

**Recognition and Rewards**

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## 1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Recognizing and rewarding staff members can create a positive environment, increase productivity and a sense of participation. At UNFPA, means of recognizing and rewarding staff are available and detailed in this policy.
- 1.2 Most initiatives and practices stem from the UNFPA human resources strategy, and are based on the competency framework and the Performance Appraisal and Development (PAD) system, by which staff members measure their contribution to achieving organizational priorities and UNFPA recognizes successful performance.

## 2 Introduction

### Definitions

- 2.1 **Recognition:** A process through which UNFPA acknowledges a staff member's achievements, performance or behaviours. Recognition can take the form of acknowledgement, approval, or the expression of gratitude. It means appreciating someone for something s/he has done for the benefit of the organization or its mandate. Recognition can be given while a staff member is trying to achieve a certain goal or behavior, or once s/he has achieved it.
- 2.2 **Reward:** A reward is a tangible item with monetary or non-monetary value that is provided to the staff member for desired behaviour or results, often with accompanying recognition.

## 3 Informal ways of recognizing good performance

### Positive Feedback

- 3.1 Recognizing good performance by providing positive feedback should be a standard practice. It is a powerful motivator, improves morale, increases productivity and reinforces positive behaviour. **Positive feedback or acknowledgement of an achievement** can be done individually and "on-the-spot" and in a more visible way within regularly held public meetings (*e.g.* divisional or branch meetings).
- 3.2 In order to provide positive feedback effectively, it should be:
  - **Timely** – Provided immediately after the achievement, or to acknowledge progress toward a desired achievement/goal.
  - **Sincere** – Based on true and honest appreciation and excitement
  - **Specific** – Provide detailed or concrete examples of the action /accomplishment.
  - **Positive** – Positive feedback should be provided separately from constructive criticism or reprimands.

- **Proportionate** –Too much praise or too little may become ineffective, negatively impacting the team/unit.

#### Other means of recognition – SET TONE

#### 3.3 Simple and effective ways to provide recognition include:

- **Senior staff showing interest** – A senior staff “walk-around” to chat and greet staff informally Events – Impromptu gatherings after special events or a challenging week can recognize accomplishments and individual contributions
- **Thank you** – A simple and sincere thank you, especially when offered publicly, improves morale. For emphasis, handwritten thank you cards or e-cards can be sent and are available through websites such as Baudville.com
- **Tokens** – A token of appreciation brought back from mission travel, such as a small gift, local sweets or chocolates is always appreciated!
- **Opportunities** – Providing opportunities to develop skills and gain experience by inviting staff with knowledge in a relevant area to participate in key meetings, missions or challenging assignments is a to recognize ability
- **Notes** – Write down examples of good performance to include when completing PADs or providing feedback
- **Emails** – Send the person an email to recognize a special effort and copy their supervisor

#### Fostering Visibility and Development

- 3.4 Delegating responsibility can recognize ability and reward good performance! For non-managers or unit heads, providing opportunity to represent their unit, participate in key meetings, serve as officer-in-charge if appropriate, be sent on missions, or be given opportunities to lead certain projects, builds management and leadership skills, and provides greater visibility within UNFPA.

### **4 Formal ways of recognizing and rewarding good performance**

#### **Long Service Awards**

- 4.1 UNFPA values long-serving staff members for their consistent and dedicated service and especially recognizes those who have provided 10, 20, 30 or more years of service.

#### For Locally Recruited Staff at field duty stations

- 4.2 Field duty stations can request the Career Development and Mobility Programs Branch /Division of Human Resources (CDMPB )/(DHR) to prepare certificates of recognition signed by the Executive Director for locally recruited staff members celebrating 10, 20

or 30 years of service with UNFPA. Requests should be sent to CDMPB/DHR by February of each year.

- 4.3 In addition, field duty stations may decide as follows:
- 1) The office may wish to purchase an award locally, not exceeding US\$ 50.00 for long service awards of 10 years, US\$ 150.00 for long service awards of 20 years, or US\$ 250.00 for long service awards of 30 years, or;
  - 2) The recipient may choose to donate the designated amount to a charitable organization (list will be provided). If this option is chosen, UNFPA will match the contribution!
- 4.4 UNFPA reserves the right to make changes to these items or values at any time without notice.

#### For Internationally Recruited Staff and Locally Recruited Staff at Headquarters

##### 10 years of service

- 4.5 Staff members celebrating 10 years of service with UNFPA will receive a pen engraved with their name and the UNFPA logo engraved on the box (or a similar gift). In addition, they will receive a certificate of recognition signed by the Executive Director.

##### 20 years of service

- 4.6 Staff members celebrating 20 years of service with UNFPA will have two options:
- 1) They can choose to receive a gift cheque in the amount of US\$ 150.00; or
  - 2) They can choose to donate the amount to a charitable organization. If this option is chosen, UNFPA will contribute an additional US\$ 150.00 and the charitable organization will receive a total of US\$ 300.00.
- 4.7 In addition, staff members in this group will receive a commemorative gift (e.g. plaque) of recognition for their 20 years of service with UNFPA. For international staff in the country offices, the gift cheque and commemorative gift will be sent by pouch.

##### 30 years of service

- 4.8 Staff members celebrating 30 years of service with UNFPA will have two options:
- 1) They may choose to receive a gift cheque in the amount of US\$ 250.00; or
  - 2) They can choose to donate the amount to a charitable organization (list will be provided). If this option is chosen, UNFPA will contribute an additional US\$ 250.00 and the charitable organization will receive a total of US\$ 500.00.
- 4.9 In addition, they will receive a commemorative gift (e.g. plaque) of recognition for their 30 years of service with UNFPA. For international staff in the country offices, the gift card and certificate will be sent by pouch.

- 4.10 UNFPA reserves the right to make changes to these items or values at any time without notice.

### **Recognition of Proficiency in Language**

- 4.11 In accordance with Staff Rule 3.8, a staff member in the General Service grade levels 1-7 is paid a language allowance for a second United Nations official language, provided s/he has passed the prescribed test.

### **Special Post Allowance**

- 4.12 In accordance with [Staff Rule 3.10](#), the Special Post Allowance (SPA) is an exceptional reward mechanism, in recognition of demonstrated ability to carry out the full functions and responsibilities of higher-level posts.
- 4.13 An SPA can only be granted to staff members holding permanent or fixed-term appointments.
- 4.14 An SPA may be granted to the staff member if s/he is called upon by UNFPA to assume the full duties and responsibilities of a post higher than his or her own post for a temporary period exceeding three months. The SPA is a non-pensionable allowance. It is equivalent to the salary increase, including post-adjustment (if applicable) and applicable dependency allowance that a staff member would have received had the staff member been promoted to the next higher level.
- 4.15 The SPA is provided on a temporary basis and is granted from the beginning of the fourth month of the staff member assuming higher level responsibilities. However, exceptions, on a discretionary basis, can be considered for staff members in General Service grade levels 1-7 who are assigned to serve on higher level posts in the National Professional or International Professional categories, or for staff members in any category who are required to serve in a post which is classified more than one level above his or her level. In that case, the SPA may be paid immediately when the staff member assumes the higher level duties and responsibilities.
- 4.16 All SPAs are proposed by the supervisor of the staff member concerned and granted by decision, on a discretionary basis, by the respective Human Resources Business Partner (HRBP).
- 4.17 An SPA shall be discontinued from the date on which the staff member ceases to perform the full functions of the higher-level post.

- 4.18 When an SPA is discontinued, the staff member will revert to his or her regular salary level. The time during which the higher salary is paid will be credited as service for the purpose of determining the date of the next salary increment at the regular level.

### **Recognition Assignments for staff in the General Service category and National Officers**

#### Overview

- 4.19 In order to reward staff members in the General Service category and national officers for exceptional performance during the prior performance (PAD) year, these staff will be invited to apply for participation in a special assignment in another UNFPA office, either in the field or at headquarters.
- 4.20 Twice a year, the Career Development and Mobility Programs Branch/DHR will work with each division to identify potential special assignments that will become available through the year. DHR will then invite staff members in the General Service and National Professional Officer categories with exceptional performance to submit an expression of interest for the assignment(s) they are best suited for. The candidates will be reviewed by DHR, the Learning Advisory Board, and the office offering the assignment. One candidate will be selected for each assignment.

#### Eligibility

- 4.21 You must be a staff member with a permanent, continuing or fixed term contract at General Service 1-7 grade level in the field or at headquarters, or be a National Professional Officer (NOA-NOD).
- 4.22 You must have two overall exceptional ratings in your last completed PAD year: one in workplan output achievement, **and** an overall exceptional rating in either core or functional competencies.
- 4.23 Your supervisor **and** your division/regional director must endorse your application for participation in the assignment and arrange for your work to be covered in your absence.

#### Administration

- 4.24 DHR/ CDMPB will:
- launch a request for special assignments twice a year ;
  - determine eligible staff based on the criteria listed above;
  - communicate the assignments to eligible staff and ask them to submit an expression of interest in the assignments they are most qualified for

- convene the Learning Advisory Board to review the submission of assignments and expressions of interest and recommend two candidates to the hosting office.

4.25 The hosting office can then select the final candidate for the assignment, and DHR will notify both candidates accordingly.

4.26 Costs related to the assignment are to be cost-shared by the hosting office, the releasing office, and DHR/CDMPB.

4.27 Recognition assignments constitute a privilege. There shall be no entitlement to the award of any recognition assignment.

### **Selection for Special Programmes**

4.28 Other means of reward include selection for special programmes such as the mid-level manager's programme (LAMP), sabbatical leave or other certification programme. When reviewing candidates for special programmes offered through DHR/CDMPB, the review panel takes into consideration, *inter alia*, performance history as demonstrated in the PAD as well as the recommendation by the supervisor and/or division director.

### **Promotion to a grade that is one level above the level of the post (personal/merit promotion)**

#### Background

4.29 "Equal pay for work of equal value" is a basic and important principle of service in UNFPA. In accordance with this principle, appointments and promotions of staff are made at/to the classified and budgeted level of the post, as per the UNFPA policy on Personnel ([Personnel Policies and Procedures, Personnel of UNFPA: Fixed-term and continuing appointments: Staffing](#)).

4.30 The Executive Director may consider a promotion in order to recognize an exceptional situation where the professional contribution of a staff member in UNFPA exceeds the budgeted and classified level of the post, *i.e.* the job level, under the following conditions:

- (1) The staff member has a minimum of 10 years of continuous active service with UNFPA; and
- (2) (i) It is in the interest of UNFPA to retain the staff member at a field duty station for a protracted period of time (including, for example, significantly exceeding the tour-of-duty time frame for a rotational post based on the "operational necessity" exception) whereas the staff member would normally

have been likely to have been selected for and progressed to a higher level post; or

(ii) It is in the interest of UNFPA to keep the staff member in a narrow field of specialization in order to retain a specific type of necessary expertise; or

(iii) The staff member is serving in an occupational group that has a low career ceiling and has developed a crucial “institutional memory”.

4.31 A personal promotion is not intended as a tool to increase future retirement payments or as a reward/recognition of past service prior to retirement and shall not be granted for that purpose. In particular, a personal promotion shall not be made an element of any agreed termination of appointment.

4.32 In all cases of personal promotion, the staff member must have shown more than simply good/solid performance: s/he must have demonstrated a record of truly exceptional merit. However, there exists no right on the part of a staff member to a personal promotion or to consideration for a personal promotion even in cases of exceptional performance or merit; in particular, the fact alone that a staff member has been rated at “exceptional proficiency” and/or “exceptional output achievement” within the meaning of PAD does not create a right to or give rise to an expectancy of an award of a personal promotion. A personal promotion is a privilege that may be considered by UNFPA at its sole discretion when it is in the interest of UNFPA to do so.

4.33 Under no circumstances should the number of personal promotions exceed the lesser of either *five percent* of the established and budgeted posts at a given level or the percentage of the average vacancy rate at that level.

#### Procedure

- 4.34 A personal promotion may be approved following the procedure established below:
- a. A proposal for a personal promotion is to be submitted by the relevant staff member’s supervisor or senior manager to the Director, DHR. The proposal should be made in the form of a detailed written submission and with all supporting documentation;
  - b. DHR will review the proposal to determine compliance with the established criteria;
  - c. The personal promotion will be endorsed by the Performance Review Group in its annual meeting and;
  - d. The personal promotion requires approval by the Executive Director, UNFPA.

## 5 UNFPA Awards for Excellence

- 5.1 The UNFPA Awards for Excellence recognize individuals or teams at UNFPA for outstanding initiatives in delivering the organization's programmes and services. The goal is to acknowledge, share and celebrate these special success stories.
- 5.2 The awards are to be given based on the following criteria:
- Outstanding impact, improvement or innovative change;
  - Increase in quality, efficiency or effectiveness of UNFPA's programme or services; and/or significant effect on external stakeholders; and
  - Achievement of concrete results.
- 5.3 Award Categories

Awards for Excellence will be provided in the following categories:

- Excellence and/or outstanding inter-agency coordination: exceptional contribution to the work of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) as recognized by other members of the UNCT and external partners.
- Substantive Programmes: Initiatives with concrete results in policy development, international action in UNFPA's substantive areas, or progress related to ICPD and the Millennium Development Goals.
- Field-based Projects: Initiatives in the field with a demonstrable positive impact on external stakeholders.
- Improvement in working environment/staff morale: Initiatives to develop new ways to improve working environment, and to motivate and recognize staff.
- Leadership/service in Emergencies: Initiatives taken during natural/political crises with a demonstrable impact on stakeholders.
- Process Reengineering: Process streamlining, including getting maximum leverage from applications, including redesign processes, improved workflow, elimination of duplication, time-saving initiatives, knowledge management, and improving client satisfaction.

### Awardees

- 5.4 Each year, one team and two individuals will be awarded for outstanding initiatives in three of the award categories.

### Definition of a Team

- 5.5 A team can be a work unit, an inter-divisional task force, or any similar group of individuals united by a specific assignment/task or actual project with official and clearly stated terms of reference.

### Nominations

- 5.6 Nominations can be made by peers/colleagues of the individual or individuals who are not part of a team being nominated. Nominations should include the reasons why the individual/team is being nominated, and in the case of team nominations, the official terms of reference for the teams, and a list of team members. Nominations should be sent directly to DHR/CDMPB.

### Evaluation

#### 5.7 Review Process

- a. The nominations will be reviewed by DHR/CDMPB to ensure that they meet the three criteria stated above.
- b. DHR/CDMPB will work with the Learning Advisory Board and the divisional/regional directors to verify both projects and results.
- c. Nominations will be presented to and reviewed by the Performance Review Group (PRG) who will make a final decision.

### Awards

- 5.8 In celebration of the outstanding initiatives, awards will be presented at major UNFPA events, such as global meetings, all-staff meetings, or regional meetings. Awarded teams/individuals will be featured prominently in the Voices newsletter.

- 5.9 Awardees will receive a certificate of recognition from the Executive Director and a token of appreciation.

### Conditions

- 5.10 Individual or team awards should not be granted to the same staff member or teams two years in a row. Also, an individual award cannot be granted to a staff member who is in a team receiving an award in the same year.

- 5.11 Decisions regarding the award are not subject to appeal.

Annex I – UNFPA Awards for Excellence Nomination Guidelines

(To be issued shortly)