

MSF HUMAN RESOURCES PRINCIPLE

ON STAFF MOBILITY & TEAM DIVERSITY

Approved by the Core ExCom in March 2018

MSF considers all employees a “**global HR capacity**”¹. Collectively they provide quality medical and humanitarian assistance to populations in distress, bear witness to and express international solidarity with their plight. This is achieved through a mix of international and national staff working side by side to alleviate suffering.

In line with its principles and values, through its associative and executive mechanisms, MSF strives for participation, inclusiveness and equality in decision-making and fair employment opportunities for all staff. To this end and to optimize HR contributions towards the operational demands of tomorrow, staff mobility & team diversity have been identified as strategic institutional priorities and the backbone of the principle described below.

Each OC shall ensure these principles are part of their HR management practices unless those principles generate security, institutional or operational risks putting in danger MSF employee(s) and/or preventing MSF from operating properly in a country.

The HR principles on Staff Mobility & Team Diversity are:

- a. **MSF considers the presence of mixed teams of international and national staff as a core element for managing effective and efficient operations**

Mixed teams are considered as core assets to ensure impartiality, reactivity and adaptability in our medical operations and advocacy. To promote this, MSF fosters employee mobility and ensures a range of nationalities and diversity in the composition of its teams. In a mission where national staff (NS) undertake management responsibilities, the decrease in the number of international staff (IS) at the top level can be compensated for by assigning IS to positions of lower responsibility.

Mixed teams are of high importance in missions with high insecurity or high operational/politicized complexity. In many of these cases, being from outside the country of intervention is a pre-requisite for coordination positions.

Employee mobility refers to all geographical staff movements within the organization, whether it is for operational reasons (deployment mobility) or for individual competency development (career mobility).

- b. **All positions within MSF are accessible to all staff based on their professional experience, competencies and operational considerations**

¹ “we seek to build and optimize our global HR capacity and resources in order to harness strengths and meet challenges, while fostering diversity and ensuring that MSF acts as a responsible employer to all of its staff. We will remove unnecessary barriers between staff categories, create a free flow of human resources, increase sharing and transferability of our staff, mobilizing their full capacity for the benefit of the organization and those we seek to assist”. Extract from the International HR vision, endorsed by the ExDir in 2009

Within the bounds of what (perception of) neutrality, independence and impartiality will allow in any given context, competencies, professional experience and commitment to the organization are the main criteria for appointing employees to a position. The level of experience and competence required are defined at section level. Every employee fulfilling the criteria is entitled to be selected for any position, without consideration of status (national contract, expatriate contract, headquarter contract), nationality or gender, unless this is justified by security, operational or institutional concerns.

c. International exposure is a recognized asset when in a coordination position

Selection criteria for coordination positions should prioritize employees with previous MSF experience² outside their country of residence. Through this, MSF reinforces its principle that employee mobility is as key element to preserving its operational capacity, its impartiality and its emergency international identity. To maintain the quality and efficacy of MSF operations, it is crucial to have coordinators who have worked outside their country of origin.

d. Administrative status does not define a hierarchy within the organization

In an organization that promotes staff mobility, it is essential to ensure that there are sufficient entry-level positions where the level of responsibility required is not too high. It is crucial to promote the supervision of junior IS by senior NS. MSF will therefore foster national employee development in managerial positions supervising IS.

Given the MSF emphasis on témoignage and on being an organization driven by direct medical and humanitarian action, it is also important that IS remain in direct contact with beneficiaries and are not only in managerial positions. It is just as important for national employees with significant MSF experience and contextual knowledge to fill decision-making positions.

e. Any coordination position is subject to temporary assignment

MSF wants to maintain a balance in staff turnover of top management positions to ensure dynamism and continuity and to avoid complacency, in particular linked to resources and people management. In order to keep its operational reactivity it is important to limit the amount of time a person can spend in the same position. Coordination assignments should therefore not exceed three to six years. This principle is valid for any MSF employee in a coordination position.

f. MSF considers professional experience within the organization to be an asset that should be recognized in the international recruitment process

MSF promotes the application of NS to expatriate status if it responds to a personal choice. MSF recognizes the importance of the experience of national colleagues and as such promotes an adapted recruitment process for international positions that is aligned with standard international recruitment processes applied across MSF sections. The access to international mobile experience is also a means to grow within the organization, although not the only one, and an answer to the need for mobility. MSF will put in place measures that will ensure that the criteria for recruiting NS are

² *International experience can be gained both through expatriation or detachment (mobility)*

identical than those for non-MSF candidates applying for international positions (e.g. in terms of language criteria, timing in the management of the applications, etc).

g. Inclusive access to innovative, timely and streamlined learning opportunities for all staff

MSF makes sure that learning opportunities are available to all staff based on their competencies, commitment and needs rather than on their status, provided that these match the needs of the organization.

Those principles have been defined by the Field HR platform together with the International Directors of Human Resources (IDHR) in relation to the 2014–2015 IGA motion and the 2014 assessment of progress since La Mancha. (the 2014–2015 IGA motion focuses on national staff (NS) expatriation and on the presence of NS in management positions. These motions echo the assessment of progress since La Mancha undertaken by the field HR platform in 2014).

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