



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

FIFTY-EIGHTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY
Provisional agenda item 19.2

A58/35
4 May 2005

Recruitment strategy integrating gender and geographical balance: progress report

Report by the Secretariat

1. The Fifty-sixth World Health Assembly adopted two resolutions that reiterated the principles of geographical and gender balance, calling for further organizational commitment to work in this area.
2. Resolution WHA56.17 reaffirmed the target of 50% for appointments of women to professional and higher-category posts; it also requested the Director-General to redouble efforts in order to achieve the target of parity in gender distribution among professional staff, and to raise the proportion of women at senior level. Resolution WHA56.35 set a target for the appointment of nationals of unrepresented and underrepresented countries, in particular developing countries. The target was 60% of all vacancies arising or posts created over the following two years in the professional and higher-graded categories.
3. In response to resolution WHA56.17, an action plan for recruitment, integrating gender and geographical balance, was submitted to the Executive Board at its 113th session.¹ A number of activities have been undertaken in order to implement the plan, as described below.

MAPPING AND MATCHING STAFF NEEDS

4. A concerted effort is being made to ensure that planning of human resources is fully integrated, consolidated and simplified, in accordance with established priorities. This process will make it easier for WHO's Secretariat to identify the number and type of staff it will need, both in the immediate future and in the coming years.
5. To this end a tool has been developed involving key metrics that make it possible to identify trends in various areas, including staff turnover (both voluntary and mandatory), levels of recruitment, mobility and diversity. The tool will enable comparisons to be made between current and future resource needs; it will also make it possible to identify shortfalls and facilitate planning for action, where required.

¹ See document EB113/2004/REC/2, summary record of the tenth meeting, section 4.

ATTRACTING AND RETAINING STAFF

6. Several initiatives have been taken in order to increase the Organization's **outreach** efforts. The goal is to ensure wider distribution of information about the career opportunities that exist in WHO's Secretariat in order to attract potential candidates worldwide, particularly from unrepresented and underrepresented Member States and developing countries, to target specific areas of expertise, and to promote better gender balance.

7. Letters have also been sent to all permanent missions in Geneva requesting their assistance with the implementation of the strategy. In particular, missions were requested to identify possible sources of candidates for employment within the Organization, including institutions, professional societies and organizations in health and related fields within the country in question. Professional associations in which women are well represented were to be given particular consideration. This initiative was taken so that those organizations could be informed about WHO's web site and its regularly updated list of vacancies. The aim was, where possible, to establish a direct hyperlink to the WHO Secretariat e-recruitment site. To date, six permanent missions have responded. In addition, some of these missions have agreed to disseminate directly, within their country, information about WHO vacancies and the Secretariat's recruitment web site.

8. Over 1500 e-mails have been sent to WHO collaborating centres, health-related associations and WHO Representatives in order to identify potential new sources of candidates. Internet platforms, such as ReliefWeb, OneWorld.net, the International Civil Service Commission, Partnerjob.com, the Association for Human Resources Management in International Organizations, together with other online employment sites have also been explored (see Annexes 1 and 2).

9. Following these outreach efforts, the number of sites referring individuals to the Secretariat's employment web site rose from 966 in May to 2156 in December 2004 – an increase of over 123%. Efforts to identify other possible referral sites are continuing.

10. In order to contact **potential candidates** directly, a three-month trial contract has been signed with a major international web-based online recruitment company, giving WHO's Secretariat access to its database of over 38 million curricula vitae worldwide. The Secretariat identified 500 potential candidates from unrepresented and underrepresented Member States whose profiles matched published vacancies. These candidates were invited to apply for vacant positions. Several responded, but declined the offer because they were not prepared to move to another country; were satisfied in their current employment; considered conditions of employment in WHO insufficiently competitive; or were not interested in working for an international organization.

11. Responding to comments that the Secretariat's recruitment system was very specific and quite unlike those used in some Member States, a team representing the Organization's technical programmes and human resources services carried out a training programme with Ministry of Health officials in China to **enhance understanding** of the Organization's recruitment and selection processes. Potential candidates were led through the various stages of the Secretariat's selection process from an online application to a competency-based interview, a presentation to a panel and technical tests. Other countries have expressed an interest in hosting similar workshops.

12. WHO has participated in a number of international **career fairs** aimed at drawing the attention of postgraduates in various fields of specialization to the career opportunities that exist within the Secretariat. It is intended to take advantage of more such events in the coming years.

13. Work has also been undertaken to revitalize programmes designed to attract younger people to work in the Secretariat. A **global health leadership programme** has been established to offer a two-year training opportunity to public health graduates from developing and underrepresented countries. The vacancy notice was posted on WHO's web sites, advertised in several newspapers and circulated to relevant libraries and public health institutions. Some 2600 applications were received and the first eight trainees (six women and two men) started at the end of March 2005. The eight trainees concerned are nationals of China, India, Kenya, Philippines, Sweden/France, Syria, United Republic of Tanzania, and Venezuela (Bolivarian, Republic of). Following their initial training period at headquarters, the participants will obtain their practical experience at WHO country offices.

14. A survey of **interns** was conducted in order to obtain a clearer understanding of their experience at WHO's Secretariat and a better appreciation of their needs during their internship. Results of the survey revealed that 90% of interns were very satisfied, both with the work they had been assigned and with the supervision and guidance they were receiving. Additional information for interns is being added to the WHO web site and the department of human resources is due to prepare a roster of interns whose professional interests match the Organization's programme areas. In this work particular attention will be paid to nationals of developing countries. It is also noteworthy that, in recent years, women have outnumbered men on the internship programme.

15. In 2004, 21 **associate professional officers** joined WHO and were assigned to headquarters and regional and country offices. It is expected that the number of new associate professional officers joining in 2005 will increase slightly. Currently, 66% of such members of staff are women.

16. As of 31 December 2004, 161 016 external candidates had submitted applications for the vacancies advertised since the **e-recruitment system** was launched in December 2002. Details are set out in Annex 3.

17. Rosters of candidates have been developed within the e-recruitment system, together with an inventory of the skills of serving staff. These make it possible to search for scarce skills and identify the right profiles for short-term vacancies and emergency needs. The rosters also permit more cost-effective candidate searches in relation to unrepresented and underrepresented Member States and to sex.

18. A WHO global competency model has been established and it was decided that the model should be introduced into the selection process. Proposals were invited for a learning programme on techniques in **competency-based interviewing** and a company has been selected to provide the training, which will begin in mid-2005. In the meantime, human resources staff from all parts of the Secretariat received training in competency-based interviewing at WHO's most recent global human resources meeting (Tunis, June 2004).

19. The project aims to introduce and formalize the use of competency-based interviews, which offer greater accuracy in predicting a candidate's job performance, using knowledge of how particular tasks have been performed in the past. As part of this effort, staff involved in selection panels and in the selection process itself also need to be provided with the necessary tools and skills to make them more effective interviewers. The tools, based on best practice, will include curricula for several types of workshops, learning materials (including videos of case studies) and an interview reference guide. Selected WHO staff will be trained to facilitate the smooth running of the workshops so that the Secretariat can become self-sufficient in this area.

20. In March 2004, the Director-General advised his senior staff of the need to ensure compliance with resolutions WHA56.17 and WHA56.35, stressing that efforts should be redoubled both to improve the representation of nationals of developing countries within the Organization and to achieve the target of parity in gender distribution among professional staff.

21. With respect to fixed-term appointments, the Director-General confirmed that there were two targets, namely: a target of 6 out of every 10 consecutive selections at headquarters or regional offices to professional and higher posts to involve nationals of **unrepresented or underrepresented countries**, and a target of no more than two candidates from any group of 10 selections to be from countries above the maximum of their range of representation.

22. Between January and December 2004, of 195 selections to fixed-term professional posts, 86 (44%) were from unrepresented or underrepresented countries or countries within their range of representation but below the midpoint; the remaining 109 (56%) were nationals either of countries at or above the midpoint of their range or of those above the maximum of their range. A total of 79 nationals of developing countries were selected during this period (see Annex 4). The idea of extending similar targets to the selections of temporary staff is under consideration. A “scorecard” is being prepared to measure the success of the Secretariat in meeting the objectives set out in resolutions WHA56.17 and WHA56.35.

ANNEX 1

TARGETED RECRUITMENT: WHO COLLABORATING CENTRES CONTACTED¹

Africa	Number of centres contacted	The Americas	Number of centres contacted	South-East Asia	Number of centres contacted	Europe	Number of centres contacted	Eastern Mediterranean	Number of centres contacted	Western Pacific	Number of centres contacted
Algeria	1	Argentina	11	Bangladesh	2	Armenia	2	Bahrain	1	Australia	46
Botswana	1	Brazil	23	India	34	Austria	1	Egypt	7	China	55
Burkina Faso	1	Canada	30	Indonesia	6	Belarus	1	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	7	Japan	33
Central African Republic	1	Chile	4	Myanmar	1	Belgium	12	Jordan	3	Malaysia	6
Kenya	3	Colombia	8	Nepal	1	Bulgaria	3	Kuwait	1	Mongolia	1
Madagascar	1	Cuba	8	Sri Lanka	2	Croatia	1	Morocco	1	New Zealand	3
Malawi	1	El Salvador	1	Thailand	20	Cyprus	1	Oman	1	Papua New Guinea	1
Mali	1	Guatemala	1			Czech Republic	6	Pakistan	7	Philippines	4
Nigeria	2	Jamaica	1			Denmark	20	Saudi Arabia	2	Republic of Korea	18
Senegal	2	Mexico	6			Finland	14	Syrian Arab Republic	1	Singapore	10
South Africa	11	Peru	2			France	35	Tunisia	6	Viet Nam	2
United Republic of Tanzania	3	United States of America	135			Georgia	1				
Zambia	1	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	4			Germany	32				
Zimbabwe	2					Greece	3				
						Hungary	6				
						Ireland	2				
						Israel	5				
						Italy	32				
						Kazakhstan	1				
						Latvia	1				
						Lithuania	2				
						Luxembourg	1				
						Netherlands	20				
						Norway	6				
						Poland	7				
						Russian Federation	36				
						Serbia and Montenegro	1				
						Slovakia	1				
						Slovenia	4				
						Spain	9				
						Sweden	20				
						Switzerland	15				
						The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	1				
						Turkey	1				
						Ukraine	2				
						United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	60				

¹ The table shows the number of collaborating centres contacted in and shortly after May 2004; some collaborating centres may have subsequently been discontinued. Only those collaborating centres with a valid e-mail address were contacted.

ANNEX 2

TARGETED RECRUITMENT:
1. COUNTRY-SPECIFIC INSTITUTIONS CONTACTED¹

Member State	Number of institutions contacted
Armenia	1
Azerbaijan	31
Belarus	1
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1
Bulgaria	5
Croatia	2
Cyprus	6
Czech Republic	1
Estonia	3
Georgia	1
Germany	3
Greece	1
Hungary	4
Iceland	1
Israel	2
Kazakhstan	6
Kyrgyzstan	1
Latvia	8
Lithuania	3
Malta	1
Poland	31
Romania	1
Russian Federation	26
Slovakia	6
Slovenia	4
Spain	2
Uzbekistan	4

¹ Contacts provided by the WHO European Region and the WHO Representative, Russian Federation.

TARGETED RECRUITMENT: 2. NON-COUNTRY SPECIFIC INSTITUTIONS CONTACTED

International nongovernmental organizations

AfriHealth

African and Middle Eastern Nursing Organisation (31 members contacted)

American Psychological Association

American Public Health Association

Asociación Latinoamericana y del Caribe de Educación en Salud Pública (40 members contacted)

Health and Human Development Programs (25 members contacted)

International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities

International Council of Nurses (almost 100 members contacted)

International Hospital Federation

International Pharmaceutical Federation (56 members contacted)

Public Services International

The Association of Schools of Public Health of the European Region

The Network: Towards Unity for Health (113 members contacted)

tropEd (24 members contacted)

World Medical Association (89 members contacted)

Women's Health Project

World Federation for Medical Education (28 members contacted)

Copenhagen-Lund University Centre for International Medical Education (22 members contacted)

World Federation of Public Health Associations

Internet platforms

DevNetJobs.org

OneWorld.net

The Development Executive Group

International Job Centre

ANNEX 3

**EXTERNAL APPLICANTS CATEGORIZED BY COUNTRY AND
GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION**

Country	Geographical grouping	Number of applicants
Afghanistan	B2	269
Albania	B1	471
Algeria	B2	569
Andorra	A	1
Angola	B2	81
Antigua and Barbuda	A	10
Argentina	A	828
Armenia	B1	641
Australia	C	1 862
Austria	B1	689
Azerbaijan	B1	291
Bahamas	B1	45
Bahrain	B1	28
Bangladesh	B2	2 771
Barbados	A	43
Belarus	B1	161
Belgium	C	1 563
Belize	A	30
Benin	B2	605
Bhutan	B1	63
Bolivia	B2	191
Bosnia and Herzegovina	A	361
Botswana	B2	137
Brazil	B2	1 612
Brunei Darussalam	A	4
Bulgaria	B1	663
Burkina Faso	C	624
Burundi	B2	256

A = unrepresented and underrepresented countries.

B1 = countries within their range but below midpoint.

B2 = countries at or above midpoint of range, including those at the maximum of their range.

C = countries above the maximum of their range.

Country	Geographical grouping	Number of applicants
Cambodia	B1	53
Cameroon	C	1 679
Canada	C	6 994
Cape Verde	B1	30
Central African Republic	B1	131
Chad	B1	127
Chile	B2	228
China	A	1 251
Colombia	C	862
Comoros	A	60
Congo	C	1 345
Cook Islands	A	12
Costa Rica	B1	226
Côte d'Ivoire	C	1 117
Croatia	B1	273
Cuba	B2	301
Cyprus	B1	114
Czech Republic	B1	288
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	B1	2
Democratic Republic of the Congo	B2	1 212
Denmark	C	1 007
Djibouti	B1	33
Dominica	A	43
Dominican Republic	B2	84
Ecuador	B2	191
Egypt	C	3 925
El Salvador	B2	154
Equatorial Guinea	B1	23
Eritrea	B1	130
Estonia	B1	140
Ethiopia	B2	1 351
Fiji	B1	102
Finland	B2	477
France	C	7 580
Gabon	B1	91
Gambia	C	374
Georgia	B1	490

Country	Geographical grouping	Number of applicants
Germany	A	2 687
Ghana	C	1 897
Greece	B1	542
Grenada	A	22
Guatemala	B1	143
Guinea	B2	397
Guinea-Bissau	B1	37
Guyana	B2	95
Haiti	A	322
Honduras	B1	103
Hungary	B1	250
Iceland	B1	74
India	C	17 938
Indonesia	B1	581
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	B1	692
Iraq	B1	569
Ireland	C	769
Israel	A	323
Italy	B2	3 497
Jamaica	B1	310
Japan	A	1 044
Jordan	C	674
Kazakhstan	B1	245
Kenya	C	3 662
Kiribati	A	5
Kuwait	B1	33
Kyrgyzstan	B1	133
Lao People's Democratic Republic	B1	25
Latvia	B1	80
Lebanon	B2	771
Lesotho	A	126
Liberia	B1	276
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	B1	74
Lithuania	B1	135
Luxembourg	A	41
Madagascar	B2	293
Malawi	B2	362

Country	Geographical grouping	Number of applicants
Malaysia	B2	741
Maldives	B1	48
Mali	C	306
Malta	B1	208
Marshall Islands	A	54
Mauritania	B2	182
Mauritius	B2	291
Mexico	A	778
Micronesia (Federated States of)	A	2
Monaco	A	2
Mongolia	B1	237
Morocco	B1	733
Mozambique	B1	64
Myanmar	C	594
Namibia	B1	144
Nauru	A	0
Nepal	B2	1 317
Netherlands	C	1 271
New Zealand	C	483
Nicaragua	B1	132
Niger	B2	369
Nigeria	B2	6 357
Niue	A	0
Norway	B1	401
Oman	A	16
Pakistan	B1	4 345
Palau (Republic of)	A	2
Panama	B2	156
Papua New Guinea	A	50
Paraguay	B1	43
Peru	B1	827
Philippines	C	6 353
Poland	B1	583
Portugal	A	736
Puerto Rico ^a	A	13
Qatar	A	0
Republic of Korea	A	503

Country	Geographical grouping	Number of applicants
Republic of Moldova	B1	281
Romania	B1	1 085
Russian Federation	B2	1 263
Rwanda	C	484
Saint Kitts and Nevis	A	4
Saint Lucia	A	115
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	A	32
Samoa	A	7
San Marino	A	1
Sao Tome and Principe	A	45
Saudi Arabia	A	78
Senegal	C	988
Serbia and Montenegro	B1	605
Seychelles	B1	53
Sierra Leone	B2	274
Singapore	A	245
Slovakia	B1	220
Slovenia	B1	159
Solomon Islands	B1	1
Somalia	B2	246
South Africa	B2	1 068
Spain	A	2 482
Sri Lanka	B2	976
Sudan	C	1 229
Suriname	A	11
Swaziland	A	91
Sweden	B2	1 054
Switzerland	B2	3 016
Syrian Arab Republic	B2	168
Tajikistan	A	172
Thailand	B2	336
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	A	391
Timor-Leste	A	7
Togo	B2	469
Tokelau ^a	A	0
Tonga	A	35
Trinidad and Tobago	B2	318

Country	Geographical grouping	Number of applicants
Tunisia	C	626
Turkey	B1	644
Turkmenistan	B1	116
Tuvalu	A	3
Uganda	B2	1 743
Ukraine	A	648
United Arab Emirates	A	23
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	C	4 089
United Republic of Tanzania	B2	950
United States of America	B1	15 327
Uruguay	B2	215
Uzbekistan	A	279
Vanuatu	A	7
Vatican ^b		4
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	B1	926
Viet Nam	A	145
Yemen	B1	234
Zambia	C	752
Zimbabwe	B2	1 339

^a Associate Member.

^b Not a Member State.

ANNEX 4

SELECTIONS TO PROFESSIONAL POSTS SUBJECT TO GEOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION¹

(1 JANUARY TO 31 DECEMBER 2004)

	A	Developing countries	B1	Developing countries	B2	Developing countries	C	Developing countries	Total	M	F
Regional offices											
Africa	1	0	7	5	14	12	6	6	28	18	10
The Americas	8	1	9	6	9	5	5	3	31	19	12
South-East Asia	0	0	4	2	9	6	6	2	19	13	6
Europe	4	4	3	1	5	3	6	0	18	10	8
Eastern Mediterranean	1	0	1	1	6	3	3	1	11	7	4
Western Pacific	5	2	5	1	4	1	3	0	17	11	6
Subtotal	19		29		47		29		124	78	46
Headquarters											
Polio Eradication	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Communicable Diseases	4	1	3	0	0	0	7	2	14	7	7
External Relations and Governing Bodies	0		0		0		1		1	1	0
Evidence and Information for Policy	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	3	1	2
Family and Community Health	2	1	7	1	0	0	2	0	11	4	7
General Management	3	0	4	0	3	1	1	0	11	3	8
HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria	1	0	0	0	1	1	5	1	7	2	5
Health Technology and Pharmaceuticals	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	3	1	2
Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health	0	0	4	0	1	1	3	1	8	2	6
Sustainable Development and Healthy Environments	5	3	3	0	0	0	4	0	12	7	5
Subtotal	16		22		8		25		71	28	43
2004 TOTAL	35	12	51	17	55	34	54	16	195	106	89
<i>2003 TOTAL</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>76</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>218</i>	<i>146</i>	<i>72</i>

M = male, F = female.

A = unrepresented and underrepresented countries. B1 = countries within their range but below midpoint. B2 = countries at or above midpoint of range, including those at the maximum of their range. C = countries above the maximum of their range.

¹ Excludes selection of staff previously geographically counted.