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DIVISION OF
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Evaluation Office

Division of Internal
Oversight Services

Evaluation of
the UNESCO
Human Resources
Management Strategy
2017-2022

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Commissioning office:

UNESCO Division of Internal Oversight Services (IOS), Evaluation Office

Authors:

Jock Baker, Team Leader, Evaluation Consultant

Uma Narayanan, Team Member, Evaluation Consultant

Syreen Forest, UNESCO Evaluation Office, Consultant (data visuals and graphs)

Evaluation reference group members:

Mr. Charaf Ahmimed, Senior Advisor, Office of the Director-General

Ms. Adélaïde Barbier, Acting Director, Human Resources Management Department,
World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

Mr. Emanuele Dominici, Ethics Officer, Ethics Office

Ms. Mirka Dreger, Ethics Advisor, Ethics Office

Ms. Otilia Gisca, Head of Policy Coordination, Strategic Support Section,
Bureau of Human Resources Management

Ms. Annick Grisar, Chief of Section, Recruitment and Staffing Section,
Bureau of Human Resources Management

Ms. Katja Konkola, Chief, Human Resources Officer, Executive Office, Education Sector

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Abstract and Acknowledgements

Abstract

At its 214th session, the UNESCO Executive Board requested the IOS Evaluation Office to undertake an evaluation of the Human Resources Management (HRM) Strategy 2017-2022 intended for the Organization to fulfil its accountability commitments and to capture relevant learnings to inform the HRM Strategy 2023-2027. The evaluation explored and analysed the relevance, coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of the HRM Strategy, 2017-2022. It concluded that the HRM Strategy was relevant for the Organization and contributed to fulfilling UNESCO's mandate and objectives despite a low level of awareness of the Strategy from UNESCO staff and affiliate workforce members and an increasing number of personnel on non-staff contracts, which are not covered by the Strategy. The HRM Strategy was found to be coherent with UNESCO internal policies as well as with UN and other external frameworks. In terms of effectiveness, the Bureau of HRM set in motion several initiatives as part of the HRM Strategy whose progress varied. Elements such as the competency framework, learning and development, ethics/standards of conduct, Managed Mobility, and gender parity were deemed to have registered the most progress between 2017 and 2022. On the other hand, some elements of the HRM Strategy, such as staff well-being, workforce planning, culture of transparency/accountability, the internal justice system and recruitment and performance management, were perceived less favourably. These conclusions can be explained by underlying factors limiting the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation of the HRM Strategy, which includes the centralised nature of the Bureau of HRM, HRM personnel being overburdened with administrative procedures and an Organization-wide perception that the Bureau of HRM was solely responsible for the implementation of the Strategy. As such, the evaluation makes eight recommendations aimed at improving the conception and implementation of the future HRM Strategy for 2023-2027.

Acknowledgements

The IOS Evaluation Office would like to acknowledge and thank all who participated in and contributed to the evaluation. The evaluation was managed by Ms. Claudia Iburgüen, Head of the Evaluation Office, and Ms. Syreen Forest, Consultant at the Evaluation Office. The external evaluation team was composed of Mr. Jock Baker and Ms. Uma Narayanan.

The IOS Evaluation Office was responsible for the conduct and the overall quality assurance of the evaluation process and deliverables. The evaluation team would like to thank the members of the Evaluation Reference Group for accompanying the evaluation team and providing invaluable guidance and inputs. Particular thanks are also due to UNESCO personnel and personnel at peer agencies for their participation in the evaluation process, notably through interviews and during the validation workshop, and for their valuable feedback which contributed to issuing quality findings and conclusions and useful recommendations.

Bernardin Assiene
Director, IOS

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADG	Assistant Director-General
AO	Finance and Administrative Officer
DG	Director-General
EQ	Evaluation Question
FO	Field Office
HQ	Headquarters
HR	Human resources
HRM	Bureau of Human Resources Management
IICBA	International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa
IOS	Division of Internal Oversight Services
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MTS	Medium-Term Strategy
SC	Service contract
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNS	United Nations System
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization

Executive Summary

1. At its 214th session, the Executive Board requested the Evaluation Office at the Division of Internal Oversight Services (IOS) to undertake an evaluation of the Human Resources Management (HRM) Strategy 2017-2022 to feed into the development of the new Strategy for 2023-2027.¹
2. The HRM Strategy 2017-2022 was grounded in UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) for 2014-2021 and had two overall objectives: 1) strengthening of staff capabilities to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and 2) the creation of an enabling and engaging work environment.
3. The HRM Strategy was subjected to different external influences during its implementation. Most notably, the COVID-19 pandemic forced UNESCO and other organizations to rapidly develop new policies and guidelines to support tele-working and caused a seismic shift in the way global organizations operate.

Evaluation Purpose and Scope

4. The purpose of this evaluation was to enable UNESCO to both fulfil its accountability commitments to its Member States and other relevant stakeholders by providing an independent assessment of progress in implementing the HRM Strategy 2017-2022 and to capture relevant learning to inform the next HRM Strategy 2023-2027 as it is being developed and implemented. The evaluation examined the full period of the HRM Strategy (2017-2022) and was global in scope covering virtually all levels and categories of UNESCO personnel.

Methodology

5. The evaluation was divided into three phases: 1) inception, 2) data collection and 3) analysis/reporting. Data collection was done through a desk review, key informant

¹ 214 EX/Decision 5.III.A

interviews and online surveys for UNESCO personnel. The evaluation was carried out remotely, and the team interviewed a total of 36 UNESCO staff and non-staff members and 3 senior human resources (HR) staff from peer United Nations (UN) Agencies. A total of 727 UNESCO staff and affiliate workforce (also called “non-staff”) responded to the survey including 42 members from UNESCO's Bureau of HRM. Four evaluation questions (EQ) relating to Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness and Efficiency were developed based on the questions in the terms of reference (TOR) and subsequent consultations with UNESCO that were used as a point of reference for the evaluation matrix, interview guides, the surveys and finally the analysis of data collected.

Summary of Findings

Key findings based on each of the four key evaluation questions (EQ).

EQ1. How appropriate and relevant was the HRM Strategy to enable UNESCO to fulfil its organizational mandate?

6. **A minority of UNESCO personnel were aware of the HRM Strategy.** Only 40% of non-HRM respondents to the survey were aware of the existence of the HRM Strategy. Within the bureau of HRM itself, 25% of respondents said they were not aware of the Strategy. Of respondents who were aware of the HRM Strategy, just over half (57%) considered that it was relevant to UNESCO's mandate. This low level of awareness coupled with a good portion of the UNESCO workforce questioning its relevance to the mandate may be indicative of a low level of ownership of the Strategy from personnel.
7. **The HRM Strategy 2017-2022 only covered staff with regular contracts.** More than half of UNESCO's workforce, however, has other types of contracts which meant that the HRM Strategy was not covering a large segment of the workforce.

EQ2. To what extent was the HRM Strategy coherent?

8. The HRM Strategy was aligned with UNESCO's MTS 2014 – 2021 (37 C/4) which reaffirmed that UNESCO requires a skilled and motivated dedicated workforce of the highest competency and integrity. The HRM Strategy was also aligned with the MTS strategic objectives, which includes identifying critical positions and competencies needed to achieve these objectives and developing recruitment, training, and talent management programmes to support the Organization's workforce.
9. **Several policies and initiatives were developed to support the HRM strategy.** During the period, HRM concluded several key policies and initiatives to support the HRM Strategy, including the Managed Mobility Exercise, the Competency Framework, the prioritisation of Learning and Development and the development of a strategic framework for human resource (HR) partnerships. An extensive range of HR procedures and tools were also developed including updating policies and guidance for "new ways and practices of working" in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. **The policies that were developed/updated were aligned with the HRM Strategy, but the implementation of policies was inconsistent,** and it was not always clear how policies and related initiatives were prioritised.
10. **The HRM Strategy was aligned with United Nations (UN) norms and standards and participated in joint reviews to help ensure coherence.** The HRM Strategy 2017–2022 made specific reference to UN standards. UNESCO regularly participated in the UN's HR Network meetings to share learning and agree on common approaches for salaries, staff allowances and staff well-being which helped to ensure that UNESCO's standards and approaches were consistent with the broader UN. The Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) of the UN periodically carried out reviews that compared HR policies and implementation status between agencies and these reviews concluded that UNESCO's proactive follow up helped the Organization to benefit from peer learning while ensuring they were aligned with the UN system.

EQ3. How effectively has the HRM Strategy been implemented across UNESCO?

11. **The initiatives set in motion** during the HRM Strategy 2017-2022 included development and implementation of UNESCO's competency framework, recruitment, mobility, learning and development, geographically diverse workforce, gender parity and classification and human resources partnership.
12. **The rate that different elements of the HRM Strategy progressed varied.** Survey respondents and staff and non-staff members interviewed judged that the most progress had been made with gender parity, the competency framework, learning, ethics/standards of conduct, and managed mobility. Conversely, the least progress was observed with staff well-being, workforce planning, classification, culture of transparency/accountability, the internal justice system, recruitment, and performance management. Different underlying factors influenced the relative success of each initiative although a common theme for underperforming initiatives was the need to strengthen transparency and accountability. The increasingly higher percentage of "non-staff" remained a challenge for UNESCO during workforce planning.
13. **Despite a limited and dedicated training and development budget, learning and development efforts showed progress,** especially in terms of the core and managerial competencies. For example, there was a relatively wide range of online trainings, briefings, and information sessions on bespoke and system-wide related core competencies available for staff and non-staff. In addition, national staff had the opportunity to go on short assignments.
14. **Staff surveys and evidence of follow-up on feedback have sent positive messages to personnel,** especially in Field Offices. IOS has carried out a series of audits, reviews, and evaluations on different elements of the HRM Strategy to support accountability and learning. These initiatives have all had a strong focus on learning and continuous improvement which has provided an opportunity for the Bureau of HRM to measure progress and benefit from expert advice on how to improve in specific areas.

EQ4. To what extent was the implementation of the HRM Strategy efficient?

15. **Initiatives undertaken during the implementation period to improve efficiency** have included streamlining the internal justice system, updating the MyTalent Performance Management tool to make it more user-friendly and the launch of a fully integrated e-recruitment platform. Feedback from staff was that the tool and platform were helpful, but that the internal justice system needed more work. For example, interviewees noted that the new internal justice system had increased inequities since staff members could no longer be represented by counsel in tribunals whereas management could rely on legal advice. Moreover, the new policy did not adequately consider the option of amicable resolution.
16. **Staff at the Bureau of HRM have been overburdened with administrative and bureaucratic processes**, including spending a significant amount of time preparing detailed reports for twice-yearly meetings of the UNESCO Executive Board. One of the effects of this was that HRM services had insufficient outreach to Field Offices notably to support field-based Finance and Administrative Officers who were selected for their backgrounds in budgeting and finance and lacked HR expertise.

Conclusions

This section provides summarised versions of conclusions which are linked to a corresponding recommendation. The full versions of conclusions and recommendations can be seen at the end of this report.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

The HRM strategy 2017-2022 was relevant to fulfilling UNESCO's mandate and mission. While some challenges arose during implementation, substantial learning has been generated that can be used for the next HRM strategy 2023-2027.

- C1.** Links between the two objectives of the HRM Strategy were tenuous.
- C2.** Diversity has been primarily driven by numbers, which has increased the number of nationalities represented in UNESCO but has also contributed to certain disincentives and delays in HR processes.
- C3.** The structure and functioning of the Bureau of HRM made it difficult to provide the necessary agility, efficiency and effectiveness to meet expectations of the UNESCO workforce.
- C4.** The HRM Strategy has built up a robust monitoring and evaluation system, but accountability is lacking, and key performance indicators (KPI) did not always incentivise strategic practice.
- C5.** Policies have been rolled out to support the HRM Strategy, but implementation of policies has at times fallen behind.
- C6.** The HRM Strategy could have benefited from more user-friendly communication and a robust communication strategy.
- C7.** More than half of the workforce is not covered by the HRM Strategy but are often key in delivering the work programme.
- C8.** There was a need for short-term secondments and support missions by UNESCO personnel to provide temporary support to field offices, which would at the same time support capacity development of deployed staff. Financial and budgetary processes and lack of clear protocols were often an obstacle to such deployments.

Summary of Recommendations

A summary list of the recommendations targeted at the Bureau of HRM and UNESCO senior management is below. The complete version of these recommendations is at the end of this report.

- Rec 1.** Strengthen the strategic linkage between the HRM strategy and UNESCO's Mid-Term Strategic Objectives.
- Rec 2.** Treat diversity and inclusion more holistically with the aim of making people proud of how they perform in their jobs.
- Rec 3.** Optimise the HRM structure and streamline functions to be able to support an increasingly decentralised and agile UNESCO workforce.
- Rec 4.** Improve the monitoring and reporting of the HRM Strategy.
- Rec 5.** Focus on improving implementation and, in some cases, the design of specific policies during the next HRM Strategy.
- Rec 6.** Improve communication capacity in the Bureau of HRM.
- Rec 7.** Integrate personnel with "other" contract modalities ("non-staff") as an integral part of the new HRM Strategy.
- Rec 8.** Adapt budget and financial processes and relevant protocols to be fit-for-purpose for facilitating short term secondments and support missions.

Management Response

Overall Management Response

The Management welcomes the report contained in document 216 EX/13 presented by the Division of Internal Oversight Services (IOS), the key findings and recommendations of which are appreciated and will, to the extent possible, be reflected in the new HR Strategy for 2023-2027.

The Management would like to express its appreciation for this comprehensive evaluation and, in particular, extend its thanks to those staff and other interested stakeholders who participated in the various interviews and surveys of the evaluation. While the evaluation confirmed that moderate to substantial progress had been achieved in several areas of the HR Strategy for 2017-2022, other areas which are outlined in the recommendations below need to be further strengthened going forward in the new Strategy.

With regard to the effective implementation, estimated timing and prioritization of the recommendations, this will depend to a large extent, on the collective responsibility of all stakeholders including the support of Member States as well as the provision of adequate resources both human and financial for the successful implementation of proposed initiatives and activities, in particular corporate-wide training and development programmes, supporting the Field Network Reform, reassessing contractual modalities, capacity-building for young talents and adopting modern digital IT solutions and systems.

Recommendations	Management response
<p>Recommendation 1:</p> <p>Strengthen the strategic linkage between the HRM strategy and UNESCO's Mid-Term Strategic Objectives to reinforce organisational buy-in throughout UNESCO so that UNESCO reaches its objectives.</p> <p>Addressed to: The Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM)</p> <p>By December 2025 (this may require more time, if HRM is also going to review and update processes to allow for decentralization)</p>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>HRM will in particular focus on supporting the implementation of the Field Reform, putting in place HR support mechanisms, reviewing delegated authorities for a more decentralized decision-making approach, providing field operations with the necessary flexibility to respond to emerging challenges or crises situations, including needs for specific expertise.</p>
<p>Recommendation 2:</p> <p>Treat diversity and inclusion more holistically – make people proud of how they perform in their jobs. Consider different concepts of defining diversity beyond statistics and away from a focus on nationalities to be more holistic. Such concepts have been developed by peer agencies such as UNDP and UNICEF to measure diversity using North and South (countries belong to categories based on their economic performance). Further, a broader conceptualisation of diversity and inclusion would foster an enabling environment and a culture that supports and creates a diverse workforce, including the capabilities and competencies required to manage a diverse work force.</p> <p>Addressed to: The Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM)</p> <p>As from endorsement of Strategy through to end 2027</p>	<p>Accepted:</p> <p>Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) is one of the four pillars of the HR Strategy and will be integrated into all aspects of its implementation. While noting the continued reporting requirements on geographical distribution and gender balance in the Secretariat, the new Strategy will also focus on leveraging and fostering diversity and inclusion in other forms including persons with disabilities, minority groups, youth etc. A proper review will require investment both in funding and timing, as it will entail reviewing and updating physical and normative structures to ensure accessibility and decent working conditions for staff. Proposed related actions in the new HR Strategy also include the development of various trainings/programmes such as a more inclusive on-boarding for newcomers, trainings and awareness raising on unconscious bias, collaboration with Ethics Office in ensuring communications and trainings on ethical commitments and standard of conduct. Policies will be updated progressively with the concerned business owners to ensure DEI is embedded throughout HR and administrative processes. This also requires the involvement of organizational entities outside HRM.</p>

<p>Recommendation 3:</p> <p>Optimise the HRM structure and streamline functions to be able to support an increasingly decentralised and agile UNESCO workforce, which could entail, among others, designating HR roving officers and encouraging Programme Sectors to designate HR business partners modelled after the HR function in the Education Sector.</p> <p>Addressed to:</p> <p>The Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM)</p> <p>As from 2024 subject to availability of budget</p>	<p>Partially accepted.</p> <p>HRM is proposing the creation of an HR coordination role, specifically in support of field offices. It is expected that this officer will, inter alia, be outposted for periods of time in duty stations outside of Headquarters, to help put in place decentralized processes and to build HR expertise and capacity in various regions. This is contingent on the availability of budget.</p> <p>At the same time, it should be recognized that the functions to be undertaken by HRM are of complex nature (not only transactional), imply technical expertise in different areas of HR management and knowledge of policies, processes and procedures of the Organization (and therefore the level of the HR Officer should be at P3/4 level).</p>
<p>Recommendation 4:</p> <p>Improve the monitoring and reporting of the HRM Strategy. Monitoring and reporting systems should provide incentives for broader ownership of the HRM Strategy. Increasing the efficiency of the Bureau of HRM may include presenting to the Executive Board one annual report focusing on strategic outcomes complemented by more frequent status updates on budget and activities as well as developing HR fit-for-purpose documents targeted at specific users.</p> <p>Addressed to:</p> <p>The Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM)</p> <p>From endorsement of Strategy through to end 2027</p>	<p>Accepted: and will be presented to UNESCO governing bodies for consideration. Currently, reporting on HR Strategy is twice a year.</p> <p>With regarding to providing incentives for broader ownership, a set of commitments and clear accountabilities to be undertaken by each concerned stakeholder i.e. leaders, managers, staff and the HRM bureau, is integrated in the new HR Strategy highlighting the collective responsibility for the successful implementation of the Strategy and not solely the responsibility of HRM.</p> <p>Information sessions on the accessibility and use of the individual HR dashboards for Programme ADGs, Directors of Bureaux and Divisions, Directors/Heads of Field Offices, Executive Officers and Administrators worldwide to allow for the monitoring of progress against targets/KPI's within their Sector/Bureaux/Office will be provided by HRM on a regular basis.</p>
<p>Recommendation 5:</p> <p>Focus on improving the implementation and, in some cases, the design of specific policies during the next HRM Strategy. This includes policies related to workforce planning, recruitment, Managed Mobility, and performance management.</p> <p>Addressed to:</p> <p>The Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM)</p> <p>By December 2027</p>	<p>Accepted:</p> <p>HRM will work with the different stakeholders when evaluating and revising these policies. The managed mobility and recruitment have already been subject to recent IOS evaluations and audits in 2020 and 2021 respectively, the recommendations of which have been accepted and are being or have been implemented. The 2020 revised policy on performance management which emanated from the recommendations of an External Audit will be reviewed in the context of the implementation of the HR Strategy which will focus more on development and results rather than compliance and processes.</p> <p>With regard to workforce planning, HRM will continue to meet bi-annually with the Sectors, pending the findings and results of the ongoing audit on workforce planning carried out by IOS.</p>
<p>Recommendation 6:</p> <p>Improve communication capacity in the Bureau of HRM. This may include creating a dedicated communication capacity, including a professional communication specialist who would update and lead the implementation of a communication strategy.</p> <p>Addressed to:</p> <p>The Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM)</p> <p>As from endorsement of Strategy through to end 2027 and subject to provision of dedicated capacity</p>	<p>Partially accepted: as this recommendation would be subject to the provision of a dedicated post/capacity for communications in the HRM Bureau who would coordinate the overall communication strategy including information sessions on the HR Strategy.</p>

<p>Recommendation 7:</p> <p>Consider integrating personnel with “other” contract modalities (“non-staff”) as an integral part of the new HRM Strategy.</p> <p>Addressed to:</p> <p>The Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM)</p> <p>From 2023 through to end 2027</p>	<p>Accepted:</p> <p>while the new HR Strategy covers the entire workforce, the Management recognizes the need to reassess the intent and purpose of these contract types, adjusting and refining their terms and usage, as appropriate.</p> <p>HRM will work closely with the Sectors including PAX, ADM/ADS and BFM to review which personnel are performing long-term core functions to assess whether they have the appropriate contract type and corresponding conditions of service. For the latter, this is also contingent on available funding.</p>
<p>Recommendation 8:</p> <p>Adapt budget and financial processes and relevant protocols to be fit-for-purpose for facilitating short term secondments and support missions.</p> <p>Addressed to:</p> <p>The Bureau of Human Resources Management (HRM) in collaboration with the Bureau of Financial Management (BFM)</p> <p>By December 2025</p>	<p>Accepted: HRM will work with BFM to identify mechanisms and processes in support of short-term deployments to the Field from a budgetary and financial perspective.</p>

Introduction

17. At its 214th session in April 2022, the Executive Board requested the IOS Evaluation Office to undertake an evaluation of the Human Resources Management (HRM) Strategy, with the purpose of feeding into the development of the new Strategy for 2023-2027. In parallel, the Bureau of HRM started the process of developing a new HRM Strategy through a wide consultation process. Preliminary proposals for a new UNESCO Human Resources Management Strategy covering the period 2023-2027 were presented at the 214th session of the Executive Board² and a draft HRM Strategy at its 215th session.³

Context: HRM Strategy 2017-2022

18. The Human Resource Management (HRM) Strategy for 2017-2022 had the stated objective of supporting the organization's delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). UNESCO acknowledged, when launching the HRM Strategy, that this was an ambitious and innovative agenda requiring a well-coordinated, nimble, and flexible system able to support countries around the globe in a collaborative manner to deliver on their commitments.

19. UNESCO's first Human Resources Management Strategy was implemented from 2005 – 2010. The second Strategy (2011 – 2016), developed following a wide consultation, was approved by the General Conference in November 2011. Its implementation resulted in numerous process improvements and policies put in place. A similar process and format were adopted for the third HRM Strategy, which is the subject of this evaluation.

² These preliminary proposals were requested by the General Conference 41 C/Resolution 63 and are contained in document 214 EX/5.III.A + ADD + ADD.2.

³ The draft HRM Strategy for 2023-2027 is contained in document 215 EX/5.IV.A + ADD. + ADD.2.

20. In November 2017, the UNESCO General Conference approved the UNESCO Human Resources Management Strategy 2017-2022. The HRM Strategy was grounded in UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) for 2014-2021, which reaffirmed that the greatest resource of UNESCO is its skilled, motivated, and dedicated workforce. This workforce should be of the highest competency and integrity, geographically diverse and gender balanced, empowered to support UNESCO achieve its mission and strategic objectives.⁴

21. The first objective – *the strengthening of staff capabilities to meet the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)* – speaks to the need to attract, retain, and develop staff to support UNESCO's mandate and mid-term strategy. The second objective – *the creation of an enabling and engaging work environment* – aims to provide staff with an environment that motivates and facilitates their efforts to achieve UNESCO's goals and objectives.

22. Fourteen elements support these two objectives. Each element has specific actions and key performance indicators (KPIs) attached to them in a workplan.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Competency Framework | 8. Classification |
| 2. Workforce Planning | 9. Human Resource Partnerships |
| 3. Recruitment | 10. Culture of Transparency & Accountability |
| 4. Mobility | 11. Performance management |
| 5. Learning and Development | 12. Ethics and Standards of Conduct |
| 6. Geographically Diverse Workforce | 13. Internal Justice System |
| 7. Gender Parity at all Levels | 14. Staff Well-Being |

⁴ UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy for 2014-2021 (37 C/4) 8. Implementing an effective human resources management (page 32).

23. The fourteen elements with their associated KPIs and progress updates are contained in the implementation plan of the HRM Strategy 2017-2022, which is attached as **Annex 4**. As evidenced in the implementation plan, the responsible officers for the implementation of the different parts of the plan varied: depending on the specific element, the responsible officers were the Bureau of HRM, managers and UNESCO staff. As regards monitoring the implementation of each of these elements, the Bureau of HRM was the responsible office. HRM issued dashboards containing statistics on staff issues such as gender parity and geographical distribution and reported on the progress of the implementation plan to the Governing Bodies on a regular basis.
24. Several external contextual factors have influenced the implementation of the HRM Strategy. Notably, the COVID-19 pandemic pushed organizations, including UNESCO, to rapidly develop new policies and guidelines to support tele-working, resulting in the use of new terminologies such as ‘remote’ and ‘hybrid working model’ becoming the new normal. The pandemic caused a seismic shift in the way global organizations operate. The transition between UNESCO’s HRM strategies comes at a time when HR must play a leading role in guiding UNESCO through the transition while enhancing new competencies to increase overall effectiveness.
25. Several significant HR initiatives were developed and implemented under the current 2017-2022 HRM Strategy and the Bureau of HRM regularly reported progress to its Governing Bodies.⁵ The table below provides a chronology of UNESCO’s HRM Strategies and related policies from 2003- 2022.

⁵ UNESCO documents 205 EX/5. IV, 207 EX/5.IV.B, 209 EX/5.III.A, 211 EX/5.III.B and 212 EX/5.IV.A.

Table 1. History of HRM Strategies in UNESCO (2003 – 2022)⁶

Period	Description of Activities
Fall 2003	Reform process began and Board requested the Director-General (DG) to establish a Medium to Long Term Strategy for UNESCO staffing (Staffing Strategy).
Spring 2005	Staffing Strategy 2005 – 2010 is endorsed.
Spring 2011	Presentation of HRM Strategy 2011 – 2016. HRM Strategy included as part of UNESCO’s change management strategy.
Fall 2011	HRM Strategy 2011 – 2016 is endorsed.
2011 - 2016	Implementation of the HRM Strategy with regular progress reported to the Board.
Spring 2016	Preliminary Proposals of new HRM Strategy (2017 – 2022) presented to the Board.
Fall 2017	HRM Strategy 2017 – 2022 is endorsed.
2018	Launch of Strategic Transformation (2017 – 2020)
January 2022	Consultations for new HRM Strategy (2023 – 2027) began.
July 2022	Evaluation of HRM Strategy 2017 – 2022 (on-going).

26. UNESCO is currently refining a new HRM Strategy that will cover the period 2023-2027. The new HRM Strategy was presented as a draft to the 215th session of the Executive Board (autumn 2022), further to the decision by the 2021 General Conference (decision 41 C/Res.63). The Executive Board, at its 216th session, will review and adopt, on a provisional basis, the new HRM Strategy 2023-2027 for implementation as of January 2023 before final endorsement by the General Conference at its 42nd session in fall 2023. The new HRM Strategy will be grounded in UNESCO’s Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029 and based on three proposed strategic aims:⁷
- (i) Attract and retain talent and expertise to effectively deliver UNESCO’s mandate, including by promoting inclusion and diversity.

⁶ UNESCO documents 33 C/25 PART I-III + ADD. (PART I), 36 C/40 + ADD., 39 C/43 + ADD. and 204 EX/31.

⁷ UNESCO (2022) Follow-Up to Decisions and Resolutions Adopted by the Executive Board and the General Conference at their Previous Sessions. Part IV - Human Resources Issues. 215 EX/5.IV.A (page 6).

27. Adapt for the future by ensuring agile and flexible ways of working.
- (ii) Attain better results and impact, including by focusing on the well-being of UNESCO's workforce.

Evaluation Purpose, Scope, and Use

28. The purpose of this evaluation is to enable UNESCO to both fulfil its accountability commitments to Member States and other relevant stakeholders by providing an independent assessment of progress in implementing the HRM Strategy and to capture relevant learning to inform the HRM Strategy 2023-2027 as it is being finalised. As part of this accountability commitment, this report and related communication materials will be published in line with the UNESCO Evaluation Policy.⁸
29. This evaluation aims to respond to the evaluation questions based on the terms of reference (TOR) and adjusted during the inception period. The key questions can be found in Table 2 below and the overall evaluation questions in **Annex 9** (Evaluation Matrix).
30. The evaluation scope assessed how UNESCO has been implementing the HRM Strategy globally since its launch in 2017 until the end of 2022, which includes an overview of the implementation of the fourteen elements contained in the Strategy. This evaluation will be used to guide adjustments to the new HRM Strategy 2023-2027. The evaluation also took in consideration UNESCO's global priorities, i.e. Global Priority Gender Equality and Priority Africa. The evaluation notably assessed the evolution of gender parity across the Organization as well as to what extent issues pertaining to gender equality and inclusion and diversity (disability, personnel holding "non-staff" contracts, geographical diversity, etc.) were mainstreamed into different elements of the HRM Strategy.

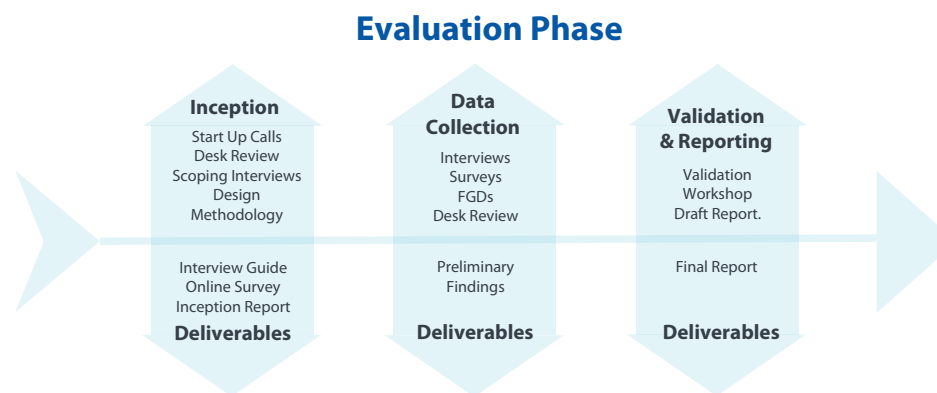
⁸ The UNESCO Evaluation Policy is available at this address: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000253907?posInSet=1&queryId=a72b5d3b-aac2-459c-919d-1b8641edd467>

31. An Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) guided the evaluation process and ensured the quality of associated deliverables. In consultation with relevant stakeholders, the UNESCO Evaluation Office established this group, composed of UNESCO staff in HRM and HR in the Education Sector, the Ethics Office, the Cabinet of the Director-General and an external HR representative from a peer UN agency. The ERG accompanied the evaluation process and provided feedback on the TOR, the inception report and the draft evaluation report.
32. The primary users of this evaluation are UNESCO Member States, UNESCO Senior Management, specifically the Sector for Administration and Management and the Bureau of Human Resources Management. Secondary users are composed of UNESCO staff and affiliate workforce as well as staff associations.

Methodology

33. The evaluation was divided into **three phases**: inception, data collection and synthesis/reporting as illustrated in **Figure 1** below.

Figure 1. Evaluation phases



34. The evaluation was conducted in line with the [UNESCO Evaluation Policy](#), [UNEG Evaluation Norms and Standards](#) and reflects the requirements outlined in the [UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation](#), as well as in the [UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation](#).

Evaluation Questions and Analytical Framework

35. This evaluation aimed to draw evidence-informed conclusions based on the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, and efficiency.⁹

Table 2. Key Questions¹⁰

Question	Theme
EQ 1	How appropriate and relevant was the HRM Strategy to enable UNESCO to fulfil its organizational mandate?
EQ 2	To what extent was the HRM Strategy coherent?
EQ 3	How effectively has the HRM Strategy been implemented across UNESCO?
EQ 4	To what extent was the implementation of the HRM Strategy efficient?

36. An evaluation matrix was developed based on these evaluation questions together with indicators and potential sources of evidence to guide data collection and subsequent analysis. This allowed the evaluation team to organise data and make it easier to build a chain of evidence from findings to conclusions to recommendations.

Data Collection and Analysis

37. The evaluation team employed a mixed-methods approach to collect relevant qualitative and quantitative data which began during the inception phase with a desk review and preliminary interviews with purposely selected key informants. The evaluation team used a diversity of data collection strands to ensure data quality and data triangulation. These data collection strands are further detailed below.

⁹ Note that questions about sustainability and impact were not explicitly explored during this evaluation since the evaluation was carried out at the end of the time period for implementation of one HRM Strategy, which would be replaced by the HRM Strategy for 2023-2027. In terms of impact, it was agreed during the inception phase that it was too early to judge impact and that, instead, learning informing the next HRM Strategy would be generated by these questions, notably the criterion of effectiveness.

¹⁰ The full set of evaluation questions and sub-questions are in the evaluation matrix. Annex 9.

38. **The literature review** included a review of UNESCO policy documents, audits, reports, reviews, evaluations, and lessons learned documents. The team also reviewed relevant documents from peer UN agencies, the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) of the UN, the Chief Executives Board for Coordination in the UN System (UNS) and the UN Secretariat. A complete list of documents reviewed by the evaluation team can be found in **Annex 5**.

39. **Key informants** were purposely selected based on a stakeholder mapping developed during the inception phase to capture perspectives from different genders and geographical regions, seniorities, and personnel holding different types of contracts.¹¹ The categories of interviewees were identified by the evaluation team based on the document review, during scoping interviews with key stakeholders and during discussions with the Bureau of HRM. Representatives of UNESCO staff associations and HRM personnel were also interviewed as were senior HR staff in three peer UN agencies: the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The evaluation team devised interview protocols to conduct interviews and ensure a coherent line of questioning across all categories of interviewees. Information related to the number, contract type and grade, and location (HQ/Field Office [FO]) of key informants is shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Key informants interviewed

	Category	Contract type / grade	Female	Male	Location
UNESCO	Staff	ADG	1	1	HQ
	Staff	D	4	3	HQ/FO
	Staff	P	12	7	HQ/FO
	Staff	G	3		HQ/FO
	Non-staff	SC and consultants	4	1	HQ/FO
Other UN agencies (WIPO, UNHCR, ITU)	Staff		2	1	
	TOTAL		26	13	39

¹¹ Consultants, D1/D2/ADG, P and G categories, Interns, and Service Contracts.

Online surveys

40. Data collection was also informed by two online surveys, one for HRM personnel and one for the remainder of UNESCO personnel holding different types of contracts, not working in HRM positions.¹² The survey questionnaires are attached as **Annex 7**.
41. A combined total of 727 staff and affiliate workforce members from UNESCO responded to both surveys: 42 were members of the Bureau of HRM (35 women, 6 men and 1 respondent having selected “other” gender) and 685 were non-HRM respondents (414 women, 263 men and 8 having selected “other” gender), which represents a combined response rate of 13.4%¹³. Data collected through the surveys helped the team in answering the EQs and provided a broad perspective regarding the achievements, challenges, and barriers related to the HRM Strategy. A description of the survey methodology, category of respondents and a synthesis of results is attached in **Annexes 7 and 8**.
42. To promote the use of evaluation results and further validate findings, conclusions, and recommendations, a validation workshop was held on the 1st of February 2023 for the Evaluation Reference Group and a selection of UNESCO personnel following circulation of a draft.

Constraints and Limitations

43. A description of the main risks along with steps taken to mitigate them are shown in Table 4.

¹² The survey for HRM staff contained some additional questions. The surveys were based on an adapted interview guide for this evaluation and, to minimise time to respond, surveys were designed so that most questions could be answered in a multiple-choice format with minimal narrative. The online survey for all personnel was devised in English, French and Spanish. The online survey for HRM personnel was devised in English and French as the Bureau of HRM is exclusively located at Headquarters.

¹³ Based on HRM statistics according to which 2,280 staff members and 3,157 affiliate workforce members were employed by UNESCO in June 2022.

Table 4. Mitigation of Risks

Risks	Mitigation approaches
Low response rates to surveys.	The survey had a communication plan to raise awareness and improve the response rate. Data gathered via the survey was triangulated with key informant interviews and document review before reaching conclusions.
Availability of Key Informants in UNESCO and other agencies.	A list of KIIs was developed with 20% more than the estimated number of KIIs to manage no-shows and non-availability of key informants. Flexible interview scheduling based on availability. Paced the interview process to accommodate holiday periods.
Longer term outcomes of the HRM Strategy not yet evident.	Immediate and medium-term outcomes were assessed based on the outcome objectives in the HRM strategy. Assessment of monitoring and learning systems for the HRM Strategy.
Potential sampling bias and survey response rates.	Triangulation using various sources when analysing data: interviews, survey results, documents, comparisons with peer UN agencies, validation workshop.

44. The compressed timeline (between July and December 2022) was a constraint to the evaluation process. There was overlap between the evaluation process and the development of the new HRM Strategy which reduced the scope for the evaluation to feed into the development of the new Strategy. In addition, stakeholders interviewed were mainly limited to UNESCO staff and affiliate workforce. The team was able to interview three senior HR managers in peer UN agencies to collect external perspectives but was not able to interview Executive Board members or partners to capture their perspectives. The team was unable to verify recruitment or promotion processes, therefore the findings in this area are largely based on perceptions of UNESCO personnel. To offset these limitations the evaluation team held regular discussions with the Bureau of HRM and reviewed independent reviews, evaluations, and audits from IOS and the JIU.

Findings

45. Findings are organized per each of four of the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria identified during the inception phase: Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness and Efficiency.

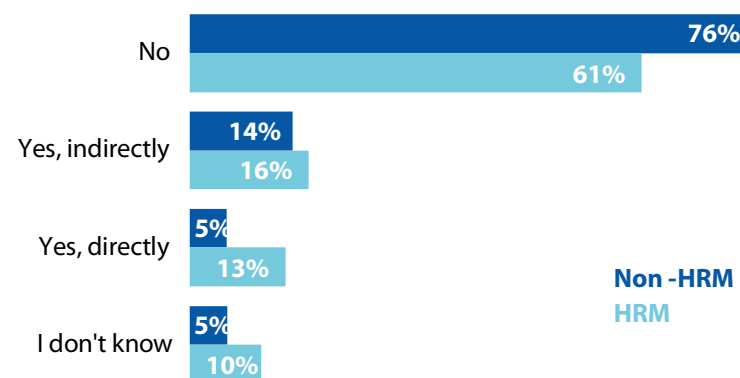
EQ 1: Relevance

EQ 1 How appropriate and relevant was the HRM Strategy to enable UNESCO to fulfil its organizational mandate?

46. This evaluation question examines the extent to which the Strategy's objectives and design respond to the organizational needs and priorities, as well as alignment with other relevant UNESCO policies and priorities. Relevance also examines if the HRM Strategy remained relevant when the context changed.
47. **The HRM Strategy defined the priorities for developing and supporting a workforce** that was flexible, mobile, diverse and gender balanced at all levels. During the implementation of the Strategy, HRM put in place various initiatives to support this priority, including the Managed Mobility Exercise, the Competency Framework, the Learning and Development prioritisation and the development of a strategic framework for HR partnerships.
48. **A minority of staff and affiliate workforce were aware of the HRM Strategy.** Only 40% of UNESCO personnel surveyed who were not working in the Bureau of HRM were aware of the existence of the HRM Strategy. Awareness was higher amongst the Bureau of HRM, even though 26% of HRM respondents were also unaware of the HRM Strategy.
49. Amongst interviewees, about half said they were familiar with the HRM strategy. Some interviewees and survey respondents who said they had been consulted when the HRM Strategy was being developed did not feel that their views had been adequately taken on board. Further, some interviewees mentioned the difficulty they experienced in accessing either soft or hard copies of the HRM Strategy.

50. There were deficiencies in communicating and disseminating the Strategy given that a majority of non-HRM respondents were unfamiliar with its existence. This finding was confirmed in the survey as only 26% of non-HRM respondents and 51% of HRM respondents stated that the HRM Strategy had been communicated effectively. Some UNESCO staff and non-staff members interviewed admitted that they had only read it when preparing for the evaluation interview. At the same time, all personnel interviewed mentioned they had participated in consultations or read about the future (2023-2027) HRM strategy.
51. Evidence from interviews indicated that there was limited consultation with different categories of personnel to inform the preparation of the HRM Strategy 2017-2022. In the same vein, most survey respondents stated they were not involved in the formulation or implementation of the HRM Strategy (**Figure 2**).¹⁴

Figure 2. Have you been involved in developing the HRM Strategy 2017-2022?¹⁵



¹⁴ Figures 2, 3, 4, 5, 8 and 11 are based on responses to both surveys. Figures 4 and 7 are solely derived from the non-HRM survey.

¹⁵ The full survey question was "Have you been involved in any aspects (formulation and/or implementation for example) of the HRM Strategy 2017-2022?". Non-HRM respondents to this question totaled n=273 (170 women, 99 men, and 4 "other"), HRM respondents n=31 (26 women, 4 men and 1 "other").

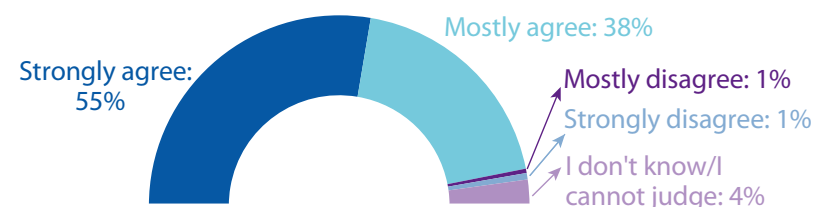
52. Partly deriving from the lack of consultations and staff involvement, most (60%) survey respondents were unsure about the value-added of the HRM Strategy to UNESCO (Figure 3). Over 40% of respondents in the Bureau of HRM were also unclear about its value-added. A small number acknowledged the value-add of improved safety and security and staff performance.

Figure 3. What is the value-added of the HRM Strategy?¹⁶



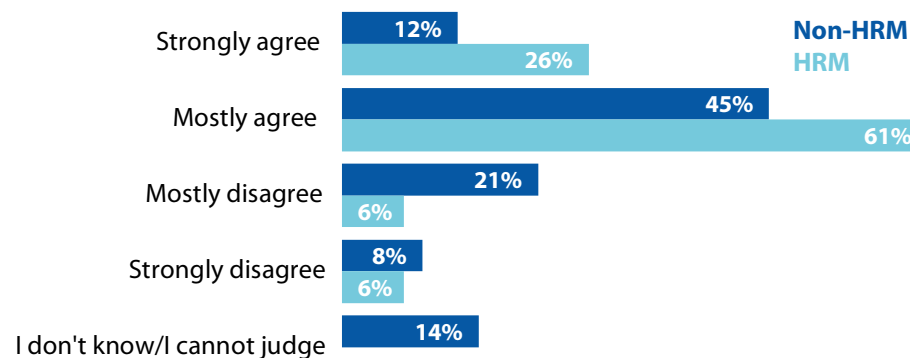
53. Despite this relative low awareness and knowledge of the existence of the Strategy, most survey respondents nevertheless did feel that their professional position contributed to fulfilling UNESCO's mandate and mission (Figure 4).

Figure 4. My position contributes to UNESCO's mandate and mission¹⁷



54. Further most survey respondents and interviewees, who were aware of the Strategy, felt that the HRM Strategy document was indeed relevant in meeting UNESCO's mandate and global needs as outlined in the 2030 Agenda (Figure 5).

Figure 5. The HRM Strategy is relevant to fulfilling UNESCO's mandate and mission¹⁸



16 The full survey question was "In your opinion, what has been the greatest value of the HRM Strategy?". Non-HRM respondents n=273 (170 women, 99 men, and 4 "other"), HRM respondents n=31 (26 women, 4 men and 1 "other").

17 The full survey question was "To what extent do you agree with the following statement: my own position contributes to fulfilling UNESCO's mandate and mission" (n=273: 170 women, 99 men, and 4 "other").

18 The full survey question was "To what extent do you agree with the following statement: the HRM Strategy (2017- 2022) is a relevant tool that contributes to fulfilling UNESCO's mandate". Non-HRM respondents n= 273 (170 women, 99 men, and 4 "other"), HRM respondents n=31 (26 women, 4 men and 1 "other").

55. Those who did not think the HRM Strategy was relevant mostly attributed their rating to the implementation of the HRM Strategy itself, focusing on issues relating to recruitment, career development and workforce planning,¹⁹ as well as staff training based on strategic objectives.
56. **Issues relating to workforce planning** were raised by all interviewees. While there is no standard definition of workforce planning²⁰ UNESCO aimed to identify critical positions and competencies needed by developing policies and programmes to support a workforce that can achieve the strategic objectives of the MTS. Different aspects related to workforce planning that were raised included recruitment, staff retention, work-life balance, diversity, gender equity, mobility, and succession planning.²¹ Managing these considerations while remaining faithful to the overall goal of workforce planning has been a common challenge within the UN system.²² An issue raised that was more specific to UNESCO was the extent to which workforce planning should choose between prioritising recruiting and retaining staff with technical skills and staff with broader management/networking skills. These aspects are further explored in the findings relating to other evaluation questions below.

19 As mentioned in the Workforce Planning Review in February 2020 (internal report), “workforce planning tools and mechanisms will be put in place to assess current capabilities, identify the priority/strategic issues for the future and the staffing risks; build strategies and implement solutions to address the talent gaps, and manage the associated risks.”

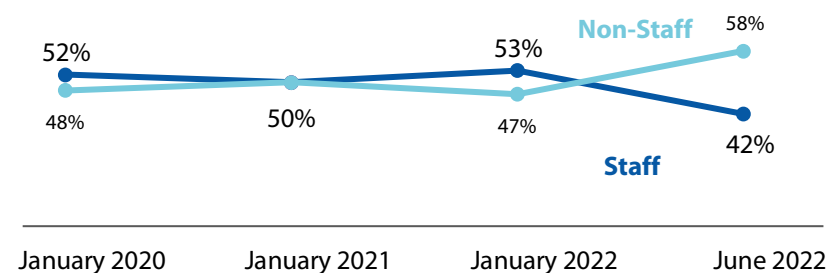
20 A JIU report defines workforce planning as: “The strategic alignment of an organization’s human capital with its business direction. It is a methodical process of analysing the current workforce; determining future workforce needs; identifying the gap between the present and the future; and implementing solutions so that the organization can accomplish its mission, goals, and objectives.” (p. 4)

21 JIU (2016) Succession Planning in the United Nations System Organizations. JIU/REP/2016/2.

22 JIU Human Resources Management <https://www.unjui.org/content/human-resources> - accessed 23 January 2023.

57. **The HRM Strategy 2017-2022 was designed for individuals holding staff contracts. This means that over half of UNESCO’s workforce fall outside of the human resource framework.** UNESCO’s current workforce is composed of 2,293 staff members from 169 nationalities and 3,145 affiliate workforce members (also called “non-staff”) as shown in **Figure 6** below.²³ Fifty-eight per cent of UNESCO personnel have non-staff contracts, i.e. personnel working for UNESCO on temporary appointments and short-term contracts (e.g. free-lance interpreters and translators) and personnel employed in a non-staff capacity such as service contractors, short-term contractors, consultants, and staff on loan. This gap, frequently cited during interviews, has implications for the relevance of the HRM Strategy for UNESCO’s personnel in its totality and for the integration and management of this large group of the workforce, key to the functioning of the Organization.

Figure 6. More than half of the workforce had non-staff contracts in 2020-2022²⁴



23 Key Data on UNESCO Staff, June 2022.

24 Source: UNESCO Staff Key Data, January 2020-June 2022.

EQ 2: Coherence

EQ 2 To what extent was the HRM Strategy coherent?

58. Coherence examines the extent to which other policies support or undermine the HRM Strategy and vice versa. This includes internal coherence within UNESCO and more broadly with UN HRM norms and standards. Coherence includes concepts of coordination, harmonisation, and the extent to which the HRM Strategy is adding value while avoiding duplication of effort.
59. The HRM strategy was designed to align with the strategic objectives of the UNESCO's 2014-2021 Medium-Term Strategy, notably identifying critical positions and competencies needed to achieve these objectives and developing recruitment, training, and talent management programmes to support the Organization's workforce. The HRM Strategy was developed after UNESCO's MTS 2014 – 2021 (37 C/4) had been finalised and this sequencing helped to ensure that **it was aligned with UNESCO's overall priorities**, which is consistent with the findings described above (e.g., Figure 3).

Related HR Policies and Frameworks and internal collaboration

60. To support the implementation of the HRM Strategy during the 2017 – 2022 period, an extensive range of HR policies, procedures and tools were developed, revised, and updated. **Table 5** below provides a list of these together with related frameworks and tools.

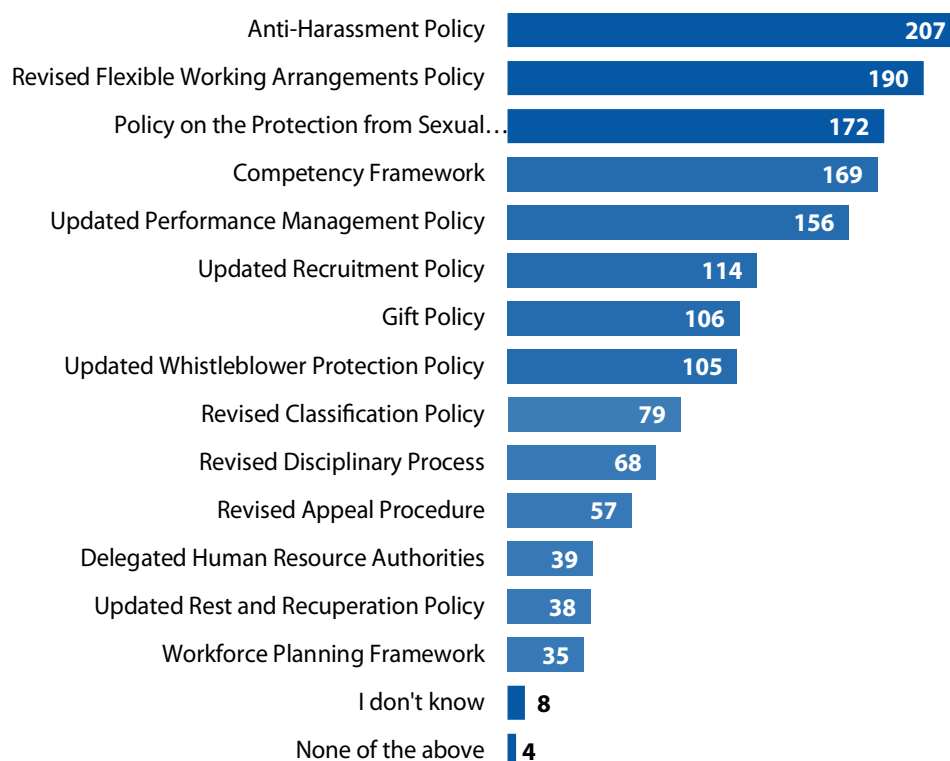
Table 5. Chronology of the development of HRM-related policies and tools

Title / Name of Frameworks	Year
Competency Framework	2017
Title / Name of Policies	Year
Recruitment Policy	2017
Updated Rest and Recuperation Policy	2019
Anti-Harassment Policy	2019
Gift Policy	2019
Remote Working Guidelines	2020
Revised Classification Policy	2020
Updated Performance Management Policy	2020
Occupational Health and Safety Policy	N/A
Policy on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)	2020
Whistle blower Protection Policy (ETH)	2021
Flexible Working Arrangements Policy	2022
Geographical Mobility Programme – Updated provisions	2022

61. **UNESCO had to adapt quickly to the COVID-19 pandemic and revise relevant policies.** Several measures were taken to support the 'new ways and practices of working' supported by policies and procedures such as adapting/developing the Remote Working Guidelines and a revised Flexible Working Arrangements Policy. Due to pandemic-related restrictions, virtual information sessions on several policies were held.
62. The three policies that survey respondents were most familiar with were: the Anti-Harassment Policy, the Flexible Working Arrangements Policy and the Policy on the Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA). The Workforce Planning Framework was the least well-known.

63. According to interviewees, awareness about the different HRM policies was either influenced by its specific relevance to the individual and/or due to targeted efforts by the Bureau of HRM and other offices to raise awareness. An example of targeted actions by the Ethics Office that resulted in high awareness was the workshop series about the Anti-Harassment policy. **Figure 7** illustrates the level of awareness of the different HR policies introduced during the period of the Strategy under review.

Figure 7. Which new/updated policies are known?²⁵



²⁵ The full survey question was "During the strategic period 2017-2022, the following frameworks, guidelines and policies were developed. Which have you heard about?" This question received 273 responses (from 170 women, 99 men, and 4 "other"). The figure illustrates the number of times the respective policies were mentioned by respondents. Respondents had the possibility of selecting several answers.

64. A review of Executive Board documents²⁶ indicated that there were **difficulties in implementing policies in a consistent manner**. During the implementation of the HRM Strategy the Bureau of HRM considered recommendations from biannual Executive Board meetings, staff surveys, peer reviews and IOS and JIU-led learning and accountability initiatives. It was not always clear to what extent the Bureau of HRM was able to prioritise and align these recommendations to optimise coherence. Different workstreams proceeded at a different pace and the extent to which policies and related initiatives were being sequenced and prioritised. Specific examples included:

- Delays in developing a workforce plan, both for Programme Sectors and overall, which raised questions about ensuring the continuous alignment between UNESCO's MTS and the HRM Strategy, notably objective 2 (the creation of an enabling and engaging work environment).
- Coherence between feedback loops of the Bureau of HRM (notably the Global Staff Surveys), feedback collected by individual Sectors and through the whistle-blower system. It is unclear whether and how the data collected through these feedback loops related to different policies is shared between different units and systems.
- Coherence between the mission statement of the MTS and HRM-led revisions of job descriptions. A third of interviewees felt that the revisions to job descriptions during the 2017-2022 period indicated that UNESCO was prioritising managerial and networking skills over technical expertise. They noted that one of UNESCO's strengths and comparative advantages resided in its specialised expertise in specific areas related to UNESCO's mandate.

65. **There were examples of good practice.** One such example was the collaboration with UNESCO's Ethics Office, which supported Objective 2 of the HRM Strategy. Although the Ethics Office is not part of the Bureau of HRM, it directly contributed to Objective 2 of the HRM Strategy focused on the creation of an enabling and engaging work environment. Since 2017, the Ethics Office has been providing a series of ethics trainings for all staff and affiliate workforce, including senior management. Interviewees acknowledged the role of ethics in providing a safe space for staff and non-staff members to raise their voices and concerns on numerous issues such as moral harassment and conflicts of interest.²⁷

²⁶ See, for example, UNESCO (2022) Follow-Up to Decisions and Resolutions Adopted by the Executive Board and the General Conference at their Previous Sessions. Part IV - Human Resources Issues. 215 EX/5.IV.A

²⁷ UNESCO Ethics Annual Reports 2017 – 2021

Alignment with relevant UN norms and standards

66. **Policies developed during the HRM Strategy 2017-2022 consistently referenced UN standards.** UNESCO HRM has been part of the HR Network of the UN system throughout the evaluation scoping period. The Network met regularly to share learning and agree on common approaches for salaries, staff allowances, staff well-being and related issues²⁸ which helped to ensure that UNESCO HRM policies and guidance were coherent with the broader UN system while at the same time benefiting from peer learning.
67. **The coherence and alignment of UNESCO policies and practices with those of other UN agencies were ensured by external oversight and coordination bodies such as the JIU.** The JIU periodically carries out reviews that compares HR policies and implementation status on themes such as change management initiatives²⁹, women's empowerment³⁰ and interagency mobility³¹ across different UN agencies and tracks implementation of recommendations. JIU reviews of UNESCO's mechanisms and work in different areas and the subsequent implementation of recommendations included in these reviews helped to ensure that UNESCO policies and practice was coherent with the broader UN system.
68. Like many of its peers, UNESCO did not integrate inter-agency mobility in its HRM Strategy. A JIU review found that inter-agency mobility contributed to talent acquisition and management, workforce planning and career development in organizations. While inter-agency mobility was not specifically excluded, UNESCO's focus on mobility was primarily internal, to develop or improve internal schemes.³² Interviewees who had been seconded to other UN agencies echoed the findings of the JIU review and spoke very positively about their experiences. On the contrary, other interviewees cited examples in which UNESCO staff had faced challenges when deployed from HQ to a field position where it was necessary to operate in an interagency context since they lacked the necessary knowledge and skills.

28 UNS (2020) Summary of Conclusions of the 40th Session of the Human Resources Network. Chief Executives Board for Coordination. CEB/2020/HLCM/HR/6. 28 February 2020.

29 UN (2019) Review of change management in United Nations system organizations. JIU/REP/2019/4.

30 UN (2019) Review of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. JIU/REP/2019/2.

31 UN (2019) Review of staff exchange and similar inter-agency mobility measures in United Nations system organizations. JIU/REP/2019/8.

32 Ibid.

EQ 3: Effectiveness

EQ 3 How effectively has the HRM Strategy been implemented across UNESCO?

69. This question looks at the extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and results, while considering the relative importance (prioritisation) of the objectives. Effectiveness also includes an analysis of differential results within the HRM Strategy and the extent to which it contributed to success and where there were gaps.

Achievement of expected results

70. Different initiatives were undertaken in the context of the HRM Strategy 2017-2022. As described in the DG's report on the Implementation of the Human Resources Management Strategy for 2017-2022,³³ initiatives carried out under the objective aimed at strengthening staff capabilities for the SDGs included the development and implementation of UNESCO's competency framework, recruitment, mobility, learning and development, geographically diverse workforce, gender parity and classification and human resources partnership.³⁴
71. Survey respondents were asked which elements of the HRM Strategy had made the most and least progress during the implementation period. The results are shown in **Figures 8 and 11** below. Amongst the non-HRM respondents, 14% were unable to make a judgement, which is consistent with the evaluation finding that there was a lack of awareness about the HRM Strategy.

³³ UNESCO (2021) Report by the Director-General on the Implementation of the Human Resources Management Strategy for 2017-2022. 41 C/47. 5 November 2021.

³⁴ Ibid.

Figure 8. HRM Strategy elements showing the most progress³⁵



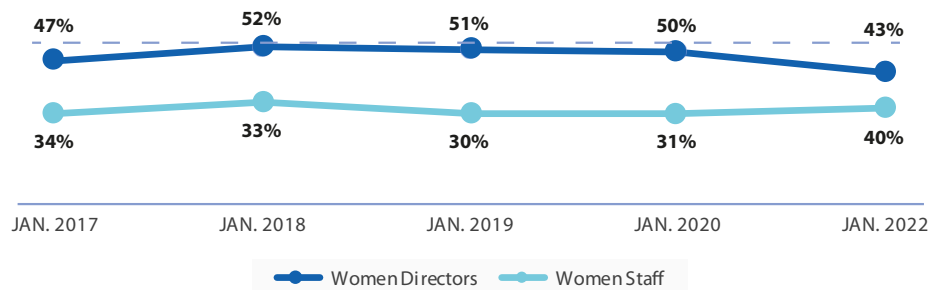
72. Components of the HRM Strategy deemed to have registered the most progress include the **competency framework, learning and ethics/standards of conduct, managed mobility, and gender parity at all levels** though there were mixed views on the success for each of these. Interviewees held similar views to those voiced in the survey. The reasons given for the overall positive ratings were as follows:

- **Competency framework:** this framework provided a useful reference for recruitment, performance management and learning and development. Interviewees who have been involved in recruitment and selection of staff have found the competency-based interview guide useful for hiring.
- **Learning:** increased options for learning for staff and non-staff, including online training. Negative comments centred on the little incentive to take advantage of learning on offer since it was rarely considered during performance evaluations.

³⁵ The full survey question was the following: "In your view, which elements of the HRM Strategy have shown reasonable progress? Select the ones that apply." Respondents could select multiple choices from 15 different answer options. Non-HRM respondents n=273 (170 women, 99 men, and 4 "other"), HRM respondents n=31 (26 women, 4 men and 1 "other").

- **Managed mobility:** survey respondents and interviewees compared the first and second mobility exercises and agreed there were improvements in the subsequent round. All survey respondents and interviewees saw the potential value-added of mobility to the Organization, both within UNESCO and for interagency exchanges with UN peers,³⁶ but noted that there was still room for improvement. Some interviewees noted the apparent ease with which staff scheduled for mobility were able to get a deferment, which was similar to findings highlighted in the 2020 IOS evaluation of the first mobility exercise.³⁷
73. **Dedicated initiatives on gender have yielded significant positive results.** As of June 2022, women represented 53% of staff in the Professional category, which is higher than the average rate of 47% across the UN,³⁸ and 42% of staff at the P-5 level. **Figure 9** below show trends for senior level women staff. Going beyond parity, gender equality was cited by all interviewees as an area where the HRM Strategy had shown significant qualitative progress, a finding that was confirmed by the IOS 2020 Evaluation of the UNESCO Global Priority Gender Equality.³⁹

Figure 9. Trends for female staff at P-5, Director and above⁴⁰



36 JIU (2019) Review of staff exchange and similar inter-agency mobility measures in United Nations system organizations.

37 IOS (2020) Evaluation of the UNESCO Managed Geographical Mobility Exercise. IOS/EVS/PI 186.

38 UNESCO (2022) Follow-Up to Decisions and Resolutions Adopted by the Executive Board and the General Conference at their Previous Sessions. Part IV Human Resources Issues. 215 EX/5.IV.C.

39 IOS (2020) From Ambition to Action: Evaluation of the UNESCO Global Priority Gender Equality. IOS/EVS/PI/191.

40 UNESCO HRM/MSC (2022) Key Data on UNESCO Staff. January 2022.

74. **Efforts to track the capabilities and experiences of staff have also shown progress. There was positive feedback from** the Education and Social and Human Sectors after the skills inventory pilot was rolled out organization-wide in 2021. Two staff members noted that this had supported their mobility journey. Further, the HR function located in the Education Sector was seen by Education staff as a good practice example of an agile “business partner” approach⁴¹ to HRM. Additional details of this approach can be seen in Case Study 3 in **Annex 1**.
75. **UNESCO personnel, notably those in Field Offices, spoke positively about the Global Staff Surveys conducted by HRM.** Both in interviews and in the survey conducted for this evaluation, UNESCO personnel spoke positively about this initiative which had high response rates (65% in 2018 and 52% in 2021).⁴² Several interviewees mentioned that these surveys were not only an invitation to express their views but also that the survey results were taken seriously by managers. The 2021 Global Staff Survey was cited as an example where experiences of employees were actively collected during COVID-19 (see the Case Study 1 in the annex for change stories).
76. An IOS audit on recruitment conducted in 2021 found **recruitment processes** to be compliant with the relevant policies and guidance, while noting that the average recruitment time exceeded the target established by the Executive Board.⁴³ Some interviewees and HRM survey respondents agreed there had been improvements in the recruitment processes, remarking on the reduction in average time to recruit at P3 and P4 levels.⁴⁴ However, recruitment was an area that received mixed reviews. This is further elaborated on below in the section covering areas for improvement.

41 HR business partnering is how HR delivers its capability in an organizational context. The original business partnering model was conceived by Dave Ulrich in the mid-1990s and though it has evolved, it has become fundamental to the way many organizations structure their HR function. The essence of business partnering is context. It is about understanding the organization’s strategy and goals, appreciating people demographics, the organizational culture, and developing people solutions that help achieve business objectives while enabling employees to flourish. This is achieved through developing meaningful relationships with key people across the organization, using data to be more evidence-based in practice and delivering portfolio of business relevant solutions that meet the evolving needs of the organization <https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/people/hr/business-partnering-factsheet#gref>

42 Global Staff Survey Results 2018 and 2021

43 IOS (2021) Audit of UNESCO Recruitment Process. 212 EX/35

44 HRM reported an improvement since April 2022 with an average of 137 days (over the last three months) for recruitment of P-1 to P-4 level although for more senior-level posts (P-5 and above level), the average timeline was higher (243 days) which was attributed to outreach efforts. UNESCO (2022) Follow-Up to Decisions and Resolutions Adopted by the Executive Board and the General Conference at their Previous Sessions. Part IV - Human Resources Issues. 215 EX/5.IV.A

77. **There was a recognition by survey respondents and interviewees that diversity had shown improvements during the period covered by the HRM Strategy.** This perception is confirmed by available data and reviews: UNESCO being one of six agencies in the UN system that developed geographical targets for recruitment, UNESCO ranked third in the UN system in terms of geographical distribution of staff in 2022.⁴⁵ Recruitment data for the period June 2021 to June 2022⁴⁶ showed a decrease in the number of under-represented countries, from 64 to 57 (33% to 29%) and an increase in the number of normally represented countries, from 68 to 73 (35% to 38%) against a target of 40%. There was a corresponding decrease in the appointment of candidates from over-represented countries to geographical and non-geographical posts (37% to 12%).
78. **Learning and Development progressed despite budget constraints.**⁴⁷ Efforts have been made to strengthen staff capabilities and teamwork through various learning and development opportunities including short term assignments for national officers. Despite a limited dedicated training and development budget, learning and development efforts showed progress, especially in terms of the core and managerial competencies.⁴⁸ Interviewees acknowledged that there was a relatively wide range of online trainings, briefings, and information sessions on bespoke and system-wide related core competencies available. One national officer interviewed who was deployed on a short-term assignment spoke positively about their experience of the deployment process and the assignment itself.
79. **Resources were also made available for staff retreats.** Other initiatives include leadership programmes such as the Senior Leadership Development Programme delivered in 2019-2020. Interviewees who participated in this exercise acknowledged the value of such training and stated that the follow-up support in the form of coaching reinforced learning gains. Feedback from interviewees and survey respondents who had participated in staff retreats partially funded by HRM was also very positive. Case studies in [Annex 1](#) describes an example in more detail.

45 Follow-up to the decisions and resolutions adopted by the Executive Board and the General Conference at their previous sessions, Part IV: Human resources issues, C. Report on the geographical distribution and gender balance of the Secretariat and on the implementation of the measures taken to redress any imbalance. 215 EX/5.IV.C + CORR. + ADD. + ADD.2

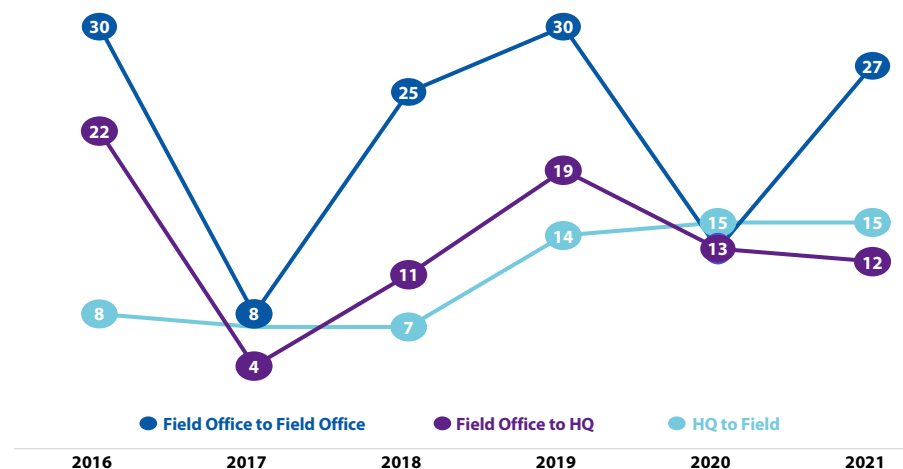
46 Ibid, p.2.

47 The budget constraints faced by UNESCO in comparison with peer agencies was highlighted in JIU's 2020 review of "Policies and platforms in support of learning: towards more coherence, coordination and convergence".

48 UNESCO (2022) Follow-Up to Decisions and Resolutions Adopted by the Executive Board and the General Conference at their Previous Sessions. Part IV - Human Resources Issues. 215 EX/5.IV.A

80. **HRM-led coaching has contributed to strengthening staff capability.** Interviewees who benefited from coaching support found the coaching sessions highly relevant. They reported an increase in confidence and empowerment. Coaching for senior managers assisted these in setting direction in their department, managing issues arising in the team and reducing their own stress level. (See case study in [Annex 1](#) for an example).
81. **Geographical mobility.** As shown in [Figure 10](#) below, most staff movement occurred between Field Offices. Interviewees who had experienced mobility or had knowledge of colleagues who had experienced mobility, confirmed that it was positive. Two staff who had moved from HQ to the field felt that the experience had helped to give them a "reality check", an opportunity to observe UNESCO's work on the ground. Three interviewees who had been seconded to other UN agencies highlighted the value of this experience in better understanding UNESCO's position in the UN system.
82. As mentioned above, most interviewees and survey respondents acknowledged improvements in the managed mobility exercise since the exercise due to adjustments based on recommendations from the 2020 IOS evaluation. One incentive provided by the second iteration of the Managed Mobility programme lies with the chance to seek a promotion by applying to a post at a higher level.

Figure 10. Number of staff moving between duty stations⁴⁹



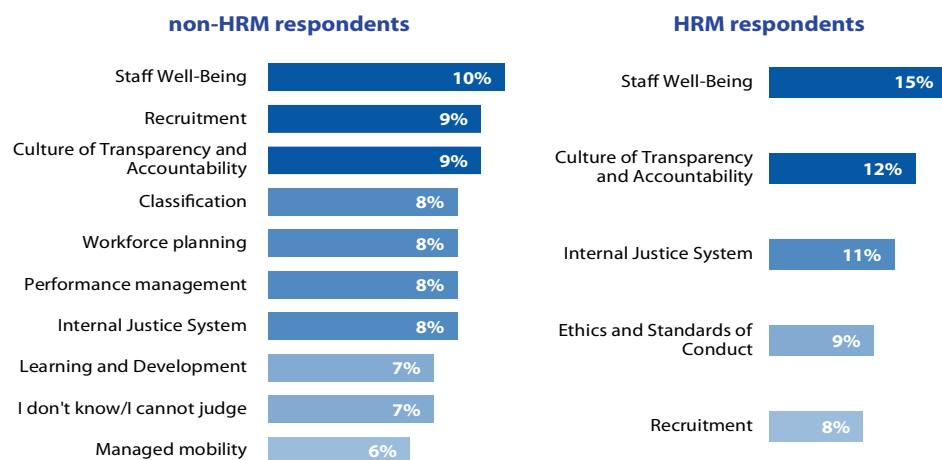
49 HRM/MS (2022) Key Data on UNESCO Staff. January 2022.

83. **Monitoring and evaluation of the HRM Strategy implementation is in place.** Different tools and processes were used to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the HRM Strategy. These included the HR Dashboard, reports to the Executive Board and General Conference,⁵⁰ as well as various evaluations, reviews and audits carried out by IOS to assess different components constituting the HRM Strategy, including the evaluations of Global Priority Gender Equality and of the first Managed Mobility Programme. However, **KPIs mainly measured the second objective of the HRM Strategy**, the creation of an enabling and engaging work environment, and there were no coherent measures of the first objective on how UNESCO's workforce was supporting the achievement of relevant SDGs in UNESCO's MTS.

Areas for improvement

84. The elements where least progress was made, according to survey respondents, were **staff well-being, workforce planning, classification, culture of transparency/accountability and the internal justice system. Recruitment and performance management** were two elements which had more negative than positive ratings.

Figure 11. HRM Strategy elements showing the least progress⁵¹



⁵⁰ In accordance with 40 C/Resolution 78 and 212 EX/Decision 5.IV.A.

⁵¹ The full survey question was the following: "In your view, which elements of the HRM Strategy have shown the least progress? Select the ones that apply." Respondents could select multiple choices from 15 different answer options. Non-HRM respondents n=273 (170 women, 99 men, and 4 "other"), HRM respondents n=31 (26 women, 4 men and 1 "other").

85. Reasons given by respondents and interviewees for their ratings are summarised below:

- **Staff well-being** was rated in the survey by both HRM and non-HRM respondents as the area which had made the least amount of progress. This was further confirmed by interviewees who cited a lack of psychological safety and a lack of recognition⁵² as the key reasons negatively influencing staff well-being. In terms of external factors, the COVID-19 pandemic was also cited as a major factor. On their part, personnel holding non-staff contracts cited concerns such as uncertainties and delays in renewals of service contracts, dissatisfaction over contract types, and the Organization's general lack of attention dedicated to non-staff personnel.
- **Workforce planning and (re) classification:** Most of the interviewees raised concerns about the lack of transparency, apparent inconsistencies with policies and insufficient feedback on both areas. The organization-wide skills assessment initiative was only initiated at the end of 2022 and hence it was too early for results.
- **Culture of transparency/accountability** was cited as an underlying issue that influenced implementation. Lack of transparency, distrust in the system and lack of feedback were some of the terms mentioned by interviewees and survey respondents. This element was thus seen by the evaluation team as an overarching theme of critical importance to the development and implementation of a future HRM Strategy.
- **The internal justice system was revised** during the period covered by the HRM Strategy since the previous system was not seen as effective or efficient by the staff.⁵³ While some interviewees and respondents who had knowledge of the new internal justice system indicated that they felt it that had been improved by streamlining, others noted that the new system had increased inequities since staff members could no longer be represented by counsel in tribunals whereas

⁵² Recognition can be defined as the assignment of personal non-monetary rewards for individual efforts and work accomplishment to recognise and reinforce the desired behaviours displayed by an employee (Brun and Dugas 2008). Many organizations recognise employees based on their performance (Frey 2007). For example, organizations can recognise outstanding performers through compliments, gratitude, private notes or emails, public awards, or publication of their achievements in company newsletters. These recognitions are sometimes symbolic and come with no corresponding financial rewards (Wang 2017) as cited in "Employee Non-financial reward and recognition, an evidence review", Scientific Summary, January 2022, CIPD

⁵³ UNESCO (2019) Report by the Director-General on the Judgments Concerning UNESCO Issued by the International Labour Organization Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT). Addendum Comments by the International Staff Association of UNESCO (ISAU). 206 EX/5.III.INF Add.

management could rely on legal advice. Another interviewee noted that the new policy did not adequately consider the option of amicable resolution.

- **Recruitment:** as mentioned above, recruitment is an area that received mixed reviews. Despite some progress, it is still seen to be underperforming. The main reason given by 30% of interviewees was a **lack of transparency during application and recruitment processes**. Some of the interviewees noted that they had applied to numerous positions in the course of their service with UNESCO and the **absence of feedback** made it difficult to improve on weak aspects of their professional profiles or better prepare for future job applications. One interviewee raised the challenges of tracking vacancy rates of project staff in multisectoral field offices, noting that there did not seem to be any mechanism to recruit staff to fill vacancies of higher priority.
- **Performance management was acknowledged to have shown some progress but was still seen as problematic overall** by survey respondents and interviewees. Interviewees mentioned that there was little incentive for managers to rate under-performers accurately, which, in turn, was detrimental in adequately rewarding good performances. A prevalent view was summed up by one key informant who described these systems as a performance “measurement” rather than “management”. Interviews with peer agencies indicated that performance management is an on-going common challenge across agencies due to the tendency to treat performance appraisal as a ‘tick the box’ exercise. Another interviewee noted that, although job descriptions for project staff include both administrative and technical supervision reporting lines, in practice the Director carrying out the performance management review is often not able to provide an appropriate mix of technical feedback, career advice and training suggestions. He noted that other peer organizations preceded the performance review by an exchange between the line manager and the technical manager to get a more balanced picture of performance.
- The process and appraisal exercise based on tools and compliances are viewed as heavy and complicated by staff. Interviewees nevertheless spoke of continuing attempts to shift the performance management process to make it more meaningful and career development oriented by focusing on performance discussions and periodic ‘check-ins’ between supervisors and staff.

- **The fact that some areas still require improvement can partly be explained by the perceived difficulties the Bureau of HRM has had with its structure and function.** While improvements have been seen in the **functioning of the Bureau of HRM** during the period covered by the HRM Strategy, many UNESCO members of personnel felt it did not meet certain key expectations, notably in the areas of recruitment, workforce planning, and career development. Reasons cited by interviewees and survey respondents included the centralized nature of the Bureau of HRM with all its personnel based at HQ, while the HR function in the field is assumed by Finance and Administrative Officers who are mainly recruited based on their financial backgrounds. Meanwhile, at HQ level, personnel in the Bureau of HRM report feeling overwhelmed due to competing demands and pressures.

86. As indicated above, all HRM interviewees expressed the view that **HRM was seen as the primary implementor of the HRM Strategy** even though it was supposed to be owned by the whole Organization. The workplan of the HRM Strategy showed several areas where responsibility lay with HRM, UNESCO staff and the managers. However, it was unclear who was leading/accountable for different areas of the HRM Strategy.
87. **As noted above, an increasingly large percentage of “non-staff” has been a major challenge in implementing the HRM Strategy.** As of June 2022, there were 42% staff and 58% non-staff personnel in UNESCO.⁵⁴ The HRM Strategy focused on UNESCO staff, which effectively excluded more than 50% of UNESCO’s workforce. All field-based interviewees and 50% of the interviewees in HQ highlighted challenges with non-staff contracts. They cited the lack of motivation, job insecurity, the absence of a platform to raise their voices and a lack of a sense of belonging within UNESCO. All respondents holding service contracts confirmed these challenges, citing specific examples such as the lack of clarity on the terms and conditions of the contract.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ UNESCO Key Staff Data, June 2022

⁵⁵ These remarks were made under the former Service Contract Policy. It is to be noted that a new policy came into effect on 1st January 2023.

88. **Orientation and induction processes were inconsistent.** Orientation and induction sessions were held in person⁵⁶ or made available on the online learning and development platform to improve the on-boarding process. Some interviewees who were part of the managed mobility exercise stated that the virtual induction and orientation process when moving to a new position was good and helpful to assume the new role. Technical orientation was also provided by HQ. However, this practice was not consistent across the board. This finding is consistent with the 2021 Global Staff Survey results in which only 41% of the respondents held a positive view of their induction training.
89. **Diversity amongst UNESCO staff is largely measured by statistics based on geographical targets.** A common perception heard during interviewees was that, while diversity was an area where UNESCO had progressed, a focus on diversity in terms of nationalities at times conflicted with merit-based recruitment and promotion. Lessons from peer agencies ([Annex 2](#)) found that, while the business case for diversity is well-established,⁵⁷ a common challenge underpinning the area of diversity and inclusion lies with defining and conceptualising these notions.
90. The example of KPIs for Workforce Planning ([Figure 12](#)) was viewed by the evaluation team as an illustrative example of combining a high-level indicator with one of another nature, more focused on numbers. The below example presents a strategic indicator focused on one measure (Sector-specific plans) with another KPI reporting on numbers, less focused at a strategic level and focused on the reduction of the number of posts vacant after retirement. This piecemeal approach to monitoring did not yield a coherent measure of performance in terms of the overall success of the HRM Strategy.
91. **Feedback loops** for biannual staff surveys mentioned above were an important component of the monitoring system for the Bureau of HRM. The series of audits, reviews and evaluations conducted by IOS on different elements of the Strategy are important, but based on interviews, the staff survey has been the tool that has been the most visible due to its participatory approach, the communication surrounding the staff survey, including evidence that the Bureau of HRM and senior management has considered the feedback. In addition, the JIU periodically conducts interagency reviews on HR-related themes. These initiatives all have a strong focus on learning and continuous improvement which have allowed the Bureau of HRM to measure progress and obtain expert advice on how to improve in specific areas.

Figure 12. Workforce planning element in the Implementation Plan of the HRM Strategy (example)⁵⁸

Objective 1. Strengthen Staff Capabilities for the Sustainable Development Goals												
Initiatives	Short Description	Performance Indicators	Time-frame						Responsible			Progress update
			2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	HRM	Staff	Managers	
2. Develop and implement Workforce Planning	<p>Ensure that HR planning is integrated into the Programme and budget planning.</p> <p>Develop workforce planning tool, to assess current capabilities, identify staffing risks and gaps on a 3- year horizon.</p> <p>Develop a Workforce plan between managers and HRM to cover recruitment, learning and development actions.</p>	<p>Workforce plan developed and implemented with each Sector.</p> <p>Reduction in number of posts vacant after retirement.</p>										

56 In-person orientation was curtailed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

57 McKinsey & Co. (2020) [Diversity wins: How inclusion matters](#). May 19, 2020 Report.

58 McKinsey & Co. (2020) [Diversity wins: How inclusion matters](#). May 19, 2020 Report.

EQ 4: Efficiency

EQ 4 To what extent was the implementation of the HRM Strategy efficient?

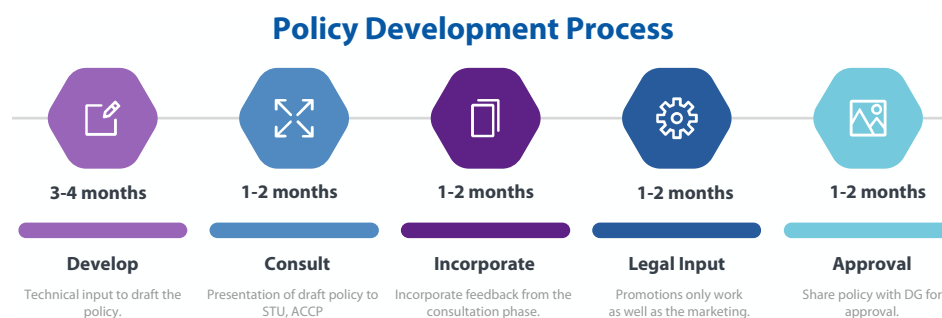
92. This question looks at the extent to which the HRM Strategy delivered results in an economic and timely way. “Economic” is used here as the conversion of inputs (funds, expertise, capacity, time, etc.) into results, in the most cost-efficient way possible, as compared to feasible alternatives in the context. Efficiency also looks at whether the HRM Strategy was able to deliver in a timely way. Efficiency provides an opportunity to check whether resourcing made available to the HRM Strategy can be justified by its results.
93. **The Bureau of HRM has reported different initiatives to improve efficiency.**⁵⁹ However, HRM plans to enhance HR systems and solutions (including digital business solutions) to improve the efficiency of HR processes have been limited due to lack of funds. Significant initiatives undertaken during the implementation period have included:
- Streamlining the **internal justice system** with the development and implementation of a revised Disciplinary procedure and the revised Statutes of the Appeals Board.
 - Revamping the **MyTalent Performance Management tool** to make it more user-friendly for staff and managers.
 - Launching a fully **integrated e-recruitment platform** (“SuccessFactors”) for staff recruitments designed to provide an improved experience in managing applications and selection decisions.
94. Interviewees felt that the **tools and platform** generally helped with efficiency while the streamlined internal justice system received mixed reviews as indicated above in the section dedicated to “areas for improvement” under “Effectiveness”.
95. **Coaching and training** staff was mentioned by three interviewees as having helped them be more efficient and effective when recruiting staff or leading performance management sessions.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

Factors limiting the efficiency of the HRM Strategy

96. **Policy development and implementation.** While there has been an extensive effort in developing and updating policies, procedures and tools, the same level of effort was not necessarily matched by implementation, such as in workforce planning, as mentioned above. Reasons cited by interviewees included the time taken to develop a policy (see **Figure 13** below depicting the HR policy development timeframe of 8 to 12 months), inadequate resources to monitor policy implementation and inadequate resources to communicate to personnel on policies. Although the evaluation team judged that this was a reasonable amount of time for policy development given the need to include stakeholder consultations, the sequencing between related policies and lack of resources to communicate/disseminate introduced inefficiencies.

Figure 13. Typical HR Policy Development Process⁶⁰



97. Several interviewees claimed that **HR staff have not been adequately represented during the recruitment and selection process.** HR staff were expected to participate in panels to ensure that processes comply with HR norms and standards. Seven interviewees indicated that the Bureau of HRM has tended to be represented by junior staff or not be present at all. Six respondents to the survey also mentioned similar problems. While acknowledging the Bureau of HRM had limited funds available, many interviewees felt that they were not doing enough to fill this critical role. This was acknowledged by staff at the Bureau of HRM while noting that HRM did not have the capacity and resources to be represented in all interview panels, especially at a senior level.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Based on an interview with a senior staff member at the Bureau of HRM.

⁶¹ It should be noted that the presence of an HRM representative on an interview panel is only compulsory for P-5 posts and above as per UNESCO's Updated Recruitment Policy (Administrative Circular AC/HR/59).

98. **HRM personnel have had a significant workload responding to Member State queries and reporting to the Executive Board.** HRM Strategy updates and reports to the Executive Board are provided bi-annually. The data collection phase for this evaluation overlapped with an Executive Board session and the evaluation team was thus able to observe first-hand how much time and energy these events demand from personnel at the Bureau of HRM in terms of preparation, participation and follow-up that span several weeks. This takes up time and resources, leaving less time to focus on the HRM Strategy implementation. The utility of reporting so frequently has meant that it has largely focused on gathering statistics to be able to report at output level and does not allow the time to gather and reflect on outcomes.
99. **With increased decentralization some interviewees highlighted a need for short term deployments of staff to provide temporary support to Field Offices in the different Sectors and services.** In addition to providing support, it was pointed out that those deployed were provided opportunities to broaden their experience. These needs were not always met, however, a challenge that was often attributed to difficulties in allocating financial resources.

Lessons learned

This section presents some key lessons learned that should be considered when developing the next HRM Strategy (2023-2027).

100. **Shifting the role of HR from administrative to a 'business partnering model' supports the achievement of programmatic goals and increases personnel engagement.** The HR function that is embedded in the Education Sector that is increasingly strategic and advisory in nature helps to align the HRM Strategy with the Education Sector goals and objectives. That HR function took on tasks of strategic importance such as skills and gap analysis, preparing staff for their mobility, identifying learning goals relevant for the Sector, etc.
101. **The HRM Strategy needs to be sufficiently agile to meet UNESCO's evolving needs as it becomes more decentralised and to adapt to changes in contexts.** During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Bureau of HRM harnessed technology and innovation to plan and prepare for the evolving environment and changing ways of working. Key HR functions such as recruitment and selection, orientation, learning, and development were carried out virtually. The challenges that UNESCO faced, both planned and unplanned, during the implementation period highlighted the importance of the Bureau of HRM maintaining an agile approach.
102. **Staff retreats contribute to team building and cohesion.** As shown in the case study in [Annex 1](#) staff retreats can help solidify a common team purpose to reach organizational goals. During the pandemic period, offsite staff retreats provided an in-person opportunity and space for staff to connect with one another better. Staff retreats could be a standard feature of HQ and Field Offices.
103. Targeted, one-on-one support such as HRM-led coaching (face to face or virtual) has increased managers' confidence in managing their work and team. **Coaching has encouraged managers to be self-reflective and take corrective measures for self-improvement.** Coaching sessions have also made managers more confident and take greater ownership of their work and team.
104. **The lack of organizational buy-in in the HRM Strategy affects its effective implementation.** While there is interest in the HRM Strategy per se, limited communication efforts and a lack of commitment to action affect the effectiveness of the HRM Strategy.
105. **Some HR challenges are common to peer organizations despite differing context, profiles, and mandate.** Peer agencies are or have faced similar HR challenges to UNESCO such as in the areas of recruitment, mobility, performance management and have taken measures to address some of the challenges in creative and innovative ways. The peer learning experience ([Annex 2](#)) found a consensus that a 'business partner' model was valuable in facilitating two-way communication and information sharing. An example of this within UNESCO could be observed in the HR business partnering model in the Education Sector which interviewees working in the sector reported to be successful in achieving the Sector's goal.

Conclusions and Recommendations

106. This section presents the conclusions and recommendations of this evaluation. Recommendations are targeted at UNESCO senior management and HRM staff. These recommendations are derived from the conclusions outlined below and are based on subsequent discussions with the Bureau of HRM to ensure their usefulness, relevance and achievability. They have been structured as follows:

- Overall conclusions on the HRM Strategy 2017-2022 and its respective elements.
- Conclusions followed by a corresponding recommendation to consider when finalising and implementing the next HRM Strategy for 2023-2027. The source of evidence is given beneath each conclusion that is linked to a recommendation.

107. Note that recommendations have been formulated based on the assumption that **UNESCO is expecting zero budget growth**. Implementation of these recommendations will thus be subject to a review process to determine their urgency and level of priority, both from the perspective of the Bureau of HRM and at a corporate level. Where additional financial and human resources are required, these will be sourced either by restructuring staffing and budgets, sourcing from external budgets or by tapping external resources (e.g., contributions by partners).

OVERALL CONCLUSION: The HRM strategy 2017-2022 was relevant to fulfilling UNESCO's mandate and mission and, while some challenges were faced during implementation, substantial learning has been generated that can feed into the next HRM strategy 2023-2027.

Findings from this evaluation confirmed that **the HRM Strategy 2017-2022 was relevant to UNESCO's mandate and mission**. Substantial progress was made in many areas during the period covered by the HRM Strategy, notably in improving gender parity amongst different levels of staff and the roll-out of successive mobility exercises. Other areas such as workforce planning, recruitment and performance management have not progressed as much as planned.

The HRM Strategy also proved **flexible enough to accommodate an unexpected global COVID-19 pandemic** and UNESCO managed to adapt its working arrangements relatively quickly to a unique situation. The HRM Strategy has faced more challenges in adapting to some planned changes, notably decentralization, which has increased resource requirements in the field and a demand for timely decision-making based on the understanding of the local context.

When comparing findings from this evaluation with the draft HRM strategy that will be launched in 2023, it is evident that most of the lessons and gaps identified will be considered in the design, notably the fact that only around half of the people with UNESCO contracts were covered by the HRM Strategy. Efforts were made to capture all-encompassing learning during the implementation of the Strategy, including consultations with UNESCO personnel facilitated by the Bureau of HRM. The conclusions and recommendations below aim to complement and build upon the progress that has been made so far.

CONCLUSION on the elements of the HRM Strategy: The design of the HRM Strategy for 2017-2022 was relevant for UNESCO to fulfil its mandate and mission although implementation progress in some areas fell short which hindered overall success.

Overall, the HRM Strategy demonstrated the ability of the Organization to react and respond to unexpected external factors, most notably during the COVID pandemic. There was also good progress with respect to policy and tool development. One challenge with a HRM Strategy composed of different elements has been that its success depended on the sum of its parts with some of the elements, such as promoting a culture of transparency and accountability, had a significant influence on the performance of other elements of the HRM Strategy.

There were 14 elements in the HRM Strategy for 2017-2022. The elements are divided below as follows: 1) progress that largely met or exceeded expectations of the Bureau of HRM and UNESCO personnel, 2) mixed results, and 3) areas where improvement was needed.

Progress that met or exceeded expectations:

- **Gender** – while there still some gaps identified at the upper-management level, significant progress has been made in terms of gender parity across the Organization.
- **Ethics and Standards of Conduct**⁶² – provided a significant contribution in HR screening and awareness-raising of staff and non-staff about fulfilling their ethical commitments.

Mixed results:

- **Geographically Diverse Workforce** – some regional groups remain under-represented⁶³; however, slight improvements were made in terms of number of countries represented. Achieving geographic representation must deal with the competing demands of balancing competence, merit, and the goal of a diverse workforce. UNESCO's focus on numbers rather than looking more holistically at diversity may also not be helpful.
- **Managed mobility** – while several problems were encountered during the first exercise, the second exercise was viewed more positively while still requiring improvements. The recently introduced skills inventory tool should contribute to an improved mobility exercise. This requires a significant shift in organizational culture while finding a balance between organizational needs and staff well-being. A specific conclusion and recommendation are described below.

- **Learning and Development** – While there have been some improvements such as good practice examples of retreats and mandatory trainings, it remains unclear how training is linked to the workforce planning and how to access funding for training. A related conclusion and recommendation are described below.
- **Competency Framework** – seen as a useful reference point for HR processes but its influence was not yet clear.

Areas where improvement was needed:

- **Staff well-being:** Staff well-being is influenced by various factors such as stress, lack of psychological safety and a lack of recognition but this is compounded by a lack of trust in the system.
- **Workforce Planning** – Strategic workforce planning between HRM and relevant Sectors is inadequate. *A related conclusion and recommendation are described below.*
- **Recruitment** – There are perceptions amongst staff and affiliate workforce members that certain recruitment processes are not fully transparent. Processes continue to be long, and HR is not present in all panels so recruitment processes may miss important elements that an HR professional can provide. *A specific conclusion and recommendation are described below.*
- **Post Classification** – linked to insufficient transparency and accountability surrounding the classification of posts and the perceived inconsistent application of the post classification policy.
- **Performance management** was not perceived as fulfilling its objective of improving performance since results of reviews were not observed to influence promotion and/or career development. A specific conclusion and recommendation are described below.
- **Culture of Transparency and Accountability** – a critical element that underlies the success of the overall HRM Strategy as transparency and accountability underpin the consistent application of all policies and initiatives led by HRM. *Specific conclusions and recommendations are described below.*

62 While led by the Ethics Office, HRM plays a support role on several ethics-related issues, such as enforcement of PSEA and the whistle-blower policy whereas other UNESCO units are screening candidates against ClearCheck, and keeps the Ethics Office and IOS informed of any disciplinary measures taken.

63 Arab States: 8% Eastern Europe: 8% Group of Latin America and Caribbean Countries: 11% based on figures in UNESCO (2022) Follow-Up to Decisions and Resolutions Adopted by the Executive Board and the General Conference at their Previous Sessions. Part IV - Human Resources Issues. 215 EX/5.IV.A (page 5)

CONCLUSION 1. Linkages between the two objectives of the HRM Strategy were tenuous

Experience of peer agencies suggests that there is no easy way to strategically position HRM within a UN agency. A common element for positioning HR is trust and credibility. The Bureau of HRM has been working to strengthen the trust and credibility by, for example, increasing its field visits for consultations and carrying out regular staff surveys. At the same time, an impediment to HRM's engagement at a more strategic level is that many members of personnel perceive the Bureau of HRM as out of touch with the field context and tend to be focused on administrative processes.

Many key informants emphasised that one of UNESCO's strengths and comparative advantages is its specialised expertise in specific areas related to UNESCO's mandate. And they perceive revisions of the content of job descriptions as a sign that UNESCO is prioritising managerial and networking skills over technical experience. This is linked to a lack of clarity about the optimal profile of staff on fixed term contracts to enable UNESCO to fulfil its mandate and strategic objectives. The HRM Strategy did not sufficiently articulate how UNESCO would preserve its required technical capacities.

The first mobility exercise was not sufficiently strategic. There was no evidence of the exercise being based on a needs analysis nor on the relevant SDGs guiding the work of a Field Office. This indicates that Objective 1 of the HR Strategy (staff capabilities to meet the SDGs) was not sufficiently considered.

There was a lack of clarity about the optimal profile of staff on fixed term contracts to enable UNESCO to fulfil its mandate and strategic objectives. The HRM Strategy was not sufficiently articulate on this issue in terms of clarifying how UNESCO was planning to maintain expected technical standards.

In terms of workforce planning, the multi-varied and complex mandate of UNESCO makes it difficult for the Bureau of HRM to anticipate changes to new demands and realities. While the fact that half of the people working with UNESCO are "non-staff" contributes to uncertainty, it may help in increasing the agility of human resources management provided this category is appropriately integrated into the new HRM Strategy.

Based on findings from EQ1, EQ2, EQ3, EQ4, lessons from peers, case studies.

Rec 1. Strengthen the strategic linkage between the HRM strategy and UNESCO's Mid-Term Strategic Objectives.

The new HRM Strategy correctly proposes to recognise the importance of having organizational buy-in throughout UNESCO to reach its objectives. There is a need for a change management plan and process that encourages broad ownership and incentivises UNESCO personnel to support the change by the following:

- Consider **changing the name of the strategy** from HRM Strategy to People Management Strategy or similar terminology that conveys its inclusive nature to convey the message that it is not just the strategy of the Bureau of HRM. It may not be realistic to make such a change immediately but should be considered in the future even while continuing to communicate and practice the principle of common ownership throughout UNESCO.
- **Support workforce planning** as outlined in the UN system strategy on the future of work⁶⁴ to incentivise personnel by motivating them and helping them to value their role as a member of a UNESCO team.
- Convey the message that the **role of UNESCO staff as advisers and programme specialists is primarily to support their partners to deliver on SDGs**. While workforce planning needs to consider staff well-being, it should also ensure that the achievement of UNESCO's MTS objectives is communicated as the top priority. This includes developing a commitment to institutionalize a results-delivery culture throughout its activities with a cost-conscious approach and that staff and affiliate workforce members feel accountable not only to its Member States but also to themselves to provide high quality delivery, national ownership, and mutual accountability.
- Develop an **agile modality that is less rigid structurally**. The implementation of the HRM Strategy will need to be sufficiently flexible to adapt and respond rapidly to planned changes, such as decentralization to the field, while allowing the Organization to rapidly deal with challenges caused by natural and man-made disasters (pandemics, conflicts, governance).

64 UN system strategy on the future of work <https://unsceb.org/topics/future-work> accessed 20 December 2022.

- HRM support to catalyse cross-sectoral **strategic planning exercises** should be continued. Based on previous experience, this has the potential to become demand-driven requiring a relatively small investment by the Bureau of HRM.
- Support the new HRM Strategy with a **robust and professional communication strategy**⁶⁵ (as described in Rec 6) to consult with stakeholders and keep them informed, providing quality information and communication in a business partnering model.
- Design a **monitoring and evaluation system** that incentivises a strategic approach in each major initiative (as described in Rec 6).

CONCLUSION 2. Diversity has been primarily driven by numbers, which has led to delays in HR processes.

UNESCO is one of six agencies in the UN system which has geographical targets for recruitment. While this has generally been seen as a positive initiative since it has contributed to a workforce composed of different nationalities, this approach has also given rise to disincentives for staff and delays in recruitment processes.

Other organizations,⁶⁶ including peer UN agencies, have recognised that there is significant value-added in extending their understanding of diversity beyond nationalities to include disability and gender identity.

Based on findings from EQ1, EQ2, EQ3, lessons from peers.

Rec 2. Treat diversity and inclusion more holistically - make people proud of how they perform in their jobs.

- Consider different concepts of defining diversity beyond statistics and away from a unique focus on nationalities to be more holistic. Examples of such concepts can be found in peer agencies such as UNDP and UNICEF to measure diversity using North and South (countries belong to categories based on their economic performance).
- Create an enabling environment and a culture that supports and creates a diverse workforce, including the capabilities and competencies required to manage a diverse workforce.

⁶⁵ The 2018 interagency evaluation of Offices of HRM made a similar recommendation. OIOS (2018) Evaluation of Department of Management-Office of Human Resources Management 06 March 2018 Assignment No: IED-18-006. Recommendation 4.

⁶⁶ See, for example, MacKenzie & Company (2020) Diversity wins: How inclusion matters.

CONCLUSION 3. The Bureau of HRM structure and function struggled to meet expectations of UNESCO personnel and needs to improve its efficiency and effectiveness.

Relatively heavy centralised administrative processes, including the preparation and follow up on twice yearly meetings for Member States, place considerable demands on HRM personnel capacity and time. Other UN agencies hold large meetings on an annual basis. The frequency of detailed reporting to the Member States is not the best use of Bureau of HRM resources and incentivises reporting at an activity and output level, making it difficult to report on strategic outcomes. As noted in the workforce planning review, personnel at the Bureau of HRM expended a considerable amount of time fighting fires. The HR focal point in the Education Sector is a model that could potentially be replicated for other Sectors to support the implementation of the HRM Strategy.

UNESCO's MTS 2022-2029 will compel the Organization, including the Bureau of HRM, to **decentralize its structure and processes**. The most important considerations will be to develop a good understanding of local contexts and streamline decision-making. This should provide an opportunity for the Bureau of HRM to address some of the capacity gaps during the previous HRM Strategy 2017-2022 whereby HR functions were the responsibility of Finance and Administrative Officers who predominantly had financial backgrounds. It is also an opportunity to change from a highly centralized Bureau of HRM whose main role has been to administer processes and transform into a more agile and itinerant unit equipped with the tools to adapt more readily to UNESCO evolution in line with the MTS.

Based on findings from EQ3, EQ4, lessons from peers.

Rec 3. Optimise the HRM structure and streamline functions

Options based mainly on learning from peers that could be considered include:

- Pilot **P3 or P4 officers posted in a region with a regional role** who would focus on advisory support, capacity building of Finance and Administrative Officers and assisting with strategic HR matters such as career counselling and recruitment of higher-level posts.
- **Designate roving HR officers** who can be deployed to regions and countries for a limited period to establish systems and build capacity. Apart from improving quality at field level this would also help to improve the connection between field and HQ and increase the exposure of the Bureau of HRM to field realities.
- Build upon successes with **Learning and Organizational Development** by prioritizing activities that meet a demand for needs to build personal capacities while meeting collective goals, such as sponsored leadership trainings and other coaching and staff retreats. Since resources are limited, this should be seen as seed money or a catalyst to kick-start activities and provide relevant expertise.
- **Encourage Sectors to designate HR business partners**, based on the model of the Education Sector with a connection to the Bureau of HRM to ensure consistency and standardization. This function could be shared between Sectors.
- Use the opportunity of operationalizing the MTS Strategy to develop a **fit-for-purpose workforce plan** that includes staff and non-staff and is scenario-based to adapt to different situations.
- Consider **Shared Global Services** to address inefficiency in operations and increase cost effectiveness. Payroll, benefits, accounting can potentially be outsourced as a global shared service with other UN agencies.

CONCLUSION 4. The HRM Strategy has built up a robust monitoring and evaluation system, but accountability is missing and KPIs did not always incentivise strategic practice.

The implementation of the HRM Strategy has been supported by a series of reviews, evaluations and audits that have been commissioned based on specific needs. The biannual Global Staff Survey has been a useful tool to engage staff not only by collecting staff inputs but also in demonstrating that the results are being used to follow up on key issues.

The workplan of the HRM Strategy showed several areas where responsibility lay with HRM, UNESCO staff and the managers, which resulted in unclear accountabilities and the Bureau of HRM being perceived as that the sole implementor.

While the Competency Framework provides a reference to recruit and develop suitable talent and expertise to support UNESCO's mandate and mission, there are no KPIs that can provide incentives to more coherently link the workforce to support the achievement of UNESCO's MTS strategic objectives.

Relatively heavy centralised administrative processes place considerable demands on HRM personnel capacity and time. The frequency of Executive Board meetings and the expectation of detailed reporting encourages reporting at an activity and output level, making it difficult to report on strategic outcomes. In comparison with other UN agency reporting, UNESCO's is comparatively more number oriented. Some peer UN agencies have successfully transitioned from similar detailed reporting to more general reporting that helps focus attention on strategic outcomes.

Based on findings from EQ1, EQ2, EQ3, EQ4, case studies, lessons from peers.

Rec 4. Improve the monitoring and reporting of the HRM Strategy

As described in Rec 1, monitoring and reporting systems should provide incentives for broader ownership of the HR Strategy. To increase the efficiency of the Bureau of HRM, it is recommended to consider the following options:

- **Reporting to Executive Board members:** one annual report focusing on strategic outcomes complemented by more frequent status updates on budget and activities. Efficiency could also be improved by continuing to improve online access to develop a dashboard where relevant information can be accessed in real time by Board members.
- Propose that a **HR resolution presented in the Executive Board** is at a strategic level and avoids granular details.
- Develop **HR fit-for-purpose documents that are targeted at specific users** e.g., a Global Marketing HR Tool for Member States and a Workplan for UNESCO staff.

CONCLUSION 5. Policies have been rolled out to support the HRM Strategy, but implementation has sometimes fallen behind.

While there have been extensive efforts in developing and updating policies, procedures and tools, this has not been matched by implementation. This was partially due to a lack of ownership described above, but it was also seen to be due to organizational culture. The roll-out of several key policies and their application can be summarised as follows:

Delays in workforce planning, which should have been a point of reference for many other initiatives, have hindered progress.

Recruitment timelines have improved but are still too long. Complex approval processes which are subject to diverse and often conflicting pressures between merit, diversity, external pressures. Opaque processes, notably the lack of feedback to unsuccessful candidates, contributed to dissatisfaction.

Performance management - A prevalent view was summed up by a key informant who described the systems as more performance “measurement” rather than “management”. Quality is dependent on the competence and interest of supervisors.

Mobility requires a significant investment of resources and, in some cases, personal sacrifices, but evidence indicates that it is worth doing since it gives exposure to staff to the “real world”. Inter-agency secondments have also been found to accomplish the same objectives.

Classification - Much of the criticisms stem from a perception that it is not being implemented as per the policy and that the process is not transparent.

Based on findings from EQ2, EQ3, EQ4, case studies, learning from peers.

Rec 5. Focus on improving implementation and, in some cases, the design of specific policies during the next HRM Strategy

Workforce planning processes should help in involving management in assessing current capabilities, planning for future needs and managing staffing gaps and should be prioritized to provide a reference point for related HR initiatives.

Recruitment and Mobility - Drawing largely on the recommendations from the IOS 2021 Recruitment Audit, the Bureau of HRM should:

- Continue to improve the timeline for recruitment, especially for senior-level posts (P5 and above).
- Workforce planning and forecasting at senior-level posts may be carried out which includes conducting a Skills Inventory exercise for all senior-level posts.
- Develop a mechanism to provide systematic feedback to candidates, especially internal applicants.
- The Bureau of HRM staff should regularly participate in interview panels at an appropriate level. In addition to playing a quality assurance role during the interview process, this would also provide a capacity-building opportunity for staff on the panel to use the competency-based interview process more effectively.
- While mobility exercises should not disregard the personal situation of staff, mobility should be promoted as part of the organizational culture in UNESCO. UNESCO should also learn from peer agencies that have a long experience of mobility in terms of what incentives (and disincentives) work.

Performance management

- Draw upon recommendations from the new approach and UNESCO's performance management policy updated in December 2020. The performance management component in the new HRM Strategy should have a development focus in line with the UN Secretary-General's vision to "move to a culture that is focused more on results than on processes."⁶⁷
- Performance management should be moving in the direction of simplification, user-friendly, efficient and focus on learning and development with collaboration between supervisors and staff.⁶⁸
- Increase the effectiveness of performance reviews by ensuring that performance is assessed from both the line manager and a technical perspective.
- Foster a culture of feedback. Specifically, managers could be trained and provided with guidance to deal with underperformance so as not to ignore and avoid underperforming staff. Further, a 360-degree feedback can be piloted at senior leaders' level and/or in a Sector that is willing to pilot.
- Leadership trainings could include coaching-style leadership, if not included already, to foster more open performance conversations.
- Look for opportunities other than monetary rewards to recognize contribution and achievement of staff and non-staff members to reinforce the desired behaviours in UNESCO personnel.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ These recommendations are in line with and should be complemented by the recommendations contained in the UNESCO Advisory on Organizational Culture (January 2022).

CONCLUSION 6. The HRM Strategy could have benefited from more user-friendly communication and a robust communication strategy.

While the implementation of the HRM Strategy appears to have made significant progress in many areas, the limited capacity of the Bureau of HRM, the lack of ownership of the HRM Strategy by other parts of UNESCO and competing pressures from different stakeholders have made it difficult to meet expectations. The importance of communication in HRM was underlined many times, not only for raising awareness and promoting ownership of the HRM Strategy, but also when implementing the mobility exercise, launching new policies, orientation and training of personnel, and reporting to the Executive Board. Most critically, effective communication could help to improve transparency which has been seen as a significant gap in human resources management.

Based on findings from EQ1, E2, E3, E4, case studies.

Rec 6. Improve communication capacity in the Bureau of HRM

Given the key role of communication in improving the coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of the HR processes, this area should be treated as a priority. It is recommended to create, in the Bureau of HRM, a dedicated communication capacity, including a professional communication specialist who would update and lead the implementation of a communication strategy, which could include:

- Developing further IT tools, including a user-friendly virtual help desk for staff using artificial intelligence and a dashboard for Board members.
- Collecting and synthesising feedback for management.
- Training the Bureau of HRM personnel and Finance and Administrative Officers on communicating more effectively about the Strategy, tools, processes or any other information relevant for UNESCO's personnel regardless of contract types.
- Updating guidelines, supplemented with short videos.
- Networking with other communication specialists in UNESCO and other UN agencies to increase learning.

CONCLUSION 7. The current HRM Strategy is conceived primarily for UNESCO's workforce holding staff contracts.

Headquarters and Field Offices heavily rely on personnel with non-staff contractual modalities (service contractors, short-term contractors, consultants, loans and interns). More than half of the workforce is not covered by the HRM Strategy but are often key in delivering the work programme.

Based on findings from EQ1, EQ3.

Rec 7. Consider integrating personnel with non-staff contracts as an integral part of the new HRM Strategy

As the affiliate workforce ("non-staff") now represents 58% of the total at UNESCO, it will be important to include this category in the next HRM Strategy (2023-2027). This is in recognition that UNESCO's asset is its entire workforce regardless of contractual arrangements, location, job classification and grades while identifying their contribution to the MTS.

Given the contractual differences between staff and non-staff, there is a need to look into the granular details and the practical inclusion of the affiliate workforce into the different elements of the HRM Strategy. Inclusion of non-staff in the new strategy also requires a shift in the mindset of staff in UNESCO to be more inclusive. This includes managers who should role-model inclusive behaviour and ensure interaction with staff and non-staff in their respective teams.

CONCLUSION 8. Field Offices would benefit from temporary assistance.

There was a need for short-term secondments and support missions by UNESCO personnel to provide temporary support to Field Offices, which would at the same time support capacity development of deployed staff. Financial and budgetary processes and a lack of clear protocols were often an obstacle to such deployments.

Based on findings from EQ4.

Rec 8. Adapt budget and financial processes and relevant protocols so that they are fit-for-purpose to facilitate short term secondments and support missions.

Annexes

Annex 1 – Case Studies

The evaluation team used an outcome harvesting⁶⁹ approach, to develop three case studies to illustrate outcomes achieved under the HRM Strategy. Outcomes are defined as changes such as actions, relationships, policies, practices of one or more stakeholders, offices, institutes influenced by the HRM.

Key questions explored when developing the case studies were:

- 108. What and who has changed what, where and when?
- 109. Why has the change been important/significant for UNESCO?
- 110. What have been the outcomes of the change?
- 111. How did the HRM Strategy contribute to the change?

The case studies provided concrete examples of the two high level objectives of the HRM strategy and were based on data collected during the desk review, the surveys and key informant interviews. The first case study is focused on the first objective, i.e. strengthening staff capabilities for the Sustainable Development Goals and the second case study illustrates outcomes related to the second objective, i.e. the creation of an enabling and engaging work environment. The third case study is an example that produces outcomes relevant to both objectives.

⁶⁹ Outcome Harvesting collects (“harvests”) evidence of what has changed (“outcomes”) and, working backwards, determines whether and how an intervention has contributed to these changes. See <https://www.betterevaluation.org/methods-approaches/approaches/outcome-harvesting>.

Case Study 1

Strategic outcome 1: Staff Survey served as a catalyst to the creation of an enabling and engaging work environment and strengthening of staff capabilities in Addis Ababa

Description:

The Bureau of Human Resource Management (HRM) administered two global staff surveys during the period of the Strategy, one in 2018 and another in 2021. These aimed to measure opinions and attitudes of staff and provided them with the opportunities to voice their views on experience working in UNESCO, measure levels of staff engagement and set a benchmark for comparison on how UNESCO is performing internally and against other UN agencies. The 2018 Global Staff Survey had a response rate of 65% whereas 2021 survey had a response rate of 52%.

HRM and the respective Field Offices monitored the staff survey results and identified steps to improve the gaps identified in the surveys. In May 2021, the Learning and Development function of the Bureau of HRM earmarked funds for decentralized learning and development initiatives reaching out to Field Offices and Institutes. HRM disbursed a total of USD 226,229 decentralized funds to Field Offices, Institutes and Sectors. Following the staff survey results, most of the requests for funds from the field were related to team building and staff retreats. Field Offices topped up some funds in cases where the funds were insufficient to organise the team building and staff retreats.

An example of how UNESCO could potentially benefit from such exercises was provided by a joint retreat involving UNESCO staff with staff of one of UNESCO's Category 1 Institute, the International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA), which organised a staff retreat and team building exercise in early January 2020 with UNESCO's support. All personnel, including interns and consultants, participated in this retreat. The budget allocated for this purpose was approximately USD 5,000 for accommodation, meals and stationery.

The main agenda of the retreat was to assess progress of IICBA, identify challenges and agree on the way forward, the achievements made and challenges of the previous biennium 2018-2019. The staff retreat was an opportunity to re-think IICBA's mandate and how IICBA will reposition its work towards achieving the SDGs. Team building activities were also organized to enhance social relations and team collaboration in the office.

After the retreat assignments were given to staff members to follow up on the action points that were agreed upon. The following were the action points which were continuously worked upon.

- Resource mobilization and proposal development in at least 2-3 areas and a mapping of donors
- Capacity mapping needed to implement IICBA's strategy and to develop an M&E strategy
- Harmonization of work plans
- Development of Communication and Advocacy Strategy
- Establishment of the IICBA internal data sharing platform
- Development of a calendar of planned Activities and Events
- A few staff had coaching opportunities following the retreat to improve their performance.
- A joint staff retreat provided an opportunity to increase engagement and collaboration among the staff, while at the same time working through their future targets and deliverables to contribute towards UNESCO's SDG goals.

Significance

The staff survey and follow-up support to set up a staff retreat is significant to the Institutes and Field Offices as it was the first time such an effort was carried out in a systematic and structured manner. It sent a strong message that the Organization cares and values staff voices and is promoting a culture of accountability and transparency in UNESCO. The staff surveys played an important role for identifying which activities would be needed for more involvement of staff in UNESCO. It was also significant to involve personnel at all levels with differing types of contracts. The staff retreat was significant as it created a platform for sharing views and feedback within the Institute.

Contribution

Staff survey and financial support to organize a retreat and capacity building of staff served as a catalyst that is contributing to the creation of an enabling and empowering work environment. It has significantly contributed to increasing staff engagement in the Institute, especially after working from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. Follow-up and personal development support such as coaching is expected to contribute to the strengthening of staff capabilities to contribute to the SDGs.

Implications for the new HRM Strategy

Staff retreats and team building, if well designed and managed, are an opportunity for staff to boost collaboration, to be creative, 'pause' and reflect and revisit common organizational or programmatic goals. Managers (in the field and HQ) should allocate resources to organize staff retreats and team building as a regular annual exercise.

Case Study 2

Strategic outcome 2: Coaching sessions contributed to the strengthening of staff capabilities to meet the SDGs as outlined in UNESCO's Mid-Term Strategy.

Description:

As part of Learning and Development, 70 Directors and Heads of Field Offices have participated in the Senior Leadership Development Programme since 2019. In addition, some Directors and Heads of Field Offices underwent coaching sessions on demand.

One Director interviewed started the coaching sessions on the first day of her new role at Headquarters. She has extensive working experience in the field; however, this was her first position at Headquarters. Her team lacked internal collaboration and coordination. Moreover, the team was extremely diverse with varied perspectives. It was not easy for her to manage the perspectives and expectations of the team members. There was a high cultural divide among the team members. All this was affecting the performance and productivity of the team and her own ability to steer them in the direction of high performance and high team spirit. She did not get adequate guidance on leading team in a new context.

The Director's new role requires strong people management skills. Despite having worked in different contexts, the Headquarters context was a new experience. The coaching sessions were useful for her to actively work towards a set of goals that would allow her to lead her new team effectively. Through the coaching sessions, she was better able to understand and navigate the context of HQ. Moreover, the coaching sessions increased her confidence and empowered her to manage her team. The coaching sessions resulted in enhancing her leadership and she was able to lead the section with a clearer direction.

Significance

The coaching sessions contributed to the increase of confidence and shaping the Director's leadership style and people management approach. This was significant as it increased teamwork and team engagement which, in turn, is showing signs of increased productivity and performance at the team level.

Contribution

Learning and development activities such as coaching are contributing to individual staff capacity and staff well-being. In this example, the coaching provided a safe space for the Director to discuss sensitive issues and an opportunity to gain new perspectives specific to her context. In addition, it also contributed at the team level, leading to the strengthening of staff capabilities to contribute to the SDGs.

Implications for the new HRM Strategy

Coaching is a valuable learning and development tool. Not all managers subscribe to the coaching sessions as they are demand-based and voluntary. Communicating the values and benefits of coaching sessions may encourage higher subscription to coaching sessions, especially for critical positions.

Case Study 3

Strategic outcomes 1 & 2: Mobility exercise contributing towards strengthening of staff capabilities to meet the SDGs in UNESCO's Mid-Term Strategy.

Description:

UNESCO adopted a new Managed Mobility policy (MMP) in December 2018 as an integral part of the Strategic Transformation process and to enhance UNESCO's full-fledged involvement in UN Country teams and UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.

One of the goals of the Managed Mobility exercise is to encourage mobility geographically, between Sectors and between Sectors and central services. Between 2018 and 2020, HRM implemented the first geographical Managed Mobility exercise and moved a cohort of 51 staff members. The largest group were at the P3 level with similar gender distribution (51% male and 49% female).

An example of how the Mobility exercise is contributing towards the strengthening of staff capabilities to meet SDGs may be seen in the Education Sector. Two UNESCO staff joined the mobility exercise voluntarily and had different journeys moving from Headquarters to a Field Office and vice versa. The role of HR in the Education Sector in both cases was to support the mapping of skills, technical advice and opportunities for capacity building such as the leadership programme and coaching sessions.

In one case, the staff member moved to a Field Office after having been in numerous positions in Headquarters for 15 years. The new job scope and responsibilities in the field included collaboration and coordination with other UN agencies and international/bilateral development partners to complement each other's strengths to best support the country's needs and priorities. Following the experience, the staff member took on a wider regional role. As acknowledged by the staff member: "The field experience was an eye opener as it showed me how the work I did at the HQ is translated in the field".

After occupying positions in the field, this staff member recently moved back to HQ in a higher role. One of the challenges faced in the movement is a long wait to be posted in HQ. The field experience gained has changed and widened the staff perspective and is expected to contribute to the role at HQ.

In the second case, the staff member had never worked at HQ and was based in the field for many years. This is the first position at HQ as the staff has had numerous positions at the field level in the past and worked in all aspects of education and intersectoral initiatives around the globe. Working at HQ was a new experience which required new ways of working and new ways of building relationships. To that end, the staff member is supported in her new role through coaching.

The above examples illustrate the shift in positions at HQ, triggered by the Managed Mobility exercise, made up of profiles that are enriched by the vast experience and perspectives gained at the field level. Some of the key competencies developed through the Mobility exercise include partnership building, communication, and working within diverse contexts.

Significance

The Mobility experience was significant in understanding needs and expectations of various stakeholders internally and externally.

The experience was significant in managing diversity such as perspectives and considering potential issues and challenges from various angles.

The Mobility experience was significant in allowing for a better understanding of the education issues at operational and policy levels.

Contribution

The experience has contributed towards building and sustaining new partnerships and networks that facilitate the achievement of organizational goals, leading towards the achievement of SDGs.

The Mobility exercise has contributed towards building capabilities of staff.

Implications for the new HRM Strategy

The Mobility exercise, when well-managed and guided, is yielding significant positive outcomes in strengthening staff capabilities to meet the SDGs.

Annex 2 – Lessons from peer experiences

HR representatives from three peer agencies were interviewed: 1) the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), 2) the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and 3) the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). Examples were also drawn from UNICEF's experience since four key informants had described practices by this agency as a useful comparison during interviews. The evaluation team recognises that UNESCO has its own specific character, notably its expertise, but many of the HR challenges faced by peer agencies are common to UNESCO and other UN agencies. The themes emerging from the peer agencies' experiences are listed below.

Table 6. Human Resources Management in peer UN agencies

	ITU	UNHCR	WIPO
Overview	The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the United Nations specialized agency for information and communication technologies.	UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, is a global organization dedicated to saving lives, protecting rights and building a better future for refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people.	WIPO is the global forum for intellectual property (IP) services, policy, information, and cooperation. WIPO is a self-funding agency of the United Nations.
Purpose of HRM	The Human Resources Management Department (HRMD) advises the Secretary General on human resources matters.	UNHCR seeks to be optimally prepared to respond to global forced displacement challenges, through a diverse workforce of talented and highly	The HRM Department is responsible for ensuring that WIPO has the human resources necessary to fulfil its mandate, through global

	ITU	UNHCR	WIPO
Purpose of HRM	The Human Resources Management Department (HRMD) advises the Secretary General on human resources matters. The Department strives to provide comprehensive strategic and operational advice in these areas, while ensuring consistency with ITU overall strategy, policies, regulations and rules, as well as being in harmony with policies promulgated by the UN Common System (ICSC).	UNHCR seeks to be optimally prepared to respond to global forced displacement challenges, through a diverse workforce of talented and highly performing people, who are flexibly and timely deployed, and who benefit from comprehensive care and support from the Organization.	The HRM Department is responsible for ensuring that WIPO has the human resources necessary to fulfil its mandate, through global sourcing of talent; by providing client-oriented and efficient HR services, strategic and operational partnerships within the Organization; and by providing an enabling working environment and best employment practices.

Strategic positioning and strategic role of HR

Strategically positioning HR within the organization is a common challenge faced by all three agencies. HR professionals have experienced struggles to have a strong influence in the organization and demonstrate real impact on the overall organization strategy. Some of the barriers to strategic positioning of HR include varying stakeholder interests, entrenched organizational culture that hinders change, lack of support from senior management, lack of HR capacity and lack of staff engagement and trust towards HR. It is also a challenge for HR to implement and manage all issues under the purview of the HR Unit, including people management, when the day-to-day administrative burden could

supersede HR strategic priorities. Further, the recruitment process, among others, is one area where trust can be easily broken which may lead to numerous challenges including tribunal cases.

In the process of overcoming some of these barriers, HR in the peer agencies is increasingly playing a strategic role and reinventing itself as a strategic player. Being the main entity supporting the implementation of the HR Strategy was seen as an opportunity to position HR. In the case of ITU for example, key to the HR Strategy implementation has been a change management plan. A change management plan and process allowed identification of key stakeholders and plans to engage and keep the stakeholders informed. HR leadership is critical to ensuring the strategic nature of HR and supporting the new ways of working within the HR team and beyond.

Client-focused HR Structure

An inefficient HR structure is a common challenge experienced by peer agencies as the HR capacity is often insufficient and under-funded. It is not easy to change the HR structure and it takes time to get the 'buy-in' from senior management and the wider organization. Despite significant growth in number of staff at times HR capacity (especially number of staff in HR and seniority of HR) to support the entire organization remains the same for these agencies.

A flexible and client-focused approach in HR is key to gaining trust and confidence. Furthermore, a 'business partner' model and approach was adopted by all three agencies to ensure two-way communication and information sharing. The essence of business partnering is context and understanding the Organization's strategy and goals and develop people solutions that help achieve objectives. The peer agencies achieve this through developing meaningful relationships with key people across the Organization. The Business Partnering model that is promoted is a one stop shop approach that has customer-oriented functions. This includes a Generalist who addresses all the concerns and refers to the HR specialists if required for specific HR issues.

Other changes adopted by agencies include out-posting of HR posts and using global shared services. Out-posting of HR positions allowed greater access and support to HR in Field Offices. Increased efficiency in recruitment processes was cited as one positive outcome of out-posting HR roles. Out-posting also reduced the need for office space at Headquarters. Verbal feedback was provided to job applicants who are unsuccessful, which was appreciated, particularly by internal candidates.

In another specific example, UNICEF shared global services (centralized HR, payroll, finance and IT services)⁷⁰ are being used to manage internal inefficiency and increase cost effectiveness. United Nations agencies are increasingly turning to shared services centres to improve efficiency and reduce costs by leveraging economies of scale in lower-cost locations.

Increasing HR efficiency

Other inefficiencies include the lack of automation, dealing with routine procedural matters and internal and external reporting. Reporting to Member States was cited as one example where much effort and time was spent on the reporting of the HR Strategy implementation. The HR Strategy and work plan were too detailed requiring granular reporting to the Member States.

Some of the solutions explored by all three agencies include investment in technology and automation. For ITU, automation and digitalisation have resulted in significant reduction of 'manual work' carried out by the HR team. The automation and digitalisation have also resulted in quicker and easier access to data and updates by Member States.

The new HR Strategy was strategic in nature allowing reporting to be at strategic level. In the case of ITU, two types of documents were developed, firstly an HR Strategy that is high level document which is also used as a marketing tool for internal and external stakeholders. This is a user-friendly document that presents the HR Strategy in a concise manner. The second document is the HR Strategy Work Plan, which is a detailed document, mainly for the reference of the HR team and other functions that are responsible for the implementation of the HR Strategy.

Performance Management

Performance management is an on-going common challenge faced in HR, notably due to a tendency for managers to treat performance appraisal as a 'tick the box' exercise. The process and appraisal exercise focused on tools and compliances are viewed as heavy and complicated by staff. There are, however, attempts to shift the performance management process to make it more meaningful and career development oriented by focusing on performance discussions and 'check-ins' between supervisors and staff. Further, new

⁷⁰ Global Shared Services Centre <https://www.unicef.org/gssc>

policies have been developed to include policies that help to manage underperformance and reward and recognise good performance.

Overall, performance management in peer UN agencies have been moving towards simplification, user-friendly, efficient and focused on learning and development with collaboration between supervisor and staff. The 360-degree approach to appraisal is also being explored. This shift is in line with the Performance Management at the United Nations – A New Vision.⁷¹

Diversity and Inclusion management

A challenge underpinning the area of diversity and inclusion lies with defining and conceptualising these notions. The business case for greater diversity has a simple formula for success that has been established, the greater the representation, the higher the likelihood of performance.⁷² At UNESCO and many other peer agencies, diversity is statistic-oriented, which risks causing demotivation among staff. Diversity and inclusion initiatives are aimed at broadening decision making processes to widen and increase the perspectives which have been overlooked. Both in the profit and non-profit sectors, there is an increasing recognition that the statistics do not give the full story of diversity and inclusion.⁷³

The concept and definition of diversity has evolved within the UN in recent years. For example, the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy provides the foundation for sustainable and transformative progress on disability inclusion through all pillars of the work of the United Nations⁷⁴.

71 UN (2021) Performance Management at the UN - A New Vision.

72 McKinsey & Co. (2020) [Diversity wins: How inclusion matters](#). May 19, 2020 Report.

73 Diversity and inclusion should be more focused on business impact, thoughts and opinions, and a culture of connection—rather than simple concepts like equality, fairness, and filling quotas. There is no set of numerical data that can accurately tell you how influential a given minority group is within an Organization, or how seriously their ideas are considered in a meeting. Even if you have a handful of Board members representing minority groups, what is important is whether these views are taken seriously by the broader Organization. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/annajohansson/2017/11/09/how-can-you-measure-diversity-and-inclusion-results-millennials-have-an-idea/?sh=762e50662310>

74 UN Disability Inclusion Strategy

Having a clear concept and policy of diversity has been found to be helpful in supporting and managing diversity and inclusion initiatives. Some agencies use the concept of North and South (countries belonging to categories based on their economic performance instead of nationalities). The concept of diversity should not be exclusionary with the notion of merit-based recruitment and promotion.

Summary of Lessons from comparison with peer agencies

- a. **Move beyond statistics and data to pay more attention to strategic and underlying diversity issues.** Agencies are making progress by measuring statistics and subjective perspectives. This includes gathering and analysing qualitative feedback from employees (minority and majority) on how diversity and inclusion is progressing in the agency. Less represented groups should have stronger voice in implementing the diversity initiatives. HR data and analytics should be informative and user-friendly to minimise confusion and mistrust about how the Organization is approaching diversity.
- b. **The strategic positioning and role of HR requires a shift in mindset at various levels of the Organization, including in HR.** Shifting mindsets is resource intensive; it takes time and is a process to be managed. A change management plan could capture this process and support in the effective implementation of this process. The process requires support and buy-in from all levels of the organization.
- c. **The HR function needs to be better connected with the other parts of the Organization and line managers need to be convinced of the benefits of HR initiatives.** The business partnering model is one approach to create stronger links with other parts of the Organization. The business partnering approach requires a shift in mindsets at all levels of the Organization in order to succeed.
- d. **Outsourcing HR administrative matters and automation contributes to increased HR efficiency.** The use of automation, global shared services and outsourcing frees HR from the day-to-day routines so that it can focus on strategic initiatives.
- e. **Genuinely redesigning the performance management system will increase its importance to achieve individual and organizational goals.** The performance management system includes flaws in most organizations and is seen as a necessary evil rather than a meaningful exercise. Having a career development focus, simplified and meaningful process increases the uptake of performance management.

Annex 3 – UNESCO Human Resources Organigram

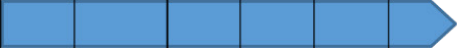

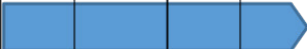
The most recent organigram for the HRM Unit in UNESCO is shown below. It has significantly evolved over the past five years.

BUREAU OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT- HRM



Annex 4 – HRM Strategy for 2017-2022 Implementation Plan

Objective 1. Strengthen Staff Capabilities for the Sustainable Development Goals								
Initiatives	Short Description	Performance Indicators	Time-frame					Progress update June 2021
			2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	
1. Implement Competency Framework for UNESCO staff	Integrate the UNESCO Competency Framework in Human Resources Processes: include competencies in job profiles, in the selection process, the performance management process and in the learning programmes. Systematically promote competencies and values with a view to internalize them and embed them in UNESCO's culture.	Key competencies are included in Vacancy Notices.						Completed
		Interviews are systematically competency-based.						Completed
		Competency development needs are identified through performance assessment.						Completed
		Learning programmes are in place to develop targeted competencies.						Completed
2. Develop and implement Workforce Planning	Ensure that HR planning is integrated into the Programme and budget planning. Develop workforce planning tool, to assess current capabilities, identify staffing risks and gaps on a 3-year horizon. Develop a Workforce plan between managers and HRM to cover recruitment, learning and development actions.	Workforce plan developed and implemented with each Sector.						Partially implemented. Pilot undertaken with CLT Sector (2019). Scaled down workforce planning meetings held with Sectors for 41 C/5
		Reduction in number of posts vacant after retirement.						The vacancy rate has reduced from an average of 13% in 2016 to 10% in June 2021 (RP posts)
3. Hire quality, committed candidates, with the expertise and skills required for the SDGs.	Develop and implement outreach strategies to attract a diversity of top candidates. Use assessment techniques where suited. Simplify the procedure and process, while ensuring its transparency. Make the process more rapid, with a timeline of 4-5 months from the issuance of the vacancy notice to the selection decision. Implement Service Level Agreements and monitor compliance.	Timeline of 4-5 months complied with in 75% of posts recruited.						Achieved: in 75% of the posts recruited in 2021, the timeline is below 5 months (150 days). (The timeline in June 2021 is 164 days for 100% of the posts).

<p>4. Achieve a geographically diverse workforce at all levels.</p>	<p>Implement measures set out in the Action Plan to improve the geographical distribution (Annex III), in order to reduce the number of under-represented and non-represented Member States and increase the number of normally represented countries.</p> <p>Work with Member States concerned to identify best avenues to attract qualified candidates at all levels. Pursue the Young Professional Programme every biennium, starting from 2018.</p>	<p>85% Member States represented in the Secretariat by 2022.</p>		<p>79% (152) of Member States represented</p>
<p>5. Achieve Gender Parity at all levels.</p>	<p>Implement measures set out in the Action Plan to achieve Gender Parity (Annex IV), to ensure that the principle of Gender Equality is embedded in all HR processes; and that gender parity is achieved and maintained at all levels, in particular at the Director level and above.</p> <p>Put in place specific measures to support the development of women in managerial and leadership roles.</p>	<p>50% women staff at all levels, including at Director level and above by 2020.</p> <p>% of women trained in leadership/managerial programmes.</p>	 	<p>55% of women represented at all levels</p> <p>52% of women represented at Director and International Professional level</p> <p>44% of women represented at Director and above level [<i>target of 50% achieved between May 2017 and January 2020</i>]</p> <p>22 women in 2018 participated in dedicated workshops on Leadership for Women.</p> <p>From 70 senior managers trained on Senior Leadership Development programme in 2019-2020, 43% were women.</p> <p>From 57 participants trained in People Management and Supervision in 2021, 47% were women.</p>

<p>6. Implement a managed mobility programme.</p>	<p>Develop and implement a managed mobility programme covering both geographical mobility for international professional staff and functional mobility for general service staff by 2018.</p> <p>Facilitate the movements of staff at P-1 to P-3 level early in their careers.</p> <p>Promote mobility, by making it a requirement for promotion to P-5 level. Implement short-term assignments to foster mobility.</p>	<p>Above 10% geographical mobility rate for International Professional staff per biennium.</p> <p>% of functional mobility per biennium.</p> <p>Number of moves of staff with more than 6 years in same post/function.</p> <p>Number of successful short-term assignments.</p>		<p>2018/2019 geographical mobility rate was 15% (including the 2019 managed mobility exercise)</p> <p>From Jan. 2020 to June 2021, the geographical mobility rate is at 8%</p> <p>Functional Mobility exercise to be launched in early 2022</p> <p>147 moves of staff of more than 6 years as from January 2018 to June 2021.</p> <p>44 staff members have successfully undertaken short-term assignments as from January 2018 to June 2021.</p>
<p>7. Implement the learning package under the Invest for Efficient Delivery Plan to build staff capacity and equip them with the skills required for the SDGs.</p>	<p>Develop and implement learning initiatives under the "Invest for Efficiency Delivery Plan". Target priority areas such as Resource Mobilization, Project management, Programme delivery at country level within the UN system, Leadership, Gender equality, Ethics, IT tools and corporate applications.</p> <p>Adopt flexible, blended learning approaches, and leverage technology. Introduce coaching and mentoring programmes as part of learning and development.</p>	<p>% of target population trained in each module.</p> <p>% of targeted staff coached</p> <p>Number of mentoring relationships in place for targeted staff</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Programme/Project Mgmt. [520 staff trained in RBM, project cycle mgmt. & 'meaningfully engaging Youth in UNESCO's work']; 2. Gender Equality [414 participants completed the 8 modules]; 3. Management & Accountability Culture [some 1700 staff completed the on-line competency-based interviews (CBI) for candidates (554) and managers (384), 56 participated in CBI workshops at HQ and Field, 274 participated in Career & Performance Workshops, and 424 staff completed the 4 online evaluation modules] 4. Leadership Skills (87 participants and 22 for leadership for women) 5. Corporate applications & IT tools [some 1400 trainings on contract mgmt., travel, performance etc.] <p>48 participants in the 2020 pilot mentoring programme.</p>

Create an enabling and engaging work environment									
Initiatives	Short Description	Performance Indicators	Time-frame						Progress update June 2021
			2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	
8. Review the contractual framework to fit the need for a flexible workforce, whilst ensuring appropriate conditions of service.	<p>Review the duration of fixed-term contracts by 2018, and further streamline temporary contracts, as required.</p> <p>Review “non-” staff contracts, in consultation with other United Nations agencies, with a view to ensure appropriate use and conditions of service.</p>	<p>New Fixed-term contract duration implemented.</p> <p>Reviews carried out (temporary and non-staff).</p>							<p>Review foreseen for 2022</p> <p>Review of Service Contract personnel being finalized for implementation in early 2022.</p> <p>Review of a new flexible contractual modality is currently ongoing at inter-agency level</p>
9. Implement an Organizational structure fit for purpose with generic roles, and clear career paths	<p>Develop and roll out generic job profiles for a majority of typical jobs in UNESCO.</p> <p>Develop career paths with competency and skills requirements for each of the main career streams in the Organization.</p>	<p>% of jobs covered by a generic job profile.</p> <p>Career paths developed for main identified career streams.</p>							<p>30% of jobs are covered by generics</p> <p>The Skills Inventory exercise will contribute to developing career paths (2022)</p>
10. Focus on manager’s performance; Recognize team performance; Support a culture of accountability and transparency, and promote Ethics.	<p>Ensure that staff well-being/duty of care is included in the performance assessment of managers.</p> <p>Review and implement the Team Award Programme.</p> <p>Conduct a staff survey every 2 years starting end 2017.</p> <p>Develop a Gift policy and guidance on Conflicts of Interest, with the Ethics Office.</p> <p>Communicate HR information regularly to staff and Member States, on the transparency portal and on intranet.</p>	<p>Staff well being / duty of care assessed as part of the managerial competence “managing performance”</p> <p>At least 2 teams rewarded per biennium.</p> <p>Staff surveys conducted.</p> <p>Gift Policy and Guidance on Conflicts of Interest issued and implemented.</p> <p>HR data published.</p>							<p>Performance agreement with senior managers will be enforced starting from 2022 which include objectives aiming at ensuring staff well-being/duty of care.</p> <p>Review ongoing for implementation in 2022</p> <p>Completed in 2018 and 2021</p> <p>Issued in 2019</p> <p>Key HR data & statistics issued every 6 months</p>

<p>11. Foster an inclusive and healthy workplace.</p>	<p>Implement Telework Agreements and explore other flexible work modalities.</p> <p>Develop and implement an Occupational Health Policy.</p> <p>Review the internal appeal system with a view to ensure reasonable delays.</p>	<p>Number of successful telework agreements put in place. Other flexible work modalities introduced.</p> <p>Occupational health policy introduced</p> <p>Timeline of appeals reduced</p>		<p>55 telework agreements were in place pre-COVID-19</p> <p>New flexible working arrangements policy developed and will be issued once alternative working arrangements are no longer in place</p> <p>Policy to be developed in consultation with key stakeholders and implemented in 2022</p> <p>Review completed in 2020</p> <p>Staff Regulation 11.1 and to the Statutes of the Appeals Board were amended to update the internal system of justice of the Organization and to adjust the time limits to ensure fairness and speed up proceedings.</p>
<p>12. Develop HRM staff capability and simplify key HR processes to improve operational effectiveness, including response time.</p>	<p>Develop key capabilities and skills for HR professionals, through learning and developmental assignments.</p> <p>Conduct a systematic review of staff rules.</p> <p>Simplify key HR processes.</p> <p>Establish Service Level Agreements for key HR processes, and monitor performance.</p>	<p>Number of development plans established to enhance HR competencies.</p> <p>Staff Rules reviewed.</p> <p>75% of the key processes reviewed and simplified</p> <p>At least 50% of key HR processes have SLAs by 2019, the other half by 2021</p>		<p>48 HR staff at HQ and in the Field enrolled in a global digital learning solution for HR experts to enhance HR competencies</p> <p>Staff Rules are reviewed on regular basis to ensure their consistency with the amended Staff Regulations and to reflect new or updated HR policies.</p> <p>Completed (recruitment, mobility, job classification, performance management, disciplinary proceedings)</p> <p>SLAs for Recruitment are being developed, HR dashboards in place to monitor targets</p>

Source: UNESCO (2021) Report by the Director-General on the Implementation of the Human Resources Management Strategy for 2017-2022. 41 C/47. 5 November 2021.

Annex 5 - Key Documents Consulted

The following list of documents consulted that were used as sources of evidence for the evaluation report. It is presented by order of author (alphabetical) and then year (ascending).

- IOS (2018) Evaluation of Department of Management - Office of Human Resources Management.
- IOS (2020) Evaluation of the First Managed Mobility Programme
- IOS (2020) Evaluation of the UNESCO Global Priority Gender Equality
- IOS (2020) Evaluation of UNESCO's Operational Strategy: For Priority Africa (2014-2021)
- IOS (2021) Review of UNESCO's Framework to Address and Respond to Sexual Harassment and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
- IOS (2021) Internal Oversight Service (IOS) Audit of UNESCO's Recruitment Process. 212 EX/35
- IOS (2021) UNESCO Field Offices in Action for Gender Equality: Evaluation of the Global Priority Gender Equality
- IOS (2022) 2022 Synthetic Review of UNESCO Evaluations.
- IOS (2022) From ambition to action: evaluation of the UNESCO global priority gender equality. IOS/EVS/PI/191.
- IOS and SRI (2022) UNESCO Advisory on Organizational Culture. Recommendation Report.
- JIU (2016) Succession Planning in the United Nations System Organizations. JIU/REP/2016.
- JIU (2019) Review of change management in United Nations system organizations. JIU/REP/2019/4.
- JIU (2019) Review of staff exchange and similar inter-agency mobility measures in United Nations system organizations. JIU/REP/2019/8.
- JIU (2020) Policies and platforms in support of learning: towards more coherence, coordination, and convergence. JIU/REP/2020/2.
- Mackenzie & Company (2020) Diversity wins: How inclusion matters.
- OECD (2021), Applying Evaluation Criteria Thoughtfully, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/543e84ed-en>
- UNESCO (2019) Report by the Director-General on the Judgments Concerning UNESCO Issued by the International Labour Organization Administrative Tribunal (ILOAT). Addendum Comments by the International Staff Association of UNESCO (ISAU). 206 EX/5.III.INF Add.
- UNESCO HRM (2017) Report by the Director-General on the Human Resources Management Strategy for 2017-2022. 39 C/43 + ADD.
- UNESCO HRM (2020) Workplan Project Review
- UNESCO (2021) Follow-Up to Decisions and Resolutions Adopted by the Executive Board and the General Conference at their Previous Sessions: Part IV: Human Resources Issues. Annex I. 212 EX/5.IV.A
- UNESCO (2021) Report by the Director-General on the Implementation of the Human Resources Management Strategy for 2017-2022. 41 C/47. 5 November 2021.
- UNESCO (2022) Follow-Up to Decisions and Resolutions Adopted by the Executive Board and the General Conference at their Previous Sessions. Part IV - Human Resources Issues. 215 EX/5.IV.A
- UNESCO (2022) Reports by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) of Interest to UNESCO and the Status of Implementation of Recommendations. 31 August 2022. 215 EX/20.
- UNESCO HRM/MS (2022) Key Data on UNESCO Staff. January 2022.
- UN (2019) Review of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. JIU/REP/2019/2.
- UN (2019) Review of staff exchange and similar inter-agency mobility measures in United Nations system organizations. JIU/REP/2019/8.
- UN (2021) Report of the Joint Inspection Unit for 2021 and programme of work for 2022. Supplement No. 34. A/76/34.
- UN (2021) Performance Management at the UN - A New Vision.
- UNS (2020) Summary of Conclusions of the 40th Session of the Human Resources Network. Chief Executives Board for Coordination. CEB/2020/HLCM/HR/6. 28 February 2020.

In addition to the above list, a range of relevant reports and other documents have also been consulted during the evaluation process.

Annex 6 – Interview Guide

A set of questions and sub-questions were developed based on the evaluation matrix. The questions in the table below provided the framework for the evidence matrix the team used to collate and analyse data.

This was not intended to be used as a questionnaire, but rather as a “checklist” during a semi-structured interview by evaluation team members when collecting relevant data to support conclusions and recommendations. This is a comprehensive interview guide, and it was understood that most key informants could not be expected to answer all the questions.

Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions
<p>How appropriate and relevant was the HRM Strategy to enable UNESCO to fulfil its organizational mandate?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent was the HRM Strategy relevant to meet UNESCO's mandate? Did the objectives match the challenges and needs during the implementation period? Was the strategy sufficiently flexible to be relevant in changing contexts? What were the main strengths and gaps of the HRM Strategy from design perspectives? Considering UNESCO's Global Priority regarding Gender Equality did the Strategy integrate considerations of gender equality and inclusion? What influence, if any, did UNESCO's Priority Africa strategy have on the HRM strategy? To what extent was the HRM Strategy influenced by learning from the previous HRM Strategy and during implementation of the current HRM Strategy?

Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions
<p>How effectively has the HRM Strategy been implemented across UNESCO?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What have been the main results and outcomes achieved to date through the implementation of the HRM Strategy? Were the successes or achievements of the strategy? If certain elements of the HRM Strategy were not implemented, why were they not implemented? How were the different elements prioritised? Did they result in significant gaps? To what extent were the M&E tools and measurement system used for the HRM Strategy effective in measuring results while enabling lessons to be captured and used? How effectively was the HRM Strategy communicated? To what extent did feedback from UNESCO staff (e.g., through surveys) influence implementation of the HRM Strategy? For non-staff personnel (consultants, service contract holders), how has the HRM Strategy supported them?
<p>To what extent was the implementation of the HRM Strategy efficient?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What was the specific value-added of the HRM Strategy? To what extent did the resources allocated to support the HRM Strategy yield the expected outputs? The extent that the processes and actions resulting from implementation of the HRM Strategy resulted in efficient actions. How does the UNESCO HRM Strategy compare with other similar UN agencies?

Evaluation Questions	Sub-Questions
To what extent was the HRM Strategy coherent?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent was the HRM Strategy aligned with relevant UNESCO processes and policies? • Was the HRM Strategy aligned with relevant UN norms and standards?
Are there any relevant documents that we should review?	
Is there anyone else that you think we should try and speak to?	
Any other comments?	
Help with distribution of targeted surveys? Have they filled it in and, if not, would they be willing to fill it in? Could they share it with others to improve response rates?	

Annex 7 – Survey questionnaires

Online Survey for UNESCO personnel

At its 214th session, the Executive Board requested the IOS Evaluation Office to conduct an evaluation of the current HRM Strategy (2017 – 2022) with the purpose to assess the implementation of the 2017- 2022 HRM Strategy. The preliminary findings of the evaluation will feed into the development of the new draft HRM Strategy 2023-2027. The final findings of the evaluation will determine any adjustments to the Strategy, based on the recommendations by the Executive Board.

The purpose of this online survey is to get your views on the implementation of the strategy, based on your direct or indirect involvement of the implementation of the HRM Strategy. Your participation is voluntary, but the evaluation team appreciates you taking the time to provide valuable inputs which will contribute to a rigorous and participatory evaluation process. The survey should only take you around 15 minutes to complete. Your responses will be collected by IOS and kept confidential.

Section A: Demographic Questions

1. Gender: Multiple options:
 - Female
 - Male
 - Other
2. Contract types, grade/level; Multiple options:
 - G1, G2, G3, G4, G5, G6, G7
 - P1, P2, P3, P4, P5,
 - D1, D2, ADG
 - Service contract holder
 - Consultant
 - Intern
 - other
3. Membership of networks, staff associations, unions:
 - Young UNESCO
 - Staff unions:
 - UNESCO Staff Union (STU)
 - Staff Association of UNESCO (ISAU)
4. Location of post:
 - Africa
 - Arab States
 - Asia & Pacific
 - Europe & North America
 - Latin America & the Caribbean
 - HQ
5. Time at UNESCO
 - Less than 1 year
 - 1 to 3 years
 - 4 to 6 years
 - 7 to 9 years
 - 10 and more years

Section B: HRM Strategy 2017 – 2022 Related Questions

1. Are you aware of the HRM Strategy 2017 - 2022?
 - Yes
 - No
2. Do you think the HRM Strategy is a relevant tool that contributes to fulfil UNESCO's mandate?
 - Yes
 - No
 - I don't know
3. Have you been involved in any aspects of the HRM Strategy 2017 - 2022?
 - Yes, directly
 - Yes, indirectly
 - No
 - I don't know
 - If you've answered "yes", please briefly describe how you were involved (Optional reply).
4. Do you feel that the 2017-2022 HRM Strategy was communicated effectively?
 - Strongly agree
 - Mostly agree
 - Mostly disagree
 - Strongly disagree
 - No opinion/ Cannot judge
 - What is the reason for your rating? Do you have any suggestions for improvement? (Optional reply)
5. In your opinion, what has been the greatest value of the HRM Strategy 2017-2022?
 - It helps improve the quality of service provided to UNESCO's stakeholders
 - It helps improve staff performance
 - It helps improve the quality of staff we hire and train
 - It contributes towards staff safety and security
 - It enhances staff care
 - I don't know
6. During the strategic period 2017-2022, the following frameworks, guidelines and policies were developed. Which have you heard about?
 - Competency Framework
 - Workforce Planning Framework
 - Managed Mobility Programme
 - Updated Recruitment Policy
 - Revised Classification Policy
 - Updated Performance Management Policy
 - Revised Flexible Working Arrangements Policy
 - Updated Rest and Recuperation Policy
 - Anti-Harassment Policy
 - Gift Policy
 - Revised Appeal Procedure
 - Revised Disciplinary Process
 - Delegated Human Resource Authorities Policy on the Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

7. Considering UNESCO's Global Priority Gender Equality, did the Strategy integrate considerations of gender equality and inclusion?
- Yes
 - No
 - Partially
 - I don't know
8. Do you think there is buy in and support for the HRM Strategy (2017-2022) across the Organization?
- Yes
 - No
 - Partially
 - What was the reason for your answer? (Optional reply).
9. In your view, which three elements of the HRM Strategy are most important? Select the ones that apply.
- Competency Framework
 - Workforce Planning
 - Recruitment
 - Mobility
 - Learning and Development
 - Geographically Diverse Workforce
 - Gender Parity at all Levels
 - Classification
 - Human Resource Partnerships
 - Culture of Transparency and Accountability
 - Performance management
 - Ethics and Standards of Conduct
10. In your view, which elements of the HRM Strategy make a difference to you? Select the ones that apply.
- Internal Justice System
 - Staff Well Being
 - What was the reason for your answer? (Optional reply).
10. In your view, which elements of the HRM Strategy make a difference to you? Select the ones that apply.
- Competency Framework
 - Workforce Planning
 - Recruitment
 - Mobility
 - Learning and Development
 - Geographically Diverse Workforce
 - Gender Parity at all Levels
 - Classification
 - Human Resource Partnerships
 - Culture of Transparency and Accountability
 - Performance management
 - Ethics and Standards of Conduct
 - Internal Justice System
 - Staff Well Being
 - What was the reason for your answer? (Optional reply).
11. Is there anything else you wish to say about your experiences with the HRM Strategy and/or what needs to be considered when designing the new HRM Strategy which will be launched in 2023 (optional reply)?

Online Survey for personnel in the Bureau of HRM

At its 214th session, the Executive Board requested the IOS Evaluation Office to conduct an evaluation of the current HRM Strategy (2017 – 2022) with the purpose to assess the implementation of the 2017- 2022 HRM Strategy. The preliminary findings of the evaluation will feed into the development of the new draft HRM Strategy 2023-2027. The final findings of the evaluation will determine any adjustments to the Strategy, based on the recommendations by the Executive Board.

The purpose of this online survey is to get your input on the implementation of the strategy, based on your direct or indirect involvement of the strategy implementation. Your participation is voluntary, but the evaluation team appreciates you taking the time to provide valuable inputs which will contribute to a rigorous and participatory evaluation process. The survey should only take you around 15 minutes to complete. Your responses will be collected by IOS and kept confidential.

Section A: Demographic Questions

1. Gender: Multiple options:
 - Female
 - Male
 - Other
2. Grade / Level: Multiple options:
 - G1, G2, G3, G4, G5, G6, G7
 - P1, P2, P3, P4, P5,
 - D1, D2, ADG
 - Service contract holder
 - Consultant
 - Intern
 - other
3. Membership to staff associations and unions:
 - Young UNESCO
 - Staff unions:
 - UNESCO Staff Union (STU)
 - Staff Association of UNESCO (ISAU)
4. Location of post:
 - Africa
 - Arab States
 - Asia & Pacific
 - Europe & North America
 - Latin America & the Caribbean
 - HQ
5. Time at UNESCO
 - Less than 1 year
 - 1 to 3 years
 - 4 to 6 years
 - 7 to 9 years
 - 10 and more years

Section B: HRM Strategy 2017-2022 Related Questions

1. Are you aware of the HRM Strategy 2017 - 2022?
 - Yes
 - No
2. Do you think the HRM Strategy is a relevant tool that contributes to fulfil UNESCO's mandate?
 - Yes
 - No
 - I don't know
3. Have you been involved in any aspects of the HRM Strategy?
 - Yes, directly
 - Yes, indirectly
 - No
 - I don't know
 - If you've answered "yes", please briefly describe how you were involved.
4. Do you feel that the 2017-2022 HRM Strategy was communicated effectively?
 - Strongly agree
 - Mostly agree
 - Mostly disagree
 - Strongly disagree
 - No opinion/ Cannot judge
5. In your opinion, what has been the greatest value of the HRM Strategy 2017-2022?
 - It helps improve the quality of service provided to UNESCO's stakeholders
 - It helps improve staff performance
 - It helps improve the quality of staff we hire and train
 - It contributes towards staff safety and security
 - It enhances staff care
 - I don't know
6. During the strategic period 2017-2022, the following framework and policies were developed. In your opinion, which of the policies are effectively implemented?
 - Competency Framework
 - Workforce Planning Framework
 - Recruitment Policy
 - Revised Classification Policy
 - Updated Performance Management Policy
 - Revised Flexible Working Arrangements Policy
 - Updated Rest and Recuperation Policy
 - Anti-Harassment Policy
 - Gift Policy
 - Policy on the Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)
 - What was the reason for your answer? (Optional reply).
7. Considering UNESCO's Global Priority Gender Equality, did the Strategy integrate considerations of gender equality and inclusion?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Partially
 - I don't know
8. Do you think there is buy in and support for the HRM Strategy across the organization?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Partially

9. In your view, which elements of the HRM Strategy are showing real progress? Select the ones that apply.
- Competency Framework
 - Workforce Planning
 - Recruitment
 - Mobility
 - Learning and Development
 - Geographically Diverse Workforce
 - Gender Parity at all Levels
 - Classification
 - Human Resource Partnerships
 - Culture of Transparency and Accountability
 - Performance management
 - Ethics and Standards of Conduct
 - Internal Justice System
 - Staff Well Being
10. Do you think HRM has the in-house capabilities and competencies to implement the strategy?
- Yes
 - No
 - Partially
 - Don't Know
11. What does HR need to effectively implement the HRM Strategy?
- Clear targets and priorities
 - Clear roles and responsibilities
 - Increased capacity (more staff)
 - New competencies
 - More resources (system, budget, etc)
 - Time to implement the plan
 - Other, please specify ...
12. Is there anything else you wish to say about your experiences with the HRM Strategy and/or what needs to be considered when designing the new HRM Strategy which will be launched in 2023?

Annex 8 – Survey results

Evaluation of the HRM Strategy (2017-2022): Visual summary of survey results

Demographics

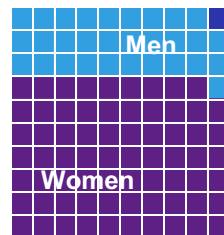
Share of non-HRM/HRM respondents



Both surveys received a combined total of 727 responses.

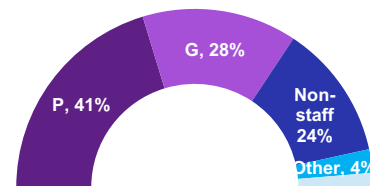
685 non-HRM and 42 HRM staff and non-staff members responded to the surveys.

Share of female/ male/other respondents



Out of the total of combined responses, there was a majority of female respondents (62%), followed by male respondents (37%) and 1% having selected "other" gender.

Share of contract types and grades among respondents



Out of the total of combined responses, staff members at P level represented the majority of respondents (41%) and those at ADG and D levels the minority of respondents (3%).

Awareness and communication of the HRM Strategy

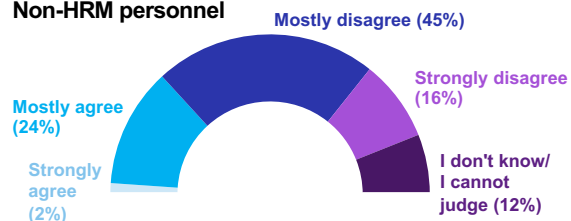


40% of non-HRM respondents and 74% of HRM respondents stated that they were aware of the Strategy.

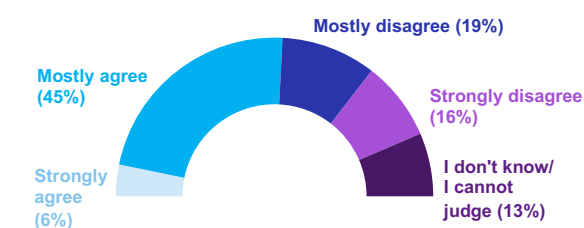
This relatively low level of awareness correlates with the question about whether the Strategy had been communicated effectively: most non-HRM members disagreed (61%) whereas a small minority of HRM respondents agreed (51%).

Q: The Strategy was communicated effectively...

Non-HRM personnel



HRM personnel



Most and least progress of elements of the HRM Strategy

Top 3 elements having shown most progress Excluding "I don't know" responses

Non-HRM

Ethics & Standards of Conduct

Managed mobility

Learning and Development

HRM

Learning and Development

Diverse workforce

Managed mobility/ Recruitment

Top 3 elements having shown least progress

Non-HRM

Staff well-being

Culture of transparency /Recruitment

Classification

HRM

Staff well-being

Culture of transparency

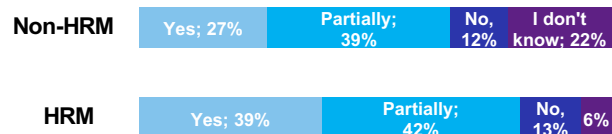
Internal justice system

Relevance of the HRM Strategy and integration of gender/inclusion

Overall, most respondents (57% of non-HRM and 87% of HRM respondents) agreed that the Strategy contributes to fulfilling UNESCO's mandate.

Taking into account UNESCO's Global Priority Gender Equality, most respondents (from both the non-HRM and HRM pools of respondents) stated that the HRM Strategy sufficiently integrated considerations of gender equality and inclusion.

Q: The Strategy included gender and inclusion considerations...



Value of the HRM Strategy

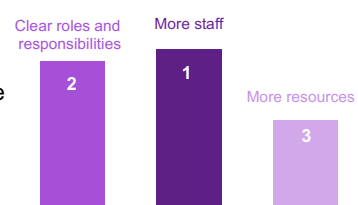
Most respondents do not know how the Strategy proved most valuable.



HRM capabilities, competencies and enablers

Overall, HRM respondents agreed, partially (48%) or fully (19%), that the HRM Bureau has the in-house capabilities to implement the Strategy. They also stated that the Bureau has the full (42%) or partial (35%) in-house competencies to roll it out.

In terms of enablers for the implementation of the Strategy, HRM respondents gave the following ranking:



Annex 9 – Evaluation Matrix

The questions in the TOR have been complemented with other issues that emerged during the inception phase. They have been organised by different OECD-DAC evaluation criteria.¹ The team addressed these questions through using the indicators, judgement criteria and data sources listed below.

Relevance (EQ 1)		
Relevance entails examining the extent to which the intervention's objectives and design respond to the organizational needs and priorities, as well as alignment with other relevant UNESCO policies and priorities. Understanding gendered power dynamics and diversity will be crucial in understanding relevance. Relevance also examines the extent to which the HRM Strategy remained relevant when the context changed.		
Evaluation questions	Indicators / Judgement Criteria	Data sources
EQ 1: How appropriate and relevant was the HRM Strategy to enable UNESCO to fulfil its organizational mandate?		
1.1 To what extent was the HRM Strategy relevant to meet UNESCO's mandate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comparative analysis of HRM strategies, organizational structure, ways of working, budget allocations to identify relevant lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HRM Policies, procedures, guidelines that are developed, revised, or updated during the strategy period
1.2 Did the objectives in the HRM Strategy match the challenges and needs during the implementation period?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent did consultations with different categories of staff inform the HRM Strategy. Evidence that consultations with a representative diversity of staff influenced the HRM Strategy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HRM tools such as the skills mapping tool Staff Survey Results Interview Findings
1.3 Was the strategy sufficiently flexible to be relevant in changing contexts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact of Covid on staff management and performance Implementation of new policies and practices Components of the strategy were appropriate Appropriateness of benchmark and targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation and Audit Reports HRM Dashboard
1.4 What were the main strengths and gaps of the HRM Strategy from design perspectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How were different staff categories treated under the strategy? 	

¹ OECD (2021) Applying Evaluation Criteria Thoughtfully. OECD Publishing.

Evaluation questions	Indicators / Judgement Criteria	Data sources
EQ 1: How appropriate and relevant was the HRM Strategy to enable UNESCO to fulfil its organizational mandate?		
<p>1.5 Taking into account UNESCO's Global Priority Gender Equality, did the Strategy integrate considerations of gender equality and inclusion?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender and diversity have been incorporated appropriately into the HRM Strategy based on UNESCO's Global Priority Gender Equality principles. • Monitoring systems for the HRM Strategy are tracking relevant gender and inclusion indicators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant policies • Staff Survey Results • Interview Findings • Reports (DG, evaluation, audits, lessons learned).
<p>1.6 To what extent was the HRM Strategy influenced by learning from the previous HRM Strategy and during implementation of the current HRM Strategy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of lessons captured from the previous strategy and the extent to which they influence the current strategy • The extent that recommendations from EB, STU, ISAU are influence the HRM Strategy and are based on lessons learned and/ or other evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRM Dashboard. • Progress reports, statements from STU, ISAU • Monitoring Results

Coherence (EQ 2)

Coherence examines the extent to which other policies support or undermine the HRM Strategy and vice versa. This includes internal coherence within UNESCO and more broadly with UN HRM norms and standards. Coherence includes concepts of coordination, harmonisation and the extent to which the HRM Strategy is adding value while avoiding duplication of effort.

Evaluation questions	Indicators / Judgement Criteria	Data sources
EQ 2: To what extent was the HRM Strategy coherent?		
<p>2.1 To what extent was the HRM Strategy aligned with relevant UNESCO frameworks and priorities such as the MTS, Gender and Inclusion and Priority Africa?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRM Strategy reflected in other strategies and policies and processes (have these been issued and when were these issued) • Evidence that anticipated changes to processes and related policies were planned. • Significant gaps between HRM Strategy and other strategies, notably UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy for 2014-2021. • HRM Strategy supports UNESCO MTS and supports SDGs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • HR survey results • Desk review (studies, reports, strategies) • Mapping of HR processes (e.g., work plans, program and budget evaluations and KPIs).
<p>2.2 Was the HRM Strategy aligned with relevant UN norms and standards?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment with UN Reform (examples of alignment of HRM Strategy and UN Reform ex. Gender, diversity...) • Consistency with other UN agency HRM strategies with respect to SDGs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System-wide UN guidance • Strategies and policies of selected UN peer organizations

Effectiveness (EQ 3)

Effectiveness looks at the extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and its results, while considering the relative importance (prioritisation) of the objectives. Effectiveness also includes an analysis of differential results within the HRM Strategy and the extent to which the HRM Strategy contributed to success and where there were gaps.

Evaluation questions	Indicators / Judgement Criteria	Data sources
EQ 3: How effectively has the HRM Strategy been implemented across UNESCO?		
<p>3.1 What have been the main results and outcomes achieved to date through the implementation of the HRM Strategy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key design principles of HRM Strategy are applied. Example: Contribute towards ONE UNESCO (HQ, Field, Category 1), Shared responsibility among the stakeholders (HR, Managers, senior management, staff), HRM Strategy is flexible • Staff capabilities increased for the SDGs • Surveys trends assessing an enabling work environment • Quality and speed of recruitment and selection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Survey Results • Interviews • Document reviews • Online survey results • Competency development framework developed and applied in HR processes • HRM Dashboard • Evaluations • Implementation Plans • Reports / DG Updates
<p>3.2 What were the successes or achievements of the strategy? If certain elements of the HRM Strategy were not implemented, why were they not implemented? How were the different elements prioritised? Did they result in significant gaps?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illustration of significant changes • Evidence of how the elements were prioritised and on what basis. • How prioritisation affect the overall implementation of the strategy. 	
<p>3.3 To what extent was the M&E tools and measurement system used for the HRM Strategy effective in measuring results while enabling lessons to be captured and used?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparison of relevance and effectiveness of M&E (what is being measured and how lessons are captured, and changes implemented) 	
<p>3.4 How effectively was the HRM Strategy communicated? To what extent did feedback from UNESCO staff (e.g., through surveys) influence implementation of the HRM Strategy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and types of communication used to support the HRM Strategy. • Confirmations that the messages were heard and understood by targeted groups. • Evidence that communications changed behaviour. • Number and type of feedback received. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Desk research (reports, communication materials and guidelines, studies, reviews) • Survey results

Efficiency (EQ 4)

Efficiency should help to understand the extent to which the HRM Strategy delivered results in an economic and timely way. “Economic” in this sense is the conversion of inputs (funds, expertise, capacity, time, etc.) into results, in the most cost-efficient way possible, as compared to feasible alternatives in the context. Efficiency also looks whether the HRM Strategy was able to deliver in a timely way. Efficiency provides an opportunity to check whether resourcing made available to the HRM Strategy can be justified by its results.

Evaluation questions	Indicators / Judgement Criteria	Data sources
EQ 4: To what extent was the implementation of the HRM Strategy efficient?		
<p>4.1 What was the specific value-added of the HRM Strategy? To what extent did the resources allocated to support the HRM Strategy yield the expected outputs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources invested outweighs outputs and outcomes. • Evidence of UNESCO decision-making that considered alternative approaches • Comparative analysis with relevant alternatives of other agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey Results • Interviews • Document reviews • Online survey results
<p>4.2 The extent that the processes and actions resulting from implementation of the HRM Strategy resulted in efficient actions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that processes and activities were efficient (converting inputs into results) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRM Dashboard • Evaluations • Implementation Plans • Reports / DG Updates • HRM staffing plans, audits, and budgets
<p>4.3 What has been the experience of similar UN agencies when implementing activities comparable to those in the UNESCO HRM Strategy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparative analysis of HRM strategies, organizational structure, ways of working, budget allocations to identify relevant lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk review (HR studies and reviews, lessons learned) • Interviews with peer UN agencies

Annex 10 – Terms of Reference

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Evaluation of the UNESCO Human Resources Management Strategy 2017-2022

Background

1. UNESCO is in the process of developing its new Human Resources Management (HRM) Strategy for 2023-2027. The draft Strategy will be presented to the 215th session of the Executive Board (autumn 2022), further to the decision by the 2021 General Conference (decision 41 C/Res.63). The Executive Board session will review and adopt, on a provisional basis, the new HR Strategy 2023-2027 for implementation as of January 2023. The new Strategy will be officially endorsed by the General Conference at its 42nd session (autumn 2023).
2. Preliminary consultations on the new HR Strategy were carried out in January 2022 by the Bureau of Human Resources Management across various stakeholder groups. Preliminary proposals for the outline of the HR Strategy were presented to the 214th Executive Board session (spring 2022).
3. The new Strategy will be grounded in UNESCO's Medium-Term Strategy for 2022-2029 and will aim at achieving its Enabling Objective 'Foster an enabling environment for the efficient and effective delivery of UNESCO's priorities' thus addressing the need for "an agile, accountable and proactive Organization." The new Strategy will also be informed by results from the 2021 Global Staff Survey, and best practices within the UN System. It will support the further efforts for ensuring a stronger focus on results, as well as on strengthening UNESCO impact at country and regional levels.
4. The UNESCO General Conference in November 2017 approved the UNESCO Human Resources Management Strategy 2017-2022 (HR Strategy). The HR Strategy has two primary objectives: i) the strengthening of staff capabilities for the Sustainable Development Goals and ii) the creation of an enabling and engaging work environment. The first goal speaks to the need to attract, retain and develop staff and the second to the development of an enabling and engaging work environment.

5. Many initiatives were developed and implemented under the current 2017-2022 Human Resources Management Strategy. UNESCO has regularly reported its progress to the Governing Bodies [cf. documents 205 EX/5. IV, 207 EX/5.IV.B, 209 EX/5.III.A, 211 EX/5.III.B and 212 EX/5.IVA]. A further and final progress report on initiatives and activities ongoing in 2021-2022 will be presented to the Executive Board at its 215th session, at the same time as a new draft Strategy 2023-2027.

Rationale and Purpose of the Evaluation

6. At its 214th session, the Executive Board requested an Internal Oversight Service (IOS) evaluation of the current HRM Strategy to feed into the development of the new strategy for 2023-2027. The report of the evaluation should be submitted to the 216th session of the Executive Board (spring 2023).
7. The main objective of this evaluation is to assess the implementation of the 2017-2022 HRM Strategy. The preliminary findings of the evaluation will feed into the development of the new draft HRM Strategy 2023-2027. The final findings of the evaluation will determine any adjustments to the Strategy, based on the recommendations by the Executive Board.
8. IOS and the Bureau for HRM will jointly identify a Reference Group composed of: representative(s) from the Office of the ADG of the Sector for Administration and Management, the Bureau of HRM, representative(s) from Programme Sectors and Category I Institutes and Field Offices and representative(s) from the Staff Unions. The evaluation will be completed by November 2022.

Scope of the Evaluation

9. The evaluation will focus on the implementation of the current HR Strategy since 2017 – noting that it is still being implemented in 2022 – as well as learning from its development process.
10. The evaluation will focus overall on:
 - **The implementation of the current HR Strategy:** The evaluation will review the manner in which UNESCO is implementing the HR Strategy, with a particular focus on the role of the Bureau of HRM in the Strategy's implementation. Questions will seek to unpack how the various elements of the Strategy were implemented and if elements were not implemented, seek to understand what the reasons behind the lack of implementation were. In other words, it will also assess why progress was or was not made and the reasons influencing progress.

- **Learning from the Strategy:** The evaluation will assess the process of developing the current Strategy in 2022 with the aim of drawing lessons that can feed into the ongoing development of the new HR Strategy 2023-2027.

Purpose and Use

11. The final report will be made publicly available and the findings will be actively communicated and disseminated by IOS and the Bureau of HRM, in line with UNESCO's Evaluation Policy (214 EX/19-INF, 4 March 2022).
12. The findings from the evaluation will serve an accountability purpose (what is the progress in the implementation of the current Strategy) as well as a learning purpose (what have we learned that we can incorporate into the development of the new Strategy?). The primary users of the evaluation will be UNESCO Member States, UNESCO Senior Management, specifically the Sector for Administration and Management and the Bureau of Human Resources Management. Secondary users will be staff and staff associations.

Limitations

13. In order for preliminary findings to feed into the ongoing development of the new HR Strategy 2023-2027, these need to be available in a short time-frame. Therefore, the review of documentation and other data collection efforts will need to be limited.
14. The evaluation will assess the implementation of the HR Strategy, which can only be limited to certain outcomes, given the Strategy is still being implemented in 2022. Insufficient time has elapsed to identify longer-term outcomes of the Strategy's full implementation.

Key Evaluation Questions

15. The evaluation will aim to answer some of the questions below. These questions will be adapted after a brief inception phase during which the consultant(s) will consult with the Reference Group and adjust the questions proposed by the ToR.
 - How appropriate and relevant was the HR Strategy to enable UNESCO to fulfil its organizational mandate?

- What lessons can be drawn from the development process of the HR Strategy 2017-2022 to feed into the development of the new HR Strategy 2023-2027?
 - How effectively has the HR Strategy been implemented across UNESCO? If elements were not implemented, why were they not implemented (noting that implementation is continuing in 2022)?
 - What have been the main results and outcomes achieved to date through the implementation of the HR Strategy?
 - Taking into account UNESCO's Global Priority Gender Equality did the Strategy integrate considerations of gender equality and inclusion?
16. The evaluation should consider internal and external factors, such as the following:
 - Buy-in and support for the HR Strategy across the Organization (inter alia Member States; senior management; directors/heads of bureaux/institutes and offices away from headquarters; staff across the Organization, including in the Bureau of HRM; staff associations; Young UNESCO). Institutional enabling environment, including policies, structure, and decision-making processes;
 - Appropriate skillsets, competencies, and organizational structure within the Bureau of HRM and across other Bureaux, divisions, and field offices;
 - Delegations of authority in relation to HR decisions;
 - Funding available for hiring, training, and ensuring appropriate contracts across the workforce;
 - Gender and geographical targets;
 - External operating environment and factors, including UN reform and changes in working conditions, particularly under COVID-19 restrictions; and
 - HRM capacity/resources.

Methods

17. The suggested methods for this evaluation are the following:
 - A desk-based review of a variety of documents; and
 - Key informant interviews across the Organization and the Executive Board.

Roles and Responsibilities

18. The Evaluation Office of the Division of Internal Oversight Services (IOS) will manage the evaluation. In close consultation with the Bureau of HRM, this will involve, amongst other tasks, finalizing the Terms of Reference, identifying and contracting an external consultant and providing the quality assurance throughout the process. All IOS evaluations adhere to the revised UNESCO Evaluation Policy, the [UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation](#) and the [UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation](#). Consultants must sign the [UNEG Pledge of Ethical Conduct in Evaluation](#).
19. The evaluation will be conducted with the support of and input from a team of one or more external consultants. The consultant(s) are expected to contribute specific expertise in areas related to human resource strategies in order to strengthen the technical quality of the data collection. They are further expected to contribute senior evaluation expertise to the evaluation design, approach and analysis. The external consultants will be responsible for developing the methodology framework, the collection of data and analysis as well as for drafting the evaluation report in English. The exact distribution of roles and responsibilities of the team members will be further specified and agreed in the Inception Report once the external consultant(s) have been selected.
20. An Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) will guide the evaluation process and ensure the quality of associated deliverables. In consultation with relevant stakeholders IOS will establish this group to accompany the evaluation process and provide feedback on the ToR, the inception report and the draft evaluation report.
21. IOS in close coordination with HRM will support access to relevant documentation contact details and lists of stakeholders.

Qualifications of External Evaluation Consultant(s)

22. The consultant(s) should possess the following mandatory qualifications and experience:
 - At least 5 years of relevant evaluation experience;
 - University degree at Master's level or equivalent in education, social sciences, political sciences, economics, or any related field;
 - Familiarity with UN mandates
 - Understanding and application of UN mandates in Human Rights and Gender Equality
 - Familiarity with human resource frameworks
 - Demonstrated excellent drafting skills in English
 - Working knowledge of French.

Deliverables and Schedule

23. The evaluation will take place between June and November 2022 and will require around 45 professional working days.
24. The consultant(s) will conduct data collection, analyse the data and prepare a draft with initial findings by October 2022 (in English). The final report will be due in January 2023. The consultant(s) might be required to present preliminary findings to UNESCO Senior Management.
25. The consultant(s) will deliver:
 - A short inception report which will include adjusted/revised questions and further precisions on the methodology.
 - A preliminary report of findings based on a review of documentation and preliminary interviews, which will feed into the drafting of the new HR Strategy 2023-2027 by end June, early July 2022.
 - A draft report, which will be reviewed by the Reference Group
 - A final report in English that is no more than 20-25 pages, including the Executive Summary.

Proposed timeline

Activity/Deliverable	Finished by
Finalization of Terms of Reference	10 May
Convene the Reference Group	Week of 13 May
Launch Expression of Interest	15 May 2022
Select consultants	Early June
Inception report	Late June
Data collection: Document review and initial interviews	June-September
Preliminary report of findings to the Bureau of HRM and IOS to feed into the new HR Strategy 2023-2027	September
Further Data collection	October 2022
Data Analysis	November
Draft report	End-November 2022
Feedback from reference group on draft report	Early December 2022
Final report	Mid-January 2023
Management response to the evaluation report	End February 2023

Annex 11 – Consultants' biodata

Jock Baker (Independent Consultant, Team Leader) has been conducting evaluations for more than two decades following a career with four United Nations agencies and two NGOs in Asia, the Pacific, Africa, Central America, Europe, and the United States. He has led several studies, reviews and evaluations for UN agencies, NGOs, the European Union, and various governments. He holds a BSc in Biological Sciences from the University of Edinburgh, an MSc in Economics from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and Certificates in Evaluation in Conflict Prone Settings from the International Conflict Research Institute at the University of Ulster and in Advanced Outcome Harvesting for Complex Development Programmes from the University of Bologna.

Uma Narayanan (Independent Consultant) is based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. She has a background in Organizational Development and Human Resources. She has worked extensively in human resources in both emergency and non-emergency contexts in Asia. In her capacity as an evaluator, she has carried out numerous reviews, impact assessments and evaluations for various humanitarian and development programmes globally. Uma has an MSc in International Employment Relations and Human Resources from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE), UK.

Syreen Forest (Consultant, UNESCO Evaluation Office) is a consultant with the UNESCO Evaluation Office at the Division of Internal Oversight Services. Syreen held positions as Research Associate, Education Fellow and Programme Coordinator at the UNICEF Regional Office for Eastern and Southern Africa in Nairobi, Columbia University's Middle East Centre in Amman and the EuroMed Foundation in Copenhagen. Her work has centred on education, gender and public policies. Syreen has a bachelor's degree in History from the Sorbonne (Paris-Sorbonne University) and a master's degree in Political Science with a concentration on the Middle East and North Africa from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London.



**DIVISION OF
INTERNAL
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SERVICES**

Evaluation Office