

UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR PROJECT SERVICES

Headquarters, Copenhagen
26 July 2011

ORGANIZATIONAL DIRECTIVE No. 38 (rev. 1)
UNOPS Personnel Performance Management Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. UNOPS people are the organization's most important asset. Our ability to attract, motivate, and retain high performing personnel is key to the success of our organization. This is reflected in one of the organization's corporate goals, which focuses on the recruitment, development and retention of talent in the organization.
- 1.2. Performance Management is the cornerstone of UNOPS HR Strategy "Putting people first, a priority for UNOPS" providing the framework to recognise and reward excellent results, "*Performance Management will be a driver for organizational excellence and will be closely linked to Learning and Development, Career management and Rewards and recognition.*"
- 1.3. In accordance with Staff Rule 1.3. (a) "*Staff members shall be evaluated for their efficiency, competence and integrity through performance appraisal mechanisms that shall assess the staff member's compliance with the standards set out in the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules for purposes of accountability*". This Organizational Directive (OD) provides the policy for the implementation of Staff Rule 1.3 and the modalities of Performance Management at UNOPS.
- 1.4. The requirements for performance management for individual contractors engaged pursuant to the individual contractor agreement (ICA) are outlined in UNOPS policy on ICAs¹. This OD provides the policy for managing the performance of individual contractors.

2. Definitions

For the purposes of this OD:

- 2.1. ***Performance management*** of personnel means: a continuous process of identifying, measuring, and developing the performance of individuals and teams and enabling the alignment of individual performance with corporate goals.

¹ For the purposes of this OD, policy on ICAs shall collectively mean Organizational Directive 21 ("Individual Contractor Agreement (ICA) Policy") and the corresponding AI/HRPG/2010/01 ("Individual Contractor Agreements (ICA)"), as may be amended from time to time.

- 2.2. **Performance appraisal** means: the process of evaluating and recording individual performance, including strengths and weaknesses - it is an important component of performance management of personnel.
- 2.3. **Manager** refers to UNOPS personnel responsible and accountable for managing the overall performance of entities in UNOPS regional and headquarters structure², e.g. Regional Directors, HQ Directors, OC Directors, PC Managers and Cluster Managers.
- 2.4. **Supervisor** means: a member of UNOPS personnel who has supervisory responsibility for one or more individuals. A supervisor can be either a manager or an individual to whom a manager has delegated such supervisory authority.

3. Objectives

- 3.1. This policy has the following objectives:
 - 3.1.1. To establish the corporate requirements for performance management of personnel and mandatory performance appraisal;
 - 3.1.2. To reinforce the linkage between performance management and UNOPS corporate goals, through a cascading process;
 - 3.1.3. To reinforce the linkage between performance management and learning and development;
 - 3.1.4. To underscore management and individual accountability and responsibility for performance management; and
 - 3.1.5. To support a high performance culture by defining a common understanding of performance management.

4. Scope of application

- 4.1. The policy shall apply to all UNOPS personnel³, including staff members up to and including the D-2 level on fixed term, permanent, continuing and temporary appointments, including Junior Professional Officers (JPOs), and individual contractors.
- 4.2. In the event that a UNOPS partner expressly wishes to include its personnel in the scope of this policy, this request may be considered, and will be subject to a specific written agreement. Any such inclusion of UNOPS partners' personnel in the scope of this policy must be approved by the Director, Human Resources Practice Group (HRPG).
- 4.3. This policy does not apply to interns and volunteers.

² As defined in OD 15 annexes 2 and 3 (UNOPS Headquarters Structure and UNOPS Regional Structure).

³ UNOPS personnel means personnel who work directly for UNOPS and for whom UNOPS has a responsibility for performance management. This policy does not apply to personnel whose contract is administered by UNOPS, but who work under the supervision of a partner.

5. Guiding Principles

5.1. The present policy will be guided by the following principles:

- 5.1.1. *A quality dialogue* between supervisors and supervisees;
- 5.1.2. *A common and shared approach*: this policy applies to all personnel regardless of contract type;
- 5.1.3. *Simplicity and streamlining* of performance management process and tools;
- 5.1.4. *Fairness and transparency* – a consistent, objective evaluation process across the organization;
- 5.1.5. *Management and individual accountability*: this policy emphasises the need for management ownership of performance management, and the joint responsibility of supervisors and individuals for performance appraisals.

6. Alignment of individual and corporate goals

6.1. UNOPS performance management is the principal means to ensure the alignment of individual goals with UNOPS corporate goals. Performance management provides the framework for establishing, reviewing and evaluating individual goals against corporate goals and ensures the alignment of our human resources with our strategic direction. The translation and cascading of the high level corporate goals, through entity and practice goals to individual goals is a key part of the performance appraisal process and a critical management responsibility. This process is implemented through a performance appraisal process, which ensures that the work of all personnel is aligned to corporate goals.

7. Management and individual accountability

- 7.1. UNOPS supervisors are accountable for managing the performance of the personnel in their teams. Performance management and performance appraisals provide a means for supervisors to:
 - 7.1.1. Ensure the alignment of individual and team work with the strategic direction of the organization;
 - 7.1.2. Ensure the most efficient deployment of our human resources to achieve results;
 - 7.1.3. Ensure that all personnel are fully equipped with skills and competencies to perform their work;
 - 7.1.4. Hold individuals accountable for their performance; and
 - 7.1.5. Enable recognition of performance contributions.
- 7.2. Managers are responsible for the timely completion of performance appraisals in their respective region, office or group.
- 7.3. Managers are responsible for the overall distribution of ratings in their respective region, office or group.

- 7.4. HRPG is responsible for providing reports and analysis on completion rates and rating distributions for each region.
- 7.5. The distribution of performance appraisal ratings will be reviewed across the organization and Managers will be held accountable for both completion rates and rating distributions.
- 7.6. Supervisors and supervisees are jointly responsible for the timely completion of performance appraisals. Supervisors are ultimately accountable for ensuring that this process is completed in a timely manner and where not, for ensuring that supervisees had adequate opportunity for this.
- 7.7. Supervisors will be held accountable for managing the performance of their supervisees in a fair, thorough and transparent manner. All supervisors shall have one of their own performance objectives directly linked to personnel and performance management.
- 7.8. Individual authority and accountability is supported and defined through management reporting lines. To support organizational integration, UNOPS personnel may have dual reporting relationships. In such cases, the primary supervisor is responsible for ensuring the inclusion of the secondary supervisor in the appraisal process throughout the reporting period. Any member of the personnel who has valid reasons to be the secondary supervisor of an individual can submit such request to the primary supervisor.
- 7.9. Where dual reporting lines exist, both supervisors are mutually responsible for holding regular performance discussions and aligning performance expectations, development plans and assessments. Secondary supervisors will be involved in performance management throughout the process, and provide input in all phases of the performance cycle.
- 7.10. In the event of a change of supervisor(s) within UNOPS in the course of the appraisal period, the former supervisor(s) and the new supervisor(s) should agree on who is responsible for completing the performance appraisal records. In any case, the supervisor at the end of the assessment period is responsible for ensuring that performance appraisals are completed within the prescribed deadlines, in consultation with previous supervisor(s). If both supervisors do not manage to reach a consensus on the ratings to be assigned to a supervisee, they must seek the mediation from their respective supervisors.
- 7.11. Personnel must complete their performance appraisal before leaving the organisation. Likewise, supervisors must complete the evaluations of the personnel they supervise before leaving UNOPS. Completion of performance appraisals is part of the exit clearance process and final pay may be withheld until this is done.
- 7.12. Personnel who do not complete their performance appraisals within 30 days after the separation date may have their performance appraisals finalized by their supervisor, and HRPG. In such cases, the final overall rating will be assigned by the supervisor(s) and is neither appealable nor rebuttable.

8. Development discussions

- 8.1. Learning and development discussions shall form an integral part of performance management. Learning and development plans should address development for current and future roles and reflect meaningful and relevant consequences of development discussions with supervisors.
- 8.2. The approval of learning and development plans as part of the performance appraisals, underscores the supervisors' support of these activities and their endorsement of both individual and organizational needs.
- 8.3. Learning and development plans shall also support the implementation of UNOPS practice approach, facilitating the capacity development of practice personnel, and enabling inputs on performance management, where dual reporting lines support this.

9. Performance management: consequences and linkages

- 9.1. Performance management will be driven by meaningful results and consequences for both individuals and the organization, through linkages between performance management and HR policies and activities:
 - 9.1.1. Contract renewals and step increments (for staff members);
 - 9.1.2. Contract extensions (for individual contractors);
 - 9.1.3. Learning and development planning;
 - 9.1.4. Career reviews;
 - 9.1.5. Recruitment and succession planning;
 - 9.1.6. Recognition, rewards and sanctions (pilot programme); and
 - 9.1.7. Other related HR policies, as appropriate.

10. Performance appraisal process

- 10.1. The performance appraisal process is the means for documenting performance management and development discussions.
- 10.2. All personnel who have worked at UNOPS for a minimum of 6 months in a given calendar year must complete a performance appraisal. For staff this is done on an annual basis in line with the performance appraisal cycle. For individual contractors this is done in line with the ICA contract cycle.
- 10.3. Supervisors and personnel are expected to have regular performance and development discussions, to discuss work plan objectives, progress and performance, learning and development activities. The performance appraisal tool is a means to document and summarise key points of these discussions, but the appraisal alone is not sufficient or comprehensive performance management in itself.

- 10.4. The overall performance appraisal ratings are determined by supervisors following an evaluation of the objectives and competencies, after performance and development discussions have taken place.
- 10.5. Supervisors must supplement their own assessment of their supervisees' performance by consulting other feedback sources (peers, clients, etc.) and the secondary supervisor, where applicable.
- 10.6. Performance concerns must be shared with personnel as they arise and should not be first voiced at the final stage of the performance appraisal cycle. Where dual reporting lines exist, the primary supervisor must share performance concerns with the secondary supervisor, and vice versa.
- 10.7. Performance appraisals are confidential documents and should be treated accordingly.
- 10.8. As part of supervisory responsibilities, supervisors have access to prior performance appraisals of their supervisees. Supervisees must provide their appraisals to their supervisors if requested. Managers should be given access to such information, in line with their accountability for the supervisory responsibilities they have delegated.
- 10.9. Where performance appraisals are needed, in the course of recruitments or reassignments, they should be requested directly from the individual concerned.
- 10.10. Notwithstanding the confidentiality of performance appraisals, the Director, HRPG may, at his/her discretion, provide performance appraisal information to such UNOPS officials as he/she deems appropriate in the best interest of the organization.

11. Rebuttal of performance appraisal ⁴

- 11.1. The performance appraisal rebuttal is an appeal process which allows staff members to challenge overall ratings below satisfactory which in their view were unfair or incorrect.
- 11.2. Every staff member can rebut the final overall rating as long as he/she:
 - 11.2.1. Has finalized his/her performance appraisal within the prescribed deadline (subject to paragraph 11.4 below);
 - 11.2.2. Has previously requested his/her supervisor in writing to review the rating without success; and
 - 11.2.3. Has obtained a performance appraisal rating below satisfactory.
- 11.3. A performance appraisal rebuttal is a formal process and should be considered the last resort. A formal request for rebuttal may, therefore, only be submitted following a good faith attempt by the staff member to seek a resolution of the disagreements regarding

⁴ This section is limited to staff members holding a UNOPS letter of appointment issued pursuant to the United Nations Staff Regulations and Rules.

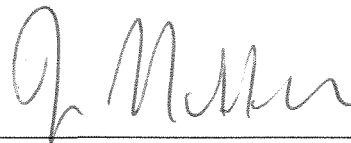
performance rating(s) by availing of both of the following alternative remedies: discussion with supervisor(s) to resolve disagreements and assistance from HRPG to resolve.

- 11.4. The rebuttal statement must be addressed to the Director, HRPG and must be submitted within **30 calendar days** following the finalization of the staff member's performance appraisal or the prescribed deadline for finalization of performance appraisal, whichever is earlier. In the event the performance appraisal is not finalized within the prescribed deadline due to circumstances beyond the control of the staff member, the Director HRPG may accept the rebuttal case provided always that the rebuttal statement is submitted within 30 calendar days after the supervisor has provided the final overall rating.
- 11.5. The Rebuttal Panel is comprised of five members and alternates, all of whom are current staff of UNOPS. The Rebuttal Panel members and alternates are appointed by the Executive Director. Every effort will be made to ensure an appropriate geographical and gender balance in the Rebuttal Panel. Members and alternates shall have adequate knowledge and experience to be able to review the performance appraisal and the ratings. The members and alternates are appointed for a term of two years and received "no objection" from the Chairperson of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS Staff Council.
- 11.6. The Director, HRPG shall serve as the *ex-officio* non-voting member of the Rebuttal Panel.
- 11.7. Upon receipt of a request for rebuttal pursuant to paragraph 11.4, the Director, HRPG will assign the case to two or three panel members/alternates. The designated members will conduct their own review of the case. The designated members shall design their own working arrangements (for example, the method and/or frequency of meetings/interviews). As a minimum, interviews must be conducted with the staff member and his/her supervisor(s).
- 11.8. Upon conclusion of their review, the designated members will present their findings to the other members/alternates of the Rebuttal Panel and the Director, HRPG, as the *ex-officio* member. The quorum at this meeting is three (excluding the *ex-officio* member). The Rebuttal Panel shall then make its recommendation whether to change or maintain the rating by simple majority. The Rebuttal Panel will make its recommendations, through the Director, HRPG, to the UNOPS Executive Director for final decision. The Executive Director may, at his/her discretion, consult with the Director, HRPG before making his/her final decision. The decision of the Executive Director is not appealable or rebuttable.
- 11.9. The Rebuttal Panel will conduct reviews of rebuttal cases with maximum dispatch. Reviews and recommendations to the Executive Director should be completed within two months after referral to the panel members/alternates in accordance with paragraph 11.7.

12. Final provisions

12.1. The present OD is effective **28 July 2011**.

12.2. The Director, HRPG is tasked with implementation of this policy and is hereby authorized to issue any Administrative Instruction, Guidance Notes, or advisories as may be necessary to implement this policy.



Jan Mattsson
Executive Director
UNOPS