



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

A large, faint, light blue background image of a sundial. The sundial has a circular face with a gnomon and is marked with various numbers and letters. The text "CASSENS & PLATON" is visible on the sundial's face. The overall image is a light blue monochrome.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ETHICS OFFICE 2014

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
I. Message from the Director-General	3
II. Message from Rebecca Trott, Ethics Adviser	4
III. Mission Statement	5
IV. Overview of the Ethics Office	5
1. Introduction.....	5
2. Ethical Core Values	6
V. Activities and Operations	6
1. Training.....	6
2. Requests: advice, guidance and complaints.....	7
VI. The Financial Disclosure Programme	12
1. Introduction.....	12
2. Results	13
VII. Planning for 2015	15
1. E-learning training	15
2. Ethics Trainings.....	15
3. Post-employment Policy.....	15
4. Gifts Policy	16
5. Participation in the United Nations Ethics Network	16
V. Conclusion	17
<i>Annex 1. The Declaration of Interest for the Financial Disclosure Programme</i>	<i>18</i>

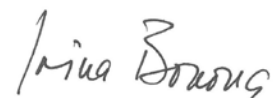
I. Message from the Director-General

We celebrate the 70th anniversary of UNESCO this year at a time of great challenge and opportunity, when all societies are transforming, when the mission of building the defences of peace in the minds of women and men has never been so important. These are times of turbulence but also vision, when Governments have shaped a new global sustainable development agenda for the next 15 years. In celebrating past achievements and in looking forward, I believe that UNESCO must remain true to the values at the heart of all its action. Integrity, professionalism and respect for diversity are essential guides to UNESCO's work, fundamental to the success of our delivery, vital for the well-being of the Organisation's staff. These values are our starting point and the measure of our success – they are central to my mandate as Director-General.

UNESCO has a uniquely diverse and ambitious mandate – in taking this forward, I believe that it is important to consider not only what we achieve but also how we achieve it. In this regard, the Ethics Office plays a vital advisory role for all employees, to help foster a culture of ethics and respect for core values. Well-being is essential for every member of staff – it is crucial for the success of every aspect of UNESCO's work, especially at a time of financial constraint and rising demand and expectation.

This is why training is so important, for all staff, across the board, along with the advice and guidance provided by the Ethics Office, including for complaints. The Financial Disclosure Policy is another crucial element of this work, which I am committed to developing further. In all this, I wish to underline the importance of the work led by the Ethics Office.

Strengthening UNESCO's culture of ethics is essential – this is a responsibility that we all share and must all take forward together.



Irina Bokova

II. Message from Rebecca Trott, Ethics Adviser

It is with great pleasure that I accepted the appointment as Ethics Adviser in November 2014 and have been inspired by the warm welcome I received from employees throughout the Organisation. On many occasions, on being introduced to new colleagues I have heard how they had looked forward to the introduction of a new Ethics Adviser and how important my work was.

I realise that much is expected of me. My predecessor Jean-Paul Proulx, who created the Ethics Office at UNESCO created a first class framework for the Office and a flawless handover. Much needs to be achieved in a relatively short time and my initial focus has been to listen to those with superior knowledge of the Organisation. To date, I have found colleagues refreshingly open and willing to share their institutional memory and help me prioritise the work to be done. The hiatus during which the Organisation did not have an Ethics Adviser has left a number of individual issues to be addressed as a priority. Thereafter, it seems vital to me to increase the visibility of the Office. Employees need to be aware that we are 'open for business' and willing to help them within the scope of our mandate. Relaunching training at the earliest opportunity is vital to ensure employees are aware of their rights and obligations in relation to ethics at UNESCO and who to approach with their concerns and queries. We need to ensure that we are accessible, helpful and efficient and that those who seek our guidance are assured of the absolute confidentiality of any approach.

There is much to be done and resourcing remains an issue but I take this opportunity to thank the management who have tirelessly supported the Ethics Office to date. Initiatives have been unanimously encouraged and I applaud the UNESCO Director General, Ms. Irina Bokova for her recognition and respect for the independence and confidentiality of the Ethics Office.

I look forward to the task ahead and reporting on the achievements of the Ethics Office in 2015.

Rebecca Trott



III. Mission Statement

The Ethics Office is responsible for providing confidential advice on ethics and standards of conduct to the Organization and all its employees. It promotes ethical awareness through training, communication, policy development and liaison; and aims to resolve allegations of unethical behavior or wrongdoing.

The Ethics Office is independent from all Programme Sectors, Support Sectors and other Central Services, and reports directly to the Director-General. In the event that the Director-General is the subject of an allegation, the Ethics Office will refer the case to the UNESCO Executive Board.

IV. Overview of the Ethics Office

1. Introduction

Since its establishment in 2009, the Ethics Office has continuously developed and has become a key component in the services provided by UNESCO to assist in the resolution of grievances and enhance compliance with the Organisation's ethical standards.

From the offset, the Ethics Office has taken a preventive rather than a punitive approach to promoting a culture of ethics at UNESCO. Through a comprehensive communication and outreach strategy aimed at sensitising UNESCO employees to the UNESCO standards of conduct and the personal, professional and reputational risks of failing to respect these standards, to the implementation of a policy protecting those who speak up against unethical behavior, the Ethics Office is proud to highlight the progress made since its inception.

In this annual report, the reader will notice that the number of requests¹ received in 2014 is, for the third time, lower than the previous year. This fall in reporting should be viewed with the necessary degree of caution. It should not automatically be taken to mean that less

¹ For consistency, the term 'requests' will be utilized throughout this document to include enquiries, reports, complaints and any other type of approach received.

ethical issues arose in 2014. Rather it may reflect the natural reticence of staff to raise ethical issues for fear of retribution or for fear that they will be viewed as ‘troublemakers’. It is no surprise that this reduction in reporting coincides with an absence of an Ethics Adviser for the majority of the year. The need to reinforce not only the right of staff to report incidents of unethical behaviour but also their duty in this regard is a message that needs to be highlighted and reiterated regularly and the Organisation clearly suffered from the lack of an Ethics Advisor to drive home this message for the majority of the year. With the appointment of the new Ethics Adviser in November 2014 it is anticipated that the number of reports should increase as employees are again sensitized to the issues and feel confident that they will receive independent, professional advice and that, if intervention is required, this can be provided at an appropriate level without fear of reprisals.

2. Ethical Core Values

It is important to recall the fundamentals relating to Ethics. Ethics refers to the basic concepts and fundamental principles of decent human conduct. At the organizational level, it relies on three core values: Integrity, Professionalism and Respect for diversity.

Integrity is a core value in all aspects of our professional and personal life. Integrity includes, but is not limited to loyalty, impartiality, fairness and honesty.

High-standards of professionalism are required to fulfil our duties at UNESCO. We should show pride in our work, demonstrate the highest standards of competence, be conscientious and efficient in meeting goals and commitments, and be motivated by professional objectives rather than by personal concerns.

Finally, we take pride in the diversity of our colleagues, which brings together people from varied backgrounds, cultures and experiences. We should embrace this diversity, and view it as an advantage. We should be able to work constructively with people from all backgrounds, examine our assumptions and avoid stereotypes, and show no discrimination against any individual or group.

V. Activities and Operations

1. Training

Education is key in building a culture of Ethics at UNESCO. After all, how can employees be expected to uphold UNESCO's ethical standards if they are unaware of them? From its inception, the Ethics Office has considered that sensitizing employees and raising ethical awareness is the best way to attain this objective. This is the reason why the Ethics Office has developed and implemented a number of specific training programmes aimed at enabling all employees to understand their rights and obligations and make decisions in an ethical manner.

The basic Ethics training was specifically tailored to the needs of UNESCO by the Ethics Office and has certain elements, which makes it unique amongst trainings delivered in other international organizations. Firstly, it is important to note that it is a face-to-face training, developed and delivered directly by the Ethics Office. This was a deliberate choice as it was clear that ethics was a topic which sparked much discussion and highlighted many differences in approach. Rarely can ethical issues be answered with a simple 'yes' or 'no' but by discussion of often delicate and sensitive issues which relates to the daily professional life of each employee ethical, yet practical, solutions can be found. This interactive approach also enables the Ethics Office to take the 'ethical temperature' in UNESCO offices around the world, to best address the concerns of the employees and to provide appropriate feedback to leaders to facilitate change.

Another strength of the training is its mandatory status for all categories of employees regardless of their contractual arrangements, whether based at Headquarters or in the Field Offices. This approach has been adopted to encourage a uniform standard of ethical behaviour throughout UNESCO and to endorse the right of all employees to be treated in an ethical manner.

Since 2010, 3 015 employees have been trained at Headquarters and in the Fields Offices and Institutes. However, the lack of an Ethics Adviser combined with financial restrictions meant that no training took place in 2014. However, with the appointment of the new Ethics Adviser the training sessions will be relaunched in 2015 with a first session in April in the Bangkok and Jakarta Offices. On this occasion, the Ethics Office will launch a third training programme in Ethical Leadership, detailing the specific responsibilities and actions required of managers and providing practical support for embedding ethical standards into teams.

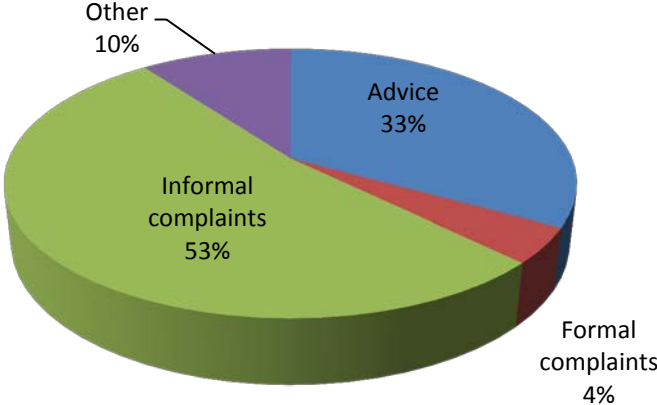
2. Requests: advice, guidance and complaints

The Ethics Office responded to a total of 118 requests during the 2014 calendar year, fewer than during 2013 (179 requests) and 2012 (235 requests). This is the lowest number since the creation of the Office. The trend confirms what began two years ago with the departure of the previous Ethics Adviser, as alluded to earlier.

The continuing trend may also be explained by the financial constraints facing the Organization, as a result of which the number of missions made by the Ethics Office to deliver the trainings and meet the employees in the Field continued to decrease. In fact, during 2014 there were no missions to the Field Offices. A further possible explanation might be that, due to the financial constraints of the Organization and consequential uncertainties, employees feel apprehensive to come forward and raise their ethics-related issues.

It is interesting to note that more than half of the 118 requests submitted to the Ethics Office were informal complaints (when an employee informally seeks assistance for an ethics-related involving another employee). Only 4% of the requests were formal complaints (when an official complaint is lodged against another employee for action on the part of the Organization). The number of both informal and formal complaints has decreased compared to last year. However, reports in the 'Other' category have increased mostly due to approaches from individuals who are not employees of the Organisation but chose to contact the Ethics Office for advice or to complain about a situation. The complaints are often rejected as the Ethics Office's mandate covers only reports by UNESCO employees.

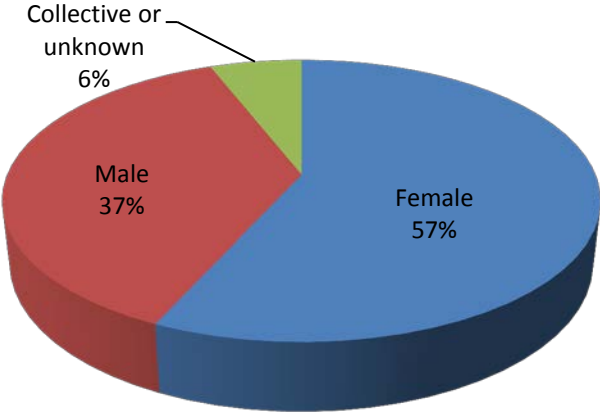
Figure I. Nature of the requests



Furthermore, it should be noted that more than half of the approaches were made by women. This has to be viewed in conjunction with the fact that there are more women in the position of supervisees in the Organization. It is also noteworthy that there are an increasing number of enquiries that are reported collectively, that is by a group of employees, or by unknown or anonymous sources. The Ethics Office takes these reports seriously as it could be argued that in addition to the existing whistleblower protection

policy, the best protection against retaliation is anonymity. Nonetheless, this method of reporting does raise certain challenges as it is often impossible to gain further information surrounding the report and offering anonymous reporting can increase the opportunity for malicious reports.

Figure II. Requests by gender



The Ethics Office can be contacted in several ways: by email, with a phone call, or in person. This is to ensure equitable access to the Ethics Office for all employees, regardless of whether they are based at Headquarters or in the Field Offices. This approach appears to be effective as in 2014, an equal number of requests from Field Offices and Headquarters were received.

However, due to the size of the respective populations, it can also be concluded that proportionately more issues were raised by employees in Field Offices than from those based at Headquarters.

Finally, as can be seen by the graphic below, the Ethics Office can also be directly contacted from outside the Organization, when employees are for instance not honoring their private legal or financial obligations.

Figure III. Origin of the requests

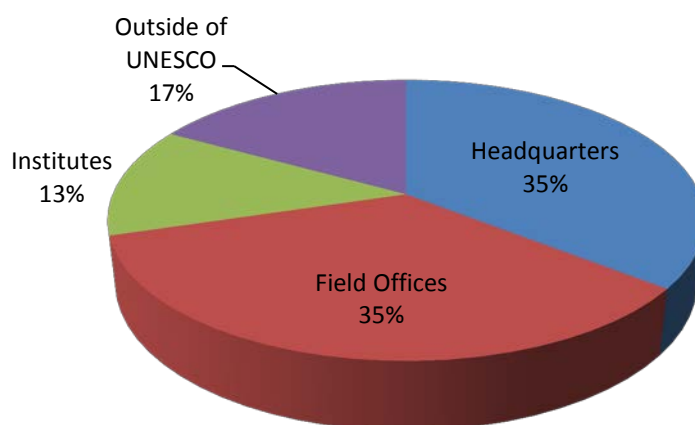
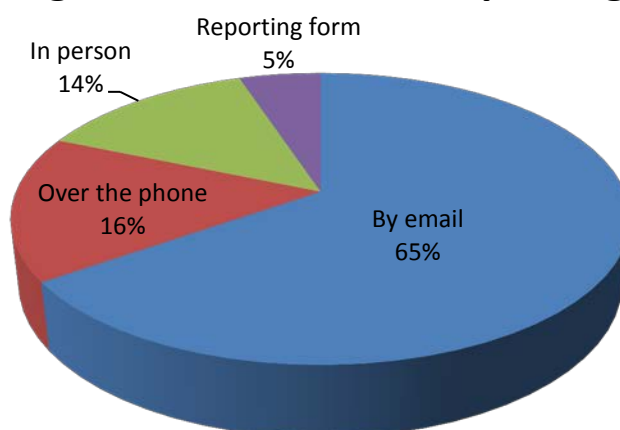


Figure IV. Method of Reporting



More than a quarter of the requests received by the Ethics Office refer to work related concerns, such as interpersonal and managerial issues, absenteeism, or incivilities.

Almost at the same level are the requests relating to moral harassment, including abuse of authority. Compared to 2013, the number has decreased, while the number of reported cases of sexual harassment has increased even though it remains relatively low at 3 reports during 2014.

The 'Other' category represents a high proportion of the requests addressed to the Ethics Office. This category includes requests which cannot be dealt with by the Ethics Office because the subject of the request is not within the mandate of the Office. Generally, the

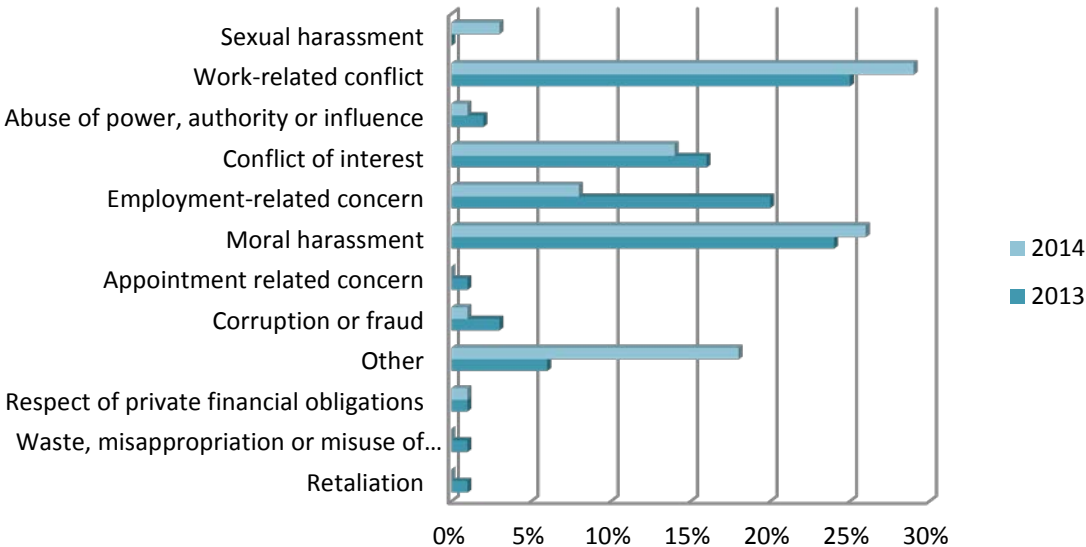
requests do not relate to ethics and these reports often require referral to another service for which appropriate details are provided.

More than 10% of the requests relate to conflicts of interests. In particular, situations relating to the acceptance of gifts, honors, and remuneration, or performance of outside activities and employment. Additionally, reports have been received relating to favoritism, employment of family members, access to privileged information and situations of external pressures.

Employment related concerns also form a significant percentage of the requests received. They include issues relating to contracts, performance reviews, transfers, career development, recruitments, and job descriptions. While they are not necessarily ethics-related issues, the Ethics Office might address them in cooperation with the responsible service, should there be an ethical element to the request.

Beyond these main categories, others reports received by the Ethics Office include situations such as the non-respect of private financial obligations and corruption or fraud. The latter cases are referred to our colleagues in the Internal Oversight Service for further consideration.

Figure V. Category of requests received by the Ethics Office



106 out of the 118 requests received by the Ethics Office in 2014 were resolved by the end of the reporting year. A third of the requests made to the Ethics Office were employees needing advice (see Figure I). The Ethics Office usually provides advice or guidance and closes the requests. Other types of requests are closed by the Ethics Office following a

successful resolution between the parties concerned, or following the Director General's acceptance of the recommendations by the Ethics Office for action to be taken by the administration.

VI. The Financial Disclosure Programme

1. Introduction

In December 2012, the policy on the Declaration of Interest and Financial Disclosure Programme was approved by the Director-General, following a stringent consultation process with relevant internal stakeholders (the Bureau of Human Resources Management; the Office of International Standards and Legal Affairs; the Advisory Council on Personal Policies; and both Staff Associations).

The purpose of this policy is to reduce the risk of conflicts of interests arising from the financial holdings or outside activities of some employees, while striking the right balance between their private interests and their obligations to the Organization. Avoiding conflicts of interest is the duty of all UNESCO employees and is in the best interest of the Organization in order to preserve the individuals as well as UNESCO's integrity.

The first disclosure was made during the first semester of 2014 for the 2013 reporting period. Only employees at the P-5 level and above, the employees of the Ethics Office and those whose principal duties include the procurement of goods and services for UNESCO, or relate to investment of UNESCO assets, are eligible to respond to the questionnaire (See annex 1.).

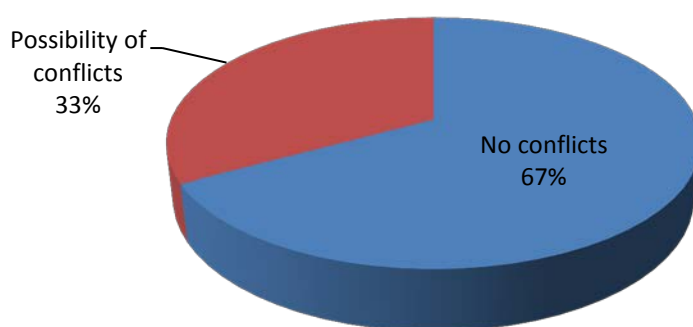
The employees were requested by the Ethics Office to complete a short paper questionnaire regarding the previous calendar year. The questionnaire is composed of ten questions and information had to be provided in relation to the employees, their spouses or partners (if any), and their children (if any). This policy is quite different from the ones in place in other international organizations, as the information only has to be shared when it relates to a potential conflict between the functions of the employee and his or her private interests, while in most United Nations entities, employees have to declare all their personal assets even if these assets are not related to their work.

In the future, the scope of the policy may be widened at the discretion of the Director-General.

2. Results

In 2014, for the reported year 2013, there were 322 questionnaires reviewed by the Ethics Office. Almost two third of these questionnaires didn't present conflicts of interests in the sense that employees responded 'no' to all questions.

Figure VI. Risk of conflicts for the reported year 2013



When employees responded 'yes' to one of the ten questions, four major risks appeared:

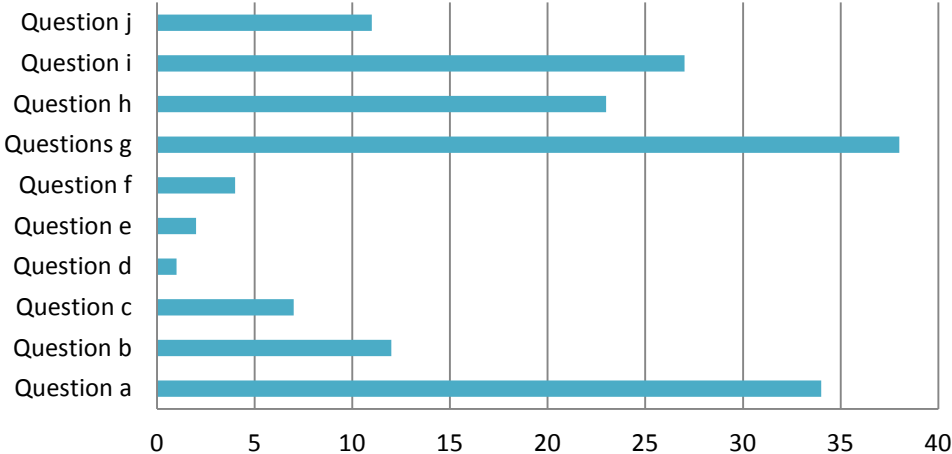
- Employment by a government or a non-governmental organization of the spouse or child of the employee,
- Gifts received by the employee, spouse or the employees' children from a UNESCO vendor, a government or an entity external to UNESCO,
- The role of employees in leadership, in policy-making or in fundraising in an entity external to UNESCO,
- Provision of services or goods, regardless of whether it was remunerated or not, to third parties.

Several of these answers led the Ethics Office to ask further questions to clarify certain points and help the Office to determine whether there was simply a risk of potential conflict of interests or an actual conflict of interests. Fortunately, after analysis by the Ethics Office, none of these potential risks of conflict were found to represent actual conflicts of interests.

Nevertheless, analysis of the questionnaires of the Financial Disclosure Programme permitted the Ethics Office to target the risks and to give specific advice to the employees who responded 'yes' to inform, for instance, their supervisor or HRM about their activities outside UNESCO or to take other steps which could mitigate similar risks in future.

From 2015, the Financial Disclosure Programme will be fully automated. The employees concerned will receive by email a link and a personal token to complete the questionnaire online. It is anticipated that this process will increase transparency and efficiency without compromising the quality and scope of disclosures. Significant work has been undertaken to ensure the confidentiality and security of the information disclosed.

Figure VII. Number of possible conflicts per questions



[See Annex 1. for the paper version of the questionnaire.]

VII. Planning for 2015

1. E-learning training

Subject to the necessary funding, the Ethics Office aims to develop an e-learning training to introduce ethics to all employees. This training will be interactive and allow all employees to receive quality training on ethics and the standards of conduct, at a time most convenient to them. This training experience will be as similar as possible to the in-person training and aims to provide staff with a basic training in a convenient and economical format.

2. Ethics Trainings

Following the arrival of the Ethics Adviser, trainings on ethics will be relaunched in 2015 both at Headquarters and in the Field Offices with the objective of prioritizing training for new employees of the Organization to provide a basic grounding in ethics and the standards of conduct at UNESCO.

The training materials, both in Ethics and Anti-harassment, will be revised and updated and delivered both in Field Offices and Headquarters, subject to need and budget availability.

Additionally, the launch of the Ethical Leadership training will lead to the programme being delivered to the maximum number of leaders both in the Field Offices and at Headquarters, subject to resource availability. Reinforcing the 'tone at the top' is seen to be an efficient way of ensuring maximum exposure and sensitization for all employees to UNESCO's core values in action.

3. Post-employment Policy

In line with other international organisations, the Ethics Office will be working on the drafting of a Post-employment policy. The aim of a Post-employment Policy is to ensure the timely disclosure, review and implementation of any remedial action in relation to the new employment of former staff members. The Policy will aim to sensitise employees to their disclosure obligations regarding new employment in order to ensure the possibility to mitigate any conflict of interests between the Organization and the former employee.

This policy will aim to strengthen the provisions of the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service in this regard, which state that:

“After leaving service with organizations of the United Nations system, international civil servants should not take improper advantage of their former official functions and positions, including through unauthorized use or distribution of privileged or confidential information; nor should international civil servants, including those working in procurement services and as requisitioning officers, attempt to unduly influence the decisions of the organization in the interest or at the request of third parties with a view to seeking an opportunity to be employed by such third parties”

4. Gifts Policy

The Gifts Policy drafted by the Ethics Office is expected to be published at the end of 2015.

Gift-giving is common practice in many cultures, and can cause offence and/or embarrassment if declined. However, UNESCO, as an international organization is, and should continue to be, judged by the Member States and the public opinion to a higher standard. UNESCO cannot put itself in a compromising situation, regardless of whether this could offend cultural customs. UNESCO needs to be a model of integrity and transparency.

The Gifts Policy has three main objectives:

- Ensure independence and impartiality of UNESCO employees by avoiding real or apparent attempts to influence decisions through advantages,
- Establish clear guidelines and procedures for all UNESCO employees in relation to receiving/accepting/declining an honor/decoration/favor/gift/remuneration,
- Establish a regulatory framework for reporting, registering and disposing of gifts.

A declaration and registration form will be also available to all the employees to report the gifts that they may have received. The intended role of the Ethics Office will be to give advice on the gift received (its value, what to do with it) and answer any general queries.

5. Participation in the United Nations Ethics Network

The United Nations Ethics Network promotes a system-wide collaboration on ethics-related issues with a specific focus on coherent application of ethical standards and policies throughout the United Nations System. The UNESCO Ethics Office will attend a meeting of

the Network in July 2015 to collaborate on issues such as ethical and reputational risks, conflicts of interest, protection against retaliation and sustaining an ethical culture.

V. Conclusion

2014 was a year in which the Ethics Office continued to support employees at UNESCO within the resourcing constraints in place. With the arrival of the new Ethics Adviser in November a new impetus was given to the work of the Office and ambitious plans for 2015 were made. The continuing development of the Financial Disclosure Programme remains high on the agenda after its introduction in 2014 and the renewed training programme for 2015 will support the steady progress being made towards a culture of ethics at UNESCO. However, this can only be achieved with the continuing commitment of all employees, regardless of contractual or hierarchical status, and stakeholders of UNESCO.

Annex 1. The Declaration of Interest for the Financial Disclosure Programme

- **The following 5 questions - a) to e) - request information in respect of the employee (i.e. you), your spouse/partner and your children.**

a) Did you, your spouse/partner and children receive any gifts, favours, travel, hospitality, entertainment, remuneration or rental/housing subsidies (other than UNESCO) above a cumulative or total value equivalent to \$250 USD from a UNESCO Vendor, a government or entity external to UNESCO during the reporting period in relation to UNESCO?

Answer (if the answer is yes, please provide details): Yes No

b) Were you, your spouse/partner and children renting or leasing any properties (house, apartment, warehouse, etc.) to or from a government, political organization, Non-Governmental Organization, UNESCO Vendor, or to or from another UNESCO employee during the reporting period?

Answer (if the answer is yes, please provide details): Yes No

c) Did you, your spouse/partner and children own stocks, bonds, investment funds or stock options in a UNESCO Vendor, of which you are aware, during the reporting period?

Answer (if the answer is yes, please provide details): Yes No

d) Were you, your spouse/partner and children involved in any activity, commercial or otherwise, during the reporting period that could have an impact on your objectivity or independence in the performance of your duties to UNESCO, or could be perceived by others to affect the image or reputation of UNESCO?

Answer (if the answer is yes, please provide details): Yes No

e) Did you, your spouse/partner and children have any other interests in any matter involving a company, partnership, or other business concern with which you (as a UNESCO employee) have the occasion to deal with in your official capacity during the reporting period?

Answer (if the answer is yes, please provide details): Yes No

- **The following 2 questions - f) and g) - request information in respect only of your spouse/partner and your children.**

f) Were your spouse/partner and children employed by a UNESCO Vendor during the reporting period?

Answer (if the answer is yes, please provide details): Yes No

g) Were your spouse/partner and children employed by a government (or governmental agency) or a Non-Governmental Organization during the reporting period?

Answer (if the answer is yes, please provide details): Yes No

- **The last 3 questions - h) to j) - request information in respect of the employee (i.e. you) only.**

h) Did you engage in providing services or goods to others, regardless of whether it was remunerated or not, including as an employee, advisor, owner or consultant during the reporting period?

Answer (if the answer is yes, please provide details): Yes No

i) Did you have any leadership, policy-making or fundraising role in any entity external to UNESCO (including memberships on corporate boards, non-governmental organizations, governments or quasi-governmental agencies) during the reporting year?

Answer (if the answer is yes, please provide details): Yes No

j) Are any of your relatives (including your partner) currently employed by UNESCO?

Answer (if the answer is yes, please provide details): Yes No

UNESCO Ethics Office

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