**United Nations Development Programme**

Junior Professional Officer Programme

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Guidelines and Practice Framework

**Bureau for Management Services**

**Office of Human Resources**

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# Introduction

## Background of the JPO Programme

The JPO Programme provides the UN System Organizations with qualified young professionals for entry-level positions to support the work of the UN system and the agenda 2030, while at the same time getting exposure and hands-on experience in multilateral cooperation. The Programme represents another form of development assistance through the UN System and an opportunity for the UN System Organisations to increase professional staffing capacity through tapping into a pool of fully funded young talent.

The JPO assignment is usually of two to three years duration depending on the respective partner country agreement. JPOs are appointed on a Fixed Term Appointment (FTA) under the UN Staff Regulations and Rules. The JPO Programme is funded by partner countries, which cover all the costs associated with the JPO assignment and training programme, as well as HR (Human Resources) and administrative services cost. The UN Organization is responsible for the design of the JPO position ensuring that the JPO assignment contributes to the work of the Organization, as well as delivering a well-designed learning and training programme for the JPOs.

Most UN system Organizations have a JPO Programme, and the number of JPOs is significant in the overall entry-level professional category in many Organizations. JPOs are assigned both in the field and in headquarters; they are involved in most of the UN thematic activities including the political, development and operational areas, as well as in economic and social areas, humanitarian affairs, human rights, trade and development, peacekeeping, post-conflict activities, and political affairs.

## The UNDP JPO Programme

The objective of the UNDP JPO Programme at the time of its establishment in 1965 was to provide a “training opportunity for young professionals in the field of technical cooperation”. Today, the UNDP JPO Programme seeks to: 1) provide young professionals with a unique exposure to multilateral development cooperation and an opportunity to gain professional work experience in one of UNDP’s thematic or operational areas, and 2) build a talent pipeline for UNDP’s future international professional workforce and bring in fresh knowledge in key priority areas.

The JPO Programme forms an integral part of UNDP´s talent management strategy and contributes to meet the Organization´s need for new emerging talent and future leadership.

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 and create a pool of talent to tap into for future staffing needs.

In addition, the Programme is an excellent entry point into the UN system as demonstrated by retention rates. Over the past 20 years, over 57% of the UNDP JPOs have continued working in the UN System following the completion of their JPO assignment.

Furthermore, the JPO Programme represents significant additional financial contributions to UNDP from the partner countries.

## The UNDP Specialist Development Programme (SDP)

In 2016 UNDP introduced a Specialist Development Programme (SDP), which aims to strengthen UNDP’s capacity to support countries to make the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda a reality.

The SDP Programme is implemented within the framework of the JPO Programme and includes roles at the P3 level.

SDP participants are recruited against specific positions identified jointly by UNDP and the partner country through a compendium of SDP positions based on the above-mentioned objectives and UNDP priorities. SDPs enjoy the same benefits and entitlements as JPOs.

Unless specified otherwise, all JPO guidelines and practices presented in the current document also apply to the SDP Programme.

## Objective of the present document

The present document supersedes the 2011 JPO Programme Framework of Policies and Practices. It introduces the objectives of the UNDP JPO Programme and outlines guidelines and practices that govern the management, oversight, and administration of the JPO Programme. This document is addressed to all stakeholders and beneficiaries of the JPO Programme, i.e., JPOs, JPO partner countries, UNDP country, regional and headquarters offices.

# 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:

* Provide young professionals the opportunity to gain experience in the field of multilateral development cooperation and management.
* Provide UNDP with talented young professionals with fresh academic knowledge to contribute to the objectives of the Organization and the implementation of UNDP’s strategic plans and activities.
* Build a talent pipeline for UNDP’s future international professional workforce and the global development sector in general.

Since its inception, the JPO Programme has made a significant contribution to the above objectives augmenting the development of a cross-organizational network of dedicated development practitioners.

## UNDP JPO Service Centre

Part of the UNDP Bureau for Management Services (BMS)/Office of Human Resources (OHR)/ Talent Acquisition and People Programmes (TAPP), the JPO Service Centre (JPOSC) provides client-centred services to JPOs, partner countries, UNDP offices as well as UN partner organizations that have outsourced the human resources administration of their JPO Programme to UNDP. As of October 2024, the UNDP JPO Service Centre provides JPO Programme services to the following UN organizations: UN Women, UNAIDS, UNCDF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNIDO, UNOPS, UNRWA, UNU, UNWTO, UNV, UPU, and WHO.

For UNDP JPOs, the BMS/OHR/TAPP/JPOSC acts as the main interlocuter with partner countries on the cooperation on the JPO Programme, and on day-to-day human resources matters, including recruitment, placement, reassignment, benefits and entitlements, retention, and separation from service, as well as learning and career development.

# JPO Position Identification

## Introduction

The main criteria of the UNDP JPO position are as follows:

* The JPO is expected to contribute to UNDP focus areas as presented in the Strategic Plan.
* The JPO assignment should include a strong learning and development component.

The hiring offices must ensure an enabling working environment as well as effective and dedicated supervision during the JPO assignment. Hiring offices which do not provide the enabling working environment and expected supervision to the JPO, may not receive any new JPO replacements.

UNDP offices submitting a request for a JPO are required to prepare a detailed job description using the designated template, and to enter the job description in the [online request system](https://gssc.undp.org/internal/onlinerequest/).

Requests from UNDP offices are prioritized by BMS/OHR in alignment with the partner country priorities.

The JPO Programme supports UNDP focus areas in accordance with the UNDP Strategic Plan, which forms the main basis for presenting proposals for partner country funding. In addition, priority is given to selected duty stations, including crisis countries, offices in need of additional capacity, and offices which have no or relatively few JPOs.

## Online JPO request system

The main purpose of the online JPO request system is to provide an overview of availability of JPO positions and streamline the selection of JPO positions. JPO job descriptions are completed and submitted online by requesting UNDP offices. BMS/OHR/TAPP/JPOSC verifies the content of the job descriptions to ensure alignment with the classified generic JPO JD and make the requests available online for funding consideration.

All duty stations can view the status of their request at any given time. JPO job descriptions which have been in the online request system for more than two years and have not been funded, will be removed from the system. If the job descriptions are still valid and there is a need for a JPO in the respective duty station, new job descriptions will have to be submitted through the online request system.

More information on the online JPO request system is available on dedicated [**UNDP Intranet page on how to request a JPO**](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fundp.sharepoint.com%2Fteams%2FTAPP%2FSitePages%2FRequest-a-JPO-or-SDP.aspx&data=05%7C01%7Clykke.andersen%40undp.org%7C21e0deee03fd4577c3f108dbc8df8e95%7Cb3e5db5e2944483799f57488ace54319%7C0%7C0%7C638324634715925130%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=7ZzA9NJxkl5kT3aHLcMS3s8VfsG32PuWQjvRehbpjzU%3D&reserved=0).

## Collaboration with partner countries

UNDP meets regularly with partner country representatives to review and discuss the status, progress, and priorities of their respective JPO Programme.

BMS/OHR/TAPP/JPOSC maintains close dialogue with the partner countries throughout the year on the JPO Programme, its implementation and prioritization of positions for funding. In addition, UNDP offices interact with the partner country representatives at the local level on the JPO Programme as part of their overall partnership and resource mobilization efforts.

Lists of suggested JPO placements presented to partner countries for funding consideration are identified through JPO requests available in the JPO request system. Such lists are also based on various criteria such as: corporate/bureau priorities and needs, partner countries’ thematic and geographical priorities, as well as JPO learning and career development prospects.

While UNDP may propose positions to partner countries for their consideration, partner countries’ JPO Programme priorities are often based on their national development cooperation strategies. Final decisions are made centrally (in partner country capitals), often after consulting with their representative offices abroad to determine which positions to fund.

# JPO Recruitment

The JPO recruitment cycle normally starts in November with consultations between UNDP and the partner countries on the identification and earmarking of JPO positions, and it ends in July/August the following year with the interview and final selection of the JPOs.

BMS/OHR/TAPP/JPOSC is the main UNDP interlocker for communications with UNDP offices on JPO positions. UNDP offices may communicate with their respective partner country counterparts while keeping BMS/OHR/TAPP/JPOSC informed about these consultations.

## Job description

JPO job descriptions are based on agreed templates that are tailored to the JPO positions. The JPO JDs are classified in accordance with UNDP policy.

In consultation with BMS/OHR/TAPP/JPOSC, hiring offices may change generic job descriptions without altering the essence of the position, its level of authority and accountability and without having a classification impact. Such changes may relate to differences in business processes and context as relevant to the specific location, reporting lines, specific competencies, duties and responsibilities, and to the required major fields of study.

BMS/OHR/TAPP/JPOSC will confirm the final job description with the respective UNDP office and subsequent confirmation with the funding partner country, prior to posting of the position vacancy announcement.

## Recruitment process

BMS/OHR/TAPP/JPOSC works closely with the partner country and the receiving hiring office in the implementation of the JPO recruitment process. The specific procedures and processes of the JPO recruitment cycle are reflected in the Agreements between UNDP and the partner country. The following three categories of JPO recruitment apply:

* Category 1: Recruitment and selection process fully managed by BMS/OHR/TAPP/JPOSC.
* Category 2: Recruitment and selection process managed jointly by BMS/OHR/TAPP/JPOSC and the partner country.
* Category 3: Recruitment and selection process fully managed by the partner country. Final selection process managed by UNDP.

Recruitments managed under category 1 and category 2 processes are conducted in accordance with the [UNDP](https://popp.undp.org/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRARY/Public/HR_Appointment%20and%20Promotion_Recruitment%20and%20Selection%20Framework.docx&action=default) [Recruitment and Selection Framework](https://popp.undp.org//document/recruitment-and-selection-framework-policy) and the JPO Programme Recruitment Guidelines and considered under UNDP’s Recruitment Accountability and Compliance model. JPOs selected under these two categories will have internal candidate status with UNDP.

The UNDP Recruitment and Selection Framework and JPO Programme Recruitment Guidelines do not fully apply to recruitments managed under category 3 processes, whereby UNDP is partially, involved in the recruitment and selection process. The signed Agreement between the respective partner country and UNDP specifies the applicable arrangement. JPOs, recruited within category 3 will have external candidate status with UNDP and their selection will not be subject to UNDP’s compliance review process.

## Recruitment Services to UN Partner Organizations

BMS/OHR/TAPP/JPOSC provides recruitment services to UN partner organizations for category 1 recruitment processes in accordance with the respective agency agreement.

## Compliance review

The UNDP Recruitment Accountability and Compliance model, established for initial appointments and promotion decisions of FTA, will apply to JPO selections managed under category 1 and 2, as described above.

## Position title and level

The term JPO only refers to the fact that a position of funded under a JPO Programme and should not be used as a functional title. The functional title of the JPO is aligned with the specific functional role of the post.

JPOs are appointed on a Fixed-Term Appointment (FTA) at the P1 or P2 level under the UN Staff Regulations and Rules. SDPs are appointed on a FTA at the P3 level under the UN Staff Regulations and Rules. Step determination follows UNDP guidelines and takes into consideration any cap/limitation specified in the JPO Programme Agreement with the respective partner country.

A JPO should not be assigned a supervisory role during the period of service under the JPO assignment in alignment with the purposes of the JPO Programme, designed for entry-level junior positions.

JPO positions are limited to the JPO Programme and are funded by the partner country for the specific job descriptions. Therefore, JPO positions should not be used to replace regular FTA positions.

Accordingly, JPOs are not eligible for Special Post Allowance under the UN Staff Rule 3.10.

# Administration of benefits and entitlements

## Status, duties and obligations

* **Status**: JPOs are appointed on a FTA under the UN Staff Regulations and Rules and are considered UNDP staff members. As international civil servants, JPOs are subject to the Convention of Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations. JPOs are eligible to become members of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNWOMEN/UNOPS Staff Association.
* **Duties and obligations**: JPOs duties and obligations are defined in Chapter I of the UN Staff Regulations and Rules, including the following: (1) By accepting appointment, JPOs pledge themselves to discharge their functions and regulate their conduct with the interests 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 UNDP Resident Representative, and shall neither seek nor accept instructions from any Government or from any source external to the Organization; (3) JPOs shall not accept any remuneration, gift, honour, decoration or favour from any Government.
* **Conduct:** Upon their appointment, it is expected and required of JPOs that their conduct is exemplary in line with the UN Staff Regulations and Rules, and the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service.
* **Legal rights:** Under the UN Staff Regulations and Rules, JPOs have full access to the i[nternal system of justice](https://www.un.org/en/internaljustice/) hereunder both the informal system through the Ombudsman's office, Office of Staff Legal Assistance as well as the formal system such as request for Management Evaluation and UN Tribunals.

## Conditions of service

In addition to this document, the administration of JPOs is based on the following guiding documents:

* Agreements signed by UNDP and partner country governments.
* UN Staff Regulations and Rules.
* UNDP Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures (POPP).
* Other UNDP administrative issuances.

This system of *conditions of service* aims at providing for equitable treatment of UN staff. The system also takes into account differences in the various countries of assignment (such as cost of living, housing conditions, hardship, security); differences in the family composition of staff (such as relocation grant, settling-in grant, dependency allowance, education grant); provides social security benefits, which are standardized across all situations (annual and sick leave, medical insurance, death, disability and pension benefits).

Thus, JPOs are entitled to the same renumeration, allowances and entitlements, as all other international professionals in the UN System governed by the UN Staff Regulations and Rules. A limited number of entitlements differ for JPOs, as follows:

* JPOs are entitled to the relocation shipment in the amount of USD 7,800 (single rate) and USD 10,800 (family rate).
* JPOs are not entitled to travel business class for assignment, reassignment, repatriation travel, entitlement travel and Duty Travel and Training Allowance (DTTA) travel, even though the duration of the flight may exceed nine hours.
* Excess baggage and unaccompanied shipments are not applicable for JPOs.
* Shipment of Privately-Owned Automobiles is not applicable for JPOs.
* While serving under the JPO Programme, JPOs are not eligible to receive a Special Post Allowance.
* JPOs may not participate in the UNJSPF in cases where the partner country decides to enrol the JPOs in a national pension scheme[[1]](#footnote-2). Such arrangement will be reflected on the JPO Programme Agreement between the partner country government and UNDP.

## Social security

A JPO is covered by the social security under the UN Staff Regulations and Rules. As a principle the sponsoring entity of the JPO contract will cover the cost and use of sick leave/extended sick leave. During any co-funded period, such sick leave will be covered and cost-shared by both the partner country and the UNDP funding source according to UNDPs policy on sick leave.

In case a sick leave requires a medical evacuation to a medical facility outside of the duty station location, the partner country will cover all additional costs for the fully funded partner country period. During any co-funded period, such costs will be covered and cost-shared by the partner country and the UNDP funding source. A medical evacuation may only be authorized upon the recommendation by the UN Division of Healthcare Management and Occupational Safety and Health in New York.

JPOs are entitled to parental leave in accordance with UNDP’s Parental Leave Policy. If parental leave arises during the partner country funded period of assignment the partner country will cover all costs. Should Parental Leave not be exhausted at the time of the end of assignment the partner country will be obligated to cover the cost of extension of the appointment to allow for the utilization of the full parental leave entitlement. During any co-funded period, such costs will be covered and cost-shared by the partner country and the UNDP funding source.

Should the need to use sick leave or parental leave arise during any fully UNDP funded period of the JPO assignment, the respective UNDP hiring unit will hold such obligations to cover the costs in accordance with Staff Rules and Regulations.

## Appointment

JPOs are offered a one-year FTA renewable, subject to satisfactory performance in accordance with UNDP’s Performance Management and Development (PMD) policy, up to the period stipulated in the respective partner country agreement.

All extensions are subject to the concurrence of the JPO, head of office and the partner country government. Extensions should be initiated at least four months before the expiration date of the appointment. Based on the request received from the hiring unit, BMS/OHR/TAPP/JPOSC will submit a request for extension to the partner country, including the [JPO annual evaluation report](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.undp.org%2Fsites%2Fg%2Ffiles%2Fzskgke326%2Ffiles%2F2024-07%2FAnnual_Evaluation_form.doc&data=05%7C02%7Crana.irshaid.andersen%40undp.org%7C953e4ff76e7c47f3607508dca66a2cba%7Cb3e5db5e2944483799f57488ace54319%7C0%7C0%7C638568222138700094%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=TKMfNnRPl8%2BWsp1AEg3lk889GcMVkszaTgmOXNDHZ10%3D&reserved=0), as well as a cost estimate for approval.

Under the UN Staff Regulations and Rules, and subject to fully satisfactory performance, JPOs are awarded within-grade increments after 12 months of service, in accordance with the applicable UN salary policy and scale.

The JPO 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. The partner country will in all instances be informed of any initiation of termination of appointment.

## Duration of JPO Assignment

The length of a JPO assignment varies depending on the funding period detailed in the JPO Programme Agreement between the partner country and UNDP and usually lasts between 2 to 4 years.

For professional growth, consolidation of experience and career development, UNDP recommends JPO assignments of three years’ duration.

JPOs are excluded from UNDPs Mobility Policy while serving as JPOs. As such, JPO positions do not have a mobility requirement, and there is no expectancy by UNDP for the JPOs to change position during their service.

Additionally, the probation policy does not apply to JPOs and JPO are not subject to a probationary period in the first year of appointment.

UNDP JPOs may apply to and be considered for UNDP positions after completing 15 months of assignment from the start of the JPO appointment/the date they joined the JPO programme, irrespective of number of locations/assignments they may have served in. JPOs with internal UNDP candidate status may apply and be considered for internal UNDP FTA positions. This minimum tour of duty of 15 months is based on a standard 24-month JPO appointment and is required to ensure that the JPO has completed at least one Annual Performance cycle.

For UNDP JPOs holding internal candidate status a “Reassignment” will be used as the mechanism to move from the JPO-limited FTA to a regular FTA. All JPOs in this category will carry forward all seniority and entitlements accrued during the JPO appointment period.

JPOs who do not hold internal UNDP candidate status will undergo a full separation/termination of appointment and will be re-hired without consideration of seniority and entitlements accrued during the JPO appointment period.

A JPO assignment, with the same job description and in the same duty station, may be extended for up to a total maximum of 12 months fully funded by UNDP following the completion of the partner country funding period. Any preceding extension period based on co-funding will be factored in the calculation of the 12-month maximum.

If the UNDP hiring unit is interested in keeping the services of the JPO on an FTA position beyond the 12-month maximum funded by UNDP, a new post will have to be created, and a full competitive recruitment process undertaken.

## Outside employment and activities

Due to the time-bound nature of the JPO assignment, requests to allow the JPOs to maintain a special leave without pay from a government position during their assignment may be considered on a case-by-case basis and only in accordance with the JPO Programme Agreement between UNDP and the partner country. In such cases, the following will apply:

* The JPO must submit proof of leave of absence from the Government.
* UNDP neither controls nor has any input into the conditions, which will regulate the JPO’s return to work with the government employer at the end of their assignment.
* Should the JPO be successful in securing a position with UNDP at the end of the assignment, they will be expected to resign from their government job prior to assuming the regular UNDP position.

## Reassignment within the JPO programme

JPO reassignment from one UNDP office/position to another within the framework of the JPO Programme and at the same level may be considered based on the JPO Programme Agreement with the respective partner country. Requests for reassignments are considered in consultation with the partner country, the receiving office, and the releasing office.

For SDP reassignments may also be considered on the exceptional basis and in agreement with the partner country.

## Lateral Moves

UNDP policy on lateral moves does not apply to JPOs, i.e., reassignment from a JPO position to a regular FTA position at the same level within UNDP without a competitive process is not allowed.

## Change of Agency

The UN Inter-Organisation Agreement on Transfers, Secondment, and Loans of Staff among Organisations is not applicable to the JPO programme, as confirmed at the 10th Biannual Meeting between National Recruitment Agencies and UN Organizations on the JPO Programme in 2015.

In exceptional cases a *Change of Agency* may be considered subject to the pre-approval of the partner country and agreement of both the releasing and receiving organizations. In such instances, the JPO will be fully separated/terminated from the releasing organization and re-hired by the receiving organization. There will be no carryover of any seniority or entitlements and all financial records will be cleared.

For the purposes of calculating the *Duration of JPO Assignment*, the JPO service period with the releasing agency will be included when considering the overall 15-months period required for JPOs.

JPO changing agency to UNDP will not have internal UNDP candidate status. Additionally, interagency transfers do not apply to the SDPs as this is a UNDP specific programme.

## Co-funding Arrangement (partner country and organization)

Some partner countries fully fund third year extensions and some support extension of the JPO assignment for a third or fourth year on a co-funding basis (e.g., 50% funded by the partner country and 50% funded by the UNDP hiring office). In such cases, the JPO assignment may be extended for a third or a fourth year provided that UNDP and the respective partner country agree to co-fund the extension.

## Retention on regular positions beyond the JPO assignment

JPOs, who have internal UNDP status, can be reassigned to a regular UNDP FTA position, should they be successful in securing such an appointment at the end of their JPO assignment. . UNDP reassignment guidelines and [UNDP Rank-in-Post Policy](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpopp.undp.org%2Fdocument%2Frank-post&data=05%7C02%7Cyuichi.kawamoto%40undp.org%7Ca30c8b25c6ec4121d36c08dd569d3988%7Cb3e5db5e2944483799f57488ace54319%7C0%7C0%7C638761955770698389%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMiIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIsIldUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=kvEsxsryhgZplwUBTujRGN%2FhvJhdFynFmSMezSpda8M%3D&reserved=0) will be applicable for the carry-over of any accrued entitlements as well as step determination purposes.

In compliance with the GA resolution (A/RES/63/250 section II-24), the period served under a JPO- and SDP-limited FTA will not be counted as period of service towards a Continuing Appointment.

For all other types of staff- movements a full separation/rehire process will be implemented, this includes:

* JPOs selected for a regular FTA.
* Non-UNDP JPOs selected for a UNDP regular FTA.
* JPOs whose selection did not fully follow U[NDP](https://popp.undp.org/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRARY/Public/HR_Appointment%20and%20Promotion_Recruitment%20and%20Selection%20Framework.docx&action=default) [Recruitment and Selection Framework](https://popp.undp.org//document/recruitment-and-selection-framework-policy) and the JPO Programme Recruitment Guidelines will be considered external.

# Learning, development and career growth

## UNDP JPO Formation Journey

Throughout the JPO assignment UNDP provides support to JPOs in undertaking informal and formal learning activities. For this purpose, UNDP has designed a JPO Formation Journey.

The objective is to nurture and mature the JPO talent pipeline through a discovery journey of personal and professional experiences, thereby building an engaged, visionary, committed, and empathetic next generation of global thinkers and leaders. The Formation Journey aims to create meaningful moments for JPOs, as well as initiatives that can spur critical navigation as eco-system facilitators and systems thinkers. It integrates the Inner Development Goalssuch as Being, Thinking, Relating, Collaborating and Acting to deliver on the SDG 2030 agenda.

Additionally, like all UNDP staff, JPOs have access to the UNDP corporate career and learning resources, including mentoring, and all online courses and programmes available. In addition, JPOs are required to take all the UNDP mandatory courses in the first six months of their assignments.

## UNDP onboarding

BMS/OHR/TAPP/JPOSC arranges a virtual onboarding briefing for JPOs in preparation for their assignment. The briefing provides an induction to the JPO Programme, the UN in the field, UNDP structure and Programmes, UNDP People Strategy, HR Services, benefits and entitlements, learning and career development, ethics, and awareness on cultural diversity.

## UNDP Purpose, Programme and Operations

UNDP organises a hybrid JPO induction workshop, including a virtual workshop followed by a face-to-face workshop. The virtual workshop (one week) focuses on strategic, macro-level thematic areas, UN/UNDP policies and development trends, including sessions on building strategic partnerships and further insights on cultural diversity and integration with a multicultural organization. The face-to-face workshop (one week) normally takes place in New York and includes a deeper introduction to UNDP programmes and operational structures as well as a stronger component on growth, career and personal development. In addition, each Bureau is responsible for organizing structured briefings for the JPOs assigned in the region. These briefings are scheduled for two or three days.

## UNDP local office onboarding

Specific onboarding organized by the hiring office and supervisor complements the onboarding organized centrally by BMS/OHR/TAPP/JPOSC. Specifically, such local onboarding programmes will provide the JPOs the opportunity to learn about the office set-up, operational procedures and tools, the regional/country programme as applicable, the partners, as well as the local context.

BMS/OHR/TAPP/JPOSC facilitates the pairing of a JPO with a local buddy to support the integration and understanding of the local context.

## [Duty Travel and Training Allowance](http://www.jposc.org/content/JPOs/dtta-en.html)

JPOs are entitled to a Duty Travel and Training Allowance (DTTA), which aims at supporting their learning activities during their assignment. The amount of the DTTA is determined by the partner country and may differ among the partner countries (usually between USD 3-4,000 per annum). JPOs are expected to plan for the use of the DTTA funds in consultation with their supervisor and include the learning activities into their annual learning plan.

DTTA funds may also be used for a short-term learning assignment in another duty station (2-4 weeks) to work shadow and support other offices. Learning assignment extending beyond four weeks will require advance partner country approval.

The utilization of the DTTA, i.e., actual learning activity, should be completed at least two months prior to the end of the JPO assignment.

Any unspent balance from one year, may be carried over to the following year of assignment. Any unspent balance at the time of separation will be forfeited. More information on the DTTA is available through the [DTTA FAQ.](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.undp.org%2Fjposc%2Ftraining-allowance-dtta&data=05%7C02%7Crana.irshaid.andersen%40undp.org%7Cdf17873d33054f1e59be08dc83cb05a9%7Cb3e5db5e2944483799f57488ace54319%7C0%7C0%7C638530155187791285%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=dFaM23IPslNBIHyd2l63S%2B2SbXsceSsX5ycxf6NVm78%3D&reserved=0)

## Career Development

UNDP provides continuous growth opportunities and career development support to JPOs during their assignment. Career development is a shared responsibility between the hiring office/supervisor, the JPO and BMS/OHR/TAPP/JPOSC. Supervisors play a key role in the JPO professional growth and learning and are informed about their role in supporting JPO career development.

BMS/OHR/TAPP/JPOSC provides career development support to JPOs who are interested in pursuing a career with UNDP as follows:

* Career Management (career management workshops, and one-to-one / career conversations, CV feedback and mock interviews)
* Learning throughout the JPO assignment (online database of use of DTTA, JPO workshops)
* Networking and mentoring (online discussion group for all current JPOs, mentoring programme)
* Post-JPO networking (JPO Alumni Association (JAA) on LinkedIn, JAA directory)

## Performance Management: Annual JPO evaluation and final exit questionnaire

As UNDP staff, JPOs’ performance is reviewed based on the same performance management policy and process as other UNDP personnel. The Annual Performance cycle runs from 1 January to 31 December, and includes annual goal planning, ongoing feedback/mid-term evaluation and annual performance review.

Although the performance assessment process is a dialogue between the staff member and UNDP, if requested, copies of the corporate PMD may be shared with the partner country for their information and reference, contingent on the agreement of the JPO. Otherwise, a separate annual evaluation form is completed for each JPO and shared with the respective partner country in connection with JPO contract extension.

All JPOs are requested to complete an exit questionnaire at the end of their assignment. The questionnaire solicits information relating to the assignment. The exit questionnaire provides UNDP with critical feedback which is be used to improve the JPO Programme.

## Supervision

It is crucial that JPOs 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, the respective supervisor receives an information package about his/her role and responsibility as a JPO supervisor. In addition, senior management in UNDP offices play a key role in supporting the career development of JPOs in their respective offices, and in identifying new and potential talent for the Organization. As such senior management are expected to provide feedback to Regional and Central Bureaux and BMS/OHR on high performing JPOs, and for supporting their potential career opportunities with the Organization.

# Financial management and accountability of the UNDP JPO Programme

## Partner country contribution and cost estimates

As per the JPO Agreement between UNDP and the partner country, the respective partner country shall provide UNDP with the funds necessary to fully cover the costs of the recruitment, appointment, and service of JPOs.

BMS/OHR/TAPP/JPOSC prepares and forwards cost estimates for the assignment of each JPO to the partner country prior to initiating the JPO hire or extension process. The cost estimates reflect the costs of a two to three years appointment and are shared with the partner country with a request for payment for the first year. When the JPO hire process is concluded, a revised cost estimate with the actual JPO status is shared with the partner country for the first-year assignment, during the extension process, and if JPO status changes.

Partner countries will make payments for the first, second and third year respectively based on the cost estimate. The payments will be made to the UNDP JPO Programme contributions account stated in the cover letter to the cost estimate. UNDP will not initiate the hire or extension process of the JPO until the donor has confirmed funding in writing based on the cost estimate and indicated the payment date.

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

The standard administrative overhead applied by all UN Organizations for the JPO Programme is 12% of annual expenditures. For JPO Programmes where UNDP administers the full recruitment cycle, the administrative overhead is 14-15%. The overhead is confirmed in the JPO Programme Agreement between the partner country and UNDP. It is reflected in the cost estimates and is part of the partner country contribution towards the JPO assignment. The overhead is debited from the JPO Programme account as actual expenditures are incurred. The income generated from the overhead is shared with partner organizations annually and after closure of the prior financial period.

## Financial Reporting

The statement of the financial position of the UNDP JPO Programme Accounts (as of 31 December of the preceding year) is published with the financial report and 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 partner country by UNDP on an annual basis, on 30 June of each year for the prior year. Should the sums initially deposited by the partner country in respect of any specific JPO whose assignment ends in a given year fall short of the actual total sums expended by UNDP in respect of the total period of the JPO service, the partner country shall make up the difference.

Should the sum be greater than the total amount expended, upon confirmation from the partner country, UNDP shall transfer the positive balance to the donor top level account or return unspent funds to the donor.

JPO accounts for separated JPOs are closed 24 months after the separation of the JPO.

## Programme monitoring and development

The JPO Programme is monitored periodically through annual client satisfaction surveys of JPOs, partner countries and partner UN Organizations, JPO exit questionnaires, and retention reports. The purpose of monitoring is to:

* Determine if the JPO Programme might better respond to the needs of UNDP and to identify areas for improvement.
* Review the effectiveness of UNDP and affiliated funds and programmes (UNCDF and UNV) in managing and facilitating development JPOs.
* Keep track career progression and retention of JPOs, understand trends and reasons.

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

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1. 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). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)