



CAREER MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

In pursuit of its core mission and strategic vision, UNDP is determined to attract, select, develop and retain people of the highest caliber, who bring with them diverse backgrounds, talents, knowledge, skills and experience, and who are strongly motivated to make a difference and contribute to resolving the world's most pressing needs, living the United Nations values, and ready and willing to continuously learn and improve.

Recognizing that UNDP's people are our single greatest asset, career development is a critical element of people management in UNDP and an essential organizational function. In addition, it plays a pivotal role in employee engagement and creating positive employee experience.

As a core part of People for 2030, this document sets out a new framework for career development and career management within UNDP. This new framework, together with new approaches on mobility, performance management and recruitment, represents one of the cornerstones of transformation of the way in which UNDP manages its talent. It values our people's intrinsic desire for growth and development, as well as taking into account the changing attitudes to careers and changes in organizations, where personnel are increasingly developing careers spanning diverse fields. UNDP provides multiple avenues for joining the organization, contributing to the fulfilment of its mission and specific priorities, enjoying positive employee experience, developing one's unique career journey, and meeting an individual's own development and growth aspirations. There is more career versatility than ever before as entry into organization can occur at different levels and through different arrangements.

Objectives

UNDP's Career Management Framework aims to:

- Provide clarity on and support wider ownership of UNDP's approach to careers and career management.
- Provide an overview of career experiences available to personnel within UNDP and how to navigate them.
- Outline a governance process to ensure strategic management of UNDP's talent and support career moves of UNDP personnel.
- Demonstrate how to build employability by developing "portable" capacities that make people more valuable and likely to fulfil their aspirations both within and outside of UNDP.
- Outline career planning and development resources provided by UNDP to support individuals in their career management.

Applicability

The Career Management Framework provides guidance to UNDP's entire workforce on how to manage their career journeys and growth experiences in UNDP.

Definition of Career

Agility, adapability, continuous improvement and change are hallmarks of UNDP as a modern organization, which means that UNDP's workforce is in a constant state of developing skills and new knowledge, both on-the-job and through experience-broadening moves within or beyond the organization. Hence, UNDP defines a modern career as a complex, growth-oriented and multi-directional sequence of experiences and opportunities in an individual's professional life. As such, a career is defined in terms of a portfolio of enriching and diverse experiences rather than as linear progressions.

Pillars of the Career Management Framework

UNDP's Career Framework is based on four pillars:

Career Management Principles

Career principles articulate the underpinnings of the Framework, including the values and priorities that drive career management decisions.

Career Architecture

The career architecture describes how work and jobs across UNDP are organized and aligned to support the achievement of its strategic objectives. Components of career architecture include: career tracks, career streams and job roles. The career architecture aims to make more explicit the career options available to UNDP personnel.

Career Pathways

Career pathways are developed for strategically important job roles to illustrate how best to prepare for those roles by gaining relevant experiences, skills, perspectives, and networks. The career pathways are supplemented by readiness criteria for each key job role to guide the creation of development plans for those who are in or aspire to be in certain jobs.

Career Development Support

Career development support is provided to all UNDP's workforce to promote continuous learning, help personnel better understand how to navigate their careers, and help managers fulfill their roles in coaching staff on their careers and ongoing development. Career development support includes online resources and tools as well as special emphasis programmes and services.

This document mainly focuses on the career management principles and architecture, and provides general information on career pathways and career development support. Separate documents provide information on career transitions, governance structure and Talent Reviews, career paths and readiness criteria.

UNDP CAREER MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

UNDP is committed to creating a career experience where diverse talents can thrive whether pursuing a career within UNDP or the UN System or joining the organization temporarily to make a difference in resolving the world's most pressing needs. To achieve this goal, UNDP's career management framework itself and its implementation governance structure is based on core principles that address the following:

- 1. Approach to learning and growth
- 2. Shared responsibility for career management
- 3. The value of depth and breadth of expertise
- 4. The organization's workforce strategy around entry points

Principle 1: Continuous, Experienced-Based Learning

This principle outlines UNDP's approach to learning and growth as a concept.

UNDP will foster a culture of continuous experience-based learning and growth that offers opportunities to gain diverse experiences through multi-directional moves driven by both business needs and staff aspirations. This principle is based on the belief that everyone in the workforce has talent to further develop.

The major reforms that UNDP and the UN system have been undergoing call for a greater degree of learning agility and integration across the UN system as well as across development disciplines to quickly deliver integrated solutions to its clients. In response, UNDP is moving toward a culture of continuous learning and growth. The organization currently has a broad offering of learning programmes that is both in-classroom and accessible online for self-paced learning. More deliberate attention will be paid in the future to nurturing ongoing growth and learning gained through diverse job experiences, frequent feedback, coaching, and knowledge sharing to stretch thinking and keep pace with external changes and client demands for innovation.

While growth is often measured and motivated by promotions, it is in practice mostly not about linear career development in the traditional sense – often seen as being about promotions. Instead, UNDP will facilitate a shift in this mindset by enabling its workforce to experience the broader growth benefits of multidirectional moves, which provide exposure to different challenges, work scenarios, client groups, successful practices, and disciplines. Diversity of experiences not only fosters growth, it builds the capacity to integrate and innovate.



Enabling actions to progress further towards a continuous learning organization:

- Invest purposefully in and strengthen accountability for systematic professional development of staff to maintain relevant skills in alignment with the needs of the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals.
- Create opportunities for multidirectional moves through the implementation of a Mobility Policy, which institutes expected rotations and mobility for Internal Professional staff, as well as mechanisms for all other personnel to expand growth.
- Offer broader range of alternative incentives to supplement promotions as an indicator of growth and to motivate and engage personnel.
- Integrate learning and career management programs to ensure they are complementary, experience-based, and team or cohort-based.
- Broadly introduce various feedback mechanisms, including just-in-time feedback tools, for staff at all levels.

Principle 2: Shared Responsibility for Career Management

This principle outlines where responsibility for career management is held, which includes who initiates career moves and what drives career management decisions.

Career management is a shared responsibility. Managers provide coaching and challenging career experiences; and personnel invest in their career planning, self-development and performance. There is a balance of managed career moves and "open market" competitive moves.

With some exceptions, such as the Resident Representative and Deputy Resident Representative rotations and candidate pools, career movement in UNDP is more characteristic of the free market system. Staff decide what job opportunities to apply for based on their own career aspirations and personal interests. The degree to which staff receive career guidance varies, and the best candidates do not always apply for roles where their skills are most needed and for which they are best suited.

Movement from a free market to a managed market approach where career management is a shared responsibility of staff and managers will ensure: (1) personnel receive more effective career coaching and guidance and (2) staff in pipelines for key roles receive greater management of their career development and movements to help them adequately prepare for those roles.



Enabling actions to progress towards shared responsibility for career management:

- Establish a robust career management governance system.
- Implement periodic talent review exercises at CO, Bureau and corporate levels, and create dynamic talent maps for multiple talent processes.
- Strengthen corporate coordination mechanisms to provide personnel with opportunities for multidirectional moves based on needs of UNDP as well as qualifications, performance, behaviors, potential, and aspirations of the individual.
- Expand use of candidate pools where appropriate.
- Implement succession planning for key roles.
- Strengthen capacity building for managers and staff to perform their respective career management roles. This includes providing career tools such as readiness criteria and illustrative career paths for key roles to clarity career move options and guide career development decisions of staff.

Principle 3: Importance of breadth and depth

This principle outlines the level of expertise and type of career progression that is most valued and supported in UNDP.

UNDP equally values and encourages building breadth through diversity of experience and technical depth through specialization.

In UNDP, the Resident Representative and Deputy Resident Representative positions have long been recognized for their strategic importance to its mission. Those roles are the face of UNDP in the delivery of its development mandate to client countries. While it is important for staff in these positions to have sufficient technical expertise to engage in influential dialogues on development issues, a career path to the RR or the DRR was generally considered to favour generalist profiles with broad preparatory exposure to different thematic areas and corporate operations. The same was true for many other positions in development programme/policy and operations management fields.

The Global Policy Network as well as on-going efforts to professionalize core corporate operations management functions (e.g. procurement, general administration, finance, HR, etc.) represent a renewed effort to ensure that UNDP also maintains the technical depth needed to address client needs and remain relevant as the number of players in international development continues to grow. Efforts to strengthen technical depth of staff are equally important for international and national staff. Technical depth will be built through structured learning as well as diverse technical experiences and developmental assignments in country offices, regional hubs and headquarters.

The degree of breadth and depth warranted will depend on the job role. For manager and executive roles, both the breadth of experience across the organization and thematic areas is valued. For technical positions, depth of experience within a thematic area or discipline is most highly valued. Career moves across geographies as well as between field and headquarters build both breadth and depth.



Enabling actions to ensure a healthy balance between breadth and depth of technical expertise, skills and experiences:

- Develop guidance and streamline funding/co-funding mechanisms for details, temporary assignments, swaps and stretch assignments, including development assignments in other locations for national staff.
- Develop mechanism for personnel exchanges or development assignments with other agencies and organizations.
- Create development standards and foster career moves to develop technical depth within a thematic area/professional field; and foster moves across the thematic areas, geographies, and both policy/programme and corporate operations to create breadth.
- Review use of rotation programs to deliberately build breadth and depth in specializations.
- Clarify in career guides when in careers it is best to develop depth and/or breadth, what critical roles look for in terms of depth and breadth, and examples of roles that provide opportunities to bridge from one specialty, career stream and/or career track to another.

Principle 4: Strategic Mix of Entry Points into UNDP

This principle outlines how and at what level people are brought into the organization.

A strategic mix between building candidates internally and bringing in talent from multiple entry points will amplify UNDP's expertise, agility and innovation.

UNDP relies on a mixture of experienced hires, entry level hiring through flagship programs such as Junior Professional Officers, and broad use of contracted services (approximately 51 percent of UNDP personnel). There should be an increased emphasis on broadening entry level hiring to bring in the best young talent and to build capacity and knowledge where UNDP's integrator role is needed.

The most structured external recruitment and development processes are currently tied primarily to entry level programs. While UNDP will continue to use a number of contract types, create more structured entry points for the next generation workforce and bring in external hires when needed expertise does not exist internally, there will be an increased focus on structuring the transitions of experienced hires within the organization as well as creating opportunities for high-performing contract staff to move into other roles. Therefore, UNDP is moving more toward a strategic mix of entry points that are supported by appropriate transition and development programs.



Enabling actions to progress towards a more strategic mix of entry points:

- Use both competitive recruitment and special programs to attract talent at different levels.
- Provide access to career opportunities first to high-performing personnel in UNDP's workforce, and opening opportunities to those outside the organization when skills or knowledge are not adequately available internally.
- Implement the UNDP-wide capacity knowledge and skills mapping to enable a more effective search for internal candidates as well as more strategic and better-informed decisions on what external talent should be attracted.
- Clarify procedures for career transitions (NO to IP, SC to NO, GS to NO/IP, SC/UNV/IC to staff)
- Clarify key roles and circumstances where internal candidates are required for best outcome and where external expertise will have a more optimal result; and, develop decision guidance.
- Align talent acquisition strategy with work force planning and establish monitoring mechanisms to ensure these strategies are achieving corporate intent.

CAREER ARCHITECTURE

Career Architecture is a structural pillar of the Career Management Framework, which describes how jobs are clustered and organized operationally in order to determine logical career progressions, which will help inform recruitment, deployment, development, and succession management decisions as well as individual career choices. It is a mechanism for organizing, categorizing and understanding the relationship of jobs; and it provides a structure for staff to assess career aspirations and options. The career architecture is managed by a governance structure that consists of oversight bodies, coordinating mechanisms, and policies. The governance structure facilitates application of career framework principles in the movement of staff across the career architecture.

Career Architecture components include career tracks, career streams and job roles.

CAREER TRACKS

Career Tracks are clusters of jobs based on the nature of work performed; and scope and impact of responsibilities, accountabilities and decision authorities. Career tracks help answer the question: What type of work do I want to do or am I best suited for (e.g., processing, analyzing or managing)? For example, do I want to be a manager or a technical expert?

UNDP Career Tracks are:

Managerial and Executive, which includes categories of jobs where the primary purpose is to provide direction to, oversee, and manage performance and resources (human, financial, technology) of an office, programme, unit, functional area, country, Centre, and/or Bureau. Responsibilities may to a lesser extent also include individually delivering technical work. Managerial and Executive jobs are graded at ICS levels 11-14 (P-4-5, NOD, D1-2) and above; and, for example, encompass directors, deputy directors, resident representatives, deputy resident representatives.

Professional/Expert, which includes categories of supervisory and non-supervisory jobs where the predominant purpose is to perform analytical, evaluative and conceptual work as an individual contributor, and may include additional responsibilities for supervising the work of others. Professional/Expert jobs are graded at ICS levels 8-14 (P 1-7, NOA-NOD, D1-2); and encompass, for example, procurement analysts, financial management specialists, policy advisors.

General Service, which includes categories of supervisory and non-supervisory jobs that predominantly provide procedural and processing support to the work of an organizational unit and/or team as an individual contributor, and may include additional responsibilities for supervising the work of others. General Service jobs are graded at ICS levels 1-7 (GS 1-7); and encompass, for example, administrative clerks, executive assistants, programme associates. Career moves can be within or between career tracks, streams and job roles based on business needs, available opportunities, and candidates meeting appropriate qualification and competitive selection requirements.

CAREER STREAMS

Career Streams are based on organizational alignment and provide a way of clustering jobs based on the fungibility of competencies and skills, and the logical progressions within career paths that focus on deepening and/or broadening experiences and expertise within a specific discipline. Career streams help answer the question:

What do I want to specialize in and/or focus on (e.g., development, procurement, general administration or finance; developing policies or implementing solutions through programmes and projects)? For example, do I want to specialize in a policy area such as governance or environment, or do I want to do programme work in these areas?

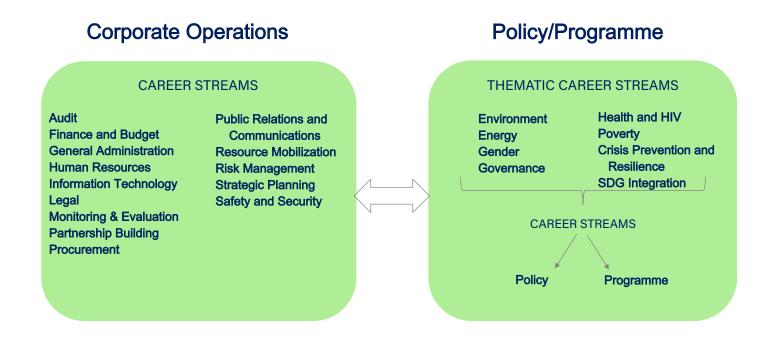
UNDP has two big clusters of career streams: *Corporate Operations* (i.e. functions that support the effective operations and overall management of the whole organization) and *Policy/Programme* (i.e. functions performing development work to achieve business priorities of the organization). They are further subdivided into specific streams, e.g. human resources, finance, legal, policy, programme in thematic areas, etc.

JOB ROLES

Job Roles are categories of jobs that have common set of duties and responsibilities. Job roles are often identified by titles, where the work is performed, and/or grade level. For example, a "director" role exists in many different functional areas, however, they all have some common duties, responsibilities, levels of authority, and accountabilities. Job role helps answer the question:

What am I ready for in my career progression and what kind of influence do I want to have? For example, what grade level am I ready for and would I like to serve as a resource to many projects or lead specific projects?

Figure 1. UNDP CAREER STREAMS AND JOB ROLES



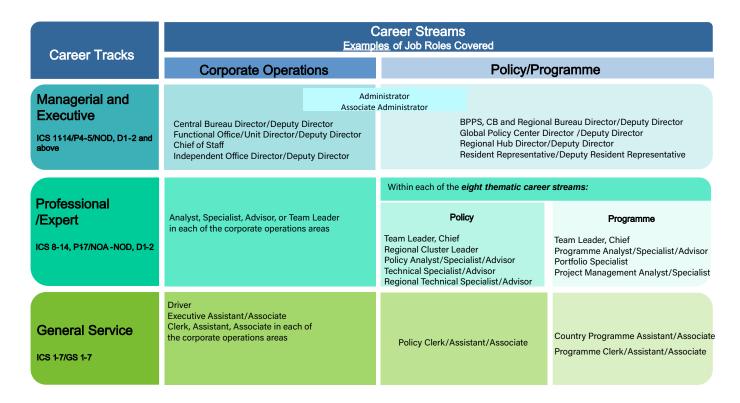
The Career Streams that make up the *Corporate Operations* align with the key internal operations functions across the Organization that are fairly common in multiple organizations (e.g. human resources management, finance, partnerships building, public relations and communications, monitoring and evaluation, etc.).

The Thematic Career Streams that make up the *Policy/Programme* align with the Sustainable Development Goals and the thematic practice areas that frame UNDP's value proposition and its core development solutions to clients.

Within each career stream there are common *Job Roles* that have a similar set of duties and responsibilities even though they may cut across different subject matter areas. For example, regardless of thematic area, programme specialists focus on design, implementation and monitoring of projects within a programme (see job roles in Figure 2. Career Architecture).

The career architecture demonstrates how job roles map back to career tracks and career streams. It provides a map for determining job qualifications and natural lines of progression – both lateral and promotion – that are driven by (1) the nature of work performed such as managing, analyzing, supporting (e.g., career track), (2) area of organizational focus and professional discipline (e.g., career stream), and (3) specific job level, context and responsibilities (e.g., job role).

Figure 2. CAREER ARCHITECTURE



The Career Architecture also frames the types of questions that need to be answered in assessing career goals, which then determine logical next and future career moves to gain the right types of experiences.

Figure 3. HOW CAREER ARCHITECTURE INFORMS CAREER OPTIONS AND ASPIRATIONS



CAREER PATHWAYS

Career pathways illustrate how the career framework principles and architecture are operationalized to best prepare staff for key roles in UNDP. They are designed for key positions where it is important to have high quality and diverse pools of staff who are well-prepared for and ready to step into those roles when they become vacant. Examples of key roles include, inter alia, Bureau Deputy Directors, Resident Representatives, Deputy Resident Representatives, Assistant Resident Representatives as well as other manager and senior technical team leader roles in policy/programme functions.

Each pathway is governed by the **readiness criteria** for the respective key roles which outline:

- (1) the depth and diversity of experiences and skills that best prepare candidates for the role
- (2) what experiences and skills are typically lacking when a candidate is not yet ready, which provides insight to different types and sequencing of assignments and career moves that are still needed.

The methodology for developing readiness criteria and career paths is both forward looking and grounded in the experience and insights of current incumbents. For each key role, information is collected from a representative sample of incumbents. Their profiles are reviewed to reconstruct past career path patterns and practices.

Incumbents are then interviewed on how well-prepared they felt when initially transitioning into their current roles, what were their most valuable preparatory career moves/experiences, retrospectively what missing preparatory experiences do they wish they had had, how they anticipate their role changing in the future, and what experience profile they would look for in a successor.

The career experiences of those who felt well-prepared and transitioned easily into their roles are compared with the career experiences of those who had more challenging transitions to identify significant distinguishing patterns in their career moves to develop preferred preparatory career paths.

Readiness criteria and career paths are included in career guides and posted on the career management portal to be accessible to all staff. These tools help to create a shared understanding of valuable career experiences and consistency in the coaching offered by managers on career development options.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

Career development support is provided to all of UNDP's workforce to promote continuous learning, help personnel better understand how to navigate their careers, and help managers fulfill their roles in coaching staff on their careers and ongoing development.

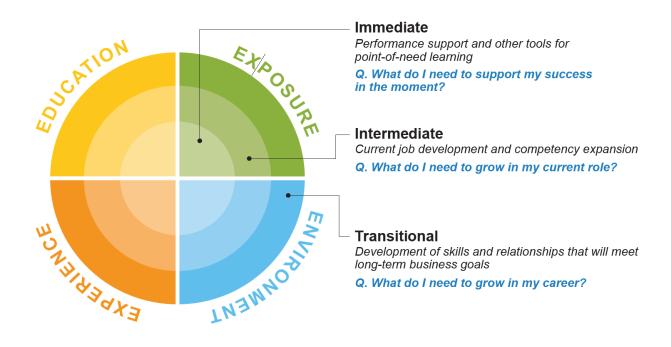
GUIDING CAREER JOURNEY THROUGH ONLINE RESOURCES

UNDP recognizes that career development is a life-long journey (See Annex 1) that starts with Knowing Yourself, which includes being clear about your values, capabilities, personality attributes and ambitions. The next step is to Know What Actions to Take that could involve continuing to grow in current role, broadening exposure to other possibilities, or moving to another role, office, or geography.

Preparing a Plan for Action serves to clarify career development objectives, how to move forward, and what support is needed. Career development action plans also strengthen personal accountability for follow through. Creating Your Future is being deliberate about your personal brand and building strategic networks to stay connected and informed to be better prepared and have a stronger presence during the job application process. UNDP's Career Journey Website and Virtual Career Labs provide interactive tools, a series of online learning webinars, and other resources to guide personnel through each step of their career journey.

CONTINUOUS LEARNING MODEL

UNDP's approach to learning draws on the Bersin-Deloitte's Continuous Learning Model. The most robust and impactful learning to build needed knowledge, technical skills and behavioral competencies comes from multiple sources.



Education consists of traditional forms of learning through structured training or workshops delivered in-person or online in either a live or self-paced format.

Exposure is learning that comes from interactions and relationships with others often in the form of feedback, coaching, mentoring and communities of practice, such as the Global Policy Network Communities of Practice.

Environment is learning through information and resource sharing infrastructures that are in place such as the Career Journey Website and Virtual Career Lab.

Experience is the most sustainable form of learning that is gained by applying new skills on the job or through various types of developmental assignments. Learning by doing is so important that more is being done to provide a framework for structuring on-the-job learning and making it integral to all job experiences.

The Continuous Learning Model also differentiates the types of activities that are most valuable for immediate, intermediate and transitional learning.

UNDP TOOLS AVAILABLE FOR ENHANCING THE CAREER EXPERIENCE OF ALL PERSONNEL

For all Career Development Plan Tool: The Career Development Plan Tool was created based on Bersin-Deloitte's "Continuous Learning Model" to engage in multiple levels of learning. This tool enables UNDP personnel to create a plan for their Career Journey. It helps define their career aspirations and goals (short-term and long-term career goals). It also gives an opportunity to think about knowledge to gain and relationships to develop.

Career Conversation Toolkit for People Managers: Available to all people managers at UNDP, this new Career Conversation Toolkit features high-quality content and practical tips in key areas of people management and career development. This guide will help managers prepare for a career conversation with their supervisees, empower them to take ownership of their own career development, and provide

information and support on their career journey. The resources provided in this toolkit cover effective ways to ask the right questions and support supervisees in setting goals and creating a development plan.

In addition to the above programmes, UNDP is currently exploring the market to provide all UNDP personnel access to online AI powered Career Development tools such as, a virtual platform with an engaging learning environment and experience that provides career assessment and interactive career development tools.

SPECIAL EMPHASIS PROGRAMMES/SERVICES

UNDP has a diverse workforce in terms of gender and nationality, appointment types, geographies, and many other factors that contribute to unique career development challenges. To address some of these unique challenges, UNDP will be offering customized learning experiences targeted at specific groups and delivery modalities.

The UNDP Career SPARK (Strive, Perform, Aspire, Reimagine, Know) Programme will support 200 women from categories of General Service (GS), National Professional Officer (NO), and International Professional (IP) to enhance their career development skillsets, and to identify their professional and personal aspirations. Helping them to expand their internal and external professional networks, the programme enables women to fulfil their potential by acquiring the confidence and knowledge they need to effectively progress in their career journeys. During the programme, participants work on and discuss aspects of self-awareness, design a development plan, learn about career development skills, and have access to coaching. Moreover, the programme acts as a platform for exchange and networking among participants, as well as connecting them with resource persons within and outside UNDP.

Development Assignments Programme for UNDP National Staff will aim to provide greater coordination of opportunities to work in different country offices on short-term assignments. Participants can work in HR, Procurement, Programme, Common Services, Finance and M&E functions. OHR, Regional Hubs and Country Offices will work in close collaboration to facilitate the coordination and matching of staff with opportunities.

Virtual Development Assignment (VDA) Programme: Given the current COVID-19 crisis and the typical costs of in-person detail and developmental assignments, virtual assignments may provide a cost-effective and innovative solution to support the learning and development of our employees, while enhancing capacities across the globe. The VDA is a three-month virtual assignment for colleagues from the National Officers category, providing them with 2-3 hours a week of on-the-job learning, through working on a UNDP CO project outside of one's duty station. The programme will reinforce knowledge sharing across UNDP, while supporting a culture of continuous learning and career growth. The first cohort (starting in September 2020) will be open to 25 participants from the NO category. They will work in groups of 5, on 5 CO projects, 1 per region and will have access to coaching.

Bespoke career supporting services for Country Offices: For Country Offices going through a change management process, UNDP offers bespoke career supporting services aiming at helping individuals through change. The programme will be co-designed and customized by selecting the most relevant career support tools and services with all personnel, helping them manage the transition and making the process as least disruptive as possible.

ANNEX 1: CAREER DEVELOPMENT JOURNEY

