viewed as a corporate priority by staff and managers; that if not completed, will adversely impact them. It is primarily the recommendation of the supervisors at various levels that places a staff member in the zone of consideration for promotion and not the PACE. The value of PACE as an input in career decisions is impaired in such a situation.

Capacity development

A focus area in WFP would be a corporate culture of cataloguing and archiving knowledge spread across disparate studies, reports, authors' contracts, etc. The rotation policy and the considerable delegation of powers to the field managers make it imperative that there is documentation of decisions and they are easily retrievable. WFP will benefit from a Knowledge Management System that can create, capture, share and use knowledge.

We are happy to note that WFP launched in 2010 the Learning Management System (LMS), a web-based learning platform for training of its staff. It is gaining acceptance among the staff. The field offices had not linked their training modules to the LMS which was restricting its utilisation among staff.

Summary of recommendations

Recommendation 1: The Structure and Staffing Review (SSR) must be integrated with the 5-year country strategy and with the staffing projections across individual project plans. Comprehensive SSRs encompassing non-staff requirements (including consultants) should guide the overall deployment in the field offices.

Recommendation 2: The Regional Bureaux (RB) should be equipped with the knowledge and skills to support the country offices in the SSRs and to assist the HR Division in periodically feeding the outcomes of SSRs into corporate HR planning through a structured mechanism.

Recommendation 3: Corporate workforce plan must be supported by an assessment on the benefits and risks of high dependence on short-term contracts in relation to funding trends in country offices over a multi-year period. The controls that mitigate the risks should also be identified.

Recommendation 4: WFP should set in place oversight to provide an assurance that the position grades approved in each project conform to the standard classification and that the decisions are not driven by funding projections alone.

Recommendation 5: HR Division should establish key performance indicators on the health of HR management in the field offices and establish a threshold above which an on-site review would be conducted. A process to periodically inform the top management on the results thereon should also be put in place.

Recommendation 6: A time-bound plan for expeditious completion of the corporate workforce plan and its implementation must be prepared.

Recommendation 7: Clear documentation that provides a trail, including justification for deviations, must support HR decisions.

Recommendation 8: WFP should recognize the risks of following a closed loop in recruitment and identify the controls to mitigate the risks.

Recommendation 9: We recommend that the PACE reports form the primary basis for identifying the pool of staff that must be considered by the Professional Promotion Panel (PPP). This, in turn, will enhance the value of PACE, the quality of PACE evaluations and aid adherence to time schedules.

Recommendation 10: A structured framework for feedback to staff on HR decisions, will enhance the credibility of the process.

Recommendation 11: We re-iterate recommendation no: 17 of our Report on Somalia Operations on timeliness and quality of PACE evaluations.

Recommendation 12: A 360 degree review which includes feedback from subordinates, should be included in the annual performance evaluation of executive level staff.

Recommendation 13: WFP must develop a learning policy for continuous capacity-building of staff and its integration with work processes.

Recommendation 14: A knowledge management system will help WFP harness the knowledge that resides in disparate reports and in different divisions of the organization. Handing over of hard and soft copy of files should form an important item in the checklist before an employee moves out on reassignment/retirement.

Recommendation 15: Training Modules of all functional areas and offices should be linked to the Learning Management Systems (LMS).

I   INTRODUCTION

The numbers

1. The World Food Programme (WFP) conducts its operations in Headquarters (HQ) and across 89 countries with a staff of 14566.[1] Staff costs of US$646 million account for 15 *per cent* of WFP's total annual expenditure. More than 90 *per cent* of the staff is in the field (13167); 83 *per cent* of the staff are recruited locally; "international employees" number 2437. Annexure I provides the trends in staffing over the period 2002–11. The different categories of staff are detailed at Annexure II. Human Resources Division (HR Division): previously called OMH) at HQ at Rome has the overall responsibility of planning and implementing all HR-related activities in WFP. It is headed by Director, HR, who reports to the Executive Director, WFP.

The challenges

2. WFP's HR Strategy was outlined in the document: 'Preparing for Tomorrow Today: WFP Strategy for Managing and Developing Human Resources: 2008–11' (referred as the HR Strategy in

> **Stated Vision:** OMH is a proactive, value-adding partner, leading organizational culture change through learning and managerial excellence.
>
> **Stated Mission:** The role of OMH is to ensure that WFP has the appropriate composition of staff who are well prepared and supported in carrying out their assignments so that WFP succeeds in its mandate

this document). The main drivers for change identified in the document were: ability to attract and retain competent staff when working and living conditions are difficult; the need for periodic workforce adjustments that may result in downsizing of offices, rapid expansion of staffing, or re-profiling of job requirements; and the need to develop a mind set in which diversity is valued, harnessed and leveraged to achieve greater organizational success.

3. These drivers resonate the challenges that confront HR planning in the Programme. Most of the staff costs of the Country Office (CO) are funded through the Direct Support Costs (DSC): directly linked to the WFP projects.[2] The voluntary funding model creates uncertainty in WFP's ability to finance posts which in turn, necessitates flexibility for timely re-structuring: to downsize or expand the staff strength. Structure and Staffing Review exercises that support the "right-sizing "of the COs can create anxiety and conflicts from perceptions of lack of respect for experience, skills and knowledge.[3] This model also supports a view in WFP that use of short-term contracts offer a cost-effective response, many holders of such contracts are engaged in routine functions.

4. With a view to providing speedy response, WFP has delegated substantial responsibility to its field formations. It is the responsibility of the country offices to create an appropriate structure to deliver its programme of work although within the ambit of instructions issued by the HQ. The challenge lies in defining policies that reinforce transparency and accountability as well as in providing space to hiring managers to find the right fit.

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[1] The data in this paragraph are as of July 2011

[2] Most of the staff at the Headquarters/Regional Offices/Liaison Offices are funded through the Programme Support and Administrative budget

[3] Report on the Activities of the Office of the Ombudsman: 1 January—31 December 2010

5. Given its mandate, WFP cannot offer to its staff ideal living conditions in all duty stations. Nearly a quarter of its international professionals and many national staff serve in hardship duty stations.[4] 41 *per cent* of the duty stations to which staff are assigned in WFP are designated non-family duty stations due to security risks. The rotation policy in WFP facilitates staffing of the difficult stations but this needs to be balanced with the organization's need for specialisation, to develop the requisite skills among staff, to provide them the breadth of experience to pick the leaders among them.

6. The HR strategy of an organization should be closely aligned to its overall strategic objectives. The Programme has introduced strategic initiatives in line with good practices in the private sector and adopted new tools in programming. The percolation of these initiatives to transform them from mere corporate directives to processes integrated into the operations necessitates advocacy among staff, mobility, re-profiling of job requirements and also ability to infuse new skills in the workforce. The HR planning in WFP has to keep pace with the developments in the organization.

The strategy

7. The HR strategy: 2008–11 listed the following objectives:

- Integration of workforce planning with strategic, financial and operational planning
- Alignment of recruitment practices to support targeted and rigorous selection
- Development of process to identify internal staff for reassignment
- Provide staff tools to develop their managerial, technical and personal capacities
- Provide opportunities to staff for inter-agency mobility in the United Nations system and WFP partner organizations

II   OUR AUDIT

Audit objectives

8. Our audit objectives were fashioned with reference to the HR Strategy. The audit objectives were to seek an assurance that :
   - Staffing Review Exercises support an ability to project staffing profiles to meet the changing needs towards achieving WFP's Strategic Objectives.

   - A Corporate workforce plan that forecasts staff size, diversity and competence requirements, is in place.

   - HR is equipped with information systems that provide reliable, accurate and consistent data for all categories of staff.

   - HR decisions on recruitment, reassignment and promotions are rigorous, transparent and credible.

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[4] Categorized as hardship stations, based on criteria such as availability of education and medical facilities, climate conditions, communications, housing, leisure and recreation. In addition to hardship, the staff face security concerns in many of these stations. The statistics have been drawn from the strategy document: 2008–11.

- A plan for continuous development of managerial, technical and personal capacities of the staff helps WFP to build a learning organization.

- Staff is provided with opportunities for inter-agency mobility in the United Nations system and WFP partner organizations.

Scope of audit

9. Our study covered the HR processes in general in WFP. With particular reference to review of HR decisions, we drew samples relating to WFP International Professional Staff: IPS (fixed-term) in three areas of the Programme *viz.,* Programming, Logistics and Finance. Compliance was tested with reference to the documents that guide the HR policy, listed at Annexure III.

10. Our work spanned the WFP Headquarters (HQ) in Rome, 7 COs[5] under 4 Regional Bureaux[6] (RBs). We covered the period 2009 to 2011. For trend analyses, we used the data and figures for the past five years wherever necessary.

Audit methodology

11. We started our audit with an Entry Conference with Director, HR Division to discuss the audit objectives and the methodology. Based on a preliminary review of documents, we issued Audit Queries designed to ascertain the control mechanisms in place for identified risk areas. We analysed data, test-checked records and issued our Audit Observations seeking management response. This Report has been compiled after taking into consideration the views of the Secretariat solicited at different stages of audit. We also shared our assessment with the HR Division in an Exit Conference held on 6th October 2011.

12. The work in the field offices was conducted between October 2011 and November 2011. Our field audit teams also held entry and exit meetings in the COs and RBs to discuss the preliminary audit observations and obtain responses.

13. Our audit findings and recommendations are strictly based on information made available to us. We are not responsible for erroneous audit findings attributable to inaccurate/incomplete information provided to us.

14. Our findings and recommendations are detailed in the succeeding paragraphs. The illustrative examples are only from the COs where we have cross-checked the data on ground.

We acknowledge the cooperation and assistance extended by the WFP staff and Secretariat during various stages of this audit.

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[5] Egypt, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Niger, Côte d'Ivoire, Colombia, Guatemala, Senegal

[6] Cairo, Panama, Dakar, the Sudan

III   OUR FINDINGS

A   WORKFORCE PLANNING

15. The HR Strategy: 2008–2011 underscored the integration of workforce planning with the strategic, financial and operational objectives by WFP, in achievement of which the following goals were set:,
    - develop a systematic HR planning framework and reporting process to enable projection of staff requirements
    - strengthen support to COs in conducting staffing reviews to ensure that staff and office structure meet current and future needs

(i) Structure and Staffing Review

16. The Staffing Review Exercise – now known as the Structure and Staffing Review (SSR) – aims to ensure that the structure and positions of an organization or unit are aligned to the strategy and goals which it needs to deliver, and the resources which are available to it. The HR Strategy recognized the need for "more regular and robust schedule of [SSRs]."

17. We found that the SSR is perceived in the field as an exercise to explore staffing options to meet the uncertainties in funding. For instance, CO, Egypt told us that a SSR was not conducted in 2010 because the funding situation had not dynamically changed. CO, Senegal recruited 17 staff in its Programme Unit in 2010, which was not supported by a SSR, based on the perception that it may not be essential since a significant funding cut was not anticipated.

18. We were further informed that the HR Division does not compile data on the status of completion of SSRs in the field. The data available (which essentially covers those in which the HR Division had provided assistance) showed that HQ-guided SSRs had been conducted by few out of a total of 89 COs/RBs, as shown in the table. We were happy to note that the 3 SSRs we sampled (prepared with guidance from HQ) were comprehensive.

Year	Number of HQ-driven SSRs
2008	6
2009	7
2010	2

19. The HR Division largely viewed the SSR as a field initiative. Our field work as illustrated in the following case studies showed that the SSRs did not bear close correlation with staff projections in individual project plans/Management Plans (discussed in further detail in paragraph 26). These plans guided staff deployment in the field rather than the SSR. An organization-wide workforce plan supported by a compilation of the results of periodic SSRs is thus not prepared in WFP.

Case Study 1: CO, Côte d'Ivoire
In order to align staff costs to the Direct Support Costs (DSC) that would be expected from a realistic level of contributions, it was decided in SSR in 2010 to downsize the CO. 40 staff members were separated or re-assigned while implementing the SSR in 2010 to bring down the total staff strength to 61.

We found that the staff strength had thereafter risen to 132 as on November 2011. The CO justified the increase on the addition of two EMOPs (Emergency Operations) and one United Nations Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) project (air transport) to the CO portfolio in 2011.   The increase was not complemented by a substantial improvement in 2011 in resourcing; funding shortfall across projects exceeded

55 *per cent* in the year. WFP has systems in place that prepare it for impending emergencies and reduce the surprise element. A SSR must factor the CO's immediate future requirements (in this case within a year). We recommend that the increase may be reviewed with reference to the flow of contributions (and DSC); the estimated increase in workload; and the mix of skills required to meet the workload.

Case Study 2: CO, Niger
The CO conducted a detailed SSR with the help of the RB, Dakar in May 2009 which identified an increase in HR requirements, though not directly related to the emergency in the country. The SSR recommended an increase of fixed-term (FT) staff by 11 but we found that the CO recruited 22 FT staff in 2010. The CO felt that the increase was justified as it moved from being a small/medium office to a large one and with the creation/strengthening of units. We were also told that since a downscaling of operations was not anticipated in the coming 5 years, the increase in staff was effected by recruiting FT (fixed-term) staff. We could not derive an assurance on why these factors could not be addressed in the SSR and on why FT recruitments were the best solution.

20. The Report on the activities of the Office of the Ombudsman: 2010 noted that the "*restructuring causes varying intensities of workplace issues and conflict among all involved.*" The Ombudsman felt that "*support is available from Headquarters and the Regional Bureaux but it is neither standardized nor based on a model or best practice. There is no common messaging, no standard policy interpretation and communication, no regular career counselling, and no guidance on the best or most appropriate timing of the exercise. Advice must be sought from disparate parts of the organization and quite haphazardly: some individuals are more knowledgeable, more skilled than others and could and should be called upon to assist. Some office managers might have successfully restructured while maintaining employee productivity and satisfaction, but they will have done so on their own.*" The Ombudsman's conclusion was that "*while the delegation of authority has its advantages, programming complexity due to the changing global political and economic situation and continuing organizational growth requires a more centralized authority in the short and medium term.*"[7]

21. Subsequent to the Ombudman's report, HR Division has developed and rolled-out an SSR Toolkit. The SSR Toolkit is intended to provide comprehensive guidance to lead field managers through the process of conducting such an exercise. It offers guidance on different aspects of conducting an SSR, including communications, procedural framework, messaging and timing of the exercise. In addition, a dedicated unit (the Field Support Unit) provides guidance and assistance to Regional Bureaux and Country Offices, through their respective HR officers, to strengthen staff management and application of human resources policies and procedures.

22. A corporate requirement in WFP is preparation of a Country Strategy (CS) for each country, which is essentially a road map that outlines the direction WFP will take in a given country over a five-year period in order to reach a vision. It is prepared in consultation with the government and other stakeholders. We found that the COs find a useful link between the CS and SSR, which must be encouraged in order to peg SSR as a planning tool not entirely yoked to funding uncertainties.

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[7] Report on the Activities of the Office of the Ombudsman – 1 January–31 December 2010, at p. 11.

23. We feel that the SSR and its future refinements should be aimed to develop capacity and greater self-reliance among HR managers in the field to review staffing needs in line with the 5-year country strategy. We also think that the RBs could help with oversight that periodic SSRs support HR decisions in the COs and in developing capacity in the COs for the exercise.

24. Even if viewed as a tool to align funding situations to staffing, a risk-based, regular and robust schedule for completion of SSRs in COs would help systematise the initiative. A regular schedule for submission of the outcomes of SSRs by the field level managers is currently not required. We were told that the HR Division does not envision integrating an oversight role within the context of an SSR since it would not be consistent with the delegation of authority.

(ii) Workforce Plan

25. The HR strategy: 2008–11 had aimed at developing a Corporate Workforce Plan that forecasts staff size, diversity and competence requirements. This was yet to be developed in WFP. We were told that the practice of incorporation of staffing requirements in the WFP's Management Plans with forecasts on staff size and diversity, provides an alternative in this regard. The Secretariat felt that the Management Plan process entails forecasting staff size and diversity; work on competency forecasting remains ongoing.

26. However, the Management Plan process does not entirely meet the expectation of a Corporate Workforce Plan. The staff requirements in the field are aggregated from requirements against each project into the Management Plan. The project plans are informed by inputs from key divisions, including HR Division, through the process of the Programme Review Committee (PRC). But the estimation of the staffing needs is not set against a corporate template; it is initiated as essentially a budgeting exercise and not a HR process. The individual staff requirements against each project are not set against the integrated needs of the CO as a whole; or against the existing complement of staff in the CO; or supported on an assessment of the impact of the project on other on-going projects. However, there are no "rules of thumb" as each project is viewed as unique with respect to the programmatic approach. We recognize that in order to maintain flexibility, prescriptive formulae would not meet WFP's field needs, but we feel that the projection of staff requirements (the numbers, the grade) would benefit from greater clarity on the parameters (thumb rules) that must guide them. We recognize that decentralisation is essential in WFP to meet its challenging mandate. But the parameters would aid in taking decisions that provide cohesiveness, consistency in approach, and which are faithful to the corporate goals and culture.

27. The actual staffing is hinged entirely on the ability to resource the approved project budget and it is left to the CO to re-adjust the staffing in relation to the funding. The CO does not prepare an implementation plan aligned to the funds actually raised against the project. The implementation of the project is reported through the Standardized Project Reports (SPRs) which is mainly aimed to inform the donors. A management review of actual implementation of the project plans, including that of the staffing element, is not in place to reinforce accountability of the hiring managers. We are of the opinion that WFP would benefit from an HR Division-driven oversight on key performance indicators on the HR management in the field offices: with regard to implementation of project plans and compliance to HR guidelines and directives.

28. These issues constitute the reality of HR management in WFP. While HR Division is accountable for HR decisions, the actual authority for raising the staff structure lies with the COs/RBs. The HR planning is closely tied with the funding model and its consequences: a situation in which HR planning and implementation has to be seen as a corporate responsibility and not only as an HR Division domain.

29. We were informed that the HR Division had initiated a workforce planning project (focused on professional-level staff) comprising 3 phases:
    - identification of future skills and knowledge requirements;
    - assessment of current capabilities in terms of quantity and quality of required skills; and
    - development of a workforce plan to transition into the future, addressing identified challenges and proposing strategies to close gaps.

30. Since this will necessitate recruitment of new talent and re-alignment of the workforce, a voluntary separation programme is planned. An amount of US$10 million has been budgeted in the Management Plan 2012–14 for the project and separation programme.

31. We acknowledge this project as a much needed initiative in the right direction aimed to develop a sound and systematic HR planning framework and reporting process. We were informed (March 2012) that a firm has been contracted for this purpose and that WFP was preparing for the 2nd phase.

32. It must be appreciated that the 2008–2013 Strategic Plan of WFP marked a significant shift from WFP as a food aid agency towards WFP as a food assistance agency, with a more robust set of tools to respond to critical hunger needs. This called for new skills: the HR Strategy 2008–11 stressed a continued focus on technical expertise, especially in nutrition, vulnerability assessment and market analysis. An evaluation conducted in 2008 found that the impediments to implementation of WFP's policies included among others, limited helpfulness of guidance material; limited staff expertise in capacity development; and a funding mechanism that was not conducive to systematic capacity development. Success of corporate initiatives, in all areas including programming, hinges on WFP's ability to position adequate, skilled staff in the requisite place. The need for a Workforce Plan that underpins this goal is imperative. The Secretariat told us that ongoing reassignments and recruitments are targeted to identify the right staff to implement new initiatives.

Workforce Plan: Hiring of Consultants

We illustrate below one of the issues viz., appointment of consultants, which we *think should be guided by policy choices informed by an objective cost-benefit analysis*, preferably country-specific, factoring all factors including funding.

Non-staff form 58 *per cent* of the workforce in WFP. We were told that it is an accepted principle that staffing through contractual staff provides WFP a flexible route in the context of funding uncertainties and a mandate to provide speedy response to emergency situations.

The guidance on appointment of consultants lays down that 'persons who are recognised authorities or specialists in a specific field and whose services are utilised in an advisory, consultative, or demonstrative capacity are normally engaged as consultants.' However, our field audits showed that consultants perform normal staff functions. For instance, in CO, Niger the consultants perform the functions of a fleet

manager, depot manager, warehouse manager, landside transport, storage and handling (LTSH) officer, etc. The CO told us that the vast experience of these consultants, their availability, and their familiarity with the language, make them preferable for deployment. The Secretariat clarified that the guidance on international consultants also explains that "*[o]n occasion, consultants may also be employed on a temporary basis to perform staff functions when staff resources are not immediately available for emergency or operational areas*".

We also found that the RB in Sudan employs a large number of international consultants that bears little correlation to the vacant positions in the office. More than 80 *per cent* of the consultants continued to be employed by WFP for a significant number of years – as long as 8 years in some cases - with nominal breaks in order to meet with the requirement that the consultant must not be recruited for more than 11 months. Our analysis showed that the Sudan achieved above 85 *per cent* resourcing of projects (except a Special Operations project) in 2008–11, without significant year-to-year fluctuations in funding. The situation, in our view, lent for a SSR-supported identification of core positions that could be considered for options that provide greater continuity. The Secretariat informed us that consequent to the division of the country, the number of consultants would be brought down significantly (expected to be 16 in 2012). We were told that a number of factors: harsh environment, security considerations, language requirements, strong capacity to adapt to very isolated areas, necessitated deployment of consultants.

	Number
Vacancies in the cadre	6
Consultants employed	59
Consultants employed for more than 1 year	46
Consultants recruited from the Sudan and continuing	24

We acknowledge that use of short-term contracts provides a cost-effective option in COs that face widely fluctuating funding (though this is not true of all COs). However, the cost of exercising such an option should be recognised and considered in the HR Corporate Workforce Plan. The costs could arise from many factors. Given the autonomy enjoyed by local hiring managers, it creates avenues for extraordinary discretion and corresponding risks. This could lead to pockets of loyalty to hiring managers on whom the continuity of contracts depend, which would impair autonomy in their functioning and may be detrimental to the organization. The Secretariat felt that the rotation of managers would mitigate this risk. The work of the contract holders is not included in the structured corporate performance evaluation system. Inadequate documentation while extending the contracts was an issue.

Another issue would be management of the expectations of long-standing consultants for a more secure contract and for equal rights for equal work. Uncertainty in tenure would corrode commitment to the organization.

The consultants are deployed for managing routine jobs or short-term exigencies. In such a scenario, the work allocation would not follow a determined policy that guides the consultants to positions that are best fit to absorb such talent or new skills. Inadequate documentation and archiving, could lead to loss of the experience and the investment made by the organization on the consultants, when they leave their positions.

(iii) Information Systems

33. The WFP Information Network and Global System II (WINGS II) provides the IT backbone for administering HR functions mainly through the following modules:

    - HR operations branches: WFP staff are administered primarily by HR Operations - Contracts (HROCs) and HR Operations - Entitlements (HROEs), for the creation and maintenance of HR master data and employee staff member files.
    - Human Resources Information and System Support Branch (HROI) has the primary responsibility to ensure the smooth operation, business maintenance and support of the corporate HR WINGS system. The branch produces corporate reports and provides technical support; it is also responsible for the maintenance of the payroll-related data.
    - Country Offices/Regional Bureaux: WFP employees (all Locally Recruited Field Employees) are administered primarily by HR Staff in the field for the creation and maintenance of HR master data and employees files.

34. The HR Strategy had noted that collating data on locally recruited staff in the field was laborious because it was kept in numerous CO databases rather than in one system. WINGS II provides a single, global, corporate system that brings under one database all WFP employees. However, the payroll for locally recruited staff is not run through WINGS II. We were told that adoption of PasPort (an IT system that captures non-payroll data) had been on a voluntary basis and a revised version Pasport NG - which would be mandatory - was being implemented with a planned roll out in 2011–2012. We felt that an integrated payroll would ensure cleanliness of data, validated through the controls inbuilt in SAP, and thus provide reliable data for HR planning.

(iv)   Guidance

35. The legal framework governing human resource policies in WFP has three main levels: (a) the regulations that the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) establishes for the United Nations system as a whole; (b) the Staff Regulations and Rules of FAO and related manual provisions which are applicable to International Professional and HQ General Service staff and the staff regulations and rules of the United Nations and related manual provisions which are applicable to locally recruited field staff; (c) specific WFP rules and administrative issuances (policies, directives and memoranda, etc.).

36. Several circulars and directives issued from time to time by HR Division guide the HR policies in WFP. These have not yet been consolidated into an HR Manual that meets the unique needs of WFP integrated with the United Nations Common System on Salaries and Benefits. We were told that work on preparation of the HR Manual was underway.

Gaps in guidance: Hiring of consultants

We think that the preparation of the Manual should be supported by a review of the relevance and the adequacy of guidance in the existing circulars. We were told that the human resources policy and planning unit's mandate includes this responsibility. Our field work showed that the documentation of the procedures followed while surveying the market for a suitable candidate was inadequate. The COs maintain a roster but

there is no mandatory requirement to pick the candidates from the roster. In many cases, the roster was not being used or updated.

Case Study 3: CO, Niger

Recruitment of staff on Service Contracts (SCs) in the CO was done mainly through internal advertisement (WFP, United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs)). Special Service Agreements (SSAs) were mainly recruited from the advertised recruitment file (available curriculum vitae (CVs) after normal recruitment). We were told that information on available CVs with other United Nations agencies was also collected in the process.

We found that although the CO filed CVs received in past recruitments, the Roster was not populated with these CVs, for updating. The CO told us that this was due to paucity of time but assured us that it would allocate resources to finalize the roster and validate it based on available information.

Recommendation 1: The Structure and Staffing Review (SSR) must be integrated with the 5-year country strategy and with the staffing projections across individual project plans. Comprehensive SSRs encompassing non-staff requirements (including consultants) should guide the overall deployment in the field offices.

Recommendation 2: The Regional Bureaux (RB) should be equipped with the knowledge and skills to hand-hold the country offices in the SSRs and to assist the HR Division in periodically feeding the outcomes of SSRs into corporate HR planning through a structured mechanism.

Recommendation 3: The Corporate workforce plan must be supported by an assessment on the benefits and risks of high dependence on short-term contracts in relation to funding trends in country offices over a multi-year period. The controls that mitigate the risks should also be identified.

Recommendation 4: WFP should set in place oversight to provide an assurance that the position grades approved in each project conform to the standard classification and that the decisions are not driven by funding projections alone.

Recommendation 5: HR Division should establish key performance indicators on the health of HR management in the field offices and establish a threshold above which an on-site review would be conducted. A process to periodically inform the top management on the results thereon should also be put in place.

Recommendation 6: A time-bound plan for expeditious completion of the corporate workforce plan and its implementation must be prepared.

B   STAFFING DECISIONS

(i) Objectives

37. While introducing the "Revised Career Framework and Processes for Staff Members in the International Professional and Higher Categories" in 2011, WFP articulated the importance of providing staff members with a career framework that balances organizational and operational demands with individual staff member needs. The principles embodied in the Framework were:

- The paramount consideration in the appointment, transfer or promotion of staff shall be the necessity for securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity;
- Transparency and consistency in career related decision-making;
- Effective communication and alignment of information across key career processes, including feedback to staff members on the outcome of key career decisions; and
- Clear assignment of responsibility and accountability for key decisions affecting the careers of staff members.

38. These principles are closely aligned to the goals set in the HR Strategy: 2008–11, which were:

- Align recruitment practices to support a more proactive, targeted and rigorous selection process that attracts diverse candidates who have the profiles needed by WFP.
- Develop a responsive staff reassignment process that is viewed as fair, effective and linked to career and personal objectives.

(ii) The process

39. HR decisions of staff at the P-1 to P-5 levels,[8] lies with the Regular Staffing Committee. For positions at the D-1 level, as well as Country Director positions, the Senior Staffing Committee makes recommendations to the Executive Director. Membership on the staffing committee includes (i) Deputy Executive Directors; (ii) Regional Directors; Division Directors, and any other senior managers, appointed by the Executive Director as members of the Committee; (iii) Chief of Staff and Director, Office of the Executive Director; (iv) a representative from the Professional Staff Association (for the Regular Staffing Committee); (v) the Inspector General as an observer. HR Division acts as a secretariat for the committee.

40. Pursuant to the Terms of Reference of the Staffing Committee, staffing "*decisions shall take into consideration current job requirements against available staff profiles, succession plans, as well as staff members' career preferences and personal needs.*"

41. The role of the staffing coordinator is important in the staffing decisions. Each functional area has a designated staffing coordinator, generally at P-5 grade level or above, who facilitates consultation and coordination on staffing decisions including recruitment, reassignment, promotion. They also provide career guidance and feedback to staff members in their area of responsibility.

42. Positions are identified for reassignments either by the HR Division on an annual basis when a staff member completes their assignment cycle, or by the manager on an ad hoc basis when a position becomes vacant. The positions are then advertised against which the International Professional Staff (IPS) can submit formal applications. Available positions are first filled through re-assignment, failing which recruitment is considered. The staffing coordinator conducts an initial review of the candidates for positions within their respective functional area, which are then presented to the responsible Managers for review. Both the staffing coordinators and managers document their preferences in the online reassignment matrices developed under 'StaffNet', which are made available to the Staffing Committee for consideration during the reassignment review. The Staffing Committee

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[8] With the exception of Country Directors and certain other positions

recommends one of the two routes - reassignment or recruitment, against each vacant post.

43. We attended a meeting of the Staffing Committee and were happy to note that the 'Reassignment Matrix' developed under 'StaffNet' was a user-friendly tool to arrive at reassignment decisions. Reassignment criteria include: the extent to which the candidates meet the requirements of the position;[9] any personal circumstances which may have an impact on their options; and the extent to which they have served in different and difficult duty stations (as reflected in their Service Profile).

44. Once a position is approved for external recruitment by the Staffing Committee, HR Division notifies the hiring manager. To source candidates, HR Division may issue a specific vacancy announcement through external media or to candidates in a pre-screened "pool of qualified candidates"[10] (referred to as the "resource pool" in the document). HR Division pre-screens applicants and with effect from April 2011, also verifies the final short-list of candidates before the hiring manager proceeds to final interviews. The final interviews are conducted by a selection panel that is composed of the manager, the respective staffing coordinator and an international professional human resources officer. Once a selection decision is made, the hiring manager submits the recommendation to HR Division to authorize the initiation of the appointment action

45. While reassignments and recruitments happen round the year, promotions of IPS at the P-1 to P-3 grade levels are an annual exercise. The number of promotions that can be accommodated each year is estimated by HR Division and approved by the Executive Director (ED), mainly on the basis of vacancies, funds availability and expected attritions. The process is initiated with recommendations from the supervisor of the IPS and the functional area Director. The IPS being considered is consulted in the process, following which the staff member submits the staff input form. The recommendations, the staff input form, the performance evaluation reports and the profile of the staff, together constitute the promotion file of each candidate.

46. Each member of the annual Professional Promotion Panel (PPP) individually evaluates the promotion file of each candidate and ranks them in the order of their relative suitability for promotion. An IPS in P-1 to P-3 can be assigned to a position one grade higher or lower than the personal grade, which provides flexibility in deployment of staff.

47. With the issuance of the new directives in 2011, IPS from P-1 to P-3 are eligible for promotion if they fulfil the "time in grade" (years of service) requirements: this being called the rank-in-person approach. A rank-in-post policy is applied to grades P-5 and above (earlier this principle was applied only to Country Directors and D-1 and above), by which for IPS assigned to positions at the P-5 grade or above, a temporary higher personal grade for the duration of assignment may be granted. When a staff member is assigned for a second consecutive time to a position at that same, higher level grade, the Staffing Committee recommends to the Executive Director to grant a confirmed promotion.

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[9] Assessment of this criterion is supported by their answers to application questions, online CVs and performance appraisals

[10] Pursuant to the 2011 Recruitment Directive, the Pool of qualified candidates is defined as: "Database of candidates, grouped by job profile, who meet the minimum corporate recruitment requirements. The sourcing of candidates into a pool may be through receipt of unsolicited applications or through the issuance of a generic job vacancy announcement issued by the Division of Human Resources."

(iii) Recruitment

48. During 2008–10, WFP recruited a total of 393 IPS, of which 238 (nearly 61 *per cent*) were in 2009. Our sample for review was 94 recruitments recommended by the Staff Selection Committee (SSC) in 2009 in the four[11] functional areas. We chose 2009 because of the large number of recruitments conducted during the year and given the time span, we could review the process right up to actual filling of positions.

49. The break-up of recruitments in 2009 is tabulated below:

Status	Total	Programme	Logistics	Finance	HR
Recruitment from 'Resource Pool'	65	35	12	11	7
Recruitment through External Vacancy Announcement	9	2	3	1	3
Filled Internally	9	3	2	3	1
Recruitment Pending	11	5	3	2	1
TOTAL	**94**	**45**	**20**	**17**	**12**

50. Our review led us to conclude that inadequate documentation compromised the transparency in the process and hindered a trail to review the consistency in decision-making. The results of our review were:

- 94 positions were identified for external recruitment, yet 9 positions were filled internally through reassignment. Of these 9, waivers were given for 5 positions. No justification was found on record for the decision, including those which were given a waiver by the ED.

- 69 *per cent* of the positions: 65 in number were filled from the 'Resource Pool'. The resource pool comprised mainly of short-term contract holders. Additionally, this feeder of contract holders is not sourced through an open contracting process. The HR Strategy: 2008–11 had articulated the shortcomings of a "closed recruitment loop (that) precludes breadth of competition necessary to ensure that the best candidates are recruited; it also has consequences in terms of lost time and financial investment, and reduced morale and efficiency."

- The Strategy also drew attention to the fact that "closed recruitment has implications for the gender and geographical balance: research shows that closed informal selection processes are not conducive to diversity." Currently, the representation from developing countries and of women among IPS was 42 *per cent* and 40 *per cent* respectively. Annexure IV gives details. The United Nations-mandated diversity target is 50 *per cent* against both categories. The representation of both categories at the cutting edge: P-5 to D-2 is particularly low.

- Recruitments were effected against 74 positions; in case of 6 positions the positions were up-graded/down-graded at the time of award of contract. HR Division informed us that the hiring managers are required to justify the re-grading. But we did not find recorded reasons in the documents.

- Recruitment against 11 positions was 'Pending' as on date of audit. We received data on the 'date on which position fell vacant' for 41 out of the 74 positions. On an average, it took 202 days to fill the positions. In 7 cases, the time taken was more than 300 days. The Secretariat told us that the new directive of April 2011

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[11] Programme, Logistics, Finance and HR

requires a hiring manager to complete the selection of the position within 6 months of receiving approval for recruitment. We were also told that, on average, it took 159 days to fill the positions for recruitments effected between April and December 2011.

51. The Secretariat told us that the HR Directive issued in 2011 has infused greater transparency and oversight, while also streamlining the procedure for recruitment of international professional staff (fixed term). Some of the main changes are tabulated below.

Use of resource pool
Earlier, the hiring manager was required to identify at least 3 suitable candidates from the "resource pool" for interview. Under the new directive, the vacancy announcement is: • issued to all qualified persons in the pool.   • details the selection criteria specific to the individual position(s) which is used as a basis for the selection process.   • posted with a list of application questions which facilitates the subsequent CV screening process.
Pre-screening of candidates
Now, HR Division uses a selection assessment matrix which defines the basis for assessing candidates' qualifications. The hiring manager forwards the final list of short-listed candidates to the HR Division for verification on two criteria: second language proficiency and education credentials prior to final interview.
Documentation for recruitment decisions
A selection matrix is developed, which outlines both essential and desirable criteria against which the ranking of candidates is carried out. HR Division also provides the hiring manager with a standard competency-based interview guide and rating template to ensure that all short-listed candidates undergo the same structured interview. The hiring manager needs to include the following documents when making an appointment recommendation: • Request for appointment template   • Vacancy announcement and list of media in which the vacancy was advertised   • A selection report that outlines the recruitment and selection process, the evaluation of short-listed candidates and the panel's final recommendation   • Assessment instrument (sample tests, interview questions used)   • Statistical overview on the gender and nationality composition of the candidate pool.

52. We were also told that 43 IPS were appointed in 2011, of which the recruitment process for 10 was initiated post-issuance of the directive. Of the 2011 appointments, 68 *per cent* of these positions were filled through a specific vacancy announcement through external media channels. We drew a sample of 20 recruitments and found that all the selected persons had worked with WFP in the recent past. But we also noted that recruitments of staff to handle Private Partnerships were drawn mainly from the private sector. The recruitments in the field were, however, drawn from the known pool of those who had been previously engaged with WFP.

(iv) Re-assignment

53. A total of 1612 reassignments took place in WFP during 2008–10, of which 1022 involved change in duty station. The average cost of a reassignment is approximately US$40,000; the annual cost to WFP on account of reassignment averaged to US$13.6 million. The table below gives a snap-shot of the reassignment profile of WFP (data provided by the Secretariat).

a	Average number of reassignments* (2009–11)	637
b	Percentage of reassignments in the same duty station* (2009–11)	42
c	Percentage of reassignments to different duty stations* (2009–11)	58
d	Average number of years the staff spent in the same position (as at 31 December 2011)	1.9
e	Percentage of staff that had exceeded the rotation cycle (as at 31 December 2011)	20
f	Of e), average number of years in the same position	3.6
g	Of e), average number of years in the HQ/Liaison Offices (LOs) in the same position	4.8
h	Of e), average number of years in the same duty station	5.8
i	Of e), average number of years in the same duty station in HQ/LO	8.5

Notes:
The information relates to rotational posts in the IPS
* There were no significant fluctuations in the numbers in the 3 years.

54. We selected 'Mid-year Regular Staffing Committee (RSC) Meeting – 2009' in four[12] functional areas for our review. In all, 213 positions relating to the sampled functional areas were discussed in this meeting. Our review results are as discussed below:

- Out of 213 positions, 165 were supported by staff applicants and proposals from staffing coordinators; against 48 positions, these were not available. The RSC recommended "roster" (which stands for external recruitment) for 35 of these 48 positions; in 6 cases, it opted for reassignment; and for the remaining 7 positions, it recommended "Stay On", which meant that the previous incumbent would continue to occupy the position. The documents did not show as to how the persons recommended for reassignment, came into consideration of the RSC. In 4 of the 7 cases of "stay on", the position itself was downgraded one step while for one case, the position was upgraded by one step. Reasons for upgrading/downgrading these positions were not found on the records of HR Division. In all, we found "re-gradation" in 62 out of 213 cases.

- Although the RSC recommended that 35 (out of the above 48 positions unsupported by proposals) be filled by Roster, 8 of these positions were filled by reassignment with the documents not providing the source from where the names were drawn. Against one position, the name of the reassigned person was 'struck-through', a new name was written by hand and approved for reassignment, without a recorded justification.

- We found instances where the RSC recommended "Roster" although there were applicants for the position. Decision to opt for Roster was justified in the decision memo as "No suitable internal/available staff members could be identified", but there was no trail on whom did the committee consider and why were they not found suitable.

- Against 6 other positions, we found the comment "Roster (Fast Track)" for which a separate Decision Memo was issued but once again, there was no documented justification for the decision to place them on fast track.

55. We appreciate that these decisions would have been guided primarily to find the best fit for each position. But lack of documentation and absence of a trail on the decisions, did not provide an assurance of impartiality or commitment to consistency in approach. Decisions clouded in opacity lead to mistrust among staff

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[12] Logistics, Programme, Finance, HR

and do not serve the best interests of the organization. The issuance of the 2011 directive provides a greater rigour to the process but it should be backed by documentation of the reasons supporting the decisions.

56. We would like to point out that the HR Strategy: 2008–11 had pointed out that reassignment process should be strengthened with greater rigour to ensure that decisions are reached through a transparent and credible process. It was also proposed that annual career reviews of staff would be established in which "… key aspects of one's career, from reassignment to promotion to performance to family, are reviewed with each employee within the context of the needs and requirements of the organization and its workforce planning." A system of peer review and feedback was also aimed to give staff a more realistic perception of possible career paths and open the way for staff to share their personal and professional aspirations with decision-makers.

57. Currently, in addition to the PACE, the only mechanism for such feedback is provided by the staffing coordinator/manager (we did not find the documentation of such feedback on record) at the request of the staff member. We note that the above goals set out in the HR Strategic Plan can be met within a structured framework which is yet to be put in place.

(v) Promotion

58. We selected 71 promotions made during 2011, for a detailed review, the grade-wise break-up of which is tabulated below:

	Gender		Nationality	
Grade	Male	Female	Developed	Developing
P-1 to P-2	0	0	0	0
P-2 to P-3	20	15	25	10
P-3 to P-4	12	10	13	9
P-4 to P-5	8	6	10	4
TOTAL	**40**	**31**	**48**	**23**

59. Our review results are summarised below:

- Out of 653 persons eligible for promotion in 2011, only 341 were recommended by their respective Division Managers and evaluated by the PPP.[13] Thus 312 IPS (nearly 48 *per cent*) who were eligible for promotion did not get the benefit of such evaluation. We were not provided with documentation that supported their exclusion from the promotion process. The HR Directive on Promotion indicates that "first level manager is expected to discuss with staff members whether he or she intends to submit a promotion recommendation". We found that HR Division had no record of such discussions.

- Each 'Second level Manager' was required to prioritize 5 *per cent* of staff members under his/her reporting line for promotion. The 'priority candidates' were awarded an additional score of 1 point by the PPP. We were not provided with the documentation that supported the prioritization of staff by the managers.

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[13] Out of 341 considered for promotion, the PPP recommended 71 promotions.

- We found 34 instances in 2009–11 where a candidate received low score from one 'rater' and high score from another 'rater'. The Secretariat told us that in 2011, HR introduced a more structured approach for the PPP members to evaluate candidates to increase inter-rater reliability.[14]

Recommendation 7: Clear documentation that provides a trail, including justification for deviations, must support HR decisions.

Recommendation 8: WFP should recognize the risks of following a closed loop in recruitment and identify the controls to mitigate the risks.

Recommendation 9: We recommend that the PACE reports must form the basis for identifying the pool of staff that must be considered by the PPP. This, in turn, will enhance the value of PACE and the quality of PACE evaluations as well as improve adherence to time schedules.

Recommendation 10: A structured framework for feedback to staff on HR decisions, will enhance the credibility of the process.

C   PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

60. WFP's Performance and Competency Enhancement Programme (PACE) was launched in 2004 as an important input into career decisions involving training, promotion and reassignment. PACE became a web-based online system since 2009. The PACE appraisal cycle has three phases:

Cycle	Period
Planning phase - Planning and Development Discussion	January–February
Mid-Term phase - Mid-Term Review	June–July
Final phase - Final Review	December–January

61. We found that PACE fell in arrears each year during the years 2008-2010; levels (measured as percentage of those completed against the total due in the year as of 31 January) as tabulated below:

Year	HQ (Prof)	HQ (GS)	Field (Prof)	Field (GS)
2008	40%		41%	
2009	76%	84%	74%	56%
2010	69%	77%	68%	52%

62. We found delays in all phases of PACE. It was common to have 2 phases being completed simultaneously; in some cases the whole exercise being completed within a one to fifteen days span in the year following the year for which the staff was to be assessed.

CO, Egypt told us of the inherent difficulties in meeting the PACE deadlines. The period January to March was usually spent in development of office workplans, which form the basis for each staff member to initiate his/her PACE. Additionally, the office workplan

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[14] Rating scales for each of the six criteria that compromised Performance and Potential were grounded in descriptive benchmarks based on the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) classification standards and WFP's competency framework.

development requires consultations with WFP counterparts and implementing partners further delaying the process of PACE finalization.

63. In the field, we were told that the staff was not yet familiar with the web-based online system and that they did not feel motivated to complete it. The PACE is not viewed among staff and managers as a corporate priority; that if not completed, it would adversely impact them. When viewed such, supervisors would be prompt in filling favourable PACE and be tardy on completing PACE on those who do not pass muster. The tedium of defending an adverse PACE in appellate fora, would also dissuade a supervisor from its timely completion. In any case, rotation policy would ensure that a supervisor and subordinate have only a finite time to work together, however adversely one views the other.

64. These factors would impair the value of PACE as an input in career decisions. HR Division told us that they were in the process of taking actions to encourage further compliance by (a) improving email functionality to provide updates and prompt for required actions through automated messages, and (b) enhancing the ability to monitor and report compliance rates by region/office.

65. We would like to draw attention to Recommendation 17 in our Report on WFP's Somalia operations of 2011: *"Submission of the (PACE) forms must be monitored more closely at the HQ and the CO. Timely reminders must be sent for submission and the forms checked for completeness, with a follow-up to resubmit, if the forms are incomplete. Warnings and disciplinary action must be used as a last resort against persistent defaulters. The Secretariat assured us that HR is currently working with the IT Division on a project to enhance PACE which will ensure completeness of entries and facilitate quality checks*." We re-iterate that this recommendation must be implemented on priority across WFP.

66. We found that selection to a P-5 and above position – which may result in a promotion of the IPS – considers an assessment of the candidate's managerial capacity and qualifications. This encompasses a 360 degree review that includes assessment of the subordinate of the supervisor's managerial capability. We feel that feedback from the subordinates should be integrated into the annual performance evaluation of executive level posts.

Recommendation 11: We re-iterate Recommendation 17 of our Report on the Somalia Operations on timeliness and quality of PACE evaluations.

Recommendation 12: A 360-degree review which includes feedback from subordinates, should be included in the annual performance evaluation of executive level staff.

D   CAPACITY BUILDING

67. A Learning Organization is defined (Peter Senge) as "one where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free and were people are continuously learning how to learn together". Some of the key features of a Learning Organization are:

- *Learning and business strategies are closely linked*
- *There is a conscious learning from opportunities and threats*
- *Mechanisms exist to create, update and share knowledge*
- *Systemic thinking on whole rather than on parts*

Learning policy

68. Learning strategies are crafted on a systematic process that begins by identification of each individual employee's need for knowledge, skills and attitudes (KSA). We feel that WFP would benefit from a learning policy: a formal statement of how it intends to continually develop the professional competence of its employees and how that will be integrated into its work processes to enable learning at the organizational level.

Knowledge management

69. WFP has adopted several corporate initiatives in the recent years. Their integration into work processes, aided by IT systems and their refinements based on feedback from the field is a continuing exercise. Some projects are being piloted in select offices before they are adopted organization-wide. A corporate culture of documenting the lessons from the pilots - the problems, the solution: unique to the office and those that apply organization-wide, is not firmly in place in WFP.

70. A notable step in documentation has been taken in the field of emergency preparedness. The lessons of Haiti, the Sahel and Pakistan have been captured in detailed reports and a tool: The Lessons Learned Database (LLDB-beta) enables "WFP staff to review Lessons Learned recommendations from WFP emergency operations and check on their implementation". The database is searchable and ordered by functional area so that common recommendations can be accessed and addressed.

71. The rotation policy must be buttressed by a proper system of handing over documents. Our field work showed that this is a requirement that needs corporate guidance and thrust. We noted that, for Country Directors a handover process has been put in place with detailed guidance. We were also told that as part of the annual assurance sought on internal control, Country Directors are required to consider the existence of appropriate processes for handover.

72. Disparate studies conducted across Divisions are not catalogued, validated and archived; great reliance is placed on the memory of staff and managers on the existence of such reports. This gap can be filled by putting in place Knowledge Management Systems that can create, acquire, capture, share and use knowledge through different ways: by (i) Creating data warehouses; (ii) Using "groupware" information communication technologies; (iii) Creating networks and communities of practice; and (iv) Mapping sources of internal expertise by producing "expert yellow pages". We think that a knowledge management system that can harness the knowledge that resides in WFP, should be the first step in this regard. The Secretariat stated that some of the initiatives in various stages of planning like "One Truth" and "WINGS II business warehouse" may address these needs.

Tools

73. WFP's strategies have been put together in the "Learning & Training website" for easy referral by the staff and managers. They include:
   - Development of a course catalogue: which provides details and information on more than 200 currently available courses.
   - A web-based learning platform called Learning Management Systems (LMS) designed to allow WFP to deliver, coordinate, track and report on learning and training within the organization. This includes both e-learning and classroom-based activities.

- Cataloguing external training opportunities: for e.g. Swiss School of Management (SSM): MBA Programme. WFP has tie-up with select organizations and training courses are in some cases offered to WFP at subsidized rates.

74. Training programmes to meet specific needs such as training in WINGS, are also conducted by the respective divisions. In addition, some of the key initiatives in connection with the objective of building WFP's managerial capabilities and training current and new employees include:

- The Management Assessment Centre (MAC) assesses senior staff members' (at P4, P5 and D1 grade levels) managerial competencies and assists them to improve their capabilities by identifying their strengths and areas for development. The result of candidates' participation in MAC forms a factor of consideration when the Staffing Committee reviews reassignment for senior level positions. Additionally, this programme assists senior staff to prepare themselves for the Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator assessments (both assesses candidates' leadership capacities), which provide opportunities for WFP staff to take on assignments at inter-agency level.

- In partnership with the Management Centre Europe (MCE), WFP developed a Middle Managers Programme that targets professional staff at the P3 and P4 levels to build effective skills in people management, manage performance, achieve results, manage communications and build a highly motivated team.

- Leadership Development Programme – with a range of modules to enhance the technical knowledge of newly appointed and future Country Directors.

- A corporate orientation programme which effectively integrates new employees into the organization by providing them with information on mission, rules and culture of WFP through a variety of tools, exercises and events.

LMS

75. Launched in February 2010, LMS is currently accessible to WFP HQ and field offices with internet connectivity. Our review showed that as of date of audit, 4,000 WFP users had accessed the system at least once. This worked out to approximately 33 *per cent* of those with access to LMS. In 2011, WFP users enrolled in 6,284 courses in the LMS, out of which only 1,897 courses were completed - the completion being 30 *per cent* of the enrolled courses.

76. We observed that not all WFP offices had linked their training modules to the LMS which was restricting the utilization of the system by the staff. We were also informed that the integration of the LMS in the HR System landscape has been included in the application development road map.

77. We found that data on training courses completed by staff was not being used as an input for HR decision-making like reassignment decisions, succession planning, etc. An important step would be integration of LMS data into a comprehensive 'HR Information System'. Linking the LMS information with the staff profile and with staff awareness will go a long way in promotion of the system. We also feel that one or more mandatory module for all the staff in the WFP will enhance the usage of LMS to a great extent.

Training in the field

78. Our field work showed that trainings are conducted on a need basis; training needs analysis was not available in the RBs/COs. These offices did not have a structured process for collection and periodic consolidation of feedback and evaluation of the training courses. There was no separate budget for training and funds have to be hived off from project funds; unfavourable resourcing would impact areas like training disproportionately as compared to other project components. On the other hand, the 2012 budget has effected a 14 *per cent* reduction in central appropriations - an important cost containment measure in 2011 was a 43 *per cent* reduction in training and seminars.

79. We feel that WFP would benefit from a robust and systematic training needs exercise at the field level which would include an employee survey on workforce challenges and perceived risk areas. An online evaluation of training conducted would also provide inputs for the training and development initiatives.

Recommendation 13: WFP must develop a learning policy for continuous capacity-building of staff and its integration with work processes.

Recommendation 14: A knowledge management system will help WFP harness the knowledge that resides in disparate reports and divisions of the organization. Handing over of hard and soft copy of files should form an important item in the checklist before an employee moves out on transfer/retirement.

Recommendation 15: Training Modules of all functional areas and offices should be linked to the Learning Management Systems (LMS).

E   INTERAGENCY MOBILITY

80. The HR Strategy articulated the desirability of WFP staff to have opportunities to take on assignments in other United Nations agencies with a view to enhancing awareness of how agencies can work to deliver. Hence, one of the objectives of the Strategy was to "Promote opportunities for inter-agency mobility in the United Nations system.

81. WFP is a signatory to the "Inter-Organization Agreement Concerning Transfer, Secondment or Loan of Staff among the Organizations applying the United Nations Common System of Salaries and Allowances". A modified agreement is expected to be in effect from January 1st 2012 for all United Nations common system organizations.

82. As of 31 August 2011, 2.5 *per cent* (36 number) of the IPS were on exchange (Loan or Secondment) to other agencies. The process for selection for a position in United Nations agencies is a competitive one. The receiving United Nations organizations advertise their positions, to which a WFP staff member could apply. The WFP StaffNet Website has a link to the overall United Nations inter-agency mobility vacancies. The HR Division facilitates the finalisation of the contract.

83. We were informed that there were no specific rosters established of staff interested in inter-agency exchange. All WFP rosters are maintained for internal use only: there were no shared rosters with other United Nations agencies or with partner agencies. We were also informed that there were no country level intern rosters to guide exchange programmes although a Global Roster was maintained to which interns could indicate their preferences for a geographical area.

84. We were told that at the 21st session of the Human Resources Network, to which WFP served as the chair, WFP had suggested an inter-agency roster of posts and that each organization would assign a mobility focal point who would inform and support staff on options and means for transfers. In due course, a working group would be instated within the Network. The Network also agreed to introduce the concept of a marketplace for exchange of staff accompanied by a network of knowledgeable "exchange staff".

Annexure I

Table 1: Number of WFP Employees from 31 Dec 2002 to 31 July 2011[1]
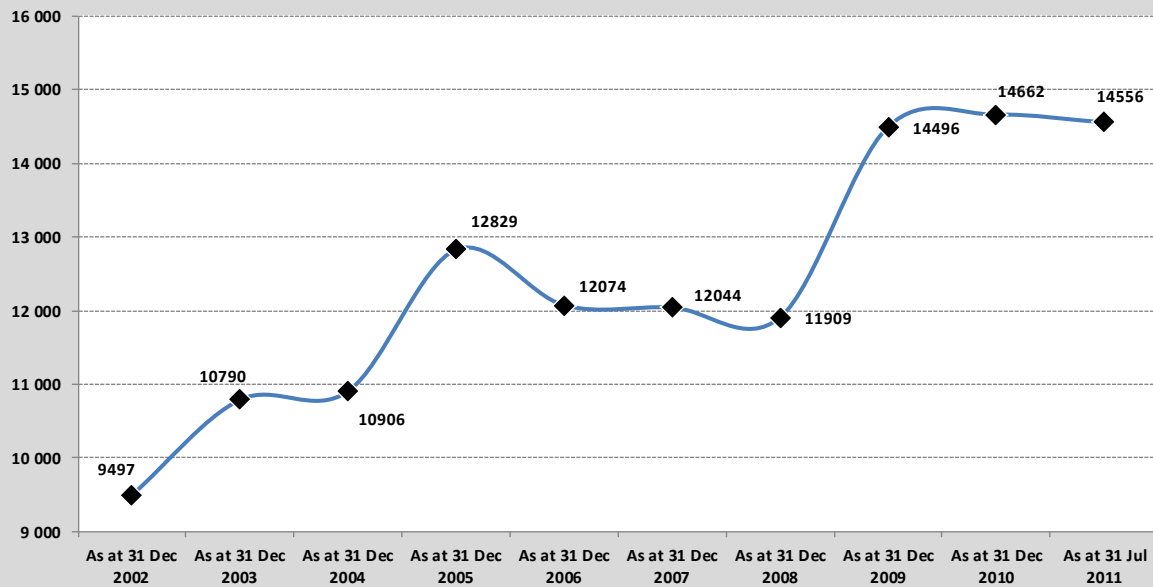
Table 2: Trend from 2008 to Present[1]		As at 31 Dec 2008[2]	As at 31 Dec 2009[3]	As at 31 Dec 2010[4]	As at 31 Jul 2011[4]	2010 and 2011 Comparative Summary	
Grand Total:		**11 909**	**14 496**	**14 662**	**14 556**	⬇ **-106**	**-0.7%**
International Employees	International Professional Staff	1 251	1 431	1 443	1 426	⬇ -17	-1.2%
	Int. Prof. Staff (Short-Term)	59	57	94	88	⬇ -6	-6.4%
	Junior Professional Officers	61	42	51	51	➡ 0	0.0%
	International General Service		1	1	1	➡ 0	0.0%
	Consultants	425	521	532	594	⬆ 62	11.7%
	UN Volunteers	126	169	163	162	⬇ -1	-0.6%
	Fellowship Holders[5]		14	24	19	⬇ -5	-20.8%
	Interns	54	75	72	96	⬆ 24	33.3%
	Subtotal:	**1 976**	**2 310**	**2 380**	**2 437**	⬆ **57**	**2.4%**
Locally Recruited Employees	National Professional Officers	451	542	583	599	⬆ 16	2.7%
	General Service	389	397	415	418	⬆ 3	0.7%
	General Service (Short-Term)	57	78	55	67	⬆ 12	21.8%
	General Service Field	2 023	2 346	2 487	2 481	⬇ -6	-0.2%
	Service Contract Holders Prof.	126	152	168	192	⬆ 24	14.3%
	Service Contract Holders GS	5 770	7 106	7 079	7 190	⬆ 111	1.6%
	Special Service Agreement HQ	3	8	2	6	⬆ 4	200.0%
	Special Service Agreement Field Prof.	51	130	105	138	⬆ 33	31.4%
	Special Service Agreement Field GS	1 028	1 395	1 333	955	⬇ -378	-28.4%
	WFP Volunteers	35	32	55	73	⬆ 18	32.7%
	Subtotal:	**9 933**	**12 186**	**12 282**	**12 119**	⬇ **-163**	**-1.3%**

Note(1): Excludes GS Daily Brindisi and Author's Contract, since they are considered to be Procurement.
Note(2): Data extracted from WINGS, FOCUS and PASport
Note(3): Data extracted on 17 Feb 2010 from WINGS2 with Field Offices' confirmation
Note(4): Data extracted from WINGS2
Note(5): Data not available in 2008

Annexure II

CATEGORIES OF STAFF AND EMPLOYEES

A. **Internationally Recruited Staff** (*ref. FAO HR MS 305.5/HR Manual Glossary*)
- International Professional
  - *Indefinite Appointment*: open-ended appointment without an expiry date.
  - *Fixed-Term Appointment*: shall be an appointment for a continuous period of one year or more and shall have a specified expiration date.
  - *Continuing Appointment*: shall be an appointment without specific limit of time.
- International Professional Short-Term Appointment: shall be an appointment for a period of less than one year, ending on a date specified in the letter of appointment.
- Junior Professional Officer: part of a programme sponsored by nominating governments, or governments sponsoring staff, to provide training and experience to young professionals who wish to pursue a career in international development assistance.
- General Service: administrative or technical support staff
  - *Continuing Appointment*: appointment without specified limit of time.
  - *Fixed-Term Appointment*: shall be an appointment for a continuous period of one year or more and shall have a specified expiration date.

B. **Internationally Recruited Non-Staff**
- Consultants: contract limited to those who are authorities or specialists in a specific field and whose services are utilised in an advisory, consultative or demonstrative capacity for a limited time.
  - *Regular:* for the duration of a specific assignment.
  - *When Actually Employed*: for a series of specific assignments within a given period of time.
  - *Without Compensation*: they offer or are requested to render special services to the organization without the payment of an honorarium.
- United Nations Volunteers: programme managed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), funded by WFP or the United Nations Volunteer (UNV) Programme/Bonn. Volunteers receive a monthly living allowance and basic support costs; normally serve an average period of two years.
- Author's Contract: issued to technical writers, editors, etc. for the development of material intended for issue by WFP.
- Fellowship Holder: sponsored by donor governments, universities or foundations to carry out various job functions for specific periods of time, usually between six months and one year.

- <u>Intern</u>: student, enrolled in university, who provides assistance to the Programme at no cost/nominal cost.

C. Locally Recruited Staff

- <u>National Professional Officer</u>: locally recruited professional staff member, working at the NOA-NOD level.
    - o *Fixed-Term*
    - o *Permanent*
- <u>General Service (Country Offices)</u>: locally recruited administrative or technical support staff
    - o *Fixed Term*
    - o *Permanent*
- <u>General Service (HQ and Liaison Offices)</u>: locally recruited administrative or technical support staff
    - o *Fixed Term*
    - o *Continuing Appointment*
    - o *Short Term:* granted for a duration not to exceed eleven months to meet temporary and/or short term needs.

D. Locally Recruited Non-Staff

- <u>Consultants</u>: contract limited to those who are authorities or specialists in a specific field and whose services are utilised in an advisory, consultative or demonstrative capacity for a limited time.
    - o *Regular:* for the duration of a specific assignment.
    - o *When Actually Employed*: for a series of specific assignments within a given period of time.
    - o *Without Compensation*: they offer or are requested to render special services to the organization without the payment of an honorarium.
- <u>Voluntary Assistant</u>: an individual who donates his or her services to WFP. A Voluntary Assistant has no relation to a United Nations Volunteer or to the WFP Intern programme.
- <u>Service Contract</u>: non-staff contract for temporary functions determined to be limited and for specific periods, and for certain support services (i.e. custodial, security and IT services). Contracts are for a period of between six and twelve months.
- <u>Special Service Agreement</u>: contract suitable for activities of a duration between six and eleven months.
- <u>Casual Labourer</u>: non-staff personnel engaged for short periods of time to perform duties, usually of a manual nature.

Documents used for criteria in testing compliance

- WFP HR Policy Document on 'Administrative Procedures for International Professional Staff (October 2003)'

- HR Division Directive No. HR2011/003 entitled 'Recruitment and Selection of Staff Members in International Professional and Higher Categories (April 2011)'

- WFP HR Policy Document on 'Reassignment, Rotation and Mobility of International Professional and Higher Category Staff (October 2005)'

- HR Division Directive No. HR2011/004 entitled 'Reassignment of Staff Members in International Professional and Higher Categories (April 2011)'

- HR Division Directive No. HR2011/005 entitled 'Promotion of International Professional Staff at P1 to P3 Grades (April 2011)'

- WFP Performance Appraisal System PACE – Instruction Booklet

- Career Development Policy (May 1999)

Annexure IV

**Gender and Geographical Representation by Grade Level
As at 31 July 2011 and 31 December 2010**

	Total	Women	% Women	Developing countries*	% Developing countries
As at 31 July 2011					
All International Professional (IP) staff members	**1 426**	**569**	**39.9**	**594**	**41.7**
USG**	1	1	100.0	0	0.0
ASG***	4	2	50.0	3	75.0
D-2	41	10	24.4	16	39.0
D-1	97	30	30.9	26	26.8
P-5	221	91	41.2	56	25.3
P-4	370	149	40.3	136	36.8
P-3	561	215	38.3	296	52.8
P-2	130	70	53.8	61	46.9
P-1	1	1	100.0	0	0.0
As at 31 Dec 2010					
All IP staff members	**1 443**	**581**	**40.3**	**602**	**41.7**
USG**	1	1	100.0	0	0.0
ASG***	4	2	50.0	3	75.0
D-2	42	10	23.8	16	38.1
D-1	101	31	30.7	28	27.7
P-5	217	87	40.1	57	26.3
P-4	360	146	40.6	130	36.1
P-3	549	216	39.3	298	54.3
P-2	168	87	51.8	70	41.7
P-1	1	1	100.0	0	0.0

*   Nationals of developing countries

** Under-Secretary-General

***Assistant Secretary-General

ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

CO	country office
CS	Country Strategy
CV	curriculum vitae
DSC	Direct Support Costs
ED	Executive Director
HQ	Headquarters
HR	Human Resources/Human Resources Division
ICSC	International Civil Service Commission
IP	International Professional
IPS	International Professional Staff
LMS	Learning Management System
LO	Liaison Office
MAC	Management Assessment Centre
MCE	Management Centre Europe
PACE	Performance and Competency Enhancement Programme
PPP	Professional Promotion Panel
PSA	Programme Support and Administrative (budget)
RB	Regional Bureau
RSC	Regular Staffing Committee
SPR	Standardized Project Report
SSC	Staff Selection Committee
SSR	Structure and Staffing Review
WINGS II	WFP Information Network and Global System II

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