

Human resources: update

Criteria and principles for secondments from nongovernmental organizations, philanthropic foundations and academic institutions

Report by the Secretariat

1. In accordance with operative paragraph 3(8) of resolution WHA69.10 (2016), the Director-General was requested “to develop, in consultation with Member States, a set of criteria and principles for secondments from nongovernmental organizations, philanthropic foundations and academic institutions and to submit the criteria and principles for the consideration of and establishment by, as appropriate, the Seventieth World Health Assembly, through the Executive Board, taking into account, amongst others, the following identified issues:

- (a) specific technical expertise needed and excluding managerial and/or sensitive positions;
- (b) the promotion of equitable geographical distribution;
- (c) transparency and clarity regarding positions sought, including public announcements;
- (d) secondments are temporary in nature not exceeding two years”.¹

2. Pursuant to resolution WHA69.10, the Secretariat opened an electronic consultation for Member States, between 18 November and 1 December 2016, on a set of proposed criteria and principles for secondment from nongovernmental organizations, philanthropic foundations and academic institutions. The responses received have been considered and the set of proposed criteria and principles have been revised accordingly. The revised set is submitted for the Board’s consideration in paragraphs 3–6 below.

¹ A “secondment” to WHO is the assignment to WHO of an individual already employed by an entity, for a fixed period, under a tripartite secondment agreement concluded by WHO, the releasing entity and the employee. Secondees return to the releasing entity at the end of their secondment. While on secondment, secondees are WHO staff members.

PROPOSED CRITERIA AND PRINCIPLES FOR SECONDMENT

3. When considering any secondment from non-State actors, the Secretariat will apply:
 - (a) the provisions set out in the Framework of engagement with non-State actors,¹ in particular with regard to paragraph 47, which states that “WHO does not accept secondments from private sector entities”;
 - (b) the Organization’s policies that apply to any secondment from non-State actors and Member States; these require that:
 - (i) the secondee must:
 - fulfil the minimum criteria of the relevant position
 - be an employee of the releasing entity before the secondment
 - be guaranteed, by the releasing entity, a right of return to the releasing entity;
 - (ii) the secondment position must:
 - be time-bound
 - be in line with WHO’s programmatic priorities
 - require a high level of specialized technical expertise
 - have been granted a waiver of competitive selection by the Director-General, providing justification for the position
 - respond to a technical need that cannot be met from within the Organization.
4. In addition, the following conditions will apply:
 - (a) all costs of the secondment position must be covered by the releasing entity
 - (b) the terms of reference of any secondment must be determined by WHO in line with its programmatic priorities and comply with WHO’s policies and rules
 - (c) WHO’s standard secondment agreements will normally be used.
5. In addition to the policies and conditions applicable to all secondments as outlined in paragraphs 3 and 4, any secondment from a non-State actor must fulfil the following principles and criteria:
 - (a) managerial and/or positions that involve the validation or approval of WHO’s norms and standards are excluded;
 - (b) consideration has been given to gender and geographical diversity by the releasing entity;

¹ See document WHA69/2016/REC/1, Annex 5.

- (c) the releasing entity has, wherever possible, proposed at least three qualified candidates to WHO from whom the Secretariat may select the most suitable candidate giving due regard to gender and geographical distribution;
- (d) the proposed arrangement for a secondment has undergone a due diligence and risk assessment;
- (e) secondments are temporary in nature not exceeding two years;
- (f) a declaration of interest has been signed by the secondee, irrespective of their grade, and no (actual or perceived) conflict of interest has been identified for which adequate mitigation measures are not possible.

6. Any secondment from a non-State actor will be published in: (a) the register of non-State actors under the releasing entity's entry; and (b) the annual report on engagement with non-State actors, which will include the justification for the secondments.

ACTION BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

7. The Board is invited to note the report.

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