REPORT OF THE EXPERT GROUP MEETING

UN WOMEN
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality
and the Empowerment of Women

Policy, Practice and Potential: Work-Life Integration in the United Nations system

Expert group meeting

Organized by

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women

(UN Women)*

*The expert group meeting was organized by the former Office of the Special
Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women,
now part of UN Women

Focal Point for Women

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Tables

Executive Summary

l. Background

Several General Assembly resolutions have requested the Secretary-General to implement effective flexible working arrangements (FWAs), which would benefit all staff members, women and men. This, in essence, implies flexibility as gauged by the availability of policies, practices, and an organizational culture of facilitation and inclusion, rather than stigma and control.

Inadequate flexibility has been highlighted in several reports of the Secretary-General as one of the causes for the slow progress towards the goal of 50/50 gender parity at all levels, mandated by the General Assembly in Resolution 51/67 [31 January, 1997][1]. Gender parity, and the larger objective of improving the status of women including their aspirations, expectations and experiences in a modern and productive work place, however, is a challenge that requires a multifaceted approach. The need to work with trust and flexibility and in a manner both aligned and integrated with the needs and demands of personal life, constitutes a key and increasingly fundamental factor, certainly for women, but also for men.

Accordingly, in November 2010, the Office of the Focal Point for Women, now part of UN Women, convened an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on the Policy, Practice and Potential of Work Life Integration with a focus on flexibility in the workplace. The objective of the experts was to assist the United Nations to explore state-of- the-art research and analysis, identify good practices and pinpoint practical lessons for strategy and implementation. The participants included representatives from corporations totalling approximately 400 billion dollars in asset value and one million employees, academics from several prestigious universities, including Harvard and Wharton Business Schools in the United States, Cranfield University in the United Kingdom, and the University of Navarra in Spain as well as work-life experts from civil society and the private sector. (Papers and PowerPoint presentations from the meeting can be found at http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/fpworklifeissues.htm.)

This report on the meeting concludes that offering flexibility in work conditions to employees significantly benefits both the employees and the organization. A summary of the findings is set out below.

II. The Organizational Imperative

The data is compelling: equipping staff to address their work life needs more easily is vital for the 21st Century work-force. The changing demographics of the family, including dual career and single parent households, the aging of the population, and the dismantling of barriers to communication have profoundly altered the way people in modern institutions work. Further, in an age characterized by individual customization of technology and solutions, the idea of customization of work methods cannot remain excluded.   Flexibility in work arrangements has   become an essential ingredient for organizational success. Enabling flexibility and assisting employees to integrate their work and personal lives has been shown to:

- Assist in improving and sustaining productivity

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[1] Resolution 50/164 first extended this provision to all managerial and decision-making positions in February 1996

- Facilitate the recruitment and retention of employees
- Improve employee engagement
- Enhance the health and well-being of employees

Key Finding: Research based on a sample of 2,100 employees, conducted by the London School of Economics and Policy Studies Institute, reported 'the amount of pressure, stress, motivation and enjoyment of their job was more influenced by how much control employees felt they had over their time than by long hours worked'.

III. Flexible Work Arrangements at the United Nations

The report notes that flexibility for improved work life integration is embedded in several of the policies of the United Nations System and that flexible work arrangements are available, but implementation is uneven and sometimes entirely absent. A survey by the Focal Point for Women of United Nation's staff found three on-going challenges that have negatively impacted the use of flexibility: a management support deficit, a trust and implementation deficit, and a knowledge deficit. Evidence from the survey corroborates the external data, and provides a strong case for the importance of flexibility at the United Nations.

Key Findings: 69% of United Nations FWA users reported working more efficiently, 67% reported being more satisfied with their jobs, 65% reported feeling more motivated at work, and 64% reported having an increased desire to stay at the United Nations.

IV. Success Factors for Embedding Flexibility and Supporting Work-Life Integration

Success factors were collectively identified by participants at the EGM, and provide a comprehensive framework for the development of a Work-Life Strategy and Action Plan. Participants identified several core elements of a successful work-life initiative, including: a relevant business case, links to key organizational objectives, a work-life strategy and phased action plan, and resources.

The crucial elements of strategy, and practice of flexibility in support of work-life integration include:

- Infrastructure and positioning
In order for work-life integration to be effective, it must be: a) positioned as a universal workforce issue, b) a management initiative, c) part of a robust communications campaign, d) supported by change agents at multiple levels, and e) informed by employee input.

- A flexible work culture
Organizations seeking to create a successful flexible work culture must: a) use champions to promote and support flexibility, b) align organizational systems and practices to support flexibility, c) implement and track performance metrics in this respect for leaders and managers, and d) provide multiple opportunities for management training and coaching.

- Flexible work practices

In order to close the gap between policy and practice, an organization must: a) position FWAs as an established tool for managing work, b) require managers to have a positive approach in considering requests for flexibility, c) provide a clear and well understood process for seeking FWAs, d) ensure that employees have access to alternative flexible work options, e) make resources available to facilitate the use and management of flexible work arrangements.

- Career path flexibility

To enable greater career path flexibility, an organization must: a) create opportunities for employees to undertake gradual, rather than abrupt, transitions between assignments, b) allow employees to pace their careers in the work-life context without long-term career penalties, c) identify role models who demonstrate the different career paths, d) ensure that work-life issues become part of the career planning process, and e) provide spousal support.

Key Findings: A flexible work culture encompasses, but goes beyond, the provision and use of flexible work practices. It is one where employees feel comfortable working flexibly, whether that be on a formal schedule or in a more ad hoc way. It is a culture where managing flexibly is a required management ability, where employees are empowered to challenge notions of where, when and how work gets done, and where the business case for flexibility is well understood and support for flexibility is characterized by clear and visible leadership.

V. Proposed Work-Life Strategy for the United Nations, also applicable to modern professional organizations

The report concludes with a proposed Work Life Strategy and Action Plan for the United Nations, but also applicable to a range of modern and technology equipped professional organizations, based on the experience and advice of more than 20 eminent experts who participated in the EGM. Substantial focus is placed on building the confidence of managers in the concept, changing the work culture, expanding the usage and improving the management of FWAs, and embedding career path flexibility. The plan is presented with the understanding that individual entities, departments and offices can adapt it, as appropriate, to their needs.

Key Recommendation: To successfully implement an effective work-life strategy each entity should develop and implement a Work Life Balance Awareness and Outreach Plan including briefings for senior management, clear communication with all staff, and sharing of good practices. An electronic monitoring system is also needed.

I. Introduction

1 January 2011 is a milestone for women and girls around the world with the creation of UN Women, the unified entity for women of the United Nations system. As the principal body assisting the Secretary-General to discharge his gender-related mandates, UN Women will incorporate, consolidate, expand and strengthen existing mandates. UN Women will focus on gender equality and the empowerment of women in all regions of the world, in cooperation with their governments, and within the UN system. The establishment of UN Women offers a two-fold opportunity: to contribute to innovative advances in the work methodology of the UN system and to disseminate information relevant to women to its wider constituencies in Member States, with particular relevance for women in the global work force.

Insufficient flexibility has been highlighted in numerous reports of the Secretary-General as one of the causes of slow progress towards the goal of 50/50 gender balance at all levels at the United Nations. Several resolutions have requested the Secretary-General to implement more flexible working arrangements (FWA), which would benefit all staff members, both men and women. (See resolutions in Annex 3)

In November 2010, the United Nations Office of the Focal Point for Women, now part of UN Women, convened a meeting of experts on flexibility, work-life issues and gender equality to explore state-of-the-art research and analysis and to identify good practices and lessons learned. The participants included representatives from corporations totalling approximately 400 billion dollars in asset value and with approximately one million employees, academics from several universities including the Harvard Business School and the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania in the United States, Cranfield University in the United Kingdom, and the University of Navarra in Spain, as well as work-life experts from civil society.   This report includes recommendations on a comprehensive proposal for a United Nations work-life strategy, and includes the best thinking of the expert group. Visions for flexibility and work-life integration at the United Nations, as articulated by participants in the expert group meeting, are captured in this report. Papers and PowerPoint presentations from the meeting can be found at http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/fpworklifeissues.htm .

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Dreams for the UN: Quotations from the Experts embodying their vision:

The United Nations becomes the standard bearer.
- *The UN as the normative model for flexibility in work life balance*

Flexibility is a universal issue.
Advocacy for UN leaders to recognize that work-life flexibility brings dividends
- *Showing that work-life practices are not only for women but also for the new generation, for older workers, for men – for everyone*
- *Introducing policies that would allow staff members to maintain a work-life balance that benefits both the Organization and themselves*

Flexibility is about strong and effective management.
Flexibility is about managing talent, about inclusion and about inspiring people to demonstrate their leadership.
- *Flexibility becomes part of the fabric of the way work gets done*

Flexibility is realized by adapting the work culture.
A culture of trust that empowers employees to add flexibility to their lives
- *A UN where behaviours, attitudes and communication are aligned to strengthen efficiency, morale and trust*

II. The Organizational Imperative – for Flexibility and Work-Life Support

The data is compelling: equipping staff to address their work-life needs more easily is vital for the 21st Century workforce. In both developed and developing economies, powerful forces are dramatically changing the workforce and the workplace. The aging populations in a significant number of the largest economies, the changing demographics of the family including the rise of dual career and single parent households, the enhanced mobility of the labour force, and the expansion and scope of modern institutions, especially those globalized and technology friendly –- have changed the composition of the workforce. The explosion in technological resources – dismantling barriers to communications, enabling greater connectivity, and resulting in easily accessible information – has altered the way workers function in advanced economies. As a result of these changes, the importance of work-life fit and of helping personnel to integrate their

personal and work lives has become an important component of organizational success, including in the United Nations system.

Flexibility Around the World

Although FWAs are being developed across all sectors and in all regions of the world, progress is uneven. Research shows that FWAs are relatively more common in technologically advanced nations, owing to cultural characteristics, historical factors and the level of development of the economies[i]. However, the widespread adoption of FWAs indicates the global nature of the need for flexibility in the workplace.

Brazil – As one of the world's fastest growing economies, Brazil is experiencing unprecedented changes in its labour force. Most noticeably, the female participation in the labour market[2] has increased from 13.6% in 1950 to 52.7% in 2009[ii]. Consequently, the private sector has broadened its thinking about the benefits of well-being of employees to encompass a wider Quality of Life movement[iii]. Some companies, therefore, have begun to use FWAs to attract and retain employees.

- **Merck Sharp & Dohme,** one of the largest pharmaceutical companies in the world, has implemented a range of FWAs, including a "Holiday Bridge" policy which allows employees to work additional hours in exchange for compensation time. If employees extend their working day by 50-60 minutes during the week, the equivalent time can be taken either as holiday or a shortened Friday[iv]. The policy translated into serious gains in worker loyalty and engagement, with 85% of employees reporting that FWAs influenced their desire to remain with the company[v].

China – Employment in China has been significantly impacted by the decline in state owned enterprises (SOEs) and the emergence of private or quasi private enterprises. Given the high proportion of women now in senior management positions and the role that SOEs previously had in providing social support, many organizations have a renewed interest in flexibility[vi]. Equally, cultural norms stipulate an expectation for younger generations to care for their elders, driving the requisite workplace changes to facilitate the duty of care.

- **Dow Greater China,** one of the largest chemical manufacturers in the world, has enhanced its existing provisions, such as flexi-time and telecommuting, with a formal gender-based networking system. The network focuses on issues such as career progression and work-life balance[vii].

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[2] In Brazil, the working age population includes children aged 10years and above

Hungary – Demonstrating a strong commitment to the 40-hour norm that dominated European labour policies , Hungary has begun to look beyond regulations on working hours as a means for increasing flexibility[viii]. For example, in 2003 Hungary transposed EU directives to guarantee pro rated wages for part-time work. In 2000, the government also initiated an annual competition for family-friendly workplaces, to showcase companies that have supported work-life balance for employees[ix].

- **Magyar Telekom** is Hungary's largest telecommunications company and has won a range of awards including the 2007 Diversity Award and the 2009 annual competition for family-friendly workplaces. Supported by foundational policies (Social Charter, Diversity Policy, and Plan for Equal Opportunities), the company has an extensive set of FWAs, including part-time work, flexi-time and partial telecommuting. Additionally, Magyar Telekom has developed a child raising program to help new parents return to work, a consulting program to provide advice on work-life balance, and school-start or day nursery support[x].

Japan – Work-life balance has climbed up the political agenda in Japan in recent years, owing in part to low birth rates and an ageing population. The government recently launched a campaign, which included naming 2008 the "inaugural year" of work-life balance, establishing a cabinet level office with responsibility for promoting policies in this area, and developing The Work-Life Balance Charter. "Priority Fields" define the principles for advancement, and include supporting men and women to harmonize work with their family and community life[xi].

- **Daikin,** the Japan-based multinational chemical corporation, has a strong track record for implementing work-life policies. Its programs include flexi-time, employee control over hours, childcare leave and funding for childcare, shortened and fixed hours. Underpinning this is a commitment to dialogue with employees through "best balance" meetings, which aim to identify work-life needs[xii].

A large body of research highlights the value of flexibility for employees and organizations. Enabling flexibility and assisting employees to integrate their work and personal lives has been shown to:

- Assist in improving and sustaining productivity
- Facilitate the recruitment and retention of employees
- Improve employee engagement, morale, and satisfaction
- Enhance the health and well-being of employees

This section of the report provides several examples from the private sector in advanced economies of the documented benefits of helping employees to address their work-life needs. It encapsulates studies of individual organizations, of cross-company research and of cross-country comparisons. The research encompasses small, medium and large organizations; employees working on an hourly basis, in professional and managerial roles, and at the executive level; and organizations in a wide array of industries, including pharmaceuticals, hospitality, technology, energy, and retail, among many others.

a. Sustaining and improving employee productivity

➢ A compressed work-week pilot study at PNC Bank, a large United States bank based in Pennsylvania and the mid-west of the United States, conducted over a seven-month period, resulted in identification of several benefits, including a reduction in absenteeism from 60 to nine days, with a cost savings of more than $100,000 related to reduced turnover during that period, and a dramatic reduction in cycle time[3].

➢ The Bank identified enhanced innovation, expanded cross-training and more efficient staffing as contributing to the improved results. Based on feedback from managers and participants involved in a second compressed work-week pilot at PNC, flexibility catalyzed several improvements in how work was accomplished as a result of better planning, more effective meetings, enhanced cross-training and restructured work processes. This pilot was conducted among 200 employees in a shared service group at the Bank[xiii].

➢ Among employees working on flexible work arrangements at Bristol-Meyers Squibb, the global biopharmaceutical company, over 90% indicated that their flexible schedules had a positive impact on their productivity. They also reported a 30% higher score than the total employee population on an index measuring commitment as well as indicating feeling less stressed and burned out, based on indices tracking these measures[xiv].

➢ A study at International Business Machines (IBM), the global computer company, found that after 38 hours of work per week people feel stressed if they have to go to and stay at the office. If they can choose their own hours and work location they do not feel similarly stressed until they have worked 57 hours in a week.[4] This is consistent with findings by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), in which regular long hours are

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[3] 'Cycle time' is a business term that refers to the period required to complete one cycle of an operation or task/function.
[4] Laura Vanderkam, a panellist and author of "168 hours: You Have More Time Than You Think", said at the "Leading the Way: A Dialogue on Making the Workplace Work for Women" meeting held by the PANYC on April 20, 2011

harmful to worker's health and productive capacity. Their report on work time around the world, recommends both reductions in excessively long hours and choice and influence over working time as a means for improving these outcomes[xv].

➢ With the goal of helping to address the stress and reduce the turnover of hotel managers, Marriott International implemented a flexibility pilot study to shift manager focus from hours worked to tasks accomplished. Over a six-month period, managers reported greatly reduced stress and work-life conflict – in addition to reductions in turnover, all without any negative influence on customer service or financial results. Managers were able to cut their work time by five hours per week and to reduce the time spent on low value work by 50%. Greater effectiveness was attributed to improved ability to control one's time, increased trust and greater empowerment of employees, and enhanced communication and collaboration within teams[xvi].

Beyond the experience of individual organizations, research across multiple organizations and at the country level has similarly found flexibility and work-life support to be linked to improved productivity outcomes. For example, the ILO report cited above concluded that work-flexibility heightened the productivity of workers by reducing fatigue and improving employee attitudes and morale[xvii].

➢ Surveys of managers at large multinational corporations revealed that over 90% reported managing employees on flexible schedules did not require more time than managing employees on traditional schedules. Nearly 9 out of 10 managers reported no negative impact on their ability to manage as a result of employees working on flexible schedules, and two-thirds indicated managing employees on flexible arrangements enhanced their managerial skills[xviii].

➢ Based on a survey of human resource professionals reporting on the impacts of employees telecommuting in their organizations, 32% indicated that productivity stayed the same, 63% reported an increase and 5% reported a decline[xix].

➢ Across Europe, those countries with the most generous family-friendly policies had the highest employment rates for both men and women. The countries with the most generous family leave policies – Denmark, Norway, and Sweden – reported the highest levels of national productivity. Hourly productivity in the United States was lower than in several countries, such as Belgium, France and the Netherlands, which guarantee more time off for family reasons[xx].

➢ In a large study of over 700 firms in the US, UK, France and Germany, a significant positive relationship was reported between FWAs and total factor productivity. Importantly, the research concluded that this correlation may be driven by a third factor –

good management. Typically, well-managed firms have both higher productivity and more flexible work practices[xxi].

b. Recruiting and retaining employees

➢ WFD Consulting, a firm that specializes in analysis of workforce trends, reported in a study of approximately 2,500 employees working in medium and large corporations that having control over one's schedule was among the strongest predictors of expected tenure. While parents dissatisfied with their 'schedule control' were twice as likely to indicate an intention to leave, dissatisfied employees without children were ten times as likely to report a propensity to leave their organizations[xxii].

➢ A recent study on young professionals' perspectives on work, by the London Business School, points to the fact that there is an emerging generation of professionals with differing needs. It suggests that structures like 'jobs for life' are diminishing, that technology increasingly shapes interactional patterns, and that this generation reflects more on the relationship between self, work and life. They found that this generation considered work-life balance to be important, and the single most important factor is that they want autonomy over how and when they work[xxiii].

➢ IBM, a long-time leader in collaborating with employees to manage their work-life issues, found that work-life balance was the second leading reason identified by employees for potentially leaving the company. Based on a global work-life survey fielded in 79 countries, work-life balance was more highly valued than either compensation or benefits as a potential driver of turnover[xxiv].

➢ Based on the Families and Work Institute's (FWI's) National Study of the Changing Workforce - reflecting a nationally representative sample of workers in the United States - they found approximately 90% of employees said having the flexibility to manage their work and personal lives was an extremely or very important factor in their decision to take a new job. Access to flexibility was also found to be highly connected to retention decisions with 71% of respondents with high access indicating they were *not at all likely to try and find a job in the next year* compared with 45% of those with low access. Fully one in four respondents with low access to flexibility indicated that they were *very likely to try and find a new job within the coming year*[xxv].

➢ Infosys, a large Indian information-technology company, focuses on gender diversity, especially increasing the intake of women at the entry level as it aims to retain women as they move up in their careers. 32% of Infosoys workforce are women and they believe

that support is required at different stages of a woman's life cycle, including marriage, childbearing, childcare, elder care, etc., to ensure retention. Infosys launched networking forums such as IWIN(The Infosys Women Inclusivity Network), Young Women Circle and IWINTOR in order to address needs specific to the development, engagement, growth, and retention of women by promoting an inclusive workplace.

➢ Many companies recognize the importance of a diverse workforce, especially since it has been shown to positively impact decision-making and performance[xxvi]. The Women of Color Policy Network recently found that FWAs are particularly important in recruiting and retaining ethnic minority women. They found that, in 2009, Black women had the highest labour force participation rates among women in America, but were less likely to have access to flexible work arrangements than their White counterparts[xxvii].

c. Enhancing employee engagement, morale and satisfaction

➢ A study of executives at 10 multinational companies[5] revealed that dual-centric employees – i.e. those participants (one-third of those surveyed) who report that they give equal priority to their work and to their personal lives – felt more successful at work, worked fewer hours, were less stressed and more able to combine their work and home lives. A surprising result of the research was that dual-centric executives were as or more successful than their work-centric peers, based on classic measures of success, such as reporting level, reporting span and compensation[xxviii].

➢ Infosys launched the IWINTOR programme, which brings women from middle management positions to create self-support groups and to facilitate mentor/mentee relationships to understand leadership perspectives. The centre of the IWINTOR is a mentorship programme, which helps mentees communicate with mentors on a needs basis and helps them to get self-started. Programmes, such as *Inspiring Women*, *Coffee with a Leader* and *Life Coach*, help women unleash their leadership potentials and find the right balance for their career and personal lives. Infosys also assists women to stay connected while on sabbaticals, with technology, their own projects, counselling, and technical and quality certifications that can be completed during the leave and make it easier for them to commence their work when they return.

➢ Based on an American Express 2007 employee-pulse survey, employees using flexibility at the company indicated the highest level of engagement and a 2008 survey indicated employees would prefer flexibility to a 5% increase in compensation[xxix].

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[5]The companies that participated in this study were Baxter International, Inc.; Citigroup; Deloitte Touche Tohmatsue; The Dow Chemical Company; Eli Lilly and Company; Goldman, Sachs & Co.; IBM Corporation; JPMorgan Chase; Marriott International; and The Procter & Gamble Company.

- At Deloitte, the international accounting and consulting firm, employees agreeing that their managers provided adequate flexibility to meet their personal and family responsibilities reported 32% higher commitment scores than colleagues reporting lack of access to flexibility. Similarly, at JP Morgan Chase, the international bank, 95% of employees working for managers sensitive to work-life issues indicated feeling motivated to exceed expectations compared to 80% of employees working for managers whom they perceived lacked this sensitivity. Among employees who perceived that they had a sensitive manager at JP Morgan Chase, 84% rated productivity in their area or department as good or very good compared to 55% of employees without adequate access to flexibility[xxx].

- Based on results from the 2008 National Study of the Changing Workforce, access to flexibility is clearly associated with job satisfaction. Sixty percent of respondents with high overall access to flexibility reported a *high level of job satisfaction* compared with 44% of those with moderate access and 22% of those with low access. Additionally, 13% of those with high access to flexibility reported a *low level of job satisfaction* versus 22% of those with moderate access and over 40% of employees with low access[xxxi].

- At Eli Lilly, the global pharmaceutical company, employees with the greatest degree of flexibility and control over their work hours (among four primary groups tracked) were the most satisfied and least likely to anticipate leaving the company. Manager performance ratings also did not vary by work schedules among the four groups including those working on: 1) a traditional schedule, 2) a flex-schedule with daily variation around core hours, 3) a compressed schedule, and 4) a 'flexible flexweek', defined as employees working full-time who could change when they worked on a week-to-week basis[xxxii].

- The National Partnership for Women and Families and Family Values at Work recently convened a discussion with female salaried professionals. They found that the disparities between those who have access to FWAs and those that do not, can negatively effect staff morale. They suggested that the solution was to recognize and respect all workers' obligations in both work and family life[xxxiii].

- In 2008, BDO LLP, an international professional services firm, launched its firm-wide Flex strategy after two years of intensive cultural change and readiness building. Six months after the rollout, the firm measured the impact on a broad range of metrics including engagement, which they defined as: a combination of a willingness to recommend BDO to others; a desire to stay at BDO; perceived job satisfaction; perceived motivation, and perceived productivity—working smarter and better. The

percentage of employees responding that the BDO Flex strategy had a "positive impact" on each aspect of engagement was as follows:

- o 72%: My willingness to recommend BDO to others
- o 71%: My desire to stay at BDO
- o 70%: My job satisfaction
- o 63%: My motivation
- o 62%: My productivity —working smarter and better [xxxiv]

d. Fortifying employee health and well-being

➢ According to a 2006 survey on workplace flexibility conducted with employees of the Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies in the United States, employees who participated in a flexible work arrangement or had access to flexibility were 31% less likely to report symptoms of stress and burnout than employees who lacked flexibility[xxxv].

➢ The National Partnership for Women and Families found that the absence of paid sick days endangers business profits. For example, they report that during the H1N1 flu pandemic in 2009, 8 million workers attended work whilst feeling unwell, which may have infected an additional 7 million workers. This ultimately increases healthcare costs for businesses and the public[xxxvi].

➢ Based on research of a nationally representative sample of the workforce in the United States, employees reported increasing work-life conflict through time, especially among men rising from 34% in 1977 to 45% in 2008. The 2008 data also underscored a widespread "time famine" among workers in the United States. Three of four employees reported not having enough time to spend with their children, 61% with their spouses, and 59% reported not having enough time for themselves; furthermore, all these metrics increased from previous reporting periods. Insufficient time for family and self was linked with poorer health outcomes.   Among those who often or very often lacked time with their families and other important people in their lives because of work, 23% had excellent overall health compared with 33% of those who rarely or never reported this outcome.

➢ The Families and Work Institute(FWI) reported, "Employees who have a high work-life fit fare much better than employees who have moderate or low levels of work-life fit." Comparing study participants reporting high versus low work-life fit, FWI documented better overall health, better mental health and far lower stress levels for those in the high work-life fit category[xxxvii].

- Research based on a sample of 2,100 employees, conducted by the London School of Economics and Policy Studies Institute, reported 'the amount of pressure, stress, motivation and enjoyment of their job was more influenced by how much control employees felt they had over their time rather than by long hours worked.'[xxxviii]

- A recent study commissioned by the UK Government Office for Science, looked at the impact of FWAs on work-family interface and mental well-being. This found that work-family conflicts do not merely affect the individual employee, but also the spouse and team members. This evidence supported the case for preventing and limiting such conflicts through FWAs[xxxix].

Whether measured by productivity, engagement, retention, job satisfaction, health outcomes or client orientation, the evidence is heavily weighted toward flexibility's positive effect. The question is not: *what is the business case for flexibility,* but rather: *why would any organization, including the United Nations, not act with intensity to fully capitalize on the powerful workplace potential of flexibility?*

Support at the Federal Level

Governments can support work-life balance in a range of ways, from promotional activities which rely on voluntary compliance, to legislation that mandates the implementation of certain flexible arrangements, such as maternity leave[xl]. Research points to the importance of government support, particularly in moving from rhetoric to action, and below are some recent developments in support at the federal level.

Singapore Ministry of Manpower

Work-life balance is being prioritized by Singapore's Ministry of Manpower (MOM) in its efforts to reconcile a great workforce with a great workplace. Extensive research has been conducted by the Ministry, and guidance and toolkits have been developed to help companies get started. A Tripartite Committee on Work-Life Strategy has also been established to oversee the implementation of a national strategy and monitor its impact. As an incentive to companies considering FWAs, the government co-funds up to 80% of the costs incurred for approved FWA projects through a S$10 million dollar fund called 'Work-Life Works!'. They also provide grants of up to S$100,000 for companies to hire new workers on a part-time or flexible basis, and awards are given to recognize best practice[xli].

White House Forum on Workplace Flexibility

In 2010, the US Administration launched a Forum on Workplace Flexibility to support a national dialogue on the benefits and challenges of FWAs and to extend the knowledge base in this area. In addition to on-going conversations with key stakeholders through the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labour, the President's Council of Economic Advisors has released a report on the current state of FWAs in America and the economic benefits of flexible workplace policies and practices. This year's budget builds on these initiatives with a range of investments, including support for caregivers of elderly or disabled relatives, support for the cost of quality childcare, and support for states that intend to establish paid-leave funds[xlii].

UK Right to Request Flexible Working

Over the past decade, the UK government has taken significant steps in supporting flexibility in the workplace. In 2003 the right to request flexible working was introduced for parents of children up to 6 years of age, and disabled children up to 18 years of age. Under this law, the employer must seriously consider applications and only reject them if there are good business reasons for doing so. The legislation was designed to encourage dialogue between employees and their employer about work-life balance. Following its implementation, almost a quarter of eligible employees submitted requests and the vast majority of these were accepted. Consequently, the government has since expanded the provision to include care-givers and parents of children under 17 years of age[xliii].

III. Flexible Work Arrangements at the United Nations

Given the widely documented benefits of flexibility for organizations and employees, we next turn to considering the current state of flexibility across the United Nations system. The formal introduction of a slate of flexible work arrangements, in January 2003, by Secretary-General Kofi Annan marked a major step in supporting improved work-life integration. The Secretary General's Bulletin governing flexible work arrangements (ST/SGB/2003/4) stated that:

> "It is time to align the work practices of the Secretariat with those of many national civil services and other parts of the United Nations system by offering more flexible working arrangements leading to a better balance between the professional and personal lives of the staff of the Secretariat. He continued, "Programme managers and staff are encouraged to rethink the manner in which the work is currently performed and how it could be done in different and better ways for all concerned by using flexible work arrangements."

Broadly, the four flexible work options included: 1) staggered working hours, allowing flexibility during the working day, 2) flexibility windows for educational opportunities, 3) a

compressed schedule of nine longer days over a two-week period to allow for a tenth day away from work, and 4) the ability to "telecommute".

Despite the introduction of a menu of flexible work practices in 2003, the availability and use of flexible work arrangements remains highly variable across the United Nations system, as illustrated in the table below[xliv]:

Table 1 - Availability and Use of Flexible Work Arrangements

Type of Flexibility Option	Availability	Easily to Very Easily Granted	Occasionally Granted	Almost Never Granted
Staggered work hours	22/31 or 71%	15/22 or 68%	2/22 or 9%	
Compressed workweek	14/31 or 45%	8/14 or 57%		
Telecommuting	21/31 or 68%	8/21 or 38%	6/21 or 29%	1/21 or 5%
Flexibility for educational opportunities	16/31 or 52%	7/16 or 44%	4/16 or 25%	2/16 or 13%

Note: 8 of 31 entities (26%) reported making all four flexibility options available.

Appendix 4 includes a table summarizing the policies and measures - encompassing work-life policies - to achieve gender balance in the United Nations system.

In January 2009 the UN Secretariat conducted an on-line survey on *telecommuting* with all staff. 73% of managers indicated telecommuting arrangements were working well. Subsequently, in August 2009, the Focal Point for Women conducted an expanded survey on all four flexible working arrangements (as referenced above) to assess the benefits and challenges of flexibility and to identify current and emerging practices designed to assist UN staff in the integration of their work and non-work responsibilities. The survey was distributed to over 10,000 Secretariat staff members worldwide, to explore the use of FWAs among its Departments and Offices at Headquarters, and also in field operations. The results are based on responses from approximately 2,500 Secretariat staff members, corroborated the external research and provided clear evidence of the importance of flexibility at the United Nations.

- 69% of FWA users reported working more efficiently, 67% reported being more satisfied with their jobs, 65% reported feeling more motivated at work, and 64% reported having an increased desire to stay at the United Nations;
- Nearly 75% of respondents indicated a strong interest in using the existing flexibility options;

- 67% of respondents reported that FWAs are a modern tool allowing better work-life fit for employees.

Yet, despite the clear benefits of flexibility, the survey conducted by the Focal Point for Women identified several ongoing challenges affecting the use of FWAs among United Nations staff:

- **The management support deficit:** The vast majority of respondents <u>did not</u> perceive management as supportive of flexibility. Only 20% of respondents reported seeing senior management – and 27% of middle management - as supportive of the use of flexible work arrangements.
- **The trust and implementation deficit**: Less than half of respondents had proposed use of flexible work arrangements during the last two years, primarily due to fear or certainty of refusal.
- **The knowledge deficit**: A large percent of respondents reported poor or very poor knowledge of the flexibility policies – ranging from 50% for extended learning activity to 38% for staggered work hours.

In 2010, as in previous years, the report of the Secretary-General on the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system (A/65/334)   highlighted weak implementation of FWAs among the key challenges to the acceleration of progress towards the goal of gender parity in the United Nations system. The proposed UN Work-Life Strategy and Action Plan in this report explicitly addresses these deficits so that the United Nations can benefit from flexibility as a modern management tool that collectively benefits all United Nations staff members, managers and leaders.

IV. Success Factors for Embedding Flexibility and Supporting Work-Life Integration

Work-life support is a broad topic encompassing several fundamental elements. This section will describe each of these fundamental pieces and identify success factors that characterize each element. These success factors were collectively identified by participants at the Expert Group Meeting in November 2010. They have provided a useful framework for the development of the proposed recommendations for a UN Work-Life Strategy and Action Plan outlined in the last section of this report.

Work-life support is broad and far-reaching. The elements of work-life support encompassed in this section are explicitly focused on the work environment and the way people work, both in the short term as well as over their entire careers. They include:

- Infrastructure and positioning
- A flexible work culture
- Flexible work practices
- Career path flexibility

There are several elements of work-life support, such as *time-off policies and financial assistance, which are not covered in this paper.*   In addition, work-life support assumes a living wage and access to adequate health insurance as minimum requirements.

a. Infrastructure and Positioning

Organizations seeking to assist employees with integrating their work and personal lives require a vision and a plan as well as resources for making it happen. The stalwarts of work-life support, those seasoned organizations focused on adapting their work cultures to better align them with the needs of 21st Century workforce realities, typically consider the work-life needs of employees as an ongoing management issue. *Work-life is not just a programme to be rolled out or a box to be checked off, but rather a perspective woven into how the organization operates, which evolves through time and practice.*

Below is a list of success factors for effectively positioning and establishing a work-life initiative:

- There are several **core elements to a successful work-life initiative,** which include:
  - A **relevant "business case"**, customized for major parts of the organization, which clearly articulates why attention to work-life issues is an organizational priority.
  - **Links to key organizational objectives,** such as supporting gender equality,the empowerment of women, **and values** such as promoting an organizational culture of respect and trust.   Given the unique position of the United Nations as a global standard bearer, work-life support could be seen as setting an example for countries across the world.
  - A **work-life strategy and phased action plan** that lays out a road-map for moving forward.   In order to drive change most effectively, elements of the work-life strategy need to be integrated and coordinated; disparate activities and

programmes do not maximize an organization's efforts and often lead to marginal changes.

- o **Resources** – in terms of staff and budget – to enable effective execution of the work-life strategy.

In order for work-life integration to be effective, it must be:

- **positioned as a universal workforce issue** rather than a concern for a specific constituency, such as women or parents. Work-life integration emphasizes how it allows every individual to combine his/her work and personal life; and that flexibility is about working effectively rather than working on a particular type of schedule. It is imperative to bring both men and leaders into the conversation about work-life issues.

- **a management initiative** relevant to how we all work and needs to be seen as an important skill for management in the modern world. While the work-life initiative should be distinct from - and not owned by - human resources, it should be aligned with the work of the human resource function at the organization in that they should act as forceful champions and facilitators.

- part of a robust **communications campaign,** tied to the organization's mission, values and priorities. The organization's support of work-life fit should be communicated frequently, through multiple venues, and to many audiences. Employees rely on messaging that reinforces the fact that flexibility is sanctioned and supported by the organization. Organizations with the most sophisticated communications approaches create highly recognizable internal brands as a powerful vehicle to communicate the breadth and depth of the organization's work-life efforts.

- Supported **change agents at multiple levels**, serving in multiple capacities across the organization, which drive the evolution toward a more flexible work culture. There needs to be senior leadership involvement to provide sponsorship and strategic input, internal experts with specialized knowledge to provide both strategic guidance and to drive implementation, and involvement at the local level, to determine relevant issues and provide customized solutions. Managers must be a proactive part of the process.

- **informed by employee input** over time (e.g. employee opinion surveys, focus groups, on-line chats). This input provides ongoing feedback from employees on their experience of the work environment and helps to shape and change organizational responses. It also plays a vital role in both developing and strengthening the organization's business case for attention to the work-life integration of employees. **Metrics** also play an important role in measuring work-life progress through time (e.g. satisfaction, usage, business impact).

Infrastructure and Positioning: Good Practices

Johnson & Johnson (J&J) – Armed with the knowledge that internal brands within Johnson & Johnson enhance understanding and generate greater familiarity, a cross-functional team representing Work/Life, Benefits, Health & Wellness and Diversity & Inclusion embarked on creating a J&J work/life brand. The goal of the branding effort was to capture in a highly recognizable, easily understandable way the broad array of organizational activities aimed at supporting the work/life issues and needs of J&J employees. The team collaborated with internal and external communications specialists and finalized LIFE 360™ in 2005 as the Johnson & Johnson work/life brand.

LIFE 360™ is described as 'Created to Help You Fit Work into Your Life and Life Into Your Work.' The brand tagline is '*LiveWell. Work Well. Be Well*' and it encompasses work/life, benefits, health and wellness programmes and services for employees of the Johnson & Johnson family of companies. A LIFE 360™ brochure outlines the many elements encompassed within the company's definition of work/life support including 1) flexibility, 2) family changes, 3) elder care, 4) child care, parenting and grand-parenting, 5) education, 6) financial and retirement planning, 7) health and benefits, and 8) work/life.

The LIFE 360™ website has become a portal for employees of the Johnson & Johnson family of companies to gain access to the extensive resources and information available to them. Employees considering working on an FWA can make use of a flexibility toolkit, which assists them in thinking through a flexibility request, participating in online flexibility training and obtaining the form to request an FWA. Employees with dependent care responsibilities can use the LIFE 360™ website to find child care and elder care providers in their communities, review the company time-off policies, and get advice for addressing the financial cost of care. Under the work/life tab on the LIFE 360™website, employees can get assistance with managing workload challenges as well as with other work/life issues. After its release in 2006, the LIFE 360™ website quickly became one of the most frequently visited sites providing further evidence of the broad relevance of work/life issues. The LIFE 360™ brand has become a strong means to build awareness and educate employees as well as providing an umbrella for the many work/life initiatives, policies, programmes and services targeted at helping employees to optimize their work-life effectiveness[xlv].

International Business Machines (IBM) -- IBM provides one of the best examples of envisioning and positioning attention to work-life issues as a competitive advantage. The company has used its long-term focus on work-life integration as a means to differentiate itself in both the markets for customers and clients and the market for talent. IBM has a long history of supporting the work-life issues of its employees, including launching the first resource and referral service in the mid 1980's to assist IBM employees to locate child care. IBM has made

available a long-term leave of absence – currently up to three years – since the mid-1950's as well as fielding company-wide work-life surveys for more than two decades.

The turn of this Century marked a focus on work-life issues *globally* across IBM worksites with a global work-life survey distributed in nearly 50 countries. IBM launched the *Global Work-Life, Flexibility and Mobility Project* as a means to accelerate change and better facilitate the wide-ranging mobility that had already become a reality at the company. IBM determined that one in three employees worked at an alternative site other than an IBM office, such as a home office, a client site, or on the road. Some of the extensive resources developed to support employees and managers included *Going Mobile* providing strategies for staying connected to the workplace and the Global Guide to Mobile Work to illustrate success stories of IBM employees working flexibly across the globe. IBM has developed extensive metrics to track its work-life activities and the benefits of these investments. In its 2001 global survey, the company found that over 40% of top performers, and more than one third of IBM executives, identified work-life fit as the first or second reason for potentially leaving the company[xlvi].

Citibank -- The senior project manager identified key stakeholders across the organization – business units or functions such as technology and human resources - whose support is critical in mainstreaming a more flexible way of working. These Citibank leaders were asked for their sponsorship of the flexibility initiative and to identify at least one representative to sit on a steering committee that advises the flexibility project team. Following an induction, the group met on an ongoing basis over 12 months to further shape Citibank's flexibility approach. Members of the steering committee function as advisors, helping to build acceptance within their business units or departments by sharing the planned vision and approach and seeking input from managers.

The flexibility policy adopted by Citibank identified key overarching principles: flexibility decisions had to be judged neutrally, rather than being based on an employee's reason for seeking flexibility; flexibility decisions had to be based on discussions between a supervisor and supervisee. By engaging Citibank liaisons for flexibility at multiple levels, i.e. the senior leaders who would be most affected by the flexibility initiative and could provide leadership support and the steering committee members who helped to advise the flexibility team, the bank was able to greatly enhance flexibility as an accepted way of working. In other change initiatives, Citibank used champions within key businesses to educate and provide tools to further embed the desired change[xlvii].

University of California-- In order to expand the understanding and use of flexibility across the University of California system, two of the ten universities in the system led a system-wide

educational campaign and created resources to encourage the expansion of flexibility. UC-Berkeley developed and distributed a *Family Friendly Toolkit* to equip department chairs and deans to manage and support the use of flexibility on their campuses. UC Davis introduced a *Family Friendly Adviser Program* to assist faculty across the University of California system with career decision-making in regard to potentially becoming a parent[xlviii].

Infosys–As part of their ongoing commitment to work flexibility, Infosys launched the *Family Matters Network* in 2008 to help employees with parenting and work-life balance issues. Employees are given online expert counselling and provided referral services on daycare, information on schools for their children and on family healthcare. An estimated 14,000 employees are benefiting from this program. Programs such as "All About Marriage", "Joy of parenting", "Joy of working", "Bonding with Spouse", "and Managing your finances" have been appreciated and well received by employees. For example, Infosys has been able to get up to 88% of women back to work following maternity/ extended child care leave. In addition, parenting workshops, online counselling and forum discussions are regularly organized by the Diversity Office.

b. Flexible Work Culture

A flexible work culture encompasses, but goes beyond, the provision and use of flexible work practices. It is one where employees feel comfortable working flexibly whether that be on a formal schedule or in a more ad hoc way. It is a culture where managing flexibly is a strongly desired - if not required – management ability, where employees are empowered to challenge notions of where, when and how work gets done, and where the business case for flexibility is well understood and support for flexibility is characterized by clear and visible leadership messaging.

Programmatic responses, such as a menu of flexible work arrangements, are necessary, but not sufficient, for creating a flexible work culture[6]. As one work-life expert in the November 2010 meeting remarked, "Flexibility is about inclusion and inspiration, not just tools and programs." In many organizations a flexible work culture is something that evolves through time.

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[6] A recent study by A Better Balance (2011) found that working fathers were more likely to utilize the work-flexibility policies if their companies also have supportive, family-friendly cultures.

Success factors related to building and sustaining a flexible work culture, which are subsequently outlined, are closely connected to management and leadership and adapting work practices to modern conditions.

Organizations seeking to create a successful flexible work culture must:

- **use champions to promote and support flexibility**. Among the most important indicators of flexibility as an accepted practiceis endorsement and implementation by managers and, in particular, organizational leaders[7]. Opportunities to reflect on the practices and norms of organizational leaders can help to educate them about working flexibly. **Leaders model the use of flexibility** by sharing their personal experiences with and approach to work-life management. Employees are constantly on the lookout for individuals among managers and leaders who model a more dual-centric – rather than work-centric approach.
- **align organizational systems and practices to support flexibility**. For example a full-time equivalent system does not penalize managers who supervise employees on reduced schedules while the typical headcount system does. A second example of alignment is that employees on reduced schedules are evaluated based on their proportional contribution rather than directly compared to the contribution of full-time peers. A flexible work culture is engendered by **broadly embedding a work-life perspective into organizational systems and practices** (e.g. performance management, training, job design, workforce planning, career management.)
- **implement and track performance metrics for leaders and managers** regarding their ability to create a supportive and flexible work environment. Recognizing and rewarding managers is especially powerful in creating incentives for them to experiment with flexibility. Often, input from subordinates (or upward feedback) is an important source of information for determining manager acumen regarding flexibility.
- **Provide multiple opportunities for management training and coaching**. Managers need the opportunity to build their comfort and competence through education, skill-based training and practice. They should be allowed the time and space to move up the flexibility learning curve.

A flexible work culture clearly links flexibility with working effectively. *Rather than flexibility being narrowly construed as a particular schedule, it is perceived as a tool for individuals, managers and teams, and larger work groups to work most effectively while simultaneously honouring other important priorities in their lives*. From this perspective, the goal is to

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[7] Corporate Voices for Working Families recently conducted a number of focus groups, in which they found that the successful implementation of FWAs depended upon leadership support (see www.corporatevoices.org/our-work/flexcampaign)

minimize and/or remove obstacles and the need for flexibility becomes a catalyst to increase efficacy and value for both employees and the organization.   The expansion of flexibility from scheduling alterations to supporting better work practices and outcomes is highlighted in the table below[xlix].

**Table 2 - Expansion of Flexibility from Scheduling Alterations
to Supporting Better Work Practices and Outcomes**

Flexibility	*Work-Life Effectiveness*
o Focuses on the short-term – how to respond to current work demands.	➢ Focuses on the long-term – how to support agility and sustainable performance.
o Focuses on individual work solutions.	➢ Focuses on team solutions and coordination.
o Is an accommodation for the few.	➢ Is a tool for all employees.
o Alternatively disempowers or entitles employees.	➢ Encourages managers and employees to develop solutions together.
o Values time spent.	➢ Values results and effectiveness.
o Regards employee needs, interests and concerns about burnout as obstacles to accomplishing work.	➢ Uses employee needs, interests and concerns about burnout as a catalyst for creatively redesigning work.
o Focuses on managing employee schedules.	➢ Focuses on managing performance and managing for sustainability.

Appropriate and effective positioning of flexibility also requires that:

- **Flexibility is positioned as working effectively regardless of schedule or place**. The emphasis is on results rather than "face time" – or the need to be seen – and flexibility is perceived as enabling greater efficacy. Given multiple drivers that have profoundly changed work and working conditions, such as technology and the increasingly global nature of work, a flexible work culture helps employees to more effectively manage their work.
- There is an **explicit focus on managing work overload** because persistent overload is seen as a warning sign. Flexibility is linked with sustainability for individuals and the organization. There are organizational practices and norms that reinforce work boundaries, such as "no- meeting Fridays", return email responses not expected during weekends, and global guidelines on teleconferencing that stress sensitivity to time differences.
- **The organization supports the standard of a 'right to ask' for flexibility** and **employees come to perceive that flexibility is an option available to all**, *without regard to their*

personal life situations. Within a flexible work culture, flexibility is used by a broad slice of the workforce representing a spectrum of work-life needs and situations.

- Organizations **clarify the role of multiple stakeholders** (e.g. leaders, managers, employees, work teams, Human Resources) in collectively enabling a flexible work culture. Managers articulate clear performance goals and support a culture of trust and mutual respect. Employees understand their role, which includes supporting co-worker flexibility, being honest about personal work styles and challenges, and being accountable for strong performance. Within a flexible work culture the benefits of improved work effectiveness accrue to both the organization <u>and</u> the employees.

- **Flexibility pilot studies are used to test new approaches**, both at the individual and at the team or work group level. Working groups are empowered to develop customized flexibility solutions.

- Organizations **support an experimental approach to flexibility**. Work redesign is used to challenge ineffective work practices and a structured process allows employees to "discuss the undiscussables", test new approaches, and continue to adapt as needed. Allowing managers and employees to experience the fact that they can work differently greatly facilitates building a more flexible work culture.

Building a Flexible Work Culture: Good Practices

Boston Consulting Group (BCG) -- Strategy consultants at BCG, the global management consulting and business strategy firm, like many employees at professional service firms, worked very long hours and felt the need to be constantly accessible to clients. A Harvard Business School professor worked in partnership with multiple consulting teams at BCG to experiment with creating new norms, in particular making time-off predictable and required. Ten teams experimented with an imposed norm of not working after 6 p.m. on at least one working day per week. After five months, consultants on teams experimenting with scheduled time off reported more positive results on several measures in comparison to colleagues not involved in experimental teams. They indicated higher job satisfaction, better work-life balance, more open communication, and better value delivery for clients. The key reasons cited for success included: a) the identification of a collective team goal, b) active facilitation and support to overcome scepticism and resistance, and c) structured dialogues to work through issues and develop solutions. Allowing employees to experience working differently through the pilots at BCG was critical to challenging fundamental assumptions about working effectively[1].

Dow Corning – the multinational corporation specializing in silicone products, found through an employee opinion survey that employees were struggling to manage their work-life demands. In response to this feedback, the CEO assumed leadership for the roll-out of the company's work-

life strategy. Two of its components included: a) global "no-meeting weeks" on a quarterly basis as a company-wide practice, b) one week per quarter when employees were expected to catch up on work, take vacation, and not travel for work, and c) reduction of management meetings on Fridays.

Another component of Dow Corning's work-life strategy was the customization of the compressed workweek policy through flexibility pilot studies within work groups. Use of compressed workweeks had been limited, despite being on the books for a long time. With the *reintroduction* of compressed work weeks, work groups were encouraged to experiment in determining the application that would be a good fit for their specific challenges and constraints. For example, managers and work teams at a call centre concerned about inadequate coverage on Fridays experimented and found that a bi-weekly approach was a highly successful solution[li].

American Express -- In response to changes in the workforce, technology and business processes, American Express, the multinational credit card and travel company, introduced "BlueWork" to reflect the many different ways in which work is accomplished at the company through global teams, which span geographies and time zones. At American Express, flexible work is broadly defined as granting employees greater choice and control over how, when, and where they work, while meeting their customers', colleagues' and their own needs. Flexible work is described as a partnership between employees and managers. The company has identified several key work styles ranging from the more traditional *hub* model, where employees have individual workspaces, to the *club* model, where employees share time between a primary corporate location and other workspaces (e.g. home, on the road) to the *roam* model, describing employees primarily working at client sites. The BlueWork approach seeks to enable greater engagement and innovation and to recognize the many varied ways in which employees are already working within a highly global, round-the-clock work environment[lii].

American Airlines–To improve productivity, American Airlines used flexibility to improve the effectiveness with which teams at the company operated. Giving teams the latitude to determine their own schedules (in combination with company-specified improvement goals) enabled work groups to customize flexibility for their particular needs. The approach linked process improvements with flexibility at the group level and resulted in improved retention, enhanced teamwork, and productivity gains[liii].

Texas Instruments -- Employees at Texas Instruments, the global computer technology and semiconductor company, were struggling with expanding workloads and time at work in order to keep up with increased demands. In response, the company instituted a team-based process facilitated by internal work-life professionals, which aided work groups with identifying root causes of overwork and potential solutions. Work groups focused on redesigning work processes such as reducing the number and/or duration of meetings and minimizing disruptions to create

periods of focused work time[liv].

Infosys- In order to support employees with child care, Infosys, the global technology services company, based in India, developed a flexible work infrastructure with opportunities to build a flexible work culture. All offices have nearby day care centres within a four kilometre radius, in addition to options to telecommute, which reduce the time wasted on commuting.

c. Flexible Work Practices

Flexible work practices have long been a hallmark of work-life support and are on the short list of requirements for any organization seeking to help employees to manage the complexity of modern lives. The challenge is that despite their prevalence 'on the books', the usage of flexibility in many organizations remains stymied by fears about negative career repercussions and a general perception that working on a flexible schedule is aberrant and not the normal way to work. The gap between the existence of flexible work options and their implementation remains substantial across a broad representation of the work population.

In order for *implementation* to be successful, an organization must:

- **Position FWAs as a tool for managing work** rather than as an employee accommodation, perk, entitlement or privilege. Successful flexible work arrangements should be communicated as being dependent on mutual responsibility and accountability. Profiles of a wide variety of employees working on flexible schedules reinforce cultural acceptance.
- **Support managers to assume a problem-solving response requests for flexibility**. A request is a starting point rather than an ending point and should not be met with an immediate negative response.
- **Have clear and well understood process for seeking FWAs**. Access to flexibility should be seen as broadly available, regardless of level, gender, job type or geography.
- **Develop reason-neutral policy**. Decisions about FWAs should be based on the ability to create a mutually beneficial arrangement rather than the reason for requesting flexibility.
- Ensure that employees have **access to a menu of flexible work options,** which may include flex-time, telecommuting and remote work, compressed work weeks, reduced work options such as part-time work and job sharing, and annualized work hours allowing flexibility over the work year.

31

- **Make resources available to facilitate the use and management of flexible work arrangements**, including:
    - Training for managers on the process for implementing and monitoring FWAs.
    - A dedicated process for collecting ongoing feedback, which then informs the use and management of FWAs.
    - Partial or full coverage for the costs of equipping employees to work remotely.
    - On-line resources, e.g. flexibility policy, overview of process for requesting FWAs, request form, considerations for working on FWAs, etc. A user-friendly database of employees working on FWAs, which provides profiles and contact information for both the employee and the manager, can be a highly effective resource in expanding the use and acceptance of flexibility.
    - A formalized process to track requests for, and usage of, FWAs by unit or manager.
    - Flexibility coaches or internal consultants, to provide ad hoc support and troubleshooting for managers and employees.

Flexible work arrangements work best when built on trust and an understanding that employees will act responsibly. Some of the more programmatic aspects of FWAs, such as tracking usage and a formalized request process, may at some point no longer be required for organizations that are seasoned in the use of FWAs and have embedded flexibility and trust into their cultures. But for organizations that are newer to flexibility – or have long made FWAs available, but with little uptake –initial pilots assist in building an experience base and evidence that FWAs 'can work here'. However, long term testing and pilots could result in a lack of widespread implementation and culture change, and need to be reconciled with more formal practices.

Supporting Flexible Work Arrangements: Good Practices

Bristol-Meyers Squibb (BMS)– BMS, the global biopharmaceutical company, approached the introduction of flexible work options strategically and comprehensively. They took a major step by modifying the company pledge to include a specific commitment to work with employees in supporting their work-life integration. Prior to this, the company engaged managers and employees at the business unit level to understand what was important to them relative to managing their work and to identify business applications for flexibility. BMS

The company developed a framework for analysis and decision-making as well as tools to support managers and employees, such as special issues to consider for specific parts of the business (e.g. manufacturing, sales, and the role of various stakeholders in making flexibility successful). A multi-faceted communications campaign, encompassing senior human resource and executive leader briefings, in addition to training a cadre of human resource generalists as internal

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flexibility consultants to provide just-in-time coaching, provided a strong foundation for BMS' flexibility initiative. In addition, ongoing communication about flexibility was embedded into several company communications and integrated into the performance management process. BMS's approach was anchored from the outset by defined metrics and outcomes including the impact on business goals and satisfaction with the process in the eyes of FWA users, their managers and peers. Flexibility has been embedded as a way to work in BMS through engagement of divisions throughout the company, the comprehensive launch of FWAs and ongoing communications, coupled with measurements[lv].

Booz Allen Hamilton -- To support employees working on flexible schedules and to strengthen the reduced-hour work option, Booz Allen Hamilton, the strategic management consulting firm, introduced the virtual FlexWork Forum. Those employees working on reduced schedules use the forum to stay connected with the firm and each other and to share their learning, including best practices for working flexibly. The forum is a resource not only for employees on flexible schedules but also for employees considering working flexibly as well as for Booz Allen managers overseeing flexible schedules[lvi].

Infosys -- Infosys promotes inclusive work life policies. The *flexible working hour policy* allows parents to attend to children's needs before coming into the office. The *telecommuting policy* allows employees to attend to family emergencies and the *on-duty* policy helps working mothers to set priorities in their work-life issues. The *Work from home policy* allows women to work from home in situations when it is important for the mother to be at home for child-care reasons. *Satellite office policy* allows women to work from the city office during pre and post-maternity periods. *Alternate career* opportunities help employees identify less demanding jobs and these are available through the internal job posting policy called *WithInfy*. One year *child care sabbatical* facilitates young mothers to ensure that they get the appropriate kind of support at home before getting back to work. *This part-time policy* has helped parents to balance their child care priorities, irrespective of the age of the child. Part time also allows *compressed work hours* at Infosys. Employees can either work half a day or work for a few full days in a week.

d. Career path flexibility

Highly skilled knowledge workers, such as those sought by the United Nations, typically spend several early years in higher education and subsequently build their credentials through work experience. As these employees move into different life stages, the complexity of their lives typically accelerates and the challenges of combining work and home escalate. Changes in the

demographics of the workforce in developed economies have fuelled the focus on flexibility and flexible work practices, yet careers are built over decades and increasingly through building a portfolio of work experience across multiple organizations. *Those organizations that want to retain employees for the longer-term need to collaborate with their staff in building career paths that allow for continued growth and development throughout life stages. Career path flexibility is profoundly important for women, and increasingly for men, who play a more central role in home lives today than in the past.*

To enable greater career path flexibility, an organization must:

- **create opportunities for employees to undertake transitions more gradually into and out of work**. Phased returns to work following a parental or medical leave is one example. A second example is allowing a retirement phase-out option enabling an employee to ramp down over a period of months or years. Finally, efforts to bring alumni back to the organization as an employee or on a contract basis, as well as efforts to support employees re-entering the workforce such as parents who left the paid workforce to care for their children, also represent ways in which to ease workforce transitions, retain valuable staff and retain institutional memory.
- **allow employees to accelerate or decelerate their careers without long-term career penalties**. They have the ability to limit travel, refuse assignments, or postpone promotions without fear of permanent career repercussions. Employees are able to design a career within the organization over several life stages. Providing assistance to employees with navigation through large, complex organizations, so that they can identify opportunities beyond their immediate department or office, is a concrete way to embed greater career-path flexibility.
- **adapt positions with career path flexibility in mind** such as creating a part-time partner position in a professional service firm, or the availability of rotational assignments that do not require relocation. The availability of high level job shares is an example of enabling continued career growth <u>and</u> the ability to erect clearer boundaries around work. Another innovative approach is unbundling work to create discrete project opportunities. The goal in adapting positions is to enable employees to continue building their expertise during multiple phases of their lives.
- **Identify role models who demonstrate the different paths** that employees have taken in building their careers.
- **ensure that work-life issues become part of the career planning process**. Discussion of work-life challenges, needs and priorities are embedded into career planning conversations.
- **provide spousal support** for employees in dual career families – such as assistance with finding work –which enhances career path flexibility.

Expanding Career Path Flexibility: Good Practices

Deloitte – despite a long history of supporting work-life issues and a range of flexibility-related programmes, the international accounting and consulting firm found that employees continued to struggle to meet their work-life needs. As part of an effort to revamp the vision and agenda of the Women's Initiative in 2004, the firm began to build a new model of career design, which they named Mass Career Customization (MCC™). They envisioned the idea of a career lattice, based on multiple options and pathways replacing the more rigid notion of a career ladder. Based on this, they designed a framework around the following dimensions: a) pace (speed of advancement), b) workload (scaling from part to full time), c) location and schedule, and d) role (ranging from individual contributor to leader). Every employee at Deloitte, including senior leaders, completes an MCC profile based on the four dimensions to reinforce the notion of career path flexibility. Deloitte identifies several key differences between the career ladder and the career lattice models, including moving from: 'work is a place you go' to 'work is what you do', 'tasks define the job' to 'competencies define the job', 'career paths are linear and vertical' to 'career paths are multi-directional', and 'many workers are similar' to 'many workers are different'[lvii].

Vital to Deloitte's new approach was connecting work-life choices and flexibility to career design, and integrating MCC into the firm's talent management processes. Deloitte report that the introduction and roll-out of MCC has resulted in: a) enhanced employee satisfaction and morale, b) an increased likelihood that employees would recommend Deloitte as a great place to work, c) substantial increases in the perception that employees have the support they need to manage their work-life priorities, and d) more robust career conversations between employees and their managers[lviii].

Safeway – In its efforts to expand the representation of women store managers, Safeway made a seemingly small change, which had a major impact. Formerly, their practice dictated that store managers would be on the premises for all holidays, among the busiest times for grocery stores. Safeway changed the expectation so that store managers could decide whether or not to be present on holidays. As a result, managers became far more focused on developing their assistant managers so that they could assume the leadership role on important holidays and the store manager could limit the number of holidays they were away from their family. Store manager positions were also made available as job shares. Those on a reduced schedule at Safeway have the same access to mentoring, leadership networks and participation in leadership development programmes as those on full-time schedules. These changes greatly increased the representation of women among this critical feeder pools for top talent[lix].

Mitre & University of North Carolina-- Many organizations including Mitre Corporation (a

not-for-profit corporation with expertise in systems engineering, information technology, operational concepts and enterprise modernization), and the University of North Carolina (UNC) have introduced programmes that allow employees to phase into retirement over time. Employees at Mitre who are over 59 ½ years of age can begin to reduce their hours and simultaneously start collecting retirement benefits. In response to employee requests, Mitre instituted the phased approach at low cost and with ease in administration. At UNC tenured full-time faculty can phase into retirement over a one to five-year period. They relinquish tenure and develop individual contracts governing their part-time schedules over a negotiated ramp-down window[lx].

V. Elements of an Effective Organizational Work-Life Strategy

In order to attain and sustain gender parity as mandated by the General Assembly, it is vital for the organization to address work-life issues. Insufficient flexibility has repeatedly been recognized and highlighted in studies across industries as well as in high-level UN forums, such as the Chief Executive's Board for Coordination and by the Secretary-General in his reports on the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system as one of the significant barriers to attaining and sustaining parity for women within the UN system. Enabling women (and men) to adopt a comfortable work-life fit is a lever for both supporting gender equality and for managing the complexities of the 21st Century workforce. The proposed strategy and action plan that follow embed the input of more than 20 experts - from industry, higher education, and the non-profit sector - who gathered in November 2010 to share their best thinking on how to improve work-life support and expand flexibility in each UN entity. An at-a-glance version of the proposed work-life strategy can be found in Appendix 5.

An effective work-life strategy consists of four pillars.

•   **Building the foundation** -- Central to any foundation is genuine commitment and consistent messaging from the very highest levels of leadership. Building on this fundamental requirement, efforts to embed flexibility must be anchored by an infrastructure that facilitates the challenging work of understanding attitudes, working with and educating many constituent groups, and adapting work policies and practices. Several parts of the United Nations system have some resources in place such as policies and possibly networks of Focal Points. However, there is a critical need to improve the infrastructure including cultivating agents of change at multiple levels starting at the highest level, across the United Nations system.

•   **Improving the work culture** -- Strong management built on a foundation of trust and respect enables and facilitates worker engagement and organizational competitiveness and

productivity as well as a culture of flexibility. Empowering employees and strengthening this trust is an important element in creating a more flexible work environment.

•   **Expanding the usage and improving the management of FWAs** -- Flexible work practices are an organizational means to manifest a culture of flexibility. Some United Nations entities have the basic flexibility policy packages with incipient uptake. Surveys and anecdotal evidence point to the need to considerably broaden the existing flexibility policies and strengthen implementation.

•   **Embedding greater career path flexibility** -- There is an imperative to consider flexibility over the long term so as to synchronize and meet the larger need for flexibility over the full career path, including periods of significant dependent-care responsibilities – both child care and elder care - for many staff members. The UN has started to address this issue but more needs to be done, especially given significant shifts in demography and changes in generational attitudes.

The work-life strategy below, proposed by the experts, provides a phased approach, which could build momentum through time and support the evolving use of FWAs in the entities of the United Nations system. Substantial focus in the short-term (defined as the first twelve months) is placed on the first pillar of building and strengthening infrastructure. Select elements of the other pillars are also considered short-term activities, while much of the work will follow in the medium-term of one to three years. Finally, many actions tied to the last pillar of embedding greater career path flexibility are envisioned to be tackled over the longer term of three to five years. The Chief Executives' Board for Coordination (CEB) report "Work/Life Balance in the Organizations of the United Nations System" (CEB/2008/HLCM/HR/11-Rev 1) of 28 August 2008 gives a minimum, medium and 'gold standard'. The following action plan however deals mainly with four arrangements which appear to be more broadly prevalent, at least as written policy in some entities: staggered work hours; compressed workweek; telecommuting; and flexibility for educational opportunities. Entities however are encouraged to do more. The proposed role of UN Women is included at the end of this section.

a. *Building the Foundation*

The UN has several elements in place that are intended to encourage the advancement of women and the creation of a work environment that is responsive to the work-life needs of its staff. Improvement and expansion of these fundamental elements are necessary to drive continued cultural change and enable a more strategic and effective use of flexibility for United Nations staff and for the Organization. These fundamental elements both support and connect the many disparate efforts already under way. A robust administrative infrastructure to organize and focus efforts will lead to the most far-reaching and enduring improvements.

Area of Focus: To create and strengthen the infrastructure for mainstreaming flexibility and broad work-life support.

Actions:

1) Build a web of change agents across each United Nations entity to drive and implement the expansion of FWAs and work-life support. Several working groups, operating at multiple levels and with varying roles, will collectively move the culture of flexibility forward within United Nations entities. Key groups will include:

Short-term -- Immediately

- Networks of Focal Points are already established in some entities. It is imperative that the Focal Points be independent of the Human Resources function to position work-life support as a management and broad organizational issue rather than as a Human Resources issue. The Focal Points will act as liaisons, promoting implementation of the flexibility policies, playing a championship, facilitative and monitoring role in assessing the uptake of more flexible ways of working across the United Nations system. The Focal Points will keep a pulse on the issues of gender parity and, by extension, work-life support.

Short-term -- First six months

- A steering committee comprised of senior management from across departments and offices should be established. Its objective would be to strategically steer progress and support culture change on this issue within each entity. Its responsibilities may encompass reviewing and endorsing a Work-Life Strategy and Action Plan, visibly supporting flexibility, identifying sites for pilot studies, projects and activities, establishing core work-life supports, establishing baseline metrics for assessing progress, and identifying organizational resources for implementing the Work-life Strategy and Action Plan.

Short- term -- Second six months

- Working groups should be established to implement the goal of expanded flexibility within the entity. These working groups will be tasked with translating flexibility to specific Departments, Offices or Bureaus accounting for the different organizational structures. Members of the working groups will be identified by the steering committee and will play an important role in sharing knowledge and best practices that can then be communicated across the entity and eventually across the United Nations system.
- Engaging other stakeholders – such as Departments of Management, Medical Services, Buildings Management (office space), which may have a particular interest in partnering to enhance flexibility and work-life support.

- Women's networks comprised of women (and supportive men) at all levels of the Organization should be established. Women's networks have proven to be an effective vehicle for supporting organizational efforts to retain and develop women's careers. Work-life issues often comprise a fundamental area of focus for women's networks, although uptake and use of flexibility policies equally apply to men, who increasingly are demanding them for elder care and child care.

Area of Focus: To develop a branding and communications strategy that will elevate the importance and understanding of work-life fit as a means to support United Nations system goals and objectives.

Actions:

Short-term -- First six months

Issue a statement from the Head of the entity stressing the United Nations' commitment to assisting staff in managing their work and personal priorities and responsibilities.

- Conduct focus groups with targeted groups/departments and interviews with select individuals to seek their input on the most effective branding approaches and messages for the entity and the UN system. Interviewees should be selected from champions for FWA implementation and others to represent a cross-section to ensure that positioning captures the widest possible audience.
- Define the organizational imperative - or "business case" - for flexibility. Use internal data on turnover, the slow progress of women, work overload and burnout, stress and health care costs, and other relevant information that illustrates the importance of flexibility and work-life support. Where such data is lacking, collection of data ought to be prioritized.
- Clearly link flexibility to working and managing effectively – for all employees at all levels. Flexibility should be positioned as a tool to support and improve work effectiveness, productivity, and work-life integration, rather than a menu of possible FWAs.   Change the language from "work-life balance", which can be narrowly interpreted, to broader positioning such as "work-life integration", "work-life effectiveness" or "work-life fit".
- Tie United Nations efforts to support work-life integration internally with the United Nations' broader mission to support gender equality and the well-being of women and girls around the world.

Short- term -- Second six months

- Use the branding of work-life support as an opportunity to establish/reorganize websites and to highlight easily-accessible resources, such as a request form for seeking an FWA, issues to consider in the management of an FWA, etc.

Long-term (3 to 5 years)

Action:

- Revise branding and communication strategy to educate and elevate importance of Work Life issues.

b. Evolving the Work Culture

A key component, perhaps the most important component, of any work-life strategy is to alter the work culture in ways that allow employees greater control over how they work. There is a great need to educate managers and to build their understanding that a mutually supported work-life culture accrues many advantages, including increased productivity of staff members. Moving toward a more flexible work culture requires the development of new skills on the part of managers and staff members as well as new approaches to accomplishing work. This requires leadership engagement and support, management and staff skill building, continuing communication, experimentation and time.

Area of Focus: To build organizational competence and confidence in creating a more flexible work culture at all levels across the United Nations.

Action:

Short-term -- First six months

- Showcase existing Departments, Offices or teams that are already employing flexibility as a tool in managing their work. In most organizations flexibility is already occurring, albeit in some cases quite unnoticeably or under the radar. One objective is to illustrate how departments, staff and managers are already working flexibly. The path forward then becomes to manage flexibility more effectively for both staff members and the Organization.

Short-term—Second six months

- Identify three to five flexibility pilot sites to experiment with new working methods. Pilot studies will require pre and post-measurements so as to build entity specific information on working flexibly. Identify both easier and more challenging potential pilot sites. Managers in a new role, as well as departments already struggling, are often good

candidates for flexibility pilots. These pilots provide an opportunity to emphasize flexibility at the team or work group level, in addition to the individual level.

- Collect baseline data on important metrics. Options could include: requests for flexibility; approval vs. denial of requests; users of flexibility by gender, level, department, job type; survey data of United Nations staff on availability of informal and formal flexibility, perceptions of the work culture, measures of work overload and stress, etc.

Medium-term – within 18 months

- Conduct an assessment of managerial attitudes toward flexibility. Positive managerial attitude is key. Conduct interviews with managers across a spectrum of perceived support, to better understand their hopes, concerns, and ideas for expanding the use of flexibility across the Organization. Engaging managers, understanding their resistance to flexibility and helping them to see flexibility as a managerial tool to help accomplish their goals are all helpful for flexibility to take hold in a significant way.
- Define baseline requirements for entity. Options might include:
  o Develop a customized flexibility plan or programme that links to unique challenges and needs.
  o Require each department to run at least one flexibility pilot project.
  o Identify appropriate metrics for assessing ongoing support of flexibility and work-life issues. Build in performance metrics for managers and leaders regarding fostering a healthy work environment.
  o Require that each department make at least two flexible work options accessible to their staff members.

Medium-term – One to three years

- Embed work-life training and education into existing management and leadership development courses including through the learning manager's forum. Highlight effective management of flexibility as an important leadership skill. Explicitly name flexibility management in job descriptions for management positions.
- Develop an internal rewards system that recognizes management skill and effort relative to flexibility. Ideas include flexibility awards for creating an environment supportive of work-life balance, and featuring UN managers on the intranet for effective flexibility management within a Department. The overarching goal is to recognize and reward examples of strong flexibility management.

c. *Expanding the Usage and Improving the Management of FWAs*

Flexible work options are a concrete vehicle for employees to adapt the time and place of their work. While several agencies, funds and programmes within the United Nations system have

made available a menu of flexible work options for several years, usage remains low and many staff members have doubts about managerial and leadership support. There are many steps that can be taken in strengthening the approach to FWAs, including requiring that FWAs are not a perk or a staff accommodation but an organizational tool and necessary component of modern management.

Area of Focus: To improve the management of, and expand the usage of, flexible work practices.

Actions:

Short-term -- First six months

- Convene a Flexibility Forum bringing together users and managers of flexible work practices across each entity to share their experiences and knowledge. Distil these good practices and lessons learned into a toolkit for managing and working flexibly at the entity and United Nations system levels. (Alternatively, interview a sampling of staff members and managers with experience regarding FWAs to gather this input).
- Publicize profiles on the entity intranet of men and women managers working on flexible schedules.

Short- Term -- Second six months

- Develop a clear and transparent approach for staff to seek an FWA including a proposal process that acts as a springboard for the staff member and manager to discuss potential challenges and solutions. *The end goal is to find a solution, among multiple options, which best meets the collective needs of the manager and the staff member in a particular situation.*
- Create the norm of a 'right to ask' for flexibility, recognizing that the role of staff is to demonstrate how the work can be accomplished on the alternative schedule, but that simultaneously the expectation is that managers cannot automatically reject a request for flexibility without serious consideration and negotiation.
- A later step would be for the flexibility policy to evolve to encompass new flexibility options, such as seasonal flexibility.

Medium-term – One to three years

- Train a group of staff (the Focal Points mentioned in "Building the Foundation" where appropriate) across the entity to function as Flexibility Advocates. These individuals will provide a vital resource for both managers and employees in the implementation and usage of flexible work arrangements in the various entities across the United Nations system. One role of the Flexibility Advocates would be to support a process for managing requests for working flexibly. For example, the UK system for parents seeking flexible working arrangements involves a written request from the employee and a practical assessment by the employer, following which a decision is taken, against which

the employee can appeal. The Flexibility Advocates may be able to support a similar process.

- Develop a broadly available, sortable database of staff members across the entity that have worked on or are currently working on FWAs and feed information to UN Women system-wide website. Include information on the type and duration of the arrangement, the position, the successes and challenges as well as contact information for both the staff member working on an FWA and his/her manager. This will reinforce the reality that there is already a critical mass of staff members working flexibly.
- Create a flexibility "chat room" for staff members and managers to discuss the benefits, challenges, and potential solutions to managing flexibility effectively.

Long-term three to five years and ongoing

- Collaborate with the Offices of Human Resources Management to move from a headcount to a full-time-equivalent system for tracking employees that does not penalize managers for having staff members on reduced schedules.
- On an ongoing basis (and as part of the gender equality communication strategy), develop and publish profiles of UN staff members working on FWAs. Purposefully profile the use of FWAs for a variety of needs (e.g. elder care, education, etc.) to reinforce that flexibility is for everyone.
- As noted in the Building the Foundation section of the strategy, metrics to monitor requests for flexibility, approvals and denials of flexible work requests, usage of flexibility by gender/ level/ department, and general issues with the successful implementation of flexibility are recommended.

d. Embedding Greater Flexibility into Career Paths

Changes in the demographics of the workforce are necessitating far more fluidity in the development of career paths, particularly for the type of highly educated, highly mobile staff that comprise the United Nations' workforce. As such, a key area of focus of the United Nations' work-life strategy specifically addresses ways to communicate and create greater career path flexibility. Particularly for women, the ability to shape their careers in ways that fit within their larger life goals and priorities cannot be understated in retaining and engaging them for the long-term.   As the traditional family, consisting of one member of a couple primarily devoted to paid work while the other was primarily devoted to managing the home, has become less common in many countries an element of helping to address the work-life needs of staff members is through the provision of dependent care supports. These supports enable staff to remain focused on work knowing that their loved ones are being cared for in their absence. Dependent care support makes it possible for caregivers to work outside the home, which is highly aligned with the UN Women's goal of empowering women to be financially stable and independent.

Area of Focus: To develop the United Nations career model and design more flexible career alternatives that address the many complexities of the modern workforce (e.g.

dual career families, single parent families, blended families, an aging workforce) as well as to assist staff members in locating suitable dependent care resources.

Actions:

Short- Term – Second six months

- Identify and highlight a broad range of career paths taken by United Nations leaders with the goal of emphasizing several models of making a career within the United Nations system. Highlight staff members moving across several United Nations entities as well as those making a long-term career within one or two entities.   Consider using the Deloitte Mass Career Customization Model (MCC) to track the career trajectories of United Nations leaders. Identify examples of dual-centric leaders, those placing an equal value on both their professional and personal priorities.

Medium-term – One to three years

- Use the large number of posts becoming vacant as a result of retiring staff as an opportunity to design more flexible jobs and career paths. Identify how jobs and typical career paths could be restructured, particularly with dual career families in mind.
- Incorporate discussion of work-life issues into career development conversations and planning. Reinforce in development planning conversations (and at other times), the value the staff member brings to the entity and specific ideas for future growth and development.
- Facilitate the employment of spouses.
  o Give preferential positioning to the qualified spouses of staff members relocating to a new duty station when they applying and are well-qualified for positions within the United Nations system.
  o Identify voluntary UN work projects that enable the spouses of United Nations staff members to continue to develop professionally by gaining experience within the United Nations system.
  o Collect and disseminate information on the provision of dependent-care support across the United Nations system.
  o Convene discussion groups/ support groups for caregivers (e.g. working parents, elder-care-givers) across and within United Nations entities.

Long-term – three to five years

- Build in "on" and "off" ramps that allow for more gradual transitions. Create a phase-in option for staff members returning from parental or medical leave. Create a phase-out option for retiring UN staff members.
- Create and/or strengthen the succession planning process; embed career path flexibility into succession plans.
- Rethink career paths for key jobs/ posts with eye toward facilitating needs of dual career families

- Encourage experimentation with sabbaticals or seasonal schedules that reflect longer-term flexibility and respond to the ebb and flow of work demands and available staff.
- Create a leave bank that allows staff members to gift unused leave time, which can be made available to colleagues facing challenging work-life circumstances.

e. The Role of UN Women

Resolution RES/64/289 paragraph 53 mandates that UN Women's role include "leading, coordinating and promoting the accountability of the United Nations system in its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women". Therefore, in support of the above work-life integration strategy and action plan, UN Women will:

- Facilitate a community of practice of entity FWA focal points. This group will play an important role in steering, coordinating and monitoring progress on this issue, ensuring synergy and harmony across the UN system. It will also share entity knowledge and best practices.
- Maintain links with civil society and Member State specialists in FWA and make information and tools available to all entities.
- Provide a template for a work life strategy (included in this EGM report) that each entity can adapt to its own use.
- Provide, on the UN Women website, a model of an awareness and communication campaign for each entity to adapt to its own use.
- Use the UN Women website to communicate work-life strategy, activities and achievements.
- Provide updates on the implementation of work life balance to the Inter-Agency Network for Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE) and for the Secretary-General's reports on the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system.

Appendix 1 - Program Agenda

Expert Group Meeting
Work Life Policy, Practice and Potential
November 9 – 11, 2010
United Nations, New York

Objectives:
- To envision and explore state-of-the-art work-life policies, practices, and norms for the 21st Century workforce
- To bring together and learn from external experts on work-life support and flexibility
- To develop recommendations for policies and practices that will strengthen implementation of flexibility and inform the development of a work-life strategy for the United Nations system including the new entity UN Women

Day One November 9	Activity
9:00 – 10:00	**Welcome and introductions** o Review of meeting objectives and agenda o Review of the 'State of Flexibility 'at the UN o Round robin introductions of participants – • Name and affiliation • If you were to create a model organization aligned with your best understanding of the current and future workforce, especially women, what two or three ideas would you consider to be fundamental?
10.00 – 10.45	**Overview of Framework for Work-Life Support and Draft Work-Life Strategy (see background paper)**
10:45 – 11:00	Break
11:00 – 11:30	**Career Path Flexibility: Expert Perspective** • Anne Weisberg, Deloitte : The Career Lattice and Mass Career Customization
11.30 – 12.30	**Career Path Flexibility: Working Groups**
12.30 – 2.30	Lunch
2:30 – 3:00	**Career Path Flexibility: Report Outs and Full Group Discussion**

3:00 – 4:00	**Supporting Work-Life Issues around the Globe: Expert Perspective** • Deidre Anderson, Cranfield University: Work-life trends in Europe • Supriti Supriti : Work-life trends in Asia
4:00 – 5:00	**Supporting Work-Life Issues around the Globe: Working Groups**
5:00 – 5:30	**Supporting Work-Life Issues around the Globe: Report Outs and Full Group Discussion**
Day Two November 10	**Activity**
9:00 – 9:30	**Innovative Flexibility and Flexible Work Practices: Expert Perspective** · Carol Bryce Buchanan, FWI: Learnings from Making Work (30 minutes)
9:30 – 10:30	**Innovative Flexibility and Flexible Work Practices: Working Groups**
10:30 – 11:00	**Innovative Flexibility and Flexible Work Practices: Report Outs and Full Group Discussion**
11:00 – 11:15	Break
11:15 – 12:15	**Work Culture, Effectiveness and Productivity: Expert Perspective** • Amy Richman, WFD: People Oriented Work Redesign: IBM Case Study • Leslie Perlow, Harvard Business School: Team Based Flexibility
12:15 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 2:00	**WorkCulture, Effectiveness and Productivity: Working Groups**
2:00 – 2:30	**Work Culture, Effectiveness and Productivity: Report Outs and Full Group Discussion**
2:30 – 2:45	Break
2:45 – 3:30	**Organizational Management in the 21st Century: Expert Perspective** • Stew Friedman, The University of Pennsylvania: Total Leadership
3:30 – 4:30	**Organizational Management in the 21st Century: Working Groups**
4:30 – 5:00	**Organizational Management in the 21st Century: Report Outs and Full Group Discussion**

Day Three November 11	Activity
9:00 – 10:00	**Review of Input on Work-Life Strategy** Review 'here is what we heard'. Clarify where needed.
10:00 – 10:30	**Exercise to Prioritize Most Important Issues and Actions**
10:30 – 10:45	**Break**
10:45 – 12:00	**Discussion of Final Recommendations and Closing**

Appendix 2 - List of Participants

(in alphabetical order)

__Office of Focal Point for Women, now in UN Women__

Ms. Marilyn DAWSON
Social Affairs Officer

Ms. Aparna MEHROTRA
Focal Point for Women

__Consultant:__

Ms. Lisa D'ANNOLFO LEVEY

__Experts__

Ms. Deirdre ANDERSON
Teaching Fellow
Cranfield School of Management

Ms. Wendy BREITERMAN
Director, Global Work/Life Strategies
Johnson and Johnson

Ms. Carol BRYCE-BUCHANAN
Director of Development
Families and Work Institute

Ms. Nuria CHINCHILLIA
Professor and Director of the International Centre for Work and Family
International Center for Work and Family, IESE Business School, University of Navarra

Ms. Deborah EPSTEIN-HENRY
Founder & President
Flex-time Lawyers

Ms. Anne ERNIE
Head of Leadership, Learning & Diversity
Bloomberg

Mr. Stewart FREIDMAN
Professor
Wharton, University of Pennsylvania

Ms. Elisabeth KELAN
Assistant Professor
King's College, London

Ms. Johanna LAMMI-TASKULA
Senior Researcher
National Institute for Health and Welfare

Ms. Lorraine LANHAM
Manager – Workplace Transformation
American Express

Ms. Lisa LEVEY
Consultant
Libra Consulting

Ms. Karyn LIKERMAN
Head of Employee Networks
Citi

Ms. Leslie PERLOW
Konosuke Matsushita Professor of Leadership in Organizational Behaviour
Harvard Business School

Ms. Aneline RHODA
Senior Service Delivery Manager: Resourcing, Learning & Development
Anglo American Group

Ms. Amy RICHMAN
Senior Consultant
WFD Consulting

Ms. Teresa RODRIGUEZ
Gender Specialist/Board Member
Centre for Women's Studies

Ms. Suzanne SKIPPER
Principal
Deloitte Services LP

Ms. Supriti SUPRITI
Founder & Chief Lead at Sarvam
Supriti Consultants

Ms. Therese VALADEZ
Vice President, Workplace Transformation
American Express

Ms. Anne WEISBERG
Director, Talent
Deloitte Services LP

Appendix 3 - General Assembly Legislative Mandate for Work Life Policy and Practice

Date Adopted	Resolution	Gender sensitive work policy
6 February 1998	A/RES/52/96	Para 7: "...requests the Secretary-General to continue his work to create a gender-sensitive work environment supportive of the needs of his staff, both women and men, including through the development of policies for flexible working time, workplace possibilities, family leave, childcare and elder-care needs, as well as through training, particularly at senior levels..."
5 February 1999	A/RES/53/119	Para 8: "...requests the Secretary-General to continue his work to create a gender-sensitive work environment supportive of the needs of his staff, both women and men, including through the development of policies for flexible working time, flexible workplace arrangements, child-care and elder-care needs, as well as through the expansion of gender-sensitivity training in all departments and offices"
8 February 2001	A/RES/55/69	Para 6(d): "Requests the Secretary-General...[t]o intensify his efforts to create, within existing resources, a gender-sensitive

		work environment supportive of the needs of his staff, both women and men, including the development of policies for flexible working time, flexible workplace arrangements and child-care and elder-care needs, as well as the provision of more comprehensive information to prospective candidates and new recruits on employment opportunities for spouses and the expansion of gender-sensitivity training in all departments, offices and duty stations"
30 January 2002	A/RES/56/127	Para 6(e): "Requests the Secretary-General...[t]o intensify his efforts to create...a gender-sensitive work environment supportive of the needs of his staff, both women and men, including through the development of policies for flexible working time, flexible workplace arrangements and childcare and elder-care needs..[and] more comprehensive information to prospective candidates and new recruits on employment opportunities for spouses..and the expansion of gender-sensitivity training in all departments, offices and duty stations" Para 3(c): "Welcomes...[t]he objective of improving gender balance in action plans on human resources management for individual departments and offices...and encourages further cooperation, including the sharing of best-practice initiatives, between heads of departments and offices...which include

		specific targets and strategies for improving the representation of women in individual departments"
30 January 2003	A/RES/57/180	Para 6(g): "Requests the Secretary-General...[t]o intensify his efforts to create, within existing resources, a gender-sensitive work environment supportive of the needs of his staff, both women and men, by, inter alia, actively pursuing appropriate work/life policies, such as flexible working time, flexible workplace arrangements, career development and childcare and elder-care needs, and by providing more comprehensive information to prospective candidates and new recruits on employment opportunities for spouses, providing support for the activities of women's networks and organizations within the United Nations system and expanding gender-sensitivity training in all departments, offices and duty stations"
19 February 2004	A/RES/58/144	Para 6(h): "Requests the Secretary General...[t]o intensify his efforts to create, within existing resources, a gender sensitive work environment supportive of the needs of his staff, both women and men, including by actively pursuing appropriate work/life policies, such as flexible working time, flexible workplace arrangements, career development,

		mentoring programmes and childcare and elder care needs, as well as through the provision of more comprehensive information to prospective candidates and new recruits on employment opportunities for spouses, the provision of support for the activities of women's networks and organizations within the United Nations system and the expansion of gender sensitivity training in all departments, offices and duty stations, including more information and training of staff and managers on the benefits of the work/life policies on productivity and effectiveness"
10 February 2005	A/RES/59/164	Para 7: "...requests the Secretary-General to continue his work to create a gender-sensitive work environment supportive of the needs of his staff, both women and men, including through the development of policies for flexible working time, workplace possibilities, family leave, childcare and elder-care needs, as well as through training, particularly at senior levels..."

Source: Office of the Focal Point for Women 10/2010

Appendix 4 - Policies and Measures to Achieve Gender Balance in the United Nations System

Policy or measure	United Nations	UNDP	UNFPA	UNHCR	UNICEF	UNRWA	ILO	FAO	WFP	UNECE	WHO	ICAO	UPU	ITU	WIPO	UNIDO	IAEA	WTO	Total No. of organizations
A. Recruitment																			
1 Special measures to achieve gender balance	x[a]	x		x	x	x		x	x		x	x	x			x	x		12
2 Human resources planning measures on gender balance	x		x	x	x	x				x	x	x	x			x	x		11
3 Other policies — cooperation of Member State through points of contact																	x		1
B. Promotion																			
4 Special measures to achieve gender balance	x	x		x	x	x	x		x			x		x					9
5 Human resources planning measures on gender balance	x		x	x	x				x		x								6
C. Retention – work/life policies																			
6 Flexible working arrangements	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x			13
7 Staggered working hours	x	x	x	x	x		x	x			x		x				x		10
8 Maternity leave	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	18
9 Paternity leave	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	16
10 Child care facilities	x					x			x							x	x		5
11 Breastfeeding policies	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x					x	x	x	x	12
12 Family leave for child care, adoption, family emergency	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		16
13 Part-time work	x			x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	15

Policy or measure	United Nations	UNDP	UNFPA	UNHCR	UNICEF	UNRWA	ILO	FAO	WFP	UNECE	WHO	ICAO	UPU	ITU	WIPO	UNIDO	IAEA	WTO	Total No. of organizations
14 Job-sharing	x				x		x		x		x			x					6
15 Spouse employment	x	x		x	x			x	x		x	x	x		x		x		11
D. Gender awareness																			
16 Gender mainstreaming in programmes and policies	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x				x		x			11
17 Gender sensitivity programmes (including training)	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x		x			x		12
18 Policies on harassment, including sexual harassment	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x		16
19 Other policies — special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse	x																		1
20 Other policies — mediator programme to deal with harassment issues																	x		1
E. Monitoring and accountability																			
21 Annual gender audits							x					x							2
22 Annual reporting to the governing body	x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x		14
23 Monitoring bodies/tools		x	x		x			x						x	x				6
Total number of measures	**19**	**12**	**11**	**14**	**18**	**9**	**14**	**13**	**16**	**12**	**14**	**11**	**9**	**12**	**10**	**11**	**15**	**4**	

Appendix 5 - Proposed Work-Life Strategy at a Glance for United Nations Entities

Building the Foundation	Evolving the Work Culture	Expanding Usage and Improving Management of FWAs	Embedding Greater Career Path Flexibility
Short-term *Year 1* **Actions:** 1) Build a web of change agents across the entity including working groups at multiple levels • Empower already established networks of Focal Points for Women where they exist; Focal Points should be independent of HR function • Establish a Steering Committee of senior managers from across departments/offices to play a strategic role in the culture change process (first 6 months) • Establish working groups to drive implementation	*Short-term* *Year 1* **Actions:** • Showcase existing departments, offices and work groups that are already working flexibly (first six months) • Identify 3 to 5 flexibility pilot sites (implementation of pilots to begin in month6) • Clarify metrics and information sources in support of WL strategy	*Short-term* *Year 1* **Actions:** • Convene a flex forum of users and managers across the entity, distill learnings into entity specific flex toolkit resource materials (first 6 months) • Publicize profiles of male and female managers working on FWAs (first 6 months); • Develop a clear and transparent approach for seeking FWAs(e.g. proposal based process, manager and employee partnership (second 6 months)	*Short-term* *Year 1* **Actions:** • Identify and highlight broad range of career paths among senior staff

and translate flexibility to specific departments and offices(second 6 months) • Engage with stakeholders who may have a particular interest/ link to WL issues (e.g. facilities, finance, etc.) (second 6 months) 2) Develop a branding and communication strategy to educate and elevate importance of WL issues (first six months) • Issue a statement from entity head on commitment to assist staff in managing WL integration. • Conduct focus groups and interviews and to seek input for branding strategy. • Define specific business case for flexibility and WL support	• Collect baseline data on important metrics.		

• Link flexibility to working and managing effectively (not just alternative schedules) • Reinforce connection between WL support of staff and broader UN mission to support gender equality • Clarify metrics and information sources in support of WL strategy • Use the branding of work-life support to organize a dedicated website or webpage and highlight internal resources (second six months)			

Building the Foundation	Evolving the Work Culture	Improving Management/ Expanding Usage of FWAs	Embedding Greater Career Path Flexibility
Medium-term (1 to 3 years)	*Medium-term (1 to 3 years)*	*Medium-term (1 to 3 years)*	*Medium-term (1 to 3 years)*

Actions:	Actions:	Actions:	Actions:
1) Establish networks of women and supportive men at all levels of the organization to play role in advocating for flexibility and work-life support and monitoring at the department/office level.	• Conduct targeted assessment of managerial attitudes toward flexibility (within 18 months) • Define baseline requirements for entity (within 18 months) • Embed work-life training and education into existing leadership development • Develop an internal rewards systems to recognize skilful management of flexibility	• Train internal group of flexibility advocates • Develop sortable database of staff working on FWAs (e.g. type & duration, successes & challenges, contact information for manager and employee)and feed information to UN Women system wide website • Launch a flexibility chat room	• Proactively restructure jobs left open by retirees • Incorporate discussion of work-life issues into existing career development conversations/ processes • Facilitate the employment of UN spouses - preferential positioning for qualified spouses, UN projects (volunteer) to build experience • Collect and disseminate information on dependent care support across UN entities • Convene discussion/ support groups for care givers

United Nations Proposed Work-Life Strategy at a Glance

Building the Foundation	Evolving the Work Culture	Improving Management/ Expanding Usage of FWAs	Embedding Greater Career Path Flexibility
Long-term (3 to 5 years)/ On-going	*Long-term (3 to 5 years)/ On-going*	*Long-term (3 to 5 years)/ On-going*	*Long-term (3 to 5 years)/ On-going*
Actions: Revise branding and communication strategy to educate and elevate importance of WL issues	**Actions:** Repeat baseline survey to gauge progress annually. Entities to measure, by FWA arrangement.	**Actions:** - Collaborate with OHR to move from headcount to full-time equivalent system for tracking employees - Publicize profiles of employees working on a variety of flexible schedules - Utilize metrics to facilitate implementation of WL strategy	**Actions:** - Build in on ramps and off ramps - phase in option for employees returning from parental and medical leaves, phase out option for retirees - Create and/or strengthen the succession planning process; embed career path flexibility into succession plans. - Rethink career paths for key jobs/ posts with eye toward facilitating needs of dual career families - Encourage

			experimentation with sabbaticals or seasonal schedules that reflect longer-term flexibility
			• Create a leave bank allowing UN staffers to gift unused leave time

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