

Background

The Youth Envoy hosted a global and virtual joint workshop with Young UN in January 2018 to discuss key findings of [Young UN's Global Ideas Survey](#) and proposals for making the UN system an employer of choice for young talent in terms of recruitment, career development and retention. As a result of the survey and the joint workshop, 5 key priorities for HR reform were identified:



Over the last year, several proposals were submitted by the Young UN network to address these key priorities, and a common thread throughout all of them was a need for more system-wide interagency collaboration, coherence and information sharing in order to better meet the SDGs and the complex needs of the 21st century. Moreover, 90% of young professionals indicated a desire to work across several different UN agencies and duty stations, but felt stifled and stagnated by the disparate criteria, rules and procedures for recruitment, mobility and promotion across the UN system.



The interagency Young UN network is eager to serve as agents to help actualize ONE UN that is accountable, transparent, nimble, effective, efficient and pragmatic in the implementation of the 2030 agenda. As such, the following proposals have been submitted to address the key HR reform priorities identified in the Global Ideas Survey:

- 1) UN-wide mentorship programme
- 2) ONE UN talent management platform
- 3) Credible performance assessment
- 4) Automated feedback for applications
- 5) Systemwide online collaboration platform
- 6) Oath of Office Ceremony



Additional Resources / Proposals:

- I. [Global Ideas Survey - Key HR findings](#) / proposals
- II. [HR Reform Ideas Excel](#)
- III. [Policy lab pilot on skill sharing and system-wide results for HLCP](#)
- IV. [Peace and Security Reform](#)
- V. [Management Reform](#)
- VI. [Mobility Model \(Vienna\)](#)
- VII. [Guiding Questions \(Geneva\)](#)

What is your proposal in a nutshell?

Introduce a **UN-wide mentorship programme**. The programme would be cross-system and couple younger UN employees with mentors to allow for personal and career development advice through calls or meetups. Mentees could be selected based on performance/potential and could be coupled with mentor based on need identified by mentee together with supervisor, or on common interest.

What unmet need is your idea designed to meet and for whom?

- Personal and career development and networking opportunities for young talent
- Build connection across UN agencies and duty stations and promote one UN

How will your idea help the UN work better?

- Improved cross-UN knowledge sharing
- Improved talent development and career development opportunities for young staff

What makes your idea different from what is already being tried?

Currently no system-wide mentorship programme

Path to success

Who would be needed to implement the proposal? (staff time/skills/senior support)

- Staff time of mentor and mentee (1-2 hour/month?)

What financial and technical resources are needed?

- Technical platform: Use existing (LinkedIn, Skype)



What obstacles could your proposal potentially meet? How would you be able to overcome these?	Next steps/milestones
<p>Hesitation to introduce new system and commit in staff time. Overcome through ensuring that the programme is “light”, i.e. use already existing infrastructure (e.g. LinkedIn) and use staff time in the most efficient way.</p>	<p>-Design programme using inspiration and material from existing ones, e.g. UNAIDS, YPP, startups -Pilot programme in Geneva, e.g. through Geneva Learning Network</p>

What is your reform idea in a nutshell?

One UN talent management platform - for recruitment, rosters, skills mapping. Develop a common application form and/or system that can be used to help facilitate interagency mobility - when someone applies to any part of the UN system, their information could then be shared across the system and other entities could follow up and recruit the given person.

What unmet need is your idea designed to meet?

Talent Management addresses the two elements of the equation : the needs of the Organisation and the resources (the employees/candidates). By facilitating the mobility throughout the UN system, it allows the Staff Members to grow in their career: acquire new skills and a better understanding of the UN system, move geographically and have a fulfilling professional experience.

How will your idea help the UN work better?

It takes the Secretariat an average of 9 months to fill a vacant position, with no guarantee that the recruitment will be successful in the short or medium terms. Through the alignment of recruitment standards and post description, the use of rosters (i.e. Talent pool, etc...) would reduce the recruitment timeline and the risk of failure. It also creates a bigger pool of dynamic and mobile talent, that can be mobilised during crisis and geographically moved through rotational movements.

What makes your idea different from what is already being tried?

The concept of Talent Management is slowly emerging in the UN (through the creation of holistic approaches of recruitment, outreach, workforce planning, mobility and career guidance). However, each UN entity is building its own approach in silos and most of the time, UN entities are competing for the same resource--the best talent. We also often see that mobility schemes are successful when the pool of employees to be moved has reached a critical size: the diversity of profiles and locations is key in order to make mobility a successful program.

Three major steps would be required in this global process:



1/ the harmonization of practices (recruitment processes and rules) and standards (values & skills, job families and descriptions, and finally contractual status),

2/ the integration of tools (HR Information systems for recruitment, personnel information, internal communication),

3/ the mutualisation of resources, in order to have economy of scale and a more effective, global and ambitious talent management.

Path to success	
<p>Who would implement? (staff time/skills)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step 1: a joint task force of HR practitioners is set to harmonize practices and standards • Step 2: each new HRIS acquisition is submitted to the CEB to move towards common platforms • Step 3: One UN Talent Management is set 	<p>What financial resources are needed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step 1: only the salary of the members of task force is to be taken into account • Step 2: much longer term, 10 to 20 years, when the need of IT acquisition is there • Step 3: economies of scales can be achieved globally
<p>What technology is needed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step 1: a joint task force of HR practitioners is set to harmonize practices and standards • Step 2: each new HRIS acquisition is submitted to the CEB to move towards common platforms • Step 3: One UN Talent Management is set 	<p>Timeframe/milestones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step 1: depending on the elements to be harmonized : 1 to 7 years • Step 2: 5 to 20 years • Step 3: 20 years and beyond

What is your reform idea in a nutshell?

Replace the Secretariat's ePAS with a **credible performance rating system**:
 -13,000 professional and higher staff would receive 360 degree ratings from a single panel, once a year
 -Ratings would focus on traits with proven links to performance & future potential (analysing & strategic thinking, developing solutions, delivering results, learning & adaptability, building relationships, teamwork & values)

What unmet need is your idea designed to meet?

1. Hiring managers would receive useful information for screening out non-performers
2. Staff members would be reliably recognized for performing (and not performing)

How will your idea help the UN work better?

As performance ratings become credible, fewer low performers would be picked for management roles, drastically improving efficiency and productivity of all. An investment of 50 full time dedicated HR specialists for making these ratings credible – 0.4% of the P+ headcount – would yield far greater productivity gains over a 5 year payback period.



<p>What makes your idea different from what is already being tried?</p> <p>Currently, only 1% of staff receive a rating of “partially meets performance expectations” or “does not meet performance expectations”. Such ratings are not credible, and mean hiring managers are forced to rely exclusively on other information when making hiring decisions. Staff also cannot trust the system to recognize their performance.</p>	
<p>Path to success</p>	
<p>Who would implement? (staff time/skills)</p> <p>A single panel, comprising 25 subpanels each with 2 dedicated HR specialists, would collate feedback for 13,000 P+ staff per year across duty stations, and make the final rating assessment. (Implies each subpanel rates 520 people per year, or 10 per week)</p>	<p>What financial resources are needed?</p> <p>Travel funds for the raters (Shell uses a similar system for rating its executives among its 92,000 employees in over 70 countries, as does the Civil Service of Singapore, with 84,000 officers)</p>
<p>What technology is needed?</p> <p>360 rating functionalities integrated into Inspira</p>	<p>Timeframe/milestones</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A pilot could be launched with the 900 P-2s in Departments and Offices (NYHQ/GVA), with 2 subpanels of 2 HR specialists (=4 staff) 2. Develop assessment methodologies and rolling rating schedule (Mar-18) 3. Launch pilot (Apr-18) 4. Compare ratings across whole cohort (Mar-19)
<p>Research:</p> <p>BCG perspectives - The Making of a Talent Magnet Report of the Secretary-General: “Overview of human resources management reform: performance management” JIU – “Managing performance and contracts” Shell- “Managing potential at Shell”</p>	

<p>What is your reform idea in a nutshell?</p> <p>Automatic notifications to candidates as early as possible in the recruitment process, via the existing system (Inspira for the Secretariat), of the reasons for their (non)selection including whether or not their application met prescreening criteria (fluency in English, for example). Automated feedback on the status of the job opening from the system could also be provided with more frequency throughout the process.</p>
<p>What unmet need is your idea designed to meet?</p> <p>The Secretary-General and the General Assembly have emphasized the need for more transparency within the UN System, particularly with regards to recruitment procedures and practices. Currently, no feedback is offered to unsuccessful applicants and many don't trust recruitment is conducted fairly in the UN.</p>
<p>How will your idea help the UN work better?</p> <p>As the average recruitment process takes 239 days, providing automated and timely feedback to applicants would increase transparency in recruitment, enforce accountability amongst hiring staff, help to retain the most qualified applicants and support current staff members in their career development.</p>



What makes your idea different from what is already being tried?

Typically, applicants only receive a notification at the end of the recruitment process stating they were not selected with no other communication or information offered throughout an almost year long application process. Expanding the feedback and communication offered to candidates would build on existing efforts to expand candidate feedback in the new staff selection process.

Path to success

Who would implement? (staff time/skills)

- OHRM – Create and update notification templates to share information with applicants at every step of the recruitment process.
- Hiring Managers – Document disposition reasoning within Inspira.
- OICT (Inspira developers) – Expand Inspira self-service functions where applicants receive updates on the status of their application and automated notifications on the reasons for their (non)selection.

What financial resources are needed?

Fairly limited: project HR and IT resources to define and implement existing functional requirements in Inspira and a communications management strategy.

What technology is needed?

Expand existing self-service portal for applicants within Inspira.

Timeframe/milestones

As much of this information is already documented by the hiring team and through the automatic pre-screening in Inspira, the implementation could be completed with a rather quick turnaround.

Research:

According to the [2012 UN Joint Inspection Unit survey](#) (p. 50), 62.9% of UNS respondents indicated that transparency was a main issue in the recruitment process, both within the organization and towards the applicants. Noted areas to improve transparency included: selection criteria, recruitment rules, assessment scores and candidate feedback.

What is your reform idea in a nutshell?

An online software platform linked to the Intranet (i-see.un.org at HQ or point.un.org in field missions) across the UN system through which staff members can directly convey an idea to the lead official in their duty station such as SRSG, CR or the SG. Staff members whose ideas are accepted and adopted should be recognized in a small ceremony/town-hall meeting every quarter.



What unmet need is your idea designed to meet?

At present there is no mechanism for UN staff to provide their ideas directly to senior management. This means that senior management do not hear from those working on the ground as to what barriers to efficiency exist and how they can be overcome. This is true of both external activity (e.g. political outreach to a certain demographic) and internal processes. In the case of the latter, administrative processes are seen to become more complicated overtime as staff are often driven by concerns about audits rather than successful delivery of mandates. There are few if any incentives to making processes shorter or easier, and few opportunities for a junior staff member to circumvent the hierarchy and talk to the SRSG/ lead official onsite. The proposed platform addresses these needs.

How will your idea help the UN work better?

By providing for a direct channel of communication between senior leadership and more junior officials in the organization, the platform will give senior leadership a more holistic view of the key challenges facing the mission/office. Senior leadership can also assess which processes seem to be most in need of reform based on which processes attract most number of ideas. Junior staff members will be able to communicate 'quick-win' proposals for change that, cumulatively, can lead to significant improvements in performance by the Organization. The existence of such a channel will also increase the sense amongst staff members that they are partners with the Secretary-General and senior management in the management reform process, increasing the likelihood that the reforms ultimately introduced are well-received and effectively implemented.

What makes your idea different from what is already being tried?

There is currently no common platform for staff members to proactively share their ideas for reform of UN working methods. While in some cases staff members can route correspondence to senior management to a mail-id, there is little awareness of what would happen to the idea thereafter. The development of a common platform linked to the intranet, that explicitly asks staff members to come forward with ideas for reform would send a clear message that staff are being welcomed to engage positively in the reform process. Recognizing and rewarding a staff member's idea or initiative in an office/mission-wide town-hall meeting would boost morale and incentivize further ideas.

Path to success

Who would implement? (staff time/skills)

- OHRM and the Executive Office of Secretary-General responsible for leading concept development and design.
- OICT responsible for creation and maintenance of platform.
- OHRM and relevant Offices of senior officials then responsible for monitoring responses received from staff members.

What financial resources are needed?

Financial resources required for developing and maintaining the platform would be minimal.
Key costs would be staff time in designing and developing the platform and then monitoring responses received.
Minor costs associated with establishing new inboxes for receipt of proposals.

What technology is needed?

Timeframe/milestones



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The platform should be developed as part of the existing UN intranet system.• Responses would need to be directed to dedicated inboxes of relevant senior managers with the mandate that they be taken up in senior management meetings once a month. Ideas chosen for implementation should be recognized publicly. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of concept for platform, by OHRM, EOSG and DM in consultation with staff members (1 month).• Design and testing of platform (2 month).• Initial ceremony held for first ideas submitted through the platform that have been accepted and implemented (2 months following launch). |
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Research:

- <https://hbr.org/2012/12/a-simpler-way-to-get-employees-to-share.html> - why collaboration and information-sharing platforms like intranets can deliver better value when coupled with idea-sharing.
- <https://hbr.org/2013/05/creating-the-best-workplace-on-earth> - how idea-sourcing and talent management can be combined to create a satisfying workplace for staff members

What is your proposal in a nutshell?

Organizing an **Oath of Office ceremony** for newly appointed Staff Members.

Twice a year, new Staff Members are invited to a symbolic venue of their duty stations to speak their Oath of Office with the presence of a Senior Official (possibly the highest official of the duty station)

Possible second phase of the project: revising the Oath of Office to also have some words related to SDGs.

What unmet need is your idea designed to meet and for whom?

- Instead of signing the document, feeling proud of making the Oath.

How will your idea help the UN work better?

- Promoting a common UN culture and a sense of belonging. Having the feeling that joining the UN comes with duties and responsibilities.

What makes your idea different from what is already being tried?

It is currently used in UNOG and they have very positive feedback.

Path to success



<p>Who would be needed to implement the proposal? (staff time/skills/senior support)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Help from DGACM, DM and EOSG for the coordination	<p>What financial and technical resources are needed?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- GA Hall twice a year and a photographer.
<p>What obstacles could your proposal potentially meet? How would you be able to overcome these?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- We would need the support from SG.	<p>Next steps/milestones</p>