



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION



146th SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Washington, D.C., USA, 21-25 June 2010

Provisional Agenda Item 6.2

CE146/30 (Eng.)
1 May 2010
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CONTRACT REFORM IN PAHO

United Nations Contract Reform Implementation in PAHO Progress Report

Background and Current Status

1. During the Executive Committee's 140th Session, Staff Rule amendments needed to implement a new contractual framework in PAHO were approved. The proposed framework includes three contract types: fixed term, continuing, and temporary. However, at that time, the Executive Committee conditioned implementation of PAHO's new contractual arrangements on the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) approval of a similar framework for the United Nations (UN) common system.
2. The UNGA approved new contractual arrangements for the UN common system on 23 December 2008; its framework includes the same three contract types proposed by PAHO. The UNGA agreed that the new framework would become effective on 1 July 2009. Implementation of continuing contracts would begin no earlier than 1 January 2010 (pending further consideration by the UNGA of additional information to be provided by the UN Secretariat).
3. During its 144th Session, PAHO's Executive Committee agreed that the Organization could move forward, in light of the UNGA's 23 December 2008 decision, with implementation of appointments of temporary staff for a period of up to two years where warranted. The Executive Committee also approved staff rule changes that allowed PAHO to harmonize benefits for this category of staff with the UN common system. These changes were fully implemented by PAHO on 1 July 2009. With regard to continuing contracts, implementation of continuing contracts in PAHO will move forward once UN common system implementation is underway.

4. At the 64th Session of the General Assembly, the UN Secretariat presented a report (A/64/267) addressing how continuing appointments would be implemented in the UN common system. During deliberations by members of the Fifth Committee of the UNGA, Member States expressed a desire to review the implementation criteria in the larger context of workforce planning. The scope of the discussion extended beyond the content of the current report and differed to some extent from the approach initially proposed by the Secretariat. Consequently, no consensus was reached on the implementation of continuing contracts.

5. As a result, the UN Secretariat withdrew report A/64/267. The UN Secretariat will revise its approach on continuing contracts in collaboration with staff representatives to address the issues raised by the Fifth Committee.

6. In 2010, a UN staff/management meeting on continuing contracts will be held to develop the model for those contracts.

7. The UN Secretariat will submit a new report on the implementation of continuing contracts for review during the UNGA's 65th Session.

8. In consideration of the above, at this time PASB does not propose to move forward with implementing continuing contracts, but will submit a proposal in the future to the Executive Committee, upon approval by the UNGA, of the new policies and processes needed to implement continuing contracts in the UN common system.

9. Details regarding the Organization's experience with those aspects of the reform which have thus far been implemented are contained in the attached annex A.

Action by the Executive Committee

10. The Executive Committee is invited to take note of this report.

Annexes

CONTRACT REFORM IN PAHO AS OF 1 APRIL 2010

1. In 2007, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) proposed to simplify its contractual arrangements by using only three types of staff appointments for all functions—fixed-term, continuing, and temporary. In addition, the Organization opted to consolidate all non-staff employment contracts under the category of “consultant contracts.” While implementation of continuing appointments has not yet been approved within the UN Common System, the Organization is using fixed-term, temporary, and consultant contracts.¹

2. As of 1 April 2010, 938 individuals held staff appointments in the Organization and approximately 255 held consultant contracts. The following paragraphs present details of the Organization’s experience with contract reform to date.

Fixed-Term Appointments

3. This appointment type is used to hire staff to carry out core technical and operational functions. Upon implementation of continuing appointments, a number of changes will take place that affect this appointment mechanism. At this time, however, fixed-term appointments continue to be granted for a pre-established period (normally two years), after which the appointment expires automatically. Action by a staff member’s supervisors and by the Human Resources Management Area is required for renewal of each contract. Staff appointed to fixed-term contracts are subject to a probationary period and to annual performance appraisals.

Temporary Appointments

4. Under the Organization's contract reform, a temporary appointment continues to be a time-limited appointment. The maximum duration of such an appointment is an uninterrupted period of two years after which a break in service of more than 30 days is required. Prior to this reform, these appointments had a maximum duration of 11 consecutive months, after which a break of more than 30 days was required. Temporary appointments are used where the activity to be carried out is limited in time (a maximum of 24 months) and/or funding. If a temporary function is needed beyond two

¹ While “service” appointments are provided for under the Organization’s existing Staff Rules, this appointment modality has never been implemented. The service appointment replaced the former “career service” appointment, which was discontinued in 1994. Nevertheless, there are currently 50 staff members who received such appointments prior to the category’s discontinuation and who continue to work in the Organization under that appointment category. (This type of appointment is essentially the same as the “continuing” appointment considered under the contract reform proposal.)

years, the manager must request—well in advance—that it be created as a longer-term position (e.g., a fixed-term post or a post of limited duration) or that other arrangements be made (e.g., secondment of a qualified individual from another agency). Staff members on temporary appointments currently are not subject to a probationary period; however, the Organization has the prerogative to terminate such contracts for poor performance.

5. Temporary appointments of 60 days or less continue to be used to meet conference and other short-term service needs.

6. Reform of temporary appointments required that some changes be made to the Personnel Administration System (PAS) database. These changes were necessary to accommodate tracking separately the 24-month maximum for the individual temporary staff member and the temporary function itself.

7. The database required additional revision to permit hardship allowance to be payable to temporary staff at certain duty stations. This benefit that was extended to temporary staff in July 2009, to be in compliance with the UN Common System. Since implementation, there are four temporary staff members in receipt of the hardship allowance. The financial implications of this aspect of contract reform were minimal, as was projected when these changes were proposed.

8. In general, the changes to the temporary appointment have given managers more flexibility to plan their human resources requirements. The changes also have allowed the Human Resources Management Area to work more systematically with managers to determine their longer-term human resources needs.

Non-Staff Appointments: “Consultants”

9. As noted above, the Organization will only use fixed-term, continuing, and temporary appointments once its reform proposals are fully implemented. All other appointment types will fall under the non-staff member category of “consultants.” On 1 January 2009, a new policy established the new PAHO Consultant contract as a non-staff contract. The PAHO Consultant contract replaced the former Short-term Consultant (STC), which was a UN staff contract. PAHO Consultants engage in work that is of limited duration, that is technical in nature, and that is intended to supplement the Organization’s expertise. Under the PAHO Consultant contract, individuals may be hired for up to two years to provide consultative services in support of local, subregional, or regional projects.

10. With the introduction of the PAHO Consultant contract, the Organization can now begin to consolidate the various non-staff contracts—such as National Professional,

(NAPs), Special Services Agreements (SSAs), and individuals hired under Contractual Services Agreements (CSAs)—under a single hiring mechanism.



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Pan American Sanitary Bureau, Regional Office of the

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

CE146/30 (Eng.)

Annex B

ANALYTICAL FORM TO LINK AGENDA ITEM WITH ORGANIZATIONAL AREAS

1. Agenda item: 6.2. Contract Reform in PAHO

2. Responsible unit: Human Resources Management/Policy, Recruitment and Classification

3. Preparing officer: Nancy Machado

4. List of collaborating centers and national institutions linked to this Agenda item:
Not applicable

5. Link between Agenda item and Health Agenda for the Americas 2008-2017:
Not applicable

6. Link between Agenda item and Strategic Plan 2008-2012:
RER 16.03 Human Resources policies and practices promote (a) attracting and retaining qualified people with competencies required by the organization's plans, (b) effective and equitable performance and human resources management, (c) staff development and (d) ethical behavior.

7. Best practices in this area and examples from countries within the Region of the Americas:
Implementation of contract reform in PAHO is based on decisions taken by the U.N. General Assembly on 23 December 2008 (Document A/RES/63/250) to implement a new contractual framework for the U.N. common system and on implementation of similar reforms in WHO. A number of UN agencies are moving forward with reform efforts as well.

8. Financial implications of this Agenda item:
Not applicable.

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