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Progress made in human resources management in UNICEF

Summary

This report, presented at the request of the Executive Board, confirms the increasingly critical role that human resources play in the achievement of the mission and goals of UNICEF. The report details current staffing profiles and structures and recent trends. It describes the strategic workforce planning taking place to address the main challenges: to ensure a consistent supply of talent as well as appropriate human resource frameworks and processes to cover the wide range of operational needs of UNICEF.

Recent, current and future actions to address these and other challenges are described, as is the focus of the Division of Human Resources on obtaining and measuring results, improving efficiencies and developing professional competencies.

* E/ICEF/2010/15.



I. Introduction

1. The achievement of the mission and goals of UNICEF depends on the dedication, commitment and skills of the staff of UNICEF — and those of its partners. In an increasingly competitive environment, UNICEF needs to attract the best global talent in pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals and the targets of the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan. This is essential to improve the lives of women and children across the world. UNICEF aspires to become *the* place to work for those who want to make a difference in the world.

2. The present report provides an overview of the progress made in human resources management in UNICEF since 2007, when the first report on the organizational review process was presented to the Executive Board (E/ICEF/2007/CRP.16). Following the introduction given in section I, section II discusses the organizational context and the approach and principles of human resource management in UNICEF. Section III describes up-to-date information on the composition and structure of UNICEF staff. Section IV summarizes the progress achieved in the following key areas:

- (a) Strategic workforce planning;
- (b) Attracting, identifying and recruiting talent;
- (c) Human Resources in emergencies;
- (d) Learning and development;
- (e) Work environment and staff relations;
- (f) United Nations system-wide coherence;
- (g) Efficiencies within the Human Resources function.

3. Section V presents conclusions.

II. Human resource approach and principles

4. UNICEF is a complex global organization with a wide variety of programme requirements and challenges. The aim of human resource management is to provide the core skills that UNICEF needs in order to perform its work in this complex environment.

5. At the same time, the goal is to retain sufficient flexibility to ensure adaptability to changing circumstances. With a new Executive Director in place who is clearly articulating a vision to achieve the Millennium Development Goals with equity and reduce disparities in a more targeted manner, the ability of UNICEF to match the competencies and capabilities of its people to the needs of the organization is more critical than ever.

6. The approach of Human Resources is underpinned by a set of “people principles”:

- (a) Staff understand UNICEF goals, principles and values and are committed to delivering results and to “unite for children”;
- (b) Staff embrace diversity and encourage innovation;

(c) UNICEF leaders and managers have the capability and skills required to guide and support staff;

(d) Staff have the capability and skills required to deliver on UNICEF goals, and benefit from a culture of UNICEF that supports career growth;

(e) High performance of staff is expected and recognized.

7. As a result of the organizational improvement initiatives being undertaken by UNICEF, three areas have been identified as critical for the future:

(a) Shaping the workforce to meet the challenges of the future;

(b) Leveraging talent from a wide range of sources;

(c) Strengthening a results-based culture to deliver impact.

8. The organizational improvement initiatives emphasize that the responsibility for strengthening the “people” capability of UNICEF is jointly shared by managers, staff and Human Resources. Each group has a role to play in ensuring that effective and efficient processes are designed, understood and implemented throughout the organization.

III. Composition and structure of UNICEF staff

9. The staffing structure of UNICEF needs to reflect the changing demands of the work of the organization. The ability of UNICEF to deliver results at the country-office level requires a devolved organizational design, accompanied by appropriate accountabilities and governance. As programmes are increasingly adapted to meet the emerging needs of countries, the organization will require flexibility and adaptability in human resource capabilities and contractual modalities.

10. UNICEF engagement in countries of differing typologies and the need to respond to an increasing number of emergency and post-conflict situations also dictate a shift in staff profiles and an enhanced ability to manage and motivate staff in various situations.

11. Increasingly, UNICEF will source additional competence through partners, centres of excellence and other institutions to complement existing staffing structures in order to respond flexibly to changing demands.

12. All of these strategic shifts will need to be achieved within an environment of greater accountability to stakeholders and increased efficiency and effectiveness.

A. Total number of staff by category and contractual status

13. As of 1 June 2010, UNICEF had 11,183 staff members (see table 1). International Professionals (IPs) make up about 25 per cent (2,801), including 99 Junior Professional Officers. National Professional Officers (NOs) account for 27 per cent (2,976), while the remaining 48 per cent (5,406) are in the General Service (GS), or support staff category. Overall, 1,969, or about 18 per cent, hold temporary appointment (TA) contracts, while 82 per cent are on regular contracts, both fixed-term and permanent. Fixed-term contracts currently have a maximum duration of two years. The proportion of staff holding temporary versus regular

contracts is the same for the NO and GS categories (19 per cent for both), and lower for IPs (14 per cent).

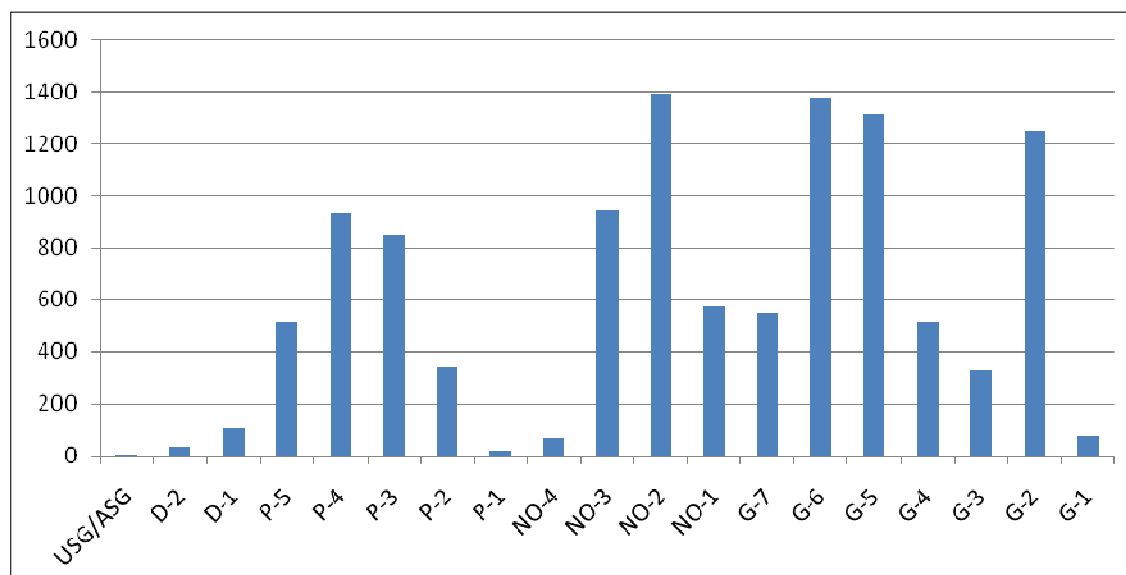
Table 1
Distribution of staff by category and contractual status (as of 1 June 2010)

<i>Category</i>	<i>Regular</i>	<i>Temporary appointment</i>	<i>Total and percentage</i>
International Professional	2 422	379	2 801 (25%)
National Officer	2 417	559	2 976 (27%)
General Service	4 375	1 031	5 406 (48%)
Total	9 214	1 969	11 183 (100%)

B. Staffing structure

14. Figure 1, “Number of staff by level” (as of 1 June 2010) provides data on the staffing structure in UNICEF. Data indicate that the majority of IP/NO staff (48 per cent) are in the middle-professional levels (the P-3/NO-C and the P-4/NO-D levels) creating a mid-organizational “bulge”. This distribution is in line with the field-based operations of UNICEF but requires constant monitoring to ensure that it is appropriate to the needs of the organization. In the General Service category, there is also a large grouping (59 per cent) at the upper-middle GS-5 and GS-6 levels.

Figure 1
Number of staff by level, 1 June 2010



C. Gender representation

15. UNICEF is committed to gender balance and to removing systemic barriers that would prevent the full participation of staff of both genders and perpetuate gender inequalities.

16. This objective is anchored in a number of policies, including the UNICEF Gender Parity and Equality Policy,¹ which sets goals for an increase in the participation of women at all levels (with a special focus on senior levels); family-friendly policies (including “Flexible Working Arrangements and Parental Leave”); and the stated commitment of the organization to achieve the United Nations system-wide goal of gender parity at all levels of staff by 2010.

17. Table 2, “Gender balance of UNICEF staff”, and table 3, “Gender balance of UNICEF staff across levels” (as of 1 June 2010), show that female staff members constituted 48 per cent of the entire workforce, as of 1 June 2010. The only United Nations system organizations with a higher ratio of female to male staff members are the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Institute for Training and Research and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS.²

Table 2
Gender balance of UNICEF staff (as of 1 June 2010)

Year	Female		Male		Total count
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	
2006	4 644	47	5 317	53	9 961
2007	4 765	47	5 381	53	10 146
2008	5 128	48	5 521	52	10 649
2009	5 309	48	5 747	52	11 056
As of 1 June 2010	5 392	48	5 791	52	11 183

18. The Key Performance Indicators for gender parity in the biennial support budget have been refined. For gender parity at senior levels (the percentage of female staff at P/L-5 levels and above) there is a baseline of 42 per cent in 2008 and a target of 45 per cent by end-2011. As of 1 June 2010, female staff occupied 43 per cent of posts at P/L-5 and above. Measures specifically to address parity at senior levels include priority consideration for women during the Representative Rotation exercise. At the P-3/P-4 level there is a good performance. This is particularly significant, as this level is the pipeline of talent for leadership positions for the future. Reaching the 50/50 target across all levels remains a priority for UNICEF.

¹ DF/EXD/2007.

² This is according to the report of the Secretary-General, “Improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system” (A/63/364). The report includes up-to-date statistics, information on progress made and obstacles encountered in achieving gender balance, and recommendations for accelerating progress.

Table 3
Gender balance of UNICEF staff across levels (as of 1 June 2010)

<i>Level</i>	<i>Count</i>		<i>Percentage</i>	
	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>
ASG/USG	1	3	25	75
D-2/L-7	14	18	44	56
D-1/L-6	39	53	42	58
P-5/L-5	223	292	43	57
P-4/L-4	465	480	49	51
P-3/L-3	448	407	52	48
P-2/L-2	228	118	66	34
P-1/L-1	4	5	44	56
NO-4	28	43	39	61
NO-3	465	494	48	52
NO-2	621	766	45	55
NO-1	253	308	45	55
GS	2 603	2 804	48	52
Total	5 392	5 791	48	52

D. Distribution of staff throughout UNICEF

19. Some 86 per cent (9,637) of UNICEF staff work in the field at regional and country office levels, while 14 per cent (1,546) work in headquarters locations. The geographical distribution of staff across the regions is indicated in table 4.

Table 4
Percentage of staff members by region (as of 1 June 2010)

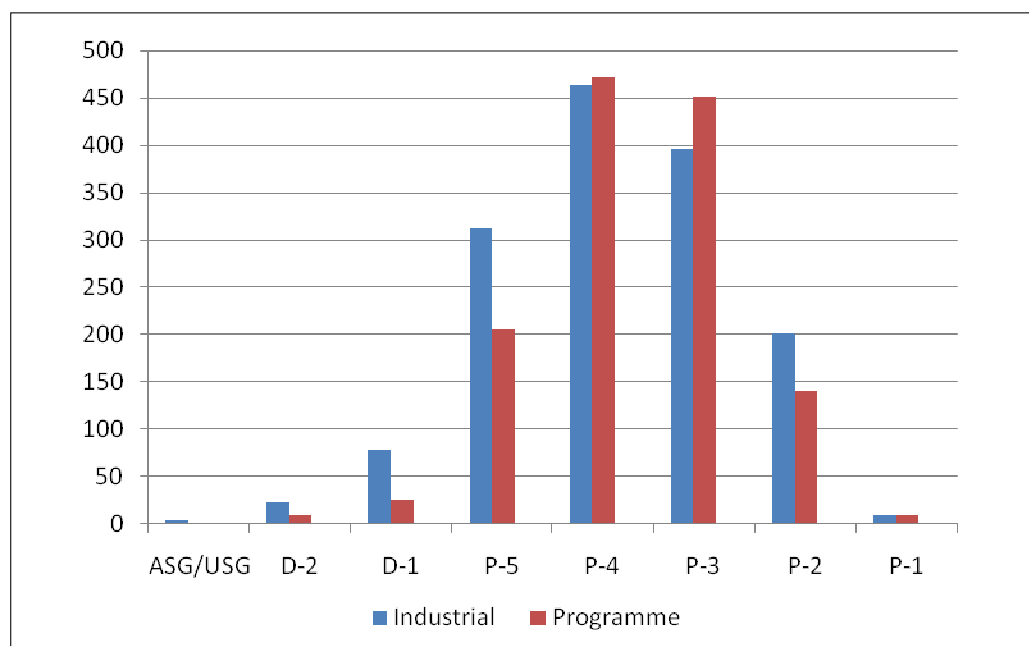
<i>Region</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States	5
East Asia and Pacific	11
Eastern and Southern Africa	20
Middle East and North Africa	9
South Asia	14
The Americas and Caribbean	8
West and Central Africa	19
New York headquarters	9
Other headquarters offices	5
Total	100

20. UNICEF will continue to deploy staff to those areas/programmes where disparities are the greatest and the needs are most urgent.

21. The proportion of UNICEF International Professionals from industrialized countries is 53 per cent, and from programme countries 47 per cent, with disparities most evident at senior levels. This shows an improving trend in this aspect of diversity, compared to 2004, when 55 per cent of IPs were from industrialized countries.

Figure 2

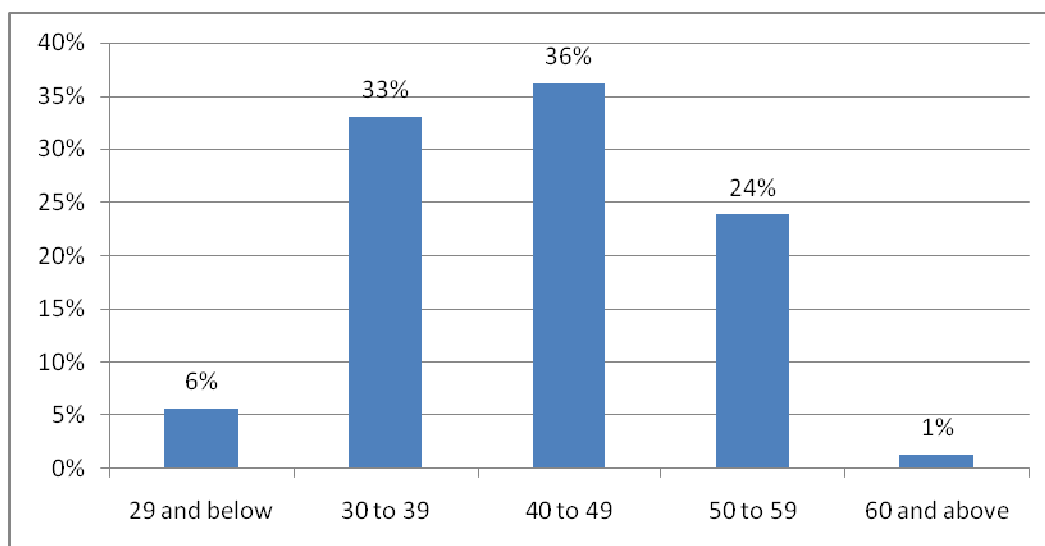
Percentage of International Professionals by industrialized/programme country (nationality) and level (as of 1 June 2010)



E. Age structure

22. The 40-49 age bracket is the single largest age group in UNICEF, at 36 per cent of staff. It is followed by the 30-39 age bracket (33 per cent of staff) and the 50-59 group (24 per cent of staff). Staff members under 29 years old make up 6 per cent of the workforce, and those aged 60 and above make up one per cent. With 25 per cent of all staff members aged 50 and above, a key organizational challenge is the replacement of staff as they reach retirement age and leave the organization.

Figure 3
Age distribution of all staff (as of 1 June 2010)



F. Projected retirements, 2010 to 2014

23. A group of 803 staff members (7 per cent of staff) will reach mandatory retirement age within the next five years. Of these, 108 will retire in 2010. The others will retire in the following respective numbers: 137 (2011), 158 (2012), 185 (2013), and 215 (2014). These numbers point to a progressive increase in the number of retirees. Over the next five years, these retirees are expected to include 136 (17 per cent) senior managers, defined as Representatives and D-1 and D-2 level staff, including Directors and Deputy Directors, among others. The average age of Professional staff is 45. For senior staff at P-5 and above, the average age is 51.

24. Succession management and leadership development are currently being prioritized to ensure the highest possible level of continuity in management and programme implementation. Consideration is also being given to possibly delaying the current retirement age, although this must be balanced with ensuring that sufficient opportunities exist for new talent.

IV. Progress made in human resources management

25. This section outlines the specific progress being made in relation to the organizational improvement initiatives and ongoing commitments of UNICEF towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

26. The Human Resources function continues to strive for consistent quality and customer focus in delivering effective support across all functional areas in development and humanitarian contexts. HR works in partnership with functional/technical colleagues to provide them with the processes and services required to effectively manage teams in the field, regions and at headquarters. HR work is

increasingly undertaken within a risk management framework (operating with reference to a risk control library), and with attention to streamlining and efficient modes of operating. For example, business processes in HR services have been mapped and streamlined, and a Customer Relationship Management system is being introduced in 2010. This system will electronically track and facilitate faster and more reliable and auditable responses to HR-related staff queries and requests. It will reduce duplication and enhance knowledge management in the area of human resources, specifically in the services area. Implementation is being undertaken with the support of the United Nations Development Programme.

27. HR provides specific support for gender equality through various means, including: the creation of up-to-date rosters of gender specialists (both individuals and institutions) to provide gender expertise for programmes in both development and humanitarian contexts; incorporating gender equality modules/components in the substantive Programme Excellence learning programmes and the Leadership and Management Programmes; and holistically integrating gender equality competencies throughout Human Resources, from job profiles and descriptions, to competency-based selection processes and managing for performance.

28. The following sections describe the key work and progress in relation to the demographic and business-related challenges described in the previous section.

A. Strategic workforce planning

29. Significant progress has been made in establishing a strategic workforce planning capacity in Human Resources. Complex issues related to the availability, accuracy and integrity of data have been addressed over the past two years in order to construct a reliable foundation of historical and current data and methodology upon which to build workforce forecasts and models. For example, dynamic staff data models have been built to enable evidence-based policy development and to provide live modelling of hypothetical changes affecting staff.

30. A workforce planning model for UNICEF was developed and refined earlier this year, in partnership with the Centre for Advanced Human Resources Studies at Cornell University. The model will dynamically forecast quantitative needs and gaps — both horizontally for specific jobs and vertically for specific functional areas. The resulting forecasts will improve the ability of UNICEF to identify in advance and address shortfalls and/or surpluses. This analysis will complement the qualitative elements compiled and data received from business managers across the functional areas. This data will help to address issues such as the re-profiling of roles and changing competency and capability requirements.

31. Other advances in this area include the launch of the HR Dashboard in September 2009, the organization's first corporate dashboard. The HR Dashboard is an information reporting tool that allows for the monitoring of HR indicators and metrics in one place. It extracts data from various HR systems and transforms that data into meaningful information on the workforce, gender parity and recruitment. It enables HR practitioners and decision makers to view HR performance across the organization from an operational, as well as strategic, perspective, and will be further enhanced in tandem with developments in the Organizational Performance Management Initiative.

B. Attracting the best talent

32. UNICEF aims to attract the best and brightest talent into the organization, enhancing the reputation of the organization to be the place to work in order to make a difference in the world. With this aim in mind, UNICEF launched a strategic talent development/management initiative in 2008 to identify and develop talent to meet the current and future needs of UNICEF. The Talent and Leadership Development/Management Initiative is focused both on internal talent and new external talent.

33. Internally, UNICEF is establishing the necessary elements to create an environment in which existing talent can be identified and developed, in particular to build a pipeline of talent for senior positions within UNICEF.

34. The New and Emerging Talent Initiative (NETI) is an outreach programme to recruit promising, demographically diverse, external talent to fill identified staffing gaps in various functional areas. This complements existing successful efforts in targeted sourcing and outreach campaigns, and the recruitment of new talent through the Junior Professional Officers (JPO) programme, internships and UN Volunteers.

35. NETI was launched in 2008. The pilot cohort of nine candidates completed the programme, and all were retained on regular staff positions. The second cohort of 21 was selected from a pool of more than 3,400 applicants and is currently completing assignments in the field. The global recruitment drive for the third NETI programme was launched in September 2009 with 4,116 applications received and 22 participants selected. The third NETI programme commenced on 24 May 2010 at New York headquarters. Participants will be deployed to offices globally starting 23 July 2010.

36. The JPO programme comprises a special category of staff members who are young professional men and women, interested in acquiring experience in the development field. These staff members are sponsored by their respective Governments to acquire experience in international development cooperation activities under the close direction of senior UNICEF officials, while contributing to the implementation of UNICEF country programmes. In 2009, 37 new JPOs were recruited, sponsored by 15 Governments, bringing the total number of JPOs working at UNICEF to 111. Within the United Nations System, UNICEF leads on the retention rate of JPOs; over the last few years, the average retention rate has been 46 per cent.

37. Additional programmes include continued partnerships with Governments and academic institutions to build a pipeline of young talent and to increase retention of high performers. The UNICEF Internship programme has also been revamped, with its application process streamlined. Work is under way to revamp the Volunteer programme along the same lines. UNICEF continues to seek new and innovative ways of bringing in fresh talent at all levels.

Regular recruitment

38. The Division of Human Resources provides the tools, policies and guidance that allow the line management to operate in the most efficient way regarding recruitment, while respecting the principles of equity, fairness and transparency. UNICEF needs to continue to streamline these processes and strengthen the capability of country, regional and headquarters offices to effectively apply them.

39. “UNICEF Employment”, the e-recruitment system, was launched on 1 December 2009 as one of the first elements of VISION-One ERP system improvements. This Internet-based recruiting tool manages recruitment processes while enhancing the transparency of the process and is aimed at reducing recruitment time. The system is designed to increase strategic recruitment capabilities and talent deployment, and to making hiring more proactive and efficient, helping UNICEF to find the “best fit” placements.

40. Significant support work was undertaken to facilitate the successful launch of UNICEF Employment. A revised Competency Framework and its application in recruitment through the Competency-Based Interviewing process was implemented. Two new policies have also been issued and implemented:

(a) An improved Staff Selection Policy,³ which aims to ensure effective, efficient, fair and transparent selection of the right person in the right job in the quickest time possible, within the framework of the new United Nations Staff Rules and Regulations that took effect from 1 July 2009;

(b) A directive on Central Review Bodies,⁴ which streamlines the previous review process for recruitment and considerably shortens timescales.

41. In addition, Generic Job Profiles covering all areas of work were drafted, jobs were classified and staff data were “cleansed” (updated and verified, as a means to create comparable data for analysis across the various systems and offices of UNICEF).

42. Recruitment actions completed in e-recruitment as of 1 June 2010 (after five months of operation) have already demonstrated greater effectiveness. Some 79 recruitment actions have been completed in the system, taking on average 93 days to complete; 47 per cent of the recruitment actions were completed within 90 days. The Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for recruitment is the percentage of recruitment actions (from closing date on advertisement to the date of the offer letter) completed within 90 days for established international Professional posts. Table 5 below details trends in performance against that indicator.

Table 5
Time frame for recruitment, against the Key Performance Indicator, 2007-2009

<i>Year</i>	<i>Recruitment actions completed</i>	<i>Percentage meeting KPI</i>
2009	552	43
2008	800	24
2007	324	33

43. Recruitment is being focused on for improvement. The introduction of e-recruitment and the “talent pool” concept (described below) will be key initiatives to further improve performance.

³ CF/EXD/2009-008.

⁴ CF/EXD/2009-009.

Talent planning and talent pools

44. Talent (succession) planning is a strategic approach to ensuring a ready supply of qualified talent to meet demands on the ground. The workforce metrics approach will determine the demand for talent and capacity available and identify the gaps. Talent planning will focus on the supply of talent and possible non-traditional sourcing strategies to acquiring the needed talent. HR will partner with each functional area to ascertain the profiles of talent needed and the global sources (internal and external). Through a variety of assessments, efforts will be made to pre-qualify and vet candidates in order to create a pipeline of talent available for immediate deployment to posts as they become available. In this “talent pools” approach, attention will be paid to transparency and diversity. The approach is designed to empower hiring managers with a more flexible approach to selection and placement of candidates and to considerably reduce recruitment time.

Rotation

45. Rotation to ensure the flow and mobility of international staff is a critical element of the HR approach.

46. The annual Senior Staff Rotation and Review Exercise has been streamlined and is in its fifth successful year. The existing Senior Staff Review portal has been enhanced to integrate assessment information.

47. The policy related to the rotation of all other staff, which has been suspended since 2006, will be reviewed, and a rotation exercise of middle-management positions in three selected functional areas is to be undertaken within the next year. This exercise will be informed by analysis derived from the strategic workforce planning process described earlier.

C. Human Resources in emergencies

48. Humanitarian action constitutes a large proportion of UNICEF work, with nearly one third of all UNICEF income (including regular and other resources) spent in this area. Trends indicate that humanitarian action will continue to be a significant area of work for UNICEF; it is expected that there will be an increased frequency and intensity of natural disasters and intra-State, rather than inter-State, conflict. In terms of humanitarian reform, the HR function contributes to strengthening humanitarian response by supporting the identification and deployment of people with the appropriate competencies and capacities to support the UNICEF response to sudden-onset emergencies (ensuring surge capacity) and countries in crisis and protracted emergencies (emergency recruitment). “Surge” is defined as the immediate, short-term scale-up of capacity to ensure that UNICEF can deliver immediate results during the initial phase of the emergency response. Table 6 provides data on deployments.

Table 6
Trends in emergency deployments, 2007-2010 (as of 1 June 2010)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of deployments</i>	<i>Number of countries affected</i>
2010 (as of 1 June 2010)	450	5
2009	259	30
2008	268	40
2007	150	56

49. For emergency surge capacity, including internal redeployment of staff, external recruitment of consultants and standby arrangements with partners, continued to be effective. This support is of particular importance in the functional areas in which UNICEF has cluster lead responsibilities. In 2009, 90 per cent of Cluster Coordinators were deployed within 56 days, with 60 per cent deployed within the first 28 days. Regional Rapid Response Mechanisms to facilitate faster internal staff redeployment continued to be enhanced and improved.

50. The recent emergency in Haiti highlighted the need for the organization to maintain adequate staffing levels in the Emergencies Unit of the Division of Human Resources. This unit is dedicated to supporting the ability of UNICEF to respond to countries in emergencies and protracted crisis, using both internal staff capacity and external partners, including “centres of excellence” and institutions. The unit focuses on HR support for immediate response and recovery programmes.

51. During the first six months of 2010, over 400 surge capacity assignments were requested from the UNICEF country office in Haiti. Of those 400 assignments, for those deployed: 10 per cent were filled through arrangement with standby partners, 60 per cent by internal redeployments (UNICEF staff from other offices), and the remaining 40 per cent through external recruitment.

52. Building on the Haiti experience, emergency processes and systems in HR are being further analysed for streamlining to enable the organization to respond optimally to an emergency. The Global Emergency Web Roster is also being expanded through traditional and non-traditional sourcing to attract the best talent for countries in crisis and protracted emergencies.

53. In addition to Haiti, the HR Emergency Unit is assessing and responding to needs of five other large-scale and protracted emergencies: Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Pakistan, Somalia and Sudan. The flow of scarce resources to these emergency situations is a particular challenge, requiring creative and innovative solutions beyond the normal internal staffing pool.

D. Learning and development

54. The UNICEF learning strategy is aligned to address current and emerging organizational needs. It covers many areas, including management and leadership, programme excellence and core learning at all levels.

Management and leadership

55. The management and leadership curriculum has been strengthened to reflect the strategic agenda and new business processes of UNICEF. Learning curricula that address substantive/functional areas, including those identified in the UNICEF medium-term strategic plan, 2006-2013, have been developed to support the mission of UNICEF to deliver results for children. HR has also introduced certification offerings (finance and administration, supply, and human resource functions) for the further professionalization of the workforce in these functional areas.

56. A leadership assessment methodology has been established and refined in the form of Management Assessment and Development Centres. The methodology involves 360-degree input and simulation-based assessment of candidates. It was introduced in 2008 to strengthen leadership capacity among the cadre of senior leaders and to promote a systematic and strategic use of assessment tools for existing senior posts. The first centres were introduced in 2008, with 32 staff members assessed. In 2009, 105 staff members were assessed. Additional centres are being run in 2010. The centres support rotation and reassignment, provide a benchmark for leadership strength, and build a pool of already-assessed candidates for potential/upcoming Representative, Deputy Representative and other strategic posts.

57. The Leadership Development Initiative has now been implemented globally. The initiative identifies talented, mid-level professional managers with strong leadership potential and proven management competencies for the leadership pipeline — to be available for positions of greater responsibility in time. One key aim of the initiative is to address shortages predicted for the mid-level category. Begun in the Eastern and Southern African region, the programme has been run globally since 2008. In 2009, 78 individuals graduated from three interregional programmes.

58. An induction programme for new Representatives was launched in 2009 as part of a larger programme to orient Representatives who are new to UNICEF or staff who are taking on the role for the first time. All 16 newly appointed Representatives were allocated coaches and mentors. A revised Senior Leaders Programme will be launched in 2010 addressing the needs of the most senior leaders in the organization. A general induction programme for newly appointed staff will be piloted in the West and Central Africa region for possible implementation throughout UNICEF in 2010.

Other learning initiatives

59. Career development curricula have been developed and implemented, addressing issues raised in the 2008 Global Staff Survey. During 2010-2011 there will be a focus on career development for National Officers and General Service categories of staff.

60. The Programme Excellence learning programme, which covers the substantive areas of UNICEF work, continued to deliver results, with 735 staff members successfully completing a range of courses, including Budget Policies, Evidenced-Based Policy Analysis to Deliver Results for Children, Social Protection, Health Policy and Financing and Strategic Choices in Education Reform.

61. The number of staff undertaking Core Curriculum courses, such as Principled Approach to Humanitarian Action and Advanced Security in the Field, and the

three-phased Supervisory Skills programme, continued to far exceed targets. Some 2,150 staff members have successfully completed the Core Curriculum courses.

Individual performance management

62. Two important initiatives that emphasize managing individual performance have been introduced to enhance the ability of UNICEF to deliver results: the revised Competency Framework and the electronic Performance Appraisal System (e-PAS).

63. A revised Competency Framework, endorsed and released in 2009, is the foundation of the talent management strategy of UNICEF. It describes core skills and abilities required by UNICEF staff members so that they can deliver on strategic aspirations, demonstrate sector leadership and remain on the cutting edge in key disciplines. A series of organization-wide training programmes have been conducted to explain the concept and application of the framework.

64. The web-based performance management system e-PAS enables staff and supervisors to set up, monitor and complete their performance evaluations online and will replace the current paper-based system. The system streamlines the individual performance management process and aligns it with that of other United Nations organizations. In addition, e-PAS will improve staff and supervisor accountability, audit the ability of the performance management process, and produce real-time metrics.

65. Addressing many of the recommendations on performance management made in the organizational review and the Strategic Review of Human Resource Management, e-PAS is a key part of the UNICEF Talent Management Initiative, along with e-recruitment, leadership development and learning.

66. Launched globally in February 2010 for all international Professionals, e-PAS will be extended to other staff categories in subsequent years. The implementation has been supported by United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), as UNICEF is utilizing an adapted version of the UNFPA performance management system. Training in managing for performance commenced in 2010, and as of mid-May, more than 1,400 staff had successfully completed training.

E. Human Resources services

67. The Division of Human Resources administers the contracts and benefits for all IP staff members globally and GS staff in headquarters (some 3,000-plus staff), and provides advice and support to regional and country offices on how to fulfil their accountabilities on Human Resources management and administration. This includes support of VISION (Virtual Integrated System of Information), the new information system adopted by UNICEF. The SAP-HR and Payroll will be among the first elements of VISION to be implemented.

68. Payroll and related entitlements are managed from New York headquarters for more than 4,400 staff, and involve processing over \$500 million in charges per year. Having centralized payroll for all headquarters locations, all regional offices and all “co-located” country offices (country offices located in the same duty stations as regional offices) has demonstrated the following benefits: harmonizing the management of benefits and entitlements for UNICEF staff members worldwide, managing all staff information in a single system, more efficient processing, and

providing a higher level of service to staff, with accurate and reliable availability of HR data. Work continues in parallel with the implementation of VISION to examine the most effective way of achieving cost-efficiencies and cost reductions in this area.

F. Work environment and staff relations

Staff relations

69. UNICEF continues to have collaborative and productive relationships with its staff association. Regular meetings take place to discuss areas of common interest and challenge. In 2009, a Global Staff Association meeting was held in Istanbul and attended by all staff representatives, who indicated their appreciation for the initiative. The staff association raised several issues requiring further attention: contractual arrangements, career development for General Service staff and National Officers, and entitlements in non-family duty stations.

Work-life balance and staff well-being

70. Significant numbers of UNICEF staff work in increasingly complex and difficult environments. A Global Staff Survey on Stress, the first-ever such survey, was conducted in 2009 in cooperation with Columbia University, and more than one third of all UNICEF staff responded.

71. The percentage of staff reporting high levels of stress dropped from 35 per cent in 2003 to 31 per cent in 2009. Female respondents reported higher levels of stress than males. Statistics on how staff members cope with stress (positive and negative mechanisms) are being further analysed to identify support and assistance. Survey responses reveal that staff members have a more positive perception than before of the usefulness of available services for staff well-being, particularly in emergency duty stations.

72. Support provided to staff members and their dependents includes counselling for critical incidents, work-related stress and other mental health issues, and staff well-being guidance to Representatives and HR staff. In 2010, the staff well-being area was strengthened with the addition of a professional resource. To complement Staff Counsellors, UNICEF also has a well-established Peer Support Volunteer programme, which is modelled on the programmes of other United Nations organizations and refined based on emerging needs. UNICEF has 276 trained Peer Support Volunteers in 90 countries.

73. Training and publications on topics such as stress management, stress in the workplace and work-life balance are in place and research is also under way on another important issue, "Cultural Responses to Traumatic Events". This research is based on a survey of staff members who had been exposed to traumatic events and is being undertaken in cooperation with Rutgers University and Columbia University.

"UN Cares"

74. UNICEF remains committed to the full implementation of "UN Cares — the United Nations system-wide workplace programme on HIV", aiming to reduce the impact of HIV within the workforce. This is done through supporting "universal access" to a comprehensive range of benefits, including learning, prevention, treatment, care and support for all personnel and their families, as well as

managerial commitment. All UNICEF offices are mandated to meet the “10 Minimum Standards”. The organization continues to fund one dedicated Staff Well-Being Specialist for HIV, who supports UN Cares on a range of global task forces, such as production of new materials, learning strategies and implementing UN Cares in remote and emergency locations. The Specialist also serves as interim Regional Coordinator for all regions not otherwise covered.

G. United Nations system-wide coherence

75. In the area of human resources, UNICEF has been highly engaged in policy dialogue with other United Nations entities. UNICEF has been articulating the position of a field-based agency both in negotiations within the HR Network of the United Nations Common System and in the development and implementation of human resources policies and procedures in accordance with the principles of coherence, simplification and harmonization. The most significant recent changes relate to the new United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules, the United Nations contractual reform and the new system of Administration of Justice.

Contractual reform

76. UNICEF is governed by the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules, and has therefore also been subject to the contractual reform, as decided by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/250 of 24 December 2008. As a result, UNICEF has instituted new fixed-term appointments and temporary appointments under the new Staff Regulations and Rules, which took effect on 1 July 2009. In addition, UNICEF is ready to implement continuing appointments when the General Assembly decides on this contractual modality.

77. One of the main objectives of UNICEF is to utilize the new contractual modalities to support its mandate more effectively. In this context, flexible criteria for granting continuing appointments will be considered in order to best support the organization’s programmatic goals. Similarly, discussions on the maximum length of fixed-term contracts have started within the organization, including with staff representatives, with a view to maximizing the appeal of UNICEF to external candidates, as well as to providing an attractive workplace for existing staff. Currently, a two-year maximum length for fixed-term contracts is in effect, which falls short of the five-year maximum that is stipulated in the Staff Rules.

78. The contractual reform, which streamlined the large number of contracts among the various United Nations organizations administered under the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules, has also laid positive foundations for improved inter-agency mobility by enhancing the compatibility of contracts and simplifying administrative aspects. Support for inter-agency mobility among staff members continues, as detailed in table 7.

Table 7
Inter-agency mobility, 2009

2009	<i>UNICEF staff members moving to other United Nations agencies</i>	<i>United Nations staff members moving to UNICEF</i>
Resident coordinators	11	Not applicable
Secondment	45	27
Reimbursable loan	19	6
Non-reimbursable loan	3	1
Inter-agency transfer	12	8

79. On a slightly less positive note, UNICEF has experienced challenges in attracting suitable candidates for temporary appointments, due to restrictions with regard to contract duration and a more limited package of benefits and entitlements stipulated for this contractual modality. This has particularly impacted emergency operations, which utilize temporary appointments as a major modality to deploy staff rapidly. UNICEF continues to work towards overcoming these challenges.

80. The changes in United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules⁵ and the United Nations contractual reform alone impacted numerous UNICEF HR policies and procedures, most of which have been or will be revised. An extensive and ongoing process of revision and modernization of UNICEF policies and procedures is under way. These changes required an elevated level of briefing, advice and guidance given to managers, as well as the ensuring of effective relations with staff through the Global Staff Association.

The new Administration of Justice System

81. Following the 2007 General Assembly decision to introduce a new system for internal disputes and disciplinary matters, the new Administration of Justice system was introduced on 1 July 2009. Cases are now heard by the United Nations Dispute Tribunal, comprising professional judges making binding decisions.

82. Significant efforts were expended in providing briefings, presentations and information and educational materials on this new system to staff members. Legal advice has been provided to country, regional and headquarters officers on disciplinary matters and appeal processes. In 2009, there were 52 disciplinary cases, 10 management evaluations/administrative reviews, 16 appeals and 6 performance evaluation review rebuttals.

83. Early experiences with the new administration of justice system have demonstrated that the workload in this area has expanded significantly. This is because many more cases are being considered, and due to the requirements of the new system, the hearings require a greater investment of time than before for case preparation and representation. This area of work is having a notable impact on the resources of UNICEF.

⁵ General Assembly resolution 63/250.

Other areas of collaboration

84. In other areas of inter-agency collaboration, the Division of Human Resources remained extremely active, participating in meetings and activities of the following: local salary surveys, the HR Network, International Civil Service Commission, United Nations Development Group, Standing Committee on Field Issues and Resident Coordinator System Issues, and inter-agency working groups.

V. Conclusions

85. Effective human resource management remains a critical factor in enabling UNICEF to honour its commitment to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, especially in an environment of increasing complexity and uncertainty.

86. Executive Board members have emphasized the importance of defining and developing staff competencies for the future. The present report has described the measures being taken at both strategic and operational levels to address this issue. Donors, partners and clients have a right to expect that UNICEF be the most professional and effective organization possible. In human resources, UNICEF is striving to be at the forefront of best practice within the United Nations and beyond.

87. Given the many expectations and demands placed on the Division of Human Resources to develop and enable processes for robust HR management, UNICEF needs to build the requisite capacity to enable the division to fulfil its accountabilities. Some 55 (36 per cent) of the 153 posts in the division are funded through “other” resources and temporary funding. Reliance on this type of funding rather than on “regular”, or core, funding makes it challenging for HR to have predictability, continuity and high staff motivation.

88. The division faces key challenges for the future in identifying competency and capability gaps, ensuring continuity of skills and competencies, and increasing efficiencies. The division is well placed to address these challenges but depends on a true partnership with its business customers in the field, regions and at headquarters. There is more work to do in strengthening the skills of HR professionals and other staff as well as the leaders in UNICEF for managing people.

89. Much has been achieved but there is much to do and there is no room for complacency. As outlined above, the focus will be on strategic workforce planning, ensuring a continuous supply of talent to meet the projected gaps and creating the right contractual and administrative frameworks to enable flexibility.

90. UNICEF continues to set high goals and targets and increasingly has the tools in place to measure and evaluate progress and value for money. The aim is to achieve deeper systemic changes in HR processes and systems so that they provide a strong platform to leverage efficiencies and enable change. The staff of UNICEF is the lifeblood of the people-centred organization. Improving the quality of HR processes, systems and guidance is critical in supporting the work of UNICEF on behalf of children and women.