

ILO STAFF UNION

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING **SECOND SESSION**

17 OCTOBER 2024

Annual Report of the ILO Staff Union Committee
for the year 2024



ILO Staff Union Committee Annual Report for the year 2024

Introduction

The Staff Union Committee is pleased to present to you an overview of all its activities for the year 2024, our last year in our current 5-year strategy, as we are heading towards the Global Meeting next year in 2025.

We have been making progress over the year on the two broad areas that were identified in our programme of activities for this year, during the first Annual General Meeting:

In terms of collective bargaining and ensuring the respect, promotion and improvements of working conditions for colleagues: we have made progress through our negotiations with the Administration, in particular with a new collective agreement on recruitment and selection, and with new measures regarding career development, alignment of contractual conditions for all colleagues, irrespective of the source of funding. We are expecting further results in the weeks ahead, and hopefully before our next AGM in February. We have still lots to be done to live up to the expectations of our colleagues, ensure that indeed the ILO “walk the talk” on the conditions of work of its staff, and that we ensure that the ILO is a safeguard of the international civil service principles and values.

We have conducted a very intensive programme of training and communication campaigns to continue strengthening our internal structures to better represent and defend you. This has been done through training being offered to newly elected representatives, monthly sessions on different topics for our representatives in various offices/regions. We have also launched some new videos on specific topics.

We wanted 2024 to be marked by people first and foremost. We still need more humane interpersonal relations in our workplaces. We need a caring Union that supports colleagues in times of difficulties and celebrates success together. A number of Union activities this year have been implemented to ensure that you know we are here for you, hoping that you feel proud of your Union.

The Staff Union is your Union, we are listening to your suggestions, we depend on your support, and we await your feedback and suggestions on the progress made but also the challenges that we have encountered.

<p style="text-align: center;">OUR VISION, OUR MISSION, OUR OBJECTIVES AND MEANS OF ACTION 2020-2025</p>

VISION

A global Staff Union, at the dawn of its second Centenary, which accompanies the transformation of the ILO and ensures a decent work environment, by representing all staff* as an equal and strong partner in social dialogue.

MISSION

**We promote social justice, equity and equality for all staff* in order to have ONE
ILO
by:**

- mobilizing and organizing for an even stronger and better equipped Staff Union;
- safeguarding and improving decent working and employment conditions for all ILO staff;
- negotiating fair, transparent and effective collective agreements with the Administration

*“All staff” includes all, without distinction whatsoever.

Part 1 – Objectives and priority areas of action for 2020 - 2025

Industrial relations:

- ✓ *Ensure sustainable well-functioning social dialogue and collective bargaining through the effective implementation of the Recognition and Procedural Agreement (2000).*

Job security:

- ✓ *Negotiation of a protective, fair and inclusive contract policy to put an end to recurring precariousness and reduce disparity between different types of contracts,*
- ✓ *Working for a fair and standardized joint recruitment process for all staff through improving or creating joint bodies for mobility and redeployment.*

A career development path for all staff:

- ✓ *A fair and transparent performance appraisal system - with equal access to the staff development fund - and connected to adequate training*
- ✓ *A negotiated and adequate job classification process*
- ✓ *A fair recruitment and mobility system that respects staff diversity*
- ✓ *A transparent rewarding mechanism.*

Enhancement of staff security, Occupational safety and Health and both physical and mental health and well-being for all ILO staff around the world:

- ✓ *in the context of multifaceted crises and ensure equal treatment of all staff as well as support crisis response initiatives in fragile contexts*

Full social protection:

- ✓ *Ensure effective, efficient and sustainable health care and pension funds,*
- ✓ *Advocate for and negotiate the creation of unemployment and maternity / paternity / parental insurance schemes.*

A diverse, inclusive, equal and equitable workplace:

- ✓ *Through combating all forms of discrimination, and promoting an ILO free from violence and harassment: Drawing inspiration from recently adopted C.190 and aligning with UN system wide rules and regulations against all forms of violence and harassment at work.*

Protection of the independence of the international civil service:

- ✓ *Defend and support the exclusively international character of the staff (Article 9, paragraphs 4 and 5, of the ILO Constitution), promote its impartiality and defend the integrity and independence of ILOAT.*

An even stronger and better equipped Union:

- ✓ *Maintaining and expanding our membership, enhancing solidarity, strengthening capacities of Union representatives*
- ✓ *Improving internal operations, communication and coherence in its actions.*

Part 2 – Objectives for 2024

I. Industrial relations

Objective: To ensure sustainable and efficient social dialogue and collective bargaining through the effective implementation of the Recognition and Procedural Agreement (2000).

Means of action

- Making sure, in the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC), that every decision or proposal coming from the ILO Administration is based on substantiated information and is subject to consultation or negotiation if necessary.
- Ensure implementation of the JNC's annual work plan, monitoring timelines, deadlines, and terms of reference for each negotiation to ensure that they are undertaken with a common-interest approach.
- Finalizing ongoing negotiations (mobility, alignment of working conditions irrespective of contract funding sources, contractual framework, employment of people with disabilities, violence and harassment, review of the job descriptions, SST), monitoring ongoing policies and ensuring their validity (in particular parental leave and flexible working arrangements).
- Strengthening the negotiating skills of staff representatives.

Joint Chair of the Joint Negotiating Committee: Séverine Deboos

Joint Secretaries: Sophie Guerre Chaillet, Andrew Christian

Members: Harvey Addo-Yobo, Carlos Carrión-Crespo, Maria Elena Lopez, Thierry Kouame

Technical Advisers: The Staff Union Legal Adviser and all the members of the Committee, according to the subject on the agenda of the Joint Negotiating Committee

- The Staff Union and the Administration, in the framework of the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC), are working on implementing the joint action programme with agreed priorities.
- The priorities agreed for 2024 were agreed as follows: (1) within the Memorandum of Understanding signed in October 2023 with a joint commitment to work on a series of measures related to mobility and alignment of working conditions, irrespective of the source of funding; (2) finalization of a new policy on employment of persons with disability and staff with dependants with disabilities; (3) review of the Compensation Committee procedures; (4) finalization of the IGDS on OSH in the ILO; (5) revision of the collective agreement on violence and harassment at work; (6) continuation of the review of the generic job descriptions for Professional job families and GS categories in HQ; (7) revision of the Annex to the Recognition Agreement. The JNC also agreed on the requirement to start reviewing implementation of the flexible working arrangements (FWA) policy and monitor the other policies signed the previous year.
- Progress has been made in the areas of mobility, alignment of working conditions for staff irrespective of source of funding (see parts on recruitment and selection, career development and contracts). Progress has, however, been slow in the other areas – besides the agreement on the revision of the Annex to the Recognition Agreement. More details on progress achieved on the respective items for negotiations are included in the relevant thematic chapters of this report.
- It should be noted overall that the pace of negotiations has been very intense. Throughout the year, the Staff Union has been calling for realistic deadlines and taking all efforts to ensure that required consultations could be conducted before making commitments, while at the

same time acknowledging that a number of issues on the table are of high priority for staff and have been stalled for a while.

- While the overall social dialogue climate has been constructive and sustained, with keeping the interest-based approach central in the negotiations, the Staff Union had to raise concerns that some issues were left hanging, due to lack of commitment and/or lack of appropriate resource allocation.
- The Staff Union has also continued to raise concerns repeatedly throughout the year on the restructuring and organizational changes that were put in motion upon the arrival of the DG, the lack of transparency, diversity promotion, and recruitment and selection.
- The Staff Union Committee has strengthened its negotiating capacity by regularly informing and including Committee members in the various negotiations or through working groups, with the old hands leading the new, and organizing capacity-building activities for Committee members, local representatives and union stewards.

II. *Job security*

A – Recruitment and selection

Objective: Advocate for a recruitment and selection process that is both equitable and transparent, so as to strengthen the collective agreement on mobility and recruitment by focusing on **career mobility, career development, greater motivation and job satisfaction_ensured at both headquarters and at the country offices level.**

Means of action

- The Staff Union Committee’s review of job vacancies aims at ensuring that **job descriptions are objective**, in accordance with the existing and current Negotiated GJDs and offer a real possibility of career development of already employed ILO officials including at the field and the country offices level.
- Within the career development framework, the SUC will work on a proposal for the improvement of the current mobility policy/practice, as per agreement reached following the JNC retreat of October 2023. We will take into consideration the results of the staff survey on mobility of August 2023.
- The Committee is convinced of the importance for the Organization of a system of recruitment that seeks a broader and more **authentic diversity** of staff while at the same time respecting Article 100 of the United Nations Charter, the Declaration of Philadelphia and the Staff Regulations. It is on this basis that the Committee is participating, jointly with HRD, in the review and update of the current generic job descriptions for the Professional and GS job families at Headquarters.
- The Staff Union is assisted in its work by the presence of two of its representatives on the Recruitment, Assignment and Mobility Committee (**RAMC**). Its efforts are based on strict observance of the recruitment and selection procedures and of the principles of transparency, on following standard procedures and on just and fair treatment. Particular attention is paid to the recruitment of internal candidates so as to offer them an opportunity of career development, and of TC+5s so that they can benefit from employment security, as well as to a knowledge of more than one language so as **to promote French and Spanish** and thereby the interests of the Organization’s truly multicultural nature.
- If it is to carry out this crucial work successfully, the Committee must make a point of establishing good relations with the appointed **independent members of the technical panels**. The objective will be to share the working parties’ experience, to offer practical advice and to

devise ways for them to fulfil their responsibilities properly, as far as possible in conjunction with the Human Resources Development.

- Besides the normal involvement of ILO staff representatives, the staff union will bring to the attention of the Administration any recruitment or selection issues affecting officials, more particularly concerning short-term contracts. The Staff Union is reviewing recruitment and selection procedures in the field in order to negotiate a coherent and fair agreement.
- Implement, by negotiating, the agreements reached in principle at the JNC retreat of October 2023.
- The Committee will emphasize the need to ensure fair union representation within recruitment panels. It will advocate for a uniform approach, where all union representatives will either be full members or observers. The objective is to avoid any form of discrimination and promote complete transparency in the selection process. It will be underscored that this decision should not be left to the discretion of regional directors and/or field office directors.

Titular Member of the Recruitment, Assignment and Mobility Committee (RAMC): Carlos Carrión-Crespo

Technical Adviser: Manuel Céspedes Ocampo

Substitute: Séverine Deboos

Coordinators of the working group on recruitment and selection: Manuel Céspedes Ocampo, Ana Catalina Ramirez

Members: Harvey Addo-Yobo, Christine Bader, Carlos Carrión-Crespo, Séverine Deboos, Zoltán Gegeny, Yousra Hamed, Carlos de Magalhaes Tome, Yuka Okumura, Pelin Sekerler Richiardi

Achievements:

- 2024 has also been an eventful year. Last February, the SUC and the Administration signed the collective agreement on a Procedure for Recruitment and Selection. The agreement includes negotiated provisions to ensure that colleagues may apply in a competition as an internal candidate not only after the successful completion of the probationary period, but also after the completion of five years of continuous services. The fact that stage 2 only applies to geographical (not anymore functional) mobility is an important change that facilitates transfer between duty stations, and creates more opportunities for career evolution (under stage 3).
- The SUC is participating in the ongoing negotiations with the Administration, on mobility, with the aim for improvement of the current mobility policy/practice. Related IGDSs on mobility and career development opportunities (including temporary assignments and detachments to DC projects or programmes) should be completed before the end of the year.
- The SUC are following-up with HRD on a training session for new **independent panel members (IPM) of the technical panels**. The SUC also offers practical advice to fulfil their responsibilities.
- In 2024, the SUC continued to play an important role in the Recruitment, Assignment and Mobility Committee (RAMC). The RAMC met ten times in connection with General Service (GS) and P competition sessions. In the RAMC meetings, the SUC representatives do their best to reach a consensus on the basis of SUC views. When consensus is not possible, a separate recommendation by the SUC is made. The latter is capital when colleagues decide to appeal, as the Joint Advisory Appeals Board (JAAB) will be able to know the Staff Union's position as regards a competition.
- The SUC actively participates in the recruitment process, starting with the review of Job descriptions (JDs) for the RAPS and for GS competitions – around 60 JDs have been reviewed by the Staff Union so far. The SUC aims at ensuring that vacant positions are real career opportunities for qualified colleagues.

The Staff Union representatives are extremely vigilant in the review of job descriptions (JDs), as well as at each of the three (3) procedural stages in the filling of vacancies (see also Annex I of the Staff Regulations): Direct selection for humanitarian/legal obligations (Stage 1), transfers through geographical mobility (stage 2) and competition (stage 3).

Challenges ahead:

The SUC takes very seriously the complaints from colleagues who were unsuccessful applicants for positions filled at the three stages of the recruitment process. Ensuring confidentiality, the SUC has shared staff concerns with HRD and other RAMC members.

The DG occasionally diverts from the recommendations of the RAMC without justification, and the RAMC has requested written explanations in order to protect staff members' right to appeal.

The SUC noticed once again the confirmation of the trend of the decrease and downgrade of General Service and Professional positions being advertised. The career development for ILO colleagues remains a challenge.

The SUC continues to fight the recurrent issue of English-language bias in many JDs, with a trend to exclude many potential better-qualified candidates for the benefit of English-speaking candidates, which in the SUC's view is unacceptable in a multilingual organization.

The SUC participates in the review by HRD of the generic job descriptions (GJDs) for General Service staff at headquarters and the Professional category. Within the new collective agreement framework, our aim remains real career development opportunities for colleagues.

Within the current negotiations with the Administration on a Contracts Policy and Mobility, the SUC aim is to improve the recruitment and mobility procedure so that career development and diversity really do become a hallmark of the Organization.

The Staff Union's advice when participating in the review of recruitment and selection procedures in the field is key in order to negotiate coherent and fair agreements.

B – Contracts and employment security

Objective: To safeguard and promote job security and working conditions, particularly during ongoing or forthcoming negotiations with the ILO Administration, irrespective of the contractual status of staff, in order to give effect to the vision of “One ILO.” To take necessary measures to eliminate all forms of precariousness and seek to achieve greater equality and equal treatment between the different categories of staff (RB-DC, P-G, Headquarters-Field).

Promote equality of treatment between staff on technical cooperation contracts (TC staff) – including PSI – (“Cooperation for Development” in the Administration's terminology) and staff on regular budget in all current or future negotiations with the Administration, in order to make the “One ILO” vision a reality. Defend with the Administration equal rights for staff performing equivalent functions and promote equivalent salaries, in the spirit of ILO Convention No. 111 condemning all forms of discrimination between workers, presented by the case law of the tribunal (ILOAT) as a fundamental principle of the working framework for civil servants. Promote career prospects and continuity for staff on TC contracts.

Priority areas include:

1. Defending existing jobs and working conditions in the context of current and future challenges: potential budget restrictions, constant search for increasingly flexible types of contracts, continuous changes and innovations used as an excuse to reduce workforce numbers, with considering in particular:
Successful outcomes of contract negotiations focusing on three main elements:
 - Maintaining social gains that are organization-specific, such as sustainable contracts,
 - Aligning the contractual conditions of staff under the technical cooperation budget with those of staff financed by the regular budget, including in terms of recruitment, career development, performance recognition and access to training and their implementation.
 - Promoting a contractual framework that guarantees long-term equal treatment for the organisation's staff, whatever the source of funding.
2. Follow-up on the contract policy negotiations on the basis of the MoU signed jointly by the Administration and the Staff Union in October 2023 enabling:
 - Equality of opportunity and treatment for all staff notwithstanding the source of funds
 - Job security for all.

Means of action

Following the MoU signed in October 2023 with the Administration and in order to implement the alignment of contractual conditions, the TC group will merge with the contract group to support the continuation of negotiations and the concrete application of the results obtained in a strengthened and coordinated manner.

- Inform the Staff Union position, strategy and results for the negotiation on the contract policy and participate in the negotiation team for a new contract policy.
- Closely cooperating with all Staff Union members with different contractual situations, in order to ensure that their views and interests are fully taken into account.
- In coordination with the legal support group, supporting the Staff Union’s position on the contract policy with an appropriate strategy and legal arguments.

Coordinators: Laurence Dubois, Guillaume Filhon

Members: Harvey Addo-Yobo, Séverine Deboos, Zoltán Gegeny, Simon Hills, Ambra Migliore, Yuka Okumura

The Staff Union has worked throughout the year to defend the existing jobs of colleagues, irrespective of their grade, location, or funding source, at the individual and the collective level, according to the rules in force and whatever their type of contract or/and source of funding of the contracts. The Staff Union has supported the actions of colleagues in end-of-contract situations, both at headquarters and in the field, including for colleagues that were in precarious conditions in duty stations in crisis.

The actions undertaken by the Staff Union under this objective are being aligned and implemented in line with the objectives identified through the technical cooperation working group in the past and the results of the 2022 survey – see the relevant resources [here](#).

The Staff Union has been guided in the negotiation by the aspirational principles established as a basis for an interest-based negotiation in 2023:

The Staff Union:

- Supports the vision that the ILO should set the example for employment conditions globally, equal treatment being the core element in them. The Organization itself must “walk the talk” and be a beacon for better work relations now and in the future.
- Supports the vision that aligning conditions of work must enhance and strengthen the position of the ILO as a reliable and fair employer. This will allow the ILO to retain and attract highly qualified staff by offering promising career development paths for all.
- Aspires to renew the vision of contracts of the ILO, to take into consideration the evolution of staff demographics, including that a majority of staff work to deliver technical cooperation activities financed by non-regular budget allocations worldwide.
- Is convinced that the source of funding for a contract should not entail differences in the employment relationship between staff and the ILO.
- Affirms that all staff deliver on the ILO mandate and their contribution should be considered equally, and not being differentiated because of a difference in source of funding.
- Considers that the scope of the unequal treatment of TC staff is unsustainable, unacceptable under the fundamental principles and rights at work, creating precarity, demoralizing, and harmful to the ILO. It is further a threat to solidarity and sound collaboration and creates a divide between colleagues and constitutes a managerial threat potentially leading to case law against the ILO as employer.
- Will support an agreement which should not lead to compromising acquired rights for colleagues and should aim at improvements as a whole, protecting the values and principles of international servants – levelling up, not levelling down.
- Considers that employment security should accompany properly-conceived appointments without limit of time, and taking into account length of service is key to ensure loyalty and independence of staff.

Based on the MoU signed in 2023, the Staff Union has been negotiating the following measures related to alignment of contractual status and contractual policy. The measures on mobility have also taken into account issues related to alignment for all staff irrespective of source of funding as well as considerations related to needs of members in diverse locations (Field – HQ), different categories (GS, NO; P), and diversity in all its dimensions:

Regarding mobility:

Extend timeframe up to 4 years for FT contract/direct selection (to cover mobility-related aspects) – article 4.2(e).

Revision of stage 2 modalities under Annex 1 on recruitment and selection: focus on geographical mobility, priority to hardship D and E and additional selection modalities.

Revision of IGDS on Mobility, in particular for temporary geographical mobility for locally recruited staff.

Review of assessment centre modalities.

Regarding alignment and contract:

Definition of “internal candidates” under Annex 1 to include all serving staff with 5 years of continuous service.

2 year contract duration.

Re-deployment mechanism at end of assignment.

Assessment centre as a development tool for all staff.

The following measures were still under negotiation at the time of the elaboration of the report:

Recognition of seniority following contract breaks.

Review titularization procedures and current WLT quotas following the establishment of a baseline.

Review termination conditions for WLT: align wording of current provisions with current operational budget system, introduce a redeployment mechanism in case of unilateral termination and review termination indemnity.

Review contract modalities with a view to aligning with RB funded staff for staff in ISSA, TRIB and ongoing support positions fully funded by PSI.

Introduce longer notice period for all Fixed Term contracts (3 months).

Improve DC staff access to/awareness of staff development opportunities, including exploring funding modalities.

Review the award system: Introduce merit bonus (details to be further discussed) applicable to all staff instead of merit increments and review the personal promotions.

Abrogate Branch Office Rules and align with the Staff regulations applicable to all staff.

Review conditions for non-local recruitment of ST staff (Rule 2.2 of the Rules Governing employment of Short-Term Officials).

The Staff Union has also monitored the implementation of the agreed measures to ensure their enforcement, raising concerns when necessary, with the Administration on bottlenecks and specific issues, and discussion of remedial measures.

With a view to ensure that rights and interests of all staff members are taken into consideration, the Staff Union negotiating team has been meeting on a weekly basis internally. Negotiations have been held with the Administration, with two intensive weeks looking at track 1 measures in January and track 2 in August followed up with dedicated meetings throughout the year.

The Staff Union has reported on progress through information sessions with representatives in the field, through the report and Questions and Answers at the First Session of the AGM, monthly broadcasts, and Committee meetings with the Director-General.

III – A career development path for all

A – Personal promotions and reclassification

Objectives:

- To ensure that the personal promotion machinery is inclusive, transparent and equitable.
- To ensure that the global reclassification exercise in the field is executed, and Independent Review Groups are established and active in all regions for the examination of job grade review appeals.

Means of action

- Participating in the joint committee on personal promotions, and legal action where appropriate;
- Ensuring that the implementation of the reclassification exercise in the field provides equal opportunities for all;
- Assisting the JNC when needed;
- Negotiate the implementation of the agreements in principle reached at the October 2023 bargaining retreat regarding rewards and recognition.

Coordinator of the working group on career development: Séverine Deboos

Member: Carlos Carrión-Crespo

As you can see in the defined objectives, the personal promotion covers several areas.

The joint group on personal promotions has finalized the 2023 exercise for all staff.

The Staff Union has provided support to colleagues who have asked for review of the reclassification exercise, both in headquarters and in the field.

The harmonization of the recruitment and selection process is also an important matter to ensure equity and transparency, and has been placed in the list of top priorities in the JNC. The Staff Union and the Administration have agreed on the review of job descriptions (JDs) for technical and evaluation officials in headquarters, and are currently reviewing the JDs for G staff in headquarters. Other job families will be reviewed afterwards. The new JDs will replace the old dual-description system, and will allow staff to discuss with their managers on the specific areas for specialization. Additional tasks will need to be discussed between the Administration and the Staff union, to avoid unilateral impositions on the part of managers.

The titularization exercise for all staff is up to date.

B – Training policy and performance management

Objectives:

- To ensure that staff concerns are taken into account in ILO training and in the performance management system of the ILO;
- To ensure that training and performance management policies are implemented in a fair and transparent manner, including through a review of the Reports Board procedures;
- To promote career development through the training policy;
- To ensure that the implementation of the new job descriptions in the field is fair to all staff;
- To ensure that the review and implementation of job descriptions in Headquarters is fair to all staff; and
- To ensure that the skills-mapping exercise does not impact the PMF and promotes adequate use of the staff development funds.

Means of action

Training policy

- Framing the priorities to be implemented by the training policy in line with the needs of staff at all levels and categories in an equitable manner, to support mobility and career development, in the framework of the JNC;
- Seeking the reactivation of the Joint Training Council so that the Staff Union has a voice in the use of Staff Development Funds, the impact of training expenditure and the assessment of how proposed training programmes satisfy staff members' needs and requests, especially in a mobility context.

Performance management

- Taking into account the staff's concerns regarding the implementation of the performance management framework (PMF);
- Ensuring that the PMF supports the career progression of staff.

Co-chair of the Joint Training Council: Séverine Deboos

Member of the Joint Training Council: Carlos Carrión-Crespo

Training policy: After several years of hiatus, the Joint Training Council (JTC) discussed in 2021 the proposed ILO learning strategy. However, the Administration has not resubmitted it for discussions while the skills-mapping exercise takes place. In the JTC, the Staff Union should have a voice in the use of Staff Development Funds, the impact of training expenditure and the assessment of how proposed training programmes satisfy staff members' needs and requests. The Staff Union will seize this opportunity to ensure that every training indicated in the appraisal reports is realized and, if not, managers should justify its absence.

Performance Management: The merit increments are tied to the performance reports and those corresponding to the past five years were published. This has increased transparency in the process, and it is now possible to point out its flaws and suggest improvements. The Staff Union has underlined its aim to preserve the interest of the staff in this exercise to ensure that the Performance Management Framework constitutes a real tool to help colleagues in their career development.

IV – Enhancement of staff security, occupational safety and health and both physical and mental health and well-being for all ILO staff around the world

Objective: With a safe and healthy working environment now being a fundamental principle and right at work, the ILO must ensure that within the Organization the OSH management system is fully operational. The ILO must walk the walk rather than just talk the talk.

Thus, the SU will continue to collaborate with the Office to ensure an effective OSH management system is operationalized in Geneva and in **all** duty stations, with OSH committees being part of this management system. As well as calling for administration accountability through strengthening Staff Union representatives' knowledge, capacity and resilience to defend the rights of staff concerning security, occupational safety and health, both physical and mental and well-being at work.

Means of action:

- Supporting the implementation of the current occupational safety and health (OSH) policy, directive and procedure (IGDS 48, IGDS 286, IGDS 385¹) through active participation in the HQ Committee on Safety and Health (COSH) promoting compliance with the actions and requirements of IGDS 385;
- In regard to the above, the SU representatives at the COSH will continue to participate in the COSH working group on the revision of IGDS No. 48, 286 and 385 with the current Administration, and will continue to advocate for the improvement of the OSH management system at the ILO;
- In addition, the SU will keep contributing to the COSH working group on mental health and well-being at work; specifically by advocating for the implementation of a component on psychosocial risks factors management into the OSH management system, as part of the ILO Action Plan on Mental Health and Well-Being at Work;
- The SU members of the COSH will continue to request that data on occupational accidents and (suspected) occupational diseases be regularly reported to the COSH as per the current IGDS No. 385, thereby enabling data to be available on issues affecting staff members and prioritization of control measures to reduce the risk;
- Reaching out to Staff Union representatives in the field offices to promote and support the creation and functioning of OSH committees and mechanisms, including, where necessary, the identification and appointment of OSH representatives;
- Contributing to capacity-building among SU representatives by developing user-friendly guidance for OSH representatives on how to fulfil their OSH duties;
- Supporting SU representatives in their crises response capacity, on matters concerning occupational safety and health in public health crises and consultation of return-to-office policies and security and well-being in fragile contexts;
- Ensuring a staff voice in the building renovation processes (planning and implementation), through Steering Committees or other consultation mechanisms, so that the highest standards on staff occupational safety and health and well-being apply during the renovation of the headquarters and field buildings, in consultation with Staff Union representatives, union stewards and focal points;
- Supporting climate- and environmentally friendly initiatives within the ILO;
- In collaboration with the Administration, ensuring that staff are kept informed of developments concerning security and occupational safety and health through communications and/or information sessions.

¹ Available on the COSH website: https://www.ilo.org/dyn/osh/intranet.home?p_lang=en

Committee on Occupational Safety and Health (COSH)**Titular members:** Ana Catalina Ramirez, Andrew Christian**Substitute member:** Thierry Kouame**Working group on occupational safety and health and environmental issues****Coordinator:** Ana Catalina Ramirez**Member:** Andrew Christian**Technical Adviser:** Vacant

The Staff Union actively participated in COSH meetings maintaining and continuing to play an active role in raising to the Administration any concern or perceived constraint that impedes the functioning of this bipartite body and of the internal OSH management system. In this regard, the Staff Union continues to engage in the revision of IGDS's 48, 286 and 385 on occupational safety and health at the Office. The new Administration did not accept the proposed revision sent to the DG in mid July 2022 and proposed the reconstitution of the COSH working group to re-revise these IGDS's. Unfortunately as at 11 September 2024 this process is still on-going to the disappointment of your safety and health representatives. The working group plans further meetings in September when it is hoped progress will be made to enable a revised version to be presented to COSH for recommendations.

As part of the representation at the COSH, the Staff Union continues to engage in the discussions on the Office Action Plan on Mental Health and Well-being. At the previous COSH meetings², the SU representatives raised the need for consultation to implement this Action Plan and urged the Administration to move forward with the risk assessment process with the involvement of safety and health representatives. The SU awaits details on timelines regarding the risk assessment process and their involvement.

In terms of communication and advice to affiliates, we continued to respond to requests from staff representatives in country offices concerning OSH issues and facilitated communication and information exchange with the ILO OSH Coordinator and the ILO Medical Service.

In addition, in 2024, the SU carried out information sessions in all regions to enhance SU representatives' knowledge on OSH related IGDS's, the risk management process and mental health and well-being at work. On 29 April, the SU commemorated the World Day on Safety and Health by holding a webinar on the realization of a safe and healthy working environment in the ILO. The webinar included the participation of the ADG/CS, tasked with the responsibility for the OSH management system within the Office, MEDSERV and field and HQ SU representatives.

Challenges to come

Notwithstanding repetitive calls from the SU on the importance of a fully functional OSH management system, progress on this remains challenging. The proposed revision of the IGDS's still have some way to go before they can be adopted. In the meantime the full implementation of the existing IGDS's on OSH will assist in ensuring a safe and healthy working environment for all. To achieve this, some key gaps need to be acted on, namely, when not in place, the constitution of fully operational OSH safety and health committees/mechanisms at the field Offices, ensuring timely consultation and involvement of SU representatives and accelerating the implementation of the Action Plan on Mental Health and Well-Being.

We would like to reiterate that creating a culture of safety and health is a long-term challenge requiring the awareness and action of everyone in their day-to-day work as well as commitment from the Administration to the active implementation of the ILO OSH policy. On your behalf, the SU will

² For more information on the COSH meetings, please refer to the minutes available [here](#).

remain vocal and vigilant to ensure that we all, Administration and staff, fulfil our responsibilities to ensure a safe and healthy working environment for all.

V – Full social protection

Objective: To ensure effective, efficient and sustainable health care and pension funds.

Means of action

- Ensuring the application of the Regulations and Administrative Rules of the Staff Health Insurance Fund, particularly with regard to the information provided to insured staff, timely publication of annual reports, etc.
- Participate in the discussions on how to avoid unnecessary administrative expenses.
- Remind each member of the need to be well informed about the management of the funds entrusted by him/her to the health and pension protection bodies. The latest exchanges concerning the management of the retirement savings of ILO staff at the UN Staff Pension Fund are a step in this direction.
- Continuing discussions with the ILO Administration to consolidate services and benefits for insured staff working in the field, in remote duty stations and technical cooperation projects. The latest discussions with SHIF on the development of services and funding are a step in this direction.
- Increasing awareness and engagement of staff with regard to health care and pension issues in order to strengthen the position of staff representatives on joint bodies. This objective will be attained through regular, close communication between the Staff Union (including the Former Officials' Section) and the insured staff representatives of the SHIF Management Committee and the representatives on the Joint Staff Pension Board. In this respect, the legitimacy of the questions asked by the staff representatives must be underlined.
- Write regular explanatory texts for the Union's blog, promoting and organizing information sessions, General Assemblies and referendums in order to ensure that any proposed changes to the structure, programme, benefits or premiums are explained clearly and fully to insured staff and other participants so that no decisions are taken without extensive consultation.

Coordinators: Guillaume Filhon, Ana Catalina Ramirez

Members: Andrew Christian, Thierry Kouame

Technical Advisers: François Kientzler, Cherry Thompson-Senior (Former Officials' Section)

Staff Health Insurance Fund Health (SHIF)

The Staff Union was active and maintained close links with the SHIF and the policy-holder representatives who have historically been close to the Union. "SHIF online", the system enabling policy-holders to make their claims online, has reached cruising speed with a positive satisfaction rate at head office and in the regional offices, but colleagues in the field are still complaining about the slowness of reimbursements and access to care sometimes made difficult by the lack of third-party payment. In this respect, an experiment has been launched in some countries in partnership with a private insurer, which will provide third-party payment before being reimbursed by SHIF. On the basis of an actuarial study carried out during the previous financial year, the representatives of the participants in the Fund did their utmost to take the best decisions to guarantee its continuity within a progressive framework negotiated with the Union. The members representing the policy-holders also took part in internal working groups to improve the Fund's governance and viability. Finally, it should be noted that the Union is regularly involved in the monitoring of delicate personal situations,

acting as an intermediary and facilitator in the follow-up of urgent reimbursements or administrative blockages that are always possible.

Pension fund

As regards the Pension Fund, the participants' representatives were present at the annual meeting. As usual, they defended the interests of ILO staff. Last year, an item on the agenda threatened the future of ILO representation on the Pension Fund's Board of Trustees, but our representatives limited the damage: elections for the renewal/replacement of staff representatives are due to take place in the next few days: remember to vote! The Pension Fund's financial situation is sound, and the outsourcing of part of its portfolio to private subcontractors that was once envisaged has been limited to a few highly technical operations. For more detailed information on the Fund, the Staff Union encourages its members to go directly to its website (<https://www.unjspf.org/newsroom/the-69th-session-of-the-un-pension-board-concludes-confirming-excellent-performance-of-the-un-pension-fund/>).

In the spring of 2022, following a CCISUA (our federation) news broadcast, the Staff Union had indeed raised significant questions and concerns with members when the Investment Management Office (IMO) of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (UNJSPF) had considered outsourcing part of the Fund and there had been concerns that such a move would compromise the security of the Pension Fund by exposing it further to volatile risk portfolios. After asking for clarification on the merits of this measure, the IOM [agreed to postpone it for three months](#) and undertook to organise further information sessions to clarify it. To date, and unless I am mistaken, no further outsourcing measures have been envisaged.

VI – A diverse, inclusive, equal and equitable workplace³

Objective: To contribute to the improvement of the working environment for all ILO officials by combating any form of discrimination, and promoting inclusion, equality and diversity whilst facilitating the pursuit of a healthy work-life balance in a workplace free from violence and harassment.

While we all uphold the common UN charter and work towards the promotion of a Decent Work Agenda for all, we all bring with us diverse perspectives, work experiences, lifestyles and cultures, which should be valued, respected and supported. The Staff Union aspires to create a working environment where diversity, equality, equity, inclusion and work-life balance is respected and leveraged to improve organizational performance and the well-being of ILO officials.

Means of action

Building upon the success of the previous year and learning from the challenges faced, the Staff Union proposes continuing to work on special mechanisms/initiatives to facilitate inclusion, diversity, equality and work-life balance.

More specifically, the working group will:

- Ensure that all negotiations – conducted under the framework of the JNC – are conducted

³ Fair, equal and equitable conditions of employment for all staff, without discrimination based on, inter alia, age, race, gender identity, gender expression, sex characteristics, sexual orientation, languages, religion, ethnicity, colour, national extraction, social origin, caste marital status, pregnancy, personal and/or family status and responsibilities, disability, HIV status, union membership or political conviction, grade, type of contract, and duty station.

through a gender equal, non-discriminatory and an intersectional lens. This will include negotiations on:

- Contract policy and mobility;
- Revision of the policy against harassment, including sexual harassment;
- Disability inclusion policy;
- And others, as relevant, and depending on the needs and decisions of the JNC.
- Actively support the promotion of respect in the workplace, including a workplace free from harassment and discrimination at HQ and in the field and in collaboration with HRD and others (Welfare Officer, MEDSERV, Ethics Officer, the Mediator and others).
- In consultation with GEDI and HRD, support the promotion of diversity and inclusion, especially the implementation of the Disability Inclusion Policy in the ILO, particularly in the areas of employment and non-discrimination.
- In collaboration with the UNGLOBE Coordinators at the ILO, support sensitization, awareness-raising, and advocacy efforts for better inclusion of LGBTIQ+ colleagues in the ILO, as well as UN policies, events and networking activities for interested colleagues.

Organize awareness-raising; information sessions; activities on International Days to exchange views/concerns and share information, knowledge and good practice and exchange with ILO Staff and Union members, in collaboration when relevant, with GEDI, FUNDAMENTALS, UN-GLOBE, the Employment Resource Group (ERG) and HRD.

Coordinator: Clara Van Panhuys

Members: Manuel Cespedes Ocampo, Andrew Christian, Séverine Deboos, Yuka Okumura

Technical Adviser: Lou Tessier

The working group continued to engage in relevant activities whenever possible to reach the objective of improving the working environment for all ILO officials by combating any form of discrimination and promoting inclusion, equality and diversity whilst facilitating the pursuit of a healthy work-life balance in a workplace free from violence and harassment.

Promoting diversity inclusion and gender equality

All Staff Union actions take into account diversity inclusion and gender equality, including in all consultations and negotiations with HRD and management. The Staff Union supports the ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality (2022-25), and advocated for more inclusive terms of reference for the ILO Gender Focal Points and Coordinators for a broader participation of field staff, colleagues irrespective of their source of funding, or grades, thus better reflecting ILO staff. The Staff Union reiterated the importance to ensure gender equality among ILO staff, in particular for P5 staff and above where equality is far from being achieved.

This year to celebrate International Women’s Day, your Staff Union organized a virtual discussion on 7 March to provide a platform where all ILO colleagues could share their views and discuss topics raised, including “What’s behind the December 2023 numbers on gender diversity?”, “What does gender discrimination at the ILO look like?” and “What should your Staff Union do for the ILO to really achieve gender parity?”. The information gathered was used to feed into the ongoing negotiations and actions of the Staff Union. The Staff Union Committee members also shared, through media, who the inspiring women were in their lives.

The Staff Union jointly with HRD, supported UNGLOBE@ILO with the commemoration of the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) on 16 May (as the actual day fell on a Friday). A panel discussion “No One Left Behind: Supporting the Inclusion of

LGBTIQ+ Personnel in the Workplace”, took place and featured speakers from ILGA, IOM and Transparents. Participants from more than 20 different UN agencies and other organizations attended. To facilitate the participation of field colleagues, the panel discussion was held in hybrid format and interpretation was provided in three languages. The discussion was followed by choral entertainment and a reception in Les Gobelins. The Staff Union this year further communicated its support through an article in the Staff Union blog and various broadcasts including during the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) for LGBTI colleagues and continued its collaboration with and support for UN GLOBE through various broadcasts, advocacy actions and logistical aspects.

Disability inclusion

The Staff Union continued to engage with the Disability Champions Network and the Employee Resource Group (ERG) on Disability Inclusion on relevant matters.

The Staff Union provided its comments and observations on the draft.

UN Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS) progress report, including indicator narratives, covering the activities implemented in 2023. The Staff Union contributed to the revision of the draft “Biennial report on the implementation of the ILO Disability Inclusion Policy and Strategy (2020- 2023)” and requested to be consulted as appropriate for the implementation of the relevant components.

Flexible working arrangements

The SU was involved in the review of the policy and procedures related to [Flexible working arrangements and remained available for all individual requests for advice from members on its use and implementation.](#)

New collective agreement on maternity protection and parental leave

Your Staff Union negotiated a new more gender sensitive, progressive and inclusive parental leave policy for the ILO in the form of a revised article 8.7 of the Staff Regulations, the Parental leave, Office procedure, IGDS No. 629, and the Collective Agreement on Maternity Protection and Parental Leave in the ILO. The latter was the last one to be finalized and signed in November 2023. During 2024, the Staff Union supported its implementation through the development of the internal guidelines on parental leave replacement and responded to individual requests for support and clarifications from members.

Under the new policy, birthing parents now have 26 weeks of parental leave and non-birthing parents have 16 weeks of parental leave. In addition, the Staff Union has successfully advocated and negotiated for various other improvements including:

- replacement funding, including for staff funded from Technical Cooperation, from the Office’s budget, thus making parental leave a real entitlement and reducing discrimination in the employment of future parents on short projects.
- An extended adoption age, in order for staff to be able to go on parental leave when they adopt a child up to 18 years old,
- an extended period of compassionate leave in case of a death, still birth or another sad event,
- improved nursing arrangements, and more, for the well-being of the baby or child and parents irrespective of grade, gender, funding source, location, and to promote, gender equality in retention and access to career opportunities.

VII – International affairs and protection of the independence of the international civil service

Objective: To strengthen alliances with key players involved in the improvement of working and employment conditions in the international civil service (international staff union federations, CCISUA, civil society, etc.) and to work in the long-term for the introduction of collective bargaining to the United Nations.

Means of action

- Strengthening ties with major international unions and those with whom the Staff Union is affiliated in order to benefit from their logistics and influence, and create a better framework for labour relations in the context of UN reform.
- Working towards the sharing of knowledge, resources and activities in advocacy campaigns led by the staff federations of the International Civil Service to address the potential threat of contractual reform throughout the whole of the UN common system.
- Continuing activities with already existing FUNSAs. Encouraging ILO staff representatives to participate in or create local FUNSAs in the field in order to better respond to the interests and needs of international organization staff locally.
- Participate in events organised by the various trade union federations (PSI, CGAS, etc.) in order to represent the interests of the ILO Staff Union.
- Strengthen internal communication to inform the Staff Union's members about the objectives and positions taken by the various trade union federations as well as about the obstacles encountered.

Coordinator: Carlos Carrión-Crespo

Members: Harvey Addo-Yobo, Manuel Céspedes Ocampo, Zoltán Gegeny, Sophie Guerre Chaillet, Simon Hills, Pelin Sekerler Richiardi

This year, the Staff Union Committee continued to work for the protection of staff within the federation to which it belongs, the CCISUA. We thank our colleague, Carlos Carrión-Crespo, for serving as Vice-Chair of CCISUA until May of this year and representing CCISUA in the ICSC meeting of March 2024. We continue to engage with the current CCISUA Bureau regarding issues of common concern. This participation means that the ILO's Staff Union has visibility of the issues at stake within the United Nations common system and can monitor the work of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), bringing its objectives (to establish a genuine negotiating system within the United Nations) to the forefront.

A lot of extra meetings and commitment are needed for the Staff Union to make progress in this area. The benefits of such a presence continue to be felt, particularly in the working groups set up to revise wage-setting methodologies and in the fundamental discussions on the future of work at the United Nations.

In addition, we have been active in procuring training on Local Salary Survey (LSS) methodologies, which concerns the remuneration of locally recruited staff. Nine colleagues have received such training, which is offered by the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA): four in Africa, two in Geneva and three in The Hague. We have also supported local staff who have faced challenges with the impact of the LSS methodology in Turkey, Laos, Beirut, Cambodia, and others.

VIII – An even stronger and better equipped Union

A – Communication

Objective: The communications group will ensure that the Staff Union communicates with the staff **more effectively and efficiently**, on activities, ongoing problems and progress made, in close collaboration with the relevant working groups.

Means of action:

- Keep the staff regularly informed of developments through the Staff Union's totems in HQ, broadcasts, website, social media, etc.
- Keep the Staff Union's website up to date in English, French and Spanish.
- Improve the wording of Staff Union materials (especially its flyers and membership forms) so as to make it more inclusive.
- Liaise with each working group in the Staff Union's areas of action to help promote what they do in the respective groups, so that staff are aware.
- Find new ways to promote Staff Union campaigns and explain what they are about, especially recruitment drives, training activities, etc.

Coordinator: Harvey Addo-Yobo, assisted by Ludovic Caprini, Carlos Carrión-Crespo, Ludovic Caprini, Carlos Carrión-Crespo, Séverine Deboos, Yvan Poulin

The communications team met virtually every week to prepare the weekly headlines, broadcasts and information that were needed for dissemination. The team also added monthly bulletins to inform staff on what the Committee had done within a month. The members of the team kept in close contact with one another so that the Staff Union and the staff could get in touch very quickly in the event of an emergency. This rapid-response capability has proved crucial and has ensured that staff are informed of developments on time.

The Staff Union communicates mainly by means of headlines and bulletins and broadcasts, and the communications team has helped by providing the design and material for posters and publications on welcome screens in HQ, the website, and other social media platforms.

The new *Union Blog* which has now replaced the UNION magazine has been very successful with very interesting articles, hence more readers this year. Contributions from members of the staff who have something to say are still very much welcome, and we can only encourage you to visit our site at <https://ilostaffunion.org/en/union-magazine>.

The Staff Union plans to keep up the hard work and to do everything it can to improve communication with the staff. To do this, it shall make use of every means at its disposal and of all the expertise of the members of the team.

B – Membership, staff representation and training

Objectives:

- **An even stronger and better equipped Staff Union:** by strengthening solidarity, consolidating the capacities of Staff Union representatives, improving internal operations, mobilization, and communication.
- Analyse statistics of interns, both in HQ and Field, in terms of diversity and ILO contracts after internships.

Means of action:

- Strengthen unity between Field and HQ Union representatives.
- Clarify structure and roles through different means.
- Contacting and informing newly recruited colleagues to encourage them to join the Staff Union.
- In coordination with the working group on Communication and technology, develop a welcome kit.
- Pushing towards Staff Union representation in all departments and all duty stations - as part of the elections for Union representatives in the Field and HQ.
- Scheduling of hybrid information and training session(s) for all Union representatives.
- Mobilizing at Union events such as General Assemblies, 1st of May, etc.
- Organizing at least two “café-croissant” information sessions in the course of 2024, in the presence of at least one Union representative, to rally support for the Staff Union.
- Liaising with regional titular members and substitute members to share experiences and provide mutual assistance for better adhesion and Staff Union organization.
- Engaging and mobilizing the Interns’ Section to best represent the interests of the interns (through training and information sharing).
- Welcome kit for interns.
- Creating SOP for organizing café-croissants.
- Clarify all ILO wide intern situations with HRD.

Coordinators: Leillah Abdallah, Ludovic Caprini, assisted by Sophie Guerre Chaillet, Clara Van Panhuys

Supporting Union Representatives

Throughout the past year, the Staff Union Committee has resolutely supported its network of Union representatives at Headquarters where representatives have been kept informed of developments and able to share their needs and news.

Monthly meetings were organized to ensure that communication was as effective as possible and ensure that the voices of all our members were heard in the best possible way. A real synergy has developed between the Committee and the Union Representatives at HQ, which has made it possible to take everyone’s concerns and interests into account more quickly and effectively.

In addition, regular meetings on MS Teams have helped to strengthen the sense of belonging to a network. Everyone has benefited from each other’s experiences, and the spirit of collaboration between Union representatives has taken on a new lease of life.

At this stage of the year, in October, the Staff Union welcomed 173 new members – 142 in the field offices and 31 at headquarters.

Since early 2024, the ILO Staff Union has been working to continuously improve its offer to response to Union representatives' (Union Reps) training and thematic information sharing needs globally. In terms of trainings:

- half day face-to-face training on Mobilizing and organizing was offered to HQ Reps in February;
- full day face-to-face training on Disability equality was offered to HQ Reps and regional titulars in February;
- 2.5 hours of online welcome training for Union Reps was offered to newly appointed Americas Reps in April, and to newly appointed Africa Reps in May
- 2x2 hours of online training for participation of Union Reps in recruitment processes in the field (first part facilitated by HRD) was offered to Europe and Arab States Reps in April, and to Africa Reps in June
- In addition, online thematic information sessions were offered to Union Reps in all five regions on a monthly basis, each session lasting 1.5 hours.

The sessions so far concerned:

- new Collective Agreement on a procedure for recruitment and selection – April 2024;
- OSH (including mental health) – May 2024;
- results of Ethics survey (together with the ILO Ethics Officer) – June 2024.

The working group also organized informal meetings with various in-house experts of conflict resolution.

We synchronized the title from Union Stewards to Union Reps (representatives) to unify and show solidarity in all ILO offices.

The idea of a "Welcome kit" was validated and under redaction with the goal of "Union Reps roles and limits".

Due to the reform that took place throughout the Organization, the working group will review the constituencies in view of the 2025 Union reps elections in Headquarters.

Supporting ILO Interns

In 2024, the Staff Union Intern Working Group remained actively engaged with interns.

The activities with the interns mainly include the bi-monthly induction for new interns where the Staff Union presents to the new interns what the Union is about and what it is working on. During this induction, we better assist the new interns understand the values of the ILO, collective bargaining and social justice for all.

During this year, the Union helped advise the interns on the document they presented to the Administration with regards to negotiating a stipend increase.

The Union also actively participated in the interactive talks between the Director-General and the interns on 17 June 2024.

Currently the Union is trying its best to reach out to interns in ILO field locations. This is to find out more about the internship programmes in the field, the demographics of interns in different field locations and how best the Union can be of use to these interns depending on various needs.

The working group remains committed to assist the interns through the coming year.

Part 3 – Periodic and regular actions

1 – Tackling the problems of staff posted in the field

The Staff Union Committee, through the strong mobilization of its regional representatives and in close contact with the national representatives, acts as a spokesperson to the Administration for the concerns and interests of colleagues in the field and ensures that the working and employment conditions of field staff are safeguarded and improved.

The objectives of the Staff Union in relation to field staff will include the following issues:

- the safety and security of all categories of field staff, by preventing and dealing with violence and harassment at work, while ensuring their health and physical safety
- Addressing the differences in treatment between international and local staff in terms of security, contract security and evacuation policies, in particular with regard to the rights and entitlements of staff operating in high-risk duty stations;
- in the area of social protection, allow better access to information, ensure transparency and consultation for fairer treatment;
- Promoting the establishment of OSH Committees in each duty station, ensuring that there is well-trained representation on these committees;
- Harmonizing recruitment and selection procedures across all duty stations;
- Harmonizing the Independent Review Group (IRG) at the global level;
- Promoting career opportunities under the mobility policy, taking into account the characteristics of each category of post, in particular TC, NO, NC and G posts;
- Ensuring greater attention to the intrinsic conditions of staff employment contracts, in particular by conducting periodic surveys on employment conditions.
- Addressing staff concerns concerning local salary surveys.
- Addressing staff concerns on managing change.

Means of action

- Promote ILO Convention No. 190 in the field offices to avoid violence and harassment and strengthen the complaints mechanism to ensure a fair and equitable outcome for complainants.
- Review the security and evacuation policies to ensure equal treatment of staff operating in high-risk duty stations.
- Strengthen the role and functions of the COSH in all duty stations through information sharing, more regular meetings and increased training.
- Support the application in the field offices of the Collective Bargaining Agreement signed in 2014 regarding the role of the Staff Union in Recruitment and Selection, in order to ensure the effective involvement of the Staff Union, at the global level, in the entire R&S process and to improve its transparency and accountability.
- Promote, in practice, a mobility policy that guarantees mobility for staff members who have been working in one duty station for a long time when applying for vacancies. The explicit mobility policy should also be incorporated into the Staff Regulations.
- Demand that the reality on the ground be taken into account when negotiating the contract policy with the Administration.
- Assist staff members in all duty stations to assert their rights vis-à-vis the Administration through dialogue with the parties concerned and with the support, where appropriate, of the Staff Union's Legal Adviser.
- Continue to hold regular monthly discussions with all the regional representatives via videoconference as an effective means of facilitating the sharing of information and

experiences on the practical implementation of the above priorities (quarterly meetings are currently scheduled).

- Organize two regional meetings in Africa and the Americas.
- Organize training on salary survey setting mechanisms, gather and compile information on the new ICSC salary survey mechanism and share those with CCISUA for further action.
- Coordinate with the Administration to mitigate risks associated with change, ensure the ILO Administration's duty of care towards its staff, and provide timely and proactive guidance and support on change management as required.
- Advocate for improved access of staff in the field to medical and emergency services.

Coordinator: Harvey Addo Yobo, assisted by Leillah Abdallah, Ludovic Caprini, Laurence Dubois, Sophie Guerre Chaillet, Yousra Hamed, Yuka Okumura, Ana Catalina Ramirez

- ILO Convention No. 190 is continually being promoted in the field offices to avoid violence and harassment and strengthening the grievance-handling mechanism for a fair and equitable judgement for complainants. This has been done through sensitization and capacity building during the regional. The Regional Titulars and relevant representatives have also supported members where necessary, and a few cases have also been transmitted through the appropriate channels.
- The Staff Union Committee has been following very closely the actions and support for the offices in difficult situations and ensures that the safety and security of all colleagues have been taken into account.
- The alignment of the recruitment and selection procedures through the implementation of the Recruitment, Assignment and Mobility Committee (RAMC) is under discussion with the Administration. In the meantime, progress has been made in a number of field offices to promote transparent and fair processes and promoting a mobility policy guaranteeing mobility for long-serving staff in a duty station.
- Great attention has been given to ensure that field reality is taken into account in all discussions and negotiations. In particular, through the Regional Titulars, feedback and contributions were collected to inform the inputs provided by the Committee negotiations with the Administration.
- Regular discussions take place on a monthly basis with all regional representatives by videoconference, as an effective means of facilitating the sharing of information and experience in the practical implementation of the priorities indicated above.
- The regional meetings for Africa and the Americas were successfully organized in person, but with online presentations from the treasurer and some sessions with the rest of the Committee.

II – Use of financial resources

Objective: To ensure maximum transparency in the use of financial resources.

Means of action

- Scrutinizing the control and monitoring process for all financial transactions.
- Continuing to search for efficient solutions for offices requiring bank accounts and putting procedures into place for transferring funds to these accounts.

Treasurer: Thierry Kouame

The level of contributions remained high during the year. The amount of contributions increased compared to 2022. The number of new members continues to grow. The number of unionized staff is growing overall.

In the regions, several field offices are facing difficulties in opening a local bank account due to restrictive national legislation. Provisional measures have been proposed in some cases. Discussions are due to be held shortly with a view to adopting definitive solutions to this problem for the coming financial years.

III – Support for ILO staff in the prevention and resolution of disputes

Objective: Represent and defend the individual and collective interests of staff.

Means of action

- Providing headquarters staff and field staff with information and/or recommendations (on a collective or individual basis) relating to the application and interpretation of the Staff Regulations, collective agreements and IGDS documents, in addition to currently applicable policies and procedures.
- Providing information and/or recommendations on collective rights issues.
- Providing information notes on procedures applicable to officials.
- Representing or accompanying staff members in the context of conflict prevention and its formal or informal settlement.
- Organizing information sessions, at headquarters and in the field, relating to legal issues, especially during regional meetings or via Teams, including on the respective roles of the staff representatives in managing conflicts.
- Monitoring recommendations made by internal bodies and identifying trends in order to be able to respond to questions from staff.

Coordinators: Christine Bader, Carlos Carrión-Crespo; assisted by the Legal Advisor, Natalia Delgado

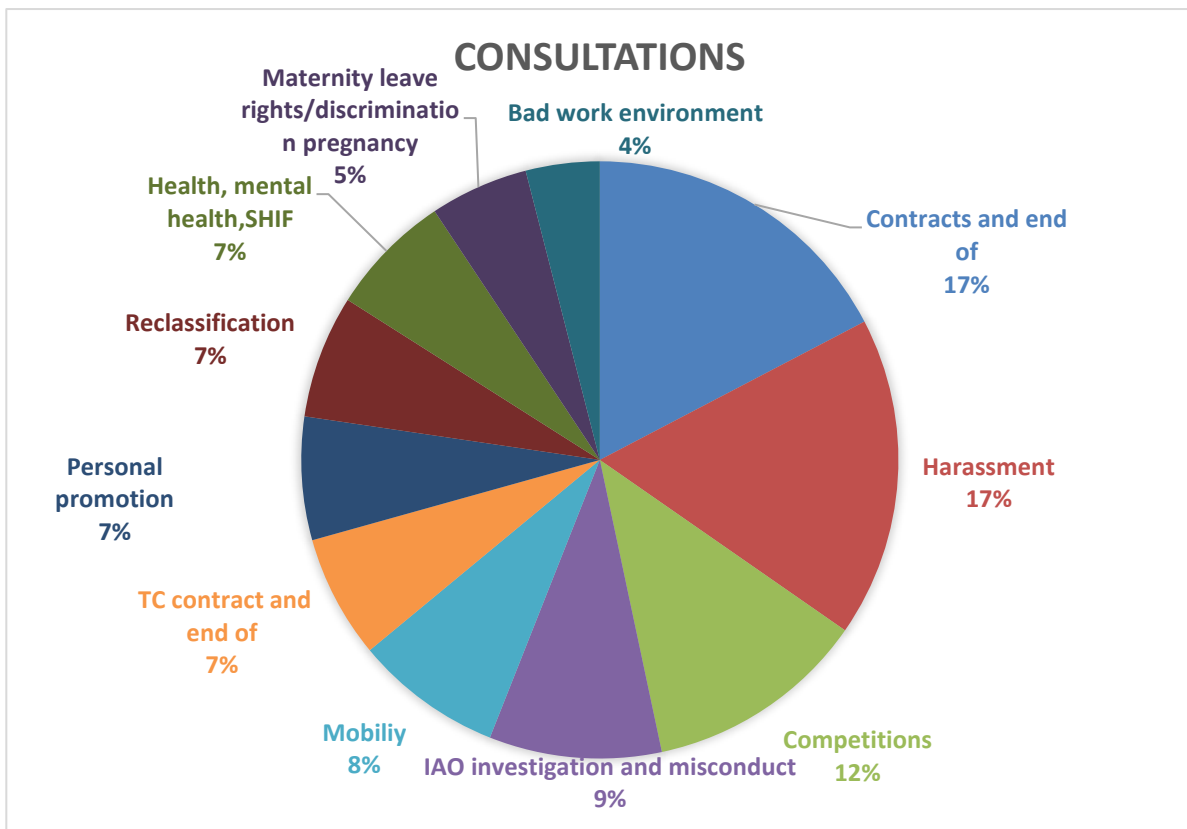
Members: Séverine Deboos, Guillaume Filhon, Carlos De Magalhaes Tome, Clara Van Panhuys

Concerning individual cases, the Staff Union has recorded several formal complaints of harassment submitted to HRD, several of them in field offices. Once again, the considerable delay in the process of job grading and a delay in misconduct investigations by the IAO created anxiety and stress among staff. Both the Office’s Legal Advisor and the Chief Internal Auditor retired this year, and their replacement has been delayed. The working group is currently finalizing guidelines for the legal advice and support, in order to meet the increasing demand from our members.

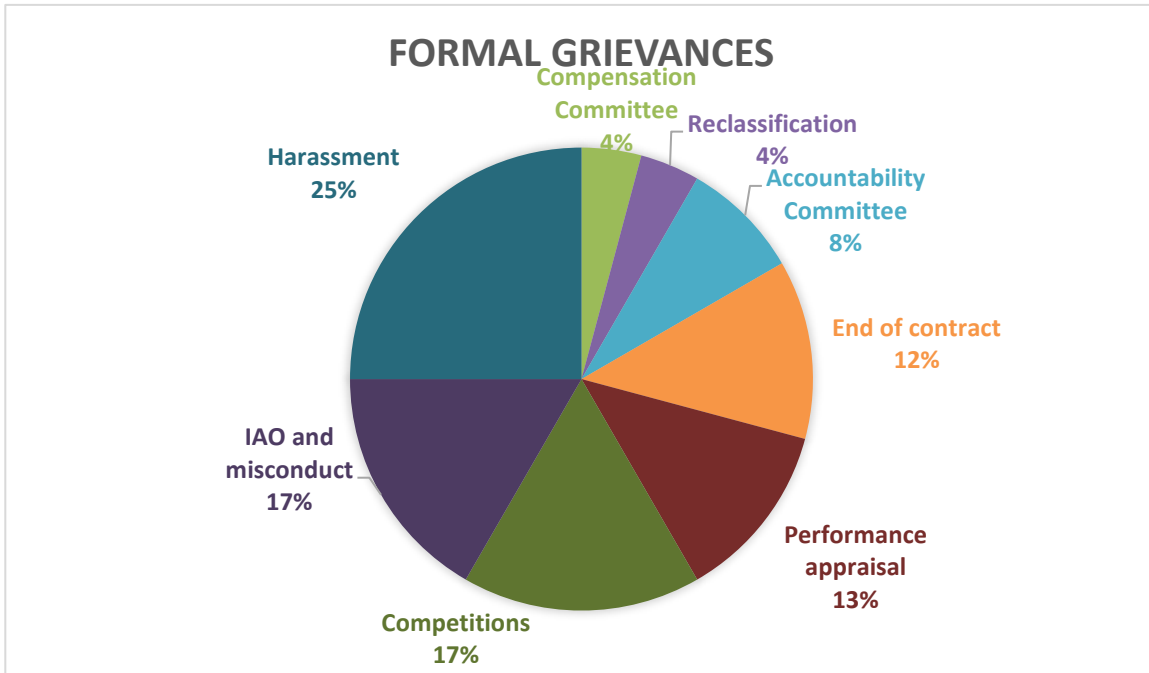
Regarding collective interests, we have negotiated with the Administration on different areas. Shortly after the last AGM, the Staff Union and the Administration signed a Collective Agreement on “Maternity Protection and Parental Leave in the ILO”, in November 2023. In addition, we signed a Collective Agreement on a “Procedure for recruitment and selection”, on 23 February 2024, which resulted in amendments to the Staff Regulations that were ratified by the Governing Body in March. In addition, the group has provided advice to the SUC to support the negotiations on contract modalities and mobility under the MOU signed in October 2023, which are discussed elsewhere in this report. Our position has been to insist on equitable treatment for all staff regardless of source of financing, based on the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work.

From the first of August 2023 to the end of August 2024, the Legal Adviser received approximately 180 consultations from colleagues at headquarters and in the region. She also provided legal support for consultations from the ITC ILO, Turin.

The most representative consultations that resulted in interventions of all kinds by the Staff Union pertained to the following topics:



With regard to the 23 formal grievances submitted to HRD, the JAAB, the ILOAT, and other internal procedures, such as the Reports Board, the following cases have been documented over the same period, from August 2023 to August 2024:



II. REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

Africa

Titular member: Remy Bertrand Kama Kama

Substitute member: Leillah Abdallah

This report provides an overview of regional trade union activities in the Africa region during 2024. It highlights the main concerns raised at the 8th Africa Regional Meeting held in Hurghada, Egypt, in September 2022, and details the actions taken to promote the rights and interests of staff members, in collaboration with the ILO administration. The report aims to demonstrate the Union's continued commitment to defending the interests of workers while setting out a vision for the future.

MAJOR CONCERNS OF THE AFRICA REGION

At the 8th Africa Regional Meeting, a number of concerns were raised:

1. Implementation of a global online system for reclassification requests:

We have asked the ILO administration to develop a global online system to allow employees to submit and track their reclassification requests according to predetermined deadlines. The aim is to guarantee greater transparency and efficiency in the processing of these requests, while ensuring better traceability and accessibility for all employees.

2. Review of the 2014 collective agreement on recruitment and selection:

It is crucial that this agreement, concluded between the Union and the ILO Administration, be revised to include greater involvement of field offices in all stages of the recruitment and selection process. This revision is intended to strengthen inclusiveness and ensure fair representation in hiring decisions, aligning practices with the principles of transparency and diversity.

SPECIFIC CONCERNS OF ABIDJAN STAFF WITH THE SHIF

Regarding the concerns of Abidjan staff with the SHIF, a pilot project is currently underway in around ten countries to test the feasibility of third-party payment (direct payment) for outpatient care within the network of providers acquired in 2020.

- Progress of the pilot project: The Management Committee approved this initiative on 19 September 2023. The project was finalized with the implementation partner at the end of 2023, and the purchasing department's agreement to the waiver was obtained in February 2024. We are now in the process of signing the contract with the partner, with launch scheduled for September 2024. The management committee stressed the importance of careful communication on this project, and we are doing everything we can to meet this requirement.

SOME KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2024

1. Renewal of the Regional Job Classification Review Group (JRG):

The mandate of the members of the IAG has been renewed until 31 December 2024, in agreement with the Regional Director and the Country Office Directors. This renewal is part of our commitment to maintaining a fair and rigorous reclassification process. The group's mandate is to review reclassification cases and make reasoned recommendations to the CEO. We continue to press for the extension of its remit to include all reclassification appeals for grades G and NO, thereby ensuring that appeals are dealt with fully.

2. Capacity building for local committees:

Training sessions on salary surveys, organised by FICSA in Brazzaville, Congo, enabled members of our local committees to strengthen their skills in negotiating and demanding salaries. These training sessions, which benefited our union representatives, strengthened their ability to defend staff interests, thereby improving the effectiveness of dialogue with management and promoting fair working conditions.

3. Organization of the 9th Africa regional meeting in Dar-Es-Salaam:

Scheduled to take place in Dar-Es-Salaam, this meeting will bring together trade union representatives from across the region to take stock of progress made and challenges encountered. The aim is to reformulate and prioritize the new concerns to be addressed to the ILO Administration, at both the global and regional level. The meeting will also serve to assess the effectiveness of the actions undertaken and to adjust our strategy to better meet the expectations of our members. The meeting will feature interactive workshops and feedback sessions to maximise participants' involvement.

4. Ongoing dialogue with Regional Management:

We have established a framework for regular dialogue with the Regional Director and her team, with monthly sessions scheduled to discuss pressing staff concerns. This ongoing dialogue has strengthened communication and collaboration between the Union and management, facilitating proactive problem-solving and improved working conditions. The exchanges have made it possible to deal effectively with issues such as improving safety conditions and the well-being of colleagues.

5. Drawing up a collective agreement on the recruitment and selection of local staff (G and NO):

In response to the need for a clear framework for the recruitment and selection of local staff, a collective agreement was drawn up, centred on the fundamental principles of transparency, fairness and non-discrimination. This agreement lays the foundations for an inclusive and fair process, and the specific details will be discussed at forthcoming sessions with the Regional Office. This effort aims to improve equity in the recruitment process, with a particular focus on internal promotion and the development of local talent.

6. Renewal of the Union's local committees:

In order to ensure the continuity and effectiveness of Union actions, all local committees whose terms of office were coming to an end were renewed until 31 March 2026. This renewal ensures the continued representation of our colleagues and enables us to continue the work we have begun, to improve working conditions throughout the region. This renewal also includes initiatives to integrate new members and diversify the committees in terms of gender and professional experience.

OUTLOOK

The activities carried out in 2024 demonstrate the Union's commitment to defending staff interests and promoting fair and just working conditions in the Africa region. We remain committed to continuing dialogue with management and to building the capacity of our members to meet current and future challenges. In 2025, our aim will be to consolidate the gains we have made and to continue to respond to employee concerns with the same determination. This year's achievements lay a solid foundation for future action, and we will continue to work to ensure that employee concerns are heard and addressed with the diligence they deserve.

We also plan to expand our training initiatives, improve our internal communications and step up our efforts to ensure fair representation in all decision-making processes. Our commitment to our members remains our priority, and we are determined to continue on this path in 2025 and beyond.

Americas

Titular member: Maria Elena Lopez-Torres

Substitute member: Ana Catalina Ramírez

IX Regional Meeting of the Trade Union of Latin America and the Caribbean

(1-5 July 2024, San José Costa Rica)

The regional meeting was attended by eight (8) representatives of the Staff Union from the region. The meeting was attended by the Chairperson of the ILO Staff Union and the Regional Titular and Substitute Members.

During the five-day meeting, the Staff Union Chairpersons from the offices in the region participated, debated, reviewed, exchanged and discussed the following topics:

- Work climate and conflict management
- Recruitment and selection
- Mobility
- Career development
- CAPS/SHIF
- Training and development
- Other

In addition, they discussed their role as trade union representatives.

Work climate and conflict management

We note that there has been an increase in labour disputes in our offices, which is creating a working environment that is detrimental to staff well-being.

We call for effective communication mechanisms within the offices and a respectful and collaborative work culture where managers intervene in a timely and effective manner to resolve conflict.

Union committees and the regional titular member have supported staff in offices where problems have arisen.

Flexible working arrangements

We recognize the importance of flexible working arrangements, including teleworking in the context of a changing world of work.

We request the participation of local staff union representatives in the evaluation processes of the telework policy to be carried out after 18 months of implementation, as we believe their input can be valuable.

Career development

Access to career development opportunities is a priority for staff in our region.

Opportunities for temporary assignments, such as covering leave vacancies and supporting regional events, are some of the initiatives proposed by the Regional Staff Union.

Performance appraisal

Staff perceive that the performance appraisal is not meeting the objectives for which it was designed. In that regard, to improve the efficiency of the performance appraisal we consider the following:

- Revise the rating to avoid the perception of underperformance by qualified staff. This would also limit discretion in its application by supervisors;
- Optimize their use as achievement recognition mechanisms for all staff (RB and TC).
- Strengthen the training of supervisors to ensure that they apply the process correctly.

We ask Regional HR colleagues to monitor to ensure that all stages, especially the beginning and end of cycle interviews are executed in a timely manner.

Recruitment and selection process

We recognize the importance of having a recruitment and selection process in place since 2010, which has been negotiated and agreed between the Staff Union and Management. The latest version was approved in 2023.

We note that its implementation has differences across offices due to varying interpretations of the process. Also, considering the limitations of our offices in the number of RB staff that can be part of the Recruitment Committee, we stress again the importance of including TC staff in the Recruitment Committee, under conditions agreed with the Staff Union.

As requested to the HRD Regional Coordinator during the regional meeting last July, we reiterated the need for joint regional training between HR staff and local recruitment committee members.

SHIF

We have noted a marked improvement in the processing time of reimbursements. Staff are satisfied with this and we commend the efforts made. However, there is a need for an option for some offices to deposit reimbursements to a UNFCU account, due to the irregular inflationary situation in some countries in the region.

Salary surveys

We express our deep concern about the slow pace of wage surveys in some countries in the region, and we are concerned that the CIASLS (inter-agency wage committees) are not becoming more active, as in several countries no wage increases have taken place for some time.

We request training on the new methodology for representatives participating in the local wage committees.

New appointments in the Latin American region

The Regional Delegation warmly welcomes our colleague Ana Virginia Moreira, who took over as Regional Director at the ILO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean in January 2024. We wish her every success in her tenure.

We also welcome our colleague Eliel Hasson who took over as Director of the San José Office in September 2024, and wish him every success in his term of office.

As representatives of the Staff Union for all local and internationally recruited officials in Latin America and the Caribbean, we reaffirm our commitment to work hard for a stronger Union that protects working conditions and a safe working environment.

Asia and the Pacific

Titular Member: Gwendolyn Fabros

Substitute Member: Yuka Okumura

This year's report is anchored on the priority areas identified during the 9th Regional Staff Union Meeting for Asia and the Pacific and various activities and discussions supported by the SU in the region.

Social Dialogue Climate in the Region

A culture of formal and structured dialogue between the Staff Union and the Regional Management has been established and implemented this year. The periodicity of meetings with the Regional Management has been agreed upon and implemented, as well as its terms of engagement. To promote inclusivity, the first part of these periodic meetings was arranged with the participation of all local staff union representatives in the region. The second part consists of focused negotiations and discussions on pressing challenges, as well as an exchange of positive notes on the achievements arising from joint collaborations. The relationship between the Regional Management is cordial and frank. The relationship between Country Directors and Local Staff Union Representatives/Committees was of the same standing in almost all country offices. Due recognition of the importance and value of social dialogue, freedom of association, and unionization, within our organisation was highly regarded during the reporting period.

However, it is important to note and recognize that in a few country offices, the reported incidents and challenges referred to the Staff Union at the regional and HQ levels are either continuous or, if not, increasing. Close monitoring of the situation and a stronger need for dialogue with the Management is upheld both at SU Regional and HQ levels.

Safe and Respectful Working Environment

The SU Regional Representation was able to stress the importance of fostering a culture of respect at all levels in the Organization. The regional representation pointed out the need to always uphold an open but respectful way of communication at all levels, as one of its major inputs to the roll-out of a joint Management-SU Global Programme on Respectful Working Environment. During the reporting period, three focused capacity-building interventions in the region were implemented as follows; (i) Joint Management-SU mission and activity for CO-Dhaka; (ii) HRD HQ-led activity for CO-Islamabad supported by local SUC; (iii) HRD HQ-led activity for Project Management Office in Phnom-Penh supported by local SUC and; a locally organized activity for CO-Colombo with support from local SUC.

However, it is worth noting that a small number of specific incidences of multiple forms of harassment have been brought forward to the Staff Union representatives in the region for case facilitation which includes advisory, referral, and coordination to SU Global, facilitation of support, and continuous

monitoring. A small number of incidents were also referred to the Staff Union Legal Adviser and the SU Bureau at HQ for case handling and further support.

Close monitoring and support were also accorded to Staff Union Representatives and affected colleagues of country offices where challenges were more evident and bigger. The difficult situation and conditions in the identified country office(s) have been brought to the attention of SUC Global for further support.

A need to be equipped with a standard operating manual is also flagged by members to know the process as to what to do when we witness or are informed about harassment or violence.

Recruitment and Selection

Anchored on the new [Collective Agreement on a Procedure for Recruitment and Selection between the Office and the Union, signed on 23 February 2024](#) with effectivity on 1 April 2024, the regional Staff Union representation with support from local SU Representatives and SUC Global continued to lobby and negotiate for increased and meaningful participation of the Staff Union in various and relevant processes encompassing overall recruitment and selection procedure.

During the meeting with the Regional Management this year, the Staff Union made a systematic presentation of the status of participation of all SUC in each recruitment process identified. The presentation highlighted a great heterogeneity among the fourteen (12) country offices (1) project management office and (1) branch office in the region. This is also to highlight that the survey enabled the identification of three offices (Dhaka, Phnom Penh and Tokyo) that do not have any meaningful participation in any of the recruitment processes as identified and presented.

It was agreed that the Regional Management and Staff Union would go back to the negotiating table before the end of this year to further the discussion. It was highlighted by the Regional Representation to the Management that the Staff Union intends to help and to ensure checks and balances that ensure transparency and fairness which in turn contribute to the prevention of disputes relating to the recruitment and selection process.

Job Security Measures for TC Staff and stronger support to Career Development Path

During a meeting with the regional management, the majority of the local staff union representatives in the region strongly flagged and requested increased support from Management for job security measures for XBDC funded Staff. Albeit aware of the nature of XBDC funded contracts that are fully dependent on the availability of limited funding, they requested to look upon other attenuating measures to alleviate this situation of job insecurity affecting many local staff under XBDC funded projects. This includes an improved policy that supports a smoother transition of XBDC funded Staff from one project to another; a smoother transition from XBDC funded project to RB positions and; an improved and clear process for formal recognition and appreciation of their past work experiences and skills gained within the organization when vetting for recruitment competitions.

It is also worth noting the strong support of SU HQ to the alignment of working conditions of staff serving in branch office(s). This applies to our office in Tokyo.

Improved and Inclusive Promotions Policy

A request was referred to SUC HQ to negotiate for due recognition of the number of years of service of staff in ITC-ILO in Turin. The region is also supporting the recommended measures for better inclusion of TC Staff in our promotions and recognition policy.

Implementation of Flexible Work Arrangements

The Staff Union played a crucial role in monitoring the implementation of FWA IGDS across the region. While it run smoothly in several country offices, specific hiccups were encountered in some COs. These include (i) resistance from project managers on availment and approvals in far-flung project field offices wherein the main focus is project delivery and fieldwork; (ii) nasty comments from management instead of putting the challenges encountered in a respectful dialogue context; (iii) different views between management and staff on availment during closing period of projects wherein the work is in bulk; the need-to-be adjusted for 24-hour prior approval in case of difficulties like typhoon, flood and other unprecedented valid limitations to physical reporting to office.

SHIF Improvements and other requests

The Staff Union is grateful to the SHIF Secretariat and its Management Committee for approving the strongly heeded request from the field for additional medical needs support on an outpatient basis. It is almost a year of hard work for the Secretariat in doing the preparatory work, research, and setting up of the entire process and needed partnership with a 3rd party global insurance. As of this reporting time, the 11 countries globally for the pilot implementation have been identified based on criteria that SHIF established before its selection process. No formal announcement has been made at the global level. The final procedures and process are being finalized by SHIF Secretariat and the actual rollout is set before the end of this year.

Additional support is being sought for “Women’s Health” during peri and post-menopausal period. Many of the medications to support women’s health conditions during these stages are being rejected hence a revision and inclusion of this in the SHIF administrative rules and guidelines is heeded.

Continuous dialogue is promoted to find durable solutions for the qualm of many members for ease of policies for voluntary dependants, e.g. parents.

Additional support is being sought by retiree members based in the field for coverage of home-based but professional “caretakers” needed by aging retirees. Those are aging, retirees with day-to-day medical support needs who opted to stay at home instead of care facilities, e.g. those suffering from Parkinson’s disease.

Project field-based colleagues expressed also their need for SHIF to establish partnerships with reputable hospitals within their duty station location. Although these are mainly XBDC funded staff members, it is most likely that they will stay in the area of duty station for two or more years covering the period of project implementation. The process should be automatic as part of support to XBDC funded Staff stationed in far-flung project areas and as part of duty diligence when establishing new offices in the field.

Challenges faced on Local Salary Survey

The participation of ILO Staff Union in the respective Local Salary Survey Committee is highly valuable and often appreciated by the lead coordinating agency, UNRC. Regarding that, staff union representatives to these LSSCs must be highly knowledgeable of the methodology. The Regional Representation have already flagged to the Regional HRD and SU Bureau in HQ to help identify opportunities for participation of SU in trainings on local salary survey methodology organized by various global associations like CCSICUA and FICSA.

Specific challenges were reported to Regional Representation and till date, solutions are being sought:

- (Nepal) – error identified in the last comprehensive salary survey resulting in revision and reduction of the current salary rate for local staff in coming months;
- (Cambodia) – it is believed that the change to the ICSC-determined category of duty station from Level 3 to Level 2 had triggered a huge negative result on the recent local salary survey at negative (-16) points for GS staff. This is attributed to the lack of good number of comparators as required under Category 3 duty stations.
- (Laos) – the huge devaluation of their currency resulted to a request for an interim measure of change of currency of local staff salary to US Dollar.

Empowering and capacity development of the Staff Union Representatives and SU Local Committees

As one of the main target outcomes identified in the last 9th Staff Union Regional Meeting, a list of Training Needs for Staff Union elected representatives was finalized with strong support from 14 SU Representatives in the region and SU Training Committee at HQ level.

As of the reporting period, the following training and briefing sessions were organized for the region:

- *Briefing on the new Collective Agreement on a procedure for recruitment and selection, offered in April 2024*
- *OSH (including mental health), offered in May 2024*
- *Briefing on the results of the Ethics survey (together with the ILO Ethics Officer), offered in June*
- *Introduction to organizing, preparing to meet with staff and problem solving in the workplace, September 2024*

In the middle of the year, it was decided to include the other elected SU Committee Officers aside from SU Representatives for inclusivity and wider reach in terms of capacity building for the Staff Union in the region.

Occupational Safety and Health

In a meeting shared with 14 Staff Union Representatives, sentiments were shared that the funding for OSH initiatives in country offices were very limited and the process of seeking approval to fund OSH measures jointly identified by Joint COSH Committee is not clear. On the other note, in several country offices, the joint SU-Management COSH is functioning only on an ad hoc basis as per need basis only but lacks regularity of consultations and meetings.

During construction of the UNESCAP Office in Bangkok, the Staff Union flagged and coordinated the need to ensure OSH of all staff especially that asbestos was identified to be removed as part of the process. The matter has been elevated to SUC Committee at Global level and ensured coordination and collaboration with the administration to ensure safety and clear communication protocols are followed by the administration and the contractors before and after the asbestos removal process.

The Staff Union has been closely monitoring the situation in CO-Yangon and supporting the local SUC during this crisis. The vulnerable and difficult situation of staff in Yangon is duly recognized and challenges are flagged and discussed with the regional management.

Europe and Arab States

Titular member: Eva Mihlic

Substitute member: Ludovic Caprini

Where specific locations are not mentioned, comments may be considered applicable to both regions. The report focuses on the following aspects of work in the ILO: staff security, job security, salaries, SHIF, and work environment/organizational climate.

Staff security

The armed conflict in Gaza and its spilling over to Lebanon is gravely affecting the ILO office in Beirut. Non-critical international staff is leaving the country at the time of preparing the present report, the rapidly changing security situation is being closely monitored.

The war in Ukraine is still ongoing, and the well-being of our staff in the growing Kyiv Country Office is paramount. The Kyiv office took part in a team-building retreat co-financed by the Staff Union which increased the team's cohesion and contributed to the psycho-social wellbeing of colleagues. The office remains fully functioning despite the war, the team is resilient, relevant and is in close contact with the constituents. The mobilization of male staff remains a major concern, UN agencies continue negotiations with Ukrainian authorities for exempting all UN-employed men from military service. Additional leave days were approved for Ukraine staff due to heavy bombing and the need for ample rest time.

The war also impacts colleagues stationed in Moscow. International staff was offered the option to relocate to Budapest for an initial period of one year, which was extended indefinitely in 2024 and resulted in all but one international staff relocating to Hungary. The splitting of the team continues to create anxiety among the Moscow staff and questions the future of the whole office.

Job security

Almost all staff in Türkiye is employed under TC projects. At this point, it is important to write new project proposals for the good management of donor relations, search for new funds and the creation of new programmes in accordance with the ILO mandate. The Office's failure to write proposals in areas such as the MNE declaration, green and digital transformation, expanding and supporting social protection (especially in the areas of care services and family insurance), which are important areas of work for ILO and Türkiye, jeopardizes the extension of many contracts. The risk that many of the ongoing projects can no longer continue (due to donor relations and funding rules) and the administration's lack of transparency and dialogue on the subject, cause job insecurity and very high levels of stress.

As a result of the new collective agreement signed by the Union and the administration, local SUCs are working on arrangements to participate or increase participation in the recruitment and selection process.

This will not only lead to greater transparency, but hopefully also to greater job security for well-performing DC staff.

The requirement to issue two-year contracts for DC staff if funding is secured was welcomed by staff, and the SU is working and advising on a case-by-case basis in situations where this arrangement is administratively challenged.

Salaries

The Staff Union financed participation in a training on local salary surveys (LSS) for two colleagues in HQ and the Titular for Europe and Arab States. During COVID, all training sessions on the topic organized by the ICSC were discontinued and they haven't been reinstated ever since, plans include the development of an online toolkit only. Locally recruited colleagues globally have no resources to turn to when it comes to becoming a proactive and knowledgeable member of their respective LSS committees. To address this need, the Staff Union also co-financed the participation of two colleagues from the Moscow office and one ILO member of the LSS Committee in Ankara in a further session of this training delivered by FICSA.

One of the salary-related problems highlighted in both Türkiye and Russia includes official economic indicators not reflecting the real state of the economy. Skewed indicators don't allow UN staff to request non-pensionable bonuses or other salary adjustments. In addition, the regions report difficulties in accessing good comparators who are willing to take part in the LSS – in addition to comparators leaving the labour market due to sanctions in Russia. Receiving US dollar-based salaries in Türkiye was an important achievement. However, due to the economic challenges mentioned above, the purchasing power of the UN staff has declined dramatically even with the USD-TRY exchange rate increased.

In addition to deteriorating economic conditions, personal changes have made the functioning of the Beirut LSS Committee even more difficult.

Budapest was one of the first duty stations to conduct a comprehensive salary survey as per the newly adopted pilot methodology of the ICSC which included data purchasing. Following the survey, the LSS Committee Chair was interviewed on the process and no problems were reported.

SHIF

The reimbursement of submitted claims has been reported as slow in both regions. Since the beginning of 2024 however, the hiring of two additional claim processors has visibly reduced reimbursement times.

Work environment and organizational climate

New directors have been appointed in the Moscow, Ankara, and Budapest offices, a country coordinator was named in Jordan in July. A Country Office was officially established in Kyiv with a new director recruited – the above changes coupled with the appointment of a new Regional Director for Europe in mid-2023. These were almost simultaneous and significant changes resulting in uncertainty and delays in some strategic but also in administrative processes.

The Staff Union conducted exit interviews with colleagues leaving several different offices, and some of the main problems reported are toxic relations and lack of psychological safety in offices, no transparent recruitment and selection processes, uncertainty in contract extensions, lack of communication from management, fear of retaliation, reputational risk to the ILO caused by unclear new internal processes and inappropriate communication with donors.

Members of the Beirut SUC visited the Amman office in February and held consultations with staff with the on-line support of the global SUC in Geneva. Issues raised covered a wide variety of topics from the internal structure of the SU to complaint mechanisms available to our staff. Beirut also raised several individual issues concerning flexible working arrangements and telework outside of duty station – the main problem being insufficient justification provided by respective managers in case of denied requests.

Some of the above may be an unwelcome residue of COVID isolation, increase in the number in project staff, change in management, lack of proper induction processes and training. Internal investigations and requests for mediation have plagued several offices in the regions.

The regional SU meeting was held in Budapest September 2024. Many of the requests for training (recruitment, use of funds, salary setting mechanisms, OSH) were addressed either through training sessions organized by the Union or through local SUC members attending trainings.

Due to staff changes, the Ankara office elected a new SUC in April. Since then, intensive efforts have been made in many areas, including strengthening social dialogue, and increasing the voice and visibility of the SU in the office.

Priority issues for the SU to tackle are setting up processes for the participation of the SU in recruitment and selection, working with management on establishing harassment-free workplaces and a respectful work environment. This is done through office visits (Ankara, Amman), on-line support sessions and trainings, coordination with the Office of Mediator and HRD, and individual assistance on a case-by-case basis.

Turin

Titular member: Cristina Pierini

Substitute member: Yousra Hamed

The Staff Union Committee (SUC) and the management of the International Training Centre of the ILO (ITCILO) are committed to engaging in a process of collective bargaining to establish a new Collective Bargaining Agreement for the biennium 2024-2025.

This agreement aims to foster a positive environment for progress and improvement in working conditions at ITCILO through constructive dialogue, mutual respect, and a shared desire to achieving outcomes that benefit the entire staff.

The refreshed joint commitment to Social Dialogue must adhere to the principles of mutual respect and shared objectives, fostering a conducive environment for advancing and improving working conditions.

The SUC has collaborated closely with the staff to prepare detailed proposals for career development and mobility within ITCILO and these proposals have been shared it with the management of ITCILO.

Additionally, the SUC has submitted a proposal to enhance the competition processes with the goal of provide the Staff of ITCILO with greater career development opportunities.

Our commitment to advocating for the rights and well-being of all staff members is continuously our priority, and our collective efforts towards a fair, supportive, and progressive workplace for everyone will continue.

III. OTHER BODIES

Former Officials' Section

Executive Secretary: François Kientzler

The return to ILO premises and the end of the pandemic enabled the Former Officials' Section to organize the elections provided for in Annex IV of the Staff Union Rules. Two retired colleagues joined the Section Board, which has since benefited from their respective skills.

Administrative work

The Former Officials' Section responds to personal requests received from retirees, either by post, e-mail or telephone. We keep our list of Section members up to date and modify it as soon as we receive new information. We add young retirees who join the Section, and make changes reported by members as well as those sent to us by the ILO Administration. These include the list of deceased retirees. This confidential list is published once a year.

Communication and information

Our main communication tool is our website, which we manage independently. Our webmaster is very responsive. An ad hoc group has been working on updating the site, which should be running shortly. Our Facebook account has several hundred members who communicate with each other. Finally, our magazine *Message* is published once a year, and is eagerly awaited for by retirees, both those who use the internet and those who don't. It remains a concrete and physical - as opposed to virtual - means of keeping links between retirees.

Meeting with the Union's regional delegates

The meeting took place on 16 February on the occasion of the first General Assembly of the Staff Union. At the centre of the discussions were issues of access by retirees to ILO offices in different regions of the world. The situations are very diverse, as the offices are located either in autonomous structures or in joint structures with other International Organizations.

Meeting with the Director of Human Resources

This meeting, which took place in the spring of 2024, provided an opportunity for dialogue. Issues of access to the ILO by spouses and retirees from other organizations were raised. The Section Bureau delegation asked for a return to the pre-COVID situation, which was confirmed by a letter from INTSERV to the Section. This meeting was the starting point for the intergenerational event on 1 October and the setting up of the *Cercle d'Arts du BIT* exhibition supported by the Section.

International Day of Older Persons and the Section Intergenerational Event: 1 October 2024

The Section Bureau prepared this intergenerational event in cooperation with HRD, DCOMM and the Staff Union. Recreational stands were set up in front of the cafeteria at the R2 and were a great success. A round-table discussion on the theme of 'Working at the ILO: yesterday, today and tomorrow' was the centrepiece of the day. It brought together three panellists: a young official, an older official and a retired official. This was a first step in intergenerational cooperation.

Presence of retirees in SHIF and inter-association structures

Retirees sit on the Staff Health Insurance Fund Management Committee, so we can keep a close eye on all developments. We maintain good relations with the SHIF secretariat. As far as the Pension Fund is concerned, several members of our Board sit on the Committee of the AAFI-AFICS (Association of Former International Civil Servants) in Geneva, and one of our members is currently one of the vice-presidents of the FAFICs (Federation of Associations of Former International Civil Servants), which brings together all the associations of retirees from the common system. These bodies discuss issues relating to our pension fund. We have a presence there and can use it to defend our interests as pensioners.

International Civil Servants' Mutual Associations (MEC/AMFI)

Staff Union representative: Sylvain Delaprisson

The year 2023 saw an improvement in the distribution of interest on the CHF deposit account.

It rose from 1.35% to 1.40%, giving an interest rate of 0.50% and an exceptional bonus of 0.90%. This distribution was made possible by an increase in the value of investments. In addition, thanks to a more favourable bond market and stable interest rates in 2023, the sum of CHF 3,049,000 has already been recovered, corresponding to more than 35% of the sums deducted from the reserves for the distribution of the interest on the CHF deposit account in 2022.

The Association will post a profit of CHF 4,706,000 for the 2023 financial year.

At the end of 2023, the Mutual's reserves stood at CHF 81.4 million.

Demand for loans remained strong in 2023. Housing loans amounted to CHF 38,330,000, an increase of 15.95% compared with 2022.

Demand for ordinary loans was slightly down on 2022 (-1.26%), but loans outstanding at the end of the year were up by 1.99%. It should be noted that the current high level of prices is curbing consumer spending and encouraging borrowers to be more cautious in managing their budgets, especially as we do not currently see the end of the inflationary period. The Board of Directors currently believes that the upward trend in Swiss interest rates does not currently require any adjustment to the rates offered by La Mutuelle, and that no change is therefore expected in the medium term. Demand for loans is therefore likely to remain strong in 2024, given that the Association offers better rates than private banks (especially on home loans). However, vigilance will still be required to avoid over-indebtedness among members.

For GPAFI, 2023 saw a rise in insurance subscriptions, mainly for supplementary health insurance, generating an increase in commissions received from insurers of around 5%. On the other hand, as expected, other revenues were down following the temporary abolition of the CHF 1 levy per insurance

contract per month. All this led to a 6% reduction in total revenues for the year. The 33% increase in expenses is due to the unrealized loss linked to the valuation in CHF of the Trust Fund expressed in USD. GPAFI's profit for the financial year 2023 amounts to CHF 567,000. The surplus for the year is down 40%, which is in line with the Board's expectations. Bearing in mind that the CHF 1 membership fee will also be frozen in 2024, this trend should continue in 2024. At the end of 2023, GPAFI's reserves stood at CHF 9.1 million.

The Association's updated risk analysis and the two audits carried out by PricewaterhouseCoopers SA did not give rise to any observations other than those already known about the IT system. It should be noted that the mandate of the Auditors expired during the year, and that PricewaterhouseCoopers SA won the contract following a call for tenders. In accordance with the Board of Directors' wishes, if an auditing firm that is ending its mandate were to be reappointed following a new invitation to tender, the auditing team would then have to be replaced in its entirety, which was the case.

The changeover of the IT system has already begun and should be completed during the year 2026. Its development will make it possible to offer a single product tailored to the needs of members and the Association. The cost of this project, estimated at CHF 3,500,000, will be borne by the extraordinary reserves of La Mutuelle and GPAFI, hence the importance of maintaining them at sufficiently high levels, bearing in mind that there will undoubtedly be unforeseen events.

The members of the Association will be kept informed as the work progresses.

Finally, the Board of Directors reiterates its unfailing commitment to the prudent management of the Association, with the aim of continuing to safeguard the interests of all members with regard to the Mutual Association and GPAFI.
