



United Nations Industrial Development Organization

Distr.: General
16 October 2015

Original: English

General Conference

Sixteenth session

Vienna, 30 November-4 December 2015

Item 13 of the provisional agenda

UNIDO field policy and network

UNIDO field policy and network

Action plan by the Director General

The present document is presented in accordance with Board decision (IDB.43/Dec.6 (paras. (f) and (g))) which requests the Director General to present to the sixteenth session of the General Conference, an action plan concerning the field policy and field network.

I. Field policy action plan

1. The present action plan on the field policy was prepared based on various recommendations, decisions and documents of the Organization providing guidance in the context. These include Board decision IDB.39/Dec.7 (d) which called on UNIDO to readjust its regular budget so as not to increase the assessed contributions of remaining Member States, upon the announced departure of any Member State. Furthermore, in decision IDB.43/Dec.6 (f) the Board took note of the Director General's proposals (IDB.43/6 and Add.1)¹) inter alia regarding the field structure adjustments and further requested the Director General to present to the sixteenth session of the General Conference, an action plan concerning the field

¹ Background notes on the proposals of the Director General regarding the programme and budgets, 2016-2017, were provided in conference room paper PBC.31/CRP.6. Chapter II.B of the same conference room paper provided further details on the streamlining of the UNIDO field network.

For reasons of economy, this document has been printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies of documents to meetings.

V.15-06695 (E) 161015 191015



Please recycle The text 'Please recycle' followed by a standard recycling symbol (a triangle of arrows).

policy and field network, including its associated headquarters capacities taking into consideration the recommendations contained in paragraph 12 of the “Strategic Guidance Document” (IDB.41/24).

2. The action plan further draws on the initial adjustments of UNIDO’s field network, introduced in the new Secretariat structure in 2014 (Director General’s Bulletin UNIDO/DGB/2014/01), redefining the interaction between the regional bureaux (RB) and field offices (FOs). The action plan also takes into consideration the need to align the field capacities with the emerging 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which is universal, transformative, integrated and rights-based, as well as with the ongoing efforts of the United Nations system-wide coherence and the Delivering as One (DaO) initiative.

3. The major guiding principles of the action plan comprise the following:

(a) Addressing the need and scope for an alternative and efficient utilization of available resources;

(b) Ensuring that any adjustment of the field network would not undermine the proximity to governments, beneficiaries, partners and donors or UNIDO’s service delivery in the field;

(c) Also ensuring largely a continued presence in Member States within the existing UNIDO representation;

(d) Further ensuring that UNIDO is positioned to contribute to United Nations system-wide coherence in monitoring and implementing the relevant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the national, regional and global level;

(e) Ensuring consistency with ongoing dialogues in the Economic and Social Council on the long-term positioning of the United Nations development system and providing differentiated country support for a universal agenda.

II. Field network

4. The current field network is composed of 9 regional offices (ROs); 21 country offices (COs) and 17 UNIDO Desks headed by D-1, P-5 and national officers respectively. The Heads of Operations of the UNIDO Desks currently report either to an RO or CO based largely on proximity in location or in some cases straight to headquarters (HQ). The current structure has progressively undergone several changes over the years that were all aimed at optimizing efficient effective utilization of available resources. However, further financial constraints call for additional field network adjustments.

5. Based on the existing field presence, this action plan reduces the number of ROs from nine to five each headed by a Director (D-1) and to convert the remaining four ROs into COs. The plan further entails the reduction of the current number of COs headed by international P-5 level staff from 21 to 14. The UNIDO Desks will be converted into country offices to be headed by national Professional staff and will increase from the current 17 to 28. This field readjustment foresees the presence of five ROs and a total of 42 COs.

6. A holistic set of criteria will guide the selection of the five ROs. These criteria included, inter alia: (a) the potential of the selected location to promote United Nations system-wide coherence through various regional coordination mechanisms and other processes, such as the United Nations Regional Director Teams; (b) the geographic location and its potential for enhanced political outreach in each of UNIDO's regions; (c) the number of United Nations international organizations and agencies, regional economic councils and commissions present in the country; and (d) availability of government contributions towards costs associated with the hosting of the respective office.

7. Similarly, the selection of COs will be driven by a number of criteria identified. These included, inter alia: (a) the level of the ongoing and pipeline technical cooperation (TC) portfolio; (b) contributions made available to UNIDO, including assessed contributions, field office cost sharing and contributions to the Industrial Development Fund and trust funds; (c) alignment with geographical locations of international organizations and regional bodies; (d) country's participation in various initiatives of country groups, intergovernmental organizations and regional integration initiatives; and (e) optimal distribution of country coverage.

8. The field structure aims to increase coherence and empowerment of the field network as a whole. The regional directors will assume the role of principal coordinators of all COs headed by national Professional staff, providing them with an enhanced overview of the regional development trends and TC demands. It is foreseen that the national officers' mandate will be strengthened through their accreditation as full representatives in the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), thereby enhancing representational status in their countries. The United Nations Resident Coordinators (UNRCs) and respective host country governments will be approached in due course to facilitate implementation of the enhanced roles of national officers. This will not only lead to increased national ownership, but also to higher UNIDO visibility at national level as well as in the United Nations system as a whole.

9. The geographical presence will enable UNIDO to be fit for purpose and align its resources and operations with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at global, regional and national levels. A better aligned field network will also ensure effective contribution in building synergies among United Nations agencies at the regional level taking into account various aspects of inter-agency collaboration, and will also contribute in promoting enhanced coherence at country level through qualified staff, well acquainted with UNIDO's work, as well as associated socioeconomic and political issues. In addition, the structure is expected to promote and replicate the new and innovative model of partnership country programmes in line with UNIDO's framework of inclusive and sustainable industrial development.

10. The proposed field structure is projected to contribute to significant cost savings for the biennium 2016-2017 through a 12 per cent reduction in staff at the Director and senior officer (P-5) levels. It will also contribute to achieving optimal resource allocation through redeployment of staff within the field network and between the field and HQ. The proposed field structure adjustments will be implemented in a phased process after the necessary consultations to ensure a smooth transition.

III. Functions and responsibilities of the HQ capacities associated with the field network

11. The field offices are responsible for representing UNIDO effectively in the countries and regions of coverage and for promoting the Organization as an effective partner for development, through maintaining close contact with government institutions, development partners and various local stakeholders.

12. Key functions of the FOs include: (a) identification of regional and national development and donor priorities, necessary for the formulation of TC projects and programmes; (b) coordination and reporting of UNIDO activities in their countries of coverage through biannual progress reports, substantive inputs and advisory services; (c) strengthening UNIDO's role in the United Nations system-wide coherence initiative by participating actively in the UNCT and the DaO processes; (d) supporting national governments in implementing and monitoring primarily SDG 9 and other related Goals and targets through various frameworks, including the United Nations Development Action Framework (UNDAF); (e) promoting proactively UNIDO's mandate and activities; and (f) participating and representing UNIDO in global and regional forum activities. In addition to these responsibilities, the ROs participate in the regional inter-agency coordination which is managed by mechanisms and guidelines such as the regional United Nations Development Group (UNDG) teams and Standard Operating Procedures for Countries adopting the DaO approach.

13. The field network functions are supported by various HQ capacities both on programmatic and management issues, including those undertaken by the regional and field representation function which covers five regions (Africa, the Arab Region, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean). Close linkages and coherence with the extended network of UNIDO institutions in the field, i.e. the Investment and Technology Promotion Offices (ITPOs), International Technology Centres (ITCs), National Cleaner Production Centres (NCPCs) and South-South Centres (SSCs) are ensured. Like other United Nations organizations, UNIDO through its RBs coordinates and consolidates field network activities of each region. It functions as an interface between the internal and external partners at HQ, receives programmatic requests by the Member States and ensures that these are appropriately addressed. The RB is the regional and country depository of institutional knowledge gained by the Organization throughout the years of cooperation with Member States and it anchors the delivery of services on an ongoing basis. Similarly, the coordination of global and interregional projects fall within its purview and through this function, also contributes to the TC delivery.

14. Key functions undertaken at HQ in support of the field network will include: (a) providing strategic analysis and advice to support the development of UNIDO's regional and country programmes, with special emphasis on least developed countries (LDCs) and middle-income countries (MICs); (b) keeping abreast of emerging regional trends, including donor priorities and lessons learned from TC management; (c) formulating strategic responses for action both at HQ and field levels; (d) coordinating country and regional level United Nations system-wide coherence activities in liaison with relevant undg bodies; (e) serving as a principal conduit for communications with the field network; (f) convening and managing

selected regional global forums; (g) managing TC demands and services for countries not covered by ROs or COs; (h) preparing missions and high-level meetings of the Director General; and (i) monitoring country and regional programme portfolios.

15. Effective institutional coverage at HQ, especially since the implementation of TC and provision of support services for the field continue to be primarily HQ-based, enables the Organization to communicate and build relationships with Permanent Missions and visiting delegations, discuss and understand Member States' requirements in order to effectively operationalize their demands. A properly empowered function at HQ acts as "neutral broker" in monitoring the TC portfolio, while also serving as an effective conduit for field operations.

16. Significant economies have already been achieved in the past bienniums in the HQ-based capacities related to the regional programmes. In terms of human resources there has been a significant reduction of capacities in headquarters, between 2005 and 2015, from 39 to 25 posts backstopping the field network, which reflects a 35.9 per cent decline in staff. The number of P-staff members decreased from 22 to 17 (22.7 per cent reduction), and the number of General Service (GS) staff was reduced from 17 to 8 (53 per cent reduction). Five D-1 positions heading each region were removed in 2006. Thus the number of Professional and GS staff at HQ has been reduced by 14, which is a significant amount in financial terms. Besides the reduction in human resources there has also been a decrease in other non-staff resources.

17. UNIDO considers the field policy action plan an exercise to strengthen the link with all stakeholders, and a process to increase overall operational coherence. As mentioned above, the adjustments will be implemented in a phased approach and after appropriate consultations.

IV. Action required of the Conference

18. The Conference may wish to take note of the action plan on the field policy and network as provided in the present document.