



**Young UN**  
Agents for Change

## **Young UN Policy Lab Pilot on Repositioning the UN development system**

### **Background**

A pilot of the Young UN Policy Lab was launched in late October 2017 to provide input to the UN development system repositioning exercise of the Secretary-General. An email invite was sent to Young UN's 700+ members, requesting innovative ideas and solutions in two key areas: **System-wide results** and **Skillsets**. The pilot requested joint inputs from duty stations and encouraged local workshops. In addition, Young UN also conducted a Global Ideas Survey during July-August 2017, to which almost 650 employees from across the UN system and 81 duty stations responded. A preview of its findings are contained in Annex 2.

### **Summary of inputs received**

Contributions were received from **Bangkok, Geneva, Mexico City, New York (x 2), and Santiago**. A further proposal, a remote collaboration of members across duty stations, drew on ideas from several of the contributions, and is provided as the first input. The remainder follow in the order that they were received.

The common trait across all proposals was a focus on creating and incentivising interconnectedness and permeability between different parts of the UN system. For example, the network in Santiago included proposals to promote inter-divisional working teams and flexible job categories. The group in Bangkok proposed a performance management based on a points-based system, while allowing more time for extracurricular activities. One of the proposals from New York focused on the Human Rights up Front (HRuF) initiative, as a tool to anchor a value-based approach in order to create a common understanding of the UN responsibility towards respect and promotion of human rights. Another group in New York looked at the development of a multi-dimensional mentorship programme to unlearn, relearn and map competencies for a more dynamic and adaptive workforce. Finally, the group in Mexico City looked at the issue of interconnectedness through the inter-agency lens, integrating various reporting and assessment mechanisms.

Another common concern at country level was that efforts to improve skillsets and system-wide results should not only be centered around the creation of a new incentive structure at the individual level, but should further consider eliminating current restraints and barriers that exist for UN employees and in the implementation of existing mechanisms. Some of the barriers mentioned were managerial in nature and/or related to general structural issues of the current UN system, such as hierarchy, rigid organizational structure and lack of flexibility, as well as lack of learning and mobility opportunities due to different types of contracts. Hence, reforms should promote inclusiveness across the system.

The **Young UN Global Ideas Survey** gathered inputs from a much larger number of personnel on an individual basis and provided the opportunity to contribute positive examples and ideas focused on five topics: inter-agency collaboration and UN coherence; human resources and talent development; transparency, integrity and accountability; living the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); and technology and data.

Many of the results resonate strongly with the Policy Lab themes. On system-wide results, while 81% of respondents felt proud to work for the UN, 77% said they had experienced competition between UN entities or departments that had a negative impact on effectiveness and less than half (46%) of respondents said they felt encouraged and empowered by management to share information and collaborate with colleagues in other parts of the UN system. Many ideas for change (detailed in Annex 2) provided centred on incentives for collaboration, mandates, funding, communication and information-sharing and human resources reform (including in relation to mobility, career development, recruitment and performance appraisal). Proposals to change the status quo on both system-wide results and developing the skillsets and agility needed for the SDGs included, for example, multi-office mentoring and skill-sharing networks and temporarily shifting employees between teams, positions and tasks – to enable innovation, break silos and foster knowledge exchange and learning.

### **Future of the Policy Lab**

Going forward, the Young UN policy lab is ready to serve as a tool for the United Nations to seek innovative ideas from its most valuable resource, its employees. The pilot was open for just two weeks, to ensure that contributions could feed directly into the last phase of the repositioning exercise. However, Young UN recognises that the reform of the organisation will take place over the short, medium and long-term - and at all levels within and across all UN entities. The Policy Lab will remain open to requests to contribute with new ideas, as well as innovative ways to implement the reforms of the Secretary-General and the Member States of the Organization. Young UN will also continue to explore options to hone the Policy Lab model to be able to quickly crowdsource ideas and input from the network in the most effective way possible. This will include experimenting with different approaches, including exploring options for using technological platforms to enable a data-driven approach where members of the network can prioritise and rank proposals or good examples according to relevant criteria (e.g. how innovative, bold, feasible etc.).

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Annex 1: Call for inputs (attached)

Annex 2: YoungUN Global survey: Preliminary findings (attached)

## Input 1: Cross-duty station proposal

### Taking the Gamification Enterprise Framework to the UN

Drawing inspiration from ideas submitted by a combination of duty stations, a gamification enterprise framework is one approach that could incentivise system-wide results and the development and adoption of new skillsets. Gamification is the application of game design principles to the enterprise environment to encourage employees to realize business processes improvements, service efficiencies, talent development, innovative research ideas, and constructive collaboration practices.

While different theories recommend different approaches the most accepted framework right now is the MDA (mechanics, dynamics, and aesthetics)<sup>1</sup> framework. This framework:

- a) Facilitates the development of a desired skillset;
- b) Promotes a cultural change around results by rewarding positive action;
- c) Provides the tools to measure the effectiveness and success of different aspects of the skillset development.

If applied in the UN context, this framework could identify and measure the achievement of system-wide results towards the 2030 Agenda, aggregating and compiling individual achievements by department, office, agency, or at any other level.

This proposal advocates for the establishment of a **badge-based system** as part of the gamification enterprise framework. This idea was primarily inspired by the submission of Bangkok (see Input 3) of a points-based system. While a points-based system could form part of the possible solution, a badge system would provide more flexibility and will likely be seen as less imposing than assigning points.

### Badge-based system (game mechanics)

The badge-based system would serve as a backbone of the UN performance management system, and be related to step-grades. By creating and distributing badges based on the employee's success in promoting different SDGs, human rights, participating in mobility exercises, trainings, inter-divisional projects and other areas, staff would be encouraged to adopt the desired behaviours. The system would also allow for the identification of challenges in different parts of the system that prevent the achievement of the expected outcomes. For example, the small number of "mobility" badges acquired by employees would indicate that not enough employees are willing to take part in mobility exercises. While the badge-system is not the only component of a gamification enterprise framework, the design of the game rules to acquire the badges and the adaptation of policies around those are key to achieving the desired behavioural change. Fundamentally, a more competency- and delivery-based

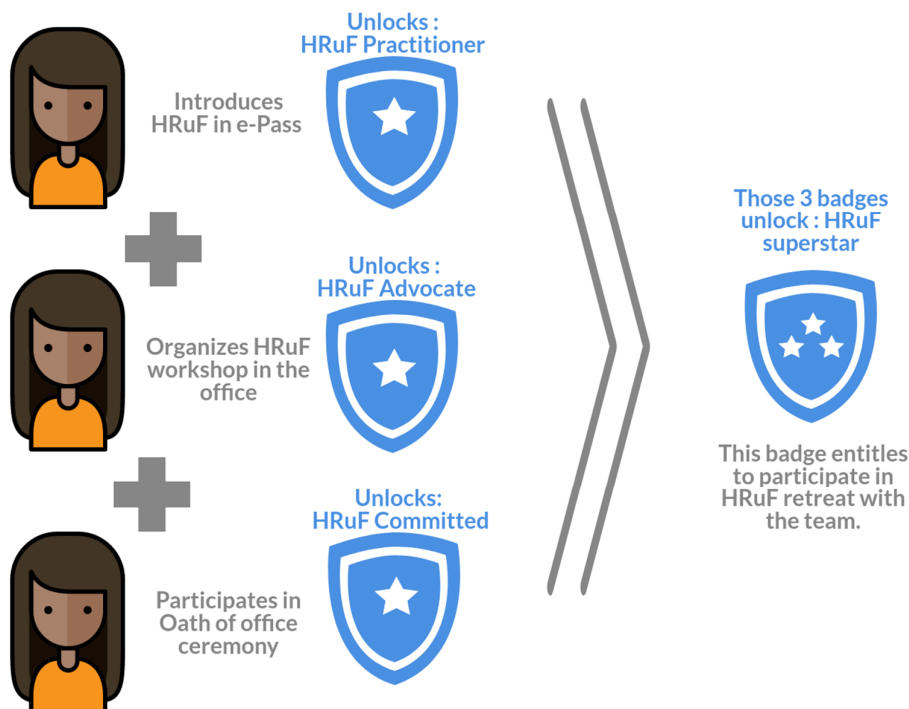
"The concept of gamification should not be confused with traditional games that are simply directed towards providing entertainment value, nor should it be mistaken for reward systems that simply entice people to perform actions to earn points. Although elements such as points, levels, leaderboards, achievements and badges can certainly constitute components of a gamified experience [...] this overall experience should be geared towards non-game situations and towards persuading end users towards intended behavioural outcomes."

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<sup>1</sup> Gal Rimon (2017-04). "[A New Framework for Enterprise Gamification – Mechanics, Dynamics and Aesthetics](#)". *Game effective*.

evaluation mechanism would enable post descriptions to be more skills-oriented, which would facilitate better matches both with candidates for recruitment and internally for building project teams based on substantive expertise.

In this system, badges could be be “unlocked” by an individual, a team, division, department and/or UN entity. In order to illustrate a simple application of the badge system, please see the following illustrative example in which an individual would be entitled to participate in a retreat organized by the Human Rights up Front team thanks to unlocking a series of badges:



The badges could be designed at different levels of the system to encourage the desired results, for example:

- a) SDG badges - in order to contribute to the fulfillment of SDGs;
- b) Human Rights badge - in order to contribute to the revitalization of HRuF (See Input 6 for concrete recommendations in the full proposal);
- c) Mobility badge - in order to promote mobility exercises;
- d) Mentorship badge - in order to be able to tap into internal capacities of the UN system. This could be combined with job swaps and existing job shadowing policies.

One way of ensuring that all employees would have equal opportunities to unlock badges, would be adopting a system whereby employees have “minor” and “major” areas of expertise. For example, for a given employee, economic affairs could be a “major” and human rights a “minor” area of expertise and an allocated percentage of time would be dedicated to the area not part of the primary

function. This would provide a great opportunity for the staff to increase their expertise in other areas, as well as for the Organization to be able to take advantage of existing staff capacities.

Additionally, communities of practice / functional networks could be created where UN staff could sign up to dedicate [x]% of their time to work on a different functional area. This could work as an “internal consultancy” programme that would allow staff to join up to 2-3 working groups outside their area where they can bring expertise(s) and or/ acquire new skillssets. Organizations like the World Bank have embarked on similar initiatives through their communities of practice.

Promoting increased interdisciplinary collaboration between and within UN agencies is especially important for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which calls for integrated and transversal approaches. In addition to internal consultancy initiatives, a more project based and flexible way of organizing and structuring work teams would contribute to breaking down divisional and organizational silos. This may require a different project-governance structure from what is currently common in the UN system, including clearly defined roles for each project (assigning a sponsor, client, project manager, project members and stakeholders). The design of funding structures would encourage such expertise-based team organization and enable staff members to obtain a broader set of skills. Development Account projects would be an opportunity to trial such an approach whereby project conditions encourage flexible and interdisciplinary teams.

Finally, the badge-based system should be rolled out in phases. A sample of Young UN members could choose one or two badges as a pilot.

## Input 2: New York A

### 1. Revolutionizing mentorship at the UN

**What?** The SDGs are premised on a common understanding that today's policy challenges are inter-related, dynamic, and complex. In turn, achieving them requires breaking down silos in communication and coordination within and across UN entities and functional areas to rectify asymmetries of information and optimize the use of staff knowledge and skills. One prominent yet under-utilized approach to breaking down these silos in the workplace is mentorship. Through regular contact with peers and colleagues across the UN system, there is huge potential for staff to be able to tap into the internal wealth of information within the organization, expand their understanding of different pillars of the Charter and their interconnectedness, and explore new positions where their skills and capacity may be at best use. But there is currently no comprehensive platform where employees can access the relevant information – for example a directory of colleagues areas of expertise and experience together with contact information. No open cross-UN mentorship programme currently exists.

**So what?** While there are various mentorship programmes in the UN which provide a great asset for those that can access them, cross-UN mentorship is in desperate need of revitalization, and even a revolution, to maximize its impact. The nature of a cross-UN mentorship programme could be adjusted to respond to the various demands of SDGs on work culture and staff career development, such as the requirement to integrate three pillars of sustainable development in work programmes, the expectation to obtain and apply transdisciplinary skills and knowledge, and the ever increasing need to adapt to emerging challenges.

**Now what?** The SDG-inspired mentorship programme should include the following features in its core:

- i. Multi-directionality: Staff at different professional levels, job titles and seniority mentor each other in their respective areas of strength and interest as opposed to the traditional mentorship programmes whereby senior staff unilaterally strive to impart knowledge or experience onto a junior staff working in the same job family. The proposed design is based on the premise that the roles of mentors and mentees are interchangeable and knowledge transfer is a two-way street.
- ii. Incentives: Mentors and mentees in their inter-changeable roles would need institutionalized incentives to join the programme, maintain their engagement and pass on the torch to the next group. While volunteerism and altruism are noble ideas and high values to sustain, today's time-intensive and demanding work environment invites structural incentives to be put in place for such a mentorship programme to be sustainable with visible rewards for all parties. Such incentives could be inserted into or mainstreamed across performance management systems, job descriptions and recruitment processes.

### 2. Re-thinking staff competencies and skills:

**What?** The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) inspired the development and implementation of the current staff competencies. In contrast to the MDGs, the SDGs are integrated and indivisible,

universally applicable and much broader in scope and ambition. This demands a serious review and re-think of staff competencies.

**So what?** Staff competencies should be more futuristic, preparing today's workforce for emerging and unforeseen challenges of the future work. In essence, they need to be more adaptive, systems-oriented, integrated and easily accessible.

**Now what?** To re-think staff competencies in line with SDGs, we should:

1. Unlearn, relearn and map core staff competencies that are required to navigate the SDG era that are in nature dynamic, futuristic and adaptive.
2. Pool and showcase staff skills and knowledge (premised on the SDG-inspired competencies) in an online platform accessible to insiders and outsiders alike to optimize their use for the implementation, monitoring and follow-up of SDGs.

## Input 3: Bangkok

### System-wide results

One of the key challenges of achieving greater system results is that currently there is little incentive for the staff to actively seek and provide evidence of results of their work. To address this, we should work towards developing a system which would allow staff members to accumulate points based on exceeding the expectations of your work plans.

- This points accumulation system can contribute towards promotions and geographical moves
- It should include a 360 component, where input from multiple parties are included and it is not simply based on contributions from your supervisor (e.g. 20% is 360)
- The process should be transparent
- Work-plans would be tied to the SDGs and extra points accumulated based on the ability to link work done to the SDGs
- The system for points accumulation should aim to be as uniform as possible

### Skillsets

Our discussions on the development of skillsets were closely linked to those of the System Wide results. We believed that once evaluation of work created room for incentives for professional development then it would promote development of an individual's skillsets as well as foster an organisational culture which promotes this.

- Staff members would be able to increase their potential for points accumulation as mentioned in the system wide results if they contributed to work outside their standard work-plan
- An example could be that there would be a portion of your work plan dedicated to an SDG or something outside your standard expected activities. If you can achieve this activity or project within in the work plan year and the multiplier in the overall points system would be higher increasing your overall points rating for that work year. This example would need more technical inputs but the general idea is to create some sort of incentive for expanding your skillsets and creating a tangible way to reward those who participate in this.



## Input 4: Mexico City

In response to Young UN's invitation for input from duty stations on the two topics (skillsets and system-wide results), the Resident Coordinator's Office of the United Nations System in Mexico conducted an online explorative survey among UN personnel that are currently members of the interagency groups and task forces.

Given the unique situation of Mexico as a High Middle Income Country, the survey was distributed not only among UN staff but UN personnel in general. Only approximately 10% of the UN personnel in the United Nations System in Mexico are UN staff. The survey had an approximate response rate of 35%.

The survey included a mixture of quantitative, open-ended and closed-ended questions concerning the improvement of staff skillsets, ideas to effectively report on system-wide results – as suggested in the request for input – as well as a series of questions on interagency collaboration given its significance in the context of the Agenda 2030.

### Skillsets

According to respondents, the factors that limit and facilitate the improvement of staff skillsets are mostly personal and managerial in nature, and/or have to do with human resources and structural issues of the UN system.

- Coordination, good management, availability of webinars/online course, and exchange of ideas and experiences between agencies, personnel and countries were mentioned as factors that generally facilitate the improvement of skillsets.
- Yet, some respondents suggested that in a context where 90% of UN employees are not considered staff, workshops are often not available for service contract personnel.
- Other identified factors that limit the improvement of staff skillsets are contractual uncertainty, a vertical and rigid organizational structure/lack of institutional flexibility, old fashioned working culture as well as internal competition within agencies, lack of motivation in permanent UN staff, lack of time, and high workloads and “short staffed” offices.

Ideas given to improve skillsets are mostly reflected in the above-mentioned factors that limit and facilitate skillsets in the areas of capacity building, knowledge sharing and management. The answers of the respondents suggested the following:

- There is still a need and demand for continuous learning through workshops for UN personnel in general, not only UN staff. In addition, to effectively participate in capacity building (CB) activities, managers/teams should allow sufficient time during working hours, facilitate more information on CB opportunities, facilitate the possibility to obtain certificates, as well as allow participation in learning activities that are not directly reflected in the TORs but respond to the interest and responsibilities of the employee.
- Implement and improve knowledge exchange mechanisms, facilitating exchange between UN personnel of different agencies, as well as with strategic partners outside the system.

- Finally, it was mentioned that interagency work could also improve skillsets.

### System-wide results

We asked respondents about their ideas to effectively report on system-wide results, both of monitoring and evaluation of agencies' contribution to interagency work as well as on how to monitor and evaluate the contribution of UN personnel to the Agenda 2030. Existing mechanisms that were cited by some of the respondents were agencies' internal work plans, PMD, UNDAF and interagency groups. In general, responses imply that agencies and the system still need to improve their individual reporting systems on interagency collaboration, since few details were provided on this.

#### **Some ideas on how to report on interagency collaboration were:**

- Though some agencies are already advancing in this direction, respondents suggested the importance of including interagency responsibilities in TORs and work plans, establishing expected results in PAF and PAD, and including interagency collaboration in CPAP and other programmatic documents.
- System-wide action plans (SWAP)
- A joint report on Interagency activities/collaboration every two years
- Establishment of clear objectives, activities and indicators, as well as clear responsibilities
- More rigorous UNCT meetings, moving away from descriptive or informative session to joint formulation and analysis of reasons, advantages and disadvantages of interagency collaboration/projects, etc.

#### **Ideas on how to report UN personnel contribution system-wide in the context of the Agenda 2030:**

- With regards to reporting on the contribution of UN personnel, some criticism has been raised regarding the subjective nature of report on the individual level, leaving out the possibility of including personal achievements (vs. professional achievements).
- Establishment of common objectives among agencies and inclusion of performance objectives in evaluations/appraisals
- Creation of a platform to share personal contributions; individual surveys

## Improving interagency collaboration

We also asked respondent about the **factors that limit and contribute to the success of interagency collaboration.**

Factors that contribute to success	Factors that limit success
<p>Having a common and clear objective</p> <p>Trust and good relationships between agencies and UN colleagues</p> <p>Good coordination</p> <p>Strategic Communication that facilitates seeing the UN systems as “one”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Competition for resources</li> <li>● Lack of time and high workload</li> <li>● Agencies’ own mandate and norms/ competition of mandates between agencies</li> <li>● Interagency work is not seen as priority</li> <li>● In the light of preserving financial resources, intent to maintain exclusive “individual” relations of agencies with national counterparts</li> </ul>

Respondents suggested the following **incentives for interagency collaboration**:

- Access to resources and reduction of costs
- Higher impact of joint projects
- Mutual interest
- Higher visibility
- Access to knowledge, capacities and expertise of other UN colleagues

Some **ideas** to improve interagency collaboration that were mentioned:

- Knowledge communities
- Joint workshops
- Promotion of collaborative/ joint spaces of work, particularly in topics that are transversal, such as Human Rights, in addition to already existing interagency groups and task forces
- Collaborative platforms online for UN personnel
- Funds for interagency initiatives that are provided by RCOs

## Input 5: ECLAC, Santiago and Mexico City

### Skillsets

The implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for highly integrated and transversal approaches to development policy. This implies a need for increasingly interdisciplinary ways of working, bringing together diverse areas of expertise from the different pillars of sustainable development, and beyond. The work of Regional Commissions as knowledge-oriented entities can particularly benefit from transversal and interdisciplinary approaches but it is the case for many other organizations with a mandate to pursue issues related to sustainable development.

Organizational silos both between and within organizations, in addition to an overall hierarchical approach to organizing our work, currently present barriers to bringing together different forms of expertise. It also limits opportunities for staff members to build skillsets outside their core function, which is also important for the integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It seems necessary that a more flexible, project based and competency focused system be used to plan and deliver work rather than the hierarchical division focused structure in place at current. The following would support such an approach:

#### **More flexible and project-based organization of work teams**

Given the current dominant approach of delivering along divisional lines, there are significant barriers to cross-disciplinary work where staff members can also learn from each other. Importantly, oftentimes in-house capacities are not fully taken advantage of. Consultants are hired to carry out work that experts from other divisions may be capable of conducting. Planning and delivering work by mapping and linking relevant in-house experts rather than remaining within the confines of each division would support substantive integration, prevent silos and enable staff members to learn new skills.

#### **Collaboration through funding structures**

Creating a system whereby project proposal submissions are accepted from inter-divisional working teams rather than through the division structure would allow for increased collaboration between substantive areas and create opportunities for staff to gain greater exposure to the work of colleagues in other 'job families'. Calls for proposals could be sent to and accepted directly from the staff base and be considered for funding on a merit basis. Such an approach would allow for teams to be created based on competencies and allow for innovative proposals to be floated.

Accountability for project deliverables should lie with the project lead/head who would coordinate experts from different divisions and would not be required to report through a division based hierarchy to a project executive. In this way we can follow a common project governance structure that clearly delineates the following important roles:

- Sponsor (ECLAC/other funders), Client (the executive, someone who has institutional authority to validate the results according to the agreed project specification)
- Project Manager (a non-substantive coordination/managerial role that tracks deliverables and accountability across all parties but is not necessarily a supervisor)

- Project Member (specialists and substantive staff who are responsible for specific deliverables toward the stated objective)
- Stakeholders (those who are not directly involved in a project but who are affected by its results).

This structure allows us to make decisions based on expertise over hierarchy and maintain accountability to agreed outputs at all levels. It also allows leadership to focus on the strategic outcomes of a project rather than the day to day work product.

Development Account projects would be an opportunity to trial such an approach. In the transition time and in order to promote this new organisation of work, each staff should be required to spend a minimum (tbd) of his time to participate into interdivisional projects.

### **Flexible job categories - competency catalogue**

So as to be able to identify staff members skillsets, PHPs could be built to include an expanded competency catalogue, listing hard and soft skills. This catalogue would allow staff as subject matter experts to identify new skills that aren't currently represented in descriptions of duties. Additionally, skills should be validated against work experience, training programs, or certifications and rated for level of expertise (basic, intermediate, advanced, expert). Interdivisional teams could then be put together on the basis of substantive knowledge and skill sets. This would also allow post descriptions to be more skills-oriented, facilitating better matches between candidates and the required responsibilities.

## Input 6: New York B

### System-wide results

#### **Respect of human rights as one of the main system-wide results of the UN:**

The **respect of human rights**, as enshrined in the UN Charter (Article 1, para 3), forms an integral part of the SDG 16 to “promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”. As the UN was established from “the ashes of Auschwitz<sup>2</sup>, it is hard to believe that there is anything else more detrimental to the credibility and legitimacy of the UN, as its ability to prevent or stop grave violations of human rights. In this regard, the respect of human rights internally, within the UN, as well as externally, towards the outside environment, should be one of the system-wide results the UN and all the staff members will be measured against.

#### **Revitalization of Human Rights Up Front Agenda (HRuF) as a possible solution:**

In order to fulfill the purpose of the UN to respect human rights system-wide, and consequently contribute to the fulfillment of the Goal 16 of the SDGs, the **organizational culture** must change. As the Secretary-General’s Internal Review Panel on United Nations Action in Sri Lanka found, UN lacked a shared understanding of the situation and a common sense of UN responsibilities<sup>3</sup>, which ultimately prevented it from taking action to prevent mass atrocities from occurring. In order to change the UN’s organizational culture towards the recognition and respect of human right, we, as Young UN, propose the revitalization of the Human Rights Up Front (HRuF) Agenda. As this policy is already in place, we are building on existing structures and processes.

#### **Why HRuF and Young UN?**

HRuF aims at cultural change in the Organization, asking all staff to recognize human rights and protection of civilians as a core responsibility and demanded greater accountability for UN action. It asks all staff to act with moral courage and to be more principled in their action, in line with human rights and the SDGs. It is not a human rights mainstreaming tool or mechanism, instead HRuF is a tool to bring the UN system together around a common understanding of risks and UN responsibilities and a strategy for action. It additionally brings all the UN pillars together while providing mechanisms to scan all countries for early warning signs including developmental, political, humanitarian, or explicitly human rights indicators.

Young UN is a group of young UN professionals who joined the United Nations because of the values it stands for. Human rights are among those values and we believe that, by revitalizing the HRuF, the UN can be better fit for purpose to face increasingly complex challenges of this century. To achieve increased recognition of human rights, both externally and internally, as the core result of the UN, we propose the following framework, which is built on our lessons learned from HRuF implementation. Our proposals are complementary to the recommendations included in the

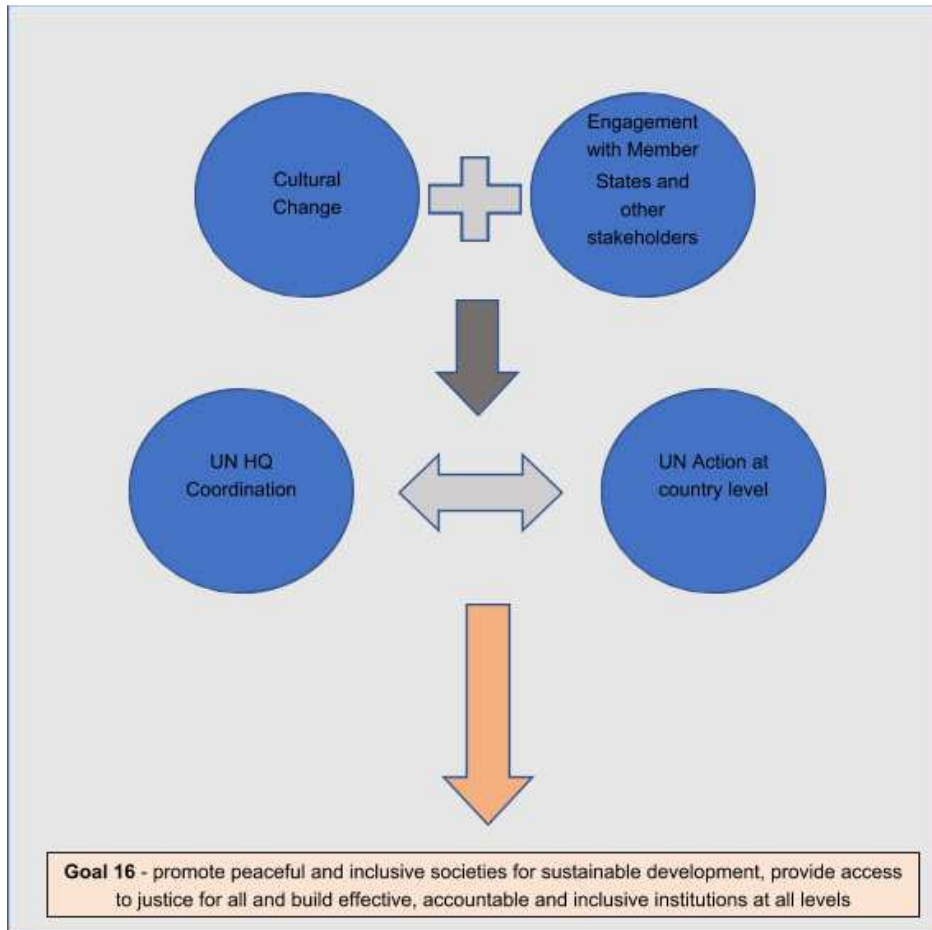
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<sup>2</sup> This phrase was used by the Director of the Global Centre for Responsibility to Protect, Simon Adams, at the book launch of *Perilous Interventions* by Hardeep Singh Puri at the Asia Society Policy Institute in new York on 30 September 2016.

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/Sri\\_Lanka/The\\_Internal\\_Review\\_Panel\\_report\\_on\\_Sri\\_Lanka.pdf](http://www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/Sri_Lanka/The_Internal_Review_Panel_report_on_Sri_Lanka.pdf), p.22.

“Rights Up Front” Detailed Action Plan<sup>4</sup>.

The below mentioned proposals and recommendations are structured around the logic as displayed in this diagram:



### **UN Cultural change**

*Renew the vision of the UN's responsibilities and embed the vision into human resources management:*

1. Inclusion of Human Rights Up Front as part of Young UN Identity Project<sup>5</sup>;
2. Introduction of a monthly guidance from the Secretary General to Special Representatives and Envoys of the Secretary-General and from the Special Representatives and Envoys to all substantive staff on UN positions and policy (including human rights issues);
3. Conducting Oath of Office ceremony at induction for all staff;

<sup>4</sup> [https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/detailed\\_hruf\\_plan\\_of\\_action.pdf](https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/detailed_hruf_plan_of_action.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> The project proposes to use social media channels, tools and fora through which UN staff will be given the opportunity to voice their ideas and views on a common UN identity. One planned initiative is an Instagram series that published one portrait of a young UN member of affiliate per month. Subsequently, these portraits will be used for a Young UN portrait exhibit, i.e. in the UN lobby, or for a blog series. Young UN is partnering with the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation on this project.

4. Expansion of a tasking of Regional Monthly Reviews (RMRs) to include common messaging for UN agencies working in a country where instability is predicted by the RMR;
5. Introduction of a compulsory four-week training for all Political Affairs Officers and Human Rights Officers at the time of joining the UN. Training will include, among others, integrity of international civil service and ethics training, as well as International Humanitarian Law;
6. Introduction of human rights related goals in e-PASes of all staff, while connected to the SDGs in particular Goal 16;
7. Introduction of a training of UN peacekeepers on the Framework for Analysis of Atrocity Crimes, gender perspective and humanitarian law;

*Hold staff and institutions accountable:*

1. Development of work plans for divisions of DPPA and DPO based on SDGs (incl. Goal 16);
2. Evaluation of all SRSGs/SESGs and USGs/ASGs for promotion and protection of human rights in their area of responsibility;
3. Introduction of SDGs (including Goal 16) as a common criteria for measurement of departments' success in peace and security pillar (e.g. by using a combination of SDG's national indicators, as well as human development and human rights indicators);
4. Establishment of a joint biennial measurement report for peace and security pillar and UN development system on the lines of the QCPR (incl. human rights indicators);
5. Inclusion of protection of civilians, as well as increase capacity to fulfill national R2P responsibilities in all peacekeeping mission mandates, when appropriate. All mandates must be reviewed regularly based on performance indicators established prior to deployment in order to facilitate mandate review.
6. All Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) should be asked to confirm in writing that they would initiate court-martial/disciplinary proceedings against any troops found guilty of disobedience of command and control during UN peacekeeping duties;
7. Disclosure of information on disciplinary actions taken by TCCs, including information on non-reporting, by DPKO;
8. DPKO should bar from peacekeeping duties, troops from countries listed in the Secretary-General's annual reports on children and armed conflict and on conflict related sexual violence, until de-listed;

**Engagement with Member States and other stakeholders**

1. Make the implementation of the responsibility to protect a formal agenda item for every session of the General Assembly and use "Uniting for Peace" resolution in cases where the Security Council is blocked more frequently;
2. Encourage restraint in use of veto in case of resolutions aiming at preventing and/or ending mass atrocities (Code of Conduct and French-Mexican initiative);
3. Security Council or alternatively General Assembly (through its new agenda item on responsibility to protect and prevention of mass atrocities) to mandate the Secretary-General to report on mass atrocities on an annual basis (similar to the SG's report on Children and Armed Conflict and its "black list");



4. Sanctions regime should be graded to ensure that specific sanctions correlate with specific human rights violations;
5. Preventive deployment of peacekeepers especially from regional organizations should be considered on a case-by-case basis (such as in the case of The Gambia during recent presidential elections);
6. Members of the Security Council should consider and agree on "Principles for Military Intervention" to govern their military interventions under Right to Protect/for reasons of Protection of Civilians (unimplemented recommendation from Report of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (2001);

### **UN Action at country level**

#### *Ensure that UN responds to the human rights context*

1. Introduction of a Criticality Level for Protection of Civilians (PoC) (similar to Humanitarian emergency Level 1-3) to galvanize resources for PoC emergencies;

#### *Develop an effective early warning mechanism*

1. Creation of a mass atrocities monitor that is accessible to the public as well as to the policy makers and covers the indicators of the Framework for Analysis of Atrocity Crimes. The monitor can be established on the basis of already existing platforms (such as OHCHR website) while organizing already available information in more effective way. The information gathering could be expanded by leveraging UN experts system-wide, UN personnel on the ground, and possibly vetted NGO experts, as well as modern technology (satellite imagery, social media, etc.) in order to transparently and systematically monitor with minimal information lag.
2. Establishment of a Dissent Channel to allow staff to write a formal code-cable/memo to the SG and an Executive Committee on substantive policy decisions in a geographic/thematic area;
3. Replication of RMRs in every region of the world to be led by ASG of the region (as per peace and security pillar reform proposal) and the heads of UNRTs in the region;
4. Increased involvement of local population and new technology/innovation in early warning mechanisms, e.g. SMS linked to an app that can track incidents and hence identify patterns. The increased involvement of local population must be coupled with a functioning victim assistance program, if applicable, for interlocutors identified as being "in danger" by OHCHR and other UN investigating entities;
5. Establishment of an effective UN document management system in order to facilitate an easy sharing of reports and information, including with the UN agencies, funds and programmes. Facilitating real time data sharing and worldwide immediate access will bridge the HQ and field divide;

#### *Ensure that UN Country Teams have a suitable profile*

1. Taking advantage of existing staff capacities across system - UN staff having 'major' and 'minor' areas of expertise (e.g. economic affairs as major and human rights as minor area of expertise dedicating certain percentage of time to the area that they are not necessarily working on as primary function. This can provide a great opportunity for the staff to increase their expertise in other areas, as well as for the Organization to be able to take advantage of

existing staff capacities. This approach could be undertaken in, for instance, UN field offices with limited capacities for monitoring human rights situation.

2. Increased capacity of SRSG for Prevention of Genocide and SRSG for Responsibility to Protect with the goal of empowering the office (similar to the SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict and Children in Armed Conflict), with a potential of a field deployment;

#### **UN HQ Coordination**

1. Conduct evaluation of all UN Human Rights structures and operations to recommend consolidation (e.g. as in case of the UN Office of Counterterrorism). Based on the assessment, recommend streamlining such as:
  - a. Combined reporting on human rights by OHCHR and SRSGs on Children and Armed conflict, R2P, Prevention of Genocide and Sexual Violence in conflict;
  - b. Usage of Framework for Analysis of Atrocity Crimes (developed by the Office of Special Representative for Prevention of Genocide) in all DPA background notes for SG/USGs' meetings with Heads of State/Government;
  - c. Inclusion of a section on human rights and the protection of civilians in any given country/situation in all UN reporting analysed based on Framework for Analysis of Atrocity Crimes;

#### **Which proposals can Young UN directly contribute to?**

- Human Rights Up Front as part of Young UN Identity Project;
- Organization of a UN Policy Lab on the topic of revitalization of HRuF with the view to find concrete solutions on how to facilitate the organizational change towards increased respect of human rights;
- UN staff having 'major' and 'minor' areas of expertise - members of Young UN could pilot such arrangements in certain duty stations and offices in cooperation with office managers;
- Introduction of human rights related goals in e-PASes of all staff, while connected to the SDGs in particular Goal 16 – Young UN members could serve as pilot members having such goals in their e-PASes;
- Creation of a mass atrocities monitor - using the IT expertise of Young UN;
- Establishment of a Dissent Channel – Young UN has already prepared a concept note for such a mechanism;
- Encourage restraint in use of veto in case of resolutions aiming at preventing and/or ending mass atrocities (Code of Conduct and French-Mexican initiative) – Young UN could engage with junior level staff at Permanent Missions to the UN serving as bridge-builders between the UN and Member States;
- Conduct Oath of Office ceremony at induction for all staff – Young UN can organize a first pilot of such a ceremony with YUN members in NYC and Geneva HQ;

## Input 7: Geneva

### Skillsets

To a greater extent, performance should be awarded and prioritised. Employees at all stages in their career, and all types of contracts including international and local, should have clear paths of advancing within the organisation. This entails promotion of local staff to expert positions, and of high performing individuals to leadership positions no matter of age. It also entails encouragement of inter-agency shifts to promote skill development and build the ability of the UN to deliver as one. Lastly, it means that performance is prioritized over seniority and to some extent job security.

#### Concrete interventions:

- Initiate a process of **reforming system wide KPIs of personnel that promotes “delivery as one”**. For example, KPIs that leads to competition for funding sources and promote fragmentation such as “amount of money raised for UN organisation x” should be replaced by “amount of money raised for UNDS” and also weight this funding to promote coherency, e.g. funding that involves more UN agencies and pooled funding is weighted more than bilateral projects. Additional KPIs that incentivise contributions to system-wide coordination should also be developed. We also fully support the initiation of 360° performance reviews.
- Introduce a **career advancement path that is available to employees at all stages in their career**, and all types of contracts including international and local and integrated across the UN system. The path should be non-bureaucratic, transparent and not make any difference between the different UN agencies in terms of joining and shifting.
- Develop a **single UN competency framework**. The UN system leadership framework goes a way to articulating the demand for all UN personnel to be leaders and the competencies this requires but more could be done. A UN competency framework with the key skillsets needed for the SDGs would be a fantastic step and enable more cross-UN mobility and inter-changeability. Many of the competency frameworks from UN entities are already similar – with communication, team work, strategic thinking for example being reoccurring themes... This would also foster stronger UN-wide identity and coherence, as well as reduce costs associated with each part of the UN regularly reviewing and updating their own competency framework. A set of UN common core competencies could be complemented by any specific technical expertise or other competency needed for a specific entity according to their mandate.

### System-wide results

Strengthen coordination across the system, for example through working together with donor countries, philanthropic foundations and impact investors to reduce fragmentation. Concrete examples can include pooled funding and implementation structures at the national level based on UNDAF targets, aligned with the SDGs.

Regular message from the UN Secretary-General directly to the inboxes of all UN system employees (not coming from head of UNICEF, WHO etc but coming directly from SG to all employees) setting out key priorities for the month ahead and key asks of personnel. This would make all employees feel part of the UN system, not just their entity or department, increase motivation and create a stronger sense of common purpose and identity.