

FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE: GENDER EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN STAFFING IN UNHCR

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report shares the findings of a review of gender equity, diversity and inclusion in staffing in UNHCR, and proposes a framework for the future. The starting point was an assessment of the content and implementation of UNHCR's 2007 Policy on Achieving Gender Equity in Staffing, which formally expired in 2012. The aim of the policy was to achieve gender balance in all international professional positions by 2010.
 2. The review found that despite a fundamental commitment to the principles of fairness, equity and respect in UNHCR, a strong case for prioritising action on gender equity, diversity and inclusion in staffing still needs to be made. That case is based on the contribution of diversity and inclusion to the core business of UNHCR – the protection of refugees and the resolution of refugee problems worldwide – as well as to organisational performance, motivation, engagement and talent attraction.
 3. In many respects UNHCR already has a fantastically diverse workforce. It has over 9000 staff operating in 126 countries, and speaking over 450 languages. 88% of staff are based in the field, and 74% are locally recruited. It's age-diverse too, with an average age of 42 years, and 46 years' experience separating the oldest and youngest employees. But it's clear the organisation could be more diverse than it is, with a better gender balance and greater national diversity at senior levels.
 4. If diversity is about the inherent and acquired differences between people, an inclusive workforce is one which regards diversity as an asset, benefiting both individual and organisational performance. It's also one where an individual's difference/ uniqueness is valued, and where everyone feels they belong. Despite the best of values and intentions, UNHCR seems to be struggling to create an inclusive environment for many of its staff.
 5. This report shares quantitative and qualitative findings in relation to gender equity, diversity and inclusion in appointments and assignments, progression and promotion, separation, workplace culture, and management and measurement. Five themes emerged as hampering progress towards greater diversity and more inclusion in UNHCR. These relate to (1) leadership on gender equity, diversity and inclusion (2) the role of beliefs and bias in decision-making (3) the availability of opportunities for flexible working (4) the approaches taken to talent management and development (including the impact of targets/ quotas on outcomes and engagement), and (5) governance, responsibility, accountability and reporting in policy implementation.
 6. The recommendations included in this report are for a strategic approach which prioritises action on the five barriers above. A strategy is suggested which focuses on:
 - Developing visible and active leadership on gender equity, diversity and inclusion in staffing, building the capacity and capabilities of managers and senior staff to lead change
 - Raising awareness of individual and systemic bias, and giving staff at all levels the tools and motivation to behave differently
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- Increasing opportunities for flexible working (both day-to-day and career flexibility) as a driver of the attraction, retention and engagement of staff, and an enabler of flexibility in the provision of services to persons of concern
- A proactive approach to building a diverse pipeline of talent to senior and leadership roles
- A robust system of governance, responsibility, accountability and reporting on progress.

2 INTRODUCTION

This report shares the findings of a review of gender equity, diversity and inclusion in staffing in UNHCR, and proposes a framework for the future. The work was conducted between February and December 2015 by Sarah Bond, an external consultant on diversity, inclusion and organisational change¹, reporting directly to Karen Farkas, Director of the Division of Human Resources Management (DHRM). The overall purpose of the consultancy was to ‘draft a comprehensive strategy and framework to address gender and diversity in staffing in UNHCR’.²

The starting point of the consultancy was an assessment of the content and implementation of the 2007 Policy on Achieving Gender Equity in Staffing, which formally expired in 2012. This policy set out to ‘achieve a 50/50 gender distribution in UNHCR by 2010 in all positions in the Professional category and above’. The IOM/FOM (018/2007 and 019/2007) which accompanied the launch of the policy made clear its bigger objective was to ‘preserve and enhance one of the many strengths of UNHCR: our diversity’ through:

- Ensuring equal opportunity in work for men and women in UNHCR
- Developing a gender-sensitive management culture
- Accelerating the increase of female staff in senior positions
- Equipping staff members with tools and provide learning on gender
- Mainstreaming gender in related staff policies, programmes and learning activities.

Core to the review was seeking to understand why the 50/50 gender balance remains an elusive goal for UNCHR, through evaluating the effectiveness of this policy and other interventions in driving the wider changes in behaviour and practice anticipated by the IOM/FOM.

2.1 Definitions

UNHCR’s 2007 gender equity policy defines ‘*gender equity*’ as ‘the activities undertaken to ensure that women and men enjoy the same status, and that women and men have equal opportunities for realising their rights and potential’. For many staff the term ‘gender equity’ means both fair treatment between women and men, and ‘gender balance’ – that is, an equal balance of women and men in the workforce.

For the purposes of this review, and in line with good practice externally, the term ‘*diversity*’ has been broadly defined, referring to all inherent and acquired differences between people, including nationality, ethnicity, culture, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, marital and family status, as well as education, professional background, experience, working patterns, perspective and approach. This definition of diversity is similar to that used in UNHCR’s AGD (age, gender and diversity) policy for persons of concern.

Alongside ‘gender equity’ and ‘diversity’, this report also uses the term ‘*inclusion*’ to describe the experience of difference/ ‘being different’ in UNHCR. One of the biggest external shifts in thinking and practice on equity and diversity since 2007 has been the focus on inclusion as a related but distinctively different concept from diversity. A *diverse* workforce is one in which staff are diverse in most or all of the dimensions above. An *inclusive* workforce is one which regards diversity as an asset, benefiting both individual and organisational performance. It’s also one where an individual’s difference/ uniqueness is valued, and where everyone feels they belong.³

Methodology

The methodology behind the consultancy has been primarily qualitative and experiential. The review process and development of the framework for the future took place in two phases.

Phase 1

- Analysis of existing data on workforce diversity held by DHRM
- A review of UNHCR's staffing policies including those relating to appointments, assignments, rotation and promotion, and their implications for gender equity and diversity
- Interviews with a total of ten men and women who voluntarily separated from UNHCR and analysis of exit survey data provided by leavers between September 2013 and April 2015
- Scheduled interviews with 62 people in HQ and the field at grades P2 to D2, plus members of the Senior Management Committee, members of the 'troika'⁴ and the High Commissioner
- Ongoing literature review and insights from the approaches being taken on gender equity and diversity by other organisations, both inside and outside the UN system.

Phase 2

- A more iterative series of formal and informal one-to-one interviews, meetings, focus groups, discussion forums and webinars organised with managers and staff (both international and locally recruited) in HQ and the field, including a second meeting with the High Commissioner, a first meeting with the new Deputy High Commissioner, a webinar with a small number of Representatives in the field, presentation to DHRM colleagues in Geneva and Budapest, two focus groups on the key issues of flexibility and talent development, with HQ and field participation, and a Food for Thought for all Geneva-based staff. These meetings all provided useful input and feedback on the evolving analysis and direction of travel of recommendations emerging from the review.

Five interim papers were produced in Phase 1, together with several presentations in Phase 2, which were used to share interim findings with key stakeholders, and encourage discussion. Requests for these papers and presentations should be directed to Kate Hummel in DHRM.⁵

This methodology has generated primarily qualitative insights, based on in-depth conversations with staff (and of course the consultant's experience of employment within UNHCR itself). There are some limitations to the approach:

- A decision was made early on not to conduct an all-staff survey on diversity and inclusion. This has meant that the data in this report relating to diversity and inclusion relies on existing data sources, such as demographic data available via DHRM, and the Global Staff Survey.
- The review focuses primarily on the experience of international professional staff. Whilst it is hoped that the recommendations will contribute to a more inclusive environment for all staff, there is work to be done to confirm this, and to identify any specific issues relating to gender equity, diversity and inclusion for locally recruited staff.
- The review was conducted from Geneva and the UK. Phone and skype conversations were held with international staff in the field, but it was not a field-based study.

2.2 Report content

The report proper begins at Section 3, with a reminder of the case for action on gender equity, diversity and inclusion in UNHCR. Section 4 presents the headline data on diversity in UNHCR's current workforce. Sections 5 to 9 share quantitative and qualitative findings from the review under five headings: appointments and assignments, progression and promotion, separation, workplace culture, and management and measurement. Section 10 describes a framework for gender equity, diversity and inclusion in UNHCR staffing for the future, and Section 11 presents the recommendations for changes in policy, practice and behaviour arising from the review.

3 THE CASE FOR ACTION

UNHCR faces enormous and often competing demands on its financial and human resources. With 60 million people around the world fleeing war, conflict and persecution, and the number of persons of concern increasing daily, UNHCR is facing the ‘biggest funding gap’ in its history, and resources are ‘stretched to the limit’.⁶

In this context there can be no automatic assumption that action on gender equity, diversity and inclusion is an organisational priority. This isn’t a question of values, as staff at all levels are in no doubt that conceptually gender equity, diversity and inclusion really matter. The principles of fairness, equity and respect are fundamental to the mandate of UNHCR, made explicit in its Code of Conduct, embedded into its day-to-day work, and codified in the competency framework which describes the ‘shared principles and beliefs that underpin the work of the organisation and guide the actions and behaviours of its entire staff’.⁷ For most employees, it’s unthinkable that UNHCR *wouldn’t* pay attention to gender equity, diversity and inclusion at work.

But in practice a strong case for prioritisation still needs to be made, in order for resources to be invested in gender equity, diversity and inclusion, in the face of all the organisation’s other priorities. The argument for change that’s often made is based on the benefits of gender equity to staff. That’s important, but there’s a much more powerful case to be made, based on the contribution of gender equity, diversity and inclusion in staffing to the core business of UNHCR – the protection of refugees and the resolution of refugee problems worldwide.

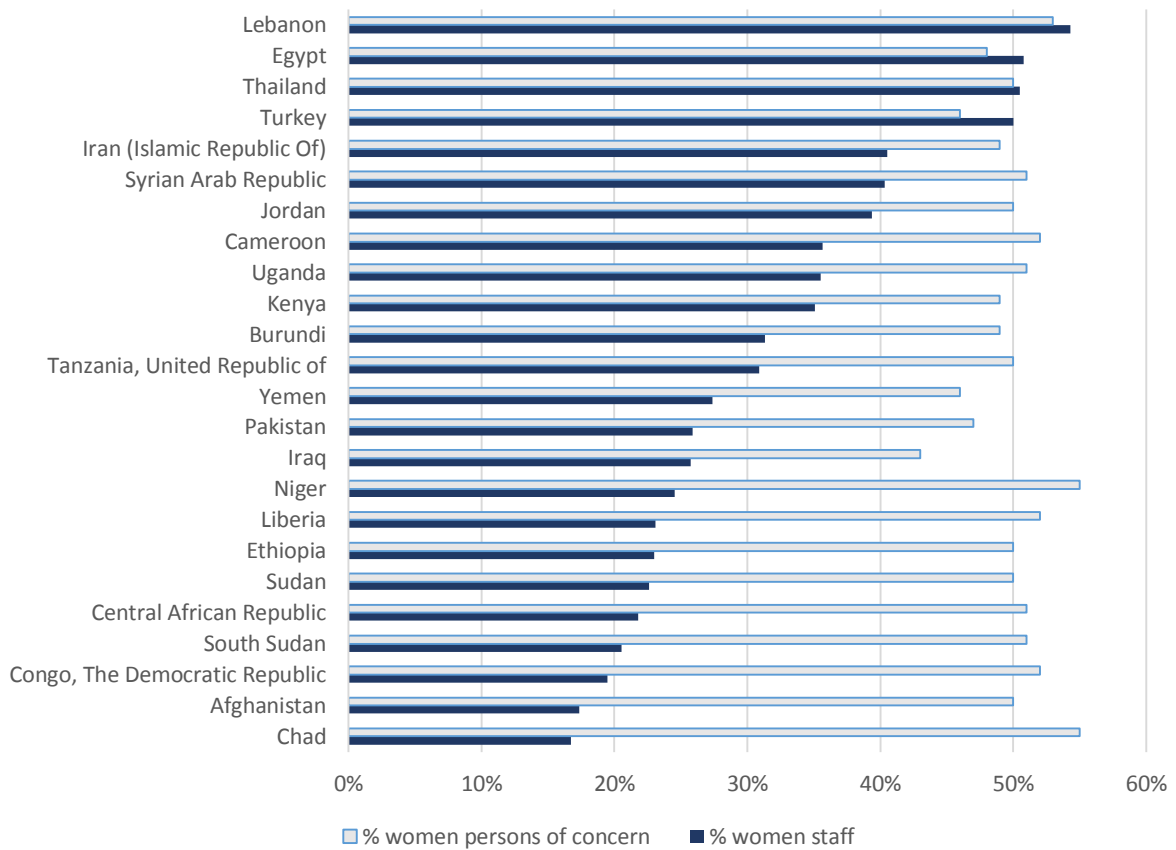
3.1 Mirroring

There’s a compelling argument that the gender profile of UNHCR’s workforce should at least mirror that of persons of concern, on the grounds that gender equity in the workforce makes a difference to UNHCR’s ability to respond effectively to the needs of women refugees. The same argument can also be extended to other kinds of diversity, for instance to the employment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people, who may be better able to offer insights into the experiences and needs of LGBTI persons of concern than their heterosexual colleagues.

In practice, comparing the percentage of women staff and women persons of concern in country operations with more than 100 employees shows there is still some way for UNHCR to go before its gender profile mirrors that of the populations it serves (Figure 1 below).

Figure 1: Comparing the % of women staff and women persons of concern in country operations with more than 100 employees, 2015

(Sources: UNHCR Population statistics reference database, October 2015; DHRM)



3.2 Diversity and organisational performance

There is a substantial body of evidence indicating a strong statistical correlation between greater diversity at senior levels, and improved organisational performance. Although much of this evidence comes from for-profit organisations, and most relates to gender, correlations have been established between diversity and several indicators of organisational performance including financial performance, ‘organisational excellence’ and innovation, all of which are relevant to UNHCR. The evidence shows:

- ‘Companies with a higher proportion of women in top management have better financial performance’ than those without, outperforming their sector in terms of return on equity, operating result and stock price growth. And ‘companies in the top quartile for racial and ethnic diversity are 35 percent more likely to have financial returns above their respective national industry medians.’⁸
- Companies with three or more women on the senior management team have higher scores on nine non-financial measures of organisational excellence (work environment and values, direction, coordination and control, leadership, external orientation, motivation, capability, accountability, innovation) than those with teams with no women.⁹

- 'More women in top management improved the performance of firms that were heavily focused on innovation.'¹⁰
- Firms that implemented LGBTI-friendly policies experience increases in firm value, productivity, and profitability, whilst firms that discontinued gay-friendly policies experienced decreases in the same performance measures.¹¹

3.3 Inclusion, engagement and motivation

There's also an increasing body of evidence about the difference that feeling included makes to staff engagement, motivation and innovation. The evidence shows that where workplaces are inclusive, employees are more motivated, more engaged, and more likely to 'go the extra mile' for their teams than staff in workplaces that are not inclusive. This should matter to UNHCR, because innovation, responsiveness and collaboration are all essential to the development of lasting solutions to refugee protection and care.

The evidence shows:

- When staff think their organisation is committed to, and supportive of, diversity and they feel included, there are significant improvements in employee engagement, the ability to innovate, responsiveness to changing client needs and team collaboration.¹²
- Companies with inclusive leaders (those who are effective at creating an inclusive working environment), are 75% more likely to have a marketable idea implemented than those without.¹³
- 'Employees' feelings of inclusion, as well as their perception of organisational commitment to diversity, are driven by their tangible day-to-day experiences of work/life balance'.¹⁴
- A clear link between flexible working and employee willingness to use their own initiative to carry out tasks over and above the day-job, and high levels of employee well-being.¹⁵

*'Staff who can be open about their sexuality at work are more likely to enjoy going to work, feel able to be themselves, form honest relationships with their colleagues, are more confident, and ultimately more productive. Lesbian and gay equality at work evidently makes good business sense.'*¹⁶

3.4 Diversity, inclusion and talent

Finally, there are plenty of reasons to believe that the approach UNHCR takes on gender equity, diversity and inclusion has an impact on its ability to attract and retain talented people. For instance:

- A recent study by global consulting firm EY into what different age-groups look for from their employer found that flexibility was cited as the most important non-cash benefit by people of all generations. The study found women value flexibility more than men, but men are more likely to 'walk away' from a job if flexibility is not offered (34% of men would walk away, compared to 30% of women). And around a third of Generation Y employees (those

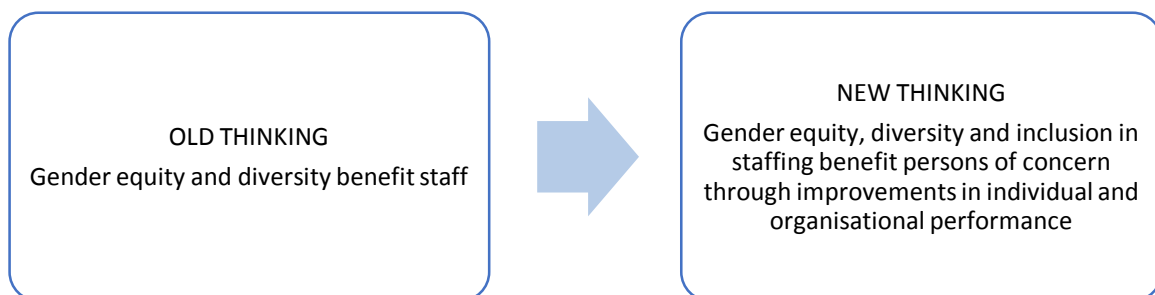
born between 1965 and 1980) would walk away from their job in the absence of day-to-day flexibility.¹⁷

- At the time of writing this report, the reputation of the humanitarian sector is under scrutiny as women online share their experiences of discrimination, harassment and sexual assault in what is clearly 'still a very macho world'.¹⁸ UNHCR's ability to evidence an inclusive approach not just on gender, but on other aspects of diversity too, has the potential to be a significant differentiator in its ability to attract, retain and develop diverse talent for the future. More generally, a 2010 study showed 70% of companies thought that diversity of teams and experience improve reputation.¹⁹
- The size of the humanitarian workforce is predicted to grow as populations are increasingly affected by conflict and climate change. Demographic shifts mean UNHCR may need to change how and where it sources talent in order to meet this growth. Globally, by 2030 the number of workers aged 45 – 64 is predicted to increase by 41%. There will be 1 billion more women in the global workforce by 2035, of whom 94% will be from emerging and developing economies. And as Europe shrinks, Africa is expanding, with a likely population increase of 1.3 billion more people in the next 35 years.²⁰ UNHCR's ability to attract and retain talent from Africa, and women from developing economies, and older workers from across the globe, will be key to its future success.
- The kinds of skills and behaviours needed in the humanitarian sector are also changing. As one Director saw it, *'for the future, successful people will need to have a better understanding of inter-agency dynamics, the ability to have proper conversations, good listening skills, willing to learn from elsewhere'*. A McKinsey study identifying the behaviours that enhance organisational performance (including role-modelling, inspiration and participative decision-making) found that these qualities are more likely to be displayed by women than by men²¹ – exactly the kinds of leadership qualities required by UNHCR for the future.

Implications

There can be no automatic assumption that action on gender equity, diversity and inclusion in staffing will be a strategic or an operational priority, but there is plenty of evidence that it should be. Gender equity, diversity and inclusion make a clear difference to UNHCR's ability to deliver on its mandate. Making this case is a vital first step in winning management and leadership support for action.

Figure 2



The case for action on gender equity, diversity and inclusion at the IMF

'At the Fund, our commitment to diversity and inclusion is crucial to fulfilling our mission.

As an international organisation, we are committed to having a staff that reflects the diversity of our membership. A diverse staff allows us to effectively draw on different perspectives to enhance the quality of the decision making, deepen the relevance of our policy advice, and enhance our efficiency and effectiveness. Diversity thereby strengthens the legitimacy and relevance of the Fund in delivering services to our member countries. Accordingly, we strive to attract, retain, and develop a pool of talent that is diverse along many dimensions, and to leverage the diverse knowledge and experiences of all our employees....

An inclusive work environment encourages different perspectives to be presented and given a fair hearing, and accepts diversity of thought as valuable and consequential. We welcome the wide range of experiences and viewpoints that employees bring to the Fund, including those based on nationality, gender, culture, educational and professional backgrounds, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, and age differences, job classification and religion. In our inclusive workplace, all employees at every level of the institution are valued members of the Fund community, regardless of their employment status as staff or contractual, and everyone is assured the right of equitable, fair, and respectful treatment.

We seek to leverage the proven benefits of enhanced innovation and creativity, greater productivity and employee satisfaction that derive from a well-managed, diverse, and inclusive workplace, in delivering value to our stakeholders. Consequently, we are committed to ensuring that the Fund is diverse and inclusive'.²²

4 UNHCR'S DIVERSE WORKFORCE

In many respects UNHCR already has a fantastically diverse workforce. It has over 9000 staff operating in 126 countries, and speaking over 450 languages. 88% of staff are based in the field, and 74% are locally recruited.²³ It's age-diverse too, with an average age of 42 years, and 46 years' experience separating the oldest and youngest employees. But in relation to other aspects of difference the picture is less positive, or simply unclear, as this section explains.

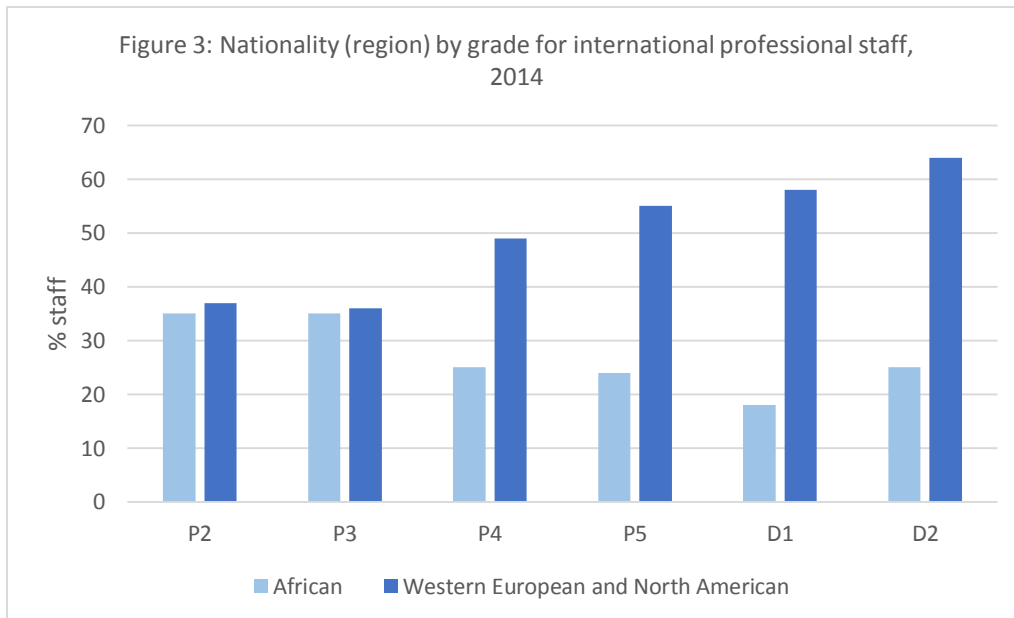
4.1 On gender

- Overall, women comprise 37% of all staff in UNHCR, down 1% since the gender equity policy was launched in 2007.²⁴
- Women hold just 35% of locally recruited roles (grades G1 to ND), an overall decrease of 2% since 2007.
- Women hold 43% of international professional roles, an increase of just 3% since 2007, against a goal of 50/50 women and men in all positions in the international professional category by 2010.
- The biggest increases in the representation of international women have been at P2 and P5. Women now hold 52% of P2 roles (up from 42% in 2007) and 42% of P5 roles (up from 33% in 2007). However the percentage of women in P3 roles decreased over the same period, from 44% to 39%.
- Women make up 41% of those in Director roles in 2014 (D1 and D2), an overall increase of 3% since 2007.
- The representation of women in international professional roles in UNHCR is on a par with the United Nations system overall, where women comprise just under 42% of those in Professional and higher categories.²⁵ UNHCR does better than the UN system overall in the representation of women at grades P5, D1 and D2.²⁶

4.2 On nationality

- Over 150 different nationalities are represented amongst UNHCR's workforce.
- 46% of all staff come from Africa, 27% from Asia, 17% from Western Europe and North America, 7% from Eastern Europe and just 3% from Latin America and the Caribbean.

- At P2, the representation of African and Western European and North American nationals is almost equal at 35% and 37% respectively, virtually unchanged from 2007. However just 25% of D2s are from Africa (down 3% since 2007), compared to 64% from Western Europe and North America (up 20% since 2007). That is, as the representation of Western European and North American nationals increases with seniority, so that of African nationals appears to decrease (Figure 3 below).



- Interestingly, Africa region has seen the biggest increase in the representation of women in Director roles since 2007. Women hold 48% of D1 and D2 roles in the region (11 women in total), up 11% since 2007.

4.3 On sexual orientation

- In common with many other international organisations, UNHCR doesn't ask its staff about sexual orientation. Estimates vary, but globally 5-10% of the adult population is believed to be lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender²⁷, equating to around 500-1000 UNHCR staff. A recent study in the UK however puts the estimate of LGBT people in the population much higher, finding that almost a quarter of the population would not describe themselves as '100% heterosexual', rising to nearly half of 18 to 24 year olds.²⁸ This equates to over 2000 UNHCR staff who might not describe themselves as '100% heterosexual'.

4.4 On disability

- There is very little visibility of staff with disabilities in UNHCR. There are only 56 employees whose health/ disability status require a formal workplace accommodation affecting where they can work. There is no data on the overall number of staff with disabilities.²⁹ The World Health Organisation estimates however that around 1 in 7 of the world's population are affected by physical or mental disability, equating to over 1300 UNHCR staff who may have a disability.

4.5 On families

- More UNHCR staff record themselves as being in same-sex relationships in 2014 than in 2007 though the numbers here are still tiny (just 53 staff in 2014 compared to 12 in 2007). In 2007 just five countries had legalised same-sex marriage; in 2014 that figure was 22 countries. Around the same number of countries again legally recognise other same-sex unions such as civil and domestic partnerships.
- About the same proportions of women staff members are single as married (48% of women are single, and 45% are married). By contrast 25% of men are single, and 73% of men are married. 7% of women and 2% of men are recorded as separated from their spouse.
- More men and women are parents in 2014 than in 2007. In 2014 almost 70% of men in UNHCR were parents (up from 57% in 2007), and 40% of women (up from 31%). That's over 5400 people in UNHCR who are parents.

4.6 On working patterns

- Almost all staff work full-time in UNHCR. Just 18 people are recorded as working part-time across the whole of UNHCR's workforce, all of whom are women. All but three of those working part-time work the equivalent of four days a week (80% of full-time).
- Only 49 staff were recorded by DHRM as telecommuting in 2014 (16 men and 33 women), although more may do so in practice. DHRM does not hold data on all forms of flexible working such as teleworking, where these are locally negotiated.

Implications

- UNHCR already has a very diverse workforce in terms of gender and nationality, but the headline data suggests it could be more diverse than it is, with a better gender balance and greater national diversity at senior levels.
- No questions are asked, and so little is known, about the percentage of LGBTI people and those with disabilities in UNHCR's workforce. Insights into the experiences of inclusion and exclusion for LGBTI people are shared in more detail in Section 8.

5 APPOINTMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Broadly in line with the Revised Policy and Procedures on Assignments (PPA)³⁰, this report uses the term ‘appointments’ to talk about recruitment into UNHCR and ‘assignments’ to talk about the posts, activities or services to which existing employees are assigned.

Appointments

5.1 Policy

The 2007 gender equity policy includes an explicit target on the gender balance of recruits into UNHCR. This is that ‘all recruitment should have a ratio of 3:2 female to male at all levels until gender parity is achieved’. To enable this, the policy lists a number of ‘positive action’³¹ provisions including:

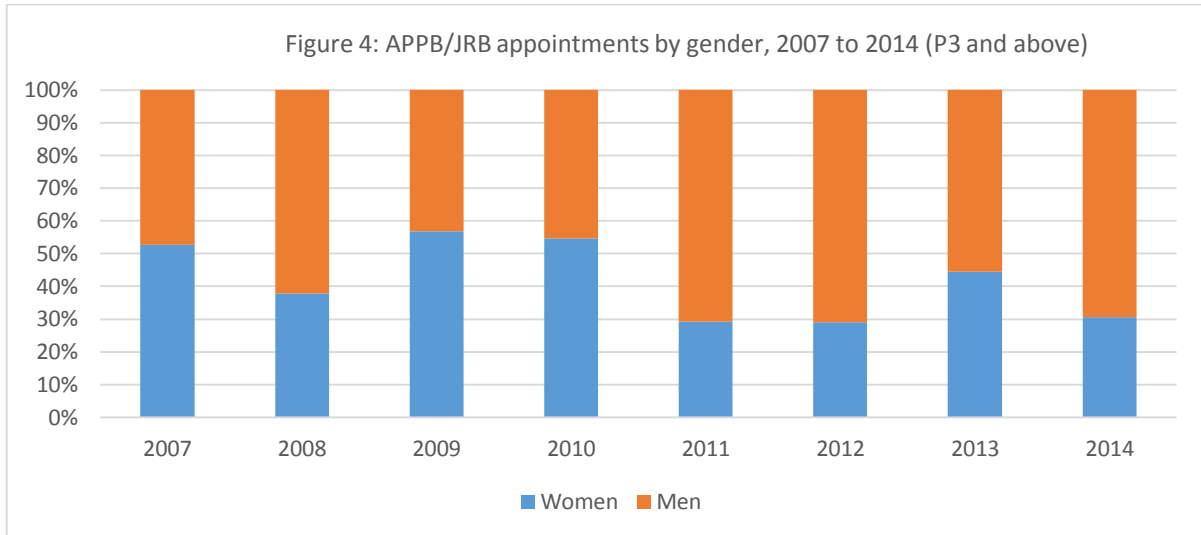
- Proactive sourcing and encouragement of women applicants for management posts in particular, including external vacancy announcements indicating ‘that female candidates are strongly encouraged to apply’.
- That ‘former UNHCR female staff members and female staff from other UN agencies who have a minimum of one year of service in the past five years, and with documented satisfactory performance, will be considered as internal candidates’. In addition, the PPA allows that women alumnae can apply for internally advertised vacancies for a period of up to five years following separation, compared to just two years for men.
- A requirement to select the female candidate ‘in the case of external short-listed female and male candidates who are equally qualified’.

The 2008 policy on the employment of persons with disabilities³² makes a similar commitment to include in the vacancy announcement for posts, a statement that ‘applications from persons with disabilities are welcome’. No targets or other policy provision is known to exist regarding the encouragement of applications from LGBTI or nationally diverse applicants.

5.2 Outcomes

UNHCR is proud of the gender balance of recruits into the Entry-Level Humanitarian Programme (EHP), launched in 2013. As in many organisations and sectors, there is good gender balance at entry level. The EHP targets ‘talented professionals interested in humanitarian work experience soon after completion of their first-level university studies’³³, and in 2014, 61% of recruits to the programme were women.

By contrast, in 2014 women comprised just 35% of applicants to mid-career international posts at P3 and above, and 31% of appointments. As a proportion of the international workforce the numbers here are very small (just 98 external appointments at P3 and above in 2014) but even so, the percentage of women being recruited is lower than the percentage of women at those grades in the existing workforce. Overall, the percentage of external women appointed to posts at P3 and above has decreased since the introduction of the 2007 gender equity policy (Figure 4 below).



The percentage of women being rehired back into UNHCR has also decreased since 2007, though in terms of actual numbers many more women and men are being rehired in 2014 than in 2007. In 2014 women comprised 42% of those rehired into international roles, compared with 59% in 2007. For national roles there has been little change since 2007, with women comprising 36% of rehires in 2014.

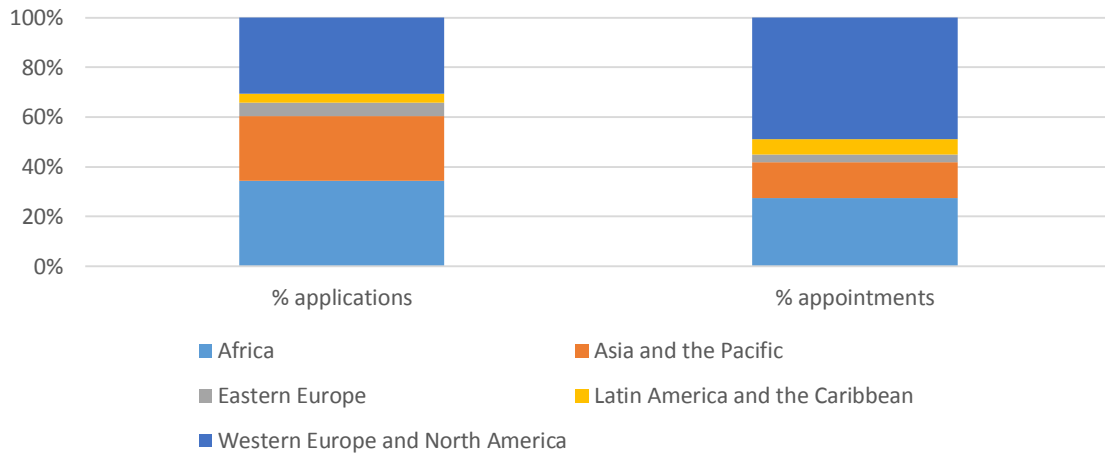
96% of rehires take place within two years of separation. Since 2007 DHRM data shows there to have been only 21 rehires at grades P2 to P5 between three and five years after leaving. Only 6 of the rehires were women. It seems that the provision in the PPA allowing for women alumnae to apply for internally advertised vacancies for a period of up to five years following separation, compared to just two years for men, is making no difference to a better gender balance in the workforce.

What staff say:

‘The policy says that I should be treated as an internal candidate for five years but in practice I felt like an external. To start with there was no way of finding out about vacancies’.

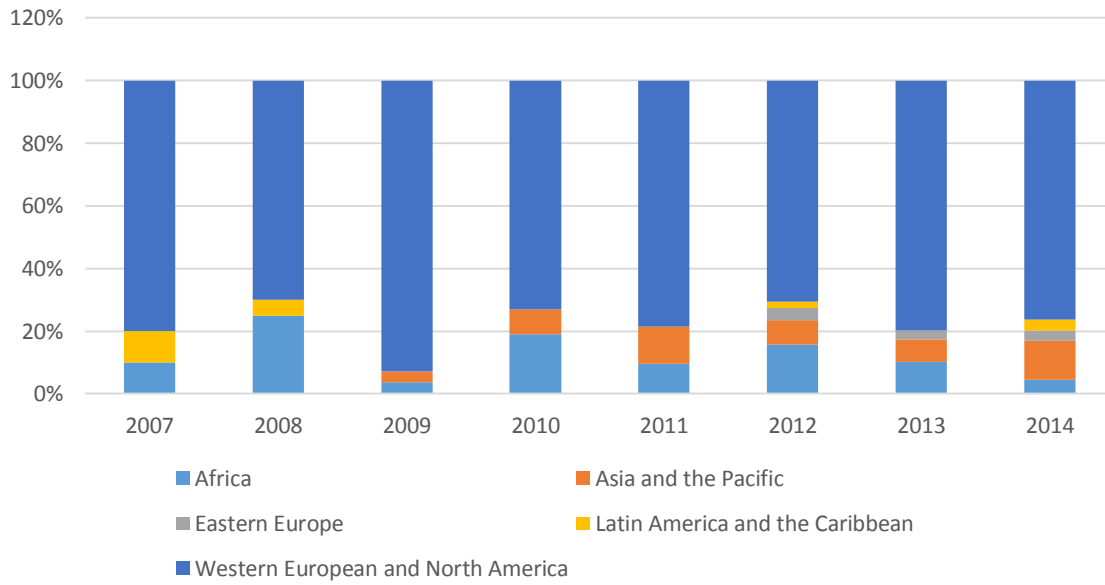
Between 2007 and 2014 UNHCR received around 41,000 applications for posts at P3 and above, of which 36% came from applicants of African nationalities. 460 appointments were made, of which 27% went to applicants from Africa. See Figure 5 below for applications and appointments by nationality to P3 and above for 2014.

Figure 5: Applications and APPB/JRB appointments by nationality (region) 2014 (P3 and above)



Between 2007 and 2014, 78% of external appointments at P4 and above went to people from Western Europe and North America (Figure 6).

Figure 6: External recruitment at P4 and above by nationality 2007 - 2014



5.3 Contributing factors

Three factors contribute to the outcomes on appointments and diversity.

First, UNHCR appears to be doing very little to proactively encourage applications from diverse applicants for international positions. There is nothing at all on the Career Opportunities pages of the external website (www.unhcr.org) to indicate that applications are particularly welcomed from women, or that gender equity and diversity in employment matter at all to UNHCR. Indeed for the gay or lesbian or disabled external visitor to UNHCR's careers website, or the person looking to work on a flexible basis, there is simply no evidence that UNHCR would be interested to receive their applications. The site says nothing at all about UNHCR's aspirations, values or beliefs on diversity and inclusion in terms of staffing. In contrast the opening paragraphs of 'What we look for' on UNICEF's site states that:

'UNICEF is committed to diversity and inclusion within its workforce, and encourages qualified female and male candidates from all national, religious and ethnic backgrounds, including persons living with disabilities, to apply to become a part of our organisation.'

UNICEF's workforce is made up of different categories of staff reflecting various levels of responsibilities and duties. Each category of staff has its own requirements.

*All staff must share our organisation's values of diversity and inclusion, integrity and commitment and meet our core employment competencies of communication, working with people and drive for results.'*³⁴

And the IAEA has an entire section of its internet site dedicated to encouraging applications from women, including statements of its commitment to increasing the representation of women in the workforce, and video profiles and audio interviews with women already working for the agency.³⁵ Progress in the representation of women in professional and higher categories in IAEA's workforce remains slow, but has increased from 18% to 29% in the past fifteen years.

Second, there has been no training or awareness raising on equity, diversity and inclusion in the recruitment process for anyone involved in encouraging and processing applications into UNHCR at any level, relating to gender, nationality, sexual orientation, disability or any other aspect of diversity. One of the biggest developments in understanding of the barriers to progress on gender equity and diversity since 2007 concerns the concept of unintended or 'unconscious' bias (bias for or against certain individuals or groups).³⁶ There is now an enormous body of evidence demonstrating that unconscious bias at both individual and systemic levels affects the decisions that even well-intentioned people make at every stage of the recruitment process, from role specification to interview, meaning that opportunities to encourage diverse applications and recruit a more diverse workforce are constantly being missed.³⁷ Most organisations that are serious about progress on gender equity, diversity and inclusion are now making awareness raising on unconscious bias a pre-requisite for decision-makers in recruitment (see also Section 6 Workplace Culture).

Third, there's a deep suspicion of 'outsiders' in UNHCR, including both external recruits and the external experience of re-recruits (staff who have previously worked for UNHCR and taken a career break or gone on secondment or worked for another organisation). This 'in-group' or 'affinity' bias is explicable in light of evidence showing that when people are under pressure, working to tight deadlines, in difficult circumstances, they tend to gravitate unconsciously to people who are like themselves.³⁸ But the very same bias is likely to limit efforts made by staff to source recruits from outside the organisation. And with women comprising 75% of those on Special Leave Without Pay (SLWOP) in 2014, this bias against 'out-groups' is disproportionately more likely to impact women compared to men.

What staff say:

'It's a bit like, either you're one of us or you're not. Anyone coming in from outside at P4 and above is going to face challenges'.

'UNHCR is a tribe. If you come in from outside, you're seen as taking a role belonging to someone else'.

'How do you break in, if you're not an insider? If you haven't got a contact, forget it'.

'It's not really appropriate to recruit people who have been out of the workforce for some time. Organisational and technical skills change'.

'The assumption was that I'd taken a few steps back in my career. I got no sense of support for taking the time out, or for coming back'.

Assignments

The assignment of the right people to the right posts in UNHCR is core to the delivery of its mandate. It's a complex and resource-intensive business, and as Karen Farkas, Director of DHRM, said in the Food for Thought in Geneva on 9 December 2015, in which she shared UNHCR's first ever People Strategy, *'Everyone is unhappy with the assignments process'*.

This section seeks to present actionable feedback relating to gender equity, diversity and inclusion, against this background of generalised discontent about the process as a whole. The themes here relate to families, fairness and flexibility in assignments.

5.4 Families

There is no doubt that a career as an international professional in UNHCR is tough on adult and family relationships. At any one time, 37% of staff are assigned to non-family duty stations,³⁹ where questions of safety and security may require people to live apart from their partners and children for extended periods. Alongside this, the system of staff rotation requires most international professional staff to relocate their place of work, home and family on average every two to five years. In addition social and legal constraints mean there are even more de facto non-family duty stations for lesbian, gay and bisexual staff than there are for straight employees. There are six countries in the world in which same-sex activities and relationships are punishable by death, and 75 countries in which same-sex activities and relationships are punishable by imprisonment, and many more where homophobic attitudes and behaviours prevail.⁴⁰

Most of the staff assigned to non-family duty stations are men. In 2014 men comprised 78% of all staff in E duty stations, and 66% of international professional staff in E duty stations. Put another way, of all men in international roles, almost one in four are in E duty stations, compared to around one in six women. These proportions are almost unchanged from 2007.

There are a number of factors contributing to this. Men are more likely than women to apply to non-family duty stations. Between 2010 and 2014, women submitted only 30% of applications to non-family duty stations, compared to 46% of applications to A duty stations.

The lower application rate from women compared to men is most often explained in terms of family responsibilities, and the choices and trade-offs that individuals make between caring and careers. There's no doubt that the practical and emotional challenges that people face in living apart from their families are hugely significant in the gender balance of non-family duty stations. But other evidence suggests that this is not the full story.

- There is a strongly-held assumption that women are (or will be) the primary carer in a family, which affects how decision-makers perceive women's ease of assignment and commitment to the mandate. As one Director said, *'Promoting women is not a problem, but deploying them is. In an emergency it's the men who get sent out to non-family duty stations. But you can't have your cake and eat it'*.

Motherhood triggers assumptions that women are less competent and less committed to their careers. As a result, they are held to higher standards and presented with fewer opportunities.⁴¹

- Women are less likely to have families than men, yet are also less likely to apply to non-family duty stations than men. 60% of women are not parents, compared to only 31% of men. Yet as one manager said: *'There's no doubt that the most easily deployable entity is a man without a family'*.
- The 'women-as-primary-carer' model simply doesn't apply across all families, countries or cultures, yet it is deeply entrenched in the thinking of many people in UNHCR. And women who don't fit this model can be vilified for it, including by other women: *'There are women who are happy to leave their families long-term and go to non-family duty stations but I am not one of them. And the problem is that those women then become cited as examples for other women to follow'*.

In the course of this review some staff proposed exempting young mothers from rotation and assignments to non-family duty stations, on the grounds that it is practically and emotionally harder for women than for men to live apart from their children. But overall there was little support for gender-specific solutions here, from either women or men, and little interest in fundamental restructure of the rotation process to better accommodate adult and family relationships.

Instead what both men *and* women want is:

- Greater *respect* from managers for the emotional and practical impact of assignments and rotation on adult and family relationships.

'When my daughter was born I asked my manager if I could take some time out. I said 'I want to see my baby girl' and my manager said 'And I want to see my dog''.

- Greater *practical efforts* from UNHCR in supporting staff to keep their adult and family relationships intact (including those in LGBTI relationships).

'I got absolutely no help to secure a visa for my partner. I felt totally alone'

- Greater *appreciation* that there are multiple family forms. Families should not be assumed to be heterosexual, women should not be assumed to be the primary or sole carer – and men should no longer be assumed to have no role or attachment to family care.

'A separate posting from my family would be a deal-breaker. [As a father] I don't want to be one or two years away from my daughter'.

- More *flexibility and control* over the timing and location of rotations and assignments to accommodate work and non-work lives at different points in their careers.

'If people decide they don't want to rotate for family reasons, this should be ok. I understand there may need to be a trade-off in terms of career, but it should still be ok to do'.

5.5 Fairness

There's a strong feeling amongst staff that the assignments process is neither transparent nor bias-free. Bias here means different things to different people. For instance, some staff feel that a decision not to post women to certain duty stations for reasons of safety and security is the act of a responsible employer; others see it as career-limiting and sexist to the detriment of both women and men. Some staff feel that managers appointing people they already know to work with them makes good common sense when loyalty and trust can be lifesavers, whilst others see the operation of such networks perpetuating exclusion and acting as a barrier to career progression ('*cultish*' as one staff member described it). Many describe parents abusing the system of 'special constraints' to secure unwarranted exemptions from rotation; others feel being a parent puts them at a distinct disadvantage in terms of rotation and assignments.

Despite the committed efforts of many people to ensure fairness in the assignments process, it seems that in practice who you know, your nationality, your gender and for LGBTI people the attitude of managers on sexual orientation all make a significant and often inappropriate contribution to where and when staff are posted.

In terms of process and policy there is little in place that would assure staff otherwise. For instance the PPA makes only a passing reference to the organisation's commitment to 'provide equality of access to employment and maintain a diverse and skilled staff, which includes persons with disabilities'.⁴² The application process itself is largely paper-based, which means staff rarely get the opportunity to present evidence which may add to or challenge the beliefs of decision-makers. And as with appointments, there is no requirement for anyone involved in decision-making on assignments to have had any training or awareness on equity, diversity and inclusion.

What staff say:

'When a new person arrives the first question is 'Is he good?'. If you've been in a difficult situation and are best friends with the Representative, then you're good'.

'I had to leave my posting because my manager was openly homophobic. It had a huge impact on my career'.

5.6 Flexibility in assignments

Opportunities for staff to flex the timing and location of rotation and assignments are very limited in UNHCR. Beyond 'special constraints' (on grounds of health or disability for instance), the form of career flexibility most often talked about by staff is Special Leave Without Pay (SLWOP), which might include secondments to other organisations and career breaks for study, family or other reasons. But there are enormous attitudinal and practical barriers with people taking special leave, including:

- The labelling of people who take a career break as uncommitted to the mandate
- Difficulties that those on leave encounter in finding out about vacancies when staff are ready to return
- The reluctance of decision-makers in UNHCR to re-recruit people who have been out of the workforce for any amount of time.

The effects of this are two-fold:

- People often don't take SLWOP even when it would be the right thing for them personally to do so (as one interviewee said, *'I needed some time out but was told going on SLWOP was the worst thing I could do'*)
- Of those who do take leave, or separate for other reasons, as already mentioned, re-recruitment levels are low, despite most of the leavers interviewed in this review strongly expressing an interest in returning. And as already mentioned, with women comprising most of those on SLWOP, the stigma attached to people who take career breaks is significantly more likely to disrupt the careers of women in UNHCR, than of men.

Implications

- There are some immediate practical steps that UNHCR could take to attract a more diverse range of applicants particularly at mid-career roles. Developing a diversity recruitment strategy (including simple steps like making clear on the internet site that applications are welcome from LGBTI people, and requiring decision-makers in recruitment to have done some training on diversity and inclusion) should be a priority.
- But deeper attitudinal change is also required, to challenge the frequently-articulated scepticism about outsiders, to address entrenched assumptions for instance about the nature of families and caring, and to raise awareness of the potential impact of bias in decision-making and behaviour on the outcomes of both appointments and assignments.

6 PROGRESSION AND PROMOTION

6.1 Policy

In addition to targets on recruitment, the 2007 gender equity policy includes explicit targets on the progression and promotion of women in UNHCR. These include:

- Priority being given to female applicants for under-filling to a P4, P5 or D1 post
- A target of 50% of all Representative and senior management posts to be filled by women
- 50% of all promotions slots to be awarded to eligible women 'at grade levels where parity is not achieved'.

To enable this, the policy allows that 'cumulative seniority shall be taken into account when considering female candidates for promotion'. UNHCR's Policy and Procedures for the Promotion of International Professional Staff Members also allows that the 'minimum seniority-in-grade criteria for female staff members serving at the P3, P4 and P5 grade levels will be reduced by one year' compared to those for men 'until gender parity at the P4 to D1 grade levels is achieved'.⁴³

There are no targets on the progression and promotion of staff by nationality, although the promotions policy does require promotions panels to 'pay due regard to the importance of recommending staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible'.⁴⁴

6.2 Outcomes

- For most years since 2007 where significant numbers of international promotions have taken place,⁴⁵ an average of 48% of promotions slots to P3 and above went to women. In 2007, 2011, 2012, 2014 and 2015 50% or more of the promotions slots went to women.
- Between 2007 and 2014, an average of 44% of promotions in locally recruited roles went to women.
- In 2014 32% of promotions to P4 and above went to staff from Africa (compared to 27% in 2007), and 42% to staff from Western Europe and North America, compared to 44% in 2007.
- Women are consistently less likely to under-fill than their representation in grade would suggest. In 2014 only 29% of under-fills were held by women.
- In 2014 women held just 26% of Representative roles, rising to 30% in 2015. In the two regions with the most Representatives (Africa, and Western Europe and North America), women hold 40% and 25% of Representative roles respectively. 29% of Representatives overall are from Africa, and 53% from Western Europe and North America.

6.3 In practice

Despite (or perhaps because of) gender balance in the allocation of promotions slots to women and men in international professional roles, perceptions of inequity dominate how staff talk about progression and promotions in UNHCR. There are three recurring themes.

First, it's clear that many staff lack faith in the fairness, transparency and objectivity of UNHCR's promotions process as a whole, not only in relation to gender equity. Neither men nor women seem to consider it a meritocratic process. There was plenty of feedback to this effect throughout the review, echoed in an all-staff email from the Staff Council in December 2015 which stated:

'As was the case last year, many are expressing concerns relating to the lack of transparency and the absence of tangible criteria for the ranking as well as a lack of a methodology and an Administrative Instructions for its implementation. Indeed without clear criteria and methodology, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to ensure equitable treatment and thus fair and objective ranking'.⁴⁶

There's a feeling amongst many staff that progression results from a combination of having the right skills and experience, but also from adherence to 'unwritten rules', which not everyone has access to.⁴⁷ These include having a sponsor (someone who is willing to advocate for you when you are out of the room, like a manager or a Representative), being well-networked and well-known particularly in Geneva, being seen to work long hours, and the attitudes of your manager in relation to gender, culture, age and sexual orientation. Promotions panels have the flexibility to take diversity into account in allocating slots to 'equally meritorious' male and female candidates, but the behaviours that are seen as 'meritorious' are often culture- and gender-specific.

What staff say:

'The policies and processes pretend to establish objective criteria for promotion and assignments, but in fact it's not at all transparent. There's a strong cowboy culture, the culture of emergencies, and many of the characteristics people need to demonstrate are those that are easier for men. The problem is that it's senior men who've been in a sequence of tough duty stations winning their spurs who set the culture. There's a pretence at equality, but it's all been decided for you'.

'My best advice is to know the rules, and build relationships with managers'

'I don't want to look and behave like a man to get on'.

'I sometimes feel like in order to progress I need to leave my culture behind'.

In this way interviews with mid-career women in UNHCR echo the findings of a survey of career ambitions conducted by Bain & Company with more than 1000 women and men in the US. The Bain survey found that there are *'three critical areas where women in the middle of their careers report more negative experiences and perceptions than those who have just entered the workforce: a clash with the stereotype of the ideal worker, a lack of supervisory support and too few role models in senior-level positions.'*⁴⁸

Secondly, there is deep ambivalence about the positive action provisions which contribute to women being allocated 50% of promotions slots to P4 and above. One of these is cumulative experience, which is generally believed to contribute to the promotion of less experienced women over more experienced male colleagues. In fact, women and men appear to enter all grades with similar years of experience, apart from entry to P5. For promotions to P5 between 2004 and 2011, most women had between 4 and 6 years' experience in grade, compared to men who had between 6 and 10 years' experience.

What staff say:

'I see women – including me – getting promoted more quickly than men – sometimes a bit too fast, as they don't have equivalent experience and there is a smaller pool of women to promote from. It puts me off wanting to be promoted again'.

More controversial than cumulative experience however is the explicit top-down allocation of promotions slots to achieve a gender-balanced outcome. The 2007 gender equity policy states that 50% of promotions in the international professional category will go to women 'with the required competencies', but over time this target has been interpreted as a quota, and the promotions process and outcomes are now adjusted so that 50% of promotions always go to women.

Definitions

A gender quota is a fixed number or percentage of women in the workforce or overall, which an organisation has an obligation (imposed itself or by others) to achieve. A gender target is a number or percentage of women in the workforce or overall, which an organisation aspires to achieve.

To help achieve this outcome, in the early promotions rounds women and men are not evaluated against each other, but instead 'men are evaluated/compared with their male peers and women are evaluated/compared with their female peers'.⁴⁹ At senior levels direct intervention in promotions outcomes is driven proactively by the High Commissioner who has determined to personally correct what he sees as years of structural inequality facing women in the organisation ('*to compensate for caring*'). There is no doubting the effectiveness of these measures in terms of the percentage of women promoted, but the intervention of the High Commissioner receives a mixed reception from both women and men. Some welcome his efforts to 'disrupt the default'⁵⁰ which many believe previously saw the progression of men favoured over that of women, arguing that without it there would be little progress on the progression and promotion of women in UNHCR. Others are deeply opposed, including on the grounds that it should be performance rather than gender which determines promotions outcomes.

One undeniable effect of the quotas is that questions are constantly raised about performance of women in UNHCR in a way that undermines the reputation of senior women as a whole, and simply does not happen with senior men. Augmented by a general lack of faith in the performance management process itself, and lack of data on performance management outcomes by gender, there is no quantitative evidence available with which to counter these allegations. It seems that

when women get promoted, whatever their individual merits and experience, they do so as a group with much less of the organisational backing than men get.

'To the extent that quotas influence existing norms, or create new norms, they can be an effective short-term shock to correct a structural imbalance. They can create role models and help an organisation achieve 'tipping point' sooner...The problems start when quotas are positioned as an alternative to the free flow of talent in the long run...Over time they become counterproductive'.⁵¹

What staff say

'I was promoted, and two male colleagues who I've known for ages and weren't promoted stopped talking to me. They said I was only promoted because I was a woman'.

'I was promoted much faster than my peers to Director. I don't think it was down to me being a woman'.

Third, there is considerable discontent amongst men who feel that the process of allocating slots to women means that they now miss out on promotions opportunities, precisely because of their gender. This discontent is acknowledged by many at senior levels (*'It's not been easy for European men'*, said one Director), and whilst it's not a sufficient reason not to act, nothing seems to have been done to meaningfully engage with men's concerns. As a result, men themselves disengage, including those who may otherwise be allies on gender equity.

What staff say:

'While I know some really excellent women promoted at every level, the promotions exercise is tainted by the manufactured nature of personal promotions and its pretence at being an objective, merit-based, award for good performance.

I would like to be a champion for gender equality in UNHCR, but this kind of HR process leaves me demotivated, disillusioned, and anti-female promotion based on quotas. The bar is significantly lower for female staff members, and male staff have to live with this reality'.

'Men are resigned to their career fate'

6.4 Building a diverse talent pipeline

The challenge for UNHCR now is that, flawed as they may be, cumulative seniority and quotas for gender and promotions are almost the only interventions in place to help build a gender-balanced talent pipeline. At an organisational level, little proactive attention is paid to women's career development beyond this.

The 2007 gender equity policy includes just one recommendation in support of women's development, which is the establishment of a mentoring programme 'with a particular focus on female staff members'. Some eight years later, a mentoring programme has just been set up, but with no particular focus on the career development needs of women. Neither does UNHCR offer any

of the many options for supporting women's career development provided by other large global organisations (and a small number of other UN entities), such as targeted development programmes, an enabling environment for gender networks, contact with role models inside and outside the organisation, career sponsorship and coaching, strategic use of stretch assignments like under-filling or Representative roles, and maternity returner schemes.⁵²

What staff say:

'I've had no mentors, no sponsors, no role models, except my mum, no advice about how to progress'

'Mentoring is useful for everyone, but maybe particularly for women'

'Women's networks are actively discouraged. There wasn't a big demand for one, anyway'

The Call to Action

KPMG's Women's Leadership Study lists a number of steps organisations can take to 'move more women into workplace leadership.'⁵³ These include:

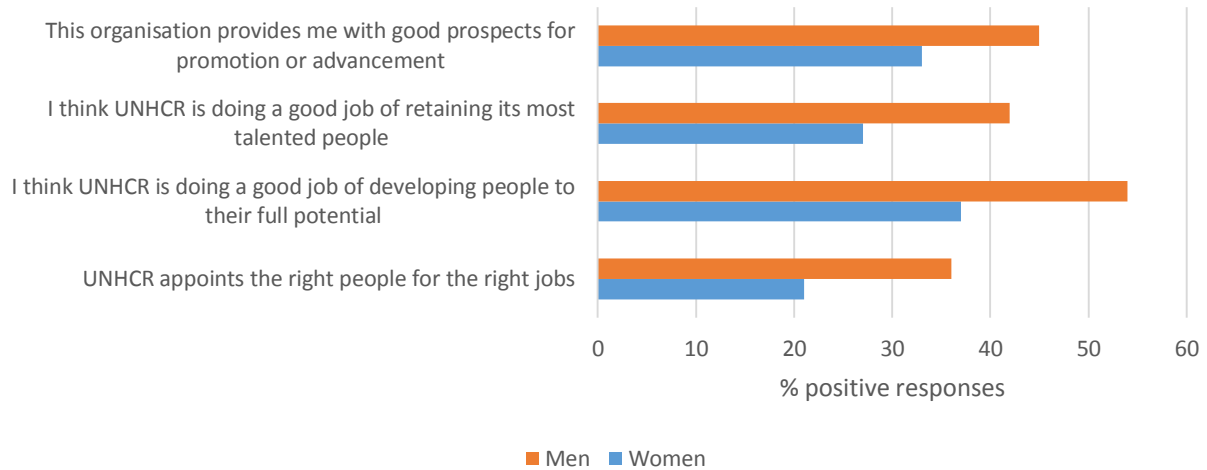
- *Actively engage potential leaders.* Identify and invest in high-performing women with the capacity and inclination to lead, and give them the confidence to do so.
- *Establish relationships and networks.* Actively connect junior-level employees with female senior leader mentors/ sponsors and create networking opportunities regardless of level.
 - *Enhance the visibility of role models.* Highlight female senior leaders.
- *Chart the path to leadership.* Articulate clear steps for career development, starting with employees in their twenties or earliest stages of their careers.

Further, the 2007 policy includes good intentions relating to broader culture change (such as the mainstreaming of 'gender issues into management and leadership development programmes', performance targets on gender equity for Directors and all heads of office, and the 'active encouragement' of the use of flexible working arrangements). These changes are key to the progression of women in an organisation. But there is little evidence of any of these intentions being delivered on either.

Perhaps this gap between intention and delivery helps explain what some men see as a paradox about women in UNHCR (*'it's like they're never satisfied'*). Although women in international roles are more likely to be promoted than men, they are considerably less satisfied than men with their careers, and with the approach to appointment, progression and development of talent in UNHCR overall (see Figure 8 below).

Only 33% of women believe UNHCR provides them with good prospects for advancement, compared to 45% of men.

Figure 8: Global staff survey responses on career development by gender, 2014



Implications

- With little other activity in place to support women’s career development, gender quotas in the allocation of promotions outcomes feel simultaneously wholly necessary, and wholly unsustainable.
- UNHCR needs to take a much more proactive approach in its support for women’s career progression. This requires the introduction of a number of proven career development interventions such as coaching and sponsorship, *and* working with managers and leaders on how their conscious and unconscious behaviour and decision-making affects women’s day-to-day experience and career potential.
- There is nothing in place in UNHCR to understand or support the career progression of LGBTI staff, or those with disabilities, and no strategy on this, or on career progression and nationality. Developing a truly diverse pipeline of talent for the future will require attention to be paid here too.

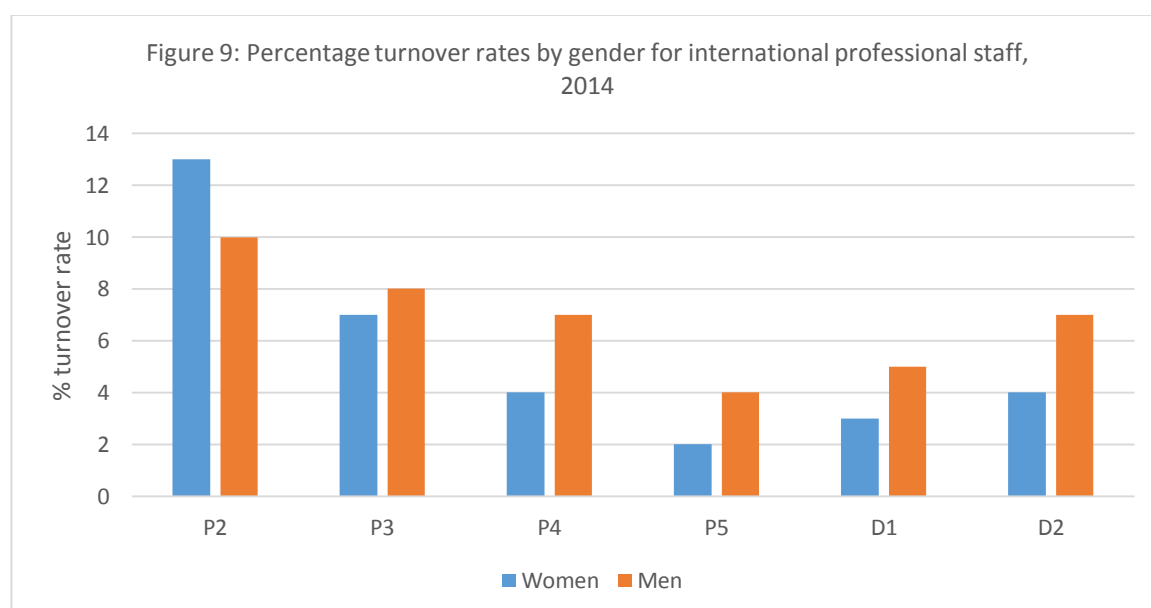
7 SEPARATION

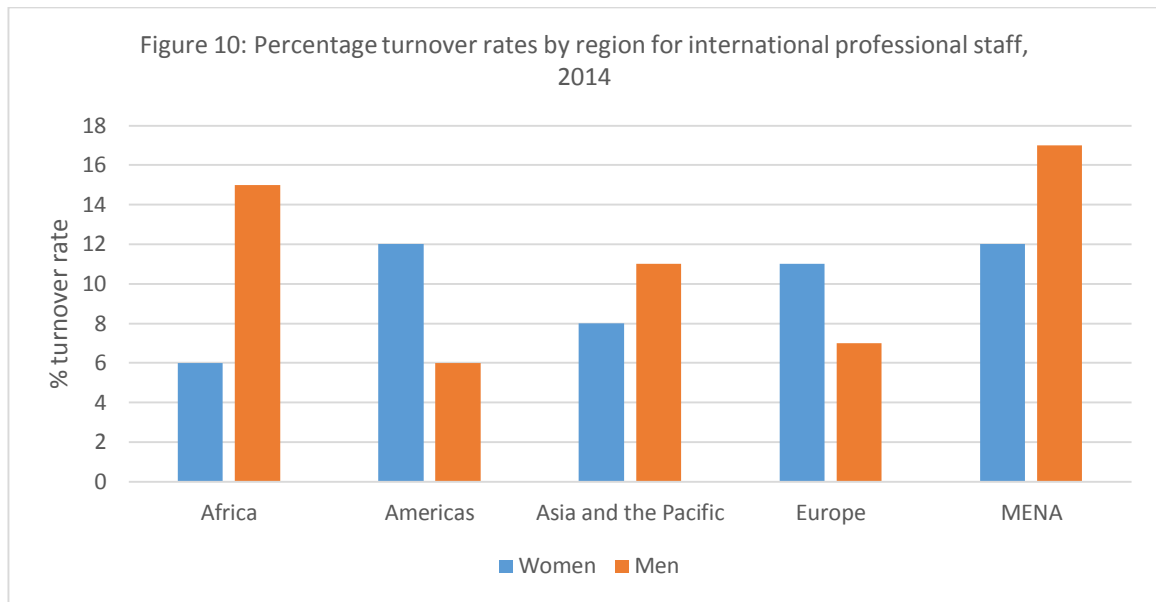
It's often said that women leave UNHCR at higher rates than men. Analysis of turnover rates and exit survey data by gender reveals the reality and some myths about women's separation.

Myth 1: Women are more likely to separate from UNHCR than men

There's a commonly-held belief that women separate from UNHCR at a higher rate than men. In fact the reverse is true. Women overall are more likely to stay than their male counterparts.

- In 2014 the turnover rate for male staff (both locally recruited and international) was 13%, compared to just 8% of women.
- In international professional roles, the turnover rate for women was lower than that for men at all grades except P2 (Figure 9 below).
- The turnover rate for women is slightly higher than that for men in HQ roles (7% of women left HQ roles in 2014, compared to 5% of men) and in the Americas and Europe (Figure 10 below).





Myth 2: Women separate because of their families

The second myth is that women are more likely than men to leave UNHCR for reasons to do with their families. In fact:

- There is no difference in the turnover rates of single employees by gender.
- Married men are significantly more likely to separate from the organisation than married women. In 2014 13% of married men left UNHCR, compared to just 8% of married women.
- There is very little difference in the turnover rates of men and women without children. However 13% of fathers left in 2014, compared to just 4% of mothers.
- A review of exit survey data⁵⁴ reveals that, excluding people separating for reasons of non-renewal of contract and retirement, 1 in 3 women, and nearly 1 in 4 men, leave for reasons to do with their families.

What staff say:

'Leaving was about much more than having children, but it definitely played a role'.

- Both women and men who leave for family reasons cite 'prolonged separation' as the main reason for leaving UNHCR. For women, the second most important reason for leaving is lack of employment opportunities for their partner. This matters to men too, but for them, the second most important reason is their children's education (see exit survey findings in Figure 11 below).
- Only around 4% of women in international roles go on maternity leave each year (37 women in 2014), of whom around 90% return to UNHCR.

Figure 11: Responses to the staff survey September 2013 to April 2015 by those identifying family factors as contributing to their decision to leave

Family factors contributing to decision-making	% of women identifying this as a factor (n=38)	% of men identifying this as a factor (n=20)	Ranking of family factors (women)	Ranking of family factors (men)
Prolonged separation	42%	65%	1	1
Lack of employment opportunities for partner	16%	30%	2	3
Partner offered employment elsewhere	13%	15%	3	4
Children's education	11%	35%	4	2
Inadequate medical facilities	5%	5%	5	5

Myth 3: Women who leave do so to care for their families

The third myth is that women who leave UNHCR do so to care for their families. In fact, similar proportions of both women and men who separate from UNHCR do so for career opportunities elsewhere.

- Around 14% of both women and men leave because of lack of career opportunities/development in UNHCR
- Over one in five women, and nearly one in four men, leave for a job opportunity elsewhere in the UN.

Marital and parental status do not significantly differ for women who aspire, and women who don't.⁵⁵

Other contributors to separation

Two further themes emerged in interviews with women and men as contributors to separation, both related to inclusion (valuing the individual, recognition of uniqueness, a sense of belonging, and access to flexible working).

- 1 Several interviewees said that they would have stayed with UNHCR if they'd felt the organisation (in practice, their managers) had recognised and valued them and their work more. Interviewees described a need for:
 - A more human touch from managers (*'Reassurance, warmth, a sense that I had a career there, that I wasn't just a body'*).

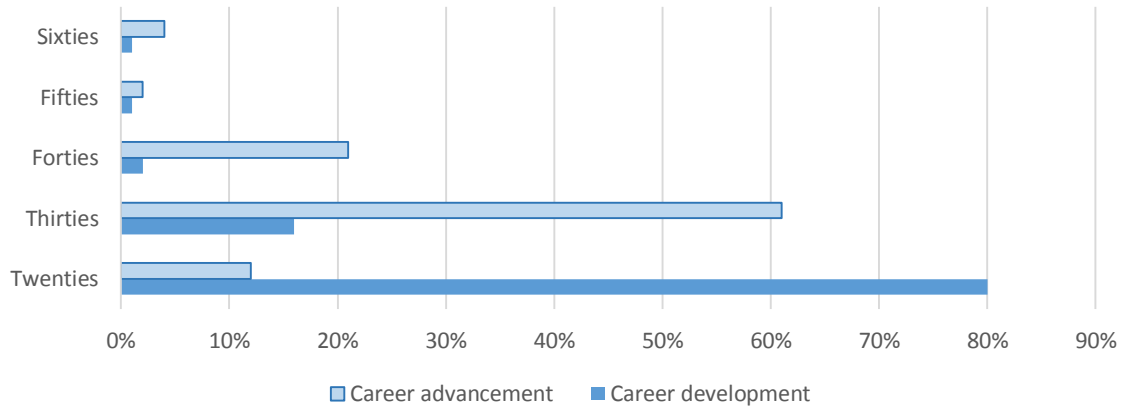
- Acknowledgement of the personal sacrifices people make for UNHCR (*'I was making one of the most difficult decisions I've ever had to make [whether to take up a posting or return home to work out their relationship with a partner]. I turned down the posting and was told 'You're ungrateful'*).
 - Treating people as individuals not as resources, with more recognition of individual circumstance (*'I took almost no holiday, I'd done well in a really tough environment, managed a large team, gone on an emergency and really needed to take a couple of months off. Instead it was like 'Thank you, here's a post at the same grade in a D duty station'*).
- 2 Both women and men referred to the lack of flexible working as a factor in their decision-making:
- Staff looking for greater day-to-day flexibility were often made to feel there was no scope to discuss options, and no alternative but to separate (*'I'd have loved to work part-time. There are definitely jobs in the field that could be done part-time'*).
 - Similarly staff who wanted to take SLWOP or sought other forms of career flexibility were given no encouragement to do so, (*'I turned down a position and was told I'm blacklisted and won't be able to work in UNHCR again'*).

More than 90 percent of both women and men believe taking extended family leave will hurt their careers.⁵⁶

Implications

- UNHCR has relatively low rate of voluntary separation, so this is unlikely to be a compelling driver for change in attitude and practice on gender equity. But drawing attention to the myths surrounding women's separation from UNHCR is important, because they appear to perpetuate a stereotype of women being less committed to the mandate than men. In truth there is no evidence at all that this is the case.
- The turnover of women is higher than that of men at P2. In addition evidence from elsewhere⁵⁷ confirms that the early career experiences of women significantly impact their levels of ambition and determination to progress, so targeting interventions at this point makes good strategic sense (see also Figure 12 below).
- The myths explored in this section relate to gender and separation, but other myths and stereotypes also exist around other aspects of diversity and inclusion, for example nationality, LGBTI and disability. Challenging myths around gender is easier because of the availability of data and because the myths are openly discussed; it is harder but just as important to remain alert to and challenge the mythology surrounding other groups too.

Figure 12: Age working women believe it is critical for companies to most support a woman's development and career advancement



Base: Working women, 25-64

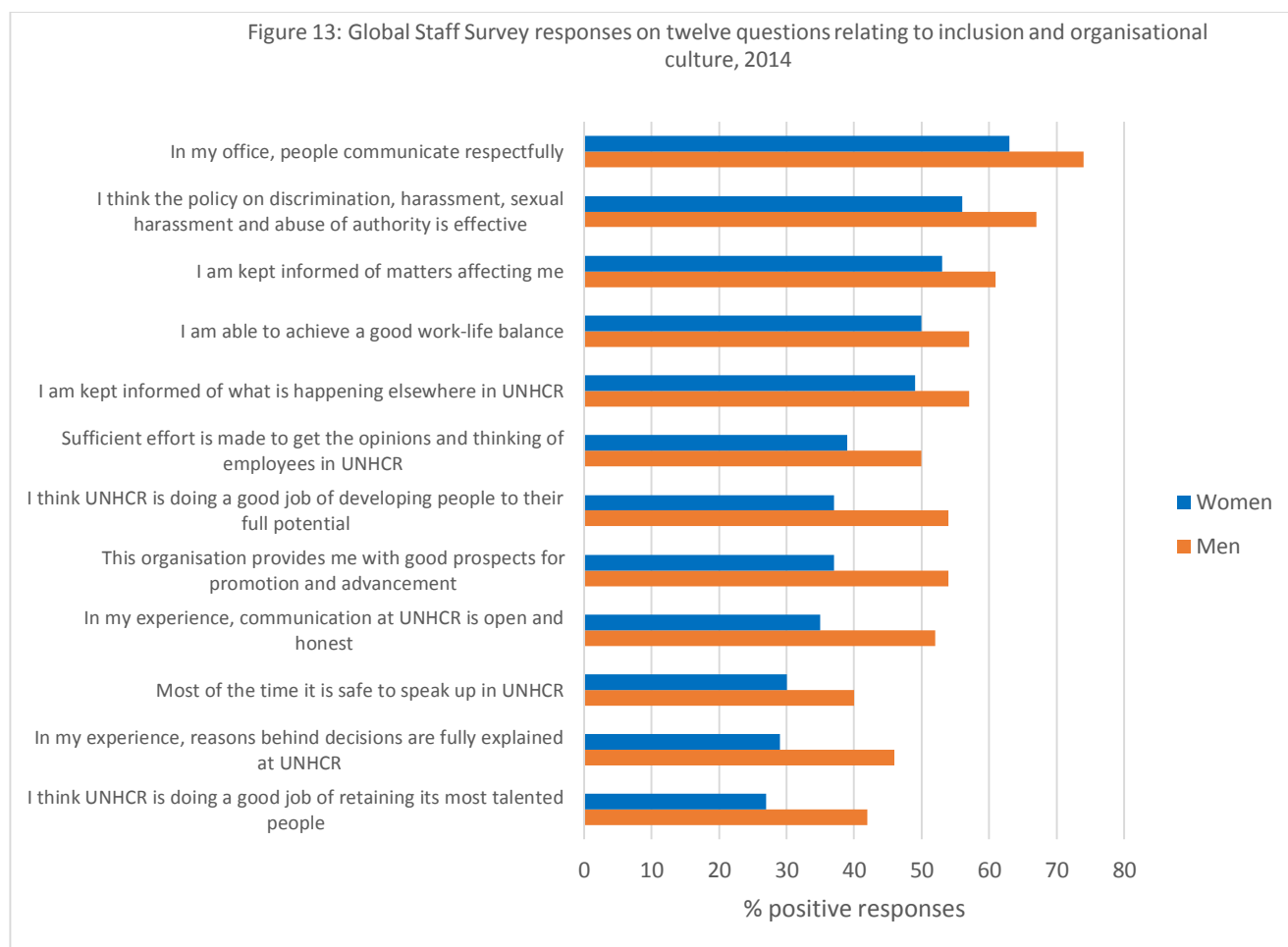
Q: At what age do you think it is critical for companies to most support a woman's career development and career advancement?

8 WORKPLACE CULTURE

88% of respondents to the 2014 Global Staff Survey are proud to work for UNHCR, and over 70% would wholeheartedly recommend UNHCR as a good place to work. These are high scores by any measure. But digging beneath the surface of the survey data, and exploring the themes emerging from interviews with staff at all levels, reveals a workplace culture that is clearly more inclusive for some groups of employees, than for others.

8.1 Measuring inclusion

Diversity is typically measured in quantitative terms, such as through the representation, recruitment, retention and promotion of different demographic groups in the workforce. The experience of inclusion is more difficult to measure, but one available indicator is responses to the Global Staff Survey. There are several questions which ask about respondents' experiences of respect and communication in their place of work, and their sense of inclusion and value in the wider organisation. Taking twelve such questions, Figure 13 below shows that whilst the pattern of responses is similar for women and men, women are much less positive than men on every question of inclusion. Whether in relation to their career prospects, their sense of being fully informed and communicated with, or their feelings of safety about speaking up, the survey echoes the sentiments and experiences described by women in interviews too.



The survey doesn't ask staff about nationality, sexual orientation or disability, so there are no measures of inclusion which can be drawn from staff responses on aspects of diversity other than gender. In this way the survey itself renders invisible (excludes) the experiences of LGBTI and disabled people in UNHCR.

8.2 Inclusive policies

Having a policy which focuses on gender equity (rather than including other aspects of diversity such as nationality) is seen by many staff to be exclusionary and old-fashioned. Most employees would like to see the scope of future policy and practice extended to include other aspects of diversity too, in particular sexual orientation and nationality.

Whilst important work is being done by DIP to raise awareness of the protection needs of LGBTI persons of concern⁵⁸, and interviewees say there has been a 'major shift in willingness' to talk about sexual orientation and staffing, it's notable that the needs of LGBTI staff achieve little visibility or discussion in the organisation. For instance:

- There is no information, policy or implementation guidance for staff or for DHRM relating to the assignment of LGBTI employees to countries which are hostile to or criminalise same-sex relationships. Indeed 'the system of postings and assignments, in design and in practice, does not regard same-sex relationships any differently than heterosexual relationships'⁵⁹ despite obvious differences in the social and legal contexts of same-sex relationships in many countries in which UNHCR operates.
- A series of actions and recommendations made by DHRM Policy Unit in 2012 to address barriers to inclusion faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex staff members in UNHCR has only been partially implemented. In particular whilst there has been some awareness raising and training for the protection of LGBTI persons of concern, there has been very little awareness raising or sensitisation of colleagues, managers or others on issues facing LGBTI staff. The staff member who generated the DHRM actions and recommendations is now working in another UN entity, and there is no longer any LGBTI subject matter expert in the Division.
- Unlike in many other large global organisations, there is no LGBTI staff network and there is no official LGBTI focal point for gay and lesbian staff in UNHCR. UNHCR's relationship with UNGLOBE (the UN staff group which provides policy guidance on the equality and non-discrimination of LGBTI employees) appears lukewarm at best. Unlike IOM, UNESCO, WFP and other UN entities, there is no UNHCR contact point listed on UNGLOBE's website.⁶⁰

It's a similar story on disability. UNHCR works hard to identify and address the needs of disabled persons of concern, including assigning a staff member with specific responsibility for disabled refugees. The Staff Welfare Section and others work with individual disabled employees on a case-by-case basis, and the organisation has had a staff disability policy in place since 2008, but in practice there is no evidence of action either to attract disabled employees or to increase understanding and awareness of the experience of disabled staff more generally in UNHCR.

The invisibility of disabled staff in the organisation was thrown into sharp relief by a message from the High Commissioner marking the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 3 December 2015. The purpose of the message was to '*celebrate the achievements and contributions of persons with disabilities and reaffirm our commitment to promoting their rights on an equal basis with others*'. It

talked exclusively about disability amongst persons of concern, and wholly failed to include any mention of disability amongst UNHCR's own staff.⁶¹

There is no policy guidance on cultural or national inclusion for UNHCR staff, and discussions of culture and nationality (and in particular cultural norms around gender relations and sexual orientation, 'culture clash', national politics and the relationship between nationality/culture and performance) are sensitive, politically, personally and organisationally.

What staff say:

'The conversations I have about culture are naïve'.

'People are just making it up as they go along'.

'Culture is just not talked about at all, because people find it too difficult'.

'What gender equity means is different for different cultures'.

Finally, there is no formal mechanism for staff to share or voice their experiences of gender equity, diversity or inclusion in UNHCR. There are no formal employee networks (no women's network, no LGBTI network for instance) though for those lucky enough to know the right people, plenty of informal networks do exist. When asked about the absence of formal networks, both women and LGBTI employees said there had never been any encouragement from the organisation to set one up. DHRM has no process for consultation with staff about the development or impact of policies or practice on the basis of gender, nationality, sexual orientation or any other aspect of diversity.

8.3 Inclusive behaviour

It's not easy being 'different' in UNHCR. First, there's little evidence that diversity is considered an asset by staff or the organisation. Instead it's something which is variously made the focus of attention, or ignored, or 'accommodated' as an exception, or seen as a 'constraint', a term which itself implies that difference is a hindrance.⁶² It's also often a source of competition between employees. Men feel their careers are disadvantaged compared to those of women, and vice versa. When it comes to postings in non-family duty stations, single people feel their personal lives are disregarded compared to those of people in a relationship and especially parents. Parents feel their particular needs are often overlooked, whilst nationality and culture are regarded as an asset in some circumstances (recruitment and promotion, maybe), and a disadvantage in others.

What staff say:

As a single woman everyone thinks I don't have a private life. If I get killed it's almost like the perception is 'there are no kids to worry about'.

Second, staff shared plenty of examples of ignorance, bias and poor behaviour in relation to diversity and inclusion both in HQ and the field. Men and women, gay and lesbian employees talked about observing and experiencing harassment, exclusion, stereotyping and bias, both intentional and unintentional. A lack of faith in management's commitment to 'zero tolerance', anxieties over articulating what's acceptable and not in different cultural contexts, and a generic fear of speaking up (see Figure 13 above, showing that barely 30% of women agreeing that it is safe to speak up even 'most of the time' in UNHCR) mean many experiences of both sexism and homophobia continue to go unreported.

What staff say:

'It comes out in the bar'.

'Strong women get quickly labelled bossy or aggressive'.

'Managers still make sexist comments about pregnancy'.

'Harassment and bullying are still a real issue for women. There's no clear messaging, no zero tolerance, so people end up questioning our values'.

'Afgaynistan'.

Third, there is limited acknowledgement that bias exists, and as yet no learning and development for staff at any level on what bias is, why it matters, and how to minimise it at both individual and systemic levels. By contrast many large global organisations are tackling unconscious bias head-on as a core component of their approach on diversity and inclusion (see case study overleaf).

8.4 Inclusive values

There's no doubt that UNHCR's protection mandate and its stated values are fundamentally aligned with respect for diversity and difference, and the principles of inclusion. Diversity and inclusion are absolutely at the heart of UNHCR's work with refugees, day in and day out. In terms of staffing however there are a number of implicit values which to some extent contradict the organisation's ambition of a diverse and inclusive culture.

Two have already been mentioned. One is the equation of family responsibilities with female employees. Though attitudes are changing, the overwhelming association of women and caring affects how women staff members are perceived, in particular their mobility, their ambition, their commitment to the mandate. The second is the organisation's need for its employees to 'fit'. All organisations look for cultural 'fit', but in UNHCR fit is equated with being 'one of us' – often to do with having been through the same tough experiences in the field. This requirement for fit has real operational benefits to 'insiders' but also acts as a powerful exclusionary mechanism to the recruitment and regard of those who are considered 'different', or 'outsiders', which is totally at odds with UNHCR's aspirations on diversity and inclusion.

PwC on unconscious bias e-learning⁶³

Diversity is critical to PwC's strategy and sustaining our leading market position depends on unlocking the innovation, creativity and potential of all employees.

Research shows that people working in an inclusive workplace are more likely to feel engaged and our own research evidences the link between engagement and performance. Inclusion is vital, but the greatest barrier is our shared tendency to gravitate towards people like ourselves which can cause minority groups to feel excluded.

The steps we took

To address this PwC launched our first unconscious bias mandatory e-learning to 16,000 UK partners and staff in 2011. The training was designed to make individuals aware of the impact of bias on their relationships, acknowledge situations where they could be more open-minded and motivate them to take action.

But, to achieve behaviour change, people need to be reminded of messages. Building on the success of our first unconscious bias training, PwC's Executive Board commissioned an internal campaign in 2013 culminating in a second round of unconscious bias e-learning.

This campaign differed from the first training, as it involved creating a sustained programme of communication and awareness-raising of the business case for diversity; how PwC needs to value the difference of its diverse talent to support its business growth targets; and the benefits of being open minded.

These messages were communicated through a variety of methods:

- a live webcast hosted by Executive Board members
- communications to people managers and HR Leaders
- articles in firm wide news channels
- a photo competition
- discussions on our internal social networking site.

Central to the campaign was a film featuring four scenarios on maternity and career progression, cultural awareness, sexual orientation, and disability.

The film demonstrates how everyone can display bias and be on the receiving end of it. This challenges the belief: "I'm open-minded, other people are the problem"!

What we've experienced

The films were followed by unconscious bias e-learning in April 2013 which was launched to all UK partners and staff.

The training employed a variety of methods to appeal to different learning styles, such as animation to emphasise the business case for diversity and the ways that people can be excluded; interactive psychological tests and an explanation from a psychologist on how bias flaws decision making; a film with an element of humour; and actions to put people's learning into practice.

People were encouraged to complete the e-learning within a three month period. Unlike the first training, however, completion was not mandatory. Instead, leaders were made accountable for maximising completion rates – 92% of the firm's people completed the e-learning and colleagues have noted that the e-learning "has made me think about the assumptions I make".

We've now gone a step further and licensed the training to clients, demonstrating that not only has it been impactful for us, but that we can help other organisations follow our successful lead.

The third value is the association of fairness with sameness. There's a strongly held belief in UNHCR that fair treatment means the same treatment. But this belief means treating people the same who have very different personal circumstances, needs, talents and ambitions, which in turn means denying uniqueness and difference. A good example of this is the system of postings and assignments which as already discussed, 'does not regard same-sex relationships any differently than heterosexual ones'. It seems UNHCR is currently facing a dilemma over difference – whether to treat everyone the same despite their differences, or whether to treat people differently, recognising their differences. To really value diversity and create an inclusive workplace will require a fundamental shift in organisational values, towards recognising that the same treatment does not always amount to fair treatment, and that difference sometimes matters.

8.5 Flexible work and inclusion

One of the most significant contributors to inclusion in an organisation is the availability of day-to-day flexible working practices or flexible working arrangements. As with other drivers of inclusion, there is plenty of evidence that the availability of flexible working options itself delivers benefits in terms of motivation, engagement and retention.

In many organisations, flexible working is seen as the key to better gender balance and increasingly to the attraction, retention and motivation of men too.

A survey of almost 1500 women leaders found 25% identified flexible time schedules as the workplace accommodation that would help them most in their career progression. The same research also found that 'male leaders strongly underestimate the importance of flexibility for female career progression. Only 15% chose it as the most important tool'.⁶⁴

In a recent study of 164 companies in 28 countries covering more than 1.7 million employees, over 90% of employers put flexible working in their top 5 initiatives to retain and develop women (more than any other initiative).⁶⁵

UNHCR has a well-established policy on day-to-day flexible working.⁶⁶ However as already mentioned, in practice very few people are known to work on a flexible or part-time basis.⁶⁷

The barriers to flexible working in UNHCR appear to be both practical and attitudinal. In practical terms, there is no doubt that some jobs can more readily be done on a flexible basis than others. Many people would say it's much less easy to work on a flexible basis in the field than in HQ. But there are no absolutes here, and in both the field and HQ, as in many other organisations, whether or not a job can be done flexibly is as much down to the attitudes and behaviours of the stakeholders (particularly the manager) involved as it is to the nature of the job itself. As one formerly field-based staff member said, on changing her manager, *'it's the first time in 20 years that I've been able to negotiate a flexible working arrangement. It makes me want to work even harder, to pay back my manager'*.

Some of the practical challenges that managers are concerned about include how the work will get done, how to manage people operating in different time zones, how to assess the performance of people working flexibly and of course fear of ‘the floodgate effect’, where ‘if one member of a team uses flexibility, everyone will, and it will be hard to manage the team’.⁶⁸ These are indeed tough challenges for UNHCR managers who currently receive no training on how to manage flexible working or evaluate competing requests from employees. In addition there is no evidence that flexible working is promoted by the leadership or encouraged by DHRM. Even those managers who might themselves support flexible working requests are not empowered by the policy to do so: UNHCR’s policy on Flexible Working Arrangements prescribes a three-tier process of approval for flexible working requests, where the authority to approve rests with the manager, ‘in consultation with the Representative in the field and Director at Headquarters’⁶⁹.

What staff say:

My manager was happy, but he still had to get the agreement of the Director, and that’s where it got stuck.

Staff themselves also have little guidance on how to submit a compelling case for flexible working, or how to address the fears of their managers (or Representatives or Directors) about how the work might get done. And they are very aware of course of the stigma associated with flexible working, and the impact that working flexibly might have on their relationship with their manager and their own career progression. Meanwhile UNHCR loses too, missing out on the well-documented benefits of flexible working, like savings on salary, travel costs and desk space, and significant gains in terms of staff motivation, engagement and retention.⁷⁰

Implications

Despite the best of values and intentions, UNHCR seems to be struggling to create an inclusive environment for many of its staff. As a reminder, an *inclusive* workforce is one which regards diversity as an asset, benefiting both individual and organisational performance. It’s also one where an individual’s difference/ uniqueness is valued, and where everyone feels they belong. Getting this right feels like a major priority for UNHCR, for its staff and the service it provides for persons of concern, now and for the future.

9.1 Management, leadership and accountability

The 2007 gender equity policy includes a number of mechanisms to embed responsibility and accountability for progress with managers, leaders and DHRM. In practice, implementation of the policy has been inconsistent and lacking in impact. There are several reasons for this.

First, the Senior Gender Task Force referred to in the gender equity policy has met only once since 2007. According to the policy its members included the Deputy High Commissioner, the Assistant High Commissioners, the Director of DHRM and the Chair of the Staff Council. However, staff are unable to name anyone at leadership or SMC level (other than the High Commissioner) who they consider to be a champion for gender equity, diversity or inclusion in UNHCR. There is a real lack of visible leadership on the issue, and staff are confused and sceptical about the messaging and behaviour from the top on gender equity, diversity and inclusion, which they see as inconsistent and lacking urgency and integrity. They also want to see more evidence of leaders leading by example, and tackling bias and poor behaviour, and not just on gender.

Second, the policy makes clear that Directors of Bureaux and Divisions have ‘primary responsibility and are accountable for the implementation of the measures set out in the policy’, including preparing and submitting ‘an annual action plan including specific gender targets’. This is textbook good practice, but with no top-down leadership, no guidance and support and above all no accountability in practice, it’s perhaps not surprising that Directors of Bureaux and Division feel no responsibility for delivering on the policy at the current time.

Third, the responsibilities of managers and Representatives in relation to implementation are unclear. There is no reference to Representatives in the policy, no accountability framework and no evidence of any management or leadership learning and development on diversity and inclusion. There is little other direction or support for managers and leaders to implement the policy or develop the behaviours that would enable the organisation to make faster and more sustained progress.

What staff say:

‘I’ve never been made aware that I have any accountability on the issue’ (Representative)

Finally, DHRM has a key role to play in policy implementation, but is perceived as being ill-informed and ‘half-hearted’ about the issue. As examples:

- Basic processes such as external recruitment which should incorporate action on diversity and inclusion fail to do so.
- Policies emerging from DHRM reference gender equity, diversity and inclusion only superficially (such as the recently revised policy on promotions), others not at all (such as the internship policy, which could for example proactively encourage greater diversity in the internship population by restricting the percentage of interns from the friends and family of existing UNHCR staff).

- HR expertise on gender equity, diversity and inclusion is limited, yet the HR development curriculum requires only superficial learning in this area. There are no focal points or subject matter experts in DHRM on gender, nationality, sexual orientation, disability or flexible working.
- There is very limited resource dedicated to diversity and inclusion in staffing in DHRM or indeed anywhere else in UNHCR. By contrast several UN entities such as ITC, IOM, OHCHR, WFP and WIPO have dedicated resources on diversity and inclusion in staffing, whilst others like UNOPS have focal points combining staffing and programme activity.

For the future, however, diversity and inclusion have been specified as one of six guiding principles and four goals in UNHCR's inaugural People Strategy 2016-2021, and it is hoped that the recommendations included in this report will provide the basis for an implementation plan from 2016.

9.2 Measuring and reporting

There is no system of regular monitoring on progress on gender equity, diversity and inclusion at the current time. A Gender and Diversity Scorecard is available on line, populated with data from DHRM, and through which managers and staff can access information on basic workforce demographics. But its use is entirely discretionary, and in practice it's not clear how often the information has been accessed, by whom or to what effect.

Of more concern is that there appears to have been very little regular reporting to the Senior Management Committee or to managers and leaders more generally on progress on gender equity, diversity or inclusion. The lack of meaningful reporting to the SMC means that senior people are often in the dark about the real position on gender, sometimes feeling it is worse than it is, and sometimes better, and in many cases repeating the myths that exist about women in the workforce (such as that a higher proportion of women than men separate from UNHCR).

Implications

The lack of accountability, responsibility and reporting on progress has had a major impact on the effectiveness of the 2007 gender equity policy. Building more robust mechanisms – alongside a more deliberate, bold and ambitious intent to change practice and behaviour – will be essential to future progress.

*'No program or initiative can be the 'silver bullet' to advance women into senior roles. Rather, the whole organisation must change. That's hard work; it will take years and, potentially, even a generational transition. This goal requires a serious commitment from busy leaders, whose natural tendency is to discuss the issue, create a plan, and hand it off to HR. And it requires real engagement up and down the line, including engagement from women.'*⁷¹

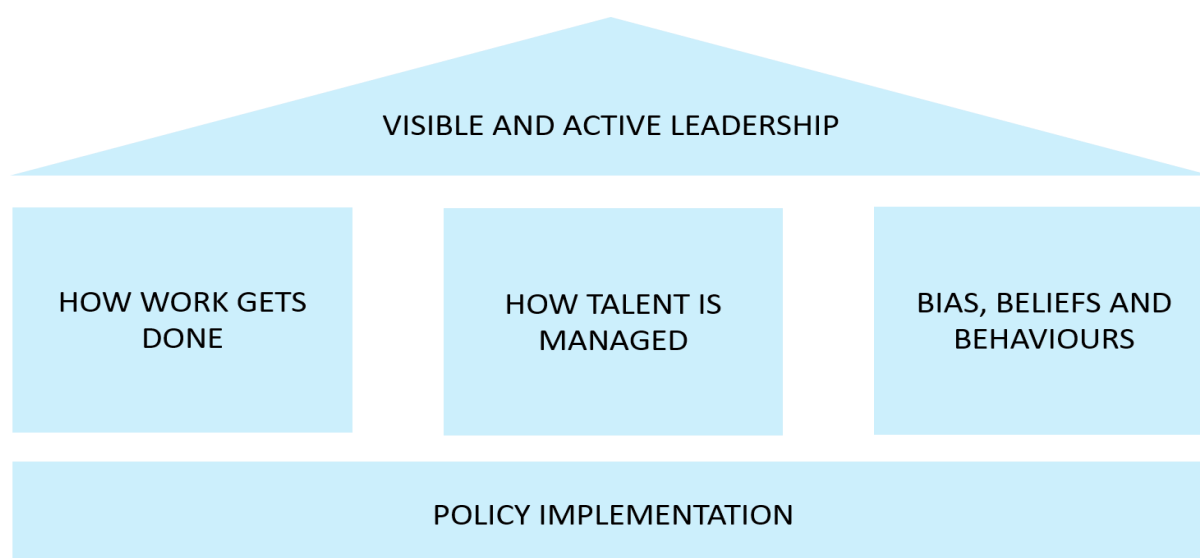
10 FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE

This review has found that progress on gender equity, diversity and inclusion in UNHCR is being hampered by five main factors, which are:

1. **Visible and active leadership.** There is plenty of leadership and management engagement on diversity and inclusion but it's personal, discretionary and ad hoc rather than a strategic leadership priority.
2. **Beliefs, bias and behaviours.** This review has shared several examples of both conscious and unconscious bias in decision-making and behaviour, at both individual and systemic levels.
3. **How work gets done.** For example, the structure of work in UNHCR is characterised by long working hours, processes of rotation and assignment including to non-family duty stations, and minimal availability of either day-to-day or career flexibility.
4. **How talent is managed.** Gender targets affect decision-making on the allocation of promotions slots for women in international roles in both positive and negative ways, but beyond this there is little proactive development of diverse talent in UNHCR.
5. **Policy implementation.** There have been policies in place for several years not just on gender equity but on other aspects of diversity (such as disability) and inclusion (such as flexible working). Lack of governance, responsibility, accountability and reporting mean that the implementation just hasn't matched up.

The good news is that addressing these factors provides a clear strategy and framework for the future on gender equity, diversity and inclusion in staffing in UNHCR.

Figure 14: Framework for the future on inclusion, diversity and gender equity in UNHCR



11 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations included in this report are for a strategic approach which prioritises action on the five main barriers identified in this report. That is, a strategy is suggested which focuses on:

- 1 Developing visible and active leadership on gender equity, diversity and inclusion in staffing, building the capacity and capabilities of managers and senior staff to lead change
- 2 Raising awareness of individual and systemic bias, and giving staff at all levels the tools and motivation to behave differently
- 3 Increasing opportunities for flexible working (both day-to-day and career flexibility) as a driver of the attraction, retention and engagement of staff, and an enabler of flexibility in the provision of services to persons of concern
- 4 A proactive approach to building a diverse pipeline of talent to senior and leadership roles
- 5 A robust system of governance, responsibility, accountability and reporting on progress.

The kinds of interventions implied by the recommendations are of four main types:

- **Improving access to information.** Making it easier for staff and managers to access information that will help progress gender equity, diversity and inclusion in staffing.
- **Process enhancement.** Evolving existing policies and processes, or developing new ones.
- **Capacity building/ resourcing.** Enhancing the capacity of staff and managers to make progress, and ensuring the organisation has the appropriate resources in place to support them in doing so.
- **Changing behaviour.** Changing culture by experimenting with/ adopting new approaches to behaviour and practice.

Recommendation 1 Make inclusion, diversity and gender equity an explicit priority for managers and leaders in UNHCR

- 1.1 Establish a sub-group of the Senior Management Committee to keep progress on gender equity, diversity and inclusion high on its strategic agenda

The sub-group should:

- Be chaired by the High Commissioner or Deputy High Commissioner
- Include at least one Head of Division (in addition to the Head of DHRM) and one Head of Bureau
- Meet on a regular basis, and be scheduled into the formal timetable of SMC meetings

First actions for the sub-group include:

- Secure the buy-in of colleagues on SMC to what progress looks like/ the key indicators of progress on gender equity, diversity and inclusion (see below)
- Finalise and communicate to staff the 'new thinking' refugee-oriented case for action on inclusion, diversity and gender equity in UNHCR staffing
- Lead the process of finalising the strategy and implementation plan - but the sub-group itself should not hold responsibility for strategy delivery. Instead it should be empowered to hold SMC members individually and collectively to account for progress in their Divisions and Bureaux against key performance indicators they set for themselves (see Recommendation 5)
- Ensure the substantive inclusion of diversity, inclusion and gender equity in UNHCR's Global Strategic Priorities
- Ask for volunteers from the SMC to lead working groups on the projects and programmes included in these recommendations.

What does progress look like?

The following definition of progress was presented to the SMC in December 2015:

- *A more diverse workforce at all levels, with a particular focus on gender, nationality, LGBTI and disability*
- *A more inclusive working environment*
- *An approach to gender equity, diversity and inclusion which is unifying rather than divisive*

1.2 Create a dedicated senior-level resource to guide the SMC, leaders and managers on delivery against the new strategy

This should be:

- An appointment at P5 or above, reporting directly to the Deputy High Commissioner
- Appointed through a process which models the highest standards of equity and inclusion (as a minimum, the post should be widely advertised, with the advert explicitly encouraging a diverse range of applicants. A diverse shortlist should be drawn up and the interview conducted by a diverse interview panel)
- Against a person specification that includes skills and experience in leadership and change management as well as technical expertise on inclusion, diversity and gender equity

1.3 Set clear and explicit standards for the behaviour of managers and leaders on diversity, inclusion and gender equity through:

- Making the skills of inclusive leadership a core component of the development programmes for leaders, managers and the certification programme for UNHCR Representatives (see below)
- Including evidence of learning and development on inclusion, diversity and gender equity in the evaluation criteria for promotion to P4 and above
- Requiring all staff at P5 and above to develop personal performance goals on diversity and inclusion, starting with the SMC (see examples overleaf).

What does it mean to lead inclusively?

- *'Inclusive leaders get the best out of all their people, helping their organisations to succeed in today's complex, diverse national and global environment. Through their skills in adaptability, building relationships and developing talent, inclusive leaders are able to increase performance and innovation'.⁷²*
- *Inclusive leaders display four attributes. These are: 'Empowerment—Enabling direct reports to develop and excel. Humility—Admitting mistakes. Learning from criticism and different points of view. Acknowledging and seeking contributions of others to overcome one's limitations. Courage—Putting personal interests aside to achieve what needs to be done. Acting on convictions and principles even when it requires personal risk-taking. Accountability—Demonstrating confidence in direct reports by holding them responsible for performance they can control.'⁷³*

Gender performance goals at eBay⁷⁴

170 of eBay's most senior leaders have personal gender performance goals which include:

- *All open leadership positions should have a diverse slate of candidates and interviewers*
- *Top-talent women, at every level, should have career-development plans and discuss them with their managers.*
 - *Leaders should monitor the diversity of their promotion pipelines to ensure fairness.*
 - *Each senior vice president and vice president should help to develop top-talent women by mentoring or sponsoring five of them.*
- *The company would continue to measure progress on our demographics regularly.*

Recommendation 2 Tackle bias and build awareness on inclusion, in relation to gender, nationality, LGBTI and disability in particular

- 2.1 Replace the gender equity policy with a policy on gender equity, diversity and inclusion. The new policy should:
- Define diversity broadly (to include all inherent and acquired differences, including nationality, ethnicity, culture, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, marital and family status, as well as education, professional background, experience, perspective and approach)
 - Set 'inclusion' and the creation of an inclusive culture as explicit organisational objectives
 - Make clear that the scope of policy and action covers locally recruited as well as international professional staff
 - Be accompanied by separate administrative instructions on the operation of the policy in relation to gender, nationality, LGBTI and disabled staff. These administrative instructions should be developed in full consultation with staff from the groups indicated.
- 2.2 Increase awareness and understanding of the specific needs of different demographic groups in UNHCR in relation to inclusion, through:
- Establishing a task force to make recommendations for the greater inclusion of LGBTI staff in UNHCR policy and practice
 - Conducting a study of the experiences of diversity and inclusion amongst national staff
- 2.3 Update UNHCR's competency framework to make explicit the skills and behaviours expected of all staff in relation to inclusion, diversity and gender equity. For example, see box.

Suggestions for updating UNHCR's competency framework to include gender equity, diversity and inclusion

- *Include diversity and inclusion as both a core competency and managerial competency*
- *Integrate diversity and inclusion into existing competencies for example on Communication, include a behavioural indicator 'Is aware of the risks of group think and seeks to avoid this', or Managing Performance, add in 'Is aware of own stereotypes and biases and takes steps to minimise the impact of these in performance management discussions', or Judgement and Decision Making, add in 'Seeks input from people different from themselves'.*

- 2.4 Source or develop training to raise awareness of diversity, inclusion and bias in decision-making. Make participation mandatory for all those involved in any way in appointments, assignments, performance and promotions, including leaders and managers, DHRM and all those on decision-making Boards and bodies, with a strict requirement for compliance.
-

- 2.5 Make gender equity, diversity and inclusion a substantive component of UNHCR's certification programme for HR professionals, enhancing the future capacity of DHRM overall on diversity and inclusion, and in particular the ability to provide credible advice to staff and managers on gender, disability, LGBTI and nationality in particular.
- 2.6 Replace the term 'special constraint' with the more inclusive term 'special consideration', to refer to a staff member's disability, sexual orientation, family status or any other personal consideration that may impact postings or assignments.
- 2.7 Make diversity, inclusion and gender equity the focus of the 2016 Code of Conduct sessions, with the discussion facilitated by trained volunteers.
- 2.8 Partner with DIP to make learning and development on bias and stereotyping of LGBTI people and those with disabilities available to all staff, and mandatory for managers and leaders.

Recommendation 3 Increase opportunities for flexible working

- 3.1 Empower managers to respond to flexible working requests and manage flexible working locally, through:
- Developing workshops for managers to explore their concerns and anxieties about flexible working, and provide training on how to fairly evaluate a flexible working proposal in relation to the work to be done, how to refuse a flexible working request if necessary, how to navigate multiple requests, and how to manage a team of flexible workers including assessing performance at a distance/ in different time zones.
 - Changing the current flexible working policy so that managers do not need to seek agreement from Representatives and Directors to accept or reject a flexible working request.
- 3.2 Appoint a flexible working focal point (subject matter expert) in DHRM who can:
- Conduct an audit of successful flexible working case studies across UNHCR, in HQ and the field, for both national and international staff, and identify the factors which make flexible working a success.
 - Use the insights from the audit to produce guidance on flexible working for staff, in particular on how to develop and robustly evaluate their own flexible working proposals from the perspective of their manager, their team and the work to be done, before submitting a formal request.
 - Develop an intranet site to share information with staff and managers on flexible working in UNHCR, including case studies of where flexibility is working successfully in HQ and the field, details of success factors in set-up and implementation, and implementation FAQs.
 - Conduct a 12-month action research project with a small number of interested Representatives and Directors who are already supportive of flexible working, and where the teams face operational challenges such as workload, staff retention or engagement. The flexible working focal point to work with the leaders and their teams, providing information, training and hands-on support to pilot new ways of working in HQ and the field, and explore solutions to the operational concerns of managers. The process, impact, problems and solutions on flexible working to be recorded and findings shared.
 - On an ongoing basis, act as an informal sounding board for staff and managers on exploring flexible working solutions before a formal request is submitted.
- 3.3 Establish a cross-functional working group on flexibility, with authority delegated by the sub-group of the SMC, with the purpose of identifying and recommending solutions to the operational and structural barriers to the flexible working policy to date (such as implications for salary, budgeting etc) and to career flexibility (such as policy and practice on rotation).

3.4 Make it easier for staff to move out of and back to UNCHR over the lifetime of their career (enable greater 'in/out' flexibility and so increase the return rates of experienced women) through:

- Providing practical support (such as job search support, cv development, interviewing skills etc), for staff who want a career break from UNHCR, enabling them to find alternative roles which are right for the individual at the time of separation and will help them develop skills and behaviours which may be of value in the event of a return to UNHCR.
- Evolving the appointments process to more accurately assess the positive contribution of work done on a secondment/ career break to career progression, for people looking to return to UNHCR.
- Improving formal keep-in-touch mechanisms for both men and women on leave of absence, including better signposting to postings and assignments. This includes giving all women staff on SLWOP and SIBA the opportunity of a twice-yearly coaching session with CMSS to discuss career plans and actively explore opportunities to return to UNHCR, for up to five years after their change in status.
- Piloting a paid return-to-work scheme for women UNHCR alumnae at P3 and above who separated from the organisation more than five years previously. Participation on the scheme would not guarantee employment with UNHCR, but its objective would be to widen the pool of experienced female applicants for roles at P4 and above in UNHCR. As a minimum, participants who successfully complete the scheme would be included in UNHCR's pool of pre-screened skilled and experienced external candidates. The scheme could be offered annually, lasting for between 3 and 6 months, and include mentoring, posting on short-term/emergency assignments, opportunities for flexible working and technical/ operational updates (see below).

Returnship programme in a global organisation⁷⁵

Real Returns was set up by global investment bank Credit Suisse to replenish its pipeline of female talent. 'The programme was open to anyone who had taken a break from the workplace lasting two or more years to fulfil a care commitment. Candidates were sourced through a variety of channels, including alumni networks, referrals from senior management and diversity-focused recruiting partners. Applicants were assessed on evidence of transferable skills rather than recent industry experience. The calibre was so high that the business and programme leads expanded the number of participants.

Each participant was assigned a 10-week placement, working on important projects in one of the company's business areas. Additional elements ensured participants were informed and supported in their return to the workplace, including a tailored training programme of learning modules to help them re-integrate into the workplace, a Speaker Series developed by top management that focusses on topical issues affecting the industry, and networking opportunities for participants, hosts and mentors'.

94% of programme participants were offered permanent or further contracts at the firm.

Recommendation 4 Take a more active approach to the identification and management of diverse talent

- 4.1 Make it easier for all staff to access information on careers in UNHCR through:
- Developing an intranet site on career paths in UNHCR, describing the range of career paths available
 - Featuring real-life stories of how a diverse range of staff (men, women, LGBTI, straight, disabled, parents, non-parents, single and in adult relationships, and those from a range of cultural and national backgrounds) have navigated their careers, including rotation, postings and assignments, and their lives outside work
 - Make use of existing discussion forums (such as Food for Thought) and virtual/ face-to-face networking events to enable employees to connect with, hear from and seek career advice from people who have made it to senior levels in UNHCR
- 4.2 Develop a diversity recruitment strategy with the goal of continuously increasing the diversity of applicants for both early and mid-career appointments. The strategy to cover each stage of the recruitment cycle including basics such as:
- Ensuring the role description and person specification are bias free
 - How and where vacancies are communicated
 - Making explicit that applications are sought from minority groups including women, LGBTI and disabled applicants
 - How applications are assessed, and by whom
 - Bias-free interviewing processes
 - Checks, balances and reporting on progress
- 4.3 Pilot the early identification and active career support (mentoring, coaching, peer-to-peer networking) of a diverse cohort of high-potential P2s (including but not limited to the Entry-Level Humanitarian Programme) and early P3s, of whom at least 50% should be women, to address the loss of international staff at P2/P3.
- 4.4 Consult with mid-career women at P4 and P5 to establish their career development needs, if any, and agree how these can be best be met (individually, or as a cohort), and which delivery mechanism would be most effective (mentoring, coaching, peer-to-peer networking etc).
- 4.5 Make talent management processes more inclusive through:
- Mandatory gender and national diversity of shortlists for all posts at P4 and above
 - Conducting a 12 month pilot on the introduction of interviews for candidates for promotion to P5 and above, evaluating impact in terms of resourcing, quality of decision-making and diversity in outcomes
 - Reviewing the process of succession planning and appointments to under-filling and Representative roles
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- Putting a fair assessment of performance at the heart of the allocation of promotions slots
- Retaining a 50/50 gender balance target but over time removing the promotions quota and cumulative seniority provision for female promotions.

Recommendation 5 Develop mechanisms to ensure more effective policy implementation

5.1 Develop a more robust system of accountability, responsibility and reporting on inclusion, diversity and gender equity, enabled through:

- SMC agreeing key performance metrics on gender equity, diversity and inclusion overall and (from 2017) for each Bureau and Division, with the Bureau and Division Heads held responsible for progress in their areas
- Monitoring and reporting performance metrics to the SMC on a regular basis, with analytical support provided to Division and Bureau Heads on interpreting the data and making recommendations on implications and actions
- Including nationality (region) in the Global Staff Survey to provide a more detailed understanding of the experiences of people on the basis of national identity. Asking the LGBTI working party for advice on requesting data on sexual orientation in the Global Staff Survey too
- Producing an annual progress report on gender equity, diversity and inclusion in staffing, combining workforce data with DIP's existing AGD Accountability report, to generate a single report on gender equity, diversity and inclusion in UNHCR.

5.2 Greater collaboration internally, in particular:

- Engaging the Bureaux and Divisions (DIP in particular) in the articulation of a unified refugee-oriented vision of gender equity, diversity and inclusion in UNHCR for staff and persons of concern alike.
- Greater coordination of communications and sharing of tools and resources between DHRM and DIP. For example DIP's work on sexual orientation awareness could be integrated by the Global Learning Centre (GLC) into staff and management capacity building programmes. And DHRM could draw on DIP's experiences in involving men in action on SGBV and from the success of organisations externally in setting up 'allies' programmes for example on LGBTI and gender (see below) to engage men more proactively in the internal work on diversity and inclusion.

What is an allies programme?⁷⁶

An ally is someone who may not identify themselves as belonging to any diversity or minority group, but who wants to show active support for workplace diversity and inclusion in general, or in relation to a specific group.

Global consulting firm Accenture has developed an LGBT ally programme, and describes the actions that allies can take under each of the four main headings below:

- 1 Be Informed: Learn the basics and take the LGBT self-study training; connect with the LGBT network group in your country or region; visit the global allies portal.*
- 2 Be Visible: Sign up to become an ally and to have an ally badge appear on your profile; include the ally logo in your email signature; join Accenture's LGBT facebook group.*
- 3 Be Vocal: Start conversations about LGBT inclusion with colleagues and clients; take action if you see disrespectful behaviour; follow the Allies Circle and share links to news, events and best practice.*
- 4 Be Active: Attend LGBT events in your country; organise LGBT network activities and encourage colleagues to participate; take on a leadership position within the Accenture LGBT network.*

5.3 Making more effective use of good practice resources available externally, both inside and outside the UN system. In particular the following are recommended:

Inside the UN system:

- Making much more use of UNHCR's membership of UN-SWAP (UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women) to gather and share good practice on gender equity in particular.
- Building relationships with UNGLOBE to make use of their expertise and access to good practice on LGBTI inclusion.
- Making more use of opportunities for inter-agency collaboration to support and develop women's career progression, such as the Inter-Agency Field Leaders programme.⁷⁷

Outside the UN system:

- Conducting an annual assessment and benchmarking of UNHCR's performance on inclusion, diversity and gender equity, against comparators outside the UN system. A tool such as the Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmark⁷⁸ is suggested for this purpose.
- Joining a global membership organisation such as Catalyst⁷⁹ which provides access to research, information and other organisations' good practices on gender equity, diversity and inclusion both inside and outside the humanitarian sector.

Appendix 1 THE FIRST SIX MONTHS

The recommendations in this report are for long-term organisational change. Change of this nature is essential in order to drive meaningful sustained progress on gender equity, diversity and inclusion in UNHCR. But the process of change itself can begin right away, embarking on some immediate actions that will signal the priority being ascribed to progress, and/or deliver some visible results.

This section proposes ten actions for implementation in the first six months of 2016.

ACTION IN THE FIRST SIX MONTHS	FOR MORE INFORMATION
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a sub-group of the Senior Management Committee on gender equity, diversity and inclusion in UNHCR staffing 2. Finalise SMC commitment to what progress looks like/ the key indicators of progress on gender equity, diversity and inclusion 3. Finalise and communicate to staff the 'new thinking' refugee oriented case for action on gender equity, diversity and inclusion in UNHCR staffing 	Recommendation 1.1 page 46
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Appoint a dedicated senior-level resource to guide the SMC, leaders and managers on delivery against the new strategy 	Recommendation 1.2 page 47
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Replace the 2007 gender equity policy with a policy on inclusion, diversity and gender equity (IDG) 	Recommendation 2.1 page 49
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Establish a task force to better understand the experiences and needs of LGBTI staff in UNHCR 	Recommendation 2.2 page 49
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Begin to source/ develop training to raise awareness of diversity, inclusion and bias in decision-making 	Recommendation 2.4 page 49
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Appoint a flexible working focal point in DHRM to begin the process of sourcing and successful flexible working case studies across UNHCR, and understanding the success factors 	Recommendation 3.2 page 51
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Establish a cross-functional working group on flexibility, with authority delegated by the sub-group of the SMC, to begin the process of identifying and proposing solutions to the operational and structural barriers to flexible working in the first instance 	Recommendation 3.3 page 51
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Develop and implement a diversity recruitment strategy 	Recommendation 4.2 page 53

Appendix 2 DRAFT POLICY ON GENDER EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN UNHCR STAFFING

1 INTRODUCTION

UNHCR is committed to recruiting, retaining and developing a diverse workforce, and to the creation of a fair and inclusive working environment in which individual difference is respected and collective diversity is regarded as an asset.

UNHCR believes that gender equity, diversity and inclusion in staffing are vital to the effective delivery of the organisation's mandate to protect persons of concern and find durable solutions to safeguarding the rights of refugees worldwide. UNHCR believes a diverse and inclusive workforce is most likely to understand the diverse perspectives and experiences of persons of concern now and in the future, most likely to come up with creative and innovative solutions, and most likely to be motivated and engaged in delivering on the organisation's strategy and purpose.

This policy replaces UNHCR's 2007 Policy on Achieving Gender Equity in UNHCR Staffing. Gender equity continues to be a priority for UNHCR, and the organisation remains wholly committed to the achievement of gender balance in both locally recruited and international professional roles, including Representative roles and senior management positions.

This is not just a question of fairness, but also because UNHCR believes that its combined local and international workforce should mirror the gender balance of populations of concern, around 50% of whom are women. There is still much work to be done in this regard.

However, this policy recognises that gender is not the only difference that matters to UNHCR's uniquely diverse workforce. This objective of this policy is to create a working environment in which all differences are respected, where diversity (including but not limited to differences of nationality, ethnicity, culture, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, marital and family status, as well as education, professional background, experience, working patterns, perspective and approach) itself is no barrier to staff joining UNHCR or achieving their career potential, and where staff at all grades and in all locations feel included, and that they belong.

2 DEFINITIONS

Gender equity: Describes fair treatment between women and men

Diversity: Describes UNHCR's commitment to recruiting, retaining and developing a workforce that is diverse in terms of both inherent and acquired differences, including gender, nationality, ethnicity, culture, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, marital and family status, as well as education, professional background, experience, working patterns, perspective and approach.

Inclusion: Describes UNHCR's commitment to building an inclusive culture, in which individual diversity is valued, and collective diversity is regarded as a vital asset, benefiting both individual and organisational performance, and contributing to UNHCR's ability to deliver on its mandate.

3 SCOPE

This policy applies to all categories of staff in UNHCR irrespective of type or duration of appointment, grade or location. It is a policy intended to create a diverse workforce and an inclusive working environment wherever UNHCR operates. Where measures relate particularly to one category of staff rather than another, this is specified in the policy.

UNHCR recognises that changing attitudes, culture and practice on gender equity, diversity and inclusion is a long-term project. The overall effectiveness of this policy, and the impact of specific measures contained within, will be under continuous review by UNHCR's Senior Management Committee.

4 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this policy are:

- To create a more diverse workforce at all levels, with a particular focus on gender, nationality, LGBTI and disability
- To create a more inclusive working environment for UNHCR staff, irrespective of ethnicity, culture, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, marital and family status, as well as education, professional background, experience, working patterns, perspective and approach.

UNHCR reiterates its commitment to achieving gender balance at each of the international professional grades P2 to D2, and in the Senior Management Committee (SMC).

In collaboration with each other and with DHRM, Heads of Division and Bureaux will be required to set their own targets on gender and national diversity in support of these overall objectives.

5 PRINCIPLES

This policy is guided by the following five principles:

- 5.1 Respect for diversity, and behaving inclusively, are attitudes and skills that can be learned. All staff will be given access to learning and development appropriate to their role and function, in support of this policy.
- 5.2 Properly implemented, gender equity, diversity and inclusion enhance rather than compromise organisational performance. On this basis, no one should be recruited, appointed or promoted on the basis of their gender, nationality or any other difference alone. Where the policy specifies numerical targets, these should be implemented as targets to aim at, not enforced as 'quotas'.

- 5.3 In the context of a diverse workforce, fair treatment does not always mean the same treatment. Recognising this, the policy includes a small number of positive action measures designed to minimise continuing barriers to the recruitment, appointment and progression of some groups of staff. In addition, DHRM will set up mechanisms to ensure that all future policies have been 'diversity-proofed' through direct consultation with staff on the basis of gender, nationality/culture, LGBTI status and disability.
- 5.4 An inclusive workplace is one in which people at all grades and in all locations can request flexibility over when and where they work, in line with UNHCR's existing flexible working policy. In an inclusive workplace, flexible working does not represent a barrier to achieving career potential.
- 5.5 Creating an equitable, diverse and inclusive workforce is a collective, collaborative endeavour, in which certain functions (such as DHRM) and groups of staff (managers, leadership, SMC) play a particularly important role. Diversity and inclusion cannot be achieved by DHRM alone, or without the active engagement of staff in all Bureaux and Divisions, in HQ and the field.

6 ACCOUNTABILITY

- A sub-group of the Senior Management Committee will be established in order to keep gender equity, diversity and inclusion high on the strategic and operational agenda of the organisation. This group will be chaired by the Deputy High Commissioner and include at least one Head of Division, one Head of Bureau and the Head of DHRM.
- The SMC will agree key performance metrics on gender equity, diversity and inclusion overall and (from 2017) for each Bureau and Division. Accountability for progress rests overall with the Deputy High Commissioner, and with the Heads of Division and Bureaux for progress in their areas, held to account by the SMC sub-group.
- Progress against the agreed metrics will be reported by Heads of Division and Bureaux to the SMC on a regular basis (at least quarterly).
- DHRM has a specific contribution to make to the implementation of this policy. However, UNHCR recognises and reiterates that responsibility for progress on gender equity, diversity and inclusion cannot be held by DHRM, but instead must be owned by the SMC as a whole.

7 CAPACITY-BUILDING ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

- The Global Learning Centre will continue the work to substantively integrate awareness and behaviour change on diversity and inclusion into existing leadership and management development programmes. As a priority, these will include integration into the leadership development and assessment centre, the management learning programme, and the certification programme for Representatives. Learning and development on diversity and inclusion will also be included as a substantive component of UNHCR's certification programme for HR professionals.
- Evidence of substantive leadership and management learning and development on diversity and inclusion will be incorporated into the first round evaluation criteria for promotion to P4 and above.
- All staff at P5 and above in HQ and the field will be required to develop at least one annual performance goal on diversity and inclusion.
- UNHCR's competency framework will be updated to emphasise that respect for diversity and inclusion are core competencies of UNHCR staff. The framework will specify diversity and inclusion as a specific managerial competency, and also make explicit the contribution of diversity and inclusion to other managerial competencies.

8 RECRUITMENT AND RE-RECRUITMENT

RECRUITMENT

- UNHCR will implement a sustained and comprehensive recruitment outreach campaign for all externally-recruited roles, with the objective of continuously increasing the diversity of suitably qualified applicants, particularly in relation to gender, nationality/ regional diversity, LGBTI and disability. The campaign will continue at least until gender balance is achieved and maintained amongst applicants for roles at all grades. For international professional roles the development and delivery of a recruitment outreach strategy will be the responsibility of DHRM in conjunction with the Bureau; for locally recruited roles increasing the gender and national/ regional diversity of applicants will be the responsibility of the Bureau.
- UNHCR will develop substantive learning on diversity, inclusion and bias in decision-making. Once available, this will become mandatory for all staff involved in assessing applications, shortlisting and interviewing candidates for both international professional and locally recruited roles.
- A shortlist of candidates must be considered for all externally-recruited and internally-appointed posts at P4 and above (including under-filling). All shortlists must be gender-balanced and geographically diverse.

- All interview panels should be gender-balanced and geographically diverse and all panel members must have completed the learning on diversity, inclusion and bias in decision-making.

RE-RECRUITMENT

- As prescribed in the Revised Policy and Procedures on Assignments 2015, ‘former UNHCR international professional staff members who were appointed following a UNHCR competitive selection process and who held an Indefinite Appointment or a FTA for an uninterrupted period of at least one year and former NPOs who have served a minimum of four years in this category prior to separation may apply for internally advertised vacancies in the international professional category at their previous grade or equivalent or one grade above for a period of five years following separation for women, and for a period of two years following separation for men, unless otherwise prescribed in an agreed termination or voluntary separation.’
- All women staff on Special Leave Without Pay or SIBA will be given access to a twice-yearly coaching session with CMSS, to discuss career plans and actively consider opportunities to return to UNHCR, for up to five years after their change of status.
- A paid return-to-work scheme will be piloted for female international professional staff members on Special Leave Without Pay or SIBA, who separated from UNHCR more than five years’ previously. The scheme will be open for applications from women who held an Indefinite Appointment or a FTA at grade P3 or above for an uninterrupted period of at least [x years]. Participation on the scheme does not guarantee employment with UNHCR but its objective is to widen the pool of experienced female applicants for roles at P4 and above in UNHCR. As a minimum, participants who successfully complete the scheme will be include in UNHCR’s pool of pre-screened skilled and experienced external candidates. The scheme will be offered annually and will last for between 3 and 6 months, and will include mentoring, posting on short-term/emergency assignments, opportunities for flexible working and technical/ operational updates.

9 PROMOTION AND PROGRESSION

- Promotions will be decided on the basis of a fair and unbiased assessment of performance conducted by Panel Members (for international professional roles) and managers (for locally recruited roles) who have completed UNHCR’s mandatory training in diversity, inclusion and bias in decision-making.
- UNHCR remains committed to the target of gender balance in promotions outcomes at all grades. There is a distinction however between a target (a goal to aim at) and a quota (an enforced outcome). Gender balance in promotions outcomes is a target (a goal to aim at), not a quota.

- In the interests of gender equity, cumulative seniority will no longer be taken into account when considering women applicants for promotion in international professional roles. However, in accordance with the 2014 Policy and Procedures for the Promotion of international professional Staff Members, the minimum seniority-in-grade criteria for promotion of women staff members serving at the P-3, P-4 and P-5 grade levels will continue to be reduced by one year compared to that for male staff members, until gender parity at the P-4 to D-1 grade levels is achieved.
- UNHCR will pilot the introduction of interviews for candidates for promotion to P5 and above.
- The process of succession planning and appointments to under-filling and Representative roles will be reviewed, with the objective of continuously increasing the gender and national diversity of appointments to Representative roles.

10 TALENT MANAGEMENT

- UNHCR will pilot the identification of a diverse cohort of high-potential staff at the P2 grade for active career management over a three year period, of whom at least 50% will be women. The cohort will be drawn from staff promoted to P2 from locally recruited roles and from those recruited via the Entry-Level Humanitarian Programme or other external routes. Each member of the cohort will have a career mentor at P5 and above, access to peer-to-peer networking and other development interventions designed to build a diverse pipeline of talent into senior international professional roles.

11 FLEXIBLE WORKING AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE

- UNHCR recognises the contribution which flexibility and a good work-life balance make to attracting, retaining, engaging and motivating men and women at all levels, and to the organisation's capacity to deliver services on a flexible basis to persons of concern. UNHCR therefore encourages both staff and managers to explore flexible working as a solution to operational as well as individual need.
- To help achieve this objective, a cross-functional working group will be established, with authority delegated by the sub-group of the SMC, with the purpose of identifying and recommending structural and operational solutions to the implementation of the flexible working policy to date.
- Improved support and guidance will be made available both on-line and face-to-face for staff and managers, on the interpretation and implementation of the flexible working policy.
- Recognising that the benefits and challenges of flexible working are felt locally, the flexible working policy will be updated to empower managers to make the final decision on flexible working requests from staff (removing the requirement to seek agreement from Representatives and Directors to accept or reject a flexible working request).

12 IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS POLICY

- In support of the implementation of this policy, administrative instructions will be developed to further progress on equity, diversity and inclusion in relation to gender, nationality, sexual orientation and disability, reflecting the specific needs and circumstances of each staff group. These administrative instructions will be developed in consultation with staff, in accordance with principle 5.2 above.

Appendix 3 GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

Examples of good practice on diversity and inclusion gathered from inside and outside the UN:

3.1 On leadership and governance:

- Global consumer goods company Unilever has a Global Diversity Board chaired by the CEO, made up of women and men executives from different parts of the business, who oversee progress against Unilever's diversity strategy. Global finance company MasterCard also has a Global Diversity and Inclusion Council, comprised of 18 senior leaders from business units.
- The World Bank has an internal Gender Leadership Council and, since March 2015, an External Advisory Panel for Diversity and Inclusion, established in order to review and advise the President on the organisation's strategies and measures to achieve diverse and inclusive workplace. EAP members include Indra Nooyi, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Pepsico and Kenji Yoshino, Professor of Constitutional Law, New York University.
- In UNESCO the Division for Gender Equality (covering diversity in employment and the field) was transferred into the Director General's office 'with a view to better reflecting the importance the organisation attaches to the implementation of Priority Gender Equality ... and to ensure more visibility'.
- Global professional services firm EY developed an 'inclusive leadership' programme for its Partners to help them develop an awareness of bias 'blind spots' and the difference between intention and impact in creating a supportive working environment for women. 85% of UK and Ireland partners have attended the programme so far, and it has recently been extended to all managers, senior managers and directors. The programme is believed to have contributed to a 1.5% increase in female senior leadership from 2013 to 2014 in the UK and Ireland, and to an increase in female engagement from 64% in 2013 to 68% in 2014.

3.2 On accountability:

- Unilever leadership executives all have targets on diversity, including the CEO and direct reports. Specific representation targets are in place for 11 priority geographies and two priority functions. All business executives are held accountable by the CEO for performance against targets, and in turn expected to discuss performance with their direct reports and with HR.
- In the UK, the Ministry of Defence has developed a diversity dashboard to track and report on the composition of the UK Armed Forces by gender, ethnic origin, age and religion.

3.3 On attracting women applicants:

- Global consulting firm McKinsey launched a virtual network targeting university and non-traditional audiences such as women's sports teams. The network site is updated daily and features posts and videos of women in business, and virtual events including webinars featuring young women leaders across a range of industries.
- Unilever produced a video (available on YouTube) and accompanying booklet profiling 16 senior women sharing their career stories and strategies for career success.

3.4 On supporting women's career development:

- Global drinks company Diageo runs a leadership programme over 12 months for senior women, combining individual development and a global learning event, supported by external and internal coaching. Mid-career development is managed regionally and includes coaching and mentoring for women employees.
- Of the Best Law Firms for Women in the US, 100% offer internal networking groups for women lawyers, 98% offer women-specific management or leadership education, 94% offer women-specific mentoring programmes or mentoring circles for women and 54% offer an on-line women's network.
- Pepsico runs a women's development programme called Strategies for Success (S4S) comprising individual coaching with an external coach, mentoring, engagement sessions for line managers, facilitated peer learning sets and an alumni network.
- Unilever offers a re-entry programme for women returners in which returners take on business projects lasting 6 months to a year, supported by flexible work arrangements, a mentor/ project guide and networking opportunities. The programme helps change attitudes as well as building capability, so that 'stepping off' the conventional career path is regarded as a postponement not a cancellation of progression.
- The Global Head of Experienced Talent Acquisition at investment bank Credit Suisse set up 'Real Returns' to attract talented women back to work after a break of two or more years for child or adult care. Candidates were sourced through a range of channels, including alumni networks and manager referrals, and applicants were assessed on the evidence of transferable skills rather than recent industry experience. Each participant was assigned a 10-week placement, alongside which they could attend learning modules to help them re-integrate into the workplace, attend a Speaker Series with experts talking about issues affecting the industry, and get involved in networking opportunities for participants, hosts and mentors. 94% of participants from the first series were offered permanent or further contracts with the firm.

- Sodexo launched the Accelerated Leadership Development Program (ALDP) in 2011 to help build a pipeline of female talent. ALDP is an intensive 12-month learning and development programme targeting high-potential entry-level women managers. The programme focuses on building self-awareness; training on managerial and technical skills; and formal mentoring with a senior leader.

3.5 On gathering insight from employees:

- The Volvo Group supports employee diversity networks to help empower women and other groups, and to provide feedback to management on how best to create an inclusive working culture. Since 2011, the number of groups has increased from eight to 11, and helped the company address issues culture, gender and LGBT inclusion.

3.6 On flexibility:

- Oxfam and British Red Cross are amongst the top ten employers in the UK for flexibility and work-life balance, as voted for by employees, along with Google, Volvo and Johnson & Johnson.
- Cisco Asia Pacific Japan needed to shift attitudes to flexible working amongst middle managers who typically associate hard work and commitment with face time. They created a website for managers, scheduled Q&A sessions, secured sponsorship from senior managers, and developed training programmes for employees and employers on how to make flexible working work. Phase 1 introduced telecommuting, flexible working and part-time; Phase 2 introduced the idea of more flexible career paths, allowing employees to take between 12 and 24 months off on unpaid leave, with a 90 day paid period on return to find a new role in the company.
- Global consulting firm Accenture allows all its staff to request flexible working. Over 50% have some form of formal flexible working arrangements, covering all different types of flexibility, from flexi-hours and compressed hours to some homeworking and part-time working. In addition the company offers flexible career models, enabling employees to keep progressing on a career 'fast track' or continue on a slower track for a time if they have greater family or other external responsibilities.
- Investment bank Goldman Sachs India has a cross-divisional maternity mentoring program that pairs new mothers with experienced working mothers who discuss how to return from maternity leave, and provide first-hand advice and support on balancing parenthood with a full-time career.

Appendix 4 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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NOTES

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- ¹ For biography and contact see <https://www.linkedin.com/in/sarahbondforbusinessake>
- ² From *Terms of Reference: UNHCR Gender Equity and Diversity Consultant*
- ³ *Inclusion Matters*, Catalyst, 2015
- ⁴ Collective term used to describe UNHCR's Deputy High Commissioner and the Assistant High Commissioners Operations and Protection
- ⁵ Contact Kate Hummel hummel@unhcr.org
- ⁶ Introductory remarks at the Standing Committee meeting of the Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme (64th meeting) Kelly T. Clements, Deputy High Commissioner Room XIX, Palais des Nations 21-22 September 2015
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- ²⁰ <http://futurehrtrends.eiu.com/report-2015/profile-of-the-global-workforce-present-and-future/>
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- ²³ From *UNHCR's People Strategy 2016-2021: In support of those we serve*, 2015
- ²⁴ Unless otherwise stated, data obtained from DHRM relating to year ending 31 December 2014
- ²⁵ *Improvement in the status of women in the United Nations system: Report of the Secretary-General, A/69/346*, 25 August 2014
- ²⁶ Data provided by each UN entity to UN Women as part of the annual UN-SWAP self-assessment (UN System Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women); analysis prepared by the Focal Point for Women, Coordination Division, UN Women, September 2014.
- ²⁷ www.global-briefing.org
- ²⁸ <https://youngov.co.uk/news/2015/08/16/half-young-not-heterosexual/>
- ²⁹ Correspondence with Staff Health and Welfare Section, October 2015
- ³⁰ *Revised Policy and Procedures on Assignments*, UNHCR/HCP/2015/2/Rev.1
- ³¹ Defined as 'the steps that an employer can take to encourage people from groups with different needs or with a past track record of disadvantage or low participation to apply for jobs' (www.equalityhumanrights.com)
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- ³⁶ There is an enormous body of literature on the impact of bias on decision-making in general (see for example *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, Daniel Kahneman, 2013) and on gender equity, diversity and inclusion (see for example *The Value of Difference: Eliminating Bias in Organisations*, Binna Kandola, 2009)
- ³⁷ For further information on bias in recruitment and good practice tips see *A head for hiring: the behavioural science of recruitment and selection*, CIPD, 2015
- ³⁸ *The Value of Difference: Eliminating Bias in Organisations*, Binna Kandola, 2009
- ³⁹ *UNHCR's People Strategy 2016-2021: In support of those we serve*, UNHCR, 2015
- ⁴⁰ *The lesbian, gay and bisexual map of world laws*, ILGA, The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association, 2015
- ⁴¹ *Women in the Workplace 2015*, Lean In/ McKinsey and Company
- ⁴² Revised Policy and Procedures on Assignments, UNHCR/HCP/2015/2/Rev.1 para 79 and 79A
- ⁴³ Policy and Procedures for the Promotion of International Professional Staff Members UNHCR/HCP/2014/2 para 5.2.1
- ⁴⁴ Policy and Procedures for the Promotion of International Professional Staff Members UNHCR/HCP/2014/2 para 5.10.2
- ⁴⁵ Excluding 2013
- ⁴⁶ Email to all staff from the Chairperson of the Staff Council dated 1 December 2015, subject heading: The 2014 Promotions
- ⁴⁷ *Unwritten Rules: What You Don't Know Can Hurt Your Career*, Catalyst, 2008
- ⁴⁸ <http://www.bain.com/publications/articles/everyday-moments-of-truth.aspx>
- ⁴⁹ Private correspondence with Assignments and Promotions Section, April 2015
- ⁵⁰ '#DisruptTheDefault is a call to action for companies and individuals to shake up the way we think, speak, and act, and to make bold moves that will forge meaningful change for women, as well as men, in the workplace and the world'. This call to action comes from Catalyst, a global gender research and campaigning organisation representing 800 employers including UNHCR corporate partner UPS (www.catalyst.org). Visit <http://www.catalyst.org/disruptthedefault> for examples of how leaders are disrupting the default on gender in global organisations.
- ⁵¹ *The Inclusion Imperative: How real inclusion creates better business and builds better societies*, Stephen Frost, Logan Page, 2014
- ⁵² See Appendix 2: Good practice examples from other organisations
- ⁵³ *KPMG Women's Leadership Study: Moving Women Forward into Leadership Roles*, kpmg.com, 2015
- ⁵⁴ 355 people completed an exit survey between September 2013 and April 2015, of whom 181 (51%) were women, and 174 (49%) were men
- ⁵⁵ <http://www.bain.com/publications/articles/everyday-moments-of-truth.aspx>
- ⁵⁶ *Women in the Workplace 2015*, Lean In/ McKinsey and Company
- ⁵⁷ <http://www.bain.com/publications/articles/everyday-moments-of-truth.aspx>
- ⁵⁸ *Working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons in forced displacement*, UNHCR, 2011
- ⁵⁹ *Challenges Faced by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) Staff Members in UNHCR*, DHRM Policy Unit, February 2012
- ⁶⁰ www.unglobe.org
- ⁶¹ Message from the High Commissioner to all staff in headquarters and the field, sent 3 December 2015, subject heading: International Day of Persons with Disabilities.
- ⁶² Other UN organisations such as IOM and WFP use the more inclusive term 'special considerations'
- ⁶³ Case study from <http://news.cbi.org.uk/news/pwc-on-unconscious-bias-e-learning/>
- ⁶⁴ *Four Imperatives to Increase the Representation of Women in Leadership Positions*, CEB Corporate Leadership Council, November 2014.
- ⁶⁵ *When Women Thrive, Businesses Thrive*, Mercer, 2014
- ⁶⁶ UNHCR Policy on Flexible Working Arrangements, DHRM, 2010
- ⁶⁷ See page x above
- ⁶⁸ *Four Imperatives to Increase the Representation of Women in Leadership Positions*, CEB Corporate Leadership Council, November 2014.
- ⁶⁹ *UNHCR Policy on Flexible Working Arrangements*, Division of Human Resources Management, 2010
- ⁷⁰ See for instance data from the Agile Future Forum <http://www.agilefutureforum.co.uk/findings/>
- ⁷¹ *Changing companies' minds about women*, McKinsey
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⁷² See more at: <http://gender.bitc.org.uk/all-resources/research-articles/inclusive-leadership-culture-change-business-success#sthash.4qPDCNMv.dpuf>

⁷³ See more at http://www.catalyst.org/system/files/inclusive_leadership_the_view_from_six_countries_0.pdf

⁷⁴ http://www.mckinsey.com/insights/organization/realizing_the_power_of_talented_women

⁷⁵ Case study from <http://gender.bitc.org.uk/all-resources/case-studies/awards-2015-advancing-women-credit-suisse>

⁷⁶ Case study from https://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/global_allies_-_engage_educate_empower.pdf

⁷⁷ <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/coordination/humanitarian-leadership/selection-process>

⁷⁸ <http://www.qedconsulting.com/products/section2h.php>

⁷⁹ www.catalyst.org