



**UNDP/ADM/97/24**

**18 April 1997**

To: All Country Offices

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Subject: **Classification Policy for Country Offices: Guidelines for Delegated Authority for Classification of Posts in the General Service and National Officer Categories**

## **PURPOSE**

1. The purpose of this circular is to announce the delegation to Resident Representatives of the authority to establish the classification of posts within specified grades for both the General Service and National-Officer categories. This delegation represents the next step in the phased decentralization of classification initiated with (i) UNDP/ADM/89/69, dated 2 August 1989, which assigned pre-approved levels of classification for certain UNOPS General Service posts, and (ii) UNDP/ADM/92/75, dated 7 October 1992, which delegated authority for classification of extra-budgetary, General Service posts. This delegation of classification authority, detailed as follows, is effective 1 May, 1997.

## **BACKGROUND**

2. UNDP has made steady progress in the development, standardization, and implementation of classification procedures and standards for grading posts in all Non-Headquarters duty stations. This evolution has been primarily in three areas:

(a) Policy: In 1987 job classification standards were promulgated by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) for General-Service staff in non-Headquarters duty stations. With the creation of the National Officer category, ICSC also approved the use of the Master Standard and related Tier II classification standards for Professional and Higher Categories in the classification of National Officer posts.

(b) Operations: Starting in 1991, the Compensation and Classification Section (CCS) integrated both General Service and National Officer posts in its classification programme for country offices. The greater harmonization in the application of classification standards has led to uniformity in the grades for typical country office occupational groups worldwide. From 1987-1992 CCS conducted a comprehensive review of all General Service posts in country offices and implemented a consistent, seven-grade structure now almost universally in place.

(c) Training: Complementing the above, over the past eight years OHR/CCS has organized training workshops in all five regions for administrative staff. These workshops have provided an overview of post classification and have developed skills in the design of posts and drafting of post descriptions, and in the application of standards to individual posts.

## **EMERGING PATTERNS**

3. CCS has analysed country office structures and function-grade correlated data in the course of its whole-office classification missions worldwide and individual post classification reviews. This has resulted in the emergence of discernible occupational characteristics and standard patterns common in the classification of posts.

(a) General Service: Within the standard seven-level office structure, the General Service category falls into well defined occupational groups with posts that are found across a range of grades.

(b) National Officers: As with General Service, in the case of National Officers, standard patterns have emerged which support the identification of consistent grade determining elements in the classification of National Officer posts at the NO-B and NO-C levels.

## **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

### Occupational Patterns

4. Having put in place the policy and operational foundation, OHR now plans to advance to the next stage of utilizing these patterns as a basis for graduated delegation of classification authority for selected occupations and grades. These patterns form the basis of this delegation and are outlined in Annex I, Guidelines for Operation of Delegated Classification Authority. These guidelines cover all major occupational groups and related grade levels with the exception of posts which fall in grades G-7, NO-A and NO-D. Grades G-7 and NO-D are excluded from this delegation since these grades constitute, respectively, the apex of the General-Service and National Officer categories. By definition, posts within these grade levels present often a unique array of functions. With respect to the NO-A level, by its nature, this grade is limited with a very narrow focus of functions. At present the use of this level is evolving within the UN Common System. Its characteristics do not lend themselves to consistent categorization by occupational group. OHR/CCS will, therefore, continue to directly classify posts which fall within this level in order to monitor trends and determine the future utilization of this grade.

### Adherence to Patterns

5. The successful management of this delegation to the country office level will be assessed through adherence to the classification patterns identified by occupational group as provided in Annex 1. Deputy Resident Representatives (DRR) and Assistant Resident Representatives (ARR) (Operations) should certify that all classifications undertaken at the country office level have been reviewed in accordance with these patterns and with grade levels established accordingly.

6. Atypical Cases: This delegation does not preclude the possibility of a post presenting an atypical array of functions or placement within an office structure. In such cases, the DRR/ARR (Operations), through the Resident Representative, should make an appropriate case for classification outside the typical occupational patterns and forward the post descriptions to CCS for evaluation. Exceptional cases or occupations which fall outside these pre-established patterns should be forwarded to CCS for review which will be conducted on the merit of each individual case. Through the review of atypical or new post structures, CCS will be in a position to update and revise the typical occupational streams over time.

#### Post-Facto Review by OHR/CCS

7. Country offices will notify OHR/CCS of delegated classification decisions as these take place. In order to ensure that the provisions of these guidelines are being applied consistently, all country offices will forward to OHR/CCS on an annual basis a Table of Classification Decisions. A copy of this table is provided in Annex 2. Should inconsistencies in the application of the classification guidelines become apparent, OHR/CCS will conduct post-facto reviews.

8. OHR/CCS will limit its role to selected interventions; i.e., in the cases of:

- i. classification of posts in grade levels not included in this delegation;
- ii. review of atypical posts which fall outside the established patterns and where exceptional consideration has been requested;
- iii. on-site, whole-office reviews on request;
- iv. advice on individual post/organizational design issues which may arise in the management of this delegated authority; and
- v. post-facto review and monitoring of classified levels established under this delegated authority.

CCS will continue to provide training workshops in post design and evaluation to further facilitate the management of this delegated authority by Country Offices.

#### **PROCEDURES FOR CLASSIFICATION UNDER THE DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

9. Signatory Authorization: Classification authority, entrusted to the Administrator and delegated to OHR/CCS, now devolves - for selected occupations and grades - to the UNDP Resident Representative. The Resident Representative will approve classification levels based on the recommendation of the DRR or ARR, Operations. The DRR/ARR (O) will attest that each submission satisfies the guidelines outlined in Annex 1. Should individual post profiles fall outside the patterns, all such cases should be referred to OHR/CCS.

10. The classification of posts will continue to be carried out based on the review of post descriptions duly signed by the incumbent, first-level supervisor, and Resident Representative. The necessary documentation should be submitted to the ARR/DRR (O) for review.

11. Documentation to be maintained in the Country Office: The following documentation should be maintained on file with each delegated classification decision:

- An updated post description, on the appropriate General Service or Professional form, for the post in question. Detailed justification should be provided for the revision in grading based upon the evolution of duties and responsibilities supporting the proposed reclassification. For this purpose, the Justification for Classification form, attached as Annex 3, should be used.
- An up-to-date organizational chart showing the placement of the post in question and other posts affected by the proposed reclassification.
- Revised post descriptions for other posts in the concerned organizational unit affected by the proposed reclassification.

## **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

12. OHR/CCS should be notified, by Email/Higgins or fax, as and when classification decisions are made. In this notification, the following should be provided on each post:

Old and new title  
FOST Number  
FOST Numbers of inter-related Posts  
Up-to-date organizational chart

13. Annual Reporting: On an annual basis country offices will be requested to provide an official update on all classification decisions made locally in the preceding 12 months. The following should be submitted to OHR/CCS:

1. Table of Classification Decisions (See Annex 2)
2. Updated Organization Chart indicating FOST numbers, post titles and name of incumbents

CCS will circulate annually a global notification and reminder for submissions by country offices.

14. Whole-Office Reviews: Country-office classification decisions will be reviewed on-site in conjunction with CCS's whole-office, comprehensive classification reviews.

15. Post facto Review by CCS. Delegated levels are subject to post-facto review by CCS to determine consistency with, and application of, the Occupational Patterns.

16. **Effective Dates of Delegated Classifications:** The effective date of the classification will be the first of the month following the date of submission to the DRR/ARR (O) or the first of the month following receipt of new data.

## **RECOURSE PROCEDURES**

18. Should the respective manager and/or staff member wish to seek a recourse review of a classified level established under this delegated authority, the post should be forwarded to CCS, through the DRR/ARR (Operations), providing background and supporting documentation, including the following:

- Post Description
- Justification for Revision in Grading Form
- Organization Chart
- DRR/ARR(O) Rating Rationale and Commentary on the requested Recourse

## **STATUS OF DELEGATION**

19. Where classifications by country offices fall significantly outside the guidelines provided, OHR will review the possible suspension of the delegation. Examples of significant deviation from the guidelines are:

- Major inconsistencies between grade levels and post descriptions
- Major inconsistencies between grade levels and Guidelines
- (Re-)classifications established without accompanying post descriptions

## **CONCLUSION**

20. The issuance of this delegation of authority for the classification of posts represents a major development in the classification programme for country offices. This delegation is the first of its kind in the United Nations system where significant responsibility for the classification of posts has been provided to line management. This achievement reflects the close partnership with country offices in the consistent implementation of classification standards and the training of country office staff in the application of these standards to typical posts. We recognize that the effective implementation of this delegation will depend on this continued close collaboration.

21. OHR/CCS stands ready to support country offices with additional training, guidance and advice where required. We believe that this delegation of authority will greatly facilitate country office management of post and office structures. We look forward to receiving the views and experiences of country offices in the exercise of this expanded responsibility.

## **Annex 1**

## **Guidelines for Operation of Delegated Classification Authority**

Classification actions for individual posts can and should take place as the situation warrants, i.e., if there has been a significant change in the complexity of the duties of a post and in the level of its responsibility. 1 All grading decisions should be based on an analysis of the functions and level of responsibility attached to the post and not the incumbent's level of performance. The re-classification of posts should be guided neither by the seniority nor meritorious performance of an incumbent.

As always, if there is either a major overhaul of services in the country office or a comprehensive reorganization, OHR/Classification Section (CCS) will respond to requests for conducting a whole-office review.

The patterns outlined are based on the ICSC Classification Standards, representing the authoritative definition of levels of responsibility by grade and occupation.

The DRR/ARR (Operations) will certify that:

- (i) the information presented meets patterns contained below or
- (ii) further clarification is required; or
- (iii) the post falls outside the patterns below and therefore will be forwarded to CCS for review.

**TYPICAL OCCUPATIONAL PATTERNS  
GENERAL SERVICE CATEGORY**

<u>GRADE</u>	<u>OCCUPATION</u>	<u>PRIMARY DETERMINING FEATURE</u>
	<b>Non-Clerical Support</b>	
G-1	Messenger	Collects, sorts, delivers mail, pouches, etc., packs material for despatch, operations operates photocopying machine and other related duties (Registry)
G-2	Driver	Drives office vehicles for transport of authorized personnel, delivery, Operations Collection of mail/other items; maintains assigned vehicle including (Transport) minor repairs, keeps log of official trips, mileage, etc.; meets official personnel at airport, facilitating immigration/customs formalities
G-3	Senior Driver	Drives for the head of the office and other high-ranking officials; for Resident knowledge of protocol matters, meets official personnel at airport, Representative only facilitates customs/immigration formalities; other duties outlined under G-2 level.
	<b>Registry</b>	
G-3	Registry Clerk	Files, maintains, documents/other material in accordance with UNDP Operations file-classification codes; logs, routes correspondence (increasingly) electronically; distributes registry files, keeps list of files up to date; other clerical duties
G-4	Registry Clerk	In addition to G-3 level duties above, sets up and maintains filing system; Operations establishes/maintains records of file movements; supervises or assigns duties to lower-level staff engaged in receipt/despatch/maintenance of communications and related activities
	<b>Secretarial</b>	
G-3	Clerk/Typist	Assignments involve diverse working processes and procedures, from Operations/ word-processing support through production, dispatch and filing. Programme
G-4	<b>Secretary</b>	Manages information flow for individual

		professional or small unit; Operations duties include some basic office management tasks in addition to Programme word-processing/ other software packages and document/ correspondence dispatch and filing
G-5	Senior Secretary	Manages information flow, including provision of instructions to Secretary to subordinate levels. Standard secretarial functions as well as involvement DRR in administrative processes and practices of a programme or Secretary to Head of administration area requiring extensive familiarity with the functional Administration or area. Decisions are made on work priorities and adherence to office DRR/ARR (Operations) procedures, organization of workload, improvement in work-flow, etc.
G-6	Secretary to Head of	Manages information flow, including confidential issues. Assignments Secretary to R.R. Office include senior level secretarial duties and coordinative functions for an office with several programme areas. Duties include liaison with all staff; responsibility for protocol matters and effective functioning of the office. Decisions are taken on work priorities, distribution of workload to, and follow-up with, other staff.



	<b>Administrative Group</b>	
G-4	Admin. Clerk	Assignments include a variety of administrative support functions. Basic Travel interpretation of rules and procedures required for specific tasks. Shipping Procurement Head of Transport
G-5	Admin. Clerk	Assignments include a full range of administrative support requiring the Personnel application of rules and procedures to a wide variety of activities. Travel Interpretation of rules and procedures for specific tasks is a regular Procurement feature of work. Office Automation
G-6	Admin. Assistant	Assignments involve in-depth application of administrative rules and Personnel; procedures within a focused area of work. (e.g. personnel). Interpretation Office Automation of complex rules and procedures is a major feature of work. Typically work includes supervision of junior staff.
	<b>Finance Group</b>	
G-4	Finance Clerk	Assignments involve a range of standard and recurring accounting tasks Finance including processing basic payments/invoices, posting payments to ledgers, reconciling data.
G-5	Finance Clerk	Assignments involve interpretation and application of complex financial, Finance accounting rules and procedures including processing payroll, medical and large claims; preparation of periodic financial statements and accounting records; maintaining contacts with local banks, compiling/verifying budget/accounting data, calculating costs, estimating expenditures, briefing on banking. Work can include supervision of junior staff.
G-6	Finance Assistant	Assignments involve in-depth treatment of financial matters across Finance several areas, such as bank reconciliations, periodic financial reporting, processing payments, monitoring cash flow, and assistance in office budgeting. Supervision of a number of junior finance staff is a pre-requisite except in small offices.
	<b>Programme Group</b>	
G-5	Programme Clerk	Assignments involve support functions in project

		<p>formulation and Programme execution including the collection, assembly and maintenance of Section; information and data from a wide variety of sources related to PSU/PMSU programme activities; work requires limited analysis of programme documentation, contributing to effective and timely operation of the work area.</p>
G-6	Programme Assistant	<p>Responsibility for a variety of specialized tasks related to programme Programme financial finance, e.g., evaluation of project budgets, trust funds, NEX: recruitment management, i.e., of experts, procurement of equipment. Errors affect project execution, PSU/PMSU budgets, and reporting on delivery.</p>

## NATIONAL OFFICER CATEGORY

GRADE	OCCUPATION	PRIMARY DETERMINING FEATURE
	<b>Programme Group</b>	
NO-B	Programme Analyst	Manages sectoral and/or thematic portfolio(s): Administers formulation Programme and implementation of, or oversees substantive activities in relation to, portfolio of sustainable human development programmes/projects. Functions include analysis and interpretation of programme and/ or sectoral background, first-level programme formulation, identification and recommendations on resolution of implementation problems.
NO-B	Programme Analyst/Head of PSU	Manages country-office, programme-management information system Programme Support and reporting. May include NEX support to Govt. including training; Unit or Prog.clearances/verification of NEX accounting data. Typical supervision Resources includes budget/financial database overview on disbursement, delivery, Management Unit forecasting, resource mobilization; programme (CPMP) monitoring; status of procurement/national expertise; preparing/implementing agency reporting;. Other programme-support may include generation of statistics on donor contributions. by sector or cluster; production of DCR; fellowships administration. Supervision of programme-support staff is a pre-requisite.
NO-C	ARR (Programme)	Provides overall management of Programme Section including Programme day-to-day supervision of substantive Programme Officers (Analysts), JPOs responsible for specific programme portfolios.
NO-C	SHD Adviser	Provides strategic advice to RR based on systematic follow up and Programme integration of country/region's socio-economic development issues and structural analysis of development constraints, etc., towards identification of potential areas of UNDP intervention, formulation of new, and modification to existing programmes. The above must be consistent with national/global socio-economic realities and UNDP's SHD strategic focus areas. Contributes directly to formulation of Country Programme documents, such as CSN, CCP, MTR.
	<b>Administrative</b>	

	<b>Group</b>	
NO-B	Administrative Analyst	Under the supervision of the DRR (Operations), oversees day to day Operations provision of services across a range of country office administrative areas (finance, personnel, general services, common premises, security).
NO-C	ARR Operations	Under the supervision of the RR, in small-medium sized offices, without Operations the post of DRR (Operations), organizes and manages the full range of country-office administrative services (finance, personnel, general services, common premises, security), etc. Advises country office management concerning optimal design of operational services. Provides authoritative guidance on the interpretation/application of rules and procedures governing administrative management issues.

## **Annex 2:**

### **Table of Classification Decisions Reporting Format**

COUNTRY: \_\_\_\_\_

Post No.	Post Title	Organizational Placement	New Post	Re-Classification	Previous Grade

## **ANNEX III**

### **Justification to Support Proposed Reclassification**

A proposal to reclassify a post to another grade level must be justified on the basis of an explanation of the change in duties of the post and, if relevant, in the office structure. To do this, it is useful to compare the previous and revised job descriptions, and to note what changes in the country office or in the unit have led to the revised responsibilities. The comparison should focus upon new duties now performed, previous duties no longer carried out and the enhancement (or diminution) of duties previously performed. Other relevant information supporting the proposed reclassification may also be provided. (Attach additional pages, if necessary).

A. comparison of post functions:

\_\_\_\_\_

PreviousDuties\_\_\_\_\_RevisedDuties\_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Change\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

B. Other relevant information (for example: change in office structure; revised qualification requirements of the post, etc.)