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OTHER MATTERS

MATTERS RESULTING FROM THE FORTIETH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Implementation of the results of job classification
for the General Service Category in UNDP

Note by the Administrator

I. BACKGROUND

1. At the thirty-second session of the Governing Council in June 1985, the Administrator presented detailed information on the outcome of the job classification exercise in respect of international Professional and headquarters General Service posts. He also provided budget estimates to reflect the implementation dates for the introduction of job classification in the two categories, as of January 1986 and January 1985 respectively (see DP/1985/57, paras. 40-42).

2. In 1985, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) endorsed the results of the UNDP job classification exercise and stated that: "For General Service posts, classification standards were jointly developed by the three New York-based organizations in consultation with the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), and were approved by ICSC in July 1982; on this basis, the Advisory Committee sees no reason to object to the results." 1/ As regards the implementation date, ACABQ indicated that: "Since the UNDP exercise is virtually complete, the Council may wish to decide on immediate implementation with an effective date of 1 January 1985. However, should the Council wish to maintain the principle that the effective date for UNDP should be the same as that for the United Nations, it may wish, after dealing with the results of the exercise, to continue the authorization (in so far as actual implementation and the effective date thereof is concerned) contained in paragraph 7 of decision 84/32 and request that the Administrator report to the thirty-third session of the Council." 2/

3. The Governing Council, by its decision 85/35 on the revised 1984-1985 budget, approved the revised appropriations to finance the 1984-1985 biennial budget and authorized: "the Administrator to implement the results of the job classification exercise and the new salary scale for General Service staff of the United Nations Development Programme at headquarters when such results are implemented by the Secretary-General for the United Nations General Service and with the same effective date." 3/

4. At its twenty-second session, held in July 1985, ICSC noted with concern that the completion of the job classification exercise in the United Nations had been further delayed, but it welcomed the assurances of the United Nations that the exercise would be completed by 1 September 1985. The Commission, aware that UNDP and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) had already completed their job classification exercises, considered the matter to be very urgent. So much time had elapsed that the job information upon which the salary scales and classifications were based might become outdated. Additionally, the delays being incurred could have a detrimental effect on the career development of staff. The Commission itself, which is mandated to ensure coherence and harmonization of practices in the common system, did not consider it to be a contradiction for two of the three organizations to proceed with the implementation of the results.

5. The Chairman of ICSC communicated the Commission's concerns to the Administrator in a letter dated 13 August 1985. He pointed out that the Commission did not question the effective date for implementation of 1 January 1985. He further indicated that the Commission had decided to: "request all three organizations in New York to actually implement the results of the job classification exercise and salary survey on 1 September 1985, and to provide to the Commission, through its Chairman, information as to implementation progress and impact by 30 September 1985; if for any reason the United Nations was still not able to implement this by 1 September 1985, UNICEF and UNDP should proceed with the introduction of the new grading structure without waiting for the United Nations" (underlining added).

6. The reply of the Associate Administrator, dated 24 September 1985, indicated that UNDP had taken note of the letter of the Chairman of ICSC and that UNDP was awaiting formal notification of the decision by the Secretary-General to proceed with the implementation of the job classification results, at which time UNDP would also proceed with the implementation. The Associate Administrator further stated in his reply: "As you are undoubtedly aware, the UNDP Governing Council, at its recent session, authorized us 'to implement the results of the job classification exercise and the new salary scale for General Service staff of the United Nations Development Programme at headquarters when such results are implemented by the Secretary-General for the United Nations General Service and with the same effective date'".

7. On 14 October 1985, the United Nations Assistant Secretary-General, Office of Personnel Services, issued an information circular (ST/IC/85/46) indicating that the Secretary-General had decided to implement the results of the job classification exercise in the United Nations with effect from 1 January 1985 and that personnel actions would be processed in the payrolls of November or December 1985.

8. After reconfirming the decision with the appropriate administrative authorities in the United Nations, the Associate Administrator issued a similar circular to UNDP staff stating that UNDP would go ahead with the implementation of the General Service job classification integration and promotions and that it was expected that these actions would take effect as from 1 January 1985 and would be reflected in the November or December 1985 payroll. UNDP undertook the necessary administrative steps to have the job classification results reflected in the payroll by end December 1985.

9. The General Assembly, at its final plenary meeting of the fortieth session, on 18 December 1985, decided to defer a decision on the job classification for General Service until its forty-first session, or sooner if possible, while maintaining the effective date of implementation on 1 January 1985. The decision reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on job classification in the General Service and related categories in New York, decides:

"(a) To defer a decision on job classification of the General Service and related categories in New York;

"(b) To consider at its forty-first session, or if possible before the session, on the basis of the recommendations of ACABQ and any observations that may be made by ICSC;

"(c) To ensure that social justice should be done in the matter;

"(d) That the effective date of the implementation of the results of the classification exercise should be 1 January 1985". 4/

10. As the Secretary-General was obliged to delay the implementation of the results of the job classification exercise, including actions related to payroll, and in view of the proviso in Governing Council decision 85/35 that linked the UNDP implementation with that of the United Nations, the Administrator did not effect the implementation.

11. As for the funds that had been earmarked for this exercise in 1985, it should be noted that the necessary funds have been obligated in 1985 and have been set aside in reserve, to be disbursed in 1986, subject to the concurrence of the Governing Council.

12. The reference, made by ICSC (see para. 4), to possible detrimental effects on career development if implementation is delayed, is being found to be an accurate prediction. The well-established appointment and promotion machinery in UNDP will, for the first time, find itself in an untenable situation whereby staff are at inexact grade levels until such time as the results of the job classification are implemented. Career movements cannot be planned and transfers are being delayed or jeopardized since staff are uncertain of their own grade levels and the true levels of other jobs to which they may aspire in the Organization. Furthermore, the Administrator is constrained in terms of filling vacant posts in the newly established levels, due to the present uncertainty.

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II. RECOMMENDATION FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESULTS OF THE JOB CLASSIFICATION IN UNDP

13. As UNDP has complied fully with the various technical, administrative and legislative steps and requirements in the job classification exercise over the last three years, the Administrator now considers it appropriate to request the Governing Council to authorize him to proceed with the implementation of job classification in UNDP for the following reasons:

(a) The classification of General Service jobs in UNDP was completed at an early stage, without the long delays experienced in the United Nations;

(b) ACABQ in 1985 endorsed the results of the job classification exercise in UNDP and offered no objection to UNDP implementing its classification with effect from 1 January 1985 without waiting for the United Nations (see para. 2 above);

(c) ICSC, in recognition of the delays being experienced in the United Nations, formally requested the Administrator to proceed with the implementation of the job classification without waiting for the United Nations;

(d) The General Assembly deferred the implementation of the results in the United Nations pending the recommendations of ACABQ and ICSC, two bodies which have already endorsed the results in UNDP;

(e) The General Assembly has established the effective date of 1 January 1985.

14. The Governing Council is therefore requested to amend its decision 85/35 and to authorize the Administrator to proceed at this time with the implementation of the results of the job classification with effect from 1 January 1985.

Notes

1/ Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (DP/1985/56).

2/ Ibid.

3/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1985, Supplement No. 11 (E/1985/32), annex I.

4/ Decision 40/466.
