

# UNOG Working Group on Addressing Racism at the Workplace

## Recommendations

In view of the launch of the Secretary General's Action Plan on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for All in the United Nations Secretariat in February 2022, the UNOG Working Group on Addressing Racism and Racial Discrimination stresses the importance of creating a safe and equitable working environment for all personnel. Affirming this, the Working group recommends the full implementation of the Action Plan with particular emphasis on the following areas:

### 1) Recruitment and selection

- a) Through the collection of aggregated data, monitor, assess and follow up on recruitment and selection decisions to ensure diversity, equity and inclusion in the recruitment and selection of personnel in all categories and at all levels, with particular emphasis on rectifying imbalances at all levels, especially the mid and senior levels (P-2, P-3, P-4, P-5, D-1 and D-2). This entails reducing recruitment from overrepresented countries/regional groupings and increasing recruitment from under- or unrepresented countries/regional groupings.
- b) Collect data on the recruitment of personnel in temporary positions and consultants to ensure diversity, equity and inclusion.
- c) Equip hiring managers and human resources practitioners with tools to be used throughout the recruitment and selection cycle to ensure equal opportunities, absence of barriers and achieve a more diverse workforce. Targeted training session on the use of these tools should be made available.
- d) Ensure diverse representation on competency-based interview (CBI) panels and demand that the Hiring Manager ensure that the views of all panel members are treated equally.
- e) Develop a mandatory training course on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI)\* and unconscious bias and, once it is in place, ensure that all panel members have completed it.
- f) Ensure that the two UN working languages, English and French, are treated equally during CBI interviews, taking into account the language requirements of the job opening.
- g) Ensure that CBI interviews include a question on diversity, equity and inclusion.
- h) Review the language requirements in job openings to ensure that they do not have a discriminatory impact which could lead to the exclusion of candidates from under- or unrepresented countries/regional groupings.
- i) Develop outreach initiatives targeting under- and unrepresented countries/regional groupings through partnerships with academic institutions and in collaboration with other UN bodies.

- j) Encourage hiring managers to have a more diverse pool of interns, fellows and volunteers, including from under- or unrepresented countries/regional groupings.

## **2) Movement of staff**

- a) Publish monthly reports on the UNOG iSeek page and in other internal means of communication about all new hires, lateral assignments, placements of staff on special projects, temporary assignments (both internal and external), promotions and separations from service\*.
- b) Use data to determine the status of equitable geographic representation and whether there are particular points in the employee life cycle where there is a greater attrition rate for certain nationalities, or ethnic and racial groups.
- c) Undertake systematic and structured exit interviews and surveys to understand what drives resignations and separations from the organization, particularly for under- and unrepresented countries/regional groupings, to develop better retention policies aimed at such staff. In addition, offer exit interviews before transfers to other duty stations or common system organizations.

## **3) Performance management**

- a) Develop concrete, measurable goals on diversity, equity and inclusion with accountability indicators, to be included in the performance document for all staff, including those in managerial positions, and hold senior managers accountable when no action is taken or no progress is made to effectively address racism and racial discrimination in the workplace.
- b) Recognize managers who maintain and strengthen equitable geographic representation in their teams and foster an inclusive and diverse working environment.
- c) Review the performance guidelines for rebuttal panels to include a requirement to ensure diversity and inclusivity in the membership and increase outreach initiatives in order to attract more diverse panel members. Empower panel members to report any case of racism and racial discrimination they encounter in the course of their work to the Anti-Racism Advocate or Conduct and Discipline Focal Point.

## **4) Informal and formal justice system**

- a) Provide personnel as well as non-personnel with simple and straightforward guidelines on where and how to report incidents of racism and racial discrimination, in particular during onboarding of new staff, and publish them on an easily accessible internal website\*.
- b) Take an active approach in raising awareness among personnel on the role and mandate of both the formal and the informal mechanisms of the system of administration of justice,

as well as other resources (Staff Counsellor, Conduct and Discipline Focal Point, Anti-Racism Advocate, staff representatives, etc.) and how to contact them\*.

- c) Explore the creation of a special mechanism to report racism and racial discrimination and recommend that UNOG put in place an institutional structure to address racism and discrimination issues in a sustainable way.
- d) Inform the Anti-Racism Advocate of all cases of racism and racial discrimination to ensure appropriate monitoring and follow-up and enhance exchange and collaboration between the UNOG Conduct and Discipline Focal Point and the Anti-Racism Advocate.
- e) Assess, through surveys and other available tools, the effectiveness of the formal and informal justice system in addressing racism and racial discrimination.
- f) In collaboration with the Staff Union and other interest groups, put in place the Racial Justice Focal Points Volunteer Network\*.

## **5) Accountability**

- a) Ensure that all formal and informal complaints of racism or racial discrimination are promptly and adequately addressed on the basis of relevant policies, namely ST/SGB/2019/8.
- b) If the allegations of racism or racial discrimination are confirmed, adopt the following measures:
  - i. Take appropriate action in line with SGB/2019/8.
  - ii. Provide confidential guidance and support, including psychosocial support and interim measures to victim of racism and racial discrimination.
- c) Each year, share the number of formal and informal complaints of racism or racial discrimination and any disciplinary or administrative measures taken.

## **6) Training/capacity-building**

- a) Ensure that all staff (including human resources practitioners, Staff Counsellors, Conduct and Discipline Focal Points, etc.) have taken the relevant mandatory training programmes, including United to Respect and any training programmes on diversity, inclusion and equity, including in-person workshops\*.
- b) Provide all members of personnel with tools to self-assess their biases\*.
- c) Ensure that the entire Senior Management Group of UNOG follows in-person training on diversity, inclusion and equity\*.

## **7) Awareness-raising through internal communication**

- a) Review and strengthen all internal communication approaches to UNOG staff, such as UNOG email broadcasts and newsletters, through a diversity, inclusion and equity lens\*.
- b) Develop an internal communication that reinforces “speak-up culture” in conjunction with “listen-up culture” and encourages staff to become active bystanders, to nurture a working environment where employees are willing and able to ask questions and raise concerns when they witness or experience racism and racial discrimination.
- c) Develop a specific campaign for all staff members on diversity, inclusion and equity to celebrate our diversity; highlight and reinforce messages regarding international days, envisage celebrations of these days where possible and encourage participation in them and organize town hall meetings, meetings at the departmental level and events that reinforce the anti-racism message\*.

## **8) Interagency collaboration and knowledge sharing**

- a) Establish the Geneva Alliance against racism. The Alliance will be composed of heads of Geneva-based entities with the aim of sharing best practices concerning the fight against racism and racial discrimination.
- b) Establish a network of anti-racism champions similar to the gender champions.

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Remark: the paragraphs that have a (\*) means that the recommendation stems from the SAP