Junior Professional Officer Programme

Policy and Practice Framework

Final Version (15 February 2010)
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Introduction

Historical background and perspectives of the JPO Programme

The Associate Experts Programme was an initiative of the Government of the Netherlands in its framework cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in 1954. The Programme aimed at providing “associate experts” at entry level as additional resources free of charge to the FAO projects, and also to provide an opportunity for on-the-job training to young, and academically trained professionals under qualified supervision.

Encouraged by the success of FAO-Netherlands cooperation, other United Nations Organizations and donors expressed their interest in similar schemes, and a United Nations system-wide concept was introduced in ECOSOC resolution 849 (XXXII) of 4 August 1961. For the United Nations Organizations, and the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), this resolution is considered as the legislative basis of the Junior Professional Officer (JPO) / Associate Expert (AE) / Associate Professional Officer (APO) Programmes.

The JPO/AE/APO Programmes provide the UN Organizations with qualified young professionals for entry-level positions to assist in the implementation of the technical cooperation and other day-to-day activities of the United Nations system Organizations. The assignment of JPOs is for a fixed term, usually from two to four years. The JPOs are considered staff members and are subject to the UN Staff Regulations and Rules. The programmes are funded by donor countries, which cover all the costs associated with the work and training programme of the JPOs, as well as the administrative and support costs of the Organizations. The Organizations undertake that the programmes, besides the normal everyday participation in the work of the Organizations, also contain well-designed learning and training elements for the JPOs.

Today the JPO/AE/APO Programmes can be found in most of the UN system Organizations. At the end of 2007, 933 JPOs were employed in 20 UN Organizations. Their numbers are significant among the overall entry-level professional posts in certain Organizations. JPOs are assigned both in the field and in headquarters; they are involved in most of the activity areas of the UN in the political, development and operational areas, including among other things in economic and social areas, humanitarian affairs, human rights, trade and development, drugs and crime, peacekeeping, post-conflict activities, political affairs.

Similar types of programmes are also run in international Organizations outside the United Nations system, e.g., the Asian Development Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the European Union1.

1 Adapted from the presentation on the “Junior Professional Officer / Associate Expert / Associate Professional Officer Programmes in United Nations System Organizations” report prepared by the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit (JIU/REP/2008/2). Full copy of the report can be accessed from the following link: http://www.unjiu.org/data/reports/2009/en2009_1.pdf
The UNDP JPO Programme

The objective of the UNDP JPO Programme at the time of its establishment in 1963 was to provide a “training opportunity for young professionals in the field of development assistance”. Today, the JPO Programme provides young professionals with a unique exposure to multilateral development cooperation, while these young professionals bring up-to-date academic knowledge to the management of programmes and the coordination capacity in the UNDP Country Offices.

Since its inception, the UNDP JPO Programme has provided the Organisation with several thousands of dedicated young professionals and has allowed UNDP to augment professional staffing capacity, while at the same time creating a pool of talent to tap into for future staffing needs.

In 2003 UNDP expanded the JPO Programme to include a Special Assistant to the Resident Coordinator (SARC) Programme in response to a need for supporting UN coordination in the field through the strengthening of the Resident Coordinator function.

As development work has become more complex and widespread, UNDP’s criteria for the selection and placement of JPOs has become more demanding and the services offered to the UNDP JPOs via the UNDP JPO Service Centre have been expanded.

The Special Assistant to the UN Resident Coordinator Programme

SARCs assist in the coordination of activities emanating from the UN Resident Coordinator Office, including support to enhancing interagency cooperation, UN coordination and the delivering as one process. SARCs are placed in the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator, and work directly under his/her supervision. In exceptional cases SARCs may also be recruited to assist senior officials in Headquarters duty stations to assist them in the coordination among UN Agencies.

The SARC Programme is implemented within the framework of UNDP’s Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Programme. The Special Assistants are experienced young professionals (in many cases former JPOs) recruited at the P3 level. SARCs enjoy the same benefits and entitlements as JPOs. Additionally, and unless specified otherwise, all JPO policies and guidelines presented in the current document also apply to the SARC Programme.

Experience indicates that the Programme has made a significant contribution to the implementation of UN reform at country level. It has been successful in providing experienced and talented young professionals, who each have made a strong contribution towards strengthening of the Resident Coordinator function.

Initiated in 2003 with the support of the Danish Government, the SARC Programme expanded when Sweden, Spain and Luxembourg decided to participate. In view of the continued importance and emphasis on UN reform and aid effectiveness, more donors may join the SARC Programme in the future.
Objective of the present document

The present document supersedes the 1995 JPO Programme Framework of Policies and Practices. It introduces the objectives of the UNDP JPO Programme and outlines policy guidelines that govern the management and administration of the JPO Programme. As such, this document is mainly addressed to all stakeholders of the JPO Programme: JPOs, JPO donors, Regional Bureaux and other Units in Headquarters, and Resident Representatives who assume responsibility in the management of JPOs in UNDP Country Offices.

The present document also covers the policy framework of the Special Assistant to the Resident Coordinator (SARC) Programme, which falls under the JPO Programme scheme.
Goals and stakeholders of the UNDP JPO Programme

Overall goals of the UNDP JPO Programme

The objectives of the UNDP JPO Programme are three-fold:

- to provide young professionals the opportunity to gain experience in the field of international development cooperation and management, and as such to build capacities for the global development sector;
- to provide UNDP with talented young professionals to contribute to the objectives of the Organization;
- to support the fight against poverty and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The JPO Programme always contributes to the implementation of the UNDP’s strategic plans and activities. The Programme allows UNDP to tap into knowledge, networks and young talent, which contribute to the development of policy approaches and implementation of programmes.

The JPO Programme represents a significant window of additional contributions to UNDP from donors, and it has contributed to augmenting professional staff capacity and provided the Organization with access to human resources with recognised talent, up-to-date knowledge and academic credentials.

Since its inception, the JPO Programme has made a significant contribution to the above objectives, and has contributed to the development of a cross-organizational network of dedicated development practitioners. Based on available data for the period 2001-2008, around 33% of the former UNDP JPOs continued a medium- or long-term career in the UN System following the completion of their JPO assignment, while another 25% returned to their home countries to continue work in the field of international cooperation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NGOs, consultancy companies, research).

At the hub of the UNDP JPO Programme: the UNDP JPO Service Centre

As part of the UNDP Office of Human Resources / Staff Administrative Services (SAS), the JPO Service Centre (JPOSC) provides client-focused services to JPOs, donors, country offices and UN organisations that have delegated the human resources administration of their JPO Programme to UNDP.

For UNDP JPOs and SARCs, the OHR/SAS/JPOSC acts as the focal point with donors on the cooperation within the framework of the JPO Programme, and on day-to-day human resources matters, including recruitment, placement, reassignment and separation from service, as well as learning and career development.
JPO Position Identification

Introduction

The main criteria of the UNDP JPO Programme are:

- The JPO is expected to contribute to UNDP practice and priority areas (in accordance with the current UNDP Strategic Plan these areas include Poverty Reduction, Democratic Governance, Energy and Environment, Crisis Prevention and Recovery, UN Coordination and Management).

- The assignment should include a strong learning element for the JPO.

- Proper supervision should be identified and provided.

- Duty Stations submitting a request for a JPO are requested to complete a detailed JPO Terms of Reference (TOR) following the standard format available here, and to enter the TOR into the online JPO request system.

Requests from Duty Stations are prioritized by the OHR Human Resources Advisor of the respective Bureau.

Donors have online access to the JPO request system, and have the possibility for selecting and earmarking positions online.

The JPO Programme supports UNDP priority areas as mentioned above, which form the main basis for selecting proposals for donor funding. In addition, priority is also given to selected Duty Stations, including Duty Stations in post-crisis countries, Duty Stations in need additional capacity, and Duty Stations which have no or relatively few JPOs.

Online Request System

The main purpose of the online JPO request system is to streamline the process of recruitment and placement of JPOs. The TORs are completed and submitted online by requesting Country Offices or Headquarters units. OHR/SAS/JPOSC checks the contents of the TORs and if no clarification is required, the TORs are made available to the OHR Human Resources Advisor of the relevant Bureau for validation and prioritization.

All Duty Stations are able to view the status of their request at any given time. Since donors also have access to this system, they are able to view what JPO positions are available for funding, as soon as the respective Regional Bureau has endorsed the relevant TORs.

JPO TORs, which have been in the JPO request system for more than two years and have not been funded, will be removed from the system after two years. If the TORs are still valid and there is a need for a JPO in the respective duty station, the TORs will have to be re-entered in the request system.
system. This is required in order to make sure that the TORs in the JPO request system are always up to date. More information on the online JPO request system can be found on the website of the JPO Service Centre.

**Partnership with donors**

UNDP meets regularly with donor representatives to review and discuss the status of the respective donor’s JPO Programme. In addition, OHR/SAS/JPOSC maintains a close dialogue with the donors throughout the year on the JPO Programme and its implementation.

Interactions with donors during the process of selecting JPO positions for UNDP take place at central (Headquarters) level as well as at local (Duty Station) levels. An on-going dialogue between OHR/SAS/JPOSC and the donor JPO focal points in the donor capitals takes place throughout the year. In addition, UNDP Duty Stations dialogue with the donor representatives at the local level on the JPO Programme as part of their overall donor relations and resource mobilization efforts.

Donors receive information about vacant JPO positions through the online JPO request system, and may select positions online. In addition, some donors also request UNDP to provide a list of suggested priority countries. Such lists are prepared by OHR/SAS/JPOSC in consultation with the Regional Bureaux, and based on the information available in the JPO request system, as well as the above mentioned criteria.

While UNDP may propose positions to donors for their consideration, donors’ priorities for their JPO Programmes are based on their national development cooperation strategies. While final decisions are made centrally (in donor capitals), many donors also consult with their representatives locally to determine which positions to fund.
JPO Recruitment

The key players involved into the JPO recruitment process are: Duty Stations, OHR and counterparts from donor countries. The JPO recruitment cycle normally starts in November with consultations between UNDP and the donor on the selection of JPO posts, and it ends in July/August with the interview and final selection of the JPOs.

The OHR/SAS/JPOSC is the main focal point within UNDP for communications with UNDP Country Offices and Headquarter units on JPO posts. UNDP Country Offices and Headquarter units may communicate with their respective donor partners and will keep the JPOSC informed about their consultations with donors in such cases.

The OHR/SAS/JPOSC will verify with the Duty Station that the Terms of Reference (TOR) is valid and confirm to the donor, before the position is advertised.

Recruitment process

The OHR/SAS/JPOSC consolidates requests for JPOs from Country Offices through the JPO Request System. In November of each year, OHR in consultation with each Regional Bureau identifies a recruitment plan for the JPO Programme for the coming recruitment cycle. The recruitment plan identifies the JPO requirements and strategic priorities for the respective region.

OHR/SAS/JPOSC works closely with the donor in the recruitment process of JPOs. The specific procedures and processes of the JPO recruitment cycle are reflected in the Agreements between UNDP and the donor. The following three categories of JPO/SARC recruitment apply:

- **Category 1**: Recruitment and selection process fully managed by OHR/SAS/JPOSC
- **Category 2**: Recruitment and selection process jointly managed by OHR/SAS/JPOSC and the donor
- **Category 3**: Recruitment and selection process fully managed by the donor

The **JPO Recruitment and Selection Guidelines** apply to all Category 1 JPO recruitments and the recruitment process under this category is fully compliant with the UNDP **Recruitment and Selection Framework**.

For category 2 and 3 JPO recruitments, UNDP prefers that the recruitment process is aligned with the JPO Recruitment and Selection Guidelines in order to ensure a transparent process. UNDP prefers that the donor Government advertises the JPO positions as widely as possible. The advertisement has to stress the requirements and qualifications for the position as outlined in the TORs. The donor Government preselects the candidates to be presented to UNDP. The donor Government checks the candidates’ academic qualifications, tests for languages and obtains references. The donor Governments are responsible for providing feedback to JPO candidates on their respective recruitment status based on the confirmation by UNDP of their selection.
OHR/SAS/JPOSC undertakes recruitment missions to the donor countries depending on the recruitment cycle of the respective donor. OHR/SAS/JPOSC will organize competency-based interviews in the donor capitals or phone interviews in accordance with the JPO Recruitment and Selection Guidelines.

OHR/SAS/JPOSC has prepared a best practice note on the JPO interview process, which is intended as a guidance note to facilitate experience-sharing on JPO interview processes and to create a harmonized approach to the JPO recruitment process.

As a means to obtain more JPOs from some donor countries, secondment of Government officials as JPOs at the appropriate level, and with the required qualifications is possible. The normal tour of duty of such assignments is two years. Government officials seconded to UNDP under the JPO Programme are not eligible to apply to UNDP positions advertised as “Internal”, as their appointment has not been endorsed by the Compliance Review Body (please see below).

**Compliance Review Body (CRB) (JPO Recruitment Guidelines)**

A Compliance Review Board (CRB) has been established to review all initial appointments and promotion decisions of international Fixed-Term Appointment staff, including initial appointments of JPOs/SARCs, whose recruitment process is compliant with the UNDP JPO/SARC Recruitment Framework (category 1 and 2 JPO/SARC recruitments).

**Recruitment title and level**

The term JPO only refers to the funding source and is not to be used as a functional title. The functional title of Programme Officer or Programme Analyst is given to JPOs in country offices. The functional title of SARCs is normally UN Coordination Specialist.

JPOs are appointed at the P1 or P2 level under the UN Staff Regulations and Rules. SARCs are appointed at the P3 level under the UN Staff Regulations and Rules.

In most cases, donor Governments determine the recruitment level. UNDP recommends that donors apply UNDP’s grading standards in determining the recruitment level. In view of the high level of qualifications demanded from JPO candidates, including relevant work experience, the norm UNDP prefers is P2. Since the majority of donors actually grade their JPOs as the P2 level, UNDP recommends that all JPO grading is set at P2 for equity purposes.
Administration of the benefits and entitlements

Status, duties and obligations

In as much as JPOs and SARCs are covered by the UN Staff Regulations and Rules, they are staff members of UNDP.

Status: JPOs and SARCs are officials of the United Nations, covered by the Organization in several important areas:

- As the Convention on Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations applies to JPOs/SARCs, they are protected by UNDP for their actions and communication in relation to the performance of their official duties;
- UNDP arranges visas and provides official travel documents (United Nations Laissez-Passer) for JPOs/SARCs to work in their respective assignments;
- JPOs/SARCs benefit from security and/or medical emergency evacuation by UNDP;
- As international civil servants, JPOs/SARCs are not subject to taxation on their United Nations income;
- JPOs/SARCs are eligible to become members of the Staff Association.

Duties and obligations: JPOs/SARCs’ duties and obligations are defined in Chapter I of the UN Staff Regulations and Rules, including the following: (1) By accepting appointment, JPOs/SARCs pledge themselves to discharge their functions and regulate their conduct with the interest of UNDP only in mind, and not of any other authority external to the Organization; (2) As staff, they are bound by the directions and instructions of the Administrator of UNDP and, by delegation, the Resident Representative, and shall neither seek nor accept instructions from any Government or from any source external to the Organization; (3) JPOs/SARCs shall not accept any remuneration, gift, honour, decoration or favour from any Government.

Conduct: Upon their appointment, it is expected and required of JPOs/SARCs that their conduct is exemplary in line with the UN Staff Regulations and Rules, and the Report on Standards of Conduct in the International Civil Service. Further, full attention should be given to respect for local culture, law, customs and traditions, and to sensitivity to differences, be they of culture, religion, gender, or national origin.

Legal rights: Under the UN Staff Regulations and Rules, JPOs/SARCs have full access to the internal system of administration of justice.

Conditions of service

The administration of JPOs and SARCs is based on the following guiding documents:

- Agreements signed by UNDP and participating donor Governments. These Agreements reflect the general system of conditions of service developed jointly by the Organizations of the UN Common System, and approved by all governments through their participation in the General Assembly.
This system of conditions of service aims at providing for equitable treatment of staff as a whole. The system also takes into account differences in the various countries of assignment (such as the cost of living, housing conditions, hardship, security); differences in the family composition of staff (e.g., size of shipment, amount of installation benefits upon arrival, dependency benefits, education benefits for children); and further, provides social security benefits which are standardized across all situations (annul and sick leave, medical insurance, death, disability and pension benefits), except where it has been agreed with the donor Government to exclude on the basis of benefits already provided by the latter.

Thus, JPOs/SARCs enjoy the same salary and entitlements, including mobility and hardship allowances, as all other international professionals in the UN System governed by the UN Staff Regulations and Rules, including the entitlements related to the split shipment of personal effects. However, relocation grant and travel entitlement for JPOs and SARCs differ, as follows:

- JPOs/SARCs are entitled to the relocation grant in the amount of USD 6,000 (single) and USD 9,000 (family)
- JPOs/SARCs are not entitled to travel business class for entitlement travel and Duty Travel and Training Allowance (DTTA) travel, even though the duration of the flight may exceed nine hours.

Consequently, it is not the practice of UNDP to tailor special conditions to fit the personal situation of each JPO/SARC, although it is recognized that different circumstances do exist among JPOs/SARCs. However, exceptions to the rules and conditions of service are rare. OHR/SAS/JPOSC is authorized to consider and rule on requests for exceptions; in this respect, consultations with the donor are required only when these exceptions entail an increase in the costs involved.

In those few duty stations of extreme hardship where international staff members benefit from the system of regular procurement trips to neighbouring countries in order to purchase essential goods (e.g., medicine, food), JPOs/SARCs also are entitled to such trips where there is a specific budget provision from the donor. Upon assignment of a JPO/SARC to such a duty station, the costs for procurement trips will be estimated in the costing sheet as a separate item.

The administration of JPOs and SARCs is shared between the Country Office and OHR/SAS/JPOSC, as is the case for all other internationally-recruited professional staff. OHR/SAS/JPOSC manages and administers the Appendix D, Injury & Illness Compensation insurance.

Contracts

4 See the Conditions of Service agreed upon between major JPO donor countries and UN agencies in Turin in 1987, which enumerates rights and obligations of both parties and the conditions of JPO service (Annex).

5 The list of such countries can be provided upon request.
Donor Governments provide for varying lengths of JPO and SARC assignments. Most Governments sponsor two to three years of a JPO/SARC assignment. Exceptional extensions may be requested by UNDP due to exigencies of service and upon recommendation from the Resident Coordinator/Representative and based on satisfactory performance.

JPOs and SARCs are offered a renewable one year JPO/SARC-limited fixed-term appointment (FTA) upon appointment by UNDP. Their appointment may be terminated in accordance with the terms of the appointment, or based on any of the reasons provided under the UN Staff Regulations and Rules, including unsatisfactory performance, abolition of posts or reduction of staff.

Under the UN Staff Regulations and Rules, JPOs and SARCs are awarded, subject to fully satisfactory performance, within-grade increments after 12 months of service.

For continuity and consolidation of experience, UNDP recommends JPO/SARC assignments of three years duration. All extensions are subject to the concurrence of the JPO/SARC, Resident Coordinator/Representative and the donor Government. Extensions should be initiated at least four months before the expiration date of the current contract. Based on the request received from the JPO/SARC duty station, OHR/SAS/JPOSC will submit a request, including the JPO/SARC annual evaluation report, for extension to the donor.

Reassignments and transfers

A JPO/SARC normally serves in one duty station only for the duration of his or her assignment. However, JPOs/SARCs of donor countries that sponsor assignments of three and/or four years may be considered for a reassignment based on satisfactory performance, the recommendation of the Resident Representative, and the approval of the donor Government. Reassignments can only occur for third year JPOs/SARCs and in exceptional cases for second year JPOs/SARCs.

No JPO/SARC can be reassigned before having served at least 12 months in a duty station, unless reassignment is necessitated by exceptional factors, e.g. security, evacuation, health reasons, etc.

Upon reassignment, a JPO/SARC is expected to spend at least one year in the new duty station. The same placement criteria apply as in the case of recruitment.

Transfers of JPOs between UN Agencies, while not the norm, are allowed subject to the same conditions as regular staff and in accordance with the UN Inter-Agency Mobility Accord. Transfers must be approved by the donor Government. JPOs/SARCs must be transferred within the existing contractual period and all the administrative entitlements are to be respected between the receiving and transferring Organizations.

Co-funding

Some donors support extension of the JPO/SARC-limited FTA for a third or fourth year on a co-funding basis only (e.g. 50% funded by the donor country and 50% funded by the UNDP duty station). In such cases, the JPO/SARC-limited FTA may be extended for a third or a fourth year provided that UNDP and the respective donor agree to co-fund the extension.
**Extensions beyond JPO assignment**

At the discretion of UNDP, a JPO/SARC-limited FTA (with the same TOR and serving in the same duty station) may be extended for up to a maximum of 12 months fully funded by UNDP following the completion of the donor funded period.

If the duty station is interested in keeping the services of the JPO/SARC beyond the 12 months period fully funded by UNDP, a new post will have to be created and a competitive recruitment process undertaken.
JPO Training and Learning

UNDP Learning Environment

UNDP supports the JPOs/SARCs in preparing for their assignment as fully as possible during the first months of their assignment. In addition, throughout the JPO/SARC assignment UNDP provides support to JPOs/SARCs in undertaking informal and formal learning activities.

Additionally, like all UNDP staff, JPOs and SARCs have access to the UNDP Learning Management System (LMS), including all online courses available in the System.

In addition, all JPOs/SARCs are required to take the UNDP mandatory courses for all staff.

Pre-departure Briefings

UNDP arranges a pre-departure briefing in Copenhagen for all JPOs. The objective of the briefing is to prepare the new staff member for the JPO assignment. The briefing provides an induction to the JPO Programme, the UN in the field, UNDP structure and programmes, JPO benefits and entitlements, as well as the UNDP Human Resources Strategy.

UNDP & affiliated Programme Policy and Operations Induction Course

UNDP organises for its JPOs an induction course, held at Headquarters, New York. The course focuses on strategic, macro-level issues, UN/UNDP policies and development trends, including individual meetings with key counterparts in relevant areas of their work. During the course, individual HR counselling sessions are organised with one of the Human Resources Associate of the OHR/SAS/JPOSC. All UNDP JPOs should attend the course within the first three to six months of their assignment.

In addition, JPOs will receive briefings from relevant programme staff in Headquarters during the induction course in New York. Each Regional Bureau is responsible for organizing structured briefings for the JPOs assigned in the region. These briefings are scheduled two or three days, and include input from various Headquarters units as may be relevant to the JPO assignment. Briefings for JPOs assigned to UNDP’s Administered Funds (UNIFEM, UNCDF) are organized by the Funds directly.

Country Specific Induction

Country specific induction by Country Offices complement the Headquarters based induction course. Specifically, the country briefings should provide the JPOs the opportunity to learn about the country

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3 This does not apply to SARCs
4 This does not apply to SARCs
office set-up, the country programme, the partners, as well as provide information about the local context.

**Donor-Organized Pre-departure Courses**

Most donors have well-organized pre-departure training programmes for their JPOs, which cover a range of subjects from substantive development training, to training in intercultural communication, to language training. UNDP encourages such initiatives. Even in cases where there is no formal training available for JPOs, intensive language training in the official language of the duty station is expected to be provided to the JPO by the donor Government.

To the extent possible, UNDP encourages donors sponsoring JPOs from developing countries to offer them the same pre-departure training made available to their own nationals.

**JPO Workshops**

UNDP organises workshops for JPOs every year. The workshops focus on a UNDP practice or priority area and provide an opportunity to bring together JPOs working in the same region or in the same thematic areas.

**Duty Travel and Training Allowance**

JPOs and SARCs are entitled to an allocation for “Training-Related Duty Travel”, which aims at supporting the JPO learning activities during the assignment. The amount of the DTTA differs among the donors, and is reviewed by them as appropriate. JPOs and SARCs plan for the use of the DTTA funds in consultation with their supervisor and include the learning activities into their annual learning plan.
JPO Career Management and Talent Pool

As outlined in the UNDP Human Resources Strategy, the UNDP JPO Programme is a learning and career development programme for young professionals wishing to pursue a career with the UN and in international development. The JPO and SARC Programmes forms an integral part of UNDP’s talent management programme, and contributes to meet the Organization’s need for new and potential talent.

In addition, the JPO Programme is an excellent entry point into the UN system as demonstrated by retention rates. Based on available data for the period 2001-2008, around 33% of the former UNDP JPOs continued a medium- or long-term career in the UN System following the completion of their JPO assignment. The JPO Programme also presents an excellent networking opportunity, through among others the JPO Alumni Association network facilitated by the OHR/SAS/JPOSC.

UNDP provides continuous career development support to JPOs and SARCs during their assignment. JPO/SARC career development is a shared responsibility between the JPO /SARC duty stations/ supervisor, the JPO/SARC and OHR. Supervisors play a key role in the JPO/SARC professional growth and learning, and are informed about their role in supporting JPO/SARC career development.

OHR/SAS/JPOSC provides support to JPOs and SARCs who are interested in pursuing a career with the Organization as follows:

- **Career Development Counselling & Advice** (Career development sessions, Career Management website, and one-to-one / remote advice sessions)
- **Learning throughout the JPO assignment** (Online database of use of DTTA, JPO Workshops)
- **Networking & Mentoring** (online discussion group for all current JPOs administered by the JPOSC, mentoring programme)
- **Post-JPO Networking** (JPO Alumni Association (JAA), Informal groups on Facebook.com and LinkedIn.com, online discussion groups for former JPOs, online directories of current and former JPOs)
- **Job Search** (advocacy towards potential internal/external employers, weekly Job Ads e-mail distributed to and by the JAA members, online CV Roster (also open to current JPOs with 15 months of JPO experience), advice on preparation of job applications and mock interviews)

JPO/SARCs may apply to internal and externally advertised posts in UNDP after having served 15 months in their post.

**JPO Performance Management: Performance assessment, annual JPO evaluation and final exit questionnaire**

As UNDP staff, JPOs/SARCs are evaluated through the corporate performance assessment system (currently the Results Competency Assessment – RCA), and are subject to the same timetable in reference to performance planning, monitoring and evaluation.

It is mandatory that JPO/SARC duty stations complete the RCA process for all JPOs and SARCs. JPO/SARC RCAs should be reviewed by the Career Review Group (CRG).
Although the performance assessment process is a dialogue between the staff member and UNDP, copies of RCAs may, if requested and with the agreement of the JPO/SARC, be shared with the donor Government for their information and reference.

The RCA is a key tool for JPO/SARC talent management, and the CRG should review the career potential of the JPO/SARC.

All JPOs/SARCs are asked to complete an exit questionnaire at the end of their assignment. The questionnaire collects information about the JPO/SARC’s assessment of the assignment, including the work experience and training received, and their career expectations. The exit questionnaire provides essential feedback on the JPO/SARC assignment and contributes to improving the JPO and SARC Programme.

**Supervision**

It is crucial that JPOs/SARCs get the right supervision/coaching and performance feedback from the onset of their assignment in order to develop professionally and to enhance their career opportunities with UNDP (and the UN in general). Prior to the arrival of the JPO/SARC, the respective supervisor receives a letter informing about his/her role as a JPO/SARC supervisor. In addition, senior management in JPO duty stations have a key role to play in supporting the career development of JPOs in their respective duty stations, and in identifying new and potential talent for the Organization. As such senior management are expected to provide feedback to regional bureaux and OHR on high performing JPOs, and for supporting their potential career opportunities with the Organization.
Financial management and accountability of the UNDP JPO Programme and the UNDP JPOSC

Donor transfer process, cost estimates

As per the Agreement between UNDP and the donor Government on the JPO Programme, the respective donor Government shall provide UNDP with the funds necessary to enable it to meet the costs of the recruitment, appointment and service of JPOs.

OHR/SAS/JPOSC prepares and forwards cost estimates for the duration of the assignment of each JPO/SARC to the donor Government at the same time that the candidate’s Offer of Appointment is issued. The cost estimates reflect the costs of a one year appointment, and are shared with the donor Government with a request for payment.

The payments for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd year respectively of such estimated sum shall be made by the donor to the UNDP contributions account stated on the cover letter to the cost estimate as soon as a candidate has been accepted by UNDP, its Offer of Appointment accepted by the candidate, a tentative entry-on-duty date established, and the donor Government notified by UNDP.

For extensions beyond the 1st year, UNDP will forward new cost estimates to the respective donor Government. Upon receipt of the cost estimate the donor will use the same arrangements of transfer of funds as stated above.

UNDP is committed to administer the accounts for the funds in accordance with its financial regulations and rules and other applicable rules, procedures and practices. The funds are subject exclusively to the internal and external auditing procedures in accordance with applicable regulations and rules of UNDP.

The standard administrative overhead applied by all UN Organizations for the JPO Programme is 12% of annual expenditures. For JPO/SARC Programmes where UNDP administers the full recruitment cycle, the administrative overhead is 14-15%. The overhead is included into the cost estimates, and is also included in the transferred donor contribution and once received is debited from the JPO Programme account annually, based on actual expenditures incurred.

Donor reporting, also on behalf of other agencies

The biennial statement of the financial position of the Accounts (as of 31 December of the preceding year) is published with the audited accounts of UNDP and submitted to the General Assembly of the United Nations and the Executive Board of UNDP in accordance with UNDP Financial Regulations and Rules.

Interim financial statements are submitted to the donor Government by UNDP on an annual basis, on 30 June of each year for the prior year. Should the sums initially deposited by the donor Government in respect of any specific JPO whose assignment ends in a given year fall short of the total sums actually expended by the UNDP in respect of his/her total period of service, the donor Government shall make up the difference.
Should the sum be greater than the total amount expended, upon confirmation from the donor Government, UNDP shall transfer the positive balance to a current JPO’s account.

JPO/SARC accounts for separated JPOs are closed within 24 months of the separation of the JPO/SARC.

**Programme monitoring and development**

The JPO and SARC Programme is monitored periodically through annual client satisfaction surveys to JPOs, donors and partner UN Organizations, exit questionnaires to JPOs/SARCs, OHR field visits, and JPO debriefings at Headquarters. More specifically the purpose of the monitoring is to:

- Review if the Programme might better respond to the needs of UNDP and to identify areas for improvement.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of UNDP and affiliated funds and programmes in managing and training JPOs and SARCs.
- Monitor career progression and retention of JPOs and SARCs.

In addition, UNDP reviews the strategic and operational matters related to the JPO and SARC Programme with the donors on an annual basis.

It is essential that UNDP maintains a certain amount of flexibility with the JPO and SARC Programme in order to respond to changing priorities and organizational requirements.

In view of the need to provide the best possible work experience for young development professionals and to maximize their contribution to UNDP, OHR/SAS/JPSOCS will undertake on a regular basis an internal review of the JPO Programme.
Partnership activities of the UNDP JPO Service Centre

Administration of JPOs on behalf of other UN organisations - overview

In addition, to administration of the UNDP JPO Programme (including UNDOCO, UNIFEM, UNCDF, and UNV), UNDP has signed agreements to administer part or all JPOs of the following partner UN Organizations:

- Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO)
- United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)
- United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)
- United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)
- United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC)
- United Nations University (UNU)
- Universal Postal Union (UPU)
- World Health Organization (WHO)

By delegating the entitlement administration of their JPOs to the JPO Service Centre, partner UN Organizations gain time and efficiency, allowing them to focus on more strategic and crucial activities, such as resource mobilisation and donor relationship, JPO talent selection and career development.

Administration of JPOs for the affiliated funds and programmes: UNIFEM, UNDOCO, UNV and UNCDF

UNV, UNIFEM, UNDOCO and UNCDF determine their JPO annual requirements for the year as an integral part of the UNDP annual JPO Recruitment Plan in accordance with the above-mentioned criteria. Donor Governments make a separate contribution to the Programme and Funds for JPO staffing purposes.

JPO candidates for the Programme and Funds are recruited and placed in the same manner as regular UNDP JPOs. UNV, UNDOCO, UNIFEM, and UNCDF approach the donors concerning their JPO requirements as part of routine resource mobilization campaigns, and coordinate with UNDP.

Placement decisions for JPO candidates are cleared with the respective Programme and Funds (with copy to the Bureaux) before submission to the Country Offices or Headquarters Units.

JPOs assigned to the Programme and Funds participate in the JPO Induction course. On-the-job training/substantive briefings are directly handled by the Programme and Funds. If any period of training is needed beyond what is established for all JPOs, the additional cost for such activities is covered by the Programme and Funds.
Administration of JPOs on behalf of UN Organisations

As in the case of UNDP affiliated Programme and Funds, UNFPA prepares its own annual JPO Recruitment Plan. OHR/SAS/JPOSC does not engage in discussions and/or negotiations with the donors for UNFPA JPOs, but requests to be kept informed, in order to ensure a smooth overall appointment process. UNFPA interviews and selects its JPOs. However, upon donor request and/or from UNFPA, UNFPA JPOs may be interviewed by UNDP representatives during UNDP JPO recruitment missions. The candidates who are considered to be suitable are then presented to UNFPA for their review. Once a candidate has been selected and endorsed by the donor and the UNFPA Duty Station, UNFPA submits the relevant documents to OHR/SAS/JPOCSC with a request to initiate the appointment process. UNFPA is responsible for the training, counselling and career development support to UNFPA JPOs. UNFPA JPOs are appointed on UNFPA letters of appointment.

Other UN Organization JPOs are administered by UNDP in accordance with the Agreement between UNDP and the respective Organization. UNDP administers the JPO from the time of the initial offer of appointment, after all the necessary clearances have been obtained for his/her placement. A lead-time of two months is required to process the appointment. All negotiations related to the management of the JPOs assigned to the respective Organization are conducted strictly between the UN Organization and the donor Governments. The JPO overhead is shared equally between UNDP and the respective Organization. UNOPS JPOs are appointed on UNOPS letters of appointment. Other UN Organization JPOs are appointed on UNDP letters of appointment and assigned on loan to the respective Organization.