OneStaff

Our Vision and Values for Managing People

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Introduction

OneStaff is an evolving concept. Its vision appears idealistic but is firmly grounded in a critical set of values, business realities, and requirements.

This concept has been growing in the minds of several leaders and professionals in the CGIAR system. Some centers have supported it by implementing different aspects of it, often without branding it as the OneStaff approach. Individual centers have initiated this approach to meet their specific objectives, implementing systems and processes in ways most appropriate to their needs.

The OneStaff approach means that a single set of values and the same policies, compensation structure, and human resource management processes are applied to all staff members.

The OneStaff approach can make numerous positive contributions to staffing within an organization. For example, it can help ensure that recruitment from different markets is grounded in specific, appropriate job requirements, such as levels of education, competencies, experience, and expected contributions to the organization. The approach emphasizes the importance of clearly explaining any differences to ensure that all staff members understand them. Such clarity, transparency, and understanding will lead to a feeling of belonging to the organization, even if there are and will always be differences in some aspects of employment conditions.

Sometimes it is best to implement the OneStaff approach gradually. A gradual approach permits organizations to develop different strategies for remaining competitive within the chosen employment markets from which they have to attract and retain the staff they need (i.e., international, regional, or national markets). A gradual approach can also enable organizations to cope with differences in employment conditions that arise from host country agreements and local statutory requirements.

The transition to the OneStaff organization happens in stages, in an evolutionary manner, driven by the strategic needs and priorities of each center and the vision and willingness of management to make the transition.

Whatever the modalities of implementation, the OneStaff approach explicitly commits the organization to a long-term direction based on a clear set of values.

Why This Document?

This document has been prepared to:

1. *Create a baseline document* that builds on prior work to define the underlying values, vision, approach, and associated processes. This should facilitate a clear, consistent, and shared understanding of the concept.

2. *Define the criteria and a set of strategic questions* to help organizations envision the decisions involved in this transition and their implications. This would assist the process of making major strategic choices regarding the extent to which an organization wishes to move towards the OneStaff concept and the optimum pace of change.

3. *Provide the basis for an evaluation framework* to map the progress in implementing this approach.

What Is the OneStaff Approach?

The OneStaff approach is a philosophy with supporting systems to: create an environment that facilitates the realization of the full potential of all staff; develop strong commitment of staff to the organization; ensure effective teamwork; and enhance the well-being of staff and their families. These goals are achieved through creation of an appropriate culture, policy framework, and supporting processes.

Culture is people believing in and breathing life into a set of values. The OneStaff approach requires that the organization define a clear set of values and principles to manage all its staff members, make it explicit, and apply it consistently.

The basic values that underpin the OneStaff approach are:

1. Fairness and Equity

- A fair set of policies applied consistently to all staff.

- Equal pay for equal work.

- Equal opportunity for all staff through the creation of an environment free of discrimination and harassment (this would include active enhancement of diversity as a way of life).

- Active avoidance of all types of staff exploitation even when such practices are acceptable in the local market.

- Provision of professional development opportunities to all staff so they can realize their full potential and make their best contribution to the organization.

- Respect for the individual's dignity and self-esteem.

2. Transparency

- Wide and open sharing of information with all staff.

3. Strong Communications and Knowledge Sharing

- Regular two-way communications with staff members.

- Sharing of knowledge to enhance the capacity of staff members so that they can meaningfully contribute to the business of the organization.

4. Inclusiveness and Participation

- Regular consultation with staff members to seek ideas, views, and suggestions regarding business matters, and to ensure their participation and contribution to the development of policies and practices that personally affect staff members and their families.

5. Respect for the Social Needs of Staff as Family and Community Members

The Business Case for the OneStaff Approach

- International organizations, such as CGIAR centers, have multiple categories of staff based on the markets from which they are recruited. To attract and retain staff, such organizations must balance the need for internal equity with market responsiveness.

- Often staff categories reflect realities of the markets from which staff members are recruited, but they are also likely to reflect historical anomalies resulting from differing values and philosophies applied in the past.

- Over time, differences in the terms and conditions of employment create class differences, manifested in rigidly stratified professional (and sometimes social) environments. This situation could result in perceived as well as real inequity. It could promote dysfunctional behavior ranging from a lack of motivation to antagonistic attitudes between different groups.

- With higher levels of education and democratization of the workplace, people demand much higher levels of transparency, participation, and equity. By not meeting these expectations, workplaces become unattractive in competitive employment markets, which negatively affects the ability of the organization to attract and retain high quality staff.

- To meet the new challenges that the CGIAR centers face today, they have to do more with fewer people and ensure effective multi-disciplinary teamwork. Dysfunctional behaviors resulting from the factors defined above negatively affect teamwork and productivity.

- The CGIAR is committed to developing the capacities of staff, especially women and men from developing countries. The staffing and policy structure of the organizations should facilitate the intellectual, technical, and leadership development of scientists and managers, with special attention to diversity considerations. Nationally recruited staff members constitute almost 85% of the staff at CGIAR centers. Policies or practices that lock people into low-paying and low-visibility positions based on non-professional criteria such as historical staff classifications or diversity factors (including gender and nationality) would be contrary to the values of the CGIAR system.

- A new philosophy, value system, and supporting policies for human resource management are required for the centers to become employers of choice and to create high performing teams. The OneStaff approach provides such a framework, for it meets the business needs described, facilitates the creation of motivated and productive teams, and creates attractive work environments.

What Do OneStaff Organizations Look Like?

While details vary depending on specific needs, organizations that implement the OneStaff approach have many of the following characteristics:

- The values and principles of the organization regarding staff management are published and consistently applied to all staff members.

- All staff members are treated fairly and equitably irrespective of their employment categories and across different functions.

- Staff members with the same competencies and doing the same jobs are compensated equally.

- The similarities in policies and practices that apply to all staff are emphasized, rather than the few differences in conditions of employment.

- There is a single policy applicable to all staff, supported by small attachments that describe additional conditions or differences applicable to different employment categories.

- Social benefits such as insurance and occupational health programs are progressively standardized. When new benefits are introduced, they are applicable to all staff.

- Benefits that are not dependent on differences in employment markets or job requirements are made available to all staff members.

- All staff members are given equal access to social and welfare services such as medical facilities, clubs, swimming pools, cafeteria.

- Policies and practices incorporate all the elements of diversity to ensure equal opportunities in staff selection, career development, and professional growth. More importantly, people sincerely believe in those values and live by them consistently.

- A professional job evaluation system is used to determine job levels and compensation.

- Human resource management systems and processes create and support a "meritocracy" based entirely on job requirements and performance.

- The knowledge, skills, attitudes, and performance levels required to be eligible for career progression are clearly defined and communicated. Barriers to advancement across job categories are removed.

- Possibilities for vertical and horizontal mobility are high, subject to the standards and processes established for promotion, recruitment, and selection.

- A performance management system applicable to all staff is in place. Within a single system, customized tools are used to evaluate staff based on job requirements.

- The compensation system and packages do not have any explicit or inherent bias based on non-professional considerations. Staff members are paid fairly, according to their capabilities and performance. Irrelevant factors such as staff groupings or diversity factors (e.g., nationality, gender, age, religion) have no bearing on reward decisions.

- Development of all human resource policies and processes ensures inclusiveness and transparency. All staff have access to policies, job requirements, and performance criteria. Staff members have a high level of understanding and buy into human resource management policies and processes.

- A powerful human resources information system gives all staff members timely access to information and ensures continuous two-way communication.

- Human resource policies and practices stimulate social integration even outside the workplace.

- The leadership team displays courage and commitment to continuously drive the changes needed to move towards this vision.

Contributors to This Document

Many people contributed ideas and shared their experiences to aid in the preparation of this document, including:

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"People are the foundation of our knowledge-based CGIAR system. OneStaff will further develop and support the vision and values that SAS-HR participating Centers have for their staff. We welcome this initiative and recognize the concept behind OneStaff requires a gradual transition in the organizations, part of the evolution of the CGIAR System as a whole."
–Francisco Reifschneider,
Director, CGIAR

" The deep divide between national and international staff categories is a threat to the very survival of our system. Human resources policies that may have made sense 20-30 years ago need major re-thinking today. We need to be bold to catch up with the world around us. "OneStaff" is not an option - it is a must"
Frank Rijsberman

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