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| **Council 2018 Geneva, 17-27 April 2018** |  |
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| **Agenda item: ADM 9** | **Document C18/20-E** |
| **8 February 2018** |
| **Original: English** |
| Report by the Secretary-General | |
| ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY FRAMEWORK  INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION | |

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| **Summary**  Pursuant to the JIU review of ITU management undertaken in 2015 ([JIU/REP/2016/1](https://www.unjiu.org/en/reports-notes/JIU%20Products/JIU_REP_2016_1_English.pdf)), the Secretary-General presented to the 2017 Council session a stand-alone ITU Accountability Framework that consolidates the core elements of accountability around three main pillars and related benchmarks.  This report provides an update of the progress achieved towards the implementation of the JIU benchmarks for the Accountability Framework.  **Action required**  The Council is invited to **take note** of the report.  **References**  [C17/64](https://www.itu.int/md/S17-CL-C-0064/en), [JIU/REP/2011/5](https://www.unjiu.org/en/reports-notes/JIU%20Products/JIU_REP_2011_5_English.pdf), [JIU/REP/2016/1](https://www.unjiu.org/en/reports-notes/JIU%20Products/JIU_REP_2016_1_English.pdf) and UN General Assembly [Resolution 64/259](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/64/259) |

1 The purpose of this document is to provide an update of the progress achieved towards the implementation of the JIU benchmarks for the Accountability Framework (AF).

2 ITU’s accountability framework builds upon the three main pillars based on a structure presented in the JIU report as shown below.

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| **PILLAR 1**  **Covenant with Member States, Sector Members, Associates, Academia, and users of ITU’s Services** | **PILLAR 2**  **Internal Controls and Risk Management** | **PILLAR 3**  **Complaints and Response Mechanism** |
| * ITU’s Basic Instruments, relevant agreements and treaties * ITU’s Results Framework | * Control Environment * Control activities * Risk assessment * Monitoring | * Procurement * ITU’s staff * Membership & other users of ITU services |

3 ITU’s Accountability Framework will be reviewed periodically in order to strengthen the organizational capacity and to ensure continued relevance. It will be updated to reflect new requirements or improvements arising from new initiatives or lessons learned. ITU will ensure that the Accountability Framework remains relevant to the mandate and objectives of the Union. ITU will also continue to ensure that the Union’s Accountability Framework responds to evolving circumstances and takes into account the best practices in the UN system.

4 The table reflected in the Annex provides an update of the progress achieved towards the implementation of the JIU benchmarks for the Accountability Framework (AF) for the three main pillars described above.

ANNEX

**Progress achieved towards the implementation of the JIU benchmarks for the Accountability Framework (AF)**

**Pillar 1**

| **Benchmark** | **Tools** | **Status** | **Comment** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. A clear framework for accountability is in place, including a definition thereof and clarity of responsibility for the overall implementation of the framework, linking all components together. | Framework policy document | ✓ | By this proposal, ITU is putting in place such a framework. |
| Definition of accountability | ✓ |
| Roles and responsibilities of senior management, line department and staff | ✓ |
| Policy document available on the website and for staff | In progress |
| Framework contains key components of accountability | ✓ |
| 2. RBM is operational and coherent with organizational mandates and objectives, and cascades down into unit and personal work plans. | Strategic plans | ✓ | RBM is operational and coherent with the organizational mandates and objectives (strategic goals and targets, Sector and Inter-Sectoral Objectives/Outcomes, Outputs and Enablers/Support Services).  Unit and Personal work plans are being elaborated based on the results-framework of the organization. A new performance evaluation and development management system will be launched in January 2018. Personal work objectives will be aligned with the strategic objectives of the Union. |
| Unit work plans | In progress |
| Personal work objectives | ✓ |
| 3. Organizations conduct credible, utilization-focused evaluations and communicate the findings, conclusions and recommendations to stakeholders. | Evaluation function | In progress | An ITU Evaluation feasibility study is being conducted to produce: a) Brief report detailing performance identified and recommended for inclusion in evaluation process, b) Brief report detailing the evaluation needs at ITU, based on a recommended evaluation scope and objectives, and c) Evaluation policy, guidelines, work plan and further steps document. The Internal Audit Unit’s plan for 2018 contains an evaluation pilot project to be conducted in Q1 and Q2 on the topic of “Smart Cities”, as agreed with the Director, TSB. |
| 4. Organizations have an effectively implemented established information disclosure policy whereby the results of the organization’s activities are communicated regularly to legislative organs, Member States and other stakeholders, including donors, beneficiaries and the general public. | Information disclosure policy | ✓ | As a step forward towards more transparency and accountability, ITU Council adopted at its 2016 session the ITU’s information/document access policy which “… ensures access by the public to information held, managed or generated by ITU”; this policy entered into force on 1 January 2017 on a provisional basis. |
| Evaluation and audit results | ✓ |
| Consolidated annual financial reports | ✓ | Consolidated annual reports are presented to the Council. |
| Programme results | ✓ |

**Pillar 2**

| **Benchmark** | **Tools** | **Status** | **Comment** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 5. Ethical conduct, standards of integrity, anti-corruption and anti-fraud policies are in place and enforced. | Staff regulations/code of conduct for staff members, including harassment | ✓ |  |
| Ethics function | ✓ |
| Gifts, favors and hospitality policy | In progress | The Ethics Office issued a Guidance Note on Gifts in connection with the 2017 Telecom World Event. A broader and improved policy on the topic is under preparation. |
| Protection against retaliation for reporting wrongdoing (whistle-blower policy) | ✓ | These topics are also being reviewed in light of the currently ongoing reviews by the Joint Inspection Unit regarding Conflicts of Interests and whistleblowers / Whistleblower protections. |
| Outside activities policy (conflict of interest) | ✓ |
| Anti-fraud and anti-corruption policy | In progress |
| Training | In progress |
| 6. Failure to comply with enforced policies/regulations results in clear consequences. Sanctions shall be clear and proportional and implemented at all levels. In addition, outstanding performance should be acknowledged by recognition/awards/rewards | Policy documents on sanctions and disciplinary action | Not applicable | Chapter X of the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules are applied. |
| Publication in annual reports of sanctions imposed by the Executive Head | Not applied | Not imposed by the ITU basic instruments. |
| Awards/rewards programmes decided by committees/panels based on clear criteria | ✓ | Annual awards to outstanding performance by staff are granted and published. |
| Publication of the names of staff members receiving awards and rewards | ✓ |
| 7. All staff can be held accountable for their work on the basis of up-to-date written job descriptions accurately reflecting their actual work. | Job description for all staff | ✓ | Full connection between actual work and job description not always easy to obtain, however, annual personal performance appraisal outlines the objectives and the day-to-day tasks of staff members as well as their participation in statutory committees and task forces. |
| Coherence between job description and day-to-day work | Ongoing |
| 8. Concretization of policies on selection, recruitment and post-employment. | Recruitment policy restricting hiring of family members and relatives | ✓ | Rule 4.7.1 of the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules. |
| Post-employment restrictions for staff who retire/resign from the organization | ✓ | Policy already in place for retirees (ITU applies the UN limitations) and for staff members leaving the organization within an early separation programme. |
| 9. Organization has a formal policy on ERM to be implemented with a coherent methodology. | Risk analysis conducted for each unit/project/process and an organizational risk plan exists | ✓ | The formal Risk Management Policy and Appetite Statement have been endorsed at the 2017 Session of Council.  Risk analysis is conducted at each level of the organization and risk registers are maintained and reported through the Operational Plans of the Sectors and the General Secretariat.  ITU is implementing the ORMS & the key element of Crisis Management. |
| 10. The chain of command and delegation of authority are aligned, clear, coherent and integrated into existing enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems. | Clear definition of delegation of authority | ✓ |  |
| Coherence between management line and delegation of authority and clear reporting lines | ✓ |  |
| Delegation of authority built into existing ERP systems | ✓ | Access to ERP system based on segregation of duties. |
| 11. Financial Regulations and Financial Rules (FRR) in the United Nations system organizations should embody anti-fraud and financial misconduct policies and are implemented practically. | FRR | ✓ |  |
| Conflict of interest statements | ✓ | ITU maintains a yearly declaration of potential conflicts of interest related to finance or procurement issues according to ethical standards. |
| Financial disclosure statements | ✓ |
| Anti-fraud policies | In progress | Finalized, subject to final approval. |
| 12. Managers attest to compliance with internal controls within the framework of their delegation of authority. | Letter/form of representation/assurance/attestation submitted annually to the executive heads | ✓ | Each Elected official, Heads of Department and Head of Unit of GS are required to submit an Internal Letter of Representation, which constitutes a written confirmation that they have duly exercised delegated financial authorities and responsibilities. |
| 13. Staff at all levels have access to relevant, reliable information that supports decision-making in line with their delegated authorities and the organization has an internal and external communication system. | ERP system or similar in place to capture and document relevant information | In progress | ITU manages information and knowledge through standardized information management. i.e. ERP, SharePoint, File repositories, BI tools, which provides staff access to information based on role and function. |
| Internal communication channels are fully exploited | In progress |
| Information disclosure policy in place | In progress |
| 14. Executive heads, senior managers and staff members’ performances are monitored and corrective action taken, as necessary. | Performance assessments for all staff levels including 360-degree feedback | In progress | The new appraisal system does not include a 360-degree feedback. |
| Senior compacts or scorecard-type tools | Not applied |  |
| Corrective measures for non-performing assets | ✓ | Staff members are invited to take action through the establishment of training plans for redressing the situation in collaboration with their supervisors. |
| 15. Recommendations of oversight bodies/internal audits and evaluations are tracked, implemented, and if not, clear justification should be provided. | Information disclosure policy | In progress | ITU Council adopted at its 2016 session the ITU’s information/document access policy which “… ensures access by the public to information held, managed or generated by ITU”; This policy entered into force on 1 January 2017 on a provisional basis. |
| Reporting on external and internal oversight recommendations | ✓ | The SG and IMAC receive regular updates on the implementation of internal and external audit recommendations. |
| Tracking recommendations of internal and external audit, oversight bodies and internal, independent and self-evaluations | ✓ | CWG-FHR is following and overseeing all the recommendations from Ext. Auditors and IMAC. Recommendations of IMAC are being tracked and implemented, and results are reported in detail to CWG-FHR and Council. |

**Pillar 3**

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| **Benchmark** | **Tools** | **Status** | **Comment** |
| 16. Staff members have recourse to non-formal complaints mechanisms. | Procedures for non-formal grievances/rebuttals are outlined in a policy document and/or handbook | Not applied | Each procedure is included in the relevant Service Order. |
| A mediator or ombudsperson function is in place | ✓ |  |
| 17. Staff members, consultants, non-staff, stakeholders/beneficiaries and vendors have recourse to formal complaints mechanisms and organizations have mechanisms to respond to such complaints. | Investigation function, hotlines, complaints forms, etc. for staff and externals. | ✓ | Consultants and non-staff have not access to the ILOAT and UNAT. SSA contracts contain a provision for informal resolution of conflicts and recourse to arbitration. |
| Grievance mechanisms: United Nations Dispute or ILO Administrative Tribunals | ✓ | Available for regular staff members and staff members on short term contracts, and arbitration for consultants and non-staff. |
| Procurement challenges | In progress | ITU is committed to ensuring that the purchase of goods and services is conducted in a fair and transparent manner and subject to competition, where appropriate, international. To address procurement challenges, ITU is considering putting in place a debrief mechanism for unsuccessful bidders for high-value solicitations. |

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