



FINANCE COMMITTEE

Hundred and Ninety-ninth Session

Rome, 20-24 May 2024

Human Resources Annual Report 2023

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

Mr Serge Nakouzi
Officer-in-Charge, Human Resources Division
Tel: +39 06570 55100
Email: Serge.Nakouzi@fao.org

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Human Resources (HR) Annual Report 2023 highlights progress made towards the outcomes and outputs detailed in the HR Strategic Action Plan (document FC 183/4). It includes workforce statistics and data, as requested by the Finance Committee at its 185th Session, and by the Council at its 166th Session.
- The HR Annual Report 2023 consists of three documents.
 - FC 199/6.1 Rev.1 reports against the key outcomes of the HR Strategic Action Plan and key performance indicators (KPIs) and includes workforce composition data;
 - FC 199/6.2 provides workforce analytics; and
 - FC 199/6.3 covers recommendations and decisions of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board (UNJSPB) to the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

GUIDANCE SOUGHT FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

- Members of the Finance Committee are invited to take note of all the documents that make up the HR Annual Report for 2023, presenting key progress and achievements in HR, updated information on the Organization's workforce data and analytics, as well as the recommendations and decisions of the ICSC and the UNJSPB to the UNGA.

Draft Advice

The Committee:

- **took note of the information provided in the HR Annual Report for 2023 and welcomed the continued progress made towards the implementation of HR outcomes and outputs, and KPIs, as well as on the Organization's workforce analytics; and**
- **acknowledged the reported recommendations and decisions of the ICSC and the UNJSPB to the UNGA.**

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Introduction

1. FAO's Strategic Framework seeks to support the 2030 Agenda through the transformation to more efficient, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable agrifood systems for better production, better nutrition, a better environment, and a better life, leaving no one behind.
2. The Strategic Framework 2022-31 provides a unifying strategic vision to position the Organization's resources and operating modalities, using a systems-oriented approach within all FAO's interventions.
3. As one of the four cross-cutting "accelerators" for this vision, human capital is part of a key complement that impacts all FAO's programmatic interventions. The strategic objective contained in the [Human Resources Strategic Action Plan \(FC 183/4\)](#),¹ of 'efficient and effective management of human resources', through best practices that support the achievement of strategic, operational and programmatic goals of the Organization, is dependent on its people.
4. To that end, FAO requires people-centred Human Resources (HR) strategies and policies that drive a culture of excellence, innovation, collaboration and renewal, alongside a proactive and value-adding human resources function that acts as business partner and change agent.
5. At the 185th session of the Finance Committee in 2021, the new Human Resources Annual Report was first presented, highlighting progress made towards the outcomes and outputs detailed in the HR Strategic Action Plan as summarized below:

Outcome 1: People-centred HR policies on staffing, learning and performance, diversity, inclusion, and staff well-being that drive a culture of engagement where staff can perform to the best of their abilities. Outputs:
 - 1.1. Enhanced staffing and mobility framework and practices.
 - 1.2. Strengthened and enabled capability through development and learning opportunities, and improved performance.
 - 1.3. A work environment that is diverse and inclusive where employees feel engaged, valued and have a sense of belonging.
 - 1.4. A safe and healthy work environment.**Outcome 2:** Management of change – stakeholder-centred communications, reporting and tools that prepare people and enable timely, comprehensive adoption and implementation of HR strategic actions, products and services.
6. The HR Annual Report 2023 also includes workforce statistics and data, as requested by the Finance Committee at its 185th Session, and by the Council at its 166th Session, providing a baseline for new workforce analytics.
7. The HR Annual Report 2023 continues to report against the outcomes and outputs set out in the HR Strategic Action Plan, with a new HR Strategy envisioned to be developed in 2024.

¹ Approved by Members in 2020, the HR Strategic Action Plan 2020-2021 was aimed at putting in place the HR building blocks to allow for long-term reform in support of FAO's Strategic Framework 2022-31. It was extended to 2022 due to COVID-19 priorities superseding many of the planned activities, with the aim of a longer-term People Strategy to be developed in 2023/2024. In the meantime, HR reform activities have continued to be guided by it in 2023.

Highlights and challenges

8. Building on the HR reform and renewal of previous years, achievements were realized in the areas of employee engagement and recognition, creating a respectful workplace, and streamlining organizational structures. Key highlights include:
- a) Restructuring of Regional Offices and implementation of new structures, including provisions for the optimal staffing of Country Offices.
 - b) Achieving gender parity for staff in the Professional 1 to 5 level categories.
 - c) Reduction of the vacancy rate for the Director-level category of staff, ensuring key organizational leadership positions were filled.
 - d) Delivery of the FAO Learning Framework, streamlining the processes for staff development planning, and supporting the professional development of employees.
 - e) A classification review of eligible long-serving General Service staff, resulting in 183 staff receiving promotions due to the growth of their jobs.
 - f) Progress on the development of new policies and guidelines to support a workplace that is inclusive of disability and prevents discrimination of all kinds.
 - g) Innovative “Health Awareness” events dedicated to improving the use of medical and insurance services, including mental health.
 - h) New team-based action plans for addressing the results of the Employee Satisfaction Survey (E2S), in addition to corporate-level ones.
 - i) Employees listened to and recognized through the Employee Recognition Awards and the Women’s and Youth Committees.
9. In terms of challenges, the development and delivery of an integrated talent solution to enhance candidate experience, operational excellence, and talent analytics is greatly looked forward to as an outcome of the new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) management system. Improved capability, integration, and updated tools in HR operations will assist with efficient, fast, and informed decision-making, as well as with oversight and accountability.
10. Although most key performance indicators (KPI) were achieved or exceeded, the goals for the ‘Vacancy rate’ and the ‘Time to recruit’ were not met, despite elevated levels of recruitment efforts and outreach, and a reduction in the vacancy rate at senior levels in the Organization.
11. Addressing the above challenges, in particular the recruitment process and the vacancy rate, will form the basis, focus and priorities of the new HR Strategic Plan 2024-2027.

1. Staffing and workforce composition

12. This section of the HR Annual Report covers achievements under the HR Strategic Action Plan output of ‘Enhanced staffing and mobility framework and practices’ and provides information on the composition of the FAO workforce. All data throughout the document is as of 31 December 2023.

1.1 Strategic workforce planning, staffing, and mobility

13. Aligning with the ‘One FAO’ principle to emphasize stronger, collaborative leadership, cohesive policy, and technical and investment teams utilizing virtual networks, the reform of the Regional Offices was completed. Progress was made at the Subregional Office level, aligning with the structural reforms at headquarters. The development of detailed plans for new structures was done in collaboration with regional focal points to manage positions, reshape functions and establish new organizational units.

14. Fifteen career events as part of outreach for talent acquisition were conducted or attended, targeting global audiences. Outreach included all levels of talent from junior assignments to senior roles.

15. Following on from the refreshed Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) framework and roadmap, the early phases to define requirements commenced to guide the selection of integrated technology options. An integrated platform for all workforce data will ensure data-informed planning and staffing decisions.

16. In response to the Director-General's directive, the Job Growth initiative to review the job classifications of eligible long-serving staff in the General Service category was finalized. It resulted in upgrades and promotions for 183 staff due to the expansion of their roles.

17. Interagency mobility increased, in line with the upward trajectory begun in 2020. Forty-seven new interagency exchanges, i.e. transfers, loans and secondments, represented a 12 percent increase. There were 75 interagency staff exchanges in place overall, a 10 percent increase.

18. Two serving UN Resident Coordinators (RCs) and five staff members in the RC talent pool demonstrated continuing collaboration with the UN Development Coordination Office, and the development of staff skills to match the unique RC profile.

19. The new staff recruitment procedures continued to progress through internal consultation to ensure partner considerations and inputs were evaluated and integrated. The focus is on achieving the targets set for the key performance indicators, to reduce time to recruit while ensuring merit-based selections, promoting mobility, diversity and career growth.

20. Work on the Guidelines for employment of the International Affiliate Workforce (Non-Staff Human Resources)² continued, ensuring that multiple audit recommendations can be incorporated. They will be issued along with corresponding Administrative Manual sections, and related delegations of authority.

1.2 Young talent programmes

21. The commitment to engage young people and bring their innovative ideas into the Organization continues through the Young Professionals Programme (YPP), the Junior Professional Officers Programme (JPO), and the FAO Global Internship, Volunteers and Fellows Programme.

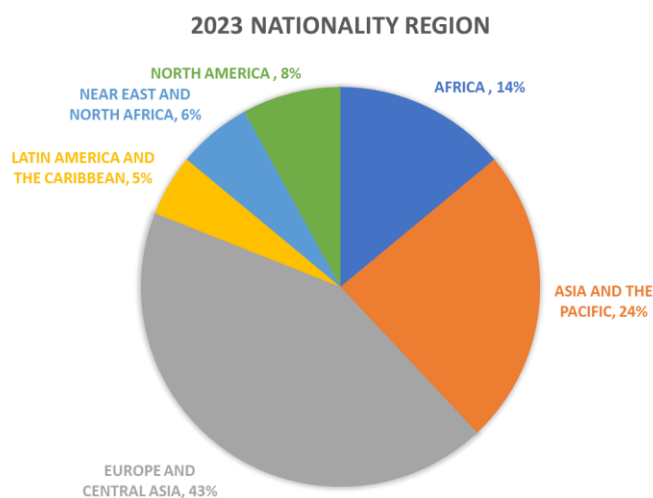
No. of participants by programme, by year	2021	2022	2023	2023 HQ	2023 DO ³
Young Professionals Programme (YPP)	4	12	17	10	7
Junior Professional Officers (JPO)	29	37	39	33	6
Fellows	3	8	5	2	3
Volunteers (FAO)	15	13	18	8	10
UN Volunteers	29	38	42	1	41
Interns	145	139	172	128	44

² Employees with contracts that are not covered by the FAO staff regulations and rules.

³ Decentralized Offices.

22. Fifteen new JPO joined, 13 completed their assignments, and five were retained.⁴

No. of Junior Professional Officers by Member Nation, gender, and location	
Belgium	1
China	8
Finland	1
France	1
Germany	5
Italy	2
Japan	7
Netherlands	4
Norway	2
Sweden	1
Switzerland	3
USA	4
Total	39
Female	67%
Male	33%
Located in headquarters (Italy)	33
Located in Decentralized Offices	6



23. There was a 16 percent increase in the diversity of nationalities of participants, with 339 joining from 81 Member Nations. Twenty-two percent of participants were from non- and under-represented countries, and 72 percent of them were female. There are 35 agreements with institutions to supply sponsored participants in the Internship, Volunteers and Fellows Programmes, including 12 new or renewed agreements. Partner institutions (excluding UN Volunteers donors) financially sponsored 23 percent of the participants on the programmes.

⁴ Either on staff or Affiliate Workforce contracts.

1.3 Workforce composition

24. The total number of employees increased by 8 percent, with the greatest increase in the Affiliate Workforce (NSHR).

Category	2023	% of workforce	2022	% of workforce	2021	% workforce
Staff ⁵	3 289	21	3 258	22.5	3 255	22
Affiliate Workforce	12 350	79	11 248	77.5	11 555	78
Total employees	15 639		14 506		14 810	

25. The location of staff compared to the Affiliate Workforce remains the same as 2022.

Category	HQ	% of workforce	DO	% of workforce	Total
Staff	1 743	53	1 546	47	3 289
Affiliate Workforce	1 345	11	11 005	89	12 350
Total employees	3 088	20	12 551	80	15 639

26. The chart below shows a further breakdown of employees by category and location (geographical regions).⁶

Category	HQ	RAF	RAP	REU	RLC	RNE	Overall total
	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	
D and above	82	14	14	9	9	3	131
Professional	1 012	213	113	86	81	92	1 597
UN JPO	33	3	1	1	1	0	39
Nat. Professional Officers	0	103	55	29	45	26	258
General Service	616	226	125	129	98	70	1 264
Total staff	1 743	559	308	254	234	191	3 289
Category	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Overall total
Consultants	774	381	224	515	257	135	2 286
Contractors (PSA.SBS)	129	84	66	111	63	14	467
Nat. Project Personnel	0	2 196	1 386	269	1 303	543	5 697
National Contractors	73	802	620	580	554	417	3 046
Other	369	133	87	59	85	121	854
Total Affiliate Workforce	1 345	3 596	2 383	1 534	2 262	1 230	12 350
Overall total	3 088	4 155	2 691	1 788	2 496	1 421	15 639

⁵ Employees with contracts that are covered by the FAO staff regulations and rules.

⁶ See FC 199/6.2 for detailed workforce data and Glossary for abbreviations of Affiliate Workforce contract types.

1.4 Key performance indicators

KPI	
1. The vacancy rate of staff positions in the Professional category funded by the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB)	Baseline Mar 2019-19% Actual Dec 2020-20% Actual Dec 2021-20% Actual Dec 2022-22% Actual Dec 2023-23%
2. Time to recruit – the number of days from opening of the vacancy announcement to the selection decision	Baseline Dec 2019: 145 days/Target-120 days Actual Dec 2020-159 days Actual Dec 2021-156 days Actual Dec 2022-178 days Actual Dec 2023- 200 days

27. While the vacancy rate increased slightly to 23 percent, the number of recruitments also increased by an unprecedented 31 percent, a continuing upward trend since 2020. Three hundred fifty-three selection panels for recruitment were conducted and managed, consisting of 150 panels for PWB-funded staff positions in the Professional category, and 92 panels for Project-funded staff positions in the Professional category globally.⁷ In 2022 these figures were 133 and 80, respectively. At headquarters, 111 panels were conducted to recruit staff for positions in the General Service category, representing an increase of 35 percent.

28. Of the Professional vacancies filled, 60 percent of PWB positions were filled through external selections. This is a higher percentage than in previous years, which will have a positive effect on the vacancy rate once all candidates complete on-boarding. For PWB staff positions in the General Service category at headquarters, 83.5 percent of vacancies were filled by internal candidates resulting in 15 percent of these staff receiving promotions, a further increase on previous years.

29. Time to recruit has increased to 200 days. Given the 31 percent increase in recruitments, more time was required to complete the higher number of processes.

2. Learning, development and performance

30. This section of the HR Annual Report covers achievements under the HR Strategic Action Plan output of ‘Strengthened and enabled capability through development and learning opportunities, and improved performance’. **2.1 Learning and training programmes**

31. The development of a consolidated Learning Framework that guides the planning, execution, monitoring, and evaluation of staff learning and training activities was delivered in response to audit recommendations. Benchmarking with other United Nations entities, and focus groups with stakeholders, informed the framework, whose four areas guide the FAO learning agenda:

1. Empowering employees
2. Nurturing leadership and management
3. Promoting multilingualism
4. Strengthening operations and internal controls.

⁷ These positions are not funded from the Programme of Work and Budget (PWB) and therefore do not contribute towards the vacancy rate and KPIs. Their recruitment processes do, however, require significant time and resources and therefore impact on the time and resources available for recruitment processes for PWB positions.

Empowering employees

32. Leveraging the virtual modalities and platforms recently established, the Organization continued its focus on the delivery of a wide variety of high-quality, needs-based learning programmes with heightened access for Decentralized Offices.

33. The digital library of eLearning courses continued to be a key resource for professional development with over 20 000 online training courses offered by LinkedIn Learning. Employees completed 4 130 courses (3 130 at Decentralized Offices). Interactive webinars on key topics included eight virtual global learning sessions with international specialists and over 3 000 attendees.⁸

34. A portfolio of career support initiatives to enhance personal, targeted career development continued to be successfully implemented with a dedicated portal in you@fao,⁹ online courses, and FAO/UN employment opportunities along with:

- Career management masterclasses with resources on career transition (620 participants).
- Twenty workshops in English, French and Spanish on goal setting, writing job applications, and interviewing skills (over 1 400 participants).
- Training to conduct effective career conversations (380 participants).
- New workshops on creating career development action plans (175 managers).

35. Based on the results of a learning needs assessment targeted at General Service staff, training included:

- IT masterclasses for Excel and data analysis skills (over 1 700 participants).
- Communication skills masterclasses (1 790 participants).
- Workshops on ‘How to give and received feedback’ (690 participants).

36. Lastly, the four-day “Preparation for retirement” seminar was delivered to 230 participants, and the FAO Orientation toolkit continued to be available.

Nurturing leadership and management

37. The table below provides an overview of learning and development offerings in support of leadership and management roles.

Learning offering	Delivered to	Highlights
Executive Leadership Programme (ELP)	30 senior managers	Diversity, gender equality and inclusion topics, 360-degree assessment, individual coaching
Follow-up training for graduates (ELP)	34 senior managers	Solving leadership challenges, team coaching skills
Leadership Insights	34 senior managers	360-degree assessment aligned to UN Leadership Framework, individual coaching
Women Leading in Times of Crisis	18 female employees	Development of women for leadership roles, networking with other entities
Achieving Results through People	40 mid managers	Blended learning, supervisory skills

⁸ These ‘Zoom in on learning’ sessions were open to all employees. Some examples of session topics were ‘Manage conflicts, nurture relationships’, ‘Effective writing tips’, ‘Addressing racism and creating inclusive workplace practices’, ‘The habit of personal management’, ‘Three ways to become change confident’.

⁹ FAO Learning and Performance Management System.

UN Emerging Leaders Programme	18 AFAORs ¹⁰	360-degree assessment, individual coaching, knowledge sharing/UN entities
Extended E-Certificate Leadership and Management	Offered to all employees	Self-paced, modular, online programme
UN Country Team Leadership – Maximizing synergies for greater impact	15 FAORs	In person UNSSC campus, networking with other UN entities
Strategic media	70 FAO spokespersons	Interactive, instructor-led workshops
Reflective Leadership Dialogues	130 managers, all levels	Navigating challenging 1-1 conversations; Speaking up/responding to microaggressions; Managing harassment, bullying, abuse; Deepening discussion and action on racism

38. The FAO Representative Briefing Programme¹¹ was expanded with new virtual sessions and a dedicated portal in you@fao. The portal facilitates access to training resources, key FAO documents, and gathers data on FAORs across the globe.

Promoting multilingualism

39. Multilingualism is promoted through HR policies and procedures by recruiting staff that display knowledge of FAO languages, and actively supporting them in language training throughout their service. Established offerings included:

- Delivery of language training in the six FAO languages¹² (over 800 staff in headquarters).¹³
- Online language courses launched in duty stations with limited access to language training (over 60 staff).
- Administering of language examinations globally (1 300 candidates from FAO, WFP, IFAD).

Course type	No. of courses	Total training hours
Individual	213	4 831
Group	94	23 500
Total	307	28 331

40. Headquarters class registrations were as follows:

Language level	Individual class	Group class
Minimum knowledge (A)	73	173
Limited knowledge (B)	97	207
Working knowledge (C)	43	214
Total	213	594

¹⁰ Assistant FAO Representatives.

¹¹ The programme, launched in 2021, is comprised of a multi-modular curriculum built around the FAOR's strategic role and functions.

¹² Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish.

¹³ Decentralized Offices coordinate their own language training directly using the staff development budget allocations.

Strengthening operations and internal controls

41. Several new courses and training were launched and piloted to develop and strengthen skills in risk management and project delivery. An enhanced reporting tool provided training-related data to monitor compliance of required functional training (e.g. finance, procurement, etc.).

2.2 Improving performance

42. Ninety-three customized performance management workshops and briefing sessions were delivered to 2 595 managers and staff, and to Performance management focal points. The performance appraisal process for General Service staff, short-term appointment, was automated. Multisource assessment as a mandatory process for Directors, Deputy Directors and heads of offices continued to be implemented. This also allowed for feedback on FAORs from Resident Coordinators, based on objectives for Country Office delivery.

43. Skills and competencies for managing performance were strengthened by integrating resources and tools into new and established courses. Topics included coaching, giving and receiving feedback, holding difficult conversations, active listening and personal productivity for peak performance.

44. Leveraging and collaborating within the UN system included:

- Coordination, design and delivery of training initiatives with the UN System Staff College (UNSSC), in particular for leadership and management development.
- Membership in UN Communities of practice for learning and performance management.
- UN system established agreements, e.g. UN Secretariat, UN Office for Project Services, WFP, UN Children’s Fund, UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

2.3 Key performance indicators

KPI	
Overall compliance with mandatory training for all employees	Target-60% Actual Dec 2020-64.9% Actual Dec 2021-74.1% Actual Dec 2022-81.2% Actual Dec 2023-84.5%
BSAFE training (on-boarding requirement)	95.2% compliance rate ¹⁴

45. The above table shows an increase of 3.3 percent in overall compliance for all employees, surpassing the target of 60 percent by 24.5 percent. The compliance of the Affiliate Workforce (NSHR) is naturally lower than staff, given the short-term nature of their contracts, mandatory breaks in service and high turnover.

¹⁴ As an on-boarding requirement, which in theory should be 100 percent, this figure fluctuates given that the data feed from one system to another is done manually, requiring time for all training completions to be sent (from SSC to CSH) and uploaded into the employee’s records.

Compliance by mandatory training course	Staff %	Affiliate Workforce %	Total %
Achieving Gender Equality in FAO's Work	96.9	82.6	85.6
Ethics and Integrity at the United Nations	95.6	77.9	81.6
FAO's Whistleblower Protection Policy	97.1	81.6	84.9
Prevention of Fraud & other Corrupt Practices	97.2	80.4	83.9
Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority	99.3	83.4	86.7
Protection from Sexual Exploitation & Abuse	97.4	81.7	85.0
UN Working Together Harmoniously	96.5	80.5	83.9
Total overall compliance			84.5

46. To monitor and increase completion rates for mandatory training, activities included targeted monthly communications, customized dashboards and reports for Country Offices, information sessions, online tutorials to analyse data, a performance indicator in PEMS assigned to all supervisors, and ongoing collaboration with internal focal point networks across the Organization. A multilingual home page supports the navigation of the mandatory training curriculum and provides content in the six FAO languages.

KPI	
Employee Satisfaction Survey question - I have opportunities to learn new skills that help me carry out my job.	2019/20 Baseline-57% employees in agreement 2022 Target-62% Result April 2022-66% 2024 Target-66%

3. Diverse and inclusive workplace

47. This section of the HR Annual Report covers achievements under the HR Strategic Action Plan output of 'A work environment that is diverse and inclusive, where employees feel engaged, valued, and have a sense of belonging'.

3.1. A diverse workforce

48. A Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Action Plan was launched as a corporate response to the results of the Employee Satisfaction Survey (E2S). It aims to promote all forms of diversity including equitable geographical distribution and gender balance, cultural, generational, multilingual and persons with disabilities. The DEI Corporate Action Plan is guided by the UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP), the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy, and the UN Strategic Action Plan on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for all.

49. The overall robust performance of FAO on the UN-SWAP is continuing, with having met or exceeded 14 out of 16 KPIs in 2022¹⁵ and resulting in a score of 88 percent – compared with 72 percent by other specialized entities, and 74 percent overall by the UN system. The indicator for 'Equal representation of women' continues to be described as 'approaching requirements'.

50. The overall percentage of female staff across all levels and categories in the Organization is 54 percent, representing an increase of 1 percent. Females in the Affiliate Workforce (NSHR) represent 39 percent. The percentage of all female employees in the Organization remained at 42 percent.¹⁶

¹⁵ The 2022 UN-SWAP performance results were published in November 2023.

¹⁶ See FC 199/6.2 Table 3.1. for more detail.

51. In the Professional staff category, the overall representation of female staff is 47 percent and meets the UN gender parity targets for the first time.¹⁷ There is still work to be done, especially at the P-4 and P-5 levels and in the Decentralized Offices. Gender parity was achieved in headquarters with 55 percent, but at the Decentralized Offices women represent 34 percent. At the Director (D-1) and above level, the overall representation of female staff remains at 28 percent.

52. The overall representation of female staff in the combined Professional and above categories has increased over the last 13 years from 32 percent in 2010 to 46 percent in 2023, showing a steady increase at all levels, except for the Assistant Director-General (ADG) level.

	DDG/ADG	D-2	D-1	Subtotal %	P-5	P-4	P-3	P-2	P-1	Subtotal %	Total %
2010	25	14	16		22	30	45	62	33		32
2020	29	25	26	26	28	39	54	65	71	44	43
2021	23	18	29	26	31	39	55	65	66	45	43
2022	25	28	28	28	32	39	57	63	73	46	45
2023	27	27	28	28	34	41	57	64	72	47	46

53. To attract more female applicants at higher levels, FAO attended the Impactpool global Virtual Career Fair, focusing on women in senior roles. As part of active outreach, diverse communication channels, specialized sourcing tools and external outreach providers were also used.

54. Corporate geographic representation targets were met with the percentage of countries that are equitably represented at 76 percent. This represents 148 Members and is just above the target that has been set by the FAO Conference of 75 percent.¹⁸

55. Detailed reporting on the linguistic profile of employees was provided in the HR Annual Report 2021, showing that employees across all locations have a prominent level of proficiency in FAO languages. Given the static nature of the data, updates will be provided every five years.

56. The Disability Inclusion online workspace was updated to include an eLearning course on 'United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy – Putting Words into Action'. The Disability Inclusion workspace forms part of the UN Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS), providing managers and employees with guidelines and resources for talent acquisition, and management of persons with disabilities.

3.2. Strengthening employee satisfaction and recognition

57. To facilitate analysis of the Employee Satisfaction Survey (E2S) 2022 results, and allow for more targeted discussions, over 170 individual reports were developed and shared with organizational units. Global focal points supported digital and decentralized action planning with a toolkit that included roles and responsibilities. An online dashboard allowed sharing of results to managers and their teams and training was provided for planning and tracking progress on action plans.

58. Action planning was conducted at the corporate, stream, regional and unit levels. At the corporate level, thematic reports were produced on ethical behaviour and misconduct, and diversity and inclusion. Two corporate level action plans focus on workplace conduct and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, and diversity, equity and inclusion, and both form part of FAO's ongoing efforts to foster a harmonious and inclusive workplace.

59. To address ethical behaviour and misconduct issues, collaboration with workplace conduct subject matter experts, including the HR Division, the Ethics Office, the Legal Office, the Office of the Inspector General, the Ombuds Office and the Health Services, took place. Organization-wide

¹⁷ While the goal of the UN System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity is 50/50 parity, "it is recognized that sustainability at that number is unlikely and for the purposes of this strategy parity is considered to be within the 47%-53% margin."

¹⁸ 39th Session of the FAO Conference, June 2015, C 2015/3, <http://www.fao.org/3/a-mm710e.pdf>.

efforts were communicated through a dedicated internal webpage. It serves as the main communication channel for E2S results, activities, as well as reporting and sharing progress.

60. The Employee Recognition Awards were a further opportunity for employees to voice their opinions as they nominated and recognized each other's talent and contributions.

3.3. A respectful, inclusive workplace and the prevention of harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination, and abuse of authority

61. The Committee on Workplace Conduct and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) continued to meet regularly, enabling exchanges among key stakeholders in the areas of workplace conduct, and ensuring a collaborative and cohesive approach. The committee is assisted by the Integrity Network¹⁹ covering workplace conduct, and another informal working group covering protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

62. The review of the existing workplace conduct-related policies is progressing to create a new policy covering all forms of workplace misconduct. The aim is to highlight discrimination as a standalone form of misconduct rather than addressing it through the provisions for harassment or abuse of authority. This new policy will also operationalize a 'victim-centred approach' and be aligned with other UN organizations. A dedicated UN database continues to be used to screen candidates as part of the recruitment process for staff positions, the Affiliate Workforce, and other personnel positions.

63. FAO Senior management continued active engagement in UN system-wide fora, particularly in the work of the [Chief Executives Board \(CEB\)/High-level Committee on Management \(HLCM\) Task Force on Addressing Sexual Harassment within the organizations of the UN system](#). The establishment of the UN Executive Group to Prevent and respond to sexual harassment was fully supported and will succeed the CEB Task Force.

64. For more information see the [Annual Report on Corporate Policy, Processes and Measures on the Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#) presented to the 174th Session of the FAO Council in December 2023.

3.4. Key performance indicators

KPI	
1. Gender parity	Baseline Dec 2019, P-1 to P-5-44% Target 2022-Parity Result Dec 2023-Parity (47%) Baseline Dec 2019, D-1 and above-25% Target 2024-Parity Result Dec 2023-28%
2. Geographic representation	Target maintain the percentage of equitably represented countries at 75% or above Result Dec 2023-76%
3. E2S survey statement – FAO has effective policies, processes, and procedures to address harassment and other unacceptable behaviour	Baseline 2019 E2S-64% employees in agreement Target 2022-70% Result Dec 2022-73% Target 2024-70% ²⁰

¹⁹ The Integrity Network is an informal group made up of the Division of Human Resources, the Legal Office, the Office of the Inspector General, the Ombudsman, the Ethics Officer and the Staff Counsellor.

²⁰ Target will remain at 70 percent to ensure that maturity level has been firmly established. This percentage covers respondents who strongly agree/agree. Neutral responses are not included.

4. Safe and healthy work environment

65. This section of the HR Annual Report covers achievements under the HR Strategic Action Plan output of 'A safe and healthy work environment'.

4.1. Well-being and mental health

66. The well-being of the workforce has continued to be a priority and is supported through initiatives like the International Employee Assistance Programme (IEAP) and the FAO Counsellor services. These programmes offer employees free, confidential, mental health support 24 hours a day, and along with other initiatives outlined below support the UN Mental Health and Well-being Strategy.

67. A Well-being Awareness Fair was held at headquarters with virtual participation from Decentralized Offices. Renowned wellness specialists addressed the global workforce and provided a unique opportunity for colleagues to come together, learn and engage in activities that promote physical, mental and emotional wellness. In addition, this event facilitated the exchange of expert knowledge and information on in-house services such as counselling, the IEAP and telehealth consultations.

68. A review of the reporting tool for occupational health and safety incidents took place and, in response to audit recommendations, the Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee on Occupational Health and Safety (ACOHS) were also updated.

4.2. Pension administration

69. The digitalization of pension operations continued to enhance functions and processes, creating process efficiencies while maintaining the operations that support the health and safety of employees.

70. Collaboration with the UN Joint Staff Pension Fund (UNJSPF) to develop an HR and financial data interface continued, and the ongoing implementation of the new payroll calculation methodology was monitored.

4.3. Management of medical insurance plans

71. Four global outreach initiatives were conducted in collaboration with providers, to maximize employee awareness and utilization of benefits under the medical plans offered. These sessions were complemented by surveys to gather feedback and further enhance service delivery.

72. The reforms in sick leave procedures now enable better monitoring and more accurate reporting. This has led to significant policy enhancements and improved contract management overall.

73. The integration of national health schemes into the After Service Medical Coverage (ASMC) plan, such as the US Medicare for US-based retirees, is under review for financial feasibility and risks, by the FAO Advisory Committee on Medical Coverage (FAC/MC). Cost containment and financial sustainability are the key focus in these considerations.

74. A new tool for reporting all Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) incidents was evaluated and implemented. This online Safety and wellness app enables more comprehensive gathering of data. Correspondingly the FAO Manual Section 342 was revised, refining the policy and procedures for compensating service-incurred incidents.

4.4. HR support during emergencies

75. The UN Organizational Resilience Management System (UN ORMS) links people and processes to manage the risks of disruptive events. This initiative builds organizational resilience to malicious acts, natural disasters and other crises impacting employees while conducting official duties. Collaboration with stakeholders took place to create a practical HR checklist as part of the

ORMS to implement essential measures during emergencies and ensure support for personnel and their families. In coordination with Regional and Liaison Office heads, a Staff Support Plan was developed and is in operation.

5. Managing change, stakeholder and client focused approaches

76. This section of the HR Annual Report covers achievements under the HR Strategic Action Plan outcome of ‘Management of change through stakeholder-centred communications, reporting, and tools that prepare people and enable timely, comprehensive adoption of HR strategic actions, products and services’.

5.1. Employee engagement and communications

77. Modalities for increased engagement and communication, introduced as part of culture change by the Director-General, have continued to be successfully used and are now an established part of the organizational culture. Supported by the E2S corporate action plans, the below types of two-way engagement continued.

78. The Director-General, the Director of HR, and other senior leaders engaged with employees, answering questions and sharing views transparently and informally as part of the Director-General’s New Year message, the FAO Representatives induction seminar in January, the 25 Year Seniority Medal Ceremony in February, FAO Conference side events in July, the World Food Forum in October, the Employee Recognition Awards in December and at the regular Regional Management Meetings held across the globe.

79. The Women’s Committee, chaired by Maria Helena Semedo, Deputy Director-General, continued to be a place for employees to engage and proactively communicate on a range of issues, as was the Youth Committee chaired by Máximo Torero Cullen, Chief Economist.

80. An historic first Global Working Conference of FAO Representatives (FAORs) was held at headquarters in December. Working as One FAO, 93 FAORs participated in plenary sessions, working group discussions and field visits to create coherent networks, strengthen internal management, and systemic capacities.

81. Consultation with the Staff Representative Bodies continued through the monthly Staff-Management Consultative Committee (SMCC), the Advisory Committee on Occupational Health and Safety (ACOHS), the FAO Advisory Committee on Medical Coverage (FAC/MC), and the Staff Pension Committee (SPC).

82. The practice of interactive knowledge sharing and training on HR specific topics for all employees also continued. Topics included medical and insurance coverage, the Pension Fund, mental health support, building a respectful workplace, and ethics.

83. The intranet home page (*InFAO*) maintained its key role in internal communications with all employees. News articles and announcements to inform, share knowledge and tools, and provide resources, kept up with the dynamic year.

84. Ten Administrative Circulars were also published, updating employees on important administrative changes that affect them, while 21 Bulletins from the Director-General informed employees on changes to organizational functions and roles. Quarterly newsletters on learning offerings and updates on the HR Division’s internal website, all continued.

85. For the second year in a row, the HR Annual Report was reproduced into a reader-friendly style including photographs, and actively disseminated to all employees. It is also available on the HR intranet in five languages.

5.2. Audits and risk management

86. Twenty outstanding internal audit recommendations were either closed or merged to better coordinate activities and avoid overlap. Nine were closed through implementation and two were

closed due to shifting organizational requirements. A further nine were closed as they are now covered through merged and streamlined audit recommendations. Further outstanding audit recommendations for HR are on track to be closed during early 2024, and all continue to be closely monitored and reported through a comprehensive tracking log.

87. Two reviews were participated in with the UN Joint Inspection Unit: the Management and Administration review and the Review of the use of non-staff personnel and related contractual modalities. An assessment by the Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) was conducted along with several other external reviews.

88. Quality assurance of HR processes continued to be worked on as part of enterprise risk management (ERM), and to improve monitoring and oversight of decentralized processes by the HR team in the Shared Services Centre, Budapest. The HR Fraud risk assessment and the HR section of the corporate Fraud risk register was updated in collaboration with HR teams and the ERM team.

5.3. HR function and capacity

89. The HR team at headquarters finalized an internal realignment to better match resources and capabilities with the Organization's strategic business needs, create greater efficiencies in the delivery of HR services and allow for more flexibility in the allocation of resources. The results of the realignment are reflected in the additional volumes of service able to be managed, particularly in recruitment where there was a 19 percent increase in recruitment panels across all staff categories.

90. Town Halls with the HR headquarters team continued to provide fora for discussion, keep employees informed of strategies and provide opportunities to co-design team building solutions. An HR headquarters one-day team retreat took place in May focusing on building team strengths through dialogue on well-being, career development, leadership and communications. A divisional action plan was created to address and build on results from the Employee Satisfaction Survey 2022.

91. A global HR workshop took place in October with the regional HR practitioners, to exchange knowledge and views with the headquarters HR team. A week-long series of interactive seminars provided insights for the development of HR practices and joint responses to organizational challenges. As part of the workshop, informal time was spent with the Director-General and senior leaders.

Conclusion

92. FAO looks forward to further executing its strategic and people-centred human resources actions and priorities in support of programme and administrative effectiveness, enabling delivery on the full breadth of the organizational mandate and objectives.