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FINANCE COMMITTEE

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**WFP Management Response to the Recommendations of the Report of the
External Auditor on Changes in Human Resources**

Queries on the substantive content of this document may be addressed to:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- In its report on Changes in Human Resources, the External Auditor made 14 recommendations.
- Management welcomes the external audit of WFP's Changes in Human Resources and the External Auditor's recommendations.
- Specific responses to the External Auditor's recommendations are presented in the document.

GUIDANCE SOUGHT FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

- The Finance Committee is requested to note the response made by WFP management to the recommendations of the Report of the External Auditor on Changes in Human Resources and to endorse it for the notification of the Executive Board.

Draft Advice

- **In accordance with Article XIV of the General Regulations of WFP, the Finance Committee advises the WFP Executive Board to take note of the management response to the recommendations of the Report of the External Auditor on Changes in Human Resources.**

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Agenda Item 7

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Resource, Financial and Budgetary Matters

For consideration

Executive Board documents are available on WFP's website (<http://executiveboard.wfp.org>).

Management Response to the Recommendations of the Report of the External Auditor on Changes in Human Resources

Background

1. Management welcomes the external audit on Changes in Human Resources and the External Auditor's recommendations.
2. Responses prepared by WFP's Human Resources Division are presented in the attached matrix.

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MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REPORT OF THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR ON CHANGES IN HUMAN RESOURCES			
External Audit Recommendations	Action By	WFP Management Response	Timeframe
Recommendation 1: The External Auditor recommends, in accordance with the recommendations of the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit, clarifying the criteria for recruiting each category of employee with a view to aligning practice with stated principles.	Human Resources Division (HRM)	Partially agreed. Management stresses that operational realities requiring flexibility and the WFP funding model do not always fully support the strictest implementation of policy provisions. HRM is currently developing a formal staffing framework to remind hiring managers of options for meeting workforce requirements.	2017
Recommendation 2: The External Auditor recommends that remuneration for newly recruited consultants be thoroughly reviewed to better align it with market practices, while maintaining it slightly above market rates to attract the best candidates when needed.	HRM	Agreed. A full review is under way: a project plan, including proposed improvements and a remuneration review, is awaiting management approval; an interim proposal has been submitted to HRM management; and a number of alternative contractual modalities are being reviewed.	2017
Recommendation 3: The External Auditor recommends that, at regular intervals – for example quarterly – a synthesis of the main components of all WFP-financed payroll be made.	HRM	Agreed.	2018
Recommendation 4: The External Auditor recommends: a) that Headquarters and regional bureaux exercise greater supervision over staffing structure reviews, in particular to mitigate the significant disparities in the resources available for human resource management in the field; and b) that these reviews be made systematic for all country offices and regional bureaux every two or three years and that they lead to a concrete action plan with a set timetable.	HRM	Partially agreed. HRM has begun outreach to develop and update the resources available for staffing structure reviews (SSRs). Once a comprehensive workforce-planning methodology and tools are developed, WFP will shift focus to a consistent workforce-planning process addressing organizational changes proactively and reducing post-factum/reactive SSRs. However, while management agrees with the recommendation partially, Headquarters will not directly supervise SSRs in the field as the oversight function under the restructuring of country offices lies with the regional bureaux. Partially agreed.	2017

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REPORT OF THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR ON CHANGES IN HUMAN RESOURCES			
External Audit Recommendations	Action By	WFP Management Response	Timeframe
		The new Integrated Road Map (IRM) framework allows country offices to more systematically align strategic objectives with organizational structures, talent and skills. In terms of timing, such reviews should be conducted at the same time as any significant review of country strategic plans – more likely to be every 4–5 years than 2–3 years, to avoid placing unnecessary burden on country offices. More frequent reviews may be required in certain country offices to ensure any interim alignments occur as required to adjust the workforce profiles and close any emerging talent/skill gaps. HRM is planning to conduct comprehensive training in June 2017 on organizational design, job evaluation, SSRs and other IRM-related topics, such as performance, talent and learning, targeting field human resources professionals to better equip them to support country offices in implementing the people dimension of the IRM.	
Recommendation 5: The External Auditor recommends the establishment of a framework for workforce and skills management planning closely linked to staffing structure reviews at the local level.	HRM	Agreed. WFP is developing a workforce-planning methodology and templates to give consistency to workforce planning and analysis, assist in identifying organizational/talent/skills gaps and ultimately provide robust support to major organizational alignments – SSRs. WFP has started developing a corporate workforce-planning framework, to be piloted in the nutrition function and country office by the third quarter of 2017.	2017
Recommendation 6: The External Auditor recommends the establishment of a procedure for recruiting consultants that includes an open call for applicants and a competitive selection process; exceptions would be made in an emergency but would require authorization.	HRM	Agreed. Management will review policy to this end. Implementation will require greater resources to support the effort.	2017
Recommendation 7: The External Auditor recommends that it be ensured that recruitment records contain all necessary documents to allow for the monitoring of compliance with procedures and the quality of procedures.	HRM	Agreed. The use of e-recruitment for all contractual modalities will make this a systemic response.	2017

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REPORT OF THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR ON CHANGES IN HUMAN RESOURCES			
External Audit Recommendations	Action By	WFP Management Response	Timeframe
Recommendation 8: The External Auditor recommends a medium-term analysis of the possibility of introducing partial performance-related pay for managerial staff.	HRM	Partially agreed. The analysis will form part of the 2018 work plan.	2018
Recommendation 9: In order to strengthen the performance assessment mindset among WFP employees, the External Auditor recommends that WFP continue its work communicating with and raising awareness among employees, especially line managers, to encourage them to implement this assessment procedure effectively. As such, performance indicators intended to measure the quality of the assessment carried out by line managers could be envisaged.	HRM	Agreed.	2018
Recommendation 10: The External Auditor recommends that a sample of Performance and Competency Enhancement (PACE) assessments regularly undergo internal audit to enable the Human Resources Division to carry out more qualitative monitoring and better target areas for improvement.	HRM	Agreed.	2017

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REPORT OF THE EXTERNAL AUDITOR ON CHANGES IN HUMAN RESOURCES			
External Audit Recommendations	Action By	WFP Management Response	Timeframe
Recommendation 11: The External Auditor recommends that the leadership roster be finalized swiftly in order to diversify the categories of staff deployed to the field and thereby ensure the effectiveness of emergency response operations.	HRM	Agreed. A draft proposal for a leadership roster has already been developed and presented to the Executive Management Group (EMG) in 2016. The conclusion of a review of corporate emergency response under way in the Emergency Preparedness and Support Response Division (OSE), will contribute to determining the way forward regarding leadership deployment in emergencies.	2017
Recommendation 12: The External Auditor recommends that any change in status of a significant number of employees in a country office be made conditional on a rigorous and prudent assessment of the potential additional costs and relevant financing.	HRM	Partially agreed. Further work is required to determine how to best analyse potential costs and help feed such information into country-level decision-making, including through workforce-planning processes that contribute to the formulation of country strategic plans.	2017
Recommendation 13: The External Auditor recommends requesting country office directors to consider, during staffing structure reviews, whether certain international staff posts could be assigned to National Professional Officers.	HRM	Agreed. The staffing review trends indicate that country offices are devoting more attention to reducing the international professional footprint and to nationalizing posts where possible. The review of SSR materials and presentations to country offices include recommendations to assess whether certain positions can be nationalized. All SSRs scrutinize the use of contract modalities and the possibility of nationalizing international posts. IRM processes under way will support country-level workforce planning, including the analysis of the appropriate staff categories required to achieve the objectives of the country strategy.	2017
Recommendation 14: The External Auditor recommends exploring the possibility of improving the prospects for career progression for National Professional Officers by financing the creation of additional posts at higher levels through the elimination of international professional posts of equivalent level.	HRM	Partially agreed. (Relates to the response to recommendation 13.) The new Talent Pool will provide the opportunity for national officers to be considered for international professional positions, depending on their career aspirations. In parallel, as part of the IRM and SSRs, country offices are considering nationalizing a number of roles currently performed by international professional staff.	2018