



PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

Hundred and Third Session

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INFORMATION ON JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL OFFICER/ASSOCIATE EXPERT/ASSOCIATE PROFESSIONAL OFFICER PROGRAMMES IN UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM ORGANIZATIONS (JIU/REP/2008/2)

A. INTRODUCTION

1. In follow up to the review by the Programme Committee at its 102nd Session of the document ref JIU/REP/2008/2: *Junior Professional Officer/Associate Expert/Associate Professional Officer Programmes in United Nations System Organizations*, an overview of implementation of the FAO APO Programme is provided, as requested by the Committee, as well as information on other opportunities for young professionals at FAO.

B. OVERVIEW OF FAO'S APO PROGRAMME

2. For the last 55 years FAO has been providing young professionals an opportunity to gain hands-on work experience in FAO through structured on-the-job learning and formal training courses. Throughout their assignments, APOs receive supervision and guidance from experienced FAO officers (staff member).

3. The APO Programme is based on sponsorship of young professionals by governments¹ and other institutions. Partners can sponsor their own nationals and/or nationals from other countries. The average duration of the assignment is two years, with some possibility of extension to a third year. The maximum age at entry on duty is 32, depending on the donor policy. During their assignment, APOs are granted full-fledged FAO staff member status at P-1 to P-2 level. For more information on the APO Programme please visit <http://www.fao.org/tc/apo/en/>.

¹ Member countries currently participating in the Programme: Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Norway, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands and the United States

4. Selected statistics on the APO Programme as at February 2010 are provided below.

a) Overview of APOs in service with FAO

Donors	Number of APOs	
APOs sponsored by own governments ²	61	(86%)
APOs from Developing Countries ³	10	(14%)
Total:	71	

b) Proportion of APO assignments at headquarters and in decentralized offices

	Number of APOs	%
Total DO ⁴	34	48%
Total HQ	37	52%
Total:	71	

c) Gender breakdown

Gender	Number of APOs	%
Female	37	52%
Male	34	48%
Total:	71	

d) Geographical representation (as at February 2010)

Under-represented	Equitably-represented	Over-represented	Total
22 ⁵	25 ⁶	24 ⁷	71
(31%)	(35%)	(34%)	

² Sponsored by: Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, South Africa, The Netherlands, and the United States

³ Sponsored by: Belgium, Japan, South Africa and the Netherlands

⁴ Including 6 in Regional Offices, 4 in Sub-regional Offices, 22 in FAOR's, and 2 country projects

⁵ Including nationals from: Japan, Norway, Spain and the United States of America

⁶ Including nationals from: Benin, Finland, Germany, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Niger, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Togo and Uganda

⁷ Including national from: Belgium, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy and the Netherlands

e) *Breakdown by field of assignment*

Field of activity	Number of APOs
Plant Protection and Production	9
Forestry	7
Food Security	8
Natural Resources Management	6
Gender and Rural Employment	4
Animal Health and Production	5
Climate Change and Environment	4
Agricultural Policy	5
Member States and donor relations	3
UN reform / delivering as one	4
Project Cycle and Rural Development	6
Emergency and Rehabilitation	4
Fisheries	2
Other	4
Total:	71

C. OTHER OPPORTUNITIES AT FAO

5. Over the years, FAO has endeavoured to develop alternative modalities outside the APO Programme to increase access for on-the-job training prospects for young professionals, in particular for candidates from developing countries. These include the Young Professionals Programme, the Junior Professionals Programme and the Internship Programme. The option of a Secondment to FAO is also available to staff of partner organizations.

- The *Young Professionals Programme* was put in place to assist developing countries and countries in transition in strengthening their national capacities by training qualified young professionals in the implementation of FAO priority programmes. Between 1995 and 2005, 150 professionals from developing countries worked at FAO through the *Young Professionals Programme*. This Programme has recently been discontinued and two new modalities are being put in place; the *Junior Professionals Programme* and the *Internship Programme*.
- The Junior Professionals Programme (JPP) will be based on targeted recruitment of young professionals at lower entry levels of the professional category. The establishment of the JPP seeks to address challenges facing the Organization such as the rejuvenation of its workforce and the achievement of corporate targets on gender and geographic balance. The JPP Policy is in the final stages of consultation. It is expected that it should be issued within the next few months and that the first group of Junior Professionals will join FAO in the course of 2010.

- The newly created *Internship Programme* builds on existing initiatives. It provides students and recent graduates with on-the-job learning opportunities at FAO:
 - a) for a period of up to 6 months for individuals with the possibility of receiving a stipend based on local living conditions; or
 - b) for a period up to 2 years if sponsored by a partner institution under a framework agreement with FAO. Since 2005, FAO has developed six partnership framework agreements and in this context there are currently 15 sponsored fellows working at FAO. Additional such partnership agreements are under negotiation.
- *Secondments*: Professionals initiating their career as staff in a governmental organization or a state partner institution can also work at FAO on specific assignments under the *secondment* modality. The government or collaborating institution signs an agreement with FAO for each assignment. During the secondment period, the individual remains under the full employment of the lending institution. Traditionally, arrangements for secondments have been made on a case by case basis at departmental level.