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**Global Green Growth Institute**

Eighth Session of the Assembly and

Twelfth Session of the Council (Joint Session)

October 24, 2019; Seoul, Republic of Korea

## **Progress Update by the Staff Council**

1. The GGGI Staff Council consists of nine staff members elected to represent staff interests (currently one position is vacant). Staff Council elections were last held late 2018 and the new members were appointed effective on the January 1, 2019. The Staff Council has had very significant and active engagement with the Management Team during 2019, who have welcomed and encouraged Staff Council contributions where possible. Staff Council has been given the opportunity by Management again this year to share its views directly with the Member States. This note is provided to share staff views on recent developments with regard to measures to promote staff well-being, as well as the areas that the Staff Council still needs to work on together with Management. The Staff Council aims to provide the Assembly and Council with a perspective of GGGI developments from a staff perspective, as representatives of staff.

### **What are the Staff Council and the Staff Association?**

2. The Staff Association comprises all staff members of GGGI, with the exception of the Director General, Deputy Director Generals and Assistant Director Generals. The stated goal of the Staff Association, in its constitution, is to “(i) promote and safeguard the rights, interests and welfare of its members; (ii) to foster a sense of common purpose among members in promoting the aims and objectives of the GGGI; and (ii) to provide the views of the staff on issues affecting staff welfare and conditions of work, and seek resolution of issues arising therefrom”.
3. The Staff Council “shall be the executive body of the Association and shall seek to achieve a coordinated and cooperative position”. This means the Staff Council is, essentially, a communication and facilitation body advocating for staff interests and welfare. Our mission statement states that we aim “to serve the interests and needs of GGGI staff, ensure favorable working conditions and a sense of common purpose as staff strives to achieve to the organization’s mission and goals. Toward this effort, the Staff Council promotes understanding and cooperation by facilitating communication between Staff and Management, and by serving as an advocate for staff wellbeing.” We aim to not only represent the interests of staff, but of the broader GGGI family, including consultants, secondees, interns and volunteers. Staff Council does not represent individual staff in individual cases, but works to identify and represent broader staff interests and concerns.
4. The Staff Council consists of nine members, elected by the Staff Association. Quotas for representation of headquarters and country offices, for women and men, and for national and international staff are in place to promote broad and equitable representation.

Unfortunately, the 2019 Staff Council as elected is not sufficiently gender balanced due to a lack of female staff willing to stand for election, something that will be actively addressed during the upcoming elections for 2020.

5. Staff Council receives suggestions and requests from staff members through dedicated sessions at GGGI events, through one-on-one meetings with staff, all-staff calls, e-mail and via GGGI's internal IT platforms, social networking service and the GGGI Staff Engagement Survey. In 2019, the Staff Council initiated its own survey to have better organizational wide participation in setting its annual priorities.

#### **What progress do we see?**

6. Over the past two years, the Staff Council has engaged closely and regularly with the Management and at times, other relevant teams, on a wide range of issues. While Staff Council itself has no distinct decision-making power on staff (employment) issues it engages with Management by drawing attention to issues of concern to staff and providing suggestions for improvement.
7. Management has shown strong commitment to engage with the Staff Council on issues brought forward, and this dialogue has led to some positive reforms. Without providing a complete overview, these are some of the more important areas of attention and progress over the past year:

#### A. Country challenges with the current UNOPS arrangement and lack of (active) HCA

8. In 2018, the Staff Council (SC) had sought staff inputs regarding the effectiveness of the UNOPS arrangement with regards to GGGI contracts, payments, visas and other issues and identified that in several cases, UNOPS did not seem to be able to provide effective support to GGGI staff for such issues, particularly in countries without an active Host Country Agreement (HCA). Pursuant to this, SC consulted with the Management Team (MT) and conducted two consultative sessions during the 2019 Annual Meeting, consulting both staff and management on perceived risks and issues. A staff session was organized to narrow down the list of risks and issues to the most material topics, and results were discussed during a meeting between MT, SC and Country Representatives (CR). It was identified that (i) material risks and issues may exist for staff in countries without HCA or with a HCA that is not yet active (ii) UNOPS seem not to be designed to cover these risks. SC and MT together agreed on the usefulness of a systematic survey of staff in relevant countries to assess risks and hurdles experienced by country staff. HR helped further clarify the role of UNOPS as well as the coverage of GGGI's existing contract via a Q&A session with UNOPS and all staff on the 24<sup>th</sup> of April 2019.
9. Consequently, a survey was sent by Staff Council to 104 colleagues in countries without HCA or active HCA. Most respondents<sup>1</sup> perceived the absence of HCA as a potentially impactful topic, primarily with regards to operations, taxation and compliance with local laws. Altogether, these issues were identified as having a material influence on the well-being of GGGI's staff and their dependents. The Staff Council members discussed and agreed to the core principle that *GGGI must ensure that the organization and its staff can comply with all legal requirements in countries of operation.*

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<sup>1</sup> 34% response rate from 11 countries.

10. Staff Council further recommended to MT to:
  - a. Further strengthen management of the HCA issue by continuing existing management support and push for HCA obtention with key stakeholders; and appointing a GGGI-wide HCA focal person/team with lead responsibility, mandate and accountability on all related matters.
  - b. Manage/ mitigate existing risks by provisioning funds at program level for local risk assessment and legal advice on specific issues related to absence of HCAs (Labour and Tax Law); and retaining the absence of HCA as one criterion for phasing out a country program, if risk assessment identifies material risks, and no mitigation options.
  - c. Avoid increased risk exposure by officially endorsing and applying a no HCA – no new country program/ country team rule unless an assessment shows all necessary local legal obligations arising from GGGI operations can be met; with all job ads to include disclosure of information on the HCA status of the duty station country.
  - d. Relieve existing impacts of no-HCA for staff by providing reimbursement of a reasonable amount for tax declaration filling preparation, for staff in countries without HCA; and standardizing management of visa runs.
11. The Staff Council is presenting all challenges and proposed solutions to the Management Team in the first week of October 2019.
12. Staff Council also takes this opportunity to directly encourage Member States where GGGI is currently operating without an HCA (or active HCA) to take all necessary steps to expedite these arrangements. This would significantly improve the ability of GGGI staff and operations in-country to more effectively support the needs of Member States.

#### B. Performance Improvement Plans

13. The “Performance Improvement Plans” (PIPs) was an issue that was brought to the Staff Council’s attention throughout 2019. Staff asked for more clarity and transparency on the PIP Mechanism as well as a review of the practice. The Staff Council has raised the issue to both MT and HR and is continuing to follow-up to improve communication and awareness around the PIPs and to request a review of the practice.

#### C. Gender and Diversity

14. The Staff Council requested the organization for information on the status of gender pay gap and a representation analysis (and a diversity analysis) for 2019. The intention is to compare the results with previous results from 2018 and see if progress has been made towards improving gender balance and diversity within the organization. The Staff Council still aims to analyze this situation in 2019.

#### D. Staff performance management and 360 feedback

15. The most recent annual Staff Engagement Survey highlighted the issues of (1) rewards and recognition and (2) accountability for performance as two areas requiring the most attention. As a contribution to solving this, Staff Council is proposing to Management that 360 feedback be incorporated into GGGI’s performance assessment and management systems. From a business perspective, we believe this could help GGGI address the growing lack of fit between the Institute’s changing operational model and its staff

performance management systems. From a staff welfare perspective, this could also help alleviate concerns raised by staff as noted above. A paper is currently being prepared by Staff Council with positions and proposals for Management to consider in Q4 2019.

#### E. Staff Engagement Survey 2019

16. The Staff Council has provided significant input on the prepared report that resulted from the Staff Engagement Survey 2019, advocating for greater visibility of results and comments organizational wide. Furthermore, the Staff Council is actively pursuing the follow-up to the survey results.

#### F. Position Evaluation Committee

17. Staff Council continued to provide members (two) to the “Position Evaluation Committee” (since March 2018) to ensure transparency of grade evaluation of new job descriptions. The role of the committee is to deliberate on recommendations made by division heads regarding grading and make a recommendation to the Director-General. Staff Council is represented in this Committee. HR serves as the Secretariat to ensure consistency of jobs at the organizational level.
18. More generally, a regular dialogue takes place between Staff Council and the Management Team (3 or 4 times per year) on a wide range of issues. This has allowed the Staff Council to provide regular feedback on how to optimize staff well-being. Management and Staff Council do not always share the same views, but considering the progress illustrated above, it can be said that an active and effective dialogue mechanism is operational.

#### **Staff Council Operational / internal developments:**

19. A further task for the Staff Council in 2019 was completion of a revision of the Staff Association Constitution and By-Laws. Those dated to 2014, and while generally sound and relevant, organizational change as well as a number of initiatives created a need to revise these foundational documents to reflect new roles and activities. Initial changes were proposed by the Staff Council, after which the documents were shared prior to, and presented during the Annual Meeting in March 2019. All feedback received in writing and during the March session were reflected, after which Staff Association members had the opportunity to vote. The revised Constitution and By-Laws were accepted by the Staff Association members and are now dated 29<sup>th</sup> of March 2019. Significant changes were mainly around:
  - a. Removal of the annual fee to be a member and revision of financial clauses relating to accounts held by Staff Council
  - b. Adjustment of the quotas to facilitate improved diversity and representation on Staff Council
  - c. Expansion of non-eligible individuals that can stand for the SC to now include members of the Executive Management, as defined by the Staff Regulations and Staff Rules, and any members from the Human Resource and Legal team.

- d. Include “online” voting mechanisms and “online” communication mechanisms as well as reference to broader means of communication and information sharing from Staff Council
  - e. Reduction of the period in which SC members serve from two years to one year, with a maximum of two consecutive years in a row.
20. The Staff Council bank account, which held 4,748.67 USD as donated by former GGGI Staff members has been closed and funds have been transferred to GGGI Accounts, to be managed through the GGGI systems (ERP) by the Staff Council Chair. As of the date of writing, there are no expenditure of these funds to report.
21. It has been discussed with the Management Team that the Staff Council should have its own dedicated budget (ideally not deducted from the budgets of units/programs that SC members work on) to ensure Staff Council can allocate time during working hours for Staff Council duties. A maximum of 10 days per member is agreed upon. Staff Council is in discussions with MT to have this budget line made available as of 2020.

### Priorities ahead

22. Looking ahead, there are a number of issues on which the Staff Council sees as priorities in working together with Management. These predominantly reflect consultations held with Staff at the Annual Meeting, and through other forms of communication. Some of the key issues the Staff Council aims to focus on in the rest of 2019 and 2020 include (but are not limited to):
- a. Ensuring staff and family well-being and support through *staff rotation* and redeployment;
  - b. To ensure greater visibility of the results and issues identified in the *Staff Engagement Survey*, and ensuring these are taken seriously and acted on by relevant managers.
  - c. Support the further enhancement of *reward and recognition processes and mechanisms* in GGGI that have been evaluated in both the Engagement Survey as the Staff Council Priority Setting exercise as issues to be addressed.
  - d. Support the development and introduction of *effective feedback mechanism* to ensure not only downward feedback is facilitate but upwards feedback is also facilitated.
  - e. Support the further improvement of the *onboarding* processes in GGGI to enhance the effectiveness and the wellbeing of newcomers.
  - f. Improving *female representation* in senior positions;
  - g. Consolidate Staff feedback and perspectives on *time writing and timesheets*.
  - h. Continuing to provide an effective and representative voice for all staff.

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 Romain Brillie, Country Representative, Mongolia (Secretary)  
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