**Performance Management and Development**

Structure Element - Description

1. Objective

1. The objective of the Policy on Individual Performance Management and Development (PMD) is to facilitate successful performance of UNDP staff members, strengthen the culture of high-performance and continuous development, as well as ensure accountability of all UNDP staff members for effective performance.
2. Applicability
3. The Policy applies to all staff members in active UNDP service. A separate procedure is in place for the performance management of staff members at the ASG and above levels.
4. The Policy does not apply to staff members holding UNDP letters of appointment for service limited to another UN entity, unless the respective entity decides otherwise.
5. This Policy does not apply to a new UNDP staff member with an initial appointment of more than one year while on probation. UNDP staff members on probation will be subject to the [Probation upon Appointment policy](https://popp.undp.org/policy-page/probation-upon-appointment).
6. Key Provisions

*A. Performance*

1. Successful performance of staff is key for UNDP’s organizational success and a prerequisite for a staff appointment and a career in UNDP.
2. All UNDP staff members are accountable to the Administrator for performing their functions and delivery of agreed results based on the highest standards of competence, integrity, ethics, and efficiency, in line with the UN values, Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service, Secretary-General’s Bulletin on the Status, Basic Rights and Duties of United Nations Staff Members, UN Staff Regulations and Rules, and UNDP policies *(also see Section Accountability for Performance).*
3. Staff members should have appropriate guidance, resources, and learning opportunities to ensure they can meet performance standards, achieve agreed goals and results, and meet their relevant development needs.
4. The performance of staff members is required to be regularly monitored through formal and informal reviews and is to be evaluated[[1]](#footnote-2) annually to ensure that the agreed goals are achieved, and that the required standards of performance and conduct are successfully met.

*B. Performance management and development (PMD)*

1. Effective performance management and development of each staff member (PMD) are a shared responsibility of the supervisee and the supervisor[[2]](#footnote-3) *(see Section Accountability for Performance Management for the specific accountabilities of the supervisee and the supervisor).*
2. Performance management and development are continuous processes and are anchored in the frequent, two-way, open communication between the supervisor and the supervisee aimed to ensure the achievement of results, staff development, and the provision of timely and appropriate support. Both the supervisor and the supervisee are expected to initiate and engage in such communication.
3. Performance management and development should be guided by the principles of transparency, integrity, objectivity, clear and achievable expectations, and open, regular and constructive feedback and support in an environment of trust and respect.
4. The annual performance management and development cycle is from 1 January to 31 December of the year and includes: annual performance planning (mandatory); regular performance discussions, including performance monitoring, feedback and coaching during the performance year; the mid-term review (MTR) (mandatory); and the annual performance review (APR) (mandatory) (see [Performance Management Development Cycle and Timeline](https://popp.undp.org/document/annex-1-performance-management-and-development-cycle-and-timeline)).
5. Performance management and development are facilitated by various mechanisms, including an on-line tool aimed to ensure that a requisite record of the key milestones of the performance management process (hereafter “on-line PMD tool”) is maintained, UNDP Talent Development Centre (TDC), relevant guidelines, and learning and reference materials.
6. Annual performance planning
7. Annual performance planning (*referred to in Paragraph 11*) is the first mandatory element of the PMD cycle. It should be done jointly by the supervisor and the supervisee at the beginning of the performance year, in line with the corporate planning calendar. It should include the formulation and agreement on: (1) individual performance goals aligned with the office/team workplan and supervisee’s functions, and (2) learning and development goals informed by the supervisee’s competency proficiency, performance expectations, development needs, and the staff member’s longer-term career aspirations and opportunities. The supervisor can also decide to assign additional goals to supervisees, in line with the office and team priorities. Both performance and learning and development goals should be recorded in the on-line PMD tool.
8. As members of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT), all UNDP Resident Representatives (RRs) will have a mandatory goal related to UNCT results. All other staff are encouraged to include such goals as relevant.
9. All supervisors will have a mandatory effective people management goal. All Heads of Offices, senior managers in Country Offices, Regional Hubs and HQs with delegated authority and accountability for budget and financial management should also have a goal on financial management.
10. In line with the commitments of the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy and Gender Parity Strategy, heads of offices will have a mandatory goal on gender equality and gender parity. All other managers and staff should include such goals as relevant.
11. A new UNDP staff member, with an initial appointment of one year or less, should have their first performance goals confirmed and recorded in the on-line PMD tool within the first two months of the appointment with UNDP. A staff member reassigned to a new position in UNDP should have their performance goals confirmed and recorded in the on-line PMD tool within the first two months of the reassignment. A new UNDP staff member with an initial appointment of more than one year will be subject to the Probation upon appointment policy.
12. Both the supervisor and the supervisee must participate in the annual planning process (referred to in paragraph 11). If the supervisor has not participated in the annual performance planning discussion or has not approved annual goals in the on-line PMD tool, the supervisor of the supervisor or, as needed, the Head of the Office should ensure that an appropriate solution is identified so that the performance review is finalized.
13. If the supervisee has not participated in the annual planning, the supervisor should finalize the goals and inform the supervisee accordingly. This should be done within the corporate timeline for the completion of the annual goal plans.
14. In case a disagreement between the supervisor and supervisee on the goals is not resolved by the corporate deadline, the supervisor of the supervisor or, as needed, the Head of the Office will decide on the final annual goal plan.
15. The annual goals may be modified during the performance year to ensure alignment with changing priorities, resource availability, necessity of services, and needs of the Organization. Modifications to the annual goals should be discussed by the supervisor and supervisee, recorded in the on-line PMD tool, and approved by the supervisor. Although preferred, agreement of the supervisee is not required to modify annual goals. However, the supervisee must be informed of the modification(s).
16. Performance monitoring
17. Performance monitoring is an on-going process and includes frequent formal and informal reviews/check-ins between the supervisor and the supervisee during the performance year. Such reviews can be initiated or requested by either the supervisor or the supervisee.
18. Periodic reviews/check-ins are important parts of the effective performance management and primarily aim to support staff members in achieving their goals through real-time feedback, coaching, guidance and other support. They may be used to acknowledge and recognize good performance, or identify and timely address any performance shortcomings, challenges that the staff member is facing, or potential setbacks in the achievement of goals.
19. Informal reviews/check-ins may be in person (e.g. regular one-on-one meetings) or through an exchange of emails, or any other form of communication. They should be organized as frequently as needed. Formal reviews/check-ins should be provided in writing and recorded in the on-line PMD tool. It is recommended but optional that at least two formal check-ins are conducted during the year, one between the annual planning exercise and the MTR, and one between the MTR and the annual performance review. More frequent formal check-ins may be conducted, as needed.
20. The MTR (*referred to in Paragraph 11*) and its record in the on-line PMD tool are mandatory for all UNDP staff members who have worked for UNDP for at least three months prior to the MTR time. Generally, it takes place in the middle of the performance year and provides a formal opportunity for the supervisor and the supervisee to review progress, clarify and adjust goals and expectations, discuss development and support needs, confirm priorities for the remainder of the year and changes in the annual plan, if any. MTR also provides a good opportunity to discuss staff member’s career aspirations and check-in on the implementation of the respective development goals.
21. MTRs of staff members with performance shortcomings should reflect comments on identified performance issues and include copies of [Performance Improvement Plan(s) (PIP)](https://popp.undp.org/document/performance-improvement-plan-pip), (see *3.0 Procedure table “Dealing with Performance* [*that*](https://popp.undp.org/SitePages/POPPSubject.aspx?SBJID=363&Menu=BusinessUnit&Beta=0) *does not meet/partially meets performance expectations”, step 1*) where these already exist.
22. Annual performance review (APR)
23. In line with the UN Staff Regulations and Rules, an annual performance review (*referred to in Paragraph 11*) will take place to evaluate the performance of the staff members during the year, confirm the achievement of agreed goals and other performance expectations, demonstrated competency proficiency, and review development needs (*see* [*3.0 Procedure table “Annual Performance Review”, step 4*](https://popp.undp.org/node/9886)).
24. The APR and its record in the on-line PMD tool are mandatory for all UNDP staff members who have worked for UNDP for at least six months during the performance year.
25. Prior to the APR, additional feedback may be requested by the supervisor from others (e.g. peers, other managers, clients, etc.). Such feedback should be, but is not required to be, requested following consultation with the supervisee on which people could provide such feedback. Requesting additional feedback from others is optional and can be done at any time during the year, as appropriate. For staff members with supervisory responsibilities, feedback from the personnel they supervise is strongly encouraged.
26. For UNDP Resident Representatives, feedback on their performance as members of the UNCT and their contribution to UNCT results will be requested from the UN Resident Coordinators or other appropriate authority and be taken into account in the APR of the RRs.
27. Supervisors are expected to exercise rigor in performance reviews, provide meaningful comments, and, as appropriate, include critical incidents of exceptional or deficient performance.
28. Supervisors are required to submit recommendations on supervisees who should receive a certificate of special recognition to their supervisor for endorsement and then to the Head of the Office for approval. Supervisors are also required to provide clarifications to the Talent Management Committee (TMC), as needed, regarding the performance of supervisees who received a performance rating of either ‘Partially meets performance expectations’ or ‘Does not meet performance expectations’.
29. Upon request from a staff member, the TMC reviews the outcome of performance reviews that received a ‘Partially meets performance expectations’ or ‘Does not meet performance expectations’ rating. The TMC is not required to separately endorse each of the reviews for individual staff members. However, the TMC will have the authority to discuss and change the final outcome of the annual performance review for a staff member, if necessary, as a result of a request by the supervisee.
30. Comments by the TMC, if any, are required to be recorded in the on-line PMD tool and make up part of a formal performance record of the respective staff members. The TMC will not address the questions of renewal of a staff member appointment or of awarding the within-grade salary increment in its comments.
31. If the supervisor leaves the organization, they are required to complete the mandatory performance reviews of the supervisees they supervised or share their comments on the supervisees’ performance with the new supervisor, as part of the separation or the inter-agency move process.
32. If the supervisor is reassigned to a different position in UNDP, they are required to complete the mandatory performance reviews of their supervisees in their previous position or share their comments on the supervisees’ performance with the new supervisor.
33. If the current or former supervisor does not complete the mandatory performance review of the supervisee within 30 calendar days of the corporate deadline, the supervisor of the supervisor or, as needed, the Head of the Office will finalize the performance review, based on relevant inputs. *(See Section on Accountability for Performance Management for provisions on non-compliance of supervisors with obligations related to performance management, including the completion of the annual performance review).*
34. If a supervisee does not provide their input into the performance review until 5 days before the corporate deadline, the supervisor should complete their review without that input. In exceptional cases, the supervisee can request an extension of the timeline to be approved by the Head of the Office. *(See Section on Accountability for Performance Management for provisions on non-compliance of supervisees with obligations related to performance management, including providing inputs for performance reviews.)*
35. Recognizing successful performance
36. Recognition of and rewarding successful performance is a good management practice and, as such should be an integral part of regular interaction between supervisors and supervisees.
37. A review of the recent Annual Performance reviews is a part of any recruitment/selection process, and other similar processes, and is expected to be balanced with other means of candidate assessment, such as technical tests, interviews and others.
38. Pursuant to Annex I, paragraph 4 of the UN Staff Regulations and Staff Rule 3.2, only staff members with satisfactory service will receive a within-grade salary increment.
39. Staff members with exceptional performance may receive a certificate of special recognition. Such certificates will be signed by the Head of Bureau/Office and uploaded to the on-line PMD tool by the supervisor. For a supervisee to receive a certificate of special recognition, the supervisor’s recommendation must be endorsed by their supervisor. If the person reports to the Head of Office, then the Head of Office would provide the final endorsement**.**
40. Addressing performance that does not meet/partially meets performance expectations
41. It is expected that most issues related to staff performance are identified and addressed informally as part of the on-going performance monitoring during the performance year.
42. If the supervisor considers that the supervisee’s continued performance may result in a ‘Partially meets performance expectations’ or ‘Does not meet performance expectations’ overall rating, the supervisor should notify the supervisee in writing of the performance shortcomings, discuss expected improvements and timelines, work with the supervisee on the creation of a [Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)](https://popp.undp.org/node/2341), and inform the supervisee of the consequences of non-compliance, as per this Policy. Prior to notifying the supervisee of the need to create a PIP, approval from the supervisor of the supervisor or the Head of Office must be obtained. If the person reports to the Head of Office, then the Head of Office would provide the final endorsement.
43. The creation of a [Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)](https://popp.undp.org/node/2341) will be mandatory if progress in the Mid-Term Review (MTR) is captured as “Significant acceleration/improvement needed.”
44. In the event that a supervisee is assessed with a rating of either 'Partially meets performance expectations' or 'Does not meet performance expectations' in the Annual Performance Review (APR), it shall be mandatory to implement a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). If at the time of the APR a PIP is already in place and/or in progress, there is no need for a new one.
45. A [Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)](https://popp.undp.org/node/2341) is a tool that aims to facilitate the required improvement in the performance of a staff member. It serves to record: (1) identified shortcomings and improvements to be achieved, (2) actions to be taken to fully meet the requirements of the job and performance objectives, (3) timelines; as well as (4) support to be provided, (5) outcomes of periodic check-ins, and (6) the final review of the PIP implementation.
46. The creation of a PIP should be initiated by the supervisors and finalized within ten working days from the supervisor’s notification of the need to create a PIP. If the supervisor and the supervisee are unable to agree on the terms of the PIP, or the supervisee refuses to participate in the PIP discussions, a decision on the terms of the PIP will be made by the supervisor of the supervisor or Head of Office. If the person reports to the Head of Office, then the Head of Office would provide the final endorsement.
47. PIPs are generally of 3 months[[3]](#footnote-4) each and there could be more than one within a performance year. It is important to ensure that agreed support is provided to the supervisee during the PIP implementation.
48. If the PIP is initiated mid-cycle or as a result of a ‘Partially meets performance expectations' rating, the supervisee can have a maximum of two consecutive PIP(s).
49. If the PIP is initiated as a result of a 'Does not meet performance expectations' rating the supervisee can have a maximum of one PIP with a duration of between 3 and 6 months.
50. If improvement in performance is not achieved in line with the established expectations and within the established timeline set in the one or two consecutive PIP(s), or if the supervisee refuses to comply with the PIP, their appointment may be terminated or not renewed, in accordance with the applicable UN Staff Regulations and Rules and UNDP policies.
51. In the case of two consecutive PIPs, it need not be in the course of one performance year as long as the PIPs are not separated by more than a six-month period of time.
52. The consecutive ‘Partially meets performance expectations' or Does not meet performance expectations' rating is not required to initiative termination or non-renewal.
53. Notifications, key performance-related shortcomings, performance improvement needs, remedial measures and timelines should be properly recorded in the on-line PMD tool and other documents such as emails and notes to file, as appropriate.
54. If unsatisfactory performance is observed within the first year of service in UNDP, the generally recommended time for performance improvement and implementation of remedial measures can be reduced. A new UNDP staff member with an initial appointment of more than one year will be subject to the Probation upon appointment policy.
55. Resolution of disputes
56. Supervisees who do not agree with the results of the annual performance review by the supervisor must request that TMC considers their case. The request for the TMC review should be made within 10 working days of the date that the supervisee received the notification of the completion of the performance review by the supervisor from the on-line PMD tool. Such supervisees can provide additional information for the TMC to review, as needed.
57. If a supervisee does not agree with the final annual performance review as confirmed by the TMC, they may submit a formal request for rebuttal. Recourse to the rebuttal process does not suspend the outcome of the performance review until the final rebuttal decision. A request for rebuttal must be submitted within 15 working days from the date they are notified of the final decision of the TMC. Exceptions can be made in cases when in the opinion of the Chair of the Rebuttal Panel circumstances are beyond the control of the supervisee.
58. Only the performance reviews with the ‘Partially meets performance expectations’ or 'Does not meet performance expectations’ rating may be rebutted. Consideration by the TMC is a mandatory step before the submission of a rebuttal request.
59. Each rebuttal request is to be considered by the Rebuttal Panel (*hereinafter “Panel”,* [*see 3.0 Procedure table “Rebuttal”, step 1*](https://popp.undp.org/node/9891) *for the* [*Terms of Reference of the Rebuttal Panel*](https://popp.undp.org/node/2336)).
60. The results of the review by the Panel are to be captured in the Panel Report, which constitutes the final outcome of the annual performance management process.
61. Decisions on a performance rating are only final once the Chair of the Rebuttal Panel has rendered a decision on the rebuttal request. Thus any further appeal by a supervisee against a performance rating should follow the decision of the Chair of the Rebuttal Panel on the performance rating of the supervisee who requested rebuttal. Similarly, the decision on the award of the within grade increment are only final once the decision is rendered by the Director, OHR.
62. In the event of complaints to the Office of Audit and Investigations related to wrongdoing in the context of performance management, the performance review process will be suspended pending the outcome of that complaint to OAI. In the event of a formal appeal as a request for management evaluation or to the UN Tribunals on issues related to performance, consideration before the TMC or Rebuttal Panel depending on the stage of the process, will also be suspended. Proceedings may furthermore be suspended if, in the opinion of the TMC Chair or the Chair of the Rebuttal Panel depending on the stage of the supervisee appeal, the circumstances warrant suspension.
63. Accountability for performance
64. Continued appointment with UNDP is contingent on an overall rating of ‘Successfully meets performance expectations’.
65. If the performance of the staff member does not meet, or only partially meets performance expectations, their appointment may be terminated or not renewed. The decision on termination or non-renewal of the UNDP appointment will take into account the results of the latest mid-term and annual performance reviews and the implementation of PIPs[[4]](#footnote-5).
66. Staff members whose performance is rated as ‘Partially meets performance expectations’ or 'Does not meet performance expectations’ will not be awarded the next within-grade salary increment when it is otherwise due. Decisions not to award or to recover the within-grade salary increment will be approved by the Director of OHR.
67. In case a rebuttal of the outcome of the annual performance review is requested by the staff member, the rebuttal decision will be factored into the decision not to award a within-grade salary increment, or not to renew or to terminate the appointment, where non-renewal or termination of appointment is being considered for performance reasons.
68. If the within-grade increment is due to be awarded in the next performance cycle and the due date occurs *before* the decision on the annual performance review for the previous performance cycle (whether after the rebuttal process or earlier, if there is no rebuttal), the increment will generally be awarded when it is due pending the subsequent decision on the annual performance review. If such a decision confirms that the staff member has not met or only partially meets performance expectations, the increment may be recovered by the Organization retroactive to the date when it was awarded. If the within-grade increment is due to be awarded in the next performance cycle and the due date occurs *after* the decision on the annual performance review for the previous performance cycle (whether after the rebuttal process or earlier, if there is no rebuttal), the increment may be awarded only on that due date.
69. Pursuant to Staff Rule 13.2(d), if the necessities of service require abolition of a post or reduction of the staff and subject to the availability of suitable posts for which their services can be effectively utilized, staff members with permanent appointments shall be retained in preference to those on all other types of appointments, provided that due regard shall be given in all cases to relative competence, integrity and length of service. In line with the present Policy, satisfactory performance will constitute one more key condition.
70. Accountability for performance management
71. The Assistant Administrator of the Bureau for Management Services (BMS) has the overall authority over performance management policies and processes in UNDP.
72. Bureaus Directors and Heads of Offices are accountable for effective performance management in their respective Bureaus/Offices. They are expected to promote regular communication between supervisors and supervisees in their teams, encourage ongoing feedback and discussion, and make sure that changes in the mandate or priorities of UNDP, Bureau or Office are clearly communicated to all staff members to ensure alignment.
73. The supervisor is accountable for the performance management in their teams/offices, both in terms of process and quality. In particular, the supervisor should:
74. engage in regular discussions with supervisees about work and performance; appropriately guide and coach supervisees for performance, development, and potential career development options;
75. ensure that each supervisee has annual performance goals defined on time and aligned with the office/team workplan;
76. initiate and participate in formal and informal performance reviews and check-ins, with a view to monitoring the achievement of goals, identifying performance gaps and needs, and ensuring required support;
77. ensure that a mandatory mid-term review is completed for all supervisees;
78. support the implementation of their supervisees’ learning and development plans and ensure their appropriate alignment with the requirements of the supervisees’ current jobs as well as their career development aspirations, potential opportunities, and needs;
79. complete mandatory annual performance reviews for all supervisees in their team on time;
80. ensure development of PIP(s), if needed/required, and support their implementation in line with the established expectations and within the established timeline set in the PIP(s). During the implementation of the PIP the supervisor is required to provide overall guidance to the supervisee including, holding regular check-ins and providing regular feedback and support.
81. ensure that the resources and tools at the disposal of the supervisee are commensurate with goals/results to be achieved and other expectations, as per the Job Description; ensure that the supervisee has access to requisite training/learning resources;
82. actively promote and support an inclusive, respectful, psychologically safe and enabling working environment that fosters open communication regarding performance and work-related issues.
83. The supervisee should:
84. engage in regular discussions with the supervisor about work and performance; proactively seek support and guidance required for successful achievement of goals/results;
85. discuss with the supervisor and draft, on time, their annual performance goals aligned with the office/team workplan;
86. participate in and provide required information for various formal and informal performance discussions and reviews, including drafting the statement of annual achievement and acknowledging reviews;
87. embrace feedback constructively and make an active effort to address issues, as needed;
88. implement a [Performance Improvement Plan](https://popp.undp.org/node/2341), if required;
89. take charge of their development and, as such, formulate and implement learning and development goals/plans.
90. Unless there are compelling reasons beyond the control of the supervisor or supervisee, failure to comply with the above obligations should be reflected in the performance review of the supervisor and/or of the supervisee.
91. Timelines for the completion of the key performance management milestones for staff members with extended absence (for example, staff members on an extended sick leave, or staff members on maternity leave) are to be adjusted accordingly.
92. Documenting performance
93. Key milestones related to the annual performance of UNDP staff members, including annual goals, mid-term reviews, and annual performance reviews are required to be documented and recorded in the on-line PMD tool (other reviews should be recorded, as needed).
94. To ensure continuity, PMD documents in the on-line PMD tool and other performance records for each staff member are maintained and archived in accordance with UNDP standards for human resources information management.
95. **Other provisions**
96. The standard performance management processes can be suspended during the investigation and any subsequent disciplinary proceedings, as appropriate, by a decision of the Director of OHR following consultation with the Legal Office. If the final investigation report, as received by the Legal Office, and the circumstances of the case have shown unsatisfactory performance and/or poor judgement not amounting to misconduct on the part of the staff member, a reprimand or comments on performance where the staff member’s conduct did not rise to the level of misconduct but nevertheless demonstrated performance shortcomings may be recorded in the PMD on-line tool.
97. Definitions
98. **Formal reviews** are reviews that are conducted in writing and may be proceeded or followed by a discussion between the supervisee and their supervisor. Formal reviews include, for example, a mid-term performance review, an annual performance review, a review on progress in the implementation of PIP, and the like.
99. **Informal reviews** are discussions about the performance of the supervisee without a formal record in writing, e.g. discussions at regular one-on-one meetings.
100. **Performance shortcomings** are documented instances of performance that do not meet the required standards of performance.
101. **Not meeting performance expectations** is where a supervisee has demonstrably fallen short of most or all requirements of their position, including expected performance standards, required competency proficiency, or their status as a UN staff member.
102. **Partially meets performance expectations** is where a supervisee has demonstrably fallen short of some of the requirements of their position, including expected performance standards, required competency proficiency, or their status as a UN staff member.
103. **Successfully meeting performance expectations** is where a supervisee meets all or most of the performance expectations, displays the required competency proficiency, and honors their status as a UN staff member.

1. Reference is to UN Staff Rule 1.4. “*Performance of staff (a) Staff members shall be evaluated for their efficiency, competence and integrity through performance appraisal mechanisms that shall assess the staff member’s compliance with the standards set out in the Staff Regulations and Rules for purposes of accountability*”. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. On behalf of the administration. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Time remaining in the contract is to be taken into account in determining the duration of the PIP. A PIP can be up to 6 months. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. For staff members with Permanent Appointments and Fixed-Term Appointments of more than two years, performance reviews during the last two years will be taken into account. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)