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| **Agenda item: ADM 3** | **Document C23/55-E** |
| **9 June 2023** |
| **Original: English** |
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| Report by the Secretary-General | |
| PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF  THE HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGIC PLAN AND OF  RESOLUTION 48 (REV. BUCHAREST, 2022) | |
| **Purpose**  The goal of the Human Resources Strategic Plan (HRSP) is to progressively transform ITU’s people management and its capacity to deliver on the strategic and financial plans of the Union. The strategy reaffirms that the greatest resource of ITU is a skilled, motivated, and dedicated workforce of the highest competence and integrity that is geographically diverse. gender-balanced, and empowered to achieve ITU’s mission and strategic objectives through a commitment to managing the results. The strategy also highlights the need to modernize ITU’s human capacity, processes, procedures and tools and emphasizes the importance of integration and harmonization with the United Nations Common System and the values of the international civil service.  This progress report reflects the organization's commitment to fostering a people-centric culture, developing an agile workforce, streamlining HR services, and creating an enabling work environment. As ITU continues to move forward, it will build on these achievements to further strengthen its human resources and ensure the organization remains well-positioned to face the challenges and opportunities of the rapidly evolving telecommunication landscape.  The HRSP is a rolling plan, which may be adapted as required. This progress report highlights the key results achieved under each of the four pillars in 2022 and early 2023.  **Action required by the Council**  The Council is invited to **take note** of the progress report on the implementation of the HRSP.  **Relevant link(s) with the Strategic Plan**  Excellence in human resources and organizational innovation.  **Financial implications**  None.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **References**  *Council documents* [*C20/54,*](https://www.itu.int/md/S20-CL-C-0054/en)[*C21/54*](https://www.itu.int/md/S21-CL-C-0054/en)*, and* [*C22/INF/6*](https://www.itu.int/md/S22-CL-INF-0006/en)*;* [*Resolution 48 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts-2023/RES-048-E.pdf) *of the Plenipotentiary Conference* | |

**Pillar 1: Fit-for-purpose workforce integrating diversity and agility   
(aligning ITU workforce to the ITU goals)**

The first pillar focuses on a fit-for-purpose workforce; alignment between the Union’s strategic priorities and staff functions and posts; and a balanced and diversified workforce when it comes to staff in Professional and higher versus General Service categories, age, gender parity at all levels, geographical distribution, and persons with disabilities.

It also focuses on achieving balanced recruitment between internal and external talent; strengthened, simplified, and shortened recruitment models and processes to determine highly qualified candidates, from young talent (intern and youth programmes, Junior Professional Officers, etc.) to highly skilled talent for senior roles; enhancement of ITU’s employer brand through a strategic outreach in attracting highly qualified and diverse candidates; and a strengthened partnership with the Member States and national governments.

Key highlights:

1. Comprehensive Recruitment Guidelines (RG) implemented include (i) new processes that provide autonomy and accountability for hiring managers, (ii) processes that include increased monitoring by the Human Resources Management Department (HRMD), as recommended by the auditors, and (iii) processes that include strengthened verification of credentials and references.

2. A training programme on RGs for assistants to hiring managers/supervisors, HR focal points, staff members/applicants, Staff Council representatives and supervisors. 315 staff members attended the different training sessions.

3. Enhanced talent acquisition processes through the implementation of the new Recruitment Management System (RMS). The system includes complete automation of the recruitment process, better monitoring of timelines, detailed controls, and efficiencies which support further acceleration of the recruitment process. Training on RMS was provided to staff.

4. Recruitment processes for fixed-term contracts, short-term contracts, special service agreements (SSAs) and internships have been conducted through the RMS.

5. Statistics on gender and geographical distribution are regularly updated and systematically provided as part of recruitment processes. Integration of recruitment data from the internal RMS system is ongoing.

6. The young talent programme partnership with Member States and national governments has been expanded (interns, junior professionals officers, etc).

7. SSA conditions have been revised.

8. An HR Workforce Analytic Report using Power BI has been developed to provide up-to-date, reliable data and posted on the Council dashboard.

9. The Ethics Officer has updated the financial disclosure policy, and a new Service Order (SO) No.22/02 was developed on the declaration of interest.

10. The ITU careers site has been completely revamped.

**Pillar 2: Engaged employees**

This pillar aims to achieve strategic and operational alignment between staff performance and organizational goals through the implementation of effective performance management and development systems, leadership models that foster continuous feedback and mutual trust, the identification of common competencies and skills, provision of learning and development opportunities, staff orientation and mentoring, rewards programmes, succession planning, change management strategies, internal and external mobility, and meaningful performance evaluation with opportunities for training and career growth.

ITU has embraced new ways of working, leveraging technology to support remote work and flexible working arrangements. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, ITU successfully transitioned to a remote work environment, ensuring business continuity while prioritizing the health and well-being of its staff. Steps have been taken to improve internal communications with town hall meetings and regular updates on HR-related matters. These efforts have contributed to a more transparent and collaborative work environment, which aims to make staff feel informed, engaged, and empowered to contribute to the organization's success.

Furthermore, HRMD has created mentoring and coaching programmes to support employee development and enhance their skill sets.

Key achievements:

1. The 2022 ePMDS exercise has been completed for the majority of ITU staff members (81%), giving them feedback on their annual performance.

2. The number of underperformance cases addressed by HRMD has increased. That has included performance improvement plans to help staff achieve objectives, and extensions of the probationary period and terminations, where necessary.

3. A new Learning Management System (LMS) has been launched, offering staff access to a wide range of training opportunities.

4. The 2023 learning plan was developed based on insights from the 2021 McKinsey Culture and Skills Gap report, the ITU visioning exercise, and the ITU strategic plan.

5. The following core learning programmes were held: Anti-Fraud Essential Training, Diversity and Inclusion Training, Emerge Programme (an inter-agency collaborative programme for emerging women leaders in the UN), Empowering UN Gender Focal Points, Geneva Innovation Movement (“Innovating as a Force for Good in a Transforming World”), Introduction to Change Management, Leadership Culture Assignments, Pre-Retirement Seminar, and Project Management Certification.

6. Internal communication informed staff about the simplified approval process for ePMDS and learning, with significant time savings for staff and managers.

7. The ratio between technical and corporate learning events in 2022 was 53:47. This figure does not include other learning means such as on-the-job, self-study, etc.

8. A comprehensive career development programme has been created for 2023, and the associated career development resources and curated content made available to staff.

9. Since September 2019 the 90 minute induction programme for newcomers (regular and short-term staff, SSAs, interns, etc.) has been held 36 times, attracting a total of 478 participants.

10. HRMD has contributed to the project of migrating BDT’s expert recruitment management system to SAP-ERP.

11. The voluntary separation programme (SO 23/03) launched on 17 March 2023 was accompanied by an information session for all staff. Interested staff members were supported with information resources including an online estimate calculator and an FAQ.

**Pillar 3: Excellence-driven HR services**

The third pillar aims to establish a business partnering and results-based HR model that aligns with the institutional strategy, modernizes working methods and processes, and focuses on the people implications. HRMD is seeking to become a trusted and accountable partner that adds value and is pro-active and service-minded while continually delivering high-quality HR services that ensure organizational equity. The department also emphasizes connecting with internal customers with curiosity, purpose, and impact to streamline HR services, promote a paperless work environment, and build business plans and programmes oriented to clients.

HRMD aims to strengthen the culture of internal communication at the corporate level, review and update HR and administrative regulatory frameworks, and ensure capacity building and empowerment of the Bureaux and SG departments to ensure success in HR service delivery and decision making.

ITU has prioritized the effective use of HR data and analytics, developing a Workforce Analytic Report using Power BI to provide up-to-date, reliable data for informed decision-making. This report has been posted on the Council dashboard, further demonstrating the organization's commitment to data-driven decision-making.

Efforts have been made to improve communication with HR clients through town hall meetings and announcements on the portal to keep staff informed on relevant HR matters. These initiatives have contributed to a more transparent and inclusive work environment, which aims to enable staff to feel supported and well-informed about HR-related issues and developments.

Key achievements:

1. Several business processes have been incorporated into the ERP system, moving from manual processing towards greater automation with the objectives of simplification, faster processing, and reduction of risks, in collaboration with ISD.

2. New functionalities have been deployed: new UNSMIS reports, automated generation of letters of appointment and contract extensions, and education grant HR modules. The education grant HR module is in use since July 2022.

3. The new role of Strategic HR Policy Advisor was filled in December 2022, to address the need to update the human resource regulatory framework and policies.

4. HR business processes are being streamlined and simplified through ongoing reviews and reengineering efforts.

5. The Learning Management System and Recruitment Management System were implemented in early 2022.

6. The HR Workforce Analytic Report using Power BI for data-driven decision-making was developed.

7. The life insurance contract update and actuarial services contract procurement have been successfully completed.

8. The Staff Pension Committee election was successfully completed.

9. In early 2023, a mass data clean-up of certain personnel information was conducted to ensure quality of data both internally in HRMD as well as externally to partners. Reports were provided to members.

10. An exit interview has been developed and is currently being piloted prior to implementation.

11. HRMD followed up on thirteen Internal Audit (IA) reports and resolved fourteen recommendations to the Department and one for IMAC, relating to recruitment, the ERP system, internal controls, overtime management and staff entitlements.

**Pillar 4: Enabling work environment**

The last pillar aims to establish a healthy and respectful workplace that values diversity and inclusion and supports staff well-being through medical services, psychological support and occupational health. The organization seeks to enable a healthy work-life balance through flexible work arrangements. Decisions with a personal impact will be taken closer to people, ensuring effective delegation of authority and accountability in line with organizational governance and administrative/legal frameworks.

Regular staff consultations will be conducted to identify internal factors and develop action plans to influence the organizational culture of ITU, including promoting healthier habits, reducing stress, and strengthening resilience. The organization aims to establish a culture of accountability, dialogue, and understanding of organizational and staff needs, minimizing conflicts and promoting innovation. ITU also seeks to ensure adequate channels are available for staff to report misconduct and wrongdoing, protect whistle-blowers and handle retaliation cases. The organization will review and update rules to provide adequate compensation for injury, illness, disability, and death attributable to the performance of official duties and to manage cases of deteriorated health condition, difficult family situations or other precarious situations, harassment of all kinds, and unfavourable working conditions.

Key highlights:

1. A draft ITU mental health and well-being strategy will be finalized in 2023.

2. Twelve outreach awareness sessions were led by the Staff Counsellor, focusing on prevention and support.

3. Service Order 22/03 was issued setting out ITU's policy on harassment, including sexual harassment, abuse of authority, and discrimination.

4. A new parental leave entitlement has been implemented, increasing the amount of leave available to all parents and providing greater flexibility in how staff may take leave within the first year following a child's birth or adoption (in accordance with Resolution A/RES/77/256 A–B of the General Assembly of the United Nations on the new parental leave framework and on the basis of recommendations from the International Civil Service Commission).

5. A new policy on flexible working arrangements will be issued in mid-2023.

6. An online system (using Power BI) has been developed to give an overview of sick leave data.

7. ITU participated in the United Nations-wide health and well-being survey which sought input from all staff on their overall health and well-being, but also the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and working from home. The survey collected information on demographics, employment status, the COVID-19 pandemic impact, physical health, mental health, domestic abuse, work environment, perception of health, and plans for improving health.

8. A cross-functional working group was established in January 2023 to: define the meaning and components of a victim-centred approach to tackling sexual harassment at ITU; design a consistent, coherent, fit-for-purpose approach; revise existing policies accordingly; and develop a staff training and outreach programme on the new approach.

9. Guidance on teleworking arrangements has been published for staff (including a list of frequently asked questions) and a teleworking app has been launched to give staff and managers an accurate overview of current teleworking status.

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