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PREPARING FOR TOMORROW TODAY: WFP STRATEGY FOR MANAGING AND DEVELOPING HUMAN RESOURCES (2008–2011)

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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 C. Panlilio, Administrative Assistant, Conference Servicing Unit (tel.: 066513-2645).

* Human Resources Division



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the world's largest humanitarian agency, WFP unquestionably features one of the most challenging environments in which to manage and develop human resources. WFP staff members work in some of the most dangerous and remote places in the world, often separated from their families and isolated from their colleagues. Many international staff members are asked to uproot their personal lives and support networks to serve in a different duty station every few years, while national staff may be exposed to hardship situations for extended periods of time.

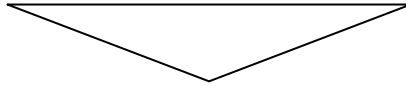
In the light of these enormous challenges, this document lays out a plan for managing and developing WFP's workforce in the next four years. The elements of the plan were derived from the directions set out in the WFP Strategic Plan (2008–2011) (WFP/EB.A/2008/5-A/1/Rev.1) and the views of staff obtained through extensive consultation.

The objectives and activities outlined in this document aim to secure improvements in three areas:

- **Being Responsive.** WFP needs to be able to deploy staff quickly in an emergency and scale down when a country office programme is handing over to partners and reducing its resource requirements. This complex process requires the integration of workforce planning with strategic, financial and operational planning, alignment of recruitment practices to support more proactive, targeted and rigorous selection, and development of a process to identify internal staff for reassignment.
- **Developing Capacity.** Achieving WFP's Strategic Objectives hinges on the capacity of our staff: in order to create a high-performance culture, WFP must be clear about the professional expectations of its staff and give them the tools they need to succeed in developing their managerial, technical and personal capacities, taking into account the extraordinary challenges staff members often face in the field.
- **Fostering Partnerships.** Partnership is a fundamental principle of "Delivering as One". Its value is emphasized in the Strategic Plan, which promotes the establishment of relationships among agencies, non-profit organizations and governments on the basis of mutual respect, understanding, trust and shared responsibility. The objectives include promoting opportunities for inter-agency mobility in the United Nations system and WFP partner organizations.



DRAFT DECISION*



The Board takes note of the document “Preparing for Tomorrow Today: WFP Strategy for Managing and Developing Human Resources (2008–2011)” (WFP/EB.2/2008/4-C) and encourages the Secretariat to implement the actions and initiatives identified in the document to facilitate attainment of the WFP Strategic Objectives, taking into account considerations raised by the Board during its discussions.

* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the Decisions and Recommendations document (WFP/EB.2/2008/15) issued at the end of the session.



INTRODUCTION

1. Since its inception, WFP staff around the world have worked tirelessly towards reducing hunger. In 2007, WFP delivered 3.3 million mt of food assistance to 86.1 million people in 80 countries. This result met over 90 percent of the planned beneficiary needs.¹ The global context in which WFP operates is rapidly changing. The defining issues of our time are the rapid globalization of hunger and the enormous challenges resulting from rising food prices and climate change. Deploying staff most effectively in this context is fundamental to WFP's continued success, which will depend on its responsiveness and capacity, and on the extent to which it is able to complement them through partnership.
2. A key aspect of WFP which sets it apart from many other organisations is the nature of its work. For WFP's mandate to be effectively implemented, staff have to serve in difficult, dangerous, and remote locations. In 2007, WFP staff members were present in over 200 duty stations. Nearly a quarter of its international professionals and many national staff serve in hardship duty stations (category D and E) based on criteria such as availability of education and medical facilities, climate conditions, communications, housing, leisure and recreation. In addition to hardship, there are very real security concerns in many of the countries where WFP operates. All duty stations classified as security phase 3 or higher by the UNDSS (United Nations Department of Safety and Security) are designated as non-family. Forty-one percent of the duty stations to which staff are assigned in WFP are non-family duty stations due to security risks. The realities of WFP's operating environment pose particular challenges in recruiting and retaining a capable and motivated workforce.
3. The Human Resources Division (OMH) has initiated a multi-year strategy that responds to WFP's Strategic Plan (2008–2011), which marks a historic shift from WFP as a food aid agency to WFP as a food assistance agency with a more nuanced and robust set of tools to respond to critical hunger needs. To support the Strategic Objectives, WFP's workforce needs to be responsive, skilled and partnership-oriented. WFP must capitalize on the increased value brought by a diverse workforce to enhance its ability to achieve its objectives.

WFP Strategic Plan (2008–2011): Strategic Objectives

- 1) Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies
- 2) Prevent acute hunger and invest in disaster preparedness and mitigation measures
- 3) Restore and rebuild lives and livelihoods in post-conflict, post-disaster or transition situations
- 4) Reduce chronic hunger and undernutrition
- 5) Strengthen the capacities of countries to reduce hunger, including through hand-over strategies and local purchase

¹ Annual Performance Report for 2007



DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

4. Over the last decade, WFP has continued to focus on emergency-related operations.¹ Consequently, staff are assigned to work in often volatile and difficult environments. The ability to attract and retain competent staff is difficult in today's global economy, and even more challenging when working and living conditions are difficult.
5. Given the nature of WFP's operations, there is a need for periodic workforce adjustments that may result in downsizing of offices, rapid expansion of staffing, or re-profiling of job requirements. WFP must be prepared to manage these transitions effectively. Although job security cannot be guaranteed, staff need to be able to develop their skills and competence continuously if they are to perform to the best of their ability in WFP and to remain marketable.
6. WFP has yet to achieve the United Nations mandate for 50 percent women overall and risks slipping below its achieved goal of 40 percent nationals from developing countries in its international professional staff category.² Numerous studies have demonstrated the benefits to organizational effectiveness inherent in diverse work groups: examples include improved decision-making, financial performance and innovation.³ WFP is not benefiting from the added-value brought by a diverse workforce. It must therefore develop a mindset in which diversity is valued, harnessed and leveraged to achieve greater organizational success.
7. As a voluntarily funded agency, WFP depends on its reputation to solicit funding. WFP's reputation is based on its success in fulfilling its mandate, which in turn is dependent on the performance of its staff. In fact, WFP's greatest asset is its staff – a strong and dedicated workforce of more than 11,000 people. Like other global actors on the front line in humanitarian crises, WFP faces critical challenges in terms of attracting, deploying, and developing the skills of its staff and in terms of their security and work-life balance. Maintaining and developing the capability and motivation of its staff is an essential element in WFP's ability to continue its high level of responsiveness and effectiveness.

² As per General Rule VII.3: "In the appointment of staff, paramount importance shall be given to securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. The Executive Director shall also give due consideration, in the professional and higher categories, to appropriate geographical distribution and to gender balance in accordance with policy guidance from the General Assembly of the United Nations and the FAO Conference." WFP's current target of 50% women overall and 40% nationals from developing countries within the international workforce corresponds to the goals set by the General Assembly. The formula for deriving the geographic distribution considered to be appropriate within WFP is outlined in the "WFP Policy on Staff Recruitment and Geographical Representation of Member States" (WFP/EB.1/2004/4-B/Rev.1).

³ A 2004 study carried out by Catalyst entitled *The Bottom Line: Connecting Corporate Performance* demonstrated the link between gender diversity and corporate financial performance: companies with the highest representation of women in their top management teams achieved better financial performance than companies with the lowest women's representation. In their 2007 report entitled "Innovative Potential: Men and Women in Teams", the Lehman Brothers Centre for Women in Business demonstrated that teams with an equal representation of women and men produced more innovative results than homogenous teams.



TOWARDS A HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY

Vision. OMH is a proactive, value-adding partner, leading organizational culture change through learning and managerial excellence.

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.

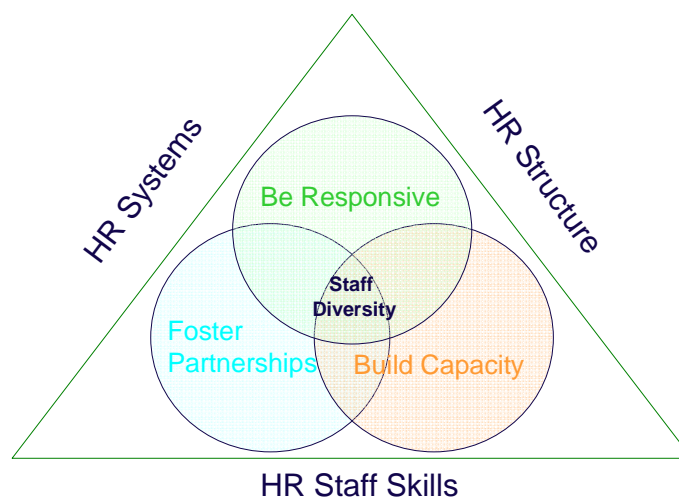
8. The human resources (HR) strategy signals a commitment to ongoing assessment of and investment in WFP's HR needs. Its impact will be relevant to **all staff**. It is intended to evolve with the directions and needs of WFP and to be as dynamic as the environment in which WFP operates. The strategy will therefore need to be periodically re-evaluated in terms of its relevance, its value-added for WFP staff and its ability to integrate emerging opportunities for improvements in the workforce. It forms a basis for future decision-making on HR and is a guide to management of the WFP workforce to achieve the aims of the Strategic Plan.
9. Development of the HR strategy included a broad participatory analysis of the external and internal factors affecting WFP's HR management. A strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis was conducted by OMH that captured the views of managers and staff throughout WFP. Several workshops were held with staff and managers, including staff association representatives. One-to-one meetings were also conducted with stakeholders to explore the issues and test assumptions.
10. A number of common HR issues in WFP emerged during the analysis: for example, because WFP responds to emergencies, it needs to be prepared to respond to situations where there may be staffing shortages or surpluses. Currently, information on WFP staff does not reside in a single database. More robust and reliable information is needed about current capacity and future requirements to support managers in their staffing decisions and individuals in their career planning.
11. Career management at WFP is currently perceived as an uncertain process based on ambiguous criteria. Decisions regarding reassignment and promotion do not have clear links with succession requirements or staff career plans, and there is a lack of clarity about roles and accountability with respect to career development.
12. With regard to learning, there are significant differences in opportunities for different categories of staff, and management development is considered to be inadequate; there are consequent negative impacts on staff performance and on WFP. More opportunities are required for all types of training in advance of need in a way that serves the requirements of a field-based agency. This requires a rethinking of the global learning approach, including the supporting infrastructure, delivery options and governance.
13. There is also a general perception that performance management as a continuous process is not widely practised, and compliance rates on the annual performance review fall significantly below the target of 100 percent. Considering that feedback is an important source of motivation and staff satisfaction, measures need to be taken to address this. Managers need the tools and skills to reward exceptional performance, address underperformance and motivate those whose performance meets expectations.



14. These and other issues imply that WFP's approach to HR management needs to evolve. The informal processes that may have been suitable for a smaller agency have not been scaled up effectively, and there is a growing consensus that WFP is not matching its requirements with the capabilities of its staff, either now or for the future.

HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY

15. The following diagram represents the main focus areas or themes that emerged from the consultative process. The needs to be responsive, develop capacity and foster partnership were most evident. The interlinking circles illustrate that many activities pursued in the HR strategy will have an impact on more than one area. A common component of each theme is maximizing the benefits inherent in staff diversity. Surrounding the themes are the foundation components of HR systems, structure and skills for implementing the strategy.



BE RESPONSIVE

16. WFP must be able to deploy staff quickly in periods when an emergency response requires additional resources and scale down when a country office programme is handing over to partners and reducing its internal resource requirements. This requires the ability to anticipate staffing requirements and to have the appropriate contractual tools and assignment processes in place.

Workforce Planning

Objective: Integrate workforce planning with the strategic, financial and operational planning processes

17. A sustainable, diverse staff that has the range of competencies necessary to meet WFP's Strategic Objectives is a priority of the HR strategy. To achieve this priority, workforce planning linked to WFP's strategic, financial and operational plans is



needed to fill gaps in its ability to implement its longer-term strategies. Forward planning is also essential for forecasting the impact of human resource actions such as recruitment and turnover on the representation of women and nationals from developing countries. This means having the ability to project staffing needs by regularly taking stock of the current staffing profile and filling gaps either internally through reassignment and training or externally through recruitment.

18. Currently, WFP has robust information about international and locally recruited Headquarters staff through the WFP Information Network and Global System (WINGS). Obtaining information about locally recruited staff in the field, on the other hand, is laborious because it is kept in numerous country office databases rather than in one system. With the implementation of WINGS II and integration of the payroll system for locally recruited staff (PasPort), position and contractual data for all categories of staff will be captured in a single system on which OMH will be able to base organizational and workforce analyses. Investment in reporting and analytical tools, and a comprehensive process for collecting and monitoring data will facilitate forecasting and scenario planning.
19. One of the outcomes of the National Staff Project initiated in 2004 was to establish a process for reviewing the country office workforce requirements, including contractual mechanisms, in terms of corporate structure. A good deal of work has been done in supporting field-level managers conducting staffing review exercises (SREs), which are relevant to Headquarters, regional bureaux and country offices, but SREs have not been consistently conducted in all offices because of lack of HR capacity. Managers recognize that SREs strengthen the link between office structure and staffing required for current and future operations. A more regular and robust schedule of SREs will therefore be implemented.
20. In the light of changing demands, it is crucial for WFP to facilitate the transition to new staffing profiles when required and to deal fairly with restructuring, redeployment, redundancy and capability issues. OMH will offer advice and hands-on support to managers in developing workforce plans and in conducting downsizing exercises, when necessary, following established HR procedures. Furthermore, by enhancing the HR information systems, managers will have access to staffing data that is reliable, accurate and consistent with other data used in the planning process. The staffing coordinator function will be assessed with a view to building on the success of this role in supporting staff during these transitions. Managers will receive timely support from HR in leading their teams and maintaining the ability of their offices to respond effectively to changing needs.

Recruitment

Objective: Align recruitment practices to support a more proactive, targeted and rigorous selection process that attracts diverse candidates who have the profiles needed by WFP

21. The target for geographic diversity has been met among WFP's international staff, but the figure could eventually be reduced because the percentage in terms of recruitment is less than 40 percent. The representation of women in the workforce and



the proportion of women recruited per year are still below the 50 percent target.⁴ Hiring managers have been delegated the authority to select candidates; they seek the best candidate for the job at hand, and may not consider corporate diversity targets or longer-term employability in WFP.

22. In view of this situation, OMH carried out an analysis of international recruitment to identify the underlying causes of limited progress in meeting diversity targets. It showed that most of those recruited as international professional staff had previously been employed by WFP. This implies that in most cases WFP uses a closed system in which selectors recruit known candidates and that selection processes may not be broad or competitive enough to ensure that the best candidates are recruited. Compromised recruitment can have serious consequences in terms of lost time and financial investment, and in terms of reduced morale and efficiency. Closed recruitment also has implications for the gender and geographical balance: research shows that closed informal selection processes are not conducive to diversity.⁵
23. Another concern relates to assessing candidates' motivation and preparedness for working in WFP. While it is in WFP's interest to attract as wide a pool of qualified candidates as possible, it has to strengthen the screening mechanisms to ensure those that are selected are conscious of the professional and personal commitments they are making by joining the Programme.
24. In response to these findings, OMH will review the current policy on international recruitment, including the use of rosters and the selection process for short-term staff. It will then propose an approach that ensures a formal and transparent selection process that identifies the best candidates for WFP, eliminating bias and minimizing adverse impact by ensuring that: i) recruitment pools contain a diverse mix of qualified candidates; ii) hiring managers are proficient in competency-based interviewing skills; and iii) a structured selection procedure is followed.

Re-assignment

Objective: Develop a responsive staff reassignment process that is viewed as fair, effective and linked to career and personal objectives

25. Mobility plays a part in helping staff to develop their potential by experiencing different types of situations and work practices. In turn, WFP's mobile workforce is a benefit in that it facilitates the exchange of ideas and information.
26. The Strategic Plan calls for continued focus on technical expertise, especially in nutrition, vulnerability assessment and market analysis. The main challenge in reassignment is to achieve a balance between the need for these specialist skills and the need to ensure that staff have the breadth of job experience to progress in their careers.
27. Balancing mobility and the need for specialist skills has often created perceptions of inequitable job rotation, especially because reassignment is limited for staff in

⁴ As of 31 December 2007, the percentage of nationals from developing countries was 40.8 percent. But the percentage of nationals from developing countries recruited into this category in 2007 was 36 percent. As of 31 December 2007, the percentage of women in the international category was 32.4 percent; the percentage recruited into this category in 2007 was 35 percent.

⁵ Harris, H. and Dickmann, M. 2005. *Guide to International Management Development*. London, Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD).



specialist positions that are mainly located in Headquarters or regional bureaux. A perceived lack of transparency and clarity in the criteria used for reassignment decisions has added to these perceptions of reassignment processes: there is a sense that reassignment is not well integrated into other HR processes such as performance management or promotion.

28. To address this, a working group was recently established to review the reassignment process with the objective of ensuring that decisions made to balance the needs of WFP, individuals and managers are reached through a transparent and credible process. Initial findings highlight the need for consistency and rigour, and that reassignment decisions should be integrated into career and succession planning. The working group will propose options to ensure that internal candidates are evaluated for reassignment in a coherent and transparent manner.
29. To create a stronger link between reassignment and career management, annual career reviews of staff will 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."⁶
30. A system of peer review and feedback will give staff a more realistic perception of possible career paths and will open the way for staff to share their personal and professional aspirations with decision-makers.

BUILD CAPACITY

31. Staff capacity must be developed and supported to inspire consistently high performance to ensure that WFP's Strategic Objectives are achieved. WFP must be clear about its professional expectations of staff and communicate them effectively. A high-performance culture encourages staff to develop their managerial, technical and personal capacities: this calls for management structures that support career planning and provide staff with individual guidance and support so that their development is continuous and contains the flexibility required by WFP.

Developing Management Capacity

Objective: Build the managerial capabilities of staff to enable them to lead the workforce in achieving WFP's Strategic Objectives and to model desired behaviours

32. To lead WFP into the future and to be responsive to the evolving global demands for food assistance, managers need to be in place who are competent in personnel management and who have the strategic and political ability to partner effectively with other humanitarian actors. This will require a different set of skills, and some managers may be stretched to acquire them. Nevertheless, it is crucial to develop leaders whose skills and behaviours are in tune with the changing needs and culture of

⁶ Report on the Activities of the WFP Ombudsman Office (1 January–31 December 2007); issued on 31 March 2008.



WFP, whose future success will partly depend on the way in which its leaders have been selected and developed.

33. Efforts to ensure diversity by advancing women and staff from developing countries through the Rome-based Management Development Centre and Deputy Country Director Pool have been effective.⁷ Nevertheless, at the senior management level WFP's goals for staff diversity have not been met.⁸
34. The consultations revealed that a more robust process is needed to identify and prepare future leaders long before they take on senior positions. This needs to be complemented by a competitive process for selecting them for higher-level positions.
35. OMH currently provides limited programmes for WFP managers in managerial and leadership skills enhancement. The Management Development Centre and the Country Director Briefing Seminar were supported by a 360⁰ feedback instrument launched in 2006. To support feedback, managers were offered online professional coaching sessions. These initiatives are valuable, but they are not sufficient to ensure that WFP has optimum managerial capacity.
36. To ensure successful implementation of the Strategic Plan, OMH conducted an assessment through the Boston Consulting Group to identify the skills needed by managers and propose approaches for closing gaps in WFP management and among applicants. A framework for management development was designed that includes training strategies for current and future country directors, including processes for: i) formally assessing staff for their leadership and management potential; ii) delivering skills programmes to provide managers with the capacity to manage staff and teams; and iii) delivering leadership training programmes to assist emerging leaders in realizing their potential. A combination of multiple approaches ("blended learning") and online approaches will be used to facilitate these processes.
37. To ensure that women and nationals from developing countries are candidates for recruitment into WFP management, efforts will be made to create an equitable representation of staff in the management development programme.

Enhancing Performance Management

Objective: Establish a credible and transparent performance assessment and feedback system to guide staffing decisions and facilitate staff development

38. To create the conditions for high performance, the performance management system needs to be aligned with the Strategic Plan. Managers must be clear about the expectations they have of staff and communicate them effectively. Where staff are unable to meet performance expectations, a system must be in place for managers to ensure that they receive support, guidance and training to enable them to achieve the required standards.
39. WFP's Performance and Competency Enhancement Programme (PACE), launched in 2004, is an important input into career decisions involving training, promotion and

⁷ "Summary Report of the End-of-Term Evaluation of WFP's Gender Policy (2003–2007): Enhanced Commitments to Women to Ensure Food Security" (WFP/EB.2/2008/6-B)

⁸ As of 31 December 2007, the percentage of women at the P-5 and higher levels was 27.1. The percentage of nationals from developing countries in the higher category was 39.1.



reassignment. PACE introduced two important elements for effective performance management: it moved WFP to an online system and it introduced the evaluation of competencies. But the current rate of completion of performance appraisals remains low,⁹ which means that many staff do not receive the feedback they deserve, and WFP's ability to make informed decisions is consequently compromised.

40. Notwithstanding the importance of performance appraisal, research has shown repeatedly that subtle and often unconscious biases negatively influence performance evaluations. This is true of the current PACE rating system, which is based solely on managers' judgement; but allowing staff members to contribute a personal assessment, and obtaining input from several raters ("multi-raters"), has been shown to diminish bias in appraisal ratings. By addressing bias, WFP can minimize barriers to creating a diverse workforce. To further support the quality of performance assessments, OMH will conduct on a biennial basis a review of PACE assessments.¹⁰
41. Concerns about the technical platform on which PACE is built have been repeatedly raised because managers find it difficult to track the status of appraisals completed. The design of the tool makes access to compliance and analytical reports laborious.
42. To overcome these issues, OMH is studying best practice in other United Nations agencies and exploring the adoption of a different appraisal tool to improve the technical platform, incorporate stronger links with staff development and elements of multi-rater feedback, and provide for monitoring of competencies and skills for positive impact and quick reassignment. These features will enhance the link between performance, development and advancement through more credible input into such decisions; OMH will continue to explore options for strengthening this link.

Strengthening Technical Expertise

Objective: Ensure that appropriate learning opportunities are available to staff to enable them to contribute fully to the implementation of the WFP Strategic Plan (2008–2011)

43. WFP staff are expected to have a wide range of skills to be effective in their present roles. The Strategic Plan places greater emphasis on operational skills and technical capacity: the need for staff to update their skills and develop new ones has never been greater.
44. The percentage of budget allotted to training in the United Nations remains low, but investment in training in the public sector is reported to be increasing in the face of skills shortages.¹¹ Staff report, however, that WFP does not invest enough in the development of its workforce,¹² and because participation in training is not captured centrally this perception cannot be challenged. Decisions regarding training made available to staff or who attends are not transparent, and there is no systematic means

⁹ As of 8 August 2008, the compliance rate for 2007 PACE completion was 62 percent.

¹⁰ Response of the Secretariat to the Report by the External Auditor on Managing for Results: A Second Review of Progress in Implementing Results-Based Management in the World Food Programme. (WFP/EB.2/2008/5-B/1/Add.1)

¹¹ International Civil Service Commission. 2008. *Conditions of Service in the Field: Effectiveness and Impact of Recruitment and Retention Measures at Difficult Duty Stations*. Report 67/R.14. New York. This report suggests that public-sector organizations invest 5 percent of total budget in staff training. But the figure is only 0.7 percent in New York-based United Nations organizations.

¹² WFP Global Staff Survey results, 2006 and 2004



of identifying staff learning needs and gaps. Outcomes may therefore not support WFP's priorities or individuals' needs.

45. The induction of new staff – a critical activity – is not carried out consistently for all new entrants: there are categories of staff who do benefit from an orientation programme and country offices where some form of induction may not take place. There needs to be a corporate approach to the way staff are initiated into WFP. Such an approach is fundamental to developing a shared code of conduct¹³ and ensuring that new entrants have the knowledge they need about WFP to perform effectively.
46. With a global workforce working in remote and difficult locations, participation in development opportunities is limited. The result is that where training is often needed most, staff are not able to access the learning resources. Technological tools must be maximized to deploy training and facilitate learning regardless of staff location.
47. To respond to WFP's learning needs, OMH will initiate a regular process of assessing staff capabilities against required competencies and prioritizing global development needs. The results will support greater coordination and qualitative monitoring of learning in WFP. A learning management system (LMS) will be launched that will enable staff learning to be registered and monitored and that will deploy e-learning to remote locations.
48. Implicit in the commitment to staff training are the realization that a high proportion of WFP's budget must be allocated to staffing and the desire to shift the culture from one that sees staff development as a cost to one that views it as a critical investment in WFP's intellectual capital.

Supporting Staff Well-Being

Objective: Provide a supportive working environment that promotes the work/life balance

49. The realities of WFP's work can have profound effects on the well-being of its staff. Stress-induced behaviour resulting from isolation or a heavy workload can have a negative impact on a staff member and on colleagues. An even more important issue is security, which is a critical stress factor affecting many WFP duty stations especially because the United Nations is increasingly a target for terrorism and because conflict and unrest are increasing as a result of rising food prices and resource scarcity.
50. The retention of women seems to feature among the main challenges in achieving gender parity in staffing. In 2007, the percentage of women separating was greater than that being recruited. An analysis of this data within the End-of-Term Evaluation on WFP's Gender Policy suggests that difficulties in maintaining a work-life balance may be more pronounced for women than men. As suggested within the evaluation document, the issue of retention among female WFP staff must be seen within the context of the nature of the Programme's activities which require employment in

¹³ Report on the Activities of the Ombudsman Office, 2008



increasingly difficult living and working conditions [and] the fact that all [international] staff are obliged to be professionally and geographically mobile.”¹⁴

51. A workplace environment which recognizes the challenges faced by staff and which supports staff with personnel tools, advice, guidance and development activity needs to be created as part of the culture of WFP.
52. WFP has a counselling service and a well-established system of peer support volunteers. The service provides information and advice for managers in relation to staff welfare and thereby complements the responsibility that managers have for the welfare of their staff. But additional guidance for managers is needed to help them to recognize and address abusive behaviour and symptoms of distress and conflict. There are often insufficient counsellors to help staff experiencing difficulties in the workplace or their personal life: some counsellors are on a part-time retainer, which eventually results in WFP losing them to other organizations. This is counter-productive, because counselling relationships are built on trust, continuity and stability.
53. Flexible approaches to work that balance the demands of work and life outside work can be powerful motivators and can support retention.¹⁵ Several WFP policies address the work/life balance,⁷ but OMH will explore other policies for alternative working arrangements and career breaks and will develop a framework for flexible working schemes that meets the needs of WFP and its staff.
54. Change in WFP is inevitable. If staff view change as a positive opportunity, they are more likely to be able to manage the stress that often accompanies it. To empower staff to take responsibility for managing their futures, especially in situations of downsizing and reassignment, OMH will support staff in assessing career options and plans for career transition; this will be achieved by providing access to career development services such as self-assessment and career planning tools.

FOSTER PARTNERSHIPS

55. Partnership is a fundamental principle of “Delivering as One”. Its value is emphasized in WFP’s Strategic Plan, which promotes the establishment of relationships among agencies, non-profit organizations and governments on the basis of respect, understanding, trust and shared responsibility. Given the magnitude of the challenges in today’s world, the effectiveness and impact of WFP’s work can be maximized only if they are complemented by the work of others and integrated into broad alliances. Partnerships are also crucial for the handing over of WFP’s activities.

¹⁴ Annex J, End-of-Term Evaluation. WFP’s Gender Policy (2003-2007). A Desk Review on Human Resources. March 2008.

¹⁵ In a 1998 Catalyst study entitled *Women Entrepreneurs*, 51 percent of women said a desire for flexibility was the main reason why they had left their employers.



Facilitating Inter-agency Mobility

Objective: Promote opportunities for inter-agency mobility in the United Nations system

56. WFP staff should have opportunities to take on assignments in other United Nations agencies with a view to enhancing awareness of how agencies can work to deliver their mandates. There are staff on secondment to and from WFP, but many hesitate to apply for vacancies because current HR policies do not recognize promotion in other agencies on return to WFP. Staff who do return are often not systematically re-integrated and risk being assigned to a position for which they had not applied.
57. To address these impediments, OMH will review its policy on transfer, secondment and loan with a view to removing constraints and enabling all categories of WFP staff to benefit from opportunities for inter-agency mobility. Increased participation in inter-agency working groups will help to facilitate the sharing of innovative approaches for identifying vacancies and internal candidates.
58. WFP's representation in the Resident Coordinator (RC) and Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) pools is low. Considering the essential role of RCs in country programmes, it is in WFP's interest to ensure that more of its staff serve as RCs.¹⁶ As a first step, managers will be prepared for the Resident Coordinator Assessment Centre and acceptance into the RC pool.

Promoting Exchange Programmes

Objective: Increase opportunities for assignments in WFP of people from partner organizations and for WFP staff in partner organizations

59. In recent years WFP has developed sound partnerships with private-sector organizations. A programme is in place to support the assignment of employees from these organizations in WFP: it will be expanded to include new partners, and an approach will be developed to give WFP staff opportunities for assignment in a partner organization. Expanding the pool of assignments within family duty stations will give staff more career options which are compatible with their personal situations.
60. OMH will create a template for identifying and selecting staff through a transparent process for such assignments.
61. A number of successful programmes have been established with universities to identify students for internship assignments; the "Princeton in Africa" is one. To increase such experiences, OMH will contact other universities to create country rosters of intern candidates.
62. Technical divisions will be encouraged through their staffing coordinators and with the support of OMH to explore opportunities for creating shared rosters of staff with partner organizations, especially staff with specialized skills.

¹⁶ Staff from WFP currently hold only 3 percent of RC positions.



ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

63. The ability of WFP to deliver on this HR strategy will depend largely on the human and financial resources that are available and on the way in which the HR function structures itself and the systems it deploys to support its work. OMH will therefore enhance the profile of HR staff throughout WFP. Current and future vacancies in HR will provide opportunities to bring in a new generation of officers who possess the required knowledge and competencies. With a view to raising levels of competence among current HR staff, partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is being explored whereby WFP can collaborate in its HR accreditation programme with Cornell University.
64. OMH will propose a mixed model of centralized and decentralized HR functions to enable the shift from a transactional and compliance role to a role that is proactive in helping WFP to achieve its Strategic Objectives. In this new model, OMH must go beyond basic HR functionality to embrace new ways of improving the quality, efficiency and productivity of its work. By adopting technologies such as state-of-the-art electronic registry, help-desk and self-service systems, OMH will be able to reduce costs and HR transaction time and conduct more detailed analyses for HR planning.

CONCLUSION

65. Managing and developing human resources is more challenging in WFP than in many other organizations because of the nature and scope of the work of the Programme. At the same time, the demands and expectations placed on staff are intensifying as WFP strives to implement its 2008-2011 Strategic Plan.
66. This HR strategy will help WFP to achieve its Strategic Objectives by developing necessary capacities and diversity in the Programme's staff base. To support the implementation of the strategy, mechanisms will be put in place to monitor the extent to which the expected results are delivered (see Annex I).
67. For OMH, this means a systematic exploration of approaches and processes that enable it to engage more effectively with managers and staff. Our stakeholders include all internationally and locally recruited categories of staff working in WFP.
68. OMH can provide the policy frameworks, tools and systems for this HR strategy, but shared responsibility and cooperation at all levels will be essential if it is to be implemented. The network of human resources staff in Headquarters, regional bureaux and country offices will be essential in delivering results. It is expected that staff and managers at all levels will contribute in their own ways to help to make this strategy successful.



ANNEX I: RESULTS MATRIX

Objectives	Actions	Indicators	Results and Milestones
Be responsive			
<p><i>WFP workforce planning</i></p> <p>Integrate workforce planning with strategic, financial and operational planning</p>	<p>Develop a systematic HR planning framework and reporting process to enable projection of staff requirements</p> <p>Strengthen support to country offices in conducting staffing reviews to ensure that staff and office structure meet current and future needs</p>	<p>Number/percentage of offices and divisions carrying out SREs each year</p>	<p>Data on all categories of staff captured in WINGS II</p> <p>Corporate workforce plan that forecasts staff size, diversity and competence requirements, published annually</p> <p>Training in management and classification delivered for international HR community</p>
<p><i>Recruitment</i></p> <p>Align recruitment practices to support more proactive, targeted and rigorous selection that attracts candidates who have the profiles needed by WFP in a framework that ensures diversity</p>	<p>Revise administrative policy on recruitment to ensure that the process is based on clearly defined criteria and adheres to the principles of fairness, transparency and merit</p> <p>Identify recruitment sources to maximize access to target audiences</p> <p>Develop a standard competency-based assessment approach for short-listed candidates</p>		<p>Revised policy drafted and submitted to policy committee</p> <p>Inventory of recruitment sources indicating target population is published on StaffNet and accessible to HR and managers</p> <p>Competency assessments completed for all short-listed candidates for international professional appointment</p>





ANNEX I: RESULTS MATRIX

Objectives	Actions	Indicators	Results and Milestones
	<p>Train managers and others in selection techniques, including job specification preparation and competency-based interviewing</p> <p>Monitor existence of adverse impact in selection process. Require hiring manager to ensure adequate proportion of under-represented candidates or women.</p>	<p>Percentage of women recruited overall</p> <p>Percentage of nationals of developing countries recruited into the international professional workforce</p>	<p>Recruitment training programme delivered to HR focal points through Headquarters and regional HR workshops. Hiring managers certified through on-line training in selection techniques.</p> <p>By 2011, recruitment results indicate more than 50 percent women recruited overall and more than 40 percent nationals of developing countries recruited into the international professional workforce</p>
<p><i>Reassignment</i></p> <p>Develop a responsive process to identify internal staff for reassignment that is viewed as fair, effective and linked to career and personal objectives</p>	<p>Establish working group to review current reassignment process and identify opportunities for improved procedures. Revise policy on reassignment in the light of revised procedures.</p> <p>Establish annual career reviews to consider staff performance and profile against personal and professional goals. Create a process to provide peer feedback to enable staff to establish realistic expectations of their future careers in WFP and to provide input into re-assignment decisions.</p>		<p>Policy on re-assignment procedure drafted and submitted to policy committee</p> <p>Annual career reviews for international staff completed. Feedback reports provided to staff and departmental heads.</p>
<p>Develop capacity</p>			
<p><i>Managerial capacity</i></p> <p>Build managerial capabilities of staff to enable them to lead the workforce in realizing WFP's Strategic Objectives and to model desired behaviours</p>	<p>Design and implement management development programme targeting senior leaders and country directors</p> <p>Introduce the use of manager scorecards</p>	<p>Number/percentage of senior leaders and country directors (CDs) who have completed the new training programme</p> <p>Number/percentage of future leaders who have completed the new training programme</p>	<p>Programme design endorsed and funded. Programme components developed: e-learning modules, future leaders' workshop and country director modules. Participation in programme by all country directors completed by 2011.</p> <p>By 2011, 30 percent of staff in senior level positions and Country Director positions are women. 40 percent of staff in these positions are nationals from developing countries.</p>

ANNEX I: RESULTS MATRIX

Objectives	Actions	Indicators	Results and Milestones
	<p>Enhance approaches including third-party assessment to assessing staff for leadership and management potential and use the information in developing leadership succession plans</p>	<p>Percentage of staff in senior level positions (including CD and deputy country director (DCD)) who are women</p> <p>Percentage of staff in senior level positions (including CD and DCD) who are nationals of developing countries</p> <p>Number/percentage of managers who are assessed and put into the senior management pool</p>	<p>Rome-based Management Development Centre reports indicate participants' potential to take on higher-level responsibilities</p>
<p><i>Performance management</i></p> <p>Establish more credible and transparent performance assessment and feedback to guide staffing decisions and facilitate staff development</p>	<p>Make it easier for managers and staff to use electronic performance appraisal tools and monitor status of completion</p> <p>Create system for providing staff with peer review and direct report review feedback</p> <p>Enhance management capacity in providing feedback and managing conflict</p> <p>Establish working group to review policy on international promotion with a view to strengthening link between merit and potential to decisions on promotion</p> <p>Create stronger link between learning plans identified during performance discussions and development opportunities captured in the LMS</p> <p>Implement use of on-line exit surveys</p>	<p>Overall compliance rate of our corporate performance management system</p>	<p>By 2011, performance appraisal compliance increased to more than 85 percent. System accessible through web-based technology. Training guidelines available online. Completion rates captured because standard reporting feature is accessible to managers. Pilot successfully completed and system launched for all staff.</p> <p>Multi-rater feedback incorporated into PACE process</p> <p>Workshop on managing performance developed and delivered to regional directors, country directors and Headquarters managers</p> <p>Report on recommendations submitted by promotion working group</p> <p>Annual report of staff learning activities as captured in LMS is provided during annual performance review. Managers rated on extent to which staff participate in mandatory training.</p> <p>Annual report on results of exit surveys produced as of 2009</p>





ANNEX I: RESULTS MATRIX

Objectives	Actions	Indicators	Results and Milestones
<p><i>Technical capacity</i></p> <p>Ensure that training and development opportunities are available to staff to enable them to contribute fully to the implementation of WFP's Strategic Plan</p>	<p>Launch LMS to advertise availability of training events, distribute e-learning to staff globally and monitor participation in staff training</p> <p>Conduct global learning needs analysis to identify and prioritize learning needs of staff</p> <p>Design and implement an orientation programme for all categories of new entrants into WFP that allows for flexible delivery to dispersed workforce and is targeted to entrants' contractual status</p> <p>Develop framework for ensuring coordination and return on investment of training in WFP</p>		<p>LMS on-line and mandatory e-learning courses available to staff in country offices. Annual report of staff training produced.</p> <p>Learning curricula indicating learning needs of staff in technical functions published on LMS</p> <p>All new entrants automatically registered in LMS, which will enable programme requirements to be communicated to entrant, delivered as e-modules and monitored for completion</p> <p>Learning policy, including terms of reference for a learning council, drafted and submitted to policy committee. Standards for training design and evaluation of training produced.</p>
<p><i>Staff well-being</i></p> <p>Provide a supportive working environment that encourages an appropriate work/life balance</p>	<p>Review policies for alternative working arrangements such as part-time/job sharing and career breaks, and develop a framework for flexible working schemes that meet the needs of WFP and staff</p> <p>Develop and provide access to career development services for all staff. Develop self-assessment and development tools and career-planning modules.</p>	<p>Staff satisfaction rates reported in Global Staff Surveys</p>	<p>Working group report on flexible working arrangements drafted and submitted to policy committee</p> <p>Modules for career assessment and planning developed and available on LMS</p>

ANNEX I: RESULTS MATRIX

Objectives	Actions	Indicators	Results and Milestones
	Make available services such as training, counselling and mediation to ensure that managers and staff receive the support services available to them to assist with work-related stress		Staff counselling services increased by 50 percent
Foster partnerships			
<p><i>Inter-agency mobility</i></p> <p>Promote opportunities for inter-agency mobility in the United Nations system</p>	<p>Review policy on transfer, secondment and loan with view to removing obstacles so that WFP staff can pursue and accept opportunities for inter-agency mobility</p> <p>Engage in inter-agency working group to develop innovative approaches for sharing vacancies and identifying internal candidates, including creation of shared rosters of staff with specialized skills</p> <p>Prepare WFP candidates for successful completion of RC Assessment Programme in order to present more candidates for the RC pool</p>	<p>Number/percentage of WFP staff on secondment or reimbursable loan agreements (RLAs) with other United Nations agencies</p> <p>Number/percentage of staff working in WFP who are on secondment or reimbursable loan agreements (RLAs) from other United Nations agencies</p> <p>Number/percentage of RCs coming from WFP</p>	<p>Policy drafted and submitted to policy committee</p> <p>Report identifying approaches for increasing inter-agency mobility prepared and accessible to staff</p> <p>Guidelines on RC process distributed to senior WFP managers</p> <p>Internal pool of potential RC candidates identified and enrolled in Rome-based Management Development Centre</p>
<p><i>Exchange opportunities</i></p> <p>Increase exchange opportunities for assignments in WFP and partner organizations</p>	<p>Expand WFP exchange programme with partners. Create template that can be adopted and that indicates process for identifying assignments, selection of staff and contractual status while on assignment.</p> <p>Explore with partner organizations opportunities for creating shared rosters of staff, especially those with specialized skills.</p> <p>Create rosters of universities from which WFP can acquire interns</p>	<p>Number/percentage of WFP staff involved in exchange programmes with partner agencies</p> <p>Number/percentage of individuals working in WFP who come from partner agencies</p>	<p>Staff exchange programme template drafted for private partnerships, government and non-governmental organizations, and universities</p> <p>Project proposal presented for creating shared rosters</p> <p>Roster of selected universities, for developed and developing countries created and accessible on internal website</p>



ANNEX II

SNAPSHOT OF THE WFP WORKFORCE			
WFP Workforce as of 30 June 2008	Total	% Women	% Developing
Higher categories (D-2 and above)	42	26	40
International professionals (P-1 to D-1)	1 184	40	41
Subtotal	1 226	40	41
Junior professional officer	67	58	1
International professional staff (short-term)	51	45	25
United Nations volunteers	122	32	89
National professional officers	433	37	96
Consultants	344	37	32
Service contract professionals	120	31	97
Short-service agreement, professionals	59	36	83
Total professional and higher categories	2 422	38	54
General service	2 577	39	84
General service (short-term)	32	75	19
Service contract, general service	5 410	25	99.6
Short-service agreement, general service	1 028	31	98
Total general service categories	9 047	30	95
Grand total	11 469	32	86



ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

CD	country director
CIPD	Chartered Institute of Personnel Development
DCD	deputy country director
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator
HR	human resources
LMS	learning management system
OMH	Human Resources Division
PACE	Performance and Competency Enhancement Programme
RC	Regional Coordinator
RLA	reimbursable loan agreement
SRE	staffing review exercise
SWOT	strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
WINGS	WFP Information Network and Global System