

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

Report of the Secretary-General's Task Force on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for All in the United Nations Secretariat



UNITED
**Against
Racism :**

Dignity for all
in our Workplace

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Dignity for all
in our Workplace

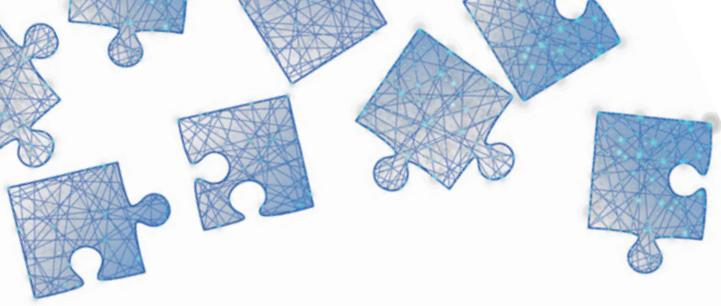
Report of the Secretary-General's Task Force on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity
for All in the United Nations Secretariat

New York, December 2021
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Cover: To advance racial diversity, equity and inclusion, there is work for people to do separately and together.



FOREWORD

Dear colleagues,

The Secretary-General has called upon us to condemn racism wherever we see it, without reservation, hesitation or qualification. This includes looking into our own hearts and minds.

The global outcry in 2020 caused us all to look inward and recognize that, in order to fight racism, we have to be proactively anti-racist. It was with this in mind that the Secretary-General established the Task Force on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for All in the United Nations, which I have had the honour to lead. I am grateful to the members of the Task Force and its working groups for their excellent collaboration, especially the extensive, in-depth discussions and the various assessments conducted over the past year.

As an organization, we were founded on the principles of the dignity and worth of the human person, proclaiming the right of everyone to enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms, without distinctions of race, colour or national origin. We have always recognized the prevalence of racism and racial discrimination in society and played a key role in supporting Member States in the development of legal instruments to address this scourge. Through consistent and targeted action, the Organization has also made strides in addressing discrimination, harassment and abuse of authority within the confines of prohibited conduct as defined by the Organization over the years.

While discrimination on the grounds of race is considered prohibited conduct, the Organization's norms do not define "racism" or specifically indicate how such behaviour may manifest itself in the workplaces of the Organization. It is therefore imperative to review ST/SGB/2019/8 to enhance the Organization's ability to address racism and racial discrimination, facilitate reporting and support those who experience it.

Equally, we must review the Organization's structures and institutions to determine how best to support racial diversity, equity and inclusion in all categories and at all levels of personnel. We also need to strengthen our internal accountability mechanisms, to build trust in investigating and addressing claims of racial discrimination in the application of the Organization's human resources policies and practices.

Racism and racial discrimination go against our common humanity and the principles of our Charter. Addressing racism in the Organization will require collective action from all personnel,

and not be left to those impacted by it. I want to urge all personnel, of every race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin, to come together in the spirit of human decency and collegiality to educate ourselves on how racism may operate in society and in the workplaces of the Organization. I encourage all of you to participate in the ongoing dialogue and awareness campaigns to gain insight into how racism manifests at the workplace and how we can prevent it and support those who experience such behaviour.

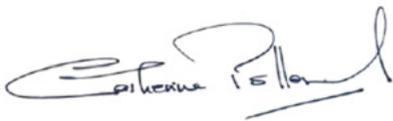
That spirit was most evident in the methodology and processes of the Task Force, which involved the widespread participation and consultation of personnel and a variety of stakeholders in our many duty stations around the world. The discussions, panels, events and analyses produced a very rich dialogue and generated many ideas and recommendations on how best to address racism in the workplace.

While most of the recommendations of the Task Force contained in the strategic action plan fall within the Secretary-General's authority for implementation, others may require further study and involvement by the legislative bodies. Still other recommendations of the Task Force are not contained in the plan, as they may be taken forward in future proposals for consideration by the legislative bodies.

The plan developed by the Task Force undertakes an approach to addressing racism in the Secretariat in the immediate, medium and long term. It recognizes that addressing racism will take time, requiring a deliberate, systematic, progressive and coordinated approach to its implementation. The plan proposes both reactive measures to address racism when it happens and proactive measures to deter it from happening.

Ultimately, progress in addressing racism and racial discrimination will require unwavering commitment from senior leaders and the full participation of United Nations personnel to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to participate in the work of the Organization and is treated with respect and dignity.

Let us stand in solidarity against racism.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Catherine Pollard', with a horizontal line underneath.

Catherine Pollard

Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance

Chair of the Task Force on Addressing Racism and
Promoting Dignity for All in the United Nations Secretariat



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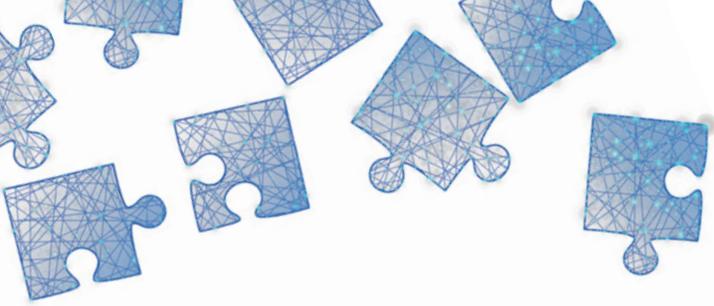
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“ Racism is the repudiation of our common humanity - of the Charter of the United Nations – of all that we are and all that we do. We must reject racism. But we have a long way to go. It is a challenge and a struggle for us all. Racism and racial inequality still permeate institutions, social structures and everyday life.

”



António Guterres
Secretary-General



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Secretary-General's Task Force on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for All in the United Nations Secretariat considered how to address racism and racial discrimination and enhance racial diversity, equity and inclusion.

In its strategic action plan, the Task Force recommends actions to address racism and bring about cultural changes to transform the United Nations to a workplace where racism is actively addressed, where there is accountability for racist conduct and where the Organization provides a dignified and inclusive workplace for all. It sets goals, provides a framework for establishing effective scorecards and measures to address racism and establishes success indicators. A key goal is to improve the lived experiences of staff who experience racial discrimination.

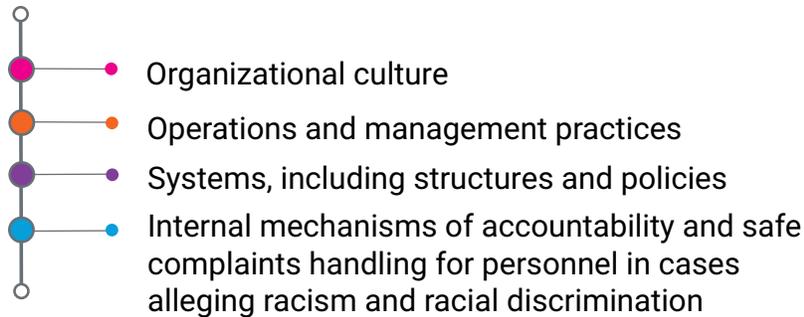
The successful implementation of the recommendations in the strategic action plan will require an overarching change management plan driven by continuous and dedicated leadership and staff engagement, coupled with enhanced accountability, robust and sustained communication and awareness initiatives, capacity-building, data collection and analysis, reporting, monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

The Task Force underlines the urgent need for strategic action to:

- Address racism and racial discrimination more directly and effectively in the Secretariat by encouraging reporting and enhancing accountability, monitoring and transparency through periodic provision of information to United Nations personnel on actions taken following reports by personnel experiencing or witnessing such behaviour or discrimination. Those who experience racism should also be protected from all forms of retaliation.
- Accelerate progress towards racial diversity, equity and inclusion in all staff and non-staff categories and at all duty stations by eliminating barriers brought about by personal, interpersonal, structural and institutional racism and racial discrimination in the Organization.
- Review human resources policies and practices, including staff recruitment, mobility and appointments to a higher level, to determine whether there are provisions or practices, including in decision-making, that may have a disparate impact on staff members of a particular race, colour, or ethnic or national origin.

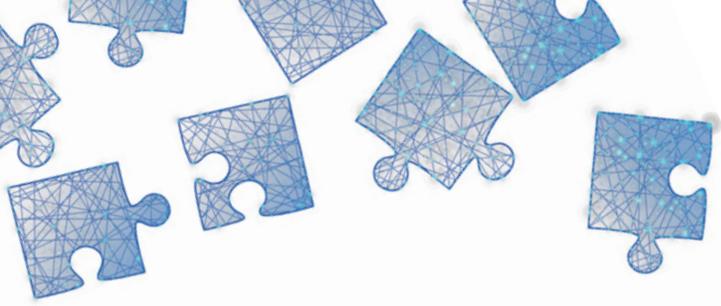
- Clarify reporting mechanisms, support processes and resources available to personnel experiencing racism and racial discrimination.
- Continue dialogue, learning and perception management, given the low level of staff trust, as they will be important to changing the workplace culture in addressing interpersonal and institutional manifestations of racism in the workplace.

The focus of the strategic action plan is on targeted actions to address personal, interpersonal, structural and institutional racism in four change areas:



Actions for these changes are mapped in a matrix to ensure proper transition and minimal interruption to current services, while leveraging ongoing change initiatives in the Secretariat, such as the United Nations values and behaviour model; the United Nations system leadership framework and the senior leadership commitments; the 2020 leadership dialogues and campaign on dignity in the workplace; the reform of the development, management and peace and security pillars in 2019; and Our Common Agenda.





KEY CONCEPTS

The following are key concepts used in the strategic action plan; their definitions are intended for use in this context only.

Racial discrimination is defined as “any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life”.

([International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination](#), art. 1 (1))

It is prohibited under international law. It concerns not only the intent or purpose of different acts, which may be formally neutral, but also their effects. Racial discrimination can be direct or indirect. The treatment applied to an individual or a group must be comparable with that offered to other persons or groups. However, different actions can be legitimate if there is a reasonable objective and purpose. A discriminatory action must have “an unjustifiable disparate impact upon a group distinguished by race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin”.

Racism includes attitudes, practices and beliefs rooted in ideas or theories of superiority, as a complex of factors, which produce discrimination and exclusion. Racism can take many forms, including stereotyping, harassment, negative comments or hate crimes. It can also be deeply rooted in culture, education, values and beliefs which may affect workplace culture and behaviours.

Discrimination is “any unfair treatment or arbitrary distinction based on a person’s race, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, disability, age, language, social origin or other similar shared characteristic or trait”. Discrimination is considered prohibited conduct and “may be an isolated event affecting one person or a group of persons similarly situated, or may manifest itself through harassment or abuse of authority”. (ST/SGB/2019/8, entitled “Addressing discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority”, sect. 1.2)

Bias is a preference or an inclination, especially one that inhibits impartial judgment.

Equality is the state or quality of being equal. It is about equivalence in quantity, degree, value, rank, ability or opportunity, such as promoting equality of opportunity in the workplace. Equality in the workplace occurs when each individual or group of people is afforded the same resources or opportunities.

Equity is recognizing that persons or groups have different circumstances and allocating the exact resources and opportunities needed for each individual or group to reach an equitable outcome. Equity is about fairness and taking deliberate actions to remove barriers and obstacles that hinder opportunities and have an impact on well-being. In institutions, equity is achieved through the identification and elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultures that create and reinforce unfair or unbalanced outcomes.

Implicit bias refers to a tacit, indirect or embedded preference or inclination, sometimes unconscious, that is developed through beliefs, values, culture, background, education, societal norms, stereotypes or personal experiences. This bias can prefer or distinguish individuals or groups because of their race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin.

Inclusion is a dynamic state of feeling, belonging and operating in which diversity is valued and managed to create a fair, results-based institution. An inclusive workplace culture and environment fosters equitable opportunities to resources and opportunities for all staff and personnel. It also enables staff and personnel to feel that diversity is valued and managed to create a fair workplace where they feel safe, motivated and respected.

Institutional racism refers to policies, procedures and practices of institutions that produce patterns of inequitable outcomes for staff and personnel based on their race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin.

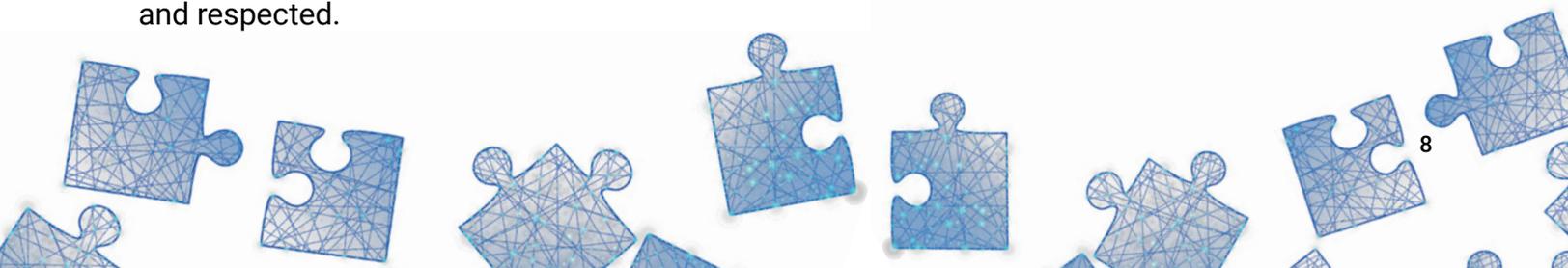
Interpersonal racism occurs between individuals. It takes place when personal beliefs are manifest in interactions with others, such as public expressions and acts of prejudice, exclusion and bias on the basis of race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin.

Microaggression is a conscious or unconscious, verbal or non-verbal interaction that expresses a prejudiced attitude towards an individual or group, for example, based on race, colour, descent, religion, or national or ethnic origin. It can be interpreted as non-physical aggression.

Personal racism comprises one's individual beliefs, preferences and biases about race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin.

Structural racism is about racial bias among institutions and across society. This involves the cumulative and compounding effects of an array of societal factors, including the history, culture, ideology and interactions of institutions and policies that systematically privilege a dominant group and disadvantage individuals of a marginalized group, for example, based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin.

Theory of change is a methodology for planning, participation and evaluation used to develop long-term strategic action plans with multiple changes. It prescribes the structured actions that will lead to identified goals.

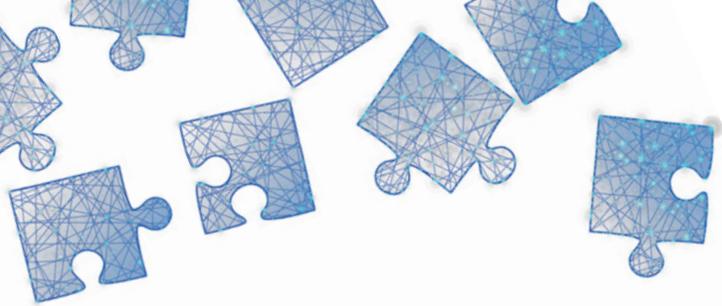


SECTION 1.

INTRODUCTION

In the Charter of the United Nations, it is recognized that diversity, equity and inclusion bring tangible benefits and efficiencies to the invaluable work of the United Nations, while racism, exclusion and marginalization affect staff morale, undermine solidarity and commitment and hamper the delivery of mandates.





INTRODUCTION

The United Nations was founded on the principles of the dignity and worth of the human person, proclaiming the right of everyone to enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.

In the Charter of the United Nations, it is recognized that diversity, equity and inclusion bring tangible benefits and efficiencies to the invaluable work of the United Nations, while racism, exclusion and marginalization affect staff morale, undermine solidarity and commitment and hamper the delivery of mandates.

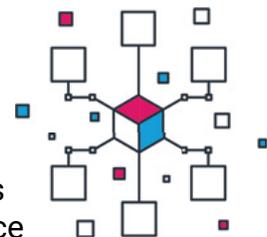
In the 75 years of its existence, the United Nations has recognized the prevalence of racism and racial discrimination in societies and played a leading role in supporting Member States in developing legal instruments to address and mitigate the impact of this abhorrent behaviour.

Prompted by the global reckoning in 2020 with the prevalence of racism and racial discrimination in societies, the Secretary-General acknowledged that the United Nations itself is not immune to racism and racial discrimination and committed to examining and addressing this scourge in the workplaces of the Organization at the personal, interpersonal, structural and institutional levels. The Secretary-General has also acknowledged that racism and racial discrimination debase

the Charter and are in stark contrast to the Organization's conviction that staff members should be able to bring their whole selves to work, operating in an environment committed to professionalism, inclusion, equality, dignity and the promotion of diversity.

Over the past year, the Secretary-General's Task Force on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for All in the United Nations examined the manifestations of racism and racial discrimination in the Organization, considering how best to address it and to enhance racial diversity, equity and inclusion in all its workplaces across the globe.

In its strategic action plan, the Task Force recommends actions to bring about the changes necessary for the United Nations to become a workplace where racism is actively addressed, where there is accountability and where the Organization provides a dignified workplace for all and benefits from the diverse perspectives, skill sets and life experiences of its personnel.



While this will take time, the effort underlines the importance of such a necessary change.

The Organization must send a clear message, backed by action and results, that such behaviour will not be tolerated.

The issues of diversity and inclusion have been at the heart of the Organization’s management reform agenda, with the objective of ensuring that every staff member, regardless of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, gender, disability, religion, creed or sexual orientation, finds a sense of belonging and safety with equal opportunity to participate in the work of the Organization at all levels. In recent years, the strategy on gender parity, the geographical diversity strategy and the disability inclusion strategy have been implemented in the Secretariat. However, a timely action plan which addresses the manifestations of racism in the workplace and how best to support racial diversity, equity and inclusion is also needed.

The greatest strength of the United Nations is its diverse global personnel. At this moment in history, the Organization must fundamentally transform its systems, policies, practices, processes and culture towards the full embodiment of the principles of the Charter with regard to its own workforce. As an employer, the United Nations must ensure freedom of opportunities, and its workplaces must be

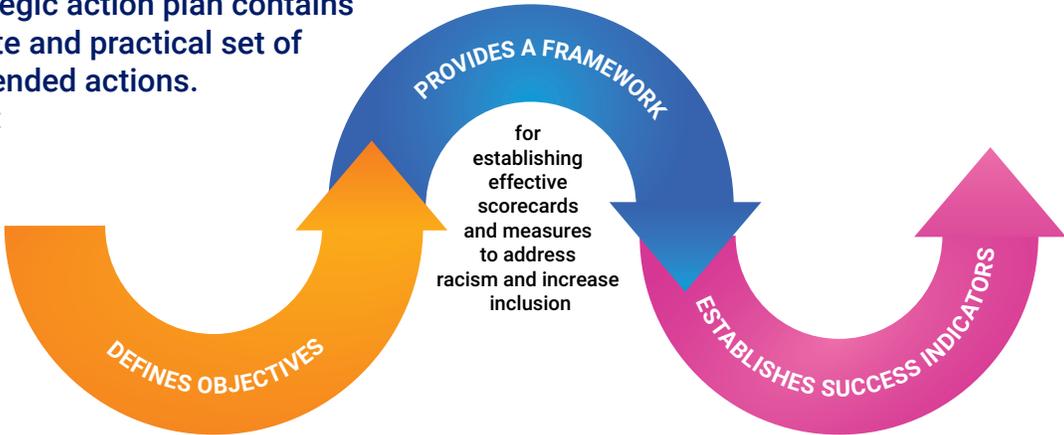
free of barriers, discrimination, indignity, harassment and fear. The strategic action plan represents the launch of that transformation.

To achieve this, an institutional stocktaking will be followed by corrective action to enable all staff and personnel to contribute to their full potential.

The strategic action plan provides recommendations that largely fall within the Secretary-General’s scope of authority for implementation. The Task Force also developed other recommendations that fell outside of his authority but will be further examined for possible presentation to the Member States for consideration and decision.

The implementation of the strategic action plan within the suggested time frames will be subject to a number of risks and challenges that will require progressive and innovative ways to address them. The full commitment of all United Nations personnel, irrespective of their race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin, and Member States will be crucial to the implementation of the plan. Furthermore, the provision of financial and expert human resources will be a primary factor in the actualization of the plan to its desired outcomes.

The strategic action plan contains a concrete and practical set of recommended actions. The plan:

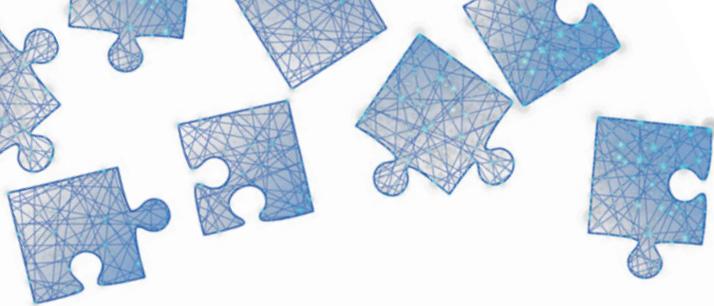


SECTION 2.

THE UNITED NATIONS - A UNIQUE WORKPLACE

Tremendous diversity is one of the Organization's strengths, requiring an inclusive and global approach to the management of its workplaces.



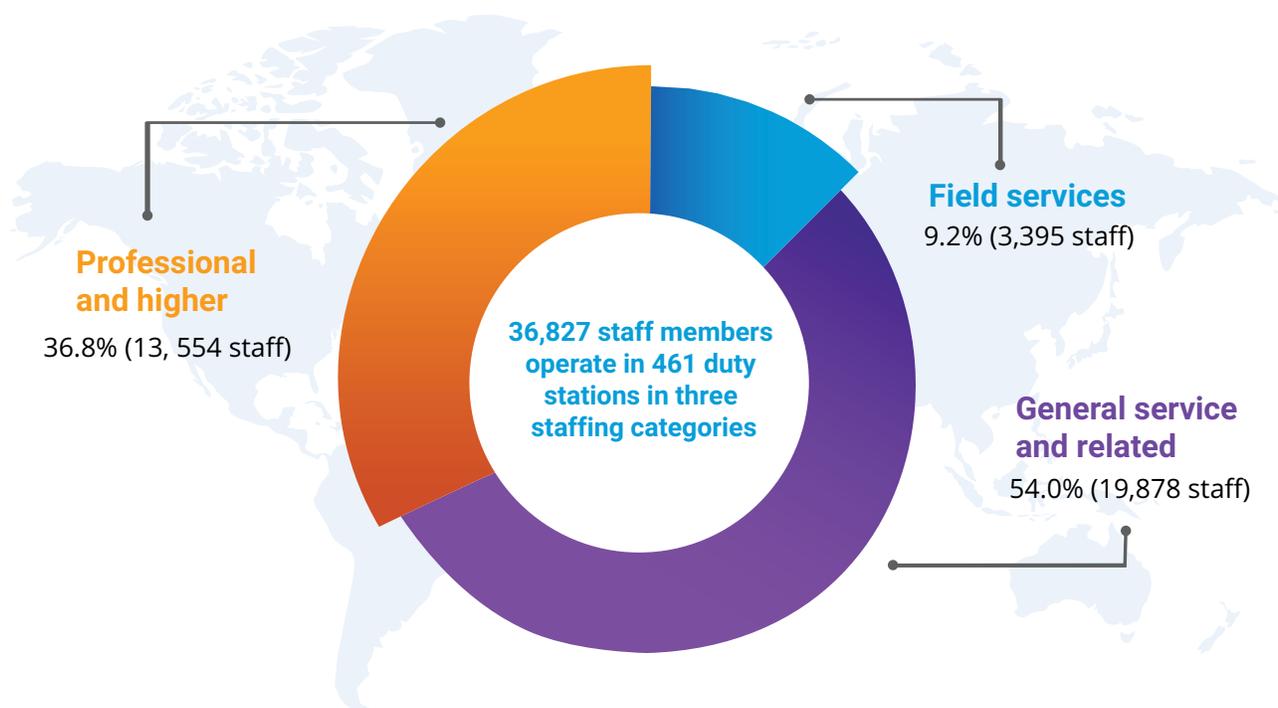


THE UNITED NATIONS - A UNIQUE WORKPLACE

The United Nations possesses a workforce notable for its diversity and multiracial, multicultural and multilingual character. This tremendous diversity is one of the Organization's strengths, requiring an inclusive and global approach to the management of its workplaces.

At the heart of the implementation of its mandates and activities, many of which are complex and place high demands on the staff and personnel deployed, is an international civil service of over 36,000 staff members operating from 461 duty stations and working in three staffing categories at Headquarters and other locations globally.

Percentage of all staff of the Secretariat, by category, as of 31 December 2020



International character of the United Nations

The appointment of staff in the United Nations is governed by Article 101 (3) of the Charter, which states: “The paramount consideration in the employment of the staff and in the determination of the conditions of service shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, and integrity. Due regard shall be paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible.” The Staff Regulations and Rules operationalize these criteria in the recruitment and selection of staff.

Therefore, staffing at the United Nations is based on a competitive system in which the primary consideration is merit, with geography and gender taken into account.

The United Nations also pursues a policy of multilingualism as an essential factor in harmonious communication among peoples and an enabler of multilateral diplomacy and greater transparency, efficiencies and better outcomes in the work of the Organization. Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish are the six official languages of the United Nations. English and French are the working languages of the United Nations Secretariat and are used in day-to-day professional exchanges. Since 1995, the General Assembly has adopted resolutions on multilingualism to address “disparity between the use of English and the use of the five other official languages” and to ensure “the full and equitable treatment of all the official languages”.

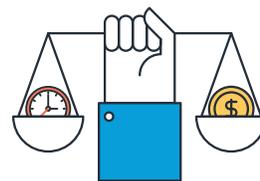
Equitable geographic representation and racial diversity

To maintain the international character of the Organization, the principle of equitable geographical representation is applied in the hiring of staff in the Professional and higher categories. This is aimed at avoiding undue predominance of national practices and to ensure that the policies and administrative methods of the Secretariat reflect and benefit to the highest degree from the assets of the various cultures and technical competence of the Member States.

Under General Assembly resolution [42/220 A](#), the Secretary-General has an obligation “whenever making appointments to posts subject to geographical distribution, to make every effort to recruit nationals of unrepresented or underrepresented Member States”. This is applied through the system of desirable ranges that was established following the adoption of the resolution. The system does not apply to non-geographical posts, which make up a majority of the positions in the Professional and higher categories.

Desirable ranges

A concept where a range of posts is established within which each Member State would be adequately represented as a guideline for recruitment priorities. This system is applied only to regular budget posts (excluding language posts) in the Professional and higher categories of staff.





While the Organization has placed diversity, equity and inclusion at the heart of its reform agenda as it relates to geographical representation, gender and disability, an overall strategy could be reinforced to address racism and racial discrimination and facilitate the attainment of racial diversity, equity and inclusion in the representation of staff members and non-staff personnel in the Secretariat.

While equitable geographical representation is relevant to racial diversity, it is evident that the factors of race, colour, descent and national or ethnic origin do not always correlate with geography or region. Furthermore, most Member States are not homogeneous but are characterized by some measure of diversity.

United Nations legal framework governing conduct and behaviour

In addition to the Charter, the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations specifically prohibit racism and provide a legal framework governing the rights and obligations of United Nations staff.

[Staff regulation 1.2 \(a\)](#) provides that “staff members shall uphold and respect the principles set out in the Charter, including faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women. Consequently, staff members shall exhibit respect for all cultures; they shall not discriminate against any individual or group of individuals or otherwise abuse the power and authority vested in them”, and staff rule 1.2 (f) provides that “any form of discrimination ... is prohibited”.

In Secretary-General’s bulletin [ST/SGB/2019/8](#), entitled “Addressing discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority”, discrimination is similarly declared to be prohibited conduct in section 1.1 and is defined in section 1.2 as “any unfair treatment or arbitrary distinction based on a person’s race, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, disability, age, language, social origin or other similar shared characteristic or trait. Discrimination may be an isolated event affecting one person or a group of persons similarly situated, or may manifest itself through harassment or abuse of authority.”

The administrative instruction on unsatisfactory conduct, investigations and the disciplinary process ([ST/AI/2017/1](#)), the [standards of conduct for the international civil service](#) and the new [United Nations values and behaviours framework](#) also provide norms which concern the conduct, decisions, actions and behaviour of staff and personnel of the Secretariat.

United Nations mechanisms for addressing prohibited conduct, including racial discrimination

The United Nations has key internal ([Office of Internal Oversight Services](#)) and external ([Joint Inspection Unit](#) and [Board of Auditors](#)) mechanisms mandated with improving management and operational efficiencies and effectiveness, supporting greater

coordination and undertaking oversight functions concerning the management of human, financial and other resources.

The Office of Internal Oversight Service (OIOS) is tasked with independent and objective oversight duties in respect of all United Nations activities, and the Joint Inspection Unit is an independent oversight body of the United Nations mandated to conduct system-wide evaluations, inspections and investigations. Both entities are relevant to fostering transformative change in the Organization's management policies and practices, structures and systems, as well as complaints mechanisms and process management in respect of addressing racism and fostering inclusion in the workplace.

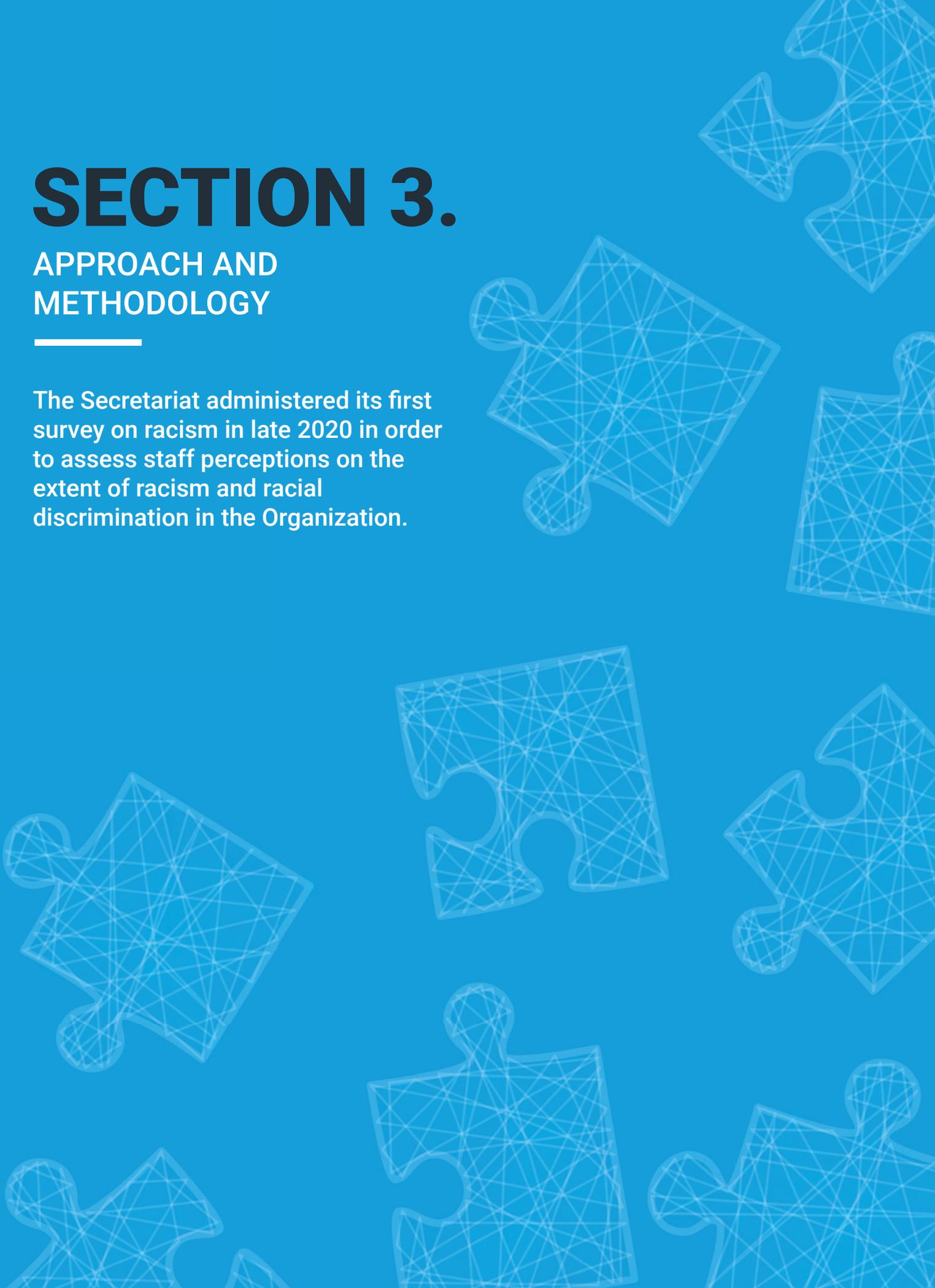
The United Nations also has an internal system of administration of justice providing staff with both informal dispute resolution in employment matters and formal means to resolve disputes.

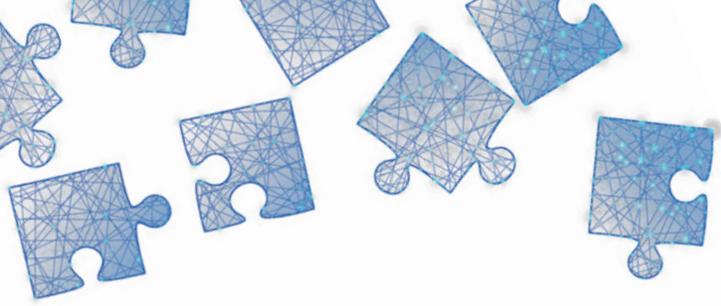


SECTION 3.

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The Secretariat administered its first survey on racism in late 2020 in order to assess staff perceptions on the extent of racism and racial discrimination in the Organization.





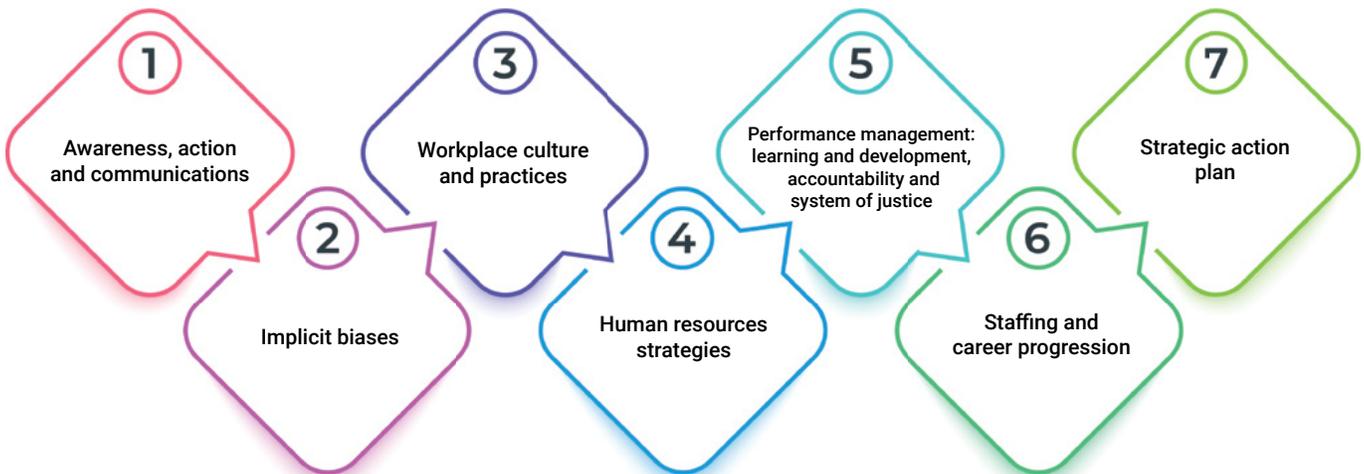
APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The Task Force was mandated to formulate a strategic action plan and “make recommendations to the Secretary-General for action that will ensure equal treatment and full inclusion of all United Nations personnel in the implementation of the Organization’s mandates and its activities”. The theory of change was applied to develop the plan with structured actions towards its goals.

The Secretariat administered its first survey on racism in late 2020 in order to assess staff perceptions on the extent of racism and racial discrimination in the Organization, to guide the activities of the Task Force in the awareness and action campaigns and to support the development of the strategic action plan and to transform the Organization in the long term. A separate survey was administered for non-staff categories, which garnered a response rate of 1 per cent.

To develop the strategic action plan, the Task Force identified the context and preconditions for change, assessed and analysed evidence-based data, carried out a review of benchmarking with comparable entities and institutions, undertook consultations to obtain additional qualitative information, engaged with staff representatives of different constituencies in various duty stations and carried out desk reviews of good practices and existing Secretariat-wide policies and strategies on promoting diversity, equity and inclusion. The Task Force designed recommendations and established expected results in key thematic focus areas. The methodology also enabled the design of a monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning mechanism for the action plan.

Key thematic focus areas





The Task Force also conducted a comparative review of relevant United Nations strategies and action plans, including on [geographical diversity](#), the [prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse](#), [disability inclusion](#) and [gender parity](#), to learn lessons and to ensure consistency of approach and synergies for implementation.

The Task Force also implemented an internal communications strategy focused on keeping staff informed, fostering a deeper understanding and awareness of racism and racial discrimination in the United Nations and promoting personnel engagement in

the work of the Task Force. The strategy complemented the dialogues facilitated by the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services (OMS) through other global panel events about racism. The Task Force also organized global webinars, town halls, conversations, articles and other activities to engage staff in rich discussions and exchanges and to provide insights into how staff feel about race and racism in the United Nations workplace. Related activities by departments, entities and interest groups, including the various staff unions, were also organized.

STAFF VOICES

Dialogues on racism in the United Nations workplace

As part of the Secretary-General's call for awareness and action to address racism and promote dignity for all in the United Nations, the Office of the United Nations Ombudsman and Mediation Services convened and facilitated 48 dialogues about racism in the United Nations workplace between 10 November 2020 and 8 November 2021. A total of 1,788 staff from as many as 22 entities in the global Secretariat participated in the dialogues, ensuring diverse groups that reflected a range of duty stations, entities, grades, gender and languages.

The purpose of the dialogues about racism in the United Nations workplace was to raise

awareness about the presence of racism; create safe spaces where individuals were engaged, encouraged and empowered to talk about their awareness of and perspectives on racism; and better understand the various manifestations of racism in the Organization and capture suggestions on how to prevent, identify and address systemic racism in the workplace. The Office used a model that allowed for the core of the conversations to take place in small groups around carefully crafted questions, with the opportunity for a "rapporteur" from each small group to share highlights with the larger group in plenary.



Processes for recruitment, selection and promotion were specifically mentioned as areas which may be tainted by institutional or systemic racism in the Organization.

There is a desire for more open dialogues at various levels across the Organization, down to the team and unit levels, not only to raise awareness but also as a tool to bring up issues using a bottom-up approach.

Some participants stated that they did not feel, experience or observe any kind of racism within the Organization.

Perspectives about racism in the workplace span a wide range, from those who believe that it does not exist, to those who have experienced it, and to those who are highly sceptical as to whether it will ever be addressed in the Organization. Several participants shared that racism manifests differently in different duty stations.

Staff acknowledged that the increasing number of initiatives to fight racism within the United Nations has contributed to making it more possible to actually talk about racism. The opportunity to share personal experiences of racist behaviour in a safe space was appreciated.

Racism can often be experienced in subtle ways and through microaggressions (also called "subtle acts of exclusion") in everyday work life. While perhaps mentioned less frequently, overt acts of racism were also discussed.

An anti-racist tone from the top is perceived as helpful to start talking about and effecting change within the Organization.

Participants asked for a definition of racism, given the wide range of experiences raised in the dialogues. Subsets of discussions on language noted the need for greater sensitivity to the use of the official languages, which could potentially include words which might have racist or colonial undertones, sometimes unknown to the speaker.

Staff who had experienced racism or witnessed racist behaviour seemed unsure to whom to reach out within the Organization to share their experience or report or remedy racist behaviour. Some who had reached out for support reported not having been met with sufficient understanding or seen satisfactory outcomes.



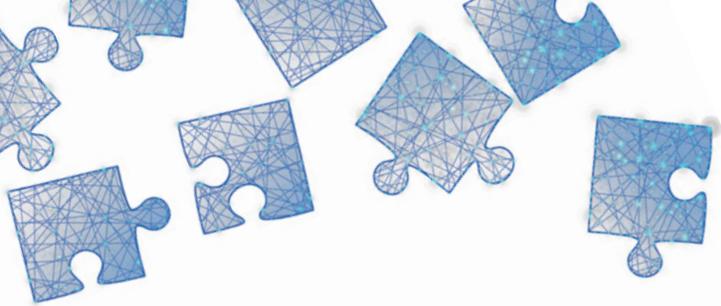
Staff perspectives and feedback from the dialogues

SECTION 4.

KEY FINDINGS AND ASSESSMENT

An extensive analysis of the Secretariat's active workforce indicated a significant lack of diversity in senior managerial positions.





KEY FINDINGS AND ASSESSMENT

United Nations Secretariat survey on racism

The United Nations survey garnered a response rate of 22 per cent (slightly more than 8,000 staff out of over 36,000 Secretariat staff members), meeting the statistical threshold of establishing the perceptions of racism in the Organization. United Nations Headquarters in New York, the United Nations Office at Geneva and the United Nations Office at Nairobi recorded the highest numbers in terms of participation.

The participation rate reflected gender balance, with 53 per cent male and 44 per cent female respondents, with staff from Western European and other States, African States and Asia-Pacific States having the highest participation rate.

From late 2020 to early 2021, a separate survey on racism was administered for non-staff categories that garnered a response rate of 1 per cent.

The results of the staff survey were largely consistent with trends identified from recent surveys about racism, including the United Nations Staff Union (New York) survey on racism in the workplace, the Staff Union survey in Geneva, the United Nations Development Programme anti-racism and racial discrimination core team report to the Executive Group, the Office for the Coordination

of Humanitarian Affairs independent consultant report and the United Nations People of African Descent survey on the perception of racism in the United Nations system.

The survey questions were categorized into nine dimensions:



The least favourable dimensions were found to be the application of human resources rules and regulations and the Organization's recruitment and hiring practices, with a third of respondents saying that the Organization's human resources regulations and rules can be applied unfairly based on race, nationality or ethnic background. The most favourable dimensions were performance management, followed closely by trust and respect within the Organization.

Percentage of respondents that have reported experiencing racial discrimination by region*



*The rate of participation is based on the total number of staff in each regional group of Member States in the composition of the Secretariat

An analysis of nearly 84,000 comments showed that the most negative comments pertained to career progression, senior leadership and processes. Among the most common microaggressions reported were preferential treatment of individuals from certain backgrounds, as well as discriminatory statements on specific jobs or assignments.

One in three respondents mentioned having experienced discrimination; 49 per cent of those who experienced such discrimination said that they had experienced it occasionally, while 21 per cent reported experiencing it frequently. The most reported forms of discrimination were based on national origin (49 per cent), racial identity (38 per cent) and colour (31 per cent). Of those who did not report an incident of racial discrimination, 72 per cent took no action because they thought that it would yield no outcome, lacked trust or feared retaliation. Of those who reported an incident of racial discrimination, 52 per cent said that they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the way in which the situation

37,276 staff were invited to take the survey

Response rate

22%

Male respondents

55%

Female respondents

45%

was handled, and only 13 per cent said that they found some form of support or protection against retaliation.

Across all dimensions of the survey, female respondents reported experiencing racial discrimination in various forms at a higher rate than male respondents. Across eight of the nine dimensions of the survey, individuals who identified themselves as being Black or of African descent reported the most unfavourable responses.

Among the respondents who reported experiencing racial discrimination, nationals of African States were the most represented (38 per cent), followed by nationals of Western European and other States (33 per cent), Asia-Pacific States (27 per cent), Latin American and Caribbean States (22 per cent) and Eastern European States (15 per cent). The rate of participation is based on the total number of staff in each regional group of Member States in the composition of the Secretariat.

Workforce analysis

An extensive analysis of the Secretariat's active workforce (as of 31 December 2020) indicated a significant lack of diversity in senior managerial positions, with over half of all appointments from one regional group (Western European and other States), significantly higher than appointments from the other four regional groups. The imbalance also appears to persist in promotions at higher levels, to the P-5, D-1 and D-2 levels and above.

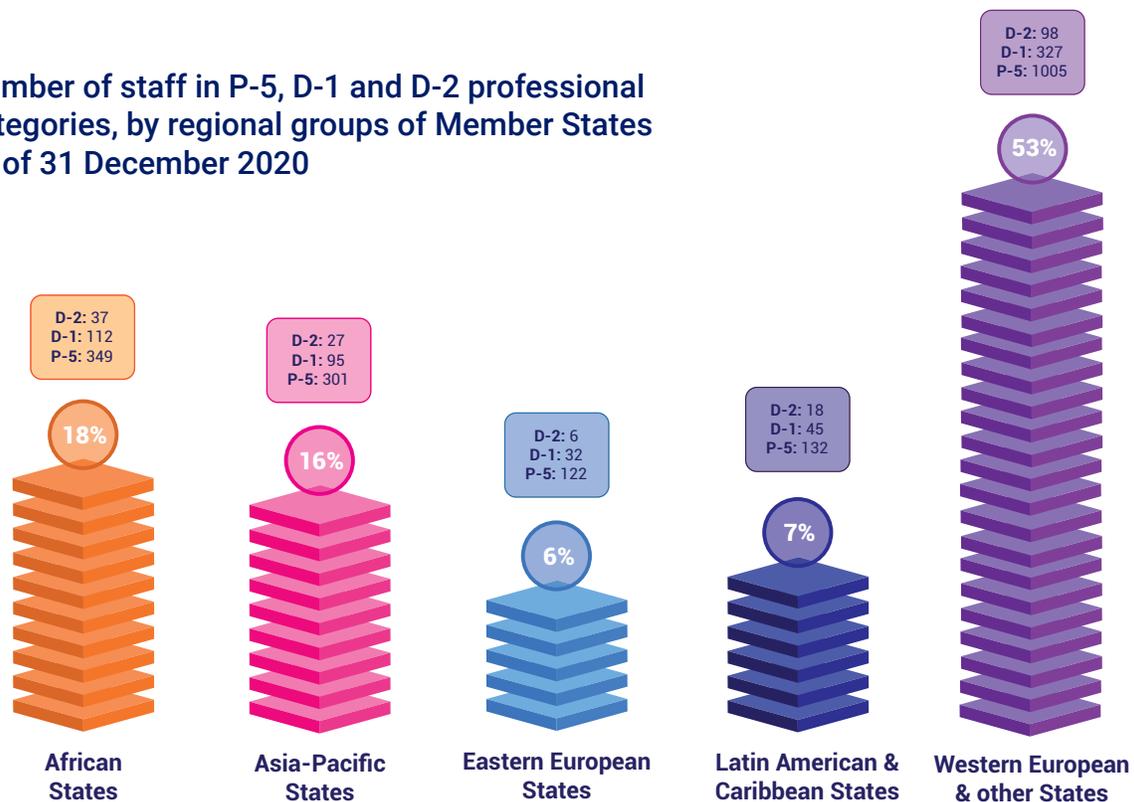
An analysis of roster data of the Organization also found that, except for the Field Service category, one regional group (Western European and other States) exceeded all other regional groups in every grade from P-1 to D-2. When considered in conjunction with the data in the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/75/591), it appears that relative parity in the ratios of applicants across different

regional groups is not reflected in the rostering of applicants.

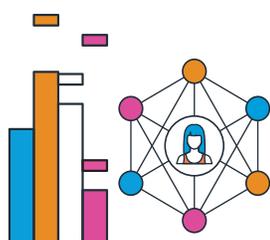
The workforce analysis and roster data also suggest that positions in the professional, substantive and decision-making levels of the Organization are disproportionately populated by staff members from one regional group. There appears to be a consistent trend, at least since 2013, leading to structural inequities in the human resources system of recruitment, promotion to P-5, D-1 and D-2, career progression and advancement and rosters in the Organization.

The Secretary-General's strategy on gender parity has helped to make significant progress in attaining parity of female and male staff members in the Secretariat. However, in the analysis of the workforce data, gender, when intersected with geographical representation, revealed a significant imbalance in the implementation of the strategy.

Number of staff in P-5, D-1 and D-2 professional categories, by regional groups of Member States as of 31 December 2020



Of all appointments in the Professional and higher categories (P-1 to D-2) between 2018 and 2020, 54.3 per cent of the female candidates appointed and 45.3 per cent of the male candidates appointed were from one regional group (Western European and other States).



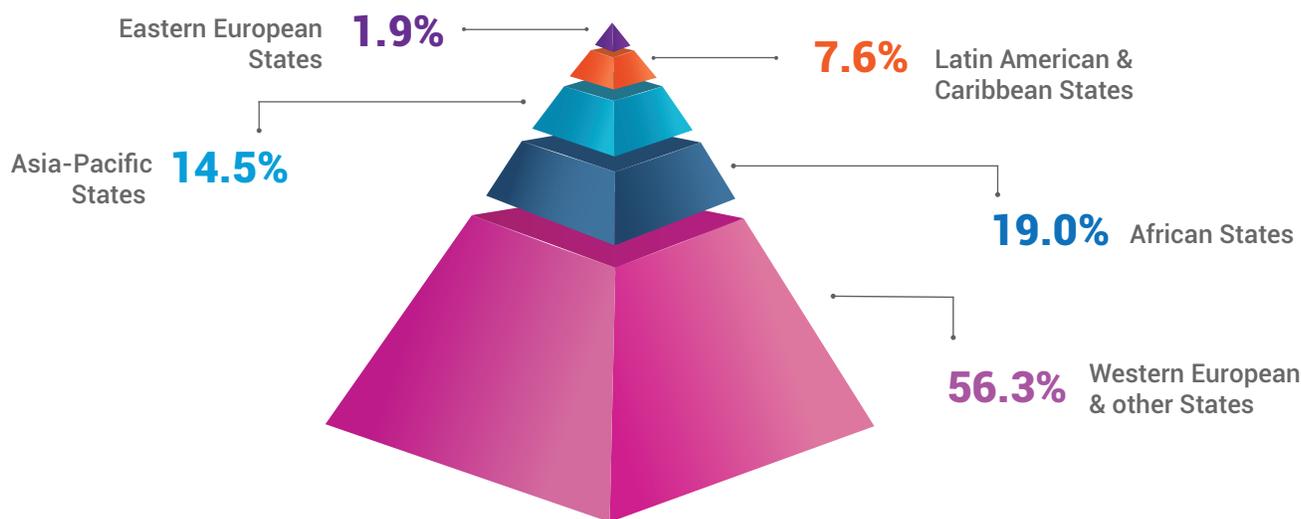
While equitable geographical representation is relevant to racial diversity, it is evident that the factors of race, colour, descent and national or ethnic origin do not always correlate with geography or region. Furthermore, most Member States are not homogeneous but are characterized by some measure of diversity.



The lack of diversity and the disparity in representation among regional groups appears to persist at all levels of the Professional and higher categories and across all types of appointments (continuing, fixed-term and temporary), suggesting that diversity should also be addressed in recruitment and appointments to non-geographical posts, as well as in the recruitment of temporary appointments.

The current analysis of workforce data, taken together with the information contained in document A/75/591, reaffirms the need to assess the Secretariat's recruitment processes and practices from a diversity perspective that incorporates both gender and geographical diversity at every stage, including in selection decisions. There is an imperative for a comprehensive and transparent examination of the reasons behind these imbalances and differences.

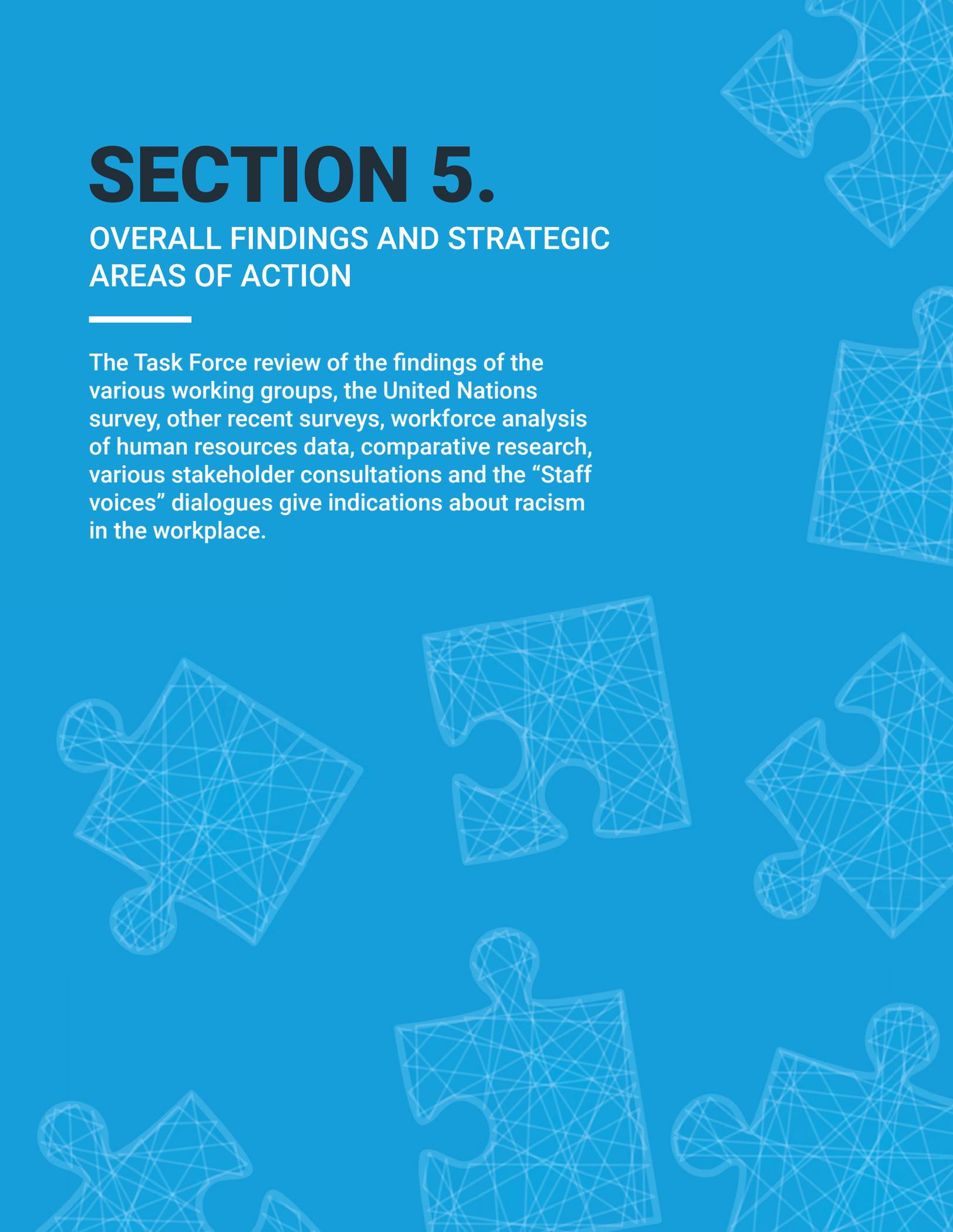
Percentage of staff promotions at the P-5, D-1 and D-2 professional categories, by regional groups, 2018-2020

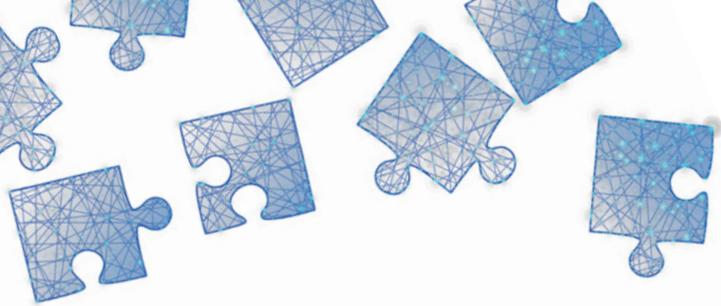


SECTION 5.

OVERALL FINDINGS AND STRATEGIC AREAS OF ACTION

The Task Force review of the findings of the various working groups, the United Nations survey, other recent surveys, workforce analysis of human resources data, comparative research, various stakeholder consultations and the “Staff voices” dialogues give indications about racism in the workplace.





OVERALL FINDINGS AND STRATEGIC AREAS OF ACTION

Overall findings

The Task Force review of the findings of the various working groups, the United Nations survey, other recent surveys, workforce analysis of human resources data, comparative research, various stakeholder consultations and the “Staff voices” dialogues give the following indications about racism in the workplace:

Staff members perceive national or ethnic origin as the primary grounds for racism and racial discrimination experienced or witnessed by staff in the Secretariat.



- Racial discrimination has an impact on various aspects of staff members’ interaction with the Organization, including staffing, career progression, learning and mobility.

Racism in the workplaces of the United Nations can also take the form of harassment, abuse of authority, exclusion, marginalization, indignities and lack of respect, implicit bias and microaggressions.



- There can be a lack of linguistic diversity and multilingualism in the workplaces and processes of the Organization, which can create barriers to access and information, recruitment and appointment, career opportunities and a sense of belonging and inclusion.
- There are imbalances and a lack of equity resulting from recruitment and selection practices, and implicit bias may be having an impact.

Staff are reluctant to report or act against racial discrimination when they witness it because they believed nothing would happen, lacked trust, or feared retaliation, possibly suggesting a low level of solidarity with those who experience racial discrimination and the lack of faith in the established mechanisms in addressing this issue.



- The legal framework and policy guidance need to be strengthened to better enable the Organization to address racism and racial discrimination.
- Discrimination based on national or ethnic origin is experienced by staff often in

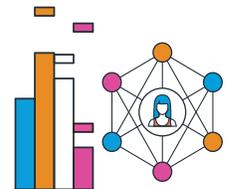
conjunction with other grounds such as race, colour, gender and language, among others, highlighting the need to consider the compounded nature of intersectional discrimination.

- Professional, substantive and decision-making roles in the Organization appear to be disproportionately staffed by one regional group (Western European and other States) over the past three years, possibly indicating structural biases. Candidates from that regional group appear to be rostered in high numbers for all levels in the Professional and higher categories of the Organization, sometimes at a ratio of 3 to 1 against candidates of other groups, suggesting the persistence of the current trends.
- There is a need for learning, listening and education about racism in all its facets

through a variety of tools, including further conversations, individual learning opportunities and structured training. Continuing learning and education about racism will be necessary to anchor an anti-racist awareness and culture in the Organization.

- There is a lack of common knowledge or awareness about racism and manifestations of discrimination in the workplace and what to do about them, and support for staff facing racism is insufficient.

Female employees appear to be affected by racial discrimination and racism in the workplace at a higher rate than their male colleagues.



Strategic areas of action

In view of its overall assessment, the Task Force underlines the urgent need for strategic action to:

Address racism and racial discrimination more directly and effectively in the Secretariat by encouraging reporting and enhancing accountability, monitoring and transparency through periodic provision of information to United Nations personnel on actions taken following reports by personnel experiencing or witnessing such behaviour or discrimination. Those who experience racism should also be protected from all forms of retaliation.

Accelerate progress towards racial diversity, equity and inclusion in all staff and non-staff categories and at all duty stations by eliminating barriers brought about by personal, interpersonal, structural and institutional racism and racial discrimination in the Organization.

Review human resources policies and practices, including staff recruitment, mobility and appointments to a higher level, to determine whether there are provisions or practices, including in decision-making, that may have a disparate impact on staff members of a particular race, colour, or ethnic or national origin.

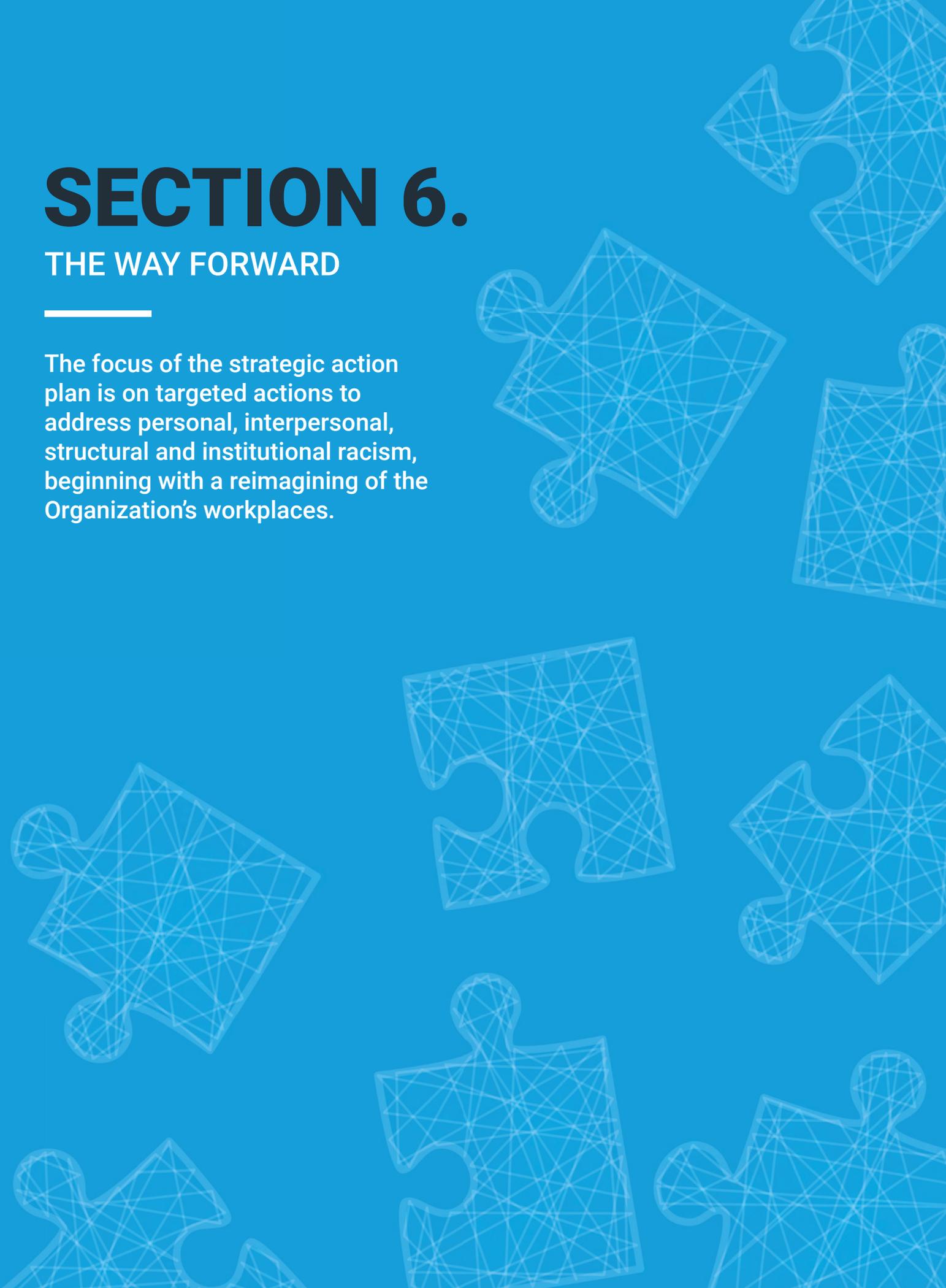
Clarify reporting mechanisms, support processes and resources available to personnel experiencing racism and racial discrimination.

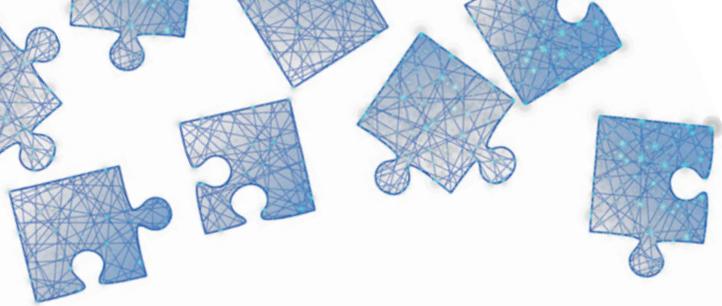
Continue dialogue, learning and perception management, given the low level of staff trust, as they will be important to changing the workplace culture in addressing interpersonal and institutional manifestations of racism in the workplace.

SECTION 6.

THE WAY FORWARD

The focus of the strategic action plan is on targeted actions to address personal, interpersonal, structural and institutional racism, beginning with a reimagining of the Organization's workplaces.

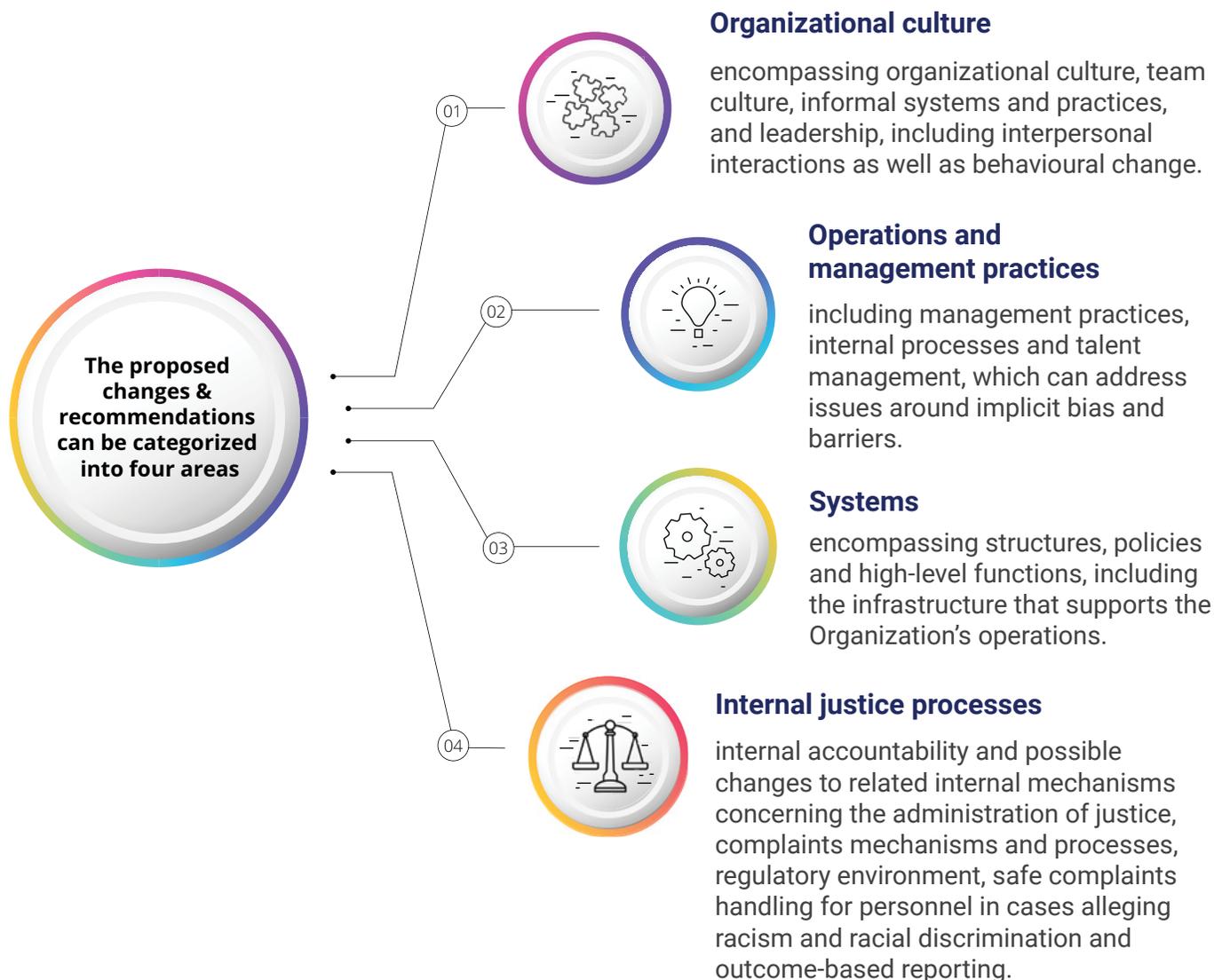




THE WAY FORWARD

The focus of the strategic action plan is on targeted actions to address personal, interpersonal, structural and institutional racism, beginning with a reimagining of the Organization’s workplaces. In doing so, the Task Force derived a number of

recommendations presented below, with some of the recommendations requiring further examination and development for possible future implementation. The recommendations have been detailed in section 7.





A. CHANGES TO THE ORGANIZATION'S CULTURE

Racism, both direct and indirect, is behaviour that will take time to address. All staff, at every level and at every duty station, must come together to create an inclusive and anti-racist workplace and working culture, including one in which those who are affected are supported and those who exhibit such behaviours are held accountable. An inclusive and anti-racist workplace culture is created through individual and collective behavioural change, including by defining expected staff and senior leadership behaviours which advance diversity, equity and inclusion.

Leadership

The Secretary-General is requested to continue to reaffirm his commitment to addressing racism and racial discrimination as an integral part of organizational strategy and success, assign responsibility, empower staff, communicate progress and hold leaders to account. In this regard, the Secretary-General is requested to designate the attainment of racial diversity, equity and inclusion a high management priority and to include it in his next senior managers' compacts, with clear timelines. Progress should be measured biannually through staff perceptions on diversity, equity and inclusion and as part of managerial performance reviews.

Specific language regarding senior leadership's role and responsibility in addressing racism at the workplace should be included in the senior managers' compacts, with accountability measures.

Leadership is critical in building the foundation for cultural change in the alignment of the Organization's values and behaviours with mandate implementation.

It is therefore imperative to build leadership capacity through the enhancement of existing leadership induction and training programmes to incorporate anti-racism, implicit bias training and diversity, equity and inclusion elements. This should be complemented by the establishment of a leadership mentoring and coaching programme that includes guidance on equitable access to learning resources for all managers.



Tone at the top is clear – racial discrimination is not tolerated. Reality and practices are different to the zero-tolerance policy.

Staff member's comments

Source: Townhall on Racism Survey Results, 31 March 2021



Learning

Leveraging existing platforms, the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance (DMSPC), in collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), should develop a comprehensive training framework, including on implicit bias, tailored to start from basic awareness and understanding towards progressive change and application of diversity management principles for the various roles and responsibilities in the Organization, namely leadership, managers, diversity advisers, staff and personnel, in different duty stations and at different levels. DMSPC should consider making implicit bias training mandatory for all personnel.

Managers should be provided with the tools and awareness to discern racism and racial discrimination in their teams. In addition, there should be accountability processes in place for managers to support a zero-tolerance approach to racism and racial discrimination or any other forms of discrimination.

DMSPC will provide education and training opportunities for staff counsellors and other support personnel (e.g. peer support) encompassing awareness about cultures, safety, humility and anti-racism.

Communication

DMSPC and the Department of Global Communications (DGC) are to develop and deploy an internal communication plan, with broad involvement of staff at all levels and in all regions, as part of a robust change management plan to promote awareness, knowledge and capability/capacity for an anti-racist workplace culture. This includes campaigns to encourage, educate and

empower staff to model desired anti-racist behaviour, including inclusion and respect for racial diversity, complemented by awareness campaigns on being an active supporter, and developing a solidarity-based approach to engaging in anti-racism efforts.

DGC and DMSPC should maintain the internal United against Racism page on iSeek and provide a digital space (a community of practice to address diversity and racism) for staff to propose suggestions and give feedback on the Organization's implementation of the strategic action plan.

DGC, DMSPC and OMS are to strengthen communications to staff about existing internal justice mechanisms, review current processes and adjust as necessary. In addition to these formal processes, consideration may also be given to putting in place reconciliation, informal resolution and "peer counsellor/support" processes. This will enhance addressing interpersonal aspects, dealing with intrapersonal biases, and accountability in the institutional and operational change areas.

Communication efforts should pay special attention to multilingualism, the use of terminology and coverage of all six official languages of the United Nations.

DMSPC, in collaboration with representatives of staff, should constitute a calendar of international United Nations (General Assembly-declared) days as markers to celebrate and recognize the diversity of the United Nations workforce and highlight how diversity strengthens the Organization in fulfilling its mandate. These can include the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March), Nelson Mandela International Day (18 July) and the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery (2 December). Similarly, all United Nations

entities, using internal communications channels, should inform and educate staff members about national days, cultural events and holidays, and appreciation of all cultures at their duty stations.

Developing awareness and advancing inclusion

All entities are to designate entity focal points on diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism at the senior leadership level (D-1/D-2) to actively and visibly model, champion, sponsor and advance anti-racist and inclusive behaviour and create an enabling work environment for the implementation of the strategic action plan.

To increase awareness and foster greater understanding of how racism and racial discrimination manifest in the workplaces of the Organization, OMS should facilitate the formalization and mainstreaming of the dialogues and awareness campaign. Staff should be encouraged to participate in the dialogues and engage on the issues, gaining

knowledge and a common understanding of how to address racism and racial discrimination and foster dignity and respect for all. All entities are encouraged to promote targeted efforts for increased awareness among staff members and create common communications and safe spaces to enhance tolerance and understanding.

DMSPC should formally recognize and collaborate with the Racial Justice Focal Points Volunteer Network by working with staff representatives in each entity to support managers' efforts to raise awareness about racism, diversity, equity and inclusion and to provide referral support services to United Nations personnel experiencing racism.

Team building and cohesion

DMSPC should explore the possibility of providing United Nations personnel with self-assessment tools to examine their own biases. The tools should be aimed at increasing self-awareness and understanding of personal biases and improving team building and cohesion.

“ Now we must take action, together, to fight to deconstruct racism, to develop anti-racist policies, to fight stereotypes and to foster diversity.

Amina J. Mohammed
Deputy Secretary-General
to the United Nations

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B. CHANGES TO THE ORGANIZATION'S OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND PRACTICES

The Organization's human resources norms, procedures and work instructions affect staff and their work daily. These must be reviewed to determine whether there are provisions or practices, including in decision-making, that may have a disparate impact on staff members of a particular race, colour, or ethnic or national origin. Human resources policies, practices and procedures that have an impact on the career opportunities and progression of staff members should be reviewed to include processes and practices that advance diversity, equity and inclusion and address racism. This entails the increased professionalization and standardization of human resources functions and services.

Policy and regulatory framework

DMSPC is to examine human resources policies, processes and procedures to include elements that promote inclusion, diversity, anti-racism and equity and counter bias, exclusion or barriers, including at the country or local level. Recruitment practices such as language requirements, testing, interview panels and assessments should be examined for bias and assessed to determine whether they may result in unfair or arbitrary exclusion based on racial, national or ethnic origin.

Recruitment and appointment to a higher level

DMSPC, in collaboration with the Department of Operational Support (DOS), should review the entire recruitment cycle to determine whether there are provisions or practices, including in decision-making, that may have a disparate impact on staff members of a particular race, colour, or ethnic or national origin. It will therefore be necessary to

review the personal history form, the criteria for drafting job openings, the assessment process, including interviews and the composition of selection panels, the shortlisting of applicants and selection methods and roster management, while establishing accountability mechanisms for human resources practitioners and hiring managers to ensure equal opportunities and equity during recruitment processes. Possible interventions to develop diversity and equity in recruitment practices include enhanced accountability in selection decisions and, for example, developing standard language to delineate and promote a culture of anti-racism at the United Nations to be included in all job openings.

The Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG) and DOS are to take action to ensure that the recruitment process, including for senior appointments, fully and fairly addresses language requirements and that the process for appointing senior officials for offices away from Headquarters, including missions, includes a language requirement to ensure fluency in the primary language of and/or the United Nations official language used in the host country, as relevant.

To increase diversity among staff, the Secretary-General is requested to continue to advocate the removal of the requirement that staff members in the General Service and related categories resign before applying and being considered for positions in the Professional category. It is recommended that these categories of staff members be accorded equal opportunity to compete for Professional positions as external candidates.

The Secretary-General is also requested to encourage countries contributing to the Junior Professional Officers programme to increase the diversity of their national applicants by reviewing their own internal outreach and selection processes.

Career support services

DMSPC is to develop a career support framework that will provide career support services to help staff to build realistic career expectations, equip them with tools to enable them to take charge of their career journeys, and provide them with information to assist them in making informed individual career decisions.

Onboarding

DMSPC and DOS are to introduce an anti-racism module in the induction programme for all new United Nations personnel. All new personnel should also be provided with contact details and information on existing

staff support mechanisms established by management, the staff unions and other interest groups for reporting all forms of discrimination that they experience or observe.

Retention and separation

DMSPC and DOS should conduct a review of the employee engagement cycle at the United Nations, from recruiting and hiring to developing and retaining employees, supported by the data gathered from engagement and other workforce survey data, to gain a full measure of the extent of racial discrimination in career progression, and assess how the implementation of the strategy on gender parity has affected staff from specific regional groups.

Performance management

DMSPC should strengthen the performance management system to include the dimension of racial discrimination as a prohibited behaviour and as an issue for dialogue and feedback, including 360-degree feedback.

DMSPC is to ensure diversity on rebuttal panels and require and provide implicit bias training to panel members; review the guidelines for rebuttal panels to include a requirement to ensure diversity and inclusivity in membership; and gather data to identify possible biases.





C. CHANGES TO THE ORGANIZATION'S SYSTEMS

As part of the review of the gains achieved through the Secretary-General's United to Reform initiative, the Administration is requested to review and, where established, to change organizational systems, structures, high-level functions, policies and strategic decision-making processes to address imbalances, bias, racial inequity and prohibited behaviours and to create systems and synergies to support and advance diversity, equity and inclusion.

Organizational structures and governance

The Secretary-General is requested to establish a dedicated office to coordinate the implementation of and advocacy for the strategic action plan on addressing racism. The office will liaise with all entities, notably DMSPC, DOS, OMS, OIOS and other concerned Secretariat entities, as well as engage with staff and their representatives, senior leadership across the Organization and external interlocutors to ensure an integrated approach to anchoring and sustaining the targeted transformation. In fulfilling its mandate, it would be staffed to carry out core functions including programme management and coordination, monitoring and evaluation, communications, outreach and engagement, and data analysis and monitoring to ensure that the action plan remains on track, evolves dynamically and becomes an organizational reference point. To ensure regular monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning, progress on the implementation of the action plan should be reported to a number of bodies, including an implementation steering group, which will be

a small but representative group of senior officials. The implementation steering group will have a time-limited mandate linked to the implementation phases of the action plan.

The new office should develop a clear methodology and regularly monitor specific indicators for the collection and analysis of data and the evaluation of progress against specific objectives and benchmarks that should be adopted for that purpose.

Definitions, data collection, analysis and monitoring

To enhance transparency, all entities are to publish, on both internal and external websites, the names, photos, titles and regional group and level of all senior leaders at the D-1 level and above, and eventually publish detailed organization charts of units with names and titles of staff members.

DMSPC should include questions in the annual staff engagement survey on racial discrimination, inclusion and diversity. The new office should be the custodian of a database which includes feedback from staff.

All entities are to publish monthly reports for circulation to all staff through their internal communication channels on all new hires, lateral reassignments, placement of staff on special projects or assignments, temporary assignments (both internal and external), promotions and separations from service.

DMSPC should consider developing a set of measurable goals on diversity and inclusion and management accountability indicators to monitor each Secretariat entity's effectiveness and the impact of the strategic action plan.

DMSPC will provide a standard definition of the terms "racism", "racial discrimination", "anti-racism" and "implicit racial bias". It will also develop policy frameworks and training and establish data collection, analysis and

monitoring processes. DMSPC may also work with other organizations in the United Nations common system to develop system-wide terminology.

In addition, DMSPC will examine the use of terms such as "headquarters" and "field", "national" and "international", and "developing" and "developed" to enhance inclusion. A unified terminology will enhance a common understanding of the Organization's ability to measure, monitor and address implicit biases in the workplace. It will also help to address language, definitions and terms affecting culture, operational practices and procedures. These definitions should be Secretariat-specific, taking into consideration the international context, frameworks and research.





D. CHANGES RELATING TO THE INTERNAL JUSTICE PROCESSES

Internal accountability mechanisms

DMSPC, in coordination with the Office of Legal Affairs (OLA) and OIOS, should review the current accountability and internal justice processes to strengthen the reporting and investigation process and outcome on claims of racism and racial discrimination. It will also be essential to increase awareness about reporting mechanisms and enhance monitoring, evaluation and accountability tools and to consolidate the application of the policy on prohibited conduct.

In coordination with other offices, DMSPC is to publish a guide in the official languages on how and where to report discrimination and racism in the United Nations workplace. Consideration should also be given to publishing the guide in other languages spoken at United Nations duty stations.

DMSPC, in coordination with OIOS and the Ethics Office, should undertake a sample review of past allegations of racism to derive lessons learned, inform the administration of future cases and accountability measures and address retaliation.

To bridge the trust deficit (and fear of retaliation) and address the issue of underreporting of complaints and issues concerning the handling of grievances, DMSPC, in consultation with other entities, should develop an awareness campaign about complaints and redress, keeping United

Nations staff and personnel aware of the outcomes of claims of racism. DMSPC should compile experiences and perspectives, provide support to staff affected by racism in the workplace and explore the development of an internal dashboard to track allegations of racism, promote accountability and leverage emerging evidence.



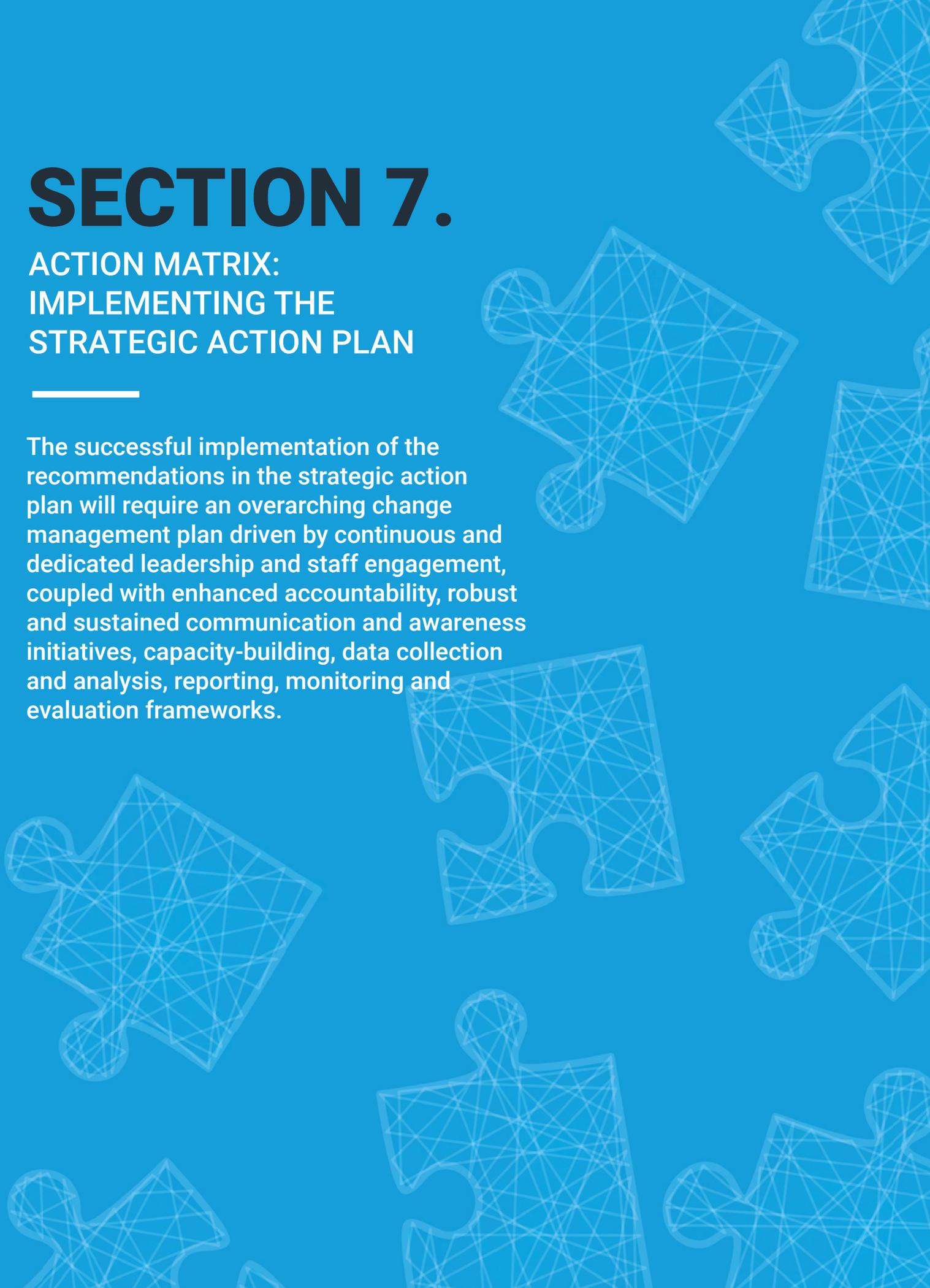
DMSPC and OIOS are to review the fact-finding and investigations of claims of racism and to consider strengthening internal capacity or engaging specialists to respond to allegations of racism and racial discrimination.

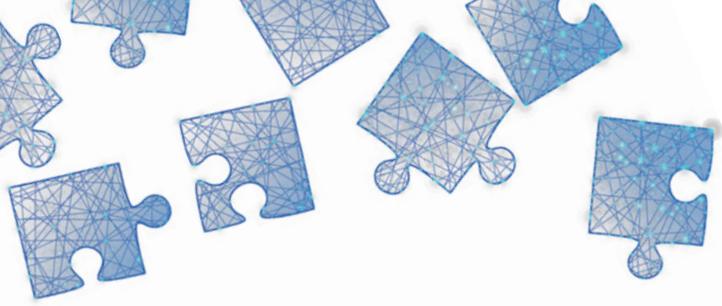
EOSG, DMSPC, OLA and OIOS are to review Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2019/8 to address racism and racial discrimination and promote diversity, equality, inclusion and equity.

SECTION 7.

ACTION MATRIX: IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

The successful implementation of the recommendations in the strategic action plan will require an overarching change management plan driven by continuous and dedicated leadership and staff engagement, coupled with enhanced accountability, robust and sustained communication and awareness initiatives, capacity-building, data collection and analysis, reporting, monitoring and evaluation frameworks.





ACTION MATRIX: IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

The suggested time frames for implementation of the recommendations are indicated as short-term (0–12 months); medium-term (12–18 months); or long-term (18–24 months).

“ Addressing racism and racial discrimination in our workplace will require strong and sustained leadership at every level. It is a cultural shift that will also require everyone in the United Nations to be engaged and collaborate as we move this important discussion forward in every duty station.



Catherine Pollard

Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance
Chair of the Task Force on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for All in the United Nations Secretariat

A. CHANGES TO THE ORGANIZATION'S CULTURE

Action	Responsible office	Related action	Expected result	Indicator	Implementation timeline
1. Leadership					
<p>1.1</p> <p>Designate the attainment of racial diversity and inclusion a high management priority at all personnel categories and include it in the next senior managers' compacts with the Secretary-General</p>	<p>EOSG, DMSPC and all entities</p>	<p>Track the perceptions of United Nations personnel on diversity, equity and inclusion in the Organization</p>	<p>Enhanced and visible racial diversity, equity and inclusion at all personnel categories, including at senior managerial positions at the P-5, D-1 and D-2 levels</p>	<p>Positive perception from United Nations personnel of Organization's efforts to address racism and racial discrimination and support racial diversity, equity and inclusion in all mandate implementation activities</p>	<p>Short-term</p>
<p>1.2</p> <p>Include language in senior managers' compacts with the Secretary-General regarding senior leadership's role and responsibility in addressing racism at the workplace</p>	<p>EOSG, DMSPC and all entities</p>	<p>Strengthen existing accountability measures to effectively address racism and racial discrimination at the workplace and, as part of their managerial responsibilities, hold leaders to account when no action is taken</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All senior leaders internally and publicly champion anti-racism, diversity, equity and inclusion Enhanced trust in senior leadership's commitment to addressing racism in the United Nations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Perceived claims of racism are addressed in an effective and timely manner Enhanced trust by United Nations personnel in the Organization's commitment to addressing racism 	<p>Short-term</p>
<p>1.3</p> <p>Build leadership capacity</p>	<p>DMSPC and OHCHR</p>	<p>Enhancement of existing leadership training programmes to incorporate anti-racism, implicit bias training and diversity, equity and inclusion elements</p>	<p>Embodiment of an anti-racist culture by all United Nations leaders</p>	<p>Enhanced trust by United Nations personnel in the Organization's commitment to addressing racism and promoting diversity, equity and inclusion at the workplace to addressing racism</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>

Action	Responsible office	Related action	Expected result	Indicator	Implementation timeline
2. Learning					
Develop a comprehensive training framework tailored to start from a basic awareness and understanding of diversity, equity and inclusion	DMSPC and OHCHR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a training framework tailored to start from a basic understanding to progressive change and application of diversity management principles for the various roles in the Organization Implicit bias training should be mandatory for all personnel and part of the induction programme for new personnel 	All United Nations personnel are knowledgeable on how to embed diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace and in mandate implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All United Nations personnel complete implicit bias training Enhanced accountability and racial diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplaces of the Organization 	Long-term
2.1					
Develop a training module tailored to managers on how to address racism at the workplace	DMSPC	Provide managers with the necessary training on how to identify and address racial discrimination in the workplace	Enhanced trust and accountability in addressing racism at the United Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll-out of a training module on addressing racism and racial discrimination All managers are provided with the tools necessary to address racism 	Long-term
2.2					
Provide education and training opportunities for staff counsellors and other support personnel (e.g. peer support)	DMSPC	Develop a training framework encompassing awareness about cultures, safety, humility and intelligence, including cultural competence and behaviours	Enhanced cultural awareness about cultures, safety, humility and intelligence in the context of anti-racism, diversity and inclusion	Staff counsellors and peer support personnel are well informed and equipped to support United Nations personnel when they experience racism to addressing racism	Long-term
2.3					

Action	Responsible office	Related action	Expected result	Indicator	Implementation timeline
<p>Develop and launch an internal communication plan, with broad involvement of staff at all levels, as part of a robust change management plan</p>	<p>DGC and DMSPC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop campaign materials to encourage, educate and empower United Nations personnel to model desired values and behaviours Provide a platform for staff to voice their views on diversity, equity and inclusion, e.g. through the "Staff voices" initiative 	<p>Promotion of awareness, knowledge and capacity to address racism in the Secretariat</p>	<p>A more cohesive staff workplace culture</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>
<p>Provide a permanent electronic communication channel and repository of educational materials for United Nations personnel</p>	<p>DGC and DMSPC</p>	<p>Formalize and retain the United Against Racism page on iSeek as the primary source of information on the implementation of the strategic action plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness and provision of resources and information on how to enhance diversity, equity and inclusion and address racism Staff are granted an avenue to voice their views on the implementation of the strategic action plan 	<p>Increased awareness on how to address racism at the workplace, and United Nations personnel are kept informed of progress in implementing the strategic action plan</p>	<p>Short-term</p>
<p>Develop innovative communication to strengthen staff engagement on the existing internal justice mechanisms, review the current processes, capabilities and capacity and adjust them to have specific and more streamlined approaches to dealing with racial and other forms of discrimination. In addition to these formal processes, consider setting up, if needed, support mechanisms to supplement the existing system of administration of justice, such as reconciliation and "peer counsellor/support" processes</p>	<p>DGC, DMSPC and OMS</p>	<p>Take an active approach in educating staff members on the role and mandate of both the formal and the informal mechanisms in the system of administration of justice, as well as other resources and how to gain access to them</p>	<p>Interpersonal aspects are tackled, intrapersonal biases are dealt with and accountability is added in the institutional and operational change areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Processes, capabilities and capacity in OMS, staff counselling and other staff support services are reviewed to ensure their ability to provide adequate support to deal with issues of discrimination, including racial discrimination. Review of each resource office will be conducted by external experts or through self-evaluation An assessment is made of other resources and processes that could be put in place to supplement existing informal resolution avenues, and staff are informed 	<p>Long-term</p>

3. Communication

3.1

3.2

3.3

Action	Responsible office	Related action	Expected result	Indicator	Implementation timeline
Constitute a calendar of international United Nations (General Assembly-declared) days that highlight diversity	DMSPC and staff unions	Develop a calendar of international days	Increased awareness and knowledge of the diversity of the United Nations workplace	Major events are celebrated by staff at various headquarters and duty stations each year	Medium-term
Foster awareness and appreciation of cultures at all duty stations	All duty stations	Use internal communication channels to inform and educate United Nations personnel about national days, cultural events and holidays, music and literature	Increased awareness and knowledge of the diversity of the duty stations and an appreciation of diversity at the national level	United Nations personnel are well informed about cultural events and the diversity of the duty station where they serve	Short-term
4. Developing awareness and advancing inclusion					
Designate a focal point on racial diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism at the senior leadership level (D-1/D-2) in all entities	DMSPC and all entities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DMSPC to provide terms of reference for the role Head of entity to appoint a senior leader at the D-1/D-2 level as the focal point on diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism and advise DMSPC of the appointment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operationalization of the strategic action plan through the development of departmental/office action plans addressing racism Enhanced focus on promoting and institutionalization of inclusion, diversity, anti-racism and equity in the workplace Enhanced accountability and reporting Enhanced trust between management and staff members 	Solidarity at all levels in addressing racism and racial discrimination at the entity level and in the celebration and promotion of racial diversity, equity and inclusion	Medium-term

Action	Responsible office	Related action	Expected result	Indicator	Implementation timeline
<p>Continue and begin mainstreaming the dialogues and awareness campaign on racism in the workplace</p>	<p>OMS and all entities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On a transitional basis, OMS to continue with the dialogues and awareness campaign until 2022. Beyond 2022, OMS will include the dialogues in its portfolio of services, the same as the civility cares to promote dignity for all During 2022, initiate and conduct knowledge transfer and training of new dialogue hosts as identified by the Task Force. Share expertise and guidance on how to hold such dialogues in safe spaces. Continue systematic feedback to the relevant stakeholders in the Organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutionalization (mainstreaming) of dialogues within the institution Increased awareness and a greater understanding of how racism and racial discrimination manifests itself in the Organization Staff members are encouraged to engage with the issue with knowledge and a common understanding of how to address racism and racial discrimination Increased participation by United Nations personnel in the dialogue and awareness initiatives 	<p>Increased staff awareness and solidarity on addressing racism and racial discrimination in the workplaces of the Organization</p>	<p>Medium- to long-term</p>
<p>Institutionalize the Racial Justice Focal Points Volunteer Network</p>	<p>DMSPC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In collaboration with the staff unions and other interest groups, formally recognize the Racial Justice Focal Points Volunteer Network Provide terms of reference to support the designated focal points Provide training to the focal points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of peer support in gaining access to referral and support services by United Nations personnel at all duty stations, including on actions that can be taken to support staff mental health and well-being Enhanced advocacy of inclusive behaviour and creation of an enabling work environment for the implementation of the Secretary-General's strategic action plan 	<p>Increased support to staff who experience any form of discrimination, including racial discrimination</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>

4.2

4.3

Action	Responsible office	Related action	Expected result	Indicator	Implementation timeline
5. Team building and cohesion					
Explore the possibility of providing United Nations personnel with self-assessment tools to examine their own biases	DMSPC	Explore the possibility of either developing or using external confidential tools for United Nations personnel to self-assess and examine their own biases	Increased awareness of personal biases	Enhanced self-awareness and team cohesion	Long-term

5.1

B. CHANGES TO THE ORGANIZATION'S OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Action	Responsible office	Related action	Expected result	Indicator	Implementation timeline
1. Policy and regulatory framework					
<p>As applicable, include provisions that promote diversity, equity and inclusion and address racism in all human resources policies, processes and procedures</p>	DMSPC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that the human resources regulatory framework embeds anti-racism, diversity, equity and inclusion Indicator Ensure that all human resources strategies, i.e. on gender parity, disability inclusion and geographical diversity, include elements on diversity, equity and inclusion and anti-racism 	Operationalization of diversity, equity and inclusion at all levels in the application of human resources rules and regulations	Application of human resources norms is perceived by United Nations personnel to be fair and devoid of racial bias	Long-term
2. Recruitment and appointment to a higher level					
<p>Review the entire recruitment cycle, including roster management, to address bias and ensure full transparency and accountability</p>	DMSPC and DOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building on the "inclusive hiring project", review the personal history form, the criteria for drafting job openings, including job requirements, assessment, including interviews and composition of the selection panels, criteria for the shortlisting of applicants, recommended candidates, building of rosters and selection/decision methods Establish accountability mechanisms for human resources practitioners and hiring managers at key stages of the recruitment cycle to ensure equal opportunities, absence of barriers, and diversity and equity during the recruitment processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A fairer, equitable and transparent recruitment and appointment process Rosters that reflect diversity and equity Increased diversity, equity and inclusion at all personnel levels, including in senior positions (P-5, D-1 and D-2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An updated staff mobility policy framework that enables diversity, equity and inclusion and addresses racial bias in the recruitment process Updated guidelines on the rostering process that address points at which biases may hinder the goal of diversity and equity 	Long-term

Action	Responsible office	Related action	Expected result	Indicator	Implementation timeline
Regularly monitor the selection decisions of entities	DMSPC	Monitor selection decisions of entities to ensure diversity and equity in the selection of United Nations personnel at all categories, including at the senior levels (P-5, D-1 and D-2)	Selection decisions that are reflective of the diversity of the membership of the Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced accountability in selection decisions Diversity and equitable selection decisions in the appointment of United Nations personnel 	Medium- to long-term
2.2					
Take action to ensure that the recruitment processes consider the official working languages of duty stations in the appointment of United Nations personnel, including in the appointment of senior officials at offices away from Headquarters and missions	EOSG/DMSPC/DOS	Include a language requirement in the recruitment process as necessary	Fluency in the language of the host country, if it is an official United Nations language	Candidates for job openings in Inspira are allowed to take assessment tests in either English or French	Short-term
2.3					
3. Career support services					
Provide career support services that will help staff to build realistic career expectations, equip them with tools that enable them to take charge of their career journeys and provide them with information that assists them in making informed individual career decisions	DMSPC	Building on ongoing efforts, develop a career support framework for staff members at all levels that takes into account diversity, equity and inclusion and that is devoid of racial discrimination in its application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff members from every race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin are granted an equal and equitable opportunity to navigate the career options in the Organization Staff members are provided with realistic career expectations 	Staff gain a sense of career satisfaction and feel valued and fully engaged in the work of the Organization	Medium- to long-term
3.1					
4. Onboarding					
Introduce a module in the induction programmes on anti-racism and on the promotion of diversity, equity and inclusion	DMSPC and DOS	Develop a module on anti-racism for delivery at all induction programmes at all levels	New United Nations personnel are informed of the Organization's zero-tolerance policy on all forms of discrimination, including racial discrimination	Updated induction package	Short- to medium-term
4.1					

Action	Responsible office	Related action	Expected result	Indicator	Implementation timeline
<p>Provide all new United Nations personnel with contact details and information on existing staff support mechanisms for reporting and addressing discrimination at the workplace</p>	<p>All entities</p>	<p>Provide all new United Nations personnel with contact details of where to obtain support in the event that they experience any form of discrimination, including racial discrimination, at the workplace and duty station</p>	<p>All new United Nations staff are well informed of where to access support in the event of an alleged incident of discrimination</p>	<p>Increased support to staff who experience any form of discrimination, including racial discrimination</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>
5. Retention and separation					
<p>Analyse the employee engagement cycle to gain a full measure of the extent of racial discrimination in career progression</p>	<p>DMSPC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As part of monitoring and compliance, use data to determine if there are particular points in the employee life cycle where there is a greater attrition rate for certain nationalities, or ethnic and racial groups Collect data to analyse the causes of separation from service, including resignations, and develop appropriate strategies for retention 	<p>Retention of high-value staff members, as well as addressing any form of discrimination that may result in the resignation of staff</p>	<p>A study on reasons for attrition while taking into account the gender, racial and national background of the staff members is completed</p>	<p>Long-term</p>
6. Performance management					
<p>Strengthen the performance management system to include a performance evaluation mechanism that explicitly measures anti-racism as a means of encouraging ongoing dialogues and providing feedback, including 360-degree feedback, on a consistent basis (throughout the cycle) to mitigate racism at the workplace</p>	<p>DMSPC</p>	<p>Ensure that the performance management system enhances dialogue at every level on issues of racism, diversity and inclusion</p>	<p>Enhanced accountability at all levels in addressing racism and all forms of discrimination</p>	<p>Commitment to diversity, inclusion and anti-racism is included as an assessment metric in the new 360-degree appraisal mechanism</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>

Action	Responsible office	Related action	Expected result	Indicator	Implementation timeline
<p>Ensure diversity on rebuttal panels and provide implicit bias training to panel members</p>	<p>DMSPC</p>	<p>Review the guidelines for performance of rebuttal panels with a view to including a requirement to ensure diversity and inclusivity in the membership, as well as gather data to identify possible biases in the cases brought before the panels</p>	<p>A more transparent and fair performance rebuttal process</p>	<p>All members of rebuttal panels undergo mandatory unconscious bias training</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>

6.2

C. CHANGES TO THE ORGANIZATION'S SYSTEMS

Action	Responsible office	Related action	Expected result	Indicator	Implementation timeline
Establish an office to coordinate the implementation of the strategic action plan	EOSG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The office would coordinate the full implementation of the strategic action plan as set out herein Develop a set of clear and measurable goals on diversity and inclusion and management accountability indicators to monitor effectiveness and impact of the strategic action plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of the strategic action plan is adhered to by all departments and offices throughout the Secretariat Activities of all Secretariat entities in the implementation of the strategic action plan are guided and monitored Remedial actions are taken in a timely manner to address regress or impediments that may hinder the full implementation of the strategic action plan 	<p>An office is created with extrabudgetary funds and is submitted for funding through the regular budget in the next financial year. The Office is fully staffed to enable it to carry out: (a) coordinating the implementation of the action plan; (b) drafting guidelines on anti-racism for all requesting entities; (c) developing a set of clear and measurable goals on diversity and inclusion and management accountability indicators; (d) reviewing all human resources policies, processes and procedures to eliminate biases; (e) providing expert advice to strengthen internal justice mechanisms to address grievances related to racism and racial discrimination; and (f) reporting to the Secretary-General, through the implementation steering group, on progress in the implementation of the strategic action plan</p>	Short-to medium-term

1.1

Action	Responsible office	Related action	Expected result	Indicator	Implementation timeline
<p>Require the publication by all entities, on both internal and external websites, of the photos, names, titles, regional group and level of all senior leaders at the D-1 level and above</p>	<p>All entities</p>	<p>All entities to publish a list of the senior leadership on the internal and external websites</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced transparency and staff provided with information on the composition of their senior leadership at every level Enhanced accountability 	<p>All departments and entities publish photos, names, titles, regional group and level of all senior leaders at the D-1 level and above</p>	<p>Short-term</p>
<p>Include questions in the annual staff engagement survey on racism, inclusion and diversity</p>	<p>DMSPC</p>	<p>Since addressing racism is a long-term initiative, include questions on racism in the staff engagement survey to gauge staff perceptions on the issue</p>	<p>Continued focus by management and staff in addressing racism in the workplace in the long term</p>	<p>Annual surveys are rolled out with questions for gauging staff perception of racism and the progress being made to address the issue</p>	<p>Short-term</p>
<p>Monthly publication of new appointments and staff movements at all levels</p>	<p>All entities and DMSPC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the interim, all entities to publish monthly reports for circulation to all staff through their internal communication channels on all new hires; lateral reassignments; placement of staff on special projects, temporary assignments (both internal and external), promotions and separations from service. DMSPC will provide entities with a template for publishing all new recruitment and staff placements In the long term, DMSPC to establish a centralized reporting mechanism for publication on (Seek of all new appointments and staff movements at all levels and at all duty stations 	<p>Enhanced transparency and accountability and established trend in the hiring practices of entities, which will contribute to monitoring progress</p>	<p>Monthly entity-level reports with details of appointments and movement of staff</p>	<p>Short/long-term</p>

2. Definitions, data collection, analysis and monitoring

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Action	Responsible office	Related action	Expected result	Indicator	Implementation timeline
<p>Review certain nomenclature used in the United Nations system</p>	<p>DMSPC and all entities</p>	<p>Review and define commonly used terms such as diversity, equity and inclusion terms for use in the United Nations system, policy frameworks, training and other processes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced common understanding of the terms in addressing discrimination, including racial discrimination Use of inclusive language and terms 	<p>A glossary of terms related to diversity, equity and inclusion is issued as an administrative instruction for all departments/entities of the Secretariat</p>	<p>Long-term</p>
<p>Reporting and accountability</p>	<p>DMSPC</p>	<p>Develop measurable goals on diversity and inclusion and management accountability indicators</p>	<p>Enhanced accountability for addressing racism and enhancing diversity, equity and inclusion</p>	<p>Measurable goals on diversity and inclusion and management accountability indicators are developed by the new Office and reported annually to the Executive Committee and the Management Committee</p>	<p>Medium-term</p>

2.4

2.5

D. CHANGES RELATING TO THE INTERNAL JUSTICE PROCESSES

Action	Responsible office	Related action	Expected result	Indicator	Implementation timeline
1. Internal accountability mechanisms					
<p>Entities involved in the disciplinary, accountability and system of justice mechanisms should take steps to improve their ability to record, retrieve and analyse data on discrimination, including racism and racial discrimination</p>	<p>DMSPC, OLA and OIOS</p>	<p>Assess the Organization's capacity to investigate, monitor and report incidents of racism and their eventual outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization's capacity to address racism is strengthened Improved trust and accountability in addressing racism 	<p>Internal oversight mechanisms are reviewed and strengthened</p>	<p>Long-term</p>
<p>Undertake a coordinated approach in developing and publishing a guide in all official languages on where to report all forms of discrimination, including racism, at the workplace</p>	<p>DMSPC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide personnel with clear guidelines on where and how to report incidents of discrimination, including racism and racial discrimination Guidelines on how to report incidents of discrimination should be simple, clear and published in an easily accessible internal website, such as the United against Racism page on iSeek 	<p>Enhanced trust and accountability in addressing racism in the United Nations</p>	<p>Publication of a guide in the official languages on how and where to report discrimination and racism, with consideration to publishing the guide in other languages spoken at United Nations duty stations</p>	<p>Long-term</p>
<p>Undertake an external independent sample review of past complaints of racism</p>	<p>DMSPC in coordination with OIOS</p>	<p>Review of past complaints of racism to derive lessons learned and inform the administration of future cases and accountability measures and address retaliation</p>	<p>Enhanced handling of complaints, reporting, trust and accountability in addressing racism in the Secretariat</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A defined framework for investigating complaints arising from racism or racial discrimination Increased confidence in the reporting mechanisms Enhanced accountability 	<p>Medium/long-term</p>

Action	Responsible office	Related action	Expected result	Indicator	Implementation timeline
<p>Review the framework for fact-finding and investigations of claims of racism</p>	<p>DMSPC and OIOS</p>	<p>DMSPC and OIOS to review the framework for fact-finding and investigations of claims of racism and to consider strengthening internal capacity or engaging specialists to respond to allegations of racism and racial discrimination</p>	<p>Enhanced capacity to investigate racism and racial discrimination</p>	<p>Enhanced trust in the internal justice system in investigating claims of racism</p>	<p>Medium/long-term</p>
<p>Review ST/SGB/2019/8 on addressing discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority</p>	<p>EOSG, DMSPC, OLA and OIOS</p>	<p>Provide a definition of racism and racial discrimination and how it manifests in the workplace</p>	<p>A standard definition of racism and racial discrimination and approach to identifying and addressing it</p>	<p>Increased reporting and trust in addressing racism and racial discrimination in the Organization</p>	<p>Short/medium-term</p>

1.4

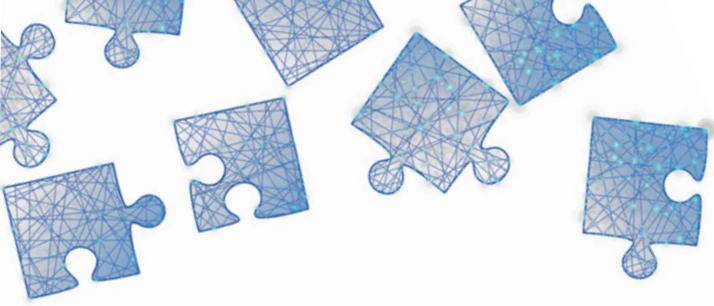
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SECTION 8.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

Sustained monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning are paramount to ensuring the full implementation of the strategic action plan towards its desired objective.





MONITORING AND EVALUATING THE STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

Continuous monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning

Sustained monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning are paramount to ensuring the full implementation of the strategic action plan towards its desired objective. While the implementation of the plan will vary from duty station to duty station and from one entity to another, unwavering commitment from senior leaders, including from all managers and supervisors, in tracking the operationalization of the plan will also be crucial in removing barriers and increasing equitable access to opportunities in the Organization for all staff in addressing racism.

The tracking of the plan will entail:



The process will be aimed at:

1. Ensuring transparency and accountability in the implementation of the strategic action plan
2. Measuring progress towards diversity, equity and inclusion as a means of belonging, sustainability and addressing racism in the Organization
3. Monitoring the impact of the plan by measuring the initial responses and reactions to the strategy and its immediate short-term effects
4. Ensuring the timely operationalization of the plan and providing advice or interventions when necessary, tracking selection decisions and activities that support racial diversity, equity and inclusion and address racism
5. Facilitating the review and revision of the plan every two years

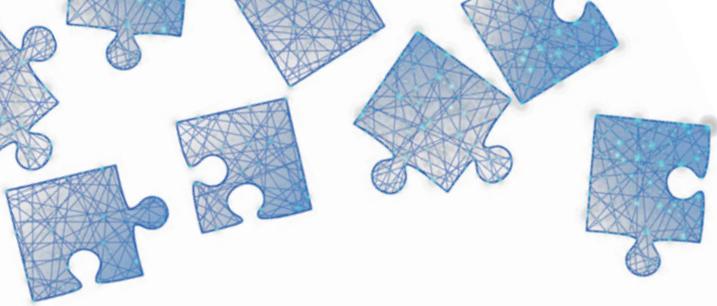
Progress in the implementation of the strategic action plan should be reported quarterly to the implementation steering group and biannually to the Executive Committee and the Management Committee, and to legislative bodies through the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Composition of the Secretariat: staff demographics”. Staff should also be kept apprised on a regular basis of progress in the implementation of the plan.

SECTION 9.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND CHALLENGES AND MITIGATION MEASURES

United Nations personnel have high expectations of racism and racial discrimination being addressed in the Organization as a matter of priority, with immediate and visible results.





POTENTIAL RISKS AND CHALLENGES AND MITIGATION MEASURES



The implementation of the strategic action plan may be presented with several risks and challenges:

HIGH EXPECTATIONS IN ADDRESSING RACISM IN THE ORGANIZATION

Risk: United Nations personnel have high expectations of racism and racial discrimination being addressed in the Organization as a matter of priority, with immediate and visible results.

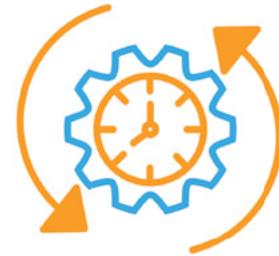
Mitigation measures: To meet expectations and ensure transparency and continuous engagement of United Nations personnel in addressing racism, it is imperative that the overall objectives of the plan be linked to measurable key results; expectations be set early on the long-term nature of the strategy; accountability be enforced at all levels in its implementation; continuous feedback be sought from staff; all key stakeholders be leveraged in the implementation of the strategy; and, through a robust communication strategy, staff be kept informed of the status of implementation of the plan.



1

2

TRUST IN THE ADMINISTRATION'S COMMITMENT TO ADDRESSING INSTITUTIONAL AND STRUCTURAL RACISM



Risk: The strategic action plan may be perceived as tokenism or taking a short-term intervention approach to addressing racism, whereby management may appear to only be willing to do just enough for the optics without meaningful and deliberate institutional and structural changes, thereby deepening staff mistrust in the Administration's commitment to addressing the issue in the Organization.

Mitigation measures: The Organization's leadership should continue to demonstrate its unwavering commitment to the full implementation of the strategic action plan. The plan and its matrix should be subject to continuous monitoring, evaluation, accountability and reviews for lessons learned. Furthermore, transparency in the implementation of the plan will be paramount to building trust and to showcasing trends in the reporting of perceived incidents of racism and their outcomes and in the application of human resources norms.

DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND REPORTING



Risk: As the Organization does not gather race-related information on its personnel, it may face challenges in establishing measurable key results and targeting interventions which specifically focus on addressing racism and racial discrimination; monitoring the fair and equitable application of human resources rules and regulations on the appointment, promotion and retention in service of United Nations personnel; and in measuring racial inclusion.

Mitigation measures: A key factor in measuring success in the implementation of the plan will be hinged on the collection of performance data and their analysis and reporting against racial and ethnic identities. The Organization should consider innovative ways of collecting racial data on a voluntary basis for analysis, including through the staff engagement survey.

3

4

SHARED VISION AND COMMON APPROACH IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN



Risk: Entity-level leadership may work at cross purposes (resistance to change) with each other and the strategic action plan unless they have a shared vision and a common narrative on the importance of implementing the plan to its fullest.

Mitigation measures: In the implementation of the strategic action plan, a similar approach to the application of the strategy on gender parity should be taken. Specifically, the Secretary-General should consider communicating to all leaders that addressing racism and racial discrimination is a high management priority for the Organization. This should be coupled with tools devoted to supporting entities in the application of the plan and in holding managers to account on its implementation.

Furthermore, and noting that addressing racism will require the engagement of all United Nations personnel, all leaders, in addition to their own participation, should encourage United Nations personnel from every race, colour, or ethnic or national origin to participate in the dialogue and awareness campaign to gain knowledge and a common understanding of how to address this ill and to foster a dignified and civil work environment for all.

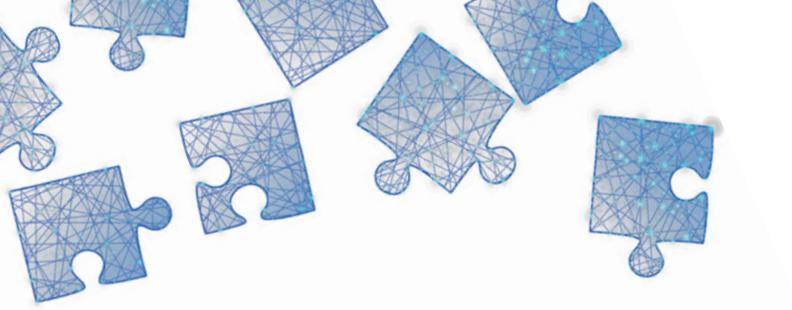
LIMITED RESOURCES



Risk: The implementation of the strategic action plan may face resource limitations, both financial and expert human resources, and various challenges that may result in delays in its immediate operationalization and the attainment of the desired outcomes within the suggested time frames.

Mitigation measures: It is imperative to obtain appropriate funding for the plan from the start through the proper legislative bodies, with temporary funding being secured in the interim to support its operationalization. Ultimately, efforts should be undertaken to ensure the availability of financial and human resources to support the immediate and full implementation of the plan as a matter of priority. The plan contains proposed actions with suggested defined timelines that are subject to execution, based on the availability of funding and expertise.

5



ANNEXES

Annexes to the report (listed below) are available on the website at:
<https://iseek.un.org/unitedagainstracism>.

- Annex 1. Membership of the Task Force on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for All in the United Nations
- Annex 2. Terms of reference of the Task Force on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for All in the United Nations
- Annex 3. Results of the 2020 United Nations survey on racism



For more information please visit:

<https://iseek.un.org/unitedagainstracism>