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REPORTS BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL ON SPECIFIC MATTERS

PART IX

**USE OF INDIVIDUAL CONSULTANT AND
FEE CONTRACTS BY THE SECRETARIAT**

ADDENDUM

Comments of the UNESCO Staff Union (STU)

In conformity with item 2805.7 of the UNESCO Administrative Manual, the UNESCO Staff Union (STU) submits its observations on this report by the Director-General.

1. The use of consultant contracts is unavoidable. Nevertheless, STU has drawn the attention of the Secretariat to the need to respect the rules in that matter. The Human Resources Manual gives a precise definition for the use of such contracts (Chapter 13.10), but application in the sectors does not always follow those rules, and shortcomings persist, notably:

- omission of a description of the assignment, of the precise objectives to be attained and a well-defined timetable for delivery which would have allowed for the consultant's achievements to be evaluated. Improved planning of this type of temporary assistance should be reviewed in the sectors, taking account of the maximum duration of these appointments according to funding sources;
- consultant evaluations which are vague and unavailable to other sectors/divisions which might require similar expertise. A database of temporary assistance, including the experience and evaluation of the expertise already provided under contract, is needed now more than ever;
- levels of remuneration for the same consultant and for similar tasks that differ according to sector.

The weakness of internal controls and failure to implement simple and functional solutions in monitoring temporary assistance are at the source of a number of these problems.

Search for skills in-house

2. Reducing the number of posts often leads to additional costs as consultants (some of them retired staff members) are recruited to make up for understaffing. The stated aim is to enable greater flexibility in implementing the work programme.
3. The search for staff members meeting the desired conditions is at present confined to the sector concerned, rather than being extended to the Secretariat as a whole. STU has nevertheless recommended having recourse to consultants solely in cases where the required skills are not available within the Organization. There is currently no internal mechanism which would make it possible to identify the staff member or members able to perform the duties in question.
4. STU has requested a skills assessment to be carried out for each member of staff.
5. Improved geographical distribution might be obtained if the needs of the Secretariat in terms of temporary assistance were made known more widely and faster. A broader public might also be reached if information on opportunities for the use of consultants was shown on the home page of UNESCO's website. The sectors should plan for their needs well in advance. Member States also have a part to play in encouraging their nationals to come forward.