



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

EXECUTIVE BOARD
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Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit

Report by the Secretariat

1. In 2000, the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) issued nine reports. Six were not of direct relevance to WHO.¹
2. Comments on two of the remaining three reports – United Nations system common services at Geneva, Part II: case studies (document JIU/REP/2000/5) and Young professionals in selected organizations of the United Nations system: recruitment, management and retention (document JIU/REP/2000/7) – were submitted to the Audit Committee at its fourth meeting in May 2001.² The Executive Board had the opportunity at its 108th session to comment on the report on the United Nations system common services. Since the Board has not reviewed the report on young professionals, comments thereon, together with JIU's main findings and recommendations, are contained in Annex 1.
3. Comments on the third report – Strengthening the investigations function in United Nations systems organizations (document JIU/REP/2000/9) – together with JIU's main findings and recommendations, are contained in Annex 2.
4. In 2001, JIU issued one report of relevance to WHO – United Nations system support for science and technology in Latin America and the Caribbean (document JIU/REP/2001/2). Comments thereon, together with JIU's main findings and recommendations, are contained in Annex 2.

ACTION BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

5. The Executive Board is invited to take note of the reports.

¹ • JIU/REP/2000/1: Administration of justice at the United Nations;
• JIU/REP/2000/2: The use of consultants in the United Nations;
• JIU/REP/2000/3: Senior-Level appointments in the United Nations, its programmes and funds;
• JIU/REP/2000/4: Review of management and administration in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO);
• JIU/REP/2000/6: Delegation of authority for the management of human and financial resources in the United Nations Secretariat;
• JIU/REP/2000/8: Review of management and administration in the Registry of International Court of Justice.

² Document EBAC4/3.

ANNEX 1

REPORT OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT – 2000¹

Title	Purpose	Recommendations	Position of the WHO Secretariat
<p>JIU/REP/2000/7</p> <p>Young professionals in selected organizations of the United Nations system: recruitment, management and retention</p>	<p>To compare and analyse policies and practices with regard to the recruitment and management of entry-level professionals, in order to recommend ways to prepare and retain a cadre of dedicated and competent professionals.</p>	<p>Ten recommendations are made against a general backdrop of the need to rejuvenate agency staff, half of which are due to retire during this decade. Despite new requirements stemming from evolving mandates and policies, rejuvenation is hampered by an increasingly older average age of entry and a high proportion of resignations among young professionals.</p> <p>Rec.1: to reduce the average recruitment age, particularly for posts from P1 to P3.</p> <p>Rec.2: to monitor more carefully trends on separation of professional staff through exit questionnaires and inclusion of relevant data in ACC personnel statistics.</p> <p>Recs.3 and 4: to speed up recruitment processes for young professionals and accelerate the placement of successful candidates of the National Competitive Recruitment Examination by reducing and optimizing the use of the Examination roster in various ways.</p>	<p>(1) on Rec.1: WHO questions the appropriateness of a blanket application to reduce the age of recruitment, since this may unnecessarily restrict the available pool of talent. All applications should be considered with an open mind, so long as procedure is consistent with WHO's recruitment and selection policy.</p> <p>(2) on Recs.2 and 3: WHO supports the recommendations, and an exit questionnaire has already been drawn up. Staff leaving the Organization are also encouraged to meet a human resources officer to provide qualitative feedback.</p> <p>(3) on Rec.4: although the Examination is not applicable to WHO, the Organization would welcome widening the net of recruitment by gaining access to the Examination roster (Rec.4c).</p>

¹ Extract from document EBAC4/3.

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		<p>Rec.5: to improve cooperation among Member States in the organization of, and publicity linked to, the Examination.</p> <p>Rec.6: to set up appropriate structures to assist with the successful integration of young professionals, such as focal points, orientation courses, or mentoring programmes.</p> <p>Rec.7: to provide more generous study leave and to set up part-time study and research schemes.</p> <p>Rec.8: to improve professional development opportunities by greater mobility and improved career development schemes, which should also facilitate both movement between duty stations and upward mobility.</p> <p>Rec.9: to increase the amount of time managers devote to the development of their junior staff, which should become an integral part of their own performance evaluation.</p> <p>Rec.10: to facilitate spouse employment by, for example, permitting employment of a spouse in the same agency, or requesting, through the United Nations General Assembly, host governments to grant work permits for spouses.</p>	<p>(4) on Rec.6: WHO already adheres to Rec.6b, since it carries out an orientation briefing for new staff, although this is not limited to young professionals only. WHO accepts Rec.6c on mentoring and is planning to carry out a pilot mentoring programme for new staff.</p> <p>(5) on Rec.7: WHO questions whether granting better leave terms to younger staff would not be considered unfair to their older colleagues who also have a legitimate need for formal training in the interest of the Organization. However, WHO is currently reviewing its study-leave policy.</p> <p>(6) on Rec.8: WHO considers that the Inter-Agency Mobility Programme would be a useful tool, in addition to its own mechanisms. It plans to draw up a strategy for implementing mobility as part of its reform of human resources.</p> <p>(7) on Rec.9: Organizational commitment to staff development is applicable to all staff regardless of their age and an integral part of WHO's strategic plan for human resources.</p> <p>(8) on Rec.10: Assistance is needed in this area, which affects WHO's ability to recruit and retain staff (of any age). Innovative means to provide work opportunities for spouses will be further investigated, such as a searchable interagency roster with spouse curricula, workshops on job searching and resumé writing, and renegotiation of host country agreements to obtain better terms for spouse work permits.</p>

ANNEX 2

REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT – 2000 and 2001

Title	Purpose	Recommendations	Position of the WHO Secretariat
<p>JIU/REP/2000/9</p> <p>Strengthening the investigations function in United Nations system organizations</p>	<p>To enhance the investigative capability of organizations of the United Nations system since this function has relatively recently become an important component of internal oversight, which requires addressing and resolving some major issues.</p>	<p>Rec.1: A common set of standards and procedures for conducting investigations in organizations of the United Nations system should be developed and adopted.</p> <p>Rec.2: Sufficient training on the use of established standards and procedures should be provided to managers involved in investigations.</p> <p>Rec.3: Risk profiles of each organization should be conducted and reported to the legislative organs, together with types of need for access to professionally trained investigators and proposals as to how they can be met.</p> <p>Rec.4: Heads of small organizations should propose options to their legislative organs for financing access to a professional investigations capability, e.g. through the use of common services or outsourcing.</p>	<p>General comments: WHO has recognized the need for investigative ability and in recent years, bearing in mind Member States' expectations, has strengthened this area, keeping a balance between risk profile and budgetary realities. The JIU report presents useful information on an important topic. However, it appears to be somewhat focused towards centralization and may not have sufficiently taken into account the difference in size, operations and needs between organizations of the United Nations system.</p> <p>Specific comments on the JIU recommendations: WHO agrees with Rec.1 on common standards and will work with other agencies to develop standards and to enhance the overall capacity of the Organization in this area.</p> <p>Regarding Rec.2, WHO managers will be trained as required in recognition and handling of investigation matters.</p> <p>Rec.3: At WHO, the establishment of an investigation, capability is clearly within the Director-General's mandate, regardless of the Organization's potential "risk profile"; hence there is no particular need for action on WHO's part.</p> <p>Rec.4: is not applicable to WHO.</p>

Title	Purpose	Recommendations	Position of the WHO Secretariat
		<p>Rec.5: Work programmes of investigations units should also include development of preventive measures based on proactive investigations and lessons learned.</p> <p>Rec.6: Conferences of United Nations investigators should continue to develop opportunities, including those external to the system, to foster, interagency cooperation in the areas indicated in the report.</p>	<p>Rec. 5: Further clarification is required as to whether the development of preventive measures should be confined to lessons learned from proactive investigations or could also include audits and inspections.</p> <p>WHO agrees with Rec.6 and will continue to participate in conferences such as the United Nations internal auditors' conference in Rome last year to ensure an effective and well-coordinated investigation response.</p>
<p>JIU/REP/2001/2</p> <p>United Nations system support for science and technology in Latin America and the Caribbean</p>	<p>To assess the relevance and effectiveness of the technical cooperation provided by organizations of the United Nations system to endogenous capacity-building in science and technology in Latin America and the Caribbean.</p>		<p>General comments: The report provides a critical overview of the effectiveness of projects supported by the United Nations in strengthening the capacity of countries in the region to apply science and technology for the benefit of their populations. Projects involving the private sector seem to have provided more evidence of success. It should be noted, however, that while not mentioned in the report, there exist projects executed by the public sector which can be equally effective. In some projects reviewed in the report, the period between implementation and evaluation of outcome seems to have been too short to come to a final conclusion.</p> <p>JIU's conclusion that the United Nations should make efforts to improve coordination among its organizations and with bodies outside the system is worth underlining.</p>

Title	Purpose	Recommendations	Position of the WHO Secretariat
		<p>Rec.1: The United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development may wish to discuss the desirability, feasibility and timeliness of a United Nations system joint programme for science and technology, modelled on UNAIDS, for the reasons and purposes discussed in paragraphs 114-125 of the report, and to make appropriate recommendations to the Economic and Social Council.</p> <p>Rec.2: (a) The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) should further expand its use of information technology (IT) as a cross-sectoral and cross-programme tool to enhance programmatic coordination and internal efficiencies and to assist its member countries more effectively; (b) the United Nations Development Group and specialized agencies should study the policy and operational approaches to information technology capacity-building in the region used by the Inter-American Development Bank, in order to derive lessons that could be applied to other developing regions.</p> <p>Rec.3: Pursuant to several General Assembly resolutions, organizations of the United Nations system active in the region should intensify their cooperation with Latin American Economic System science and technology initiatives.</p> <p>Rec.4: Organizations of the United Nations system should assess the viability, benefits and experiences of the numerous science and technology networks in the region, in order to identify possible areas for strengthening South-South cooperation, and for</p>	<p>Specific comments on the JIU recommendations: The Secretariat either agrees with or is not in a position to comment on the first seven recommendations, which generally deal with matters outside the core of WHO and WHO/PAHO's work in the region.</p>

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		<p>extending lessons learned to other developing regions. Linking the research programmes in universities and other tertiary institutions to the priority economic and social needs of the population, including funding of the best ones, should receive particular emphasis.</p> <p>Rec.5: (a) UNCTAD should involve other relevant organizations of the United Nations system more fully in future science, technology and innovation policy reviews. The lead agency role could rotate among participating organizations depending on the area of emphasis; (b) subject to the wishes of the governments concerned, the reviews should in future focus more sharply on the essential core of the national science and technology system; (c) the final review reports should be simpler and more user-friendly, and contain a separate 10-page summary.</p> <p>Rec.6: UNEP should evaluate UnepNet's current performance and diffusion in the region to determine its continuing impact and possibly to extend it to other developing regions as an interregional information exchange mechanism.</p> <p>Rec.7: In view of the multiple potential benefits of biotechnology, FAO, UNESCO, WHO, UNU and other bodies should monitor the practical results of biotechnology research and development institutions in the region and assist them (a) building synergies centred on the United Nations University Biotechnology Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean in Caracas, and the Plant Biotechnology Network for Latin America and the Caribbean, and (b) in strengthening their organization, management and resource mobilization capabilities.</p>	

Title	Purpose	Recommendations	Position of the WHO Secretariat
		<p>Rec.8: (a) The Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute should consider developing a more cost-effective system of priorities and modalities for the execution of its programmes, e.g. by concentrating on fewer courses and activities to be delivered or financed directly; outsourcing some courses to partners under formal agreements; and focusing more on preparing teaching and training materials and methodologies to promote the incorporation of nutrition courses in school curricula;</p> <p>(b) WHO/PAHO should assist the Institute in its efforts to secure extrabudgetary funding so as to enable it to modernize its information and printing technologies and realize its potential for South-South technical cooperation more fully.</p>	<p>Concerning Rec.8 on the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute, which operates under the auspices of WHO/PAHO, JIU's view of the Institute's mission and functions does not appear to reflect all aspects of its operations. A JIU discussion with officials of the Institute and the appropriate technical units at WHO/PAHO to get first-hand information on its current status would have been welcome.</p> <p>Rec 8: (a) The Institute's training courses are usually training-of-trainers courses on a variety of nutrition topics given in countries on the basis of country-specific requests. As the specialized centre in this field in the subregion, the Institute could not outsource the courses to other institutions. Evaluations have shown that they are highly cost-effective, as they are carried out during multiple missions of the Institute's staff to the widely dispersed islands. The countries have requested this small group training because it meets their needs.</p> <p>Regarding materials and curriculum development, a large part of the Institute's effort is already in this area. In fact, most secondary schools in the region teach nutrition using the Institute's materials and texts as standard reference documents. The focus on this area recommended by JIU will be continued</p> <p>Rec 8: (b) As to the recommended need for "tapping extrabudgetary funding possibilities", this has been done successfully during the last three years. The report refers to the financial situation prevailing three years ago. Currently, the Institute's extrabudgetary funds are already larger than the contribution from its Member countries.</p>