



UNAIDS PROGRAMME COORDINATING BOARD

UNAIDS/PCB (32)/13.10

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THIRTY-SECOND MEETING

Date: 25-27 June 2013

Venue: Executive Board Room, WHO, Geneva

Agenda item 5

Update on strategic human resources management issues

Additional documents for this item: *none*

Action required at this meeting - the Programme Coordinating Board is invited to: *Take note* of the update on strategic human resources management issues.

Cost implications for decisions: none

INTRODUCTION

1. As requested by the PCB at its 30th Meeting in June 2012, the purpose of this note is to provide an update on strategic human resources management issues. Unless otherwise indicated, the update provides information up to 1 April 2013.
2. The work of the UNAIDS Secretariat is driven by the *Getting to Zero* vision and mission, the *UNAIDS Strategy 2011-2015*, and the 2011 *Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS*. The Division of Labour for the Joint Programme specifies three main responsibilities for the UNAIDS Secretariat: Leadership and Advocacy; Coordination, Coherence and Partnership; and Mutual Accountability.
3. An essential element to strengthen the Joint Programme's capacity to deliver results in these areas is the progressive improvement of the Secretariat's management and administrative systems, particularly the management of its most important asset: its staff. The ability of the Secretariat to attract, develop and retain a "knowledge workforce" of the highest calibre, with the competencies, expertise and dedication to lead and engage effectively towards the organizational vision with partners at global, regional and country levels, is among the most important strategic priorities of the organization.
4. In recent years, the Secretariat has systematically strengthened its management and administrative systems, including through a strategic and proactive approach to staffing and the alignment of its workforce with changing priorities. The Secretariat has purposefully evolved from a largely headquarters- based to a largely field-based organization. Along with achieving ever greater value for money, strengthening UNAIDS capacity in countries has continued to be an overriding priority. At 1 July 2011, the Secretariat had 904 staff of which 65 per cent were based in the field and 35 per cent in Geneva. At 1 April 2013, the Secretariat had 819 staff of which 70 per cent were based in the field and 30 per cent in Geneva. Streamlining Headquarters, strengthening the field presence and achieving maximum cost efficiencies while delivering results have been the major human resources objectives over the past two years.

HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY–THE FOUNDATION

5. A key pillar supporting the Secretariat's human resources management and overall organizational strengthening is the *UNAIDS Secretariat Strategy on Human Resources 2011-2015*. The Strategy outlines the vision and principles for development of a workforce that is multi-skilled, diverse, mobile and able to work across disciplines to deliver the UNAIDS mandate and provide leadership in the global AIDS response. It supports the organization to foster a culture of high ethical standards of fairness, transparency, and accountability, achieved through continuous learning, high performance, managerial excellence, willingness to take on difficult issues, and respect for diversity, in full compliance with the *Standards of conduct for the international civil service*. The Strategy is comprehensive and integrated, incorporating seven components of human resources management in UNAIDS: workforce planning; recruitment and staffing; staff administration; staff development and mobility; performance management; staff well-being; and human resources information.
6. The *Strategy on Human Resources* is underpinned by the UNAIDS Secretariat Competency Framework. The competency framework sets the corporate standards for performance by defining the values, core competencies and managerial competencies that staff must demonstrate through their work. It has been progressively integrated into recruitment, staff development, and performance management processes. Competency-

based interviewing training for selection panel members has been carried out, including the development of a resource guide on competency-based interviewing, and a competency-based matrix for assessing candidates has been instituted.

7. Another important step in the Secretariat's efforts to progressively harmonize its human resources, as well as financial systems was the move to a single administrative system for the Secretariat. At its 27th Meeting in December 2010, the PCB took note of the decision of the UNAIDS Executive Director, after an extensive analysis, to move to a single administrative system for the UNAIDS Secretariat and encouraged the on-going efforts of the Secretariat to use the most effective administrative policies suited to its operational needs and to minimize administrative costs by seeking the most cost-effective provision of services. Until 2011, the Secretariat had operated within two different frameworks of staff rules and regulations (WHO and UNDP), requiring the use of two separate management systems. In the area of human resources administration, some two-thirds of UNAIDS staff had been administered within the framework of the WHO staff regulations and rules (adjusted as necessary to take into account the special needs of UNAIDS) and approximately one-third under the UN staff regulations and rules administered by UNDP. This situation had created a lack of parity and equity among UNAIDS staff, a serious concern for both UNAIDS management and staff, as well as administrative complexity and inconsistency. Administrative processes and procedures differed in the areas of staff selection and recruitment, reclassification and promotion, performance appraisal and accountability, and separation policies, as well as matters such as health insurance, medical leave and evacuation, travel, administration of justice and career development opportunities.
8. With the move to a single administrative system, the Secretariat workforce was brought under a single set of UNAIDS contracts, a single framework of human resources regulations and rules, one electronic enterprise resource planning (ERP) platform, and a single budgeting and expenditure system which greatly improved overall management and increased transparency. During this process, over 200 staff on UNDP contracts were transferred to UNAIDS contracts, ensuring equitable, fair and consistent terms of employment at country, regional and headquarters levels, fulfilling an important objective of the Executive Director. The move to a single administrative system has reinforced the Secretariat's ability to support the Joint Programme while eliminating inefficiencies tied to reconciliation between different systems; allowing real-time financial and human resources monitoring, management and reporting; and strengthening transparency and accountability for all UNAIDS resources. These initiatives, along with the development of the UBRAF and the on-going implementation of the organizational realignment of the Secretariat, have also been responsive to the recommendations of a number of studies and evaluations, in particular the recommendations of the Second Independent Evaluation (SIE) of UNAIDS.

IMPLEMENTING THE HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY– ORGANIZATIONAL REALIGNMENT AND WORKFORCE PLANNING

9. The Human Resources Strategy called for the introduction of an integrated organization-wide approach to regularly assess and plan staffing needs based on the evolving strategic directions of UNAIDS and the demands of the HIV epidemic.
10. Building on the Human Resources Strategy, the UBRAF, and the move to a single administrative system, the UNAIDS Executive Director renewed his commitment to modernizing the Secretariat for the next generation of the AIDS response by launching a comprehensive workforce planning exercise and organizational review of the Secretariat in mid-2011. The review analysed the existing organizational design and staff functions, collected and analysed data and external benchmarks, and developed an information

base through an extensive consultative process including with staff and managers globally, the Staff Association, and Cosponsors. The organizational realignment aimed to ensure that the internal structure and staffing of the Secretariat is aligned with the organizational vision, strategy and the Political Declaration, continues to strengthen the organization's country focus, particularly in addressing the needs of high impact countries, and delivers results with maximum value for money.

11. In the first phase of the realignment, the headquarters presence of the Secretariat was reorganized into a flatter, more streamlined structure. A number of new programmatic areas were established and positions re-profiled in line with the Secretariat's responsibilities under the Division of Labour. The headquarters presence was reduced to enable increased capacity at country level and the number of staff at headquarters decreased from 321 at the start of the functional review in July 2011 to 244 as of 1 April 2013. This contributed to a ratio of 70:30 between field and headquarters staffing.
12. At regional and country levels, a number of positions were re-profiled to better respond to programme priorities and to provide the most effective technical and operational support. The new or re-profiled programmatic functions include Global Outreach and Advocacy; Youth and Social Organization; Strategic Information; Investment and Efficiency; Human Rights and Gender Equality; and Community Mobilization and Networking. High-impact countries were reinforced with additional human and financial resources, while some other country offices are being consolidated. Measures to strengthen country focus, while providing greater value for money, include some additional multi-country offices, and the placement of a National Professional Officer as UNAIDS focal point in the UN Resident Coordinator's office in some countries. The re-profiling and consolidation of country offices is on-going and planned for completion over the next two years.
13. The implementation of the realignment has been facilitated by the Secretariat's mobility policy, which enables the organization to continually ensure that its workforce is revitalized through cross-fertilization of experience and knowledge, and fit for purpose through the timely placement of qualified staff in positions around the world. Mobility has facilitated greater country focus and given the opportunity to individual staff for professional development and career growth.
14. The organizational realignment has been undertaken in the context of rapidly changing development architecture and increasing global fiscal constraints. The challenge of delivering ever greater results while improving cost-efficiency has required a thoughtful approach, sensitive to staff needs and concerns, and close and regular consultation and communication between the Secretariat's management and staff.
15. Careful efforts have been made throughout the realignment to put in place specific measures that maintain the human face of the organization. These measures have included: a special career transition support programme; exceptional eligibility for staff affected by the realignment (including General Service staff and staff on temporary appointments with appropriate qualifications) to apply in the mobility exercises; a voluntary separation programme, a placement exercise for eligible General Services staff at headquarters to provide career opportunities in the realigned structure; and the opportunity for staff affected by the realignment to apply for internal vacancies for one year after the end of their contract. Implementation of these measures and adherence to the "human face" principle has ensured that staff can continue to focus on their work in response to the epidemic while understanding and contributing constructively to the change process.

16. Implementation of the organizational realignment began in April 2012 and is an on-going dynamic process to adapt to emerging needs and developments. The realignment has resulted in the reduction of the Secretariat's total staffing level from 904 in mid-2011 to 819 at 1 April 2013. The impact of the staffing reduction and other efficiency measures are expected to generate a total net saving of some US\$ 40 million by the end of 2015. Given the nature of the Secretariat's work as a knowledge-based organization in a changing environment, the Secretariat will continue to require a mobile, flexible, multi-skilled, and field-oriented workforce.

IMPLEMENTING THE HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY STRENGTHENING RESOURCES MANAGEMENT SERVICES

17. In addition to the comprehensive workforce planning efforts undertaken through the organizational realignment, UNAIDS has committed itself to progressively strengthening its delivery of high quality human resources management services for all staff. Thus, since 2011 the Secretariat has steadily advanced the broader human resources reform agenda envisaged in the Human Resources Strategy.

18. In the area of workforce planning, a more rigorous approach to position and staffing management at all levels of the Secretariat has been instituted, including close collaboration with staff and management across Headquarters, regional and country levels and careful management of proposed changes in positions and staff. Workforce decisions are guided by programmatic requirements and budgetary realities. Tracking and reporting is conducted centrally through an integrated staffing table, the development of which was made possible by the introduction of the single administrative system. The integrated staffing table is updated in real time and is an important tool to support on-going workforce planning and other human resources functions such as mobility, selection and recruitment, reassignment processes, and staff development.

19. Building on the directions set out in the Human Resources Strategy, the Secretariat has updated and modernised its human resources policy base to meet its operational needs and to support the well-being and development of staff. New and updated human resources policies have been developed in the areas of mobility, reassignment and staff in need of placement, recognition of personal status, and staff development and learning. New Secretariat policies were developed in consultation with the Human Resources Advisory Committee, a consultative body made up of staff from across the organization with representation from the Staff Association. Information on policy development was regularly communicated to all staff.

20. With regard to staff learning and development, a new People Development and Performance policy was issued to staff, outlining the Secretariat's approach to building core and managerial competencies and strengthening staff functional skills. As part of the larger effort to reduce operating costs, the delivery of corporate learning offerings are provided increasingly through self-paced e-learning courses that are made available through the UNAIDS Intranet and an e-learning portal has been launched containing some 40 courses with emphasis on topics such as managing meetings and communications skills. A range of staff learning resources was developed or updated, including e-learning orientation modules for new staff, a mandatory module on prevention of harassment, and e-learning on staff safety and security.

21. Staff selection and recruitment in the Secretariat is based on principles and procedures to ensure a fair, transparent and effective selection process, including: classification of positions in accordance with ICSC standards and applicable staff regulations, rules and policies; selection based on pre-approved minimum qualifications and requirements and

defined evaluation criteria; inclusion of UNAIDS competency framework's competencies in job profiles and assessment during the selection process; assessments carried out through written tests, interviews, and reference checks, with reasons for selecting or rejecting candidates documented; the engagement of the Mobility and Reassignment Committee (MRC), a representative body including UNAIDS senior management and Staff Association representatives, which verifies and ensures that selection decisions for international professional positions and reassignment processes for all staff are transparent and free of bias or discrimination and that all applicable rules and procedures have been followed; documentation of all recruitment processes, with applications processed by an online e-recruitment system that manages vacancy announcements, applications, pre-screening of applicants based on approved evaluation criteria and generates status reports.

22. Career transition support has been provided to staff across the Secretariat, including the issuance of a resource guide on career transition that was complemented by a series of skills building workshops and individual career coaching sessions for staff members undergoing career change. For staff members taking on new roles through the mobility exercise, a set of learning resources was produced and made available covering the Secretariat's main programmatic functions. Additionally, a range of individual job-related training activities was supported, covering areas such as management, operations, and monitoring and evaluation.
23. To further strengthen the Secretariat's culture of performance and results, work has begun on a new system to integrate performance management and delivery of learning resources. On the performance management side, the new approach will add feedback and evaluation of the core and managerial competencies that the staff member is required to demonstrate. It will also link each staff member's performance objectives with the higher-level strategic objectives of the Secretariat. On the learning management side, the tool will automate requests for learning and organize mandatory and suggested learning activities by function, allowing groups of staff, such as new hires, to access required learning within the required timeframe. The system will also allow centralized and real time reporting of all performance and learning data, for follow up by the Human Resources Department and management.
24. The Human Resources Strategy calls for increased attention to the empowerment of women staff and gender balance in the UNAIDS workforce. UNAIDS ranks among the better performing UN organisations with regard to gender parity in International Professional positions and overall gender parity of staff. The challenge ahead is to increase the number of women in international professional positions at P5 level and above and to further develop opportunities for women at all levels. Building on the UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP), staff were surveyed on gender issues in UNAIDS, and the survey results were instrumental in developing the UNAIDS Secretariat Gender Action Plan. The Plan was launched on International Women's Day 2013 (8 March), and includes a set of recommended actions related to areas such as leadership and accountability, recruitment, and work-life balance, with the aim of achieving improved gender balance and empowering female staff.
25. The Secretariat continues to lead two innovative system-wide initiatives to support staff members and families, UN Plus and UN Cares. UN Plus, the UN System HIV Positive Staff Group, advocates issues that are of concern to UN staff members living with HIV across the UN system, such as stigma and discrimination and access to care and support. UN Plus has recently strengthened its activities in the field, including the establishment of new UN Plus country chapters and "Friends of UN Plus", who provide

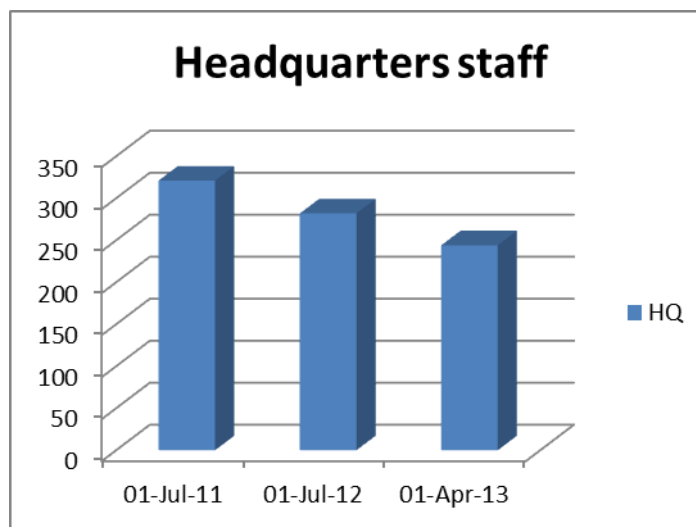
advocacy and peer-support for staff living with HIV at the country level. The Secretariat also provides leadership and support for the work of UN Cares, a programme designed to reduce the impact of HIV throughout the UN workplace. UN Cares has continued to advance its support to staff across the UN system, with a new e-course covering the basics of HIV prevention, treatment and care, as well as UN policies on HIV in the workplace. The Secretary-General awarded UN Cares a UN21 Award. The first UN Cares Awards were presented in 2012 to recognize excellence in the work of UN Cares teams in countries.

26. Staff Safety and Security remains a top priority for the Secretariat, with a focus on reinforcing the capacity of field offices and staff to plan, manage and implement security requirements. Emergency preparedness for countries was strengthened through the deployment of emergency communication kits in six Regional Support Teams. Special assistance was provided to UNAIDS staff in the Central African Republic, Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan and Thailand. Security awareness has been promoted both at Headquarters and in the field through e-learning courses on risk management for senior managers, and by incorporating gender-related needs in security programmes and initiating the development of a security awareness training programme for female staff. Steps are being taken to assess compliance with occupational health and safety standards and best practices in UNAIDS offices worldwide, including in the areas of fire precautions and emergency evacuation, first aid, availability of staff welfare and safety information, workplace risks and hazards, asbestos and harmful substances, seismic assessments, and applicable national occupational health and safety standards. UNAIDS is fully engaged with UN common system security initiatives including compliance with Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS).
27. UNAIDS continues to play an active role in UN System reform initiatives. As vice-chair of the CEB High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM), and convenor of the HLCM Working Group on Harmonization of Business Practices and the UNDG Working Group on Resident Coordinator System Issues, the Secretariat contributes to common system policy development and implementation, including with respect to the Delivering as One agenda. In the area of human resources management, the Secretariat also participates in the HLCM HR Network and its working groups, the Inter-agency Advisory Panel on Resident Coordinator selection, and the Task Team on UN Country Team Performance Appraisal.
28. Across all areas of the Human Resources Strategy, a close partnership between UNAIDS management and the Staff Association (USSA) has remained essential. Collaboration with representatives of the USSA has ensured that human resources policies and management initiatives are informed by and take into account the interests of both the staff and the organization. The USSA is a formal part of UNAIDS advisory bodies, including the Human Resources Advisory Committee, and the Mobility and Reassignment Committee. Senior management regularly consults with the USSA, including through regular monthly meetings between the Deputy Executive Director, Management and Governance and the USSA Executive Committee. Joint staff-management initiatives are also undertaken as needed, such as the joint Staff Health Insurance Task Force and a jointly convened half-day staff-management dialogue on promoting staff health and wellness.

WORKFORCE PROFILE AS OF 1 APRIL 2013

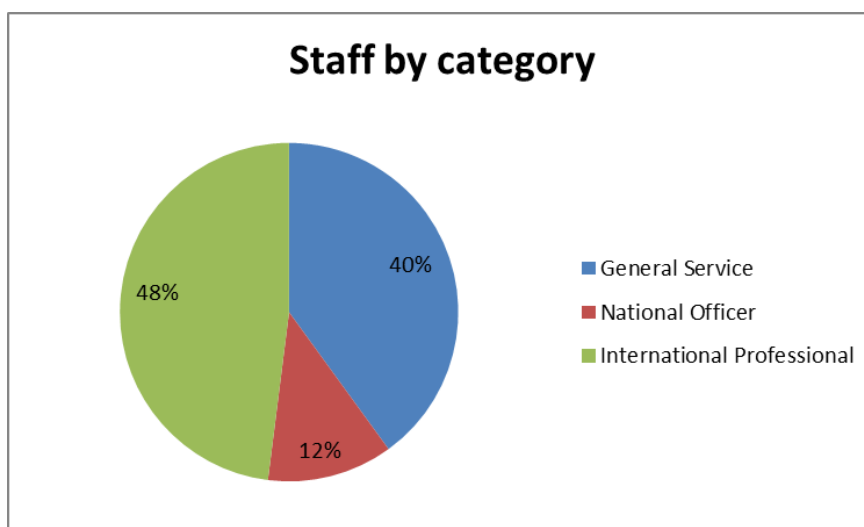
29. At the start of the functional review in July 2011, the Secretariat had 904 staff and 973 positions. As of 1 April 2013, the Secretariat had a total of 819 staff members holding fixed-term or temporary appointments - 244 at headquarters, 553 in regional and country offices and 22 in liaison offices. The staffing trend since 2011 clearly shows a steady reduction in Headquarters numbers, while staffing capacity in the field has been maintained and strengthened through re-profiling of positions and strategic allocation of human resources, including to high impact countries (Figure 1).

Figure 1



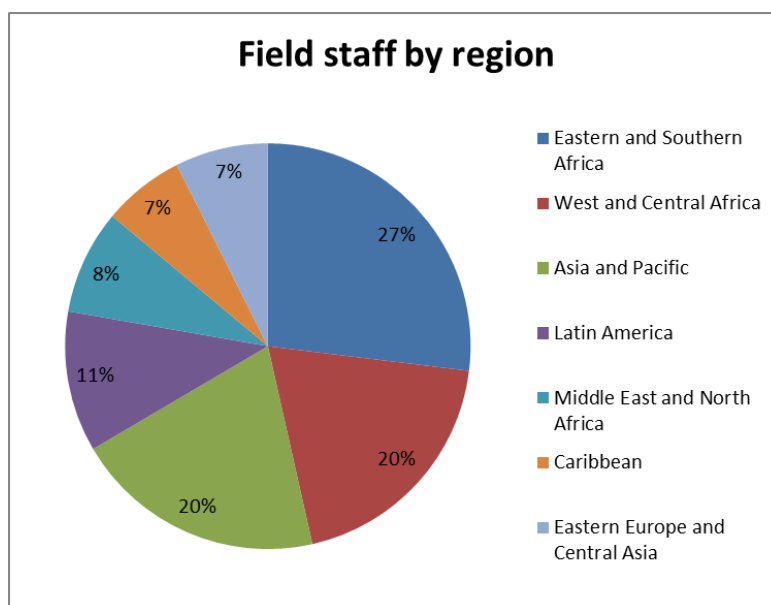
30. In terms of categories of staff, the Secretariat has an almost equal balance between internationally and locally recruited staff. As of 1 April 2013, 48% of staff were in the International Professional category, while 12% were National Officers and 40% were General Service staff (Figure 2).

Figure 2



31. With regard to contract type, as of 1 April 2013, 767 staff were on fixed-term appointments, while 46 were on temporary appointments. An important objective of the organizational realignment is the employment of temporary staff for genuinely time-limited functions, such as to carry out projects of limited duration. Consistent with its operational needs to adapt to a changing epidemic and dynamic environment, the Secretariat does not offer indefinite or “continuous” appointments.
32. While the Secretariat workforce has a presence across seven regions, almost 50% of field staff - both international and national - work at the epicentre of the epidemic in either Eastern and Southern Africa (27%) and West and Central Africa (20%), followed by 20% in Asia-Pacific (Figure 3).

Figure 3



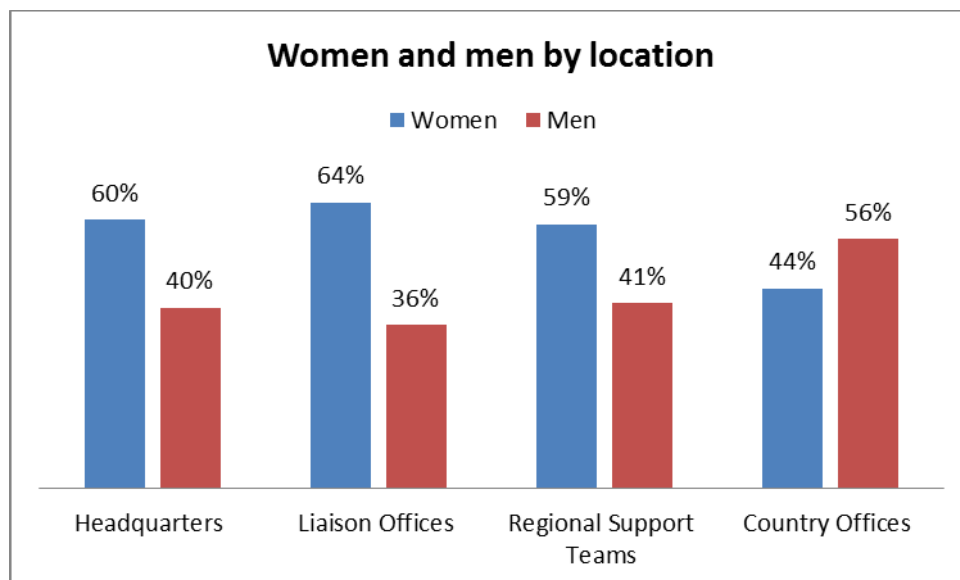
33. In terms of national origin, UNAIDS International Professional staff come from a total of 99 countries across all geographic regions (Figure 4).

Figure 4



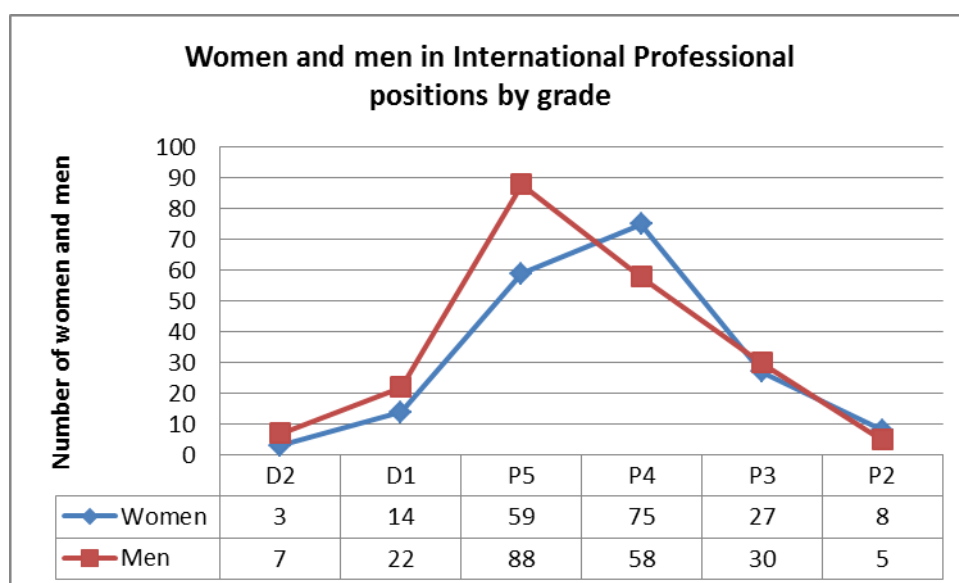
34. UNAIDS continues to maintain overall gender balance, with 52% of all positions held by women as of April 2013. At Headquarters, 60% of all staff were women, and in Regional Support Teams (RSTs) the proportion of women was 59%. Women represent 44% of staff in country offices. (Figure 5).

Figure 5



35. While the Secretariat has overall gender parity in its workforce as a whole, the issue of under-representation of women in the higher international professional grades, as well as in management roles, needs to be and is being, addressed. Women hold 45% of positions at International Professional level. At the level of P5 and above, the Secretariat currently has 76 women out of a total of 193 staff, or 39% female representation at these senior levels (Figure 6).

Figure 6



36. With regard to the age distribution of the UNAIDS workforce, the average age is 46. As a knowledge organization, the Secretariat requires experienced, high-level professionals who can independently deliver technical and management results and draw upon well-developed professional networks. At the same time the Secretariat is aiming to increase the representation of younger people in the workforce. Currently staff aged between 20 and 39 constitute 28% (229 staff) of the overall workforce. Efforts are underway to increase this proportion through reprofiling of some positions and encouraging applications from younger people. Between 2013 and 2015 some 35 retirements are anticipated, providing opportunities for succession planning and the development of a new generation of professionals for future leadership positions.
37. In 2012, the UNAIDS Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Programme provided 16 young professionals with hands-on experience in international health and development. The JPOs included 11 women and 5 men from 10 different nationalities, sponsored by 7 countries. The Secretariat's internship programme engaged 63 interns from 35 countries who were looking to develop work experience in the field of HIV and international organizations. Half of all interns were hosted in UNAIDS country offices.

PRIORITIES FOR 2013 AND BEYOND

38. Important progress has been achieved in implementing the UNAIDS Secretariat Human Resources Strategy and the organizational realignment. These efforts will continue in 2013 and beyond, with particular emphasis on the following challenges:
- Continuing implementation of the organizational realignment, taking into account experience to date;
 - Ensuring smooth transition for reconfigured offices, including career transition support to staff;
 - Strengthening accountability for staff performance, through the launch of the new integrated Performance and Learning Management system, as well as by developing innovative learning opportunities across the range of relevant functions and, to enhance management capacities and skills;
 - Increasing the representation of women at the more senior levels of the organization through implementation of the Gender Action Plan;
 - Continuing to identify and create opportunities for career development for younger professional staff and staff in the General Service category;
 - Further strengthening and refinement of human resources policies, including in areas such as recruitment, flexible working arrangements, performance management and workforce planning;
 - Continuing support to staff in volatile security environments, including through business continuity planning in the context of emergencies;
 - Further updating of the human resources management business model, including work processes, through increased use of self-service modules of the Enterprise Resources Planning (ERP), closer collaboration with the WHO Global Service Centre, and strengthened support to field operations, including to line managers.
39. Going forward, the Secretariat will continue to focus efforts on the implementation of the Human Resources Strategy and consolidation of the realignment. With clear progress made in strengthening our field presence, streamlining Headquarters, and re-profiling key functions across the organization, attention will remain focused on ensuring the workforce is equipped and deployed for the successful delivery of results at global, regional and country levels.

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