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## A Silent Workforce The Feminization of the United Nations

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“The crucial point is that feminization in the sense used here represents pervasive insecurity”.

Guy Standing, 1989

“It is not honest on the one hand to defend human rights, high principles and concepts such as decent work, or those included in the Global Compact, while on the other hand creating a vulnerable workforce under labour conditions that frequently do not meet the local labour standards”.

Cihan Terzi and Papa Louis Fall, 2014

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Why Study the United Nations?

The United Nations is divided in half. Slightly over half of its workforce consists of staff members, officially employed by the United Nations and entitled to the social benefits commonly associated with employment: holidays, sick days, health insurance, pension and maternity or paternity leave (Biraud, 2012, p. 8; International Civil Service Commission, 2012, pp. 10, 17; Terzi & Fall, 2014a, pp. 13, 24). They also have access to training, transparent pay scales that ensure equal pay for equal work, an internal justice system, an internal labour market and to staff unions (Fall & Zhang, 2012, p. 1; International Civil Service Commission, 2012, p. vi; Terzi, 2012, p. 22; Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 30). Staff members are the face of the United Nations, the half we usually hear about.

The remainder of the United Nations is made up of what it collectively refers to as non-staff, who work more or less regularly for the United Nations (United Nations General Assembly, 2010a, p. 38). A report published in 2014 estimated that the total number of non-staff for the 2012-2013 biennium was between 81,000 to 87,000, or 45% of the total workforce (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 68). Non-staff jobs vary significantly but share an important commonality; they have few if any benefits and they tend to navigate the United Nations without holidays, health insurance or a pension plan (Biraud, 2012, p. iii; Terzi, 2012, p. 2). For non-staff, insecurity is widespread; they are hired on short-term contracts ranging from a few days to a few months that are often renewed last-minute and have unpaid gaps between them (Terzi, 2012). Unable to be represented by staff unions, this half of the United Nations is what one of its members called “a silent workforce” (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 42). I was a part of it for four years.

What sets apart staff from non-staff is unclear. As the organization stated in a document published by its Joint Inspection Unit—an independent oversight body within the United Nations that conducts evaluations, investigations and inspections throughout the system—“[i]n the United Nations system, there is no clear definition of staff versus non-staff personnel from the perspective of functions performed or international labour

principles”<sup>1</sup> (Terzi, 2012, p. 2). In other words, the distinction between staff and non-staff is not based on job descriptions, with non-staff performing functions of great relevance and vitality to the organization and sometimes even holding managerial duties (Terzi & Fall, 2014b, p. 7). Like staff, non-staff also work on the premises of the organization, follow organizational working hours and receive a monthly remuneration (Terzi, 2012, p. 8).

What is clear is that the situation in the United Nations is representative of a wider social tendency towards informal employment throughout the world. In developed countries, a large share of the labour force works under arrangements that fail to provide workers with the protection derived from regular, full-time, year-round employment (International Labour Organization, 2013, p. xii). This type of work, known as informal employment, carries a slightly different name in developed countries, which often refer to it as non-standard work (Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing, 2016). Informal or non-standard work includes types of own-account self-employment, temporary or fixed-term employment and part-time wage employment (International Labour Office, 2015, pp. 1-2). In developing countries, informal employment represents more than half of non-agricultural employment (Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing, 2016). To different degrees, informal employment is seen to affect developed and developing countries alike.

While informal employment is widespread, it does not affect people of all sexes in the same way. The non-governmental organization Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (2016) reports that informal employment tends to impact women more than men. A recent publication by the United Nations agrees: “[w]omen are [...] disproportionately involved in part-time and/or informal and precarious work and are overrepresented in sectors with exploitative working conditions and low labour union density” (United Nations, 2016, p. 31). In fact, according to Martha Chen the informal sector is “the primary source of employment for women in most developing countries” (Chen, 2001, p. 74). The labour market is also less favourable for young women than for

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<sup>1</sup> The United Nations system is an internal term used by the United Nations to refer to the totality of the United Nations: the United Nations Secretariat, its funds and programmes, the United Nations specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency.



young men “virtually everywhere” (United Nations, 2016, p. 31). Young or not, the fact remains that informal employment affects many more women than men.

The tendency for women to be especially affected by unfavourable working conditions triggered the creation of a theory known as feminization of the workforce, also referred to as feminization of the labour force, feminization of work or feminization of labour. According to Standing, the most renowned proponent of this theory, the labour force became feminized when in the 1980s the types of work, income, labour relations and insecurity associated with women’s work began to spread to more jobs (Standing, 1989).

“A growing proportion of jobs possess what may be called informal characteristics, i.e., without regular wages, benefits, employment protection, and so on. Such forms of employment have been compatible with characteristics presumed to be associated with women workers – irregular labor force participation, willingness to work for low wages, static jobs requiring no accumulation of technical skills and status, etc.” (Standing, 1999, p. 585)

Standing sustained that feminized jobs had few if any benefits, were low-paid, low-skilled, insecure and not unionized, all of which were characteristics typically associated with female jobs. The theory also observed that the growth in informal employment did not only affect women, however. The feminization of labour also entailed a transformation of many jobs traditionally held by men (Standing, 1999, p. 585).

## **1.2 Research Question and Aim of Study**

Given the current makeup of the workforce of the United Nations, the question arises: *is the United Nations feminized?* This project aims to find out if the workforce of the United Nations can be defined as feminized, i.e. whether it possesses informal characteristics such as flexible contracts, no employment protection, few if any benefits, low-pay, low-skilled tasks and a lack of union representation. It also seeks to find out if the organization is particularly discriminating against women, given that informal employment tends to impact women more than men. Following Skeggs’ observation that “any feminist research should be based on women for women to produce research which would alleviate the conditions of oppression”, this project aims to produce a practical set of recommendations that could help combat discrimination against women in the United Nations, if it exists (Skeggs, 2001, p. 429).

The relevance of such an endeavour rests on the fact that this situation could affect thousands of people and has not yet been studied. This project hopes to bring visibility to a situation of considerable magnitude that has not been picked up by academic circles and that has received little attention from media outlets. This project is also relevant for the United Nations; the feminization of the United Nations would go against the principles of the organization, which aims to be an agenda-setting institution in terms of human rights and labour rights and the largest mechanism to safeguard the well-being of society. An incongruence between United Nations mandates and its internal organizational practices would represent a risk to its reputation and sustainability. If the United Nations is feminized and female workers are particularly affected, it would be in the organization's best interest to change this situation, especially given its efforts in recent years to ensure that women in the organization and throughout the world have equal opportunities (United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016). Furthermore, it would set an example for the world on how to deal with a tendency towards labour market flexibilization and the feminization of the labour force.

### **1.3 State of the Art**

Not much has been written on issues of human resources in the United Nations. The most significant work on this topic was conducted by Botham-Edighoffer, who wrote a dissertation on the reforms of the human resources management system in the United Nations Secretariat between 1985 and 2005 (Botham-Edighoffer, 2006). Botham-Edighoffer's work focused on determining whether the reforms implemented made the United Nations more efficient and effective and whether they improved the conditions of service of United Nations civil servants, by which she meant Professional staff and General Service staff (p. 102). She did not deal with contractual conditions for non-staff.

An increasing amount of literature has been addressing the topic of human resources in the United Nations system from a feminist perspective (Jain, 2005, p. 2). The first of these publications was "Breaking Barriers? Women's Representation and Leadership at the United Nations" (Haack, 2014). The article argued that women in the United Nations system were not only affected by glass ceilings preventing them from reaching leadership positions, but were also affected by glass walls. These glass walls channelled women to jobs considered "gender-appropriate" since they covered a

portfolio of “compassion issues” such as health care, child care, civil rights, education, environment and the control of government spending (p. 47). Haack went on to show that, while most United Nations entities have not been led by women, those that have are the ones working on issues related to the environment, children, women, education, health, welfare and human rights. Haack’s paper thus considered the prevailing bottlenecks for women in the United Nations system and how these stemmed from the organization’s retrograde and sexist assumptions about women’s roles and capabilities, but it did not address women’s contractual arrangements.

Another paper that dealt with women in the United Nations system was “Gender in the Malestream – Acceptance of Women and Gender Equality in Different United Nations Organisations” (Skard, 2009). Skard—former Chairman of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Director for Questions relating to the Status of Women in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)—provided an account of how the United Nations dealt with gender equality and women’s issues since International Women’s Year, celebrated by the United Nations in 1975. Skard also showed that the United Nations was a male-dominated system in terms of its decision-making bodies, its leaders and its staff in the Professional category. Skard’s paper did not address working conditions in the United Nations.

It was not academia but the public media that picked up on issues involving working conditions in the United Nations. The coverage seems to have been spurred by intern David Hyde camping on the shores of Lake Geneva since his internship was unpaid and he could not afford rent (Brooks-Pollock, 2015; Buist, 2015; Foulkes, 2015; Gani, 2015; Rogers, 2015; Taylor, 2015b; The Economist, 2015; Tran & Richards, 2016). Since then, some media outlets have discussed the struggles of a few activist groups, non-governmental organizations and interns’ rights organizations towards combating this situation (Kingstone, 2016; Tran & Richards, 2016). Some have also covered a related letter sent by two intern organizations to former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, in which they urged him and the United Nations to “align the working conditions of interns within the System with the values the UN stands for”, which they defined as the right to equal pay for equal work, the right to just and favourable remuneration that ensures workers and their families a life of dignity and to social protection if necessary (Taylor, 2015a). Their letter also highlighted that only wealthy youth have access to these

internships, a clear discrimination against youth from less affluent backgrounds and from developing and least developed countries. The situation of interns in the United Nations has made it into news headlines around the world.

The media has not given as much attention to the situation of other types of non-staff such as consultants, who comprise the largest group in the non-staff category (Biraud, 2012, p. 4; Terzi, 2012, p. 13). The Swiss, English-language newspaper, *Le News*, picked up on a publication of the Joint Inspection Unit and reported on the worsening conditions for consultants in the system (Girardet, 2014). The Swiss, French-language newspaper, *Le Temps*, acknowledged the current divide in the United Nations, stating that “the United Nations is working with a dual workforce: the first is granted all the rights and privileges attached to the job; the other enjoys few if any rights”<sup>2</sup> (Girardet, 2014). Issues around consultancies have received little press coverage and that has been limited to Switzerland. The contractual situation of other types of non-staff does not appear to have been picked up by the media so far.

#### **1.4 Design**

The present research represents an extensive examination of a single organization and as such can be considered a case study. This research design was chosen for two reasons. From an academic perspective, I chose it because of the availability of data on personnel in the United Nations, which seems to be a rare commodity. Above all, I have chosen to conduct a case study on the United Nations because of my personal biography, as I was an intern and a consultant in the United Nations for four years. According to Bryman, more often than not, researchers choose case studies they feel a proximity to (Bryman, 2012, p. 20). It seems I am no exception.

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<sup>2</sup> «La situation actuelle est que les organisations des Nations unies travaillent avec une force de travail duale: la première étant dotée de tous les droits et les privilèges attachés à leur fonction, l'autre n'accédant que peu ou pas du tout à ces mêmes droits» (Herzog, 2014).

## **1.5 Overview of the Project**

This project is divided into five chapters. These introduce the topic, describe the methods used to conduct the research, introduce the theory that guided it, analyse the materials through the above-mentioned theoretical perspective and answer the core research question.

More specifically, the present chapter has sought to introduce the project by describing the context that gave rise to it, the research question that drives it, its aim, its working thesis and its design.

The next chapter provides a description of the mixed methods used to analyse the materials. It also describes the materials used to conduct this research, which consist of primary sources published by the United Nations on the composition of its workforce, its working conditions and its human resources management.

Chapter three moves on to the theoretical foundations of the project. It provides an overview of how the theory of the feminization of the workforce developed and presents different understandings of what it means for a workforce to be feminized. This overview is intertwined with some basic definitions and concepts in feminist sociology and economics, namely non-standard contracts and precarious work. The theoretical underpinnings of this chapter also form the basis for creating a set of criteria against which materials will be analysed in the following chapter.

Chapter four represents the bulk of this study. The chapter begins with a description of the workforce of the United Nations. To answer the research question, it then analyses the composition of the organization by employment conditions vis-à-vis the main characteristics of feminized labour. More specifically, it looks at whether the workforce possesses informal characteristics such as flexible contracts with no employment protection, few if any benefits, low pay, low-skilled tasks and a lack of union representation. The chapter also investigates who, if anyone, is most affected by this feminization: women or men, staff or non-staff.

The final chapter uses the analysis provided in the fourth chapter to answer the research question, namely: based on the current employment conditions of the workforce of the United Nations, could it be defined as feminized? I contend that the workforce of the United Nations is indeed feminized. Chapter five also gives a broad overview of how

the current employment conditions affect different types of workers, which it does by surveying both the literature published by the United Nations as well as literature on organizational studies that explores the effects of precarious employment conditions on organizations, workers and families. The chapter goes on to argue that if the United Nations does not pay close attention to implementing the Decent Work agenda within its own operations, it will not be able to bring about gender equality in the organization. The chapter ends with further avenues of research that could help promote equality in the workforce of the United Nations.

## **2. Methodology**

The present chapter explores the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of this research project and spells out practical considerations regarding my choice of research strategy, design and method. It also clarifies my stance on objectivity and my connection to this research. The chapter gives a detailed account of how the materials for this project were selected and provides a description of their main characteristics.

### **2.1 Theory and Research**

The first consideration when beginning a research project revolves around its relation to theory. Does the research aim to analyse data in view of building a theory? Or does it take a theory, analyse the material with a specific theoretical perspective and observe its applicability (i.e. whether it holds up in face of empirical scrutiny) (Bryman, 2012, p. 24)? Like most research projects, the present thesis aims to do the latter and therefore follows a deductive approach. Based on my knowledge of the domain of study—employment conditions in the United Nations—I have made an assumption that I intend to scrutinize in view of the data collected to that end.

The theory for this project—the feminization of work—can be characterized as a middle-range theory. Per Easterby-Smith, Thrope and Jackson, the distinction between a middle-range and a grand theory lies in matters of scale and formality; a middle-range theory poses a generalizable preposition that may be tested, while a grand theory is usually more abstract and often cannot be tested (Easterby-Smith, Thrope & Jackson, 2008, p. 107). The feminization of work can be translated into operational terms that can be tested in qualitative and quantitative ways, as will be shown in chapter four.

### **2.2 Epistemological Considerations**

*The SAGE Dictionary of Social Research Methods* defines epistemology as “a field of philosophy concerned with the possibility, nature, sources and limits of human knowledge” (Jupp, 2006a). Broadly defined as a theory of knowledge, epistemology is

concerned with what acceptable knowledge consists of and what can pass as acceptable knowledge in a given discipline (Bryman & Teevan, 2005, p. 712). Among the issues epistemology deals with is whether the social sciences should be studied in the same way as the natural sciences, giving way to three different schools of thought: positivism, realism and interpretivism (pp. 27, 28, 712).

This thesis adopts an interpretivist approach. Grounded on phenomenology, hermeneutics and symbolic interactionism, interpretivism holds that “a strategy is required that respects the differences between people and the objects of the natural sciences and therefore requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action” (p. 30). Interpretivism therefore criticizes the assumption that people and institutions can be studied in the same way as natural phenomena, a view shared by both positivists and realists. An interpretivist approach is taken here because of disagreements with some of the main principles of realism and positivism, e.g. the claim that reality is separate or independent from our descriptions of it and that science can reflect reality directly and objectively.

### **2.3 Ontological Considerations**

Ontology is defined by *The SAGE Dictionary of Social Research Methods* as “a concept concerned with the existence of, and relationship between different aspects of society, such as social actors, cultural norms and social structures” (Jupp, 2006b). In studying the relationships between different social phenomena, norms, entities and individuals, scientists who pursue ontological considerations uphold one of two ontological positions: objectivism or constructionism (Bryman, 2012, p. 33). Objectivism maintains that social entities exist independently of social actors, who have no sway over it. Constructionism or constructivism, on the other hand, holds that, through their interaction, social actors are constantly accomplishing social phenomena and social categories. By arguing that social categories and phenomena are constantly being revised, constructivism goes hand in hand with postmodernism in viewing knowledge as indeterminate, i.e. not exactly known or fixed (p. 32-34).

The present thesis is located within a constructivist approach to epistemology, as I believe that all people working in the United Nations—regardless of whether they are



staff or non-staff—are continually influencing social phenomena within the organization, as well as the organization itself. Such an epistemological approach also grants agency to its social actors, who through their social interactions can pursue a transformative agenda and bring visibility to discriminatory organizational practices.

## **2.4 Personal Values**

Bryman and Teevan agree with Turnbull's claim that "the reader is entitled to know something of the aims, expectations, hopes and attitudes that the writer brought to the field with him, for these will surely influence not only how he sees things but even what he sees" (Bryman, 2012, p. 39). I fully agree with this statement and believe that given the distinctively feminist methodological approach taken here, making a few clarifications regarding my personal values is in order.

I am a (third wave) feminist. As such, I deem it extremely likely that women (whether by birth or choice), people of colour, non-heterosexuals and people of different abilities are being discriminated against in the United Nations as they are elsewhere in society.

Given my worldview and the afore mentioned assumptions, I aim for the present thesis to be a feminist study, by which I understand that it should be geared towards producing insights into the gendered aspects of reality. Ramazanoglu and Holland argue that not all projects that deal with gender or gendered aspects of life are necessarily feminist, however (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002).

"What appears to make some projects feminist (despite political, theoretical and epistemological variations) is dependence on a normative framework that interrelates 'injustice', a politics for 'women' (however these categories are understood), ethical practices that eschew the 'unjust' exercise of power, and theory that conceptualizes gendered power within this normative framework." (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002, p. 147)

Taking into consideration Ramazanoglu and Holland's observations, I understand the present undertaking as feminist research because it is grounded, at least to a certain extent, in the experiences of women and in the unfair socioeconomic paradigm that makes women more vulnerable to precariousness. It also covers the rest of the criteria

given by the authors, since it is conceptualized within feminist theory and it is ethically and politically committed to fighting gender-based discrimination and social injustice.

A further point of clarification regarding my personal values: I am not an objective observer, nor do I seek to be one, since like many other feminists I do not think that such a thing exists. As Harding pointed out, “one of the most central aspects of feminist methodologies is the imperative to acknowledge that research is embedded in particular historically and culturally specific conditions of knowledge production, and a ‘view from nowhere’ is simply not possible” (Harding, 2004, p. 26). Acknowledging the historical and cultural particularities that make up my positioning in this instance of knowledge production means acknowledging that I am, to a huge degree, the subject of my own study. I was part of this “silent workforce”, as I interned and consulted with the United Nations for many years and only recently left the organization because of the lack of benefits, poor employment conditions and the uneasy feeling I had for being treated as a “second-class” worker. Having had no paid holidays or sick days during the last two years that I worked there, I am both angry and frustrated with the organization’s human resources management.

Given the proximity between my persona as a researcher and the object of this research project (my former employer and colleagues and my current friends), it seems prudent to consider whether this proximity could be in some way detrimental to my analysis or to the present endeavour. The words of Mies come to mind, in feminist research the “postulate of value free research, of neutrality and indifference towards the research objects, has to be replaced by conscious partiality, which is achieved through partial identification with the research objects” (Mies, 1993, p. 68). Mies’ proposal to be consciously partial towards research objects requires the researcher to partially identify with them, with *partial* being the undefined, operative word. Am I too identified with the research objects to be considered partially identified? Perhaps. But insofar as I am conscious about my identification, I believe I still fall under Mies’ understanding of conscious partiality. I will bear this partiality in mind and, if pertinent, report on it during my final remarks in chapter five.

## **2.5 Practical Considerations**

My former employment with the United Nations has resulted in some practical considerations that are worth mentioning, as they impact options and stance in relation to this thesis. First and foremost, there are limitations to what I can say, as ethical concerns prevent me from incorporating into my thesis the knowledge I have gained during my time working there. Secondly, the non-staff contracts I signed with the United Nations stated that I may not criticize the organization in public and that this obligation does not cease upon separation from it. Bearing this in mind, I seek to be honest to my experience, in order that the current work may serve the United Nations or other staff or non-staff members in the future.

## **2.6 Research Strategy**

As mentioned in chapter one, the present study will be conducted using mixed methods research, which relies on both quantitative and qualitative data. Before delving into which issues will be covered with quantitative data and which with qualitative, I would like to acknowledge the debate surrounding mixed methods research and explain why this strategy was selected.

The so-called “paradigm wars” revolve around whether quantitative and qualitative methods can be used in parallel (Hitchcock, 2016). According to Hitchcock, those against using these in parallel argue that methods carry with them certain epistemological commitments that are inherently inconsistent with each other. As a result, they argue that researchers must choose between paradigms and either conduct quantitative or qualitative research. Academics in favour of mixed methods hold that it is not possible to demonstrate that different methods represent different paradigms, as they share commonalities. Bryman proposed a different take on this mixed methods approach, since to him “the idea that research methods carry with them fixed epistemological and ontological implications is very difficult to sustain. [Research methods] are capable of being put to a wide variety of tasks” (Bryman, 2012, p. 629). While Bryman acknowledged that quantitative and qualitative methods are grounded in different epistemological and ontological assumptions, he also viewed them as

autonomous from one another and worthy of being combined so that they may be “mutually illuminating” (p. 628).

Mixed methods have been applied here because, like Bryman, I do not believe that they represent radically different paradigms, and they both fit within the above-mentioned epistemological and ontological stance. What is more, much can be gained by combining the two in this study. A qualitative analysis of the sources will outline employment conditions in the United Nations in detail and provide evidence to the claim that certain groups within it can be defined as feminized. If, indeed, certain groups in the United Nations can be defined as being engaged in feminized work, a quantitative analysis of the sources should provide a picture of what percentage of the workforce is being affected by these conditions.

Having dealt with the controversy around the chosen research strategy, let us now move on to the nitty gritty. Quantitative and qualitative data will be combined by looking for different types of evidence to answer the question of whether work at the United Nations is feminized. The qualitative aspect of this research will delve into United Nations reports on its own staff and non-staff to understand the conditions of their employment and whether their employment is feminized or not. If it is feminized, the quantitative aspect of the research will look at what percentage of the overall staff in all United Nations categories is affected by this feminization. Furthermore, the question of whether this feminization impacts women more so than men will be addressed. To that end the following will be considered:

1. Percentage of the United Nations workforce that are staff/non-staff in order to determine numerically the significance of potentially feminized labour.
2. Percentage of female and male non-staff in order to determine whether potentially feminized work affects women and men equally.
3. Percentage of staff and non-staff from total female workforce in order to determine whether women are more likely to be in feminized jobs.
4. Percentage of staff and non-staff from total male workforce in order to determine whether men are more likely to be in feminized jobs.

Where possible, matters of age and ethnicity will be considered in order to investigate other potential forms of discrimination. While these are not necessarily compatible with

the theory of feminization of work, they are part of larger feminist concerns in the promotion of equality.

The upcoming sections will clarify the methods of data collection and analysis, design and sampling for both the qualitative and quantitative components of this study.

## **2.7 Research Design**

Research design is concerned with the process of organizing research activity so that a study accomplishes what it has set out to do (Bryman, 2012, p. 715). In practical terms, this means designing a framework to collect and analyse data that are relevant to the project. The present section of this chapter seeks to make more specific remarks on research design choices.

The unit of analysis that forms the basis of the present sample is the structure of personnel in the United Nations by type of contract. As such, this project consists of a case study. Since it only analyses one organization, it can be said to be consistent with the constructionist epistemology mentioned in section 2.3 (Easterby-Smith, Thrope & Jackson, 2008, pp. 97-99).

I have opted to conduct a case study because I want to investigate the possibility that a huge organization with high visibility and clear human resources policies might provide benefits for some section of its workforce and precarious working conditions for another. Since the present thesis do not seek to make generalizations and only seeks to shed light on the United Nations as it has unique features worth investigating in their own right, the present study is not an instrumental study but an expressive one (pp. 97-98).

## **2.8 Choice of Materials and Sampling**

The materials for this study were chosen by conducting searches on Google, Google Scholar, JSTOR and the University of Vienna's u:search around the following terms:

- “United Nations” and “working conditions”.
- “United Nations” and “employment conditions”.

- “United Nations” and “flexibilization”.
- “United Nations” and “feminization”.
- “United Nations” and “human resources” and “feminized”.
- “United Nations” and “human resources” and “flexible”.
- “United Nations” and “precarious work”.
- “United Nations” and “contract”.
- “United Nations” and “non-staff”.
- “United Nations” and “consultant”.
- “United Nations” and “intern”.
- “United Nations” and “volunteer”.
- “United Nations” and “personnel policies”.
- “United Nations” and “recruitment policy”.

The searches were limited to the English language and, because of the contemporary nature of the research question, to documents published since 2008. Based on these results, those materials specifically referring to human resources, employment and contractual conditions in the United Nations were selected. Based on this selection, this project will analyse the most relevant reports published by the Joint Inspection Unit, the United Nations General Assembly, the United Nations Secretariat and the International Civil Service Commission of the United Nations around employment conditions of staff and non-staff.

A brief description of each material is provided below, following the order in which they were published:

1. “Internships in the United Nations System” (Wynes & Posta, 2009): in this report the Joint Inspection Unit provided an overview of the internship programme and identified key characteristics, good practices and areas for improvement. To that end, the report reviewed the internship policies of 18 United Nations entities and conducted interviews with administrators, supervisors and interns in 11 of those entities.

2. "Administration of Justice at the United Nations. Report of the Secretary-General" (United Nations General Assembly, 2010a): the report provided data and information on the functioning of the new system of justice adopted in 2009. For the purpose of this thesis, this report is significant because it provided a description of the different recourse mechanisms available to staff and non-staff.
3. "Review of Personnel Working for United Nations Common System Organizations on Non-Staff Contracts" (United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 2011): this unpublished report by the Chief Executive Board for Coordination attempted to give the first system-wide overview of the status of non-staff. The Human Resources Network did not approve its release, however, claiming that some of the figures for the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) were inaccurate and that the report did not reflect the nature of the engagement of non-staff in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 2012). The report is available on the website of the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations, one of the federations of staff unions within the United Nations system.
4. "Staff-Management Relations Within the United Nations" (Biraud, 2011): in this report the Joint Inspection Unit sought to identify the conditions that would improve staff-management relations in the United Nations group, a name the report used to refer to the United Nations Secretariat, its duty stations and the separately administered organs, programmes, tribunals, peace operations and political missions. The report did not define what staff-management relations are, unfortunately, but proceeded directly into discussing the negative state of relations between management representatives and staff representatives.
5. "Staff-Management Relations in the United Nations Specialized Agencies and Common System" (Biraud, 2012): like the report published in 2011 under a similar title, this report by the Joint Inspection Unit aimed to identify what conditions would improve staff-management relations in the specialized

agencies of the United Nations as well as in the United Nations overall. To that end, the document discussed what staff representatives should be doing to represent the views of staff on matters of personnel and human resources policies and practices, as well as related necessary mechanisms to improve cooperation between management and staff representatives. Unlike the 2011 report, this report recognized the growing percentage of non-staff and proposed introducing non-staff management relations. It also provided a loose definition of staff-management relations, which it held to be a “part and parcel of determining the conditions of service/employment at the (single) organizational level, as well as at the common system level of remunerations and allowances” (p. 37).

6. “Flexible Working Arrangements in the United Nations System Organizations” (Wynes, 2012): this Joint Inspection Unit review covered all flexible working arrangements policies and practices throughout the United Nations by conducting a desk review and a survey of staff, which resulted in a response rate of 17% or 18,953 out of 113,344 staff at the time. Flexible working arrangements include the possibility of working remotely, choosing one’s working hours, taking time off for study purposes, etc. In light of the number it provided as the total number of staff and the fact that it never mentioned non-staff, it seems reasonable to assume that the report only covered flexible working arrangements for staff members.
7. “Staff Recruitment in United Nations System Organizations: A Comparative Analysis and Benchmarking Framework. Overview” (Fall & Zhang, 2012): the report published by the Joint Inspection Unit addressed recruitment rules, policies and procedures for staff members across 34 United Nations organizations and offices. It explored issues of efficiency, transparency and fairness and considered how recruitment rules, policies and procedures could best help improve geographical representation, gender balance and equality of official working languages—some of the basic principles in the organization.
8. “Evaluation of Mainstreaming of Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work by the United Nations System Organizations” (Posta & Prom-Jackson, 2015): as part of a United Nations effort to promote full and productive



employment and decent work for all, the Joint Inspection Unit carried out this evaluation to find out how the different United Nations organizations were promoting the Decent Work agenda. The report did not review the activities carried out by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the organization that spearheads the Decent Work agenda, but instead sought to gain a better understanding of how other entities had taken up this call and integrated it into their work on poverty alleviation and social protection, among other mandates.

9. “Review of Individual Consultancies in the United Nations System” (Terzi, 2012): this report assessed the use of individual consultants in all participating organizations of the Joint Inspection Unit in 2011-2012. It reviewed policy documents, internal reports and conducted a questionnaire, interviews and videoconferences with human resources and procurement officers, hiring managers, staff representatives and consultants. It also reviewed random consultant files to see if organizational policies were being applied. Given that “there is not always such a clear distinction between individual consultants and some other non-staff personnel”, the report included important considerations that could affect other non-staff contractual modalities (p. iii).
10. “United Nations Common System of Salaries, Allowances and Benefits” (International Civil Service Commission, 2012): this booklet published by the International Civil Service Commission of the United Nations described the system of salaries, allowances and benefits for staff members throughout the world. The booklet did not provide information for short-term staff, however, which it described as being employed under separate arrangements and therefore entitled to a different set of benefits.
11. “Consultants and Individual Contractors” (United Nations Secretariat, 2013): this administrative instruction set out the provisions of contracts issued to consultants and individual contractors at the United Nations Secretariat. The instruction determined the conditions for selection and recruitment, as well as the role to be played by the organization as part of these contractual agreements.

12. “Use of Non-Staff Personnel and Related Contractual Modalities in the United Nations System Organizations – Country Case Studies: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti and India” (Terzi & Fall, 2014a): this report described the use of non-staff personnel throughout the United Nations, as observed through the qualitative and quantitative assessment of relevant policies, regulations, contractual practices and managerial processes. The Joint Inspection Unit’s report also included three case studies—on Congo, Haiti and India—that sought to provide a better understanding of the contractual practices in the field. The report covered all participating organizations, funds, programmes, specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It did not cover elected officials, non-paid personnel and interns, however, which are also considered non-staff personnel (Biraud, 2012, p. 2). The report surveyed 2,151 non-staff under different types of contracts.
13. “Use of Non-Staff Personnel and Related Contractual Modalities in the United Nations System Organizations – Country Case Studies: Ethiopia, Thailand and Viet Nam” (Terzi & Fall, 2014b). This publication by the Joint Inspection Unit was not a report in and of itself but an annex to the previous report under a similar title. Like the previous report, it covered all participating organizations, funds, programmes, specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), this time in Ethiopia, Thailand and Vietnam.
14. “Composition of the Secretariat: Gratis Personnel, Retired Staff and Consultants and Individual Contractors” (United Nations General Assembly, 2014a): this report of the Secretary-General presented a graphic analysis of the engagement of gratis personnel (4,531), retired staff (3,051) and consultants and individual contractors (40,655) in the United Nations Secretariat from 1 January 2012 to 31 December 2013. The report provided a basic analysis based on gender, country of origin and length of engagement, among other less relevant criteria.
15. “Status of Women in the United Nations System” (UN Women, 2016): conducted as part of a series of reports on the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations, this report dealt with the representation of women and the challenges women face to reach equal representation at the

Professional and higher levels. Among other issues, the report reviewed the selection, appointment, career advancement and separation of female members of staff, flexible working arrangements, harassment and discrimination. Like previous reports, it only dealt with staff members.

16. "Improvement in the status of women in the United Nations system" (United Nations General Assembly, 2017): this yearly report by the Secretary-General covered the status of women in the United Nations from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2015. As per the report published in the previous year (which was the basis for report number 15 above), the report did not cover the General Service category or any non-staff categories and only focused on the representation of women in the Professional category and above.

The Joint Inspection Unit report entitled "Corporate Consultancies in United Nations System Organizations" (Terzi & Posta, 2008) was not selected since it focused on consultancies performed by consultancy firms, universities, research institutions and non-governmental organizations and did not cover individual consultants or any other form of non-staff (p. 1).

Altogether, 16 reports published by the United Nations were used to conduct this thesis. They are between 30 and 130 pages long and comprise of an overview of statistics, policies, frameworks, surveys and interviews with staff and non-staff.

The reports published by the Joint Inspection Unit should be particularly useful. The Unit is responsible for securing administrative efficiency within the system and has access to information from 28 participating agencies: the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the International Telecommunication Unit (ITU), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN Habitat), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for

Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the United Nations Secretariat, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the Universal Postal Union (UPU), the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) (Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System, 2017). Given the mandate of the Joint Inspection Unit and its wide access to United Nations entities, the Unit is the most reliable and useful source of information on the inner workings of the United Nations. It is also the “only independent external oversight body of the United Nations System” (Biraud, 2011, p. 2). As such, it is in the Unit’s best interest to be at least moderately transparent about the situation in the United Nations system and both strategic and realistic in its approach to triggering change. The reports published by the Joint Inspection Unit represent most of the primary sources analysed in this thesis.

## **2.9 Research Methods**

The main research method employed here to inspect selected materials is qualitative content analysis. Qualitative content analysis is a common method that allows the researcher to extract underlying themes in the materials she analyses (Bryman, 2012, p. 557). The method requires the researcher to inspect materials according to predetermined labels (i.e. keywords) related to what she is investigating. It is possible for the researcher to update the labels as she gets better acquainted with the materials, an option that will be used here if the labels are found to not capture the most concrete elements of feminization. Labels are then clustered into themes, showing the main findings of the investigation, and are accompanied by quotes, illustrations and often definitions.

The data presented here will be coded by using the following labels, organized around five themes:

1. Flexibility: contract; fixed-term; flexible; temporary.
2. Benefits: benefits; entitlements; holidays; insurance; leave; pension.
3. Low-paid: gratis; intern; pay; remuneration; salary; stipend; volunteer; wage.
4. Low-skilled: education; learning; low-skilled; orientation; skill; training.
5. Not unionized: association; bargaining; representation; union; voice.

Based on this coding method, this project aims to find the flexibilization of labour as the core theme that runs through all other themes. Or perhaps even better, to not find it at all.

After considering if the workforce of the United Nations system is engaged in feminized labour, the quantitative aspect of this thesis will conduct secondary analysis of official United Nations statistics. The statistics analysed should be valid since they are a straightforward collection of number of employees by type of contract and disaggregated by sex; a data-set that should be simple to collect in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The data should also be reliable since they were mostly provided by an external oversight body of the United Nations and collected in collaboration with human resources departments.

The present chapter sought to provide a detailed explanation of the theoretical and philosophical foundations of this research project, as well as some practical considerations on methodology. It has explained how the project will engage with the chosen middle-range theory, why it will use a mixed methods research strategy, what the unit of analysis consists of, what the preferred methods of analysis will be (namely qualitative content analysis for the qualitative aspects and secondary analysis of official statistics for the quantitative aspects), how materials have been chosen and what those materials consist of. Having laid out the methodological foundations, the next chapter will introduce the theory that will guide this research.



### 3. Theories of the Feminization of Work

The present chapter moves on to the theoretical foundations of this project. In order to introduce the theory that will inform this research, this chapter begins by introducing some of the basic concepts that this theory refers to, namely non-standard contracts and precarious work. Having established some common theoretical grounds, the chapter will proceed to provide an account of how the theory of the feminization of work developed and explain the different versions of this theory. The theoretical discussions in this chapter will also form the basis for creating a set of criteria against which materials will be analysed to discover if the workforce of the United Nations is feminized.

Non-standard work is not new to our era (Quinlan, Mayhew & Bohle, 2001, p. 335). In fact, non-standard work was the standard for most of the world's history, only to be replaced by what we now call standard contracts and normal jobs for a few decades in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Standard contracts and normal jobs were the result of increased government regulation, the growing influence of labour and changes in technology that favoured more stable work relations in many industrialized countries at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Menendez, Benach, Muntaner, Amable & O'Campo, 2007, p. 776). As Quinlan, Mayhew and Bohl explained,

“even during the height of the postwar boom a substantial proportion of workers was employed outside the ‘norm’ (most obviously, self-employed contractors, shiftworkers, and the majority of female employees). Hence, the terms ‘nonstandard’ or ‘atypical’ first used to describe the growth of working arrangements outside the presumed norm were misleading, especially with regard to women for whom such arrangements were indeed typical. The terms were also ahistorical because what was presumed to be normal could more accurately be portrayed as confined to a fairly restricted period (50 to 60 years at most in many countries)”. (Quinlan, Mayhew & Bohle, 2001, pp. 335-336)

Inaccurate and ahistorical as they may be, the terms standard contracts and normal employment are widely used to refer to full-time, year-round, secure and mostly day-time jobs with benefits. Based on this standard, work that is part-time, seasonal, home-based, temporary or informal is considered non-standard work. As explained by Hadden et al., “[n]on-standard work is typically characterised by reduced job security, lower

compensation and impaired work conditions” (Hadden, Muntaner, Benach, Gimeno & Benavides, 2007, p. 6).

The growth of non-standard work since the 1970s has also been characterized as the spread of precarious employment. Hadden et al. explained that precarization is “a multidimensional construct defined according to dimensions such as temporality, powerlessness, lack of benefits and low income” (Hadden, Muntaner, Benach, Gimeno & Benavides, 2007, p. 7). Precarious employment continues to grow in so-called developed economies and is widespread in developing economies.

Many scholars during the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and early 21<sup>st</sup> century have gone beyond talking about precarious employment and have described the workforce as being feminized. While authors have different notions of what feminization is and how it has come about, feminization entails that informal employment is also gendered.

### **3.1 The Feminization of Service Work: A Quantitative Understanding**

The use of the term feminization to describe the workforce can be traced back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but it only started to grow in popularity in the 1970s (Prather, 1971). Among the first authors to study the feminization of the workforce was Davies, who explored the process through which service work in the United States went from being practically all male in the 1870s to practically all female in the 1930s (Davies, 1974).

“In the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the situation was, then, the following. There were more women than men graduating from high school every year. These women constituted a pool of educated female labor which was being drawn upon only by elementary and secondary schools. Consequently, there were literally thousands of women with training that qualified them for jobs that demanded literacy, but who could not find such jobs. Excluded from most of the professions, these women were readily available for the clerical jobs that started to proliferate at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The expansion and consolidation of enterprises in the 1880’s and 1890’s created a large demand for clerical labor; the large pool of educated female labour constituted the supply.” (Davies, 1974, p. 6)

Davies attributed the feminization of the clerical workforce to two factors: to the rise of capitalism in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century increasing the demand for office workers and to women being a readily available and cheaper source of labour than men.



Like Davies, several other authors in the 1980s continued studying occupations that had become feminized. This was the case with Cohn, who explored the feminization of clerical work in Great Britain from the 1870s until the 1930s (Cohn, 1985). Cohn aimed to gain a better understanding of occupational sex-typing by comparing the composition of the clerical workforce of firms in different industries. Cohn's findings showed that industries which required less clerks were likely to hire more expensive male clerks, since they did not represent a proportionately big expenditure and fit in better with the rest of the male workforce. On the other hand, industries that were more clerk-labour intensive would try to save on one of their main expenditures, human labour, by hiring cheaper—female—workers. Cohn claimed that these findings aligned to those of Bridges, who had developed a theory on the sexual segregation of occupations and had applied it to the overall occupational structure of the United States. Thus, while accounting for exceptions in some industries, Cohn and Bridges showed why certain professions were suddenly mostly composed of women.

### **3.2 The Feminization of the Workforce: Incorporating Qualitative Aspects**

The theory started to gain more nuance towards the end of the 1980s, when Jenson, Hagen and Reddy published the first book solely dealing with the feminization of the workforce (Jenson, Hagen & Reddy, 1988). Unlike previous work, the book did not refer to the feminization of specific occupations or professions but discussed the overall feminization of the workforce in Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden and the United States, giving the theory much better grounding. The book showed that in these countries, women increasingly found themselves in part-time work, with a glass ceiling over their heads and in positions that were less protected by work legislation. Unlike previous authors, Jenson, Hagen and Reddy showed that the feminization of labour meant more than a female majority in a low-paid profession.

The basic premise of Jenson, Hagen and Reddy's book was that there was no cause-effect relationship between women joining the workforce and the workforce becoming feminized. They argued that it was a series of developments that took place in parallel:

“at the same time as women's participation rates began to rise, the economies of the advanced industrialized countries were undergoing substantial structural changes. The increasing economic importance of the service sector and of part-

time work meant that there were more jobs in sectors where women had traditionally been concentrated. Thus, female employment could expand. At the same time, however, since these structural changes occurred in the context of crisis and restructuring, they had negative effects on all workers, especially the ones who were the lowest paid, the least covered by legislative protections, and had the least seniority. Women were disproportionately located in such groups.” (Jenson, Hagen & Reddy, 1988, pp. 5-6)

According to Jenson, Hagen and Reddy, women entered the workforce in the post-1945 era and especially from the 1960s onwards because of structural changes that promoted the growth of the service sector, where most of them worked. But how come women’s positions were the lowest paid, the least senior and the least protected by legislation? According to them, because in the 1970s the above-mentioned countries were in a time of crisis and restructuring and failed to acknowledge the needs of women workers. “It was *his* job and *his* wages which were at the center of the bargaining process between employers and unions and which provided the focus of state policies” (p. 9). As we will see in the next section, some authors contested the lack of causality between women joining the workforce and their having the worst jobs.

### **3.3 Global Feminization Through Flexible Labour: A Full-Fledged Theory**

It was only with Standing’s publication of “Global Feminization through Flexible Labor” that the theory really took shape. In what continues to be the most cited paper on this theory, Standing argued that the 1980s had seen a new surge of the feminization of the labour force at a global level (Standing, 1989). He argued that several events were at the root of this transformation. Broadly put:

“The types of work, labor relations, income, and insecurity associated with ‘women’s work’ ha[d] been spreading, resulting not only in a notable rise in female labor force participation, but in a fall in men’s employment, as well as a transformation – or feminization – of many jobs traditionally held by men.” (Standing, 1989, p. 1077)

According to Standing, the feminization or transformation of the workforce was only possible because of the introduction of new technologies at work, the deregularization of labour relations, a surge in female employment and a decline in male employment.

More specifically, Standing explained that work had been changing due to the introduction of technologies and a tendency towards skill polarization (p. 1079). Skill

polarization between jobs divided the workforce in two: an elite of technically skilled specialists and a “larger mass of technically semiskilled production and subsidiary workers requiring minor training typically imparted through [...] on-the-job learning” (p. 1079). The semi-skilled and low-skilled portion represented most of the workforce, stuck in static jobs, with little to no upward mobility and no perceived benefits from on-the-job continuity.

Work relations were also greatly affected during the 1980s. Many governments removed or weakened laws on minimum wages since they believed they could lead to unemployment, one of the big issues at the time together with inflation (p. 1080). According to Standing, the consequence of weakening these laws was the growth of low-paid jobs, which gave workers “individual” instead of “family wages”. Among those most affected by low-wages were women, partially because men were less willing to work for “sub-family wage rates”.

The flexibilization of work relations was only possible due to the worldwide erosion of labour regulations, continued Standing. This erosion was so prominent that he called the 1980s “the decade of labor deregulation” (p. 1077). Deregulation allowed companies to decrease the fixed costs of labour by reducing the number of full-time workers earning fixed wages and receiving benefits. Companies could turn to casual or temporary workers, part-timers, home-workers or contractors instead, or even subcontract jobs to small informal enterprises where workers earned less and had no form of income or employment security.

According to Standing, lack of employment security was the defining characteristic of a feminized labour force.

“[A]lthough women may be gaining economically in some crude senses of that term, the crucial point is that feminization in the sense used here represents pervasive insecurity. Traditionally, women have been relegated predominantly to more precarious and low-income forms of economic activity. The fear now is that their increased economic role reflects a spread of those forms to many more spheres. That is scarcely what should be meant by progress.” (Standing, 1989, p. 1094)

Standing observed that, while on one hand women could be seen to be gaining by being part of the paid labour market, for the most part they were being relegated to jobs that were low-paid and had precarious working conditions. He also observed that pervasive

insecurity was not only a reality for women: a growing percentage of people with short-term casual contracts (which he called “permanent casuals”) and vulnerable jobs were men (p. 1093).

Standing made clear that incorporating women into the labour market was important, but it was not enough. To ensure that women’s increased workforce participation could indeed lead to more gender equality he called for a reform of the systems of social protection, so as to “combine flexibility with steadily improving economic security” (Standing, 1999, p. 600).

### **3.4 Building on Standing’s Theory**

After the 1989 publication of “Global Feminization through Flexible Labor”, several other authors addressed the feminization of the workforce. This section will deal with authors who expressed similar viewpoints to those held by Standing, whether they specifically referenced his work or not.

The first of these seems to have been Haraway, whose work on *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women* commented on the worldwide effect of the new industrial revolution (Haraway, 1991, p. 166). According to Haraway, the new economy was possible because of the extreme mobility of capital and the rise of new technologies, which facilitated the creation of electronics-dependent jobs and science-based multinationals. As a result of the new economy,

“work is being redefined as both literally female and feminized, whether performed by men or women. To be feminized means to be made extremely vulnerable; able to be disassembled, reassembled, exploited as a reserve labor force; seen less as workers than as servers; subjected to time arrangements on and off the paid job that make a mockery of a limited work day; leading an existence that always borders on being obscene, out of place, and reducible to sex.” (Haraway, 1991, p. 166)

Like Standing, Haraway criticized the inhumane nature of the new paradigm of work, which treated workers as commodities. She also argued that changes in production modes had been spurred by new technological arrangements. Acknowledging that the feminization of work affected women and men alike, Haraway pointed out that it was necessary to analyse differences among women and between women and men. Haraway spoke of deskilling, which she defined as “an old strategy newly applicable to formerly

privileged workers” (p. 166). She also observed a decrease in unionized jobs, which she characterized as “the success of the attack on relatively privileged, mostly white, men's unionized jobs” (p. 166). While Haraway's brief description of the feminized workforce did not reference Standing's work directly, they seemed to have a similar understanding of what it meant for a workforce to be feminized.

Among those who explicitly supported Standing's theory were Shah et al. (Shah, Gothoskar, Gandhi & Chhachhi, 1994). Their work complemented Standing's by providing a clear and concise explanation of what they considered had triggered flexibility in the workforce: industrial restructuring. Until the 1980s, industries had followed the Fordist system of production, which produced masses of standardized goods by using a moving assembly line that dictated the pace of work (Jessop, 2017). “Fordist production required long runs of standardised products, large units and the maintenance of large inventories on a 'just in case' basis which increased costs” (p. 40). With the introduction of microelectronic systems to production in the 1980s, however, production moved past Fordism and into Post-Fordism.

“Post-Fordist or flexible production is based on decentralised small units of production, with subcontracting arrangements, minimum inventories similar to the Japanese 'kanban' or 'just in time' system, with flexible labour deployed over a variety of production tasks. The labour force is used only when required which means workers do not have permanent status, are paid low wages and deprived of statutory rights.” (Shah, Gothoskar, Gandhi & Chhachhi, 1994, p. 40)

The economies of scale that characterized Fordist production were replaced by Post-Fordist economies of flexibility, which allowed production to cater to differentiated markets (Peterson, 2003, p. 17). Production was radically transformed, since it no longer had to take place in centralized worksites and could be performed by workers in small production units around the world (p. 17). It no longer required full-time permanent workers either, which was causing a deterioration of job conditions and a decrease in job security.

After pointing out that Post-Fordism impacted workers negatively, Shah et al. also said that flexibility did not necessarily have to be negative (Shah, Gothoskar, Gandhi & Chhachhi, 1994, p. 47). In fact, they held that it was possible for part-time work to provide workers with the freedom to choose when to work and how. For flexibilization to be positive for workers and companies alike, Shah et al. argued that it was necessary for

workers with flexible jobs to have the same wages, benefits and rights as full-time workers.

### **3.5 Opposing Views to Standing's Theory of the Feminization of Labour**

Standing's publication of "Global Feminization through Flexible Labor" triggered much opposition, too. Chhachhi and Pittin were among the first to challenge the study that Standing had based his theory on and to present a different take on the theory of the feminization of the labour force (Chhachhi & Pittin, 1996).

"Although an examination of international data on labour force participation does show a tendency for women's labour participation rates to rise and men's labour participation rates to decrease, it is possible that given earlier problems in measurement of [female labour force participation] rates, this trend could be a result of increasing visibility rather than of growth due to monetisation and improvement in data collection methods." (Chhachhi & Pittin, 1996, p. 5)

Chhachhi and Pittin questioned the findings that showed that most countries perceived an increase in female workers and a decrease in male workers, which was one of Standing's main claims. Chhachhi and Pittin were thus able to challenge the overall validity of Standing's theory. They also questioned Standing's claim that female participation would continue to increase, pointing to studies on the service industries of Ireland, Mexico and the United States that showed that technological advance decreased women's share in employment over time. While the authors also contested other aspects of Standing's work, the two outlined above seem to be the best grounded and most significant.

Chhachhi and Pittin brought further clarity to the theory of the feminization of the workforce by pointing out that it had several strands. By the feminization of the labour force, authors meant:

- An increase in the rate of female participation relative to male participation.
- The substitution of men by women, i.e. women taking over jobs traditionally held by men.
- An increase in women's involvement in "invisible" work, i.e. non-paid housework and family care.

- The changing nature of industrial work due to new technologies and managerial strategies that make work decentralized, low-paid, irregular, part-time or temporary and based on contracts, i.e. like “women’s work” but not necessarily done by women (p. 8).

Based on these splintered definitions of feminization, Chhachhi and Pittin suggested that if we were to take any one of those definitions at a time, the workforce would not be feminized. However, if all four aspects were combined to include all production sites that count on women’s labour (such as the unorganized sector and homeworking) then it was possible to argue that, as Standing suggested, there was a global tendency towards the feminization of work (p. 8).

Two further criticisms of Standing’s theory were published later that year, the first of which came from Elson (Elson, 1996). Elson contested that the rise of female employment and the decrease of male employment during the 1980s pointed to men being replaced with women. In her view, this situation could be a symptom of the disappearance of jobs usually held by men and the growth of jobs usually held by women. As a result, she argued that “flexibilisation is not always associated with feminisation” (p. 38). Furthermore, Elson challenged Standing’s claim that flexibilization led to an increase in paid female employment in manufacturing industries, but did not seem to substantiate it clearly.

Another criticism came from Chiu and Leicht, who argued that feminization did not always lead to the insecure, low-paid and irregular work described by Standing (Chiu & Leicht, 1999). In a study that resembled a previous one conducted by Wright and Jacobs, Chiu and Leicht found that for lawyers, feminization had brought about more gender equality rather than less. As a result, they proposed the existence of two types of feminization: “successful feminization” and “unsuccessful feminization” (p. 558). For feminization to be successful, it needed to take place in an occupation where: the number of jobs was growing rapidly; it was important to have a graduate or specialized university degree; and wages were increasing for men and women alike due to professional demand outstripping professional supply. In other words, “feminization increases equality in high-status occupations that are not deteriorating rather than in occupations that are in decline” (p. 564). By showing a case in which feminization led to more gender equality,

the authors showed that feminization was not a synonym for worsening economic conditions and that it could coexist with improving economic standards.

### **3.6 Still Standing: Standing Revisits his Theory**

Facing considerable criticism, in 1999 Standing reviewed the newly available data from the 1990s to see if the trend towards labour market flexibility and diverse forms of insecurity had encouraged female participation in the workforce (Standing, 1999). The new data showed that “in a majority of countries in which male participation fell, total labor force participation rose, suggesting a strong change in the gender division of labor and suggesting that female labor force entry was more than substituting for men” (p. 588). In other words, Standing found that as in the two previous decades, during the 1990s female participation in the workforce across the world had risen while male participation had fallen. He also found that women were joining the workforce in bigger numbers than men were leaving it and therefore only revised one of his original claims: women were not replacing men, they were entering the workforce in bigger numbers than men were leaving it.

The new data also showed that the three trends Standing found in his earlier article had accelerated during the 1990s: men were being pushed to the margins of the labour market, if not forced out of it; women were entering and remaining in the labour market; and the types of employment and activities traditionally associated with women were spreading in relation to the types of employment traditionally associated with men (Standing, 1999). As a result, Standing’s revised theory claimed that regular, unionized, stable and manual labour was giving way to insecure, low-paid and irregular work.

Since Standing revisited his theory, critiques against it seemed to stop, giving way to new applications of the theory, as described in the next section.

### **3.7 Applications of the Theory of the Feminization of the Workforce**

In 2001, Benería used the theory to study the informalization of jobs in developed and developing countries (Benería, 2001). Benería observed that feminization could lead to three possible results: an improvement in women’s condition, even if it did not eliminate gender inequalities; little or no improvement in women’s conditions; or mixed



results (p. 47). The most common result, according to Benería, was mixed results. This was the case because, while female participation in the workforce had grown between 1970 and 1990, so had female reliance on informal employment—which is closely linked to poverty and economic insecurity. On the other hand, the relative wages of women had grown in comparison to the relative wages of men throughout the developed and developing world. Benería also saw a tendency for gender gaps in education to decrease across all regions, but these improvements in education did not necessarily translate into better positions in the workforce. All in all, confronted with mixed results and many issues, Benería called for development policies to emphasize the creation of decent jobs (pp. 48-49).

A slightly different approach was taken by Broadbent, who looked at the feminization of the Japanese job market using the flexible firm model developed by Jon Atkinson (Broadbent, 2002). Before moving on to Broadbent's work, the Atkinson model will be briefly introduced.

In "Flexibility, Uncertainty and Manpower Management", Atkinson explored how economic recession, a decrease in market growth, technological changes at work and a reduced working day spurred companies in Britain to deploy new methods of employment (Atkinson, 1984, p. 3). The result was a new type of firm—known as the flexible firm—that was characterized by having two distinct workforces: a core workforce and an adjustable periphery. According to Atkinson, the purpose of having these two workforces was "to protect the core group from numerical employment fluctuations while conducting the host of non-specific and subsidiary activities which all organisations require and generate" (p. 3). The core workforce was therefore in charge of conducting the essential activities of an organization, while the peripheral workforce dealt with activities that were not firm-specific and that, while necessary, were easy enough to be performed by people without much knowledge of the organization. The core workforce was also required to remain flexible in their functions, so that they could be called to supply services to the company as required. According to Atkinson, "the numerical flexibility secured from the use of peripheral groups provide[d] the core group with the employment security as the basis of their functional flexibility in the face of change" (p. 3). The model thus held that the burdens of restructuring fell on the periphery, whose insecure employment subsidised the security, salaries and career

growth of the core workforce. Put even more simply, it was only due to the insecurity faced by the peripheral workforce that the core workforce could keep its security. This was bound to have a divisive impact on the workforce, Atkinson noted (p. 25). He also noted that this periphery was mostly comprised of women.

Having introduced Atkinson's model, let us now go back to Broadbent's attempt to apply it to the Japanese labour market. Broadbent found that the model had a serious limitation.

"The superficiality of the flexible firm model, which assumes a natural division between the 'core' and 'periphery' based on gender, and thus concludes that women will be relegated to the 'low-paying, insecure, dead-end jobs' in the 'periphery', does not begin to describe the complexity of employment relations." (Broadbent, 2002, p. 15)

Since the model did not explain why women were relegated to the periphery, Broadbent concluded by challenging its applicability to the situation in Japan. For the purpose of this thesis, Broadbent's approach is useful since it introduces the concepts of "core" and "periphery" to the theory of the feminization of labour.

In *A Critical Rewriting of Global Political Economy*, Peterson contributed to the theory by providing some new and interesting nuances (Peterson, 2003). Peterson argued that jobs increasingly require fewer skills and that "the most desirable workers are those who are perceived to be unorganized (undemanding), docile but reliable, available for part-time and temporary work, and willing to accept low wages" (p. 62). Peterson also defined the feminization of the workforce as "both a material, embodied transformation of labor markets and a conceptual characterization of devalorized labor conditions" (p. 64). This definition, while not as descriptive as the ones mentioned before, is valuable for its theoretical nature, for its succinctness and for covering both the macro and micro aspects of the feminization of work. Finally, Peterson held that among the few who benefitted from temporary and flexible work arrangements were high-wage consultants.

"High-wage consultants – typically male – whose information and service skills are well valued may realize greater freedom of choice and scheduling. Mothers and single parents may also find flexible arrangements better suit their life conditions, although this must be assessed in the context of available childcare arrangements and limited access to better-paying and more secure employment opportunities." (Peterson, 2003, p. 65)

Peterson argued that for most workers, however, the lack of regulatory frameworks to protect their rights were likely to create insecurity, decrease or erase their benefits and lower their incomes.

In 2007, a longitudinal study exploring the connection between low income and feminization was published by England, Allison and Wu (England, Allison & Wu, 2007). Did bad pay cause occupations to feminize? Or did feminization cause bad pay? England, Allison and Wu suggested that

“an important enemy of gender equality is the inertial relationship between highly female occupations and low wages, a kind of ‘original sin’ in the system which disappears only glacially without active policy intervention, and contributes to the sex gap in pay as long as there is substantial segregation.” (England, Allison & Wu, 2007, p. 1254)

This means that if an occupation starts off as mostly female, its wages are likely to be low and stay low. However, if an occupation does not start off as mostly female, once it increases its percent female it will not decrease its wages. England, Allison and Wu’s exploration of the connection between feminization and bad pay explains why so-called female occupations find it so difficult to earn higher wages.

In light of optimistic claims that predicted shattered glass ceilings as a result of the feminization of labour, Bolton and Muzio explored the paradoxes created by the feminization of law, management and teaching in the United Kingdom (Bolton & Muzio, 2008). The authors found that the role of women in each of these occupations was quite different. However, a common thread running through law, management and teaching was that they were continually being masculinized.

“Indeed, to be (or to aspire to be) a professional is ‘to do’ gender; to comply with behavioural and interactional norms that celebrate and sustain a masculine vision of what it is to be a professional thus marginalizing the ‘feminine’ and devaluing, ignoring and unsupporting the work that women do.” (Bolton & Muzio, 2008, p. 283)

Because in all three professions masculinity was equated with professionalism, women did not really stand a chance. “Men dominate senior positions and lucrative/high status specialisms while women perform ‘women’s work’ in front-line positions and lesser areas of practice”, they added (p. 283).

Furthermore, Bolton and Muzio argued that the effect of doing gender was different in professional, semi-professional and feminized occupations (Bolton & Muzio,

2008). Previous literature had stated that gender could represent an obstacle to professional advancement in the case of semi-professions like teaching and that it could present a source of proletarianization in professions like law. Building on this literature, Bolton and Muzio argued that gender could act as an incentive for professionalization in feminized sections like human resources management, but that it could also act as a defence mechanism for male elites seeking to preserve their privileges. Their work pointed to a non-linear, complex relationship between feminization and professionalization.

Numerous other studies explored the relation between professionalization, sex segregation and feminization within specific occupations (Irvine & Vermilya, 2010). Given that these are not necessary for the present study, let us now move on from reviewing different theories of the feminization of labour to discussing how the theory has guided this research.

### **3.8 Operationalization**

The feminization of the labour force is here understood as the extension of so-called feminine work to most of the workforce. This study does not consider that the labour force is feminized merely because jobs are mostly being performed by women. Following Standing's theory, it characterizes feminized labour as possessing informal characteristics such as flexible contracts with no employment protection, few if any benefits, low pay, low-skilled tasks and a lack of union representation (Standing, 1989, 1999).

Unfortunately, the literature on the feminization of labour does not provide working definitions of these terms. Without delineating these terms, how can we know if a job is secure or insecure, low-paid or high-paid, etc.? Faced with this situation, e-research was conducted around flexibility in the workforce, employment benefits, low-paid work, low-skilled work and non-unionized work to try to find a reliable source of information that could provide more insight. As it turned out, the necessary definitions were all available under the same theory: organizational theory. The definitions below are based on the main elements of the theory of the feminization of the workforce and the practical categorizations provided by organizational theory.

### **3.8.1 Flexible**

Flexible work is defined here as work that is performed under non-standard contracts, i.e. temporary contracts that do not provide employment security. This definition has two interconnected parts. The first part revolves around the temporary and contractual nature of flexible work. According to Dettmers, Kaiser and Fietze, “the general assumption is that flexible work arrangements enable an organization to adapt its workforce to changes in the working environment, which is mainly based on Atkinson's (1984) groundbreaking ‘flexible firm’ model” (Dettmers, Kaiser & Fietze, 2013, p. 155). Following this assumption, flexibility is usually understood as a firm or organization’s ability to allocate workers to different sections based on production needs, which it does by assigning workers to jobs that are temporary and based on contracts. As Dettmers, Kaiser and Fietze explain, flexibility can also be understood from the employee’s perspective. Following this perspective, “flexibility means to have options to choose, when, for how long and for which employer [...] to work” (p. 155). To achieve this type of flexibility, known as temporary and spatial flexibility, companies revert to introducing overtime, flexitime, on-call work and telecommuting. This project will be dealing contractual flexibility insofar as it goes hand in hand with employment insecurity. Flexible work does not provide employment security because it is based on temporary or fixed-term contracts (Scherer, 2009, pp. 528, 532). Virtanen et al. went as far as to equate fixed-term employment to insecure employment (Virtanen, Kivimäki, Elovainio, Vahtera & Ferrie, 2003).

### **3.8.2 Few, if any, Benefits**

A benefit, fringe benefit or employee benefit is defined here as a form of indirect or non-wage compensation paid to an employee. This definition is based on that of the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States of America, which states that a benefit is a “[n]onwage compensation provided to employees” (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). The Bureau distinguishes among different types of benefit categories.

“The National Compensation Survey groups benefits into five categories: paid leave (vacations, holidays, sick leave); supplementary pay (premium pay for overtime and work on holidays and weekends, shift differentials, nonproduction bonuses); retirement (defined benefit and defined contribution plans); insurance (life insurance, health benefits, short-term disability, and long-term disability insurance) and legally required benefits (Social Security and Medicare, Federal

and State unemployment insurance taxes, and workers' compensation)." (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017)

According to Weathington and Tetrick, the difference between a benefit and an entitlement lies in whether a company or organization is obliged to offer it or not (Weathington & Tetrick, 2000, p. 158). In Klonoski's words, "[e]mployees consider benefits a part of their overall compensation, but when organizations are required by law to offer them, they may be thought of more as an entitlement than a negotiable part of compensation" (Klonoski, 2016, p. 53). Weathington and Tetrick's definition of entitlement seems to coincide with what the Bureau of Labour Statistics calls a "legally required benefit". Such legally required benefits or entitlements cover social security, medical care, unemployment taxes and worker's compensation, or whatever a specific government requires of employers by law. Given that "benefits" and "entitlements" are often used interchangeably in Standing's work<sup>3</sup> as well as in United Nations reports<sup>4</sup>, this project will deal with benefits and entitlements as if they were one and the same thing—a non-wage compensation provided to an employee.

### 3.8.3 Low-Paid

Unlike with previous definitions, the definition of a low-paid job draws on the *Collins Dictionary*, which states that it is a job that earns its workers very little money (Collins Dictionary, 2017). In this instance, a dictionary definition was used since it had an interesting peculiarity. The dictionary traced back the usage of the word to the 1840s and showed a growth in popularity in the 1970s and early 1980s, right about the time when the labour market became more flexible and feminized.

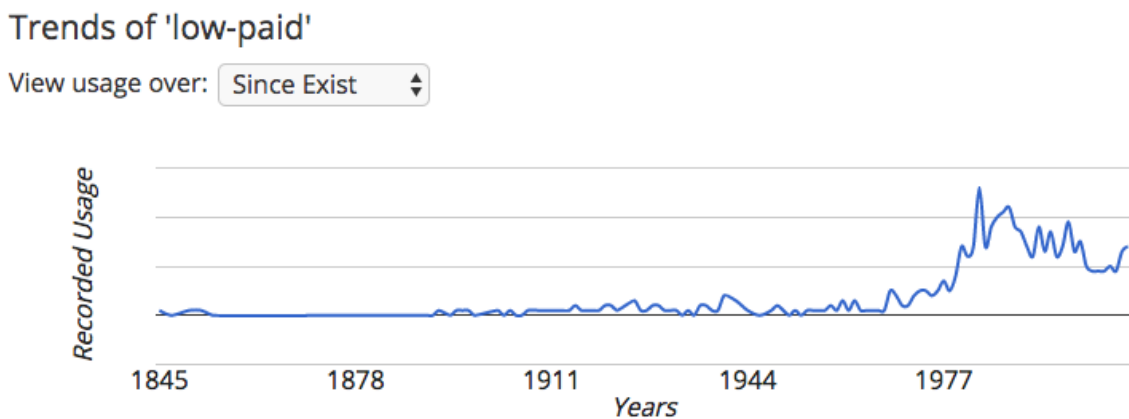
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3 For example, Standing equates entitlements to benefits by saying "... a loss of entitlement to fringe benefits is most closely associated with labor flexibilization" (Standing, 1989, p. 1082).

4 For example, the International Civil Service Commission equates entitlements to benefits by saying that "[o]ther non-cash benefits which may be provided include entitlement to [...]" (International Civil Service Commission, 2012, p. 20).

**Figure 1**

***Recorded Usage of “Low-Paid” According to Collins Dictionary, 2017***



*Note. Reprinted from Collins Dictionary, 2017.*

The definition by the *Collins Dictionary* could be expanded by adding that a low-paid job is a job that provides its workers with meagre earnings in either absolute or relative terms. A low-paid job in absolute terms is here defined as a job that pays workers little money compared to other workers in a similar job in their country. Low-paid in relative terms means is here defined as a job that provides its workers with little money compared to other jobs in the same organization or company. While this definition is not without fault (it does not, for example, account for regional tendencies, the global market or variations in an industry), it should prove useful in showing that jobs can be low-paid in more than one way.

### **3.8.4 Low-Skilled**

The next element in the definition of feminized work is that it is low-skilled, which refers to the skills a job requires and not the skills people bring to the job. According to Tåhlin, the skills required by a job have three components: formal education, defined as the amount of schooling conducted beyond the compulsory level required of the person applying for a job; the initial on-the-job training or learning, defined as the amount of learning that needs to take place after entering a job in order to perform it reasonably well; and continuous on-the-job learning, defined as learning that is required of the

worker to continue performing at an acceptable level (Tåhlin, 2007, p. 49). Based on this understanding of the skills required by a job, a low-skilled job is here defined as a job that: requires minimal levels of pre-entry education, such as only requiring a high school degree; requires minimal levels of post-entry initial learning, consisting of not more than a handful of days; and requires minimal levels of continuous learning on the job, meaning that on-the-job training is seldom.

### **3.8.5 Not Unionized**

The last characteristic in the present definition of feminized work is that it is not unionized. As Kabeer, Milward and Sudarshan pointed out in *Organizing Women Workers in the Informal Economy*, one of the essential characteristics of trade unionism is that it provides collective bargaining between employers and employees (Kabeer, Sudarshan & Milward, 2013, p. 9). Since feminized workers are often considered self-employed, Kabeer, Milward and Sudarshan explain that they are not part of the employed people that trade unions represent. As a result, feminized workers are usually not able to join trade unions, which enable workers to access social security benefits such as paid maternity leave and retirement (p 27). Such benefits are usually not accessible to workers under labour flexibilization (Standing, 1989, p. 1082).

The present chapter provided a detailed account of how the theory of the feminization of labour developed and introduced different understandings of the theory as per its many proponents. The chapter has also provided the reader with a working definition of the theory of the feminization of labour as well as operational definitions of its components to aid this research. The upcoming chapter will apply the chosen research method and theory to qualitatively analyse the content of relevant United Nations reports. It will also keep track of relevant quantitative data in order to understand the magnitude of the situation and whether it affects women and men equally.



## **4. The Feminization of the United Nations**

The present chapter uses the theory of the feminization of the labour force to analyse the characteristics of the workforce in the United Nations system. Given that it has many different types of personnel, the chapter begins with an overview of its workforce. It then goes on to analyse employment conditions for the different groups that compose it according to the five main characteristics that make work feminized: it is flexible, it has few to no benefits, it is low-paid, it is low-skilled and it is not unionized. The chapter includes extracts from 16 primary sources that deal with employment conditions in the United Nations.

### **4.1 Overview of the Workforce**

The United Nations is not so much an organization but a system of organizations, often referred to as the United Nations system or the United Nations “family” (United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 2017c). The organizations that compose the United Nations are “legally independent international organizations with their own rules, membership, organs and financial resources, whose relationships with the United Nations are regulated through negotiated agreements” (United Nations, 2017c). The term “family” arises from the independence faced by its members, together with the fact that they negotiate their relationship to other organizations within the United Nations.

More specifically, the United Nations system is made up of the United Nations proper (also known as the United Nations Secretariat), specialized agencies and a number of programmes, as well as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which is not a specialized agency in the strict legal sense (United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 2017c). Each of these individual organizations has “different mandates, diverse legislative and governing bodies and historical roots” (United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 2017a). In total, there are over 50 different funds, programmes, specialized agencies, regional commissions, research and training institutes, bodies, entities and other related organizations in the United Nations, as

shown in Annex 1 (United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 2017a).

Approximately 55% of the workforce is composed of staff (United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 2011, p. 18). There are several different categories of staff: Director; Field Service; General Service; Language Teacher; National Professional Officer; Professional; Public Information Assistant; Security; and Trades and Crafts (United Nations General Assembly, 2017). Each of these categories has different levels that reflect increasing levels of responsibility and skills requirements (United Nations, 2017b).

Staff in the United Nations can be broadly divided in two: the Professional and related categories and the General Service and related categories (International Civil Service Commission, 2012, p. vi). Staff in the Professional category are required to perform tasks that require high levels of analytical and communication skills, substantive expertise and/or the ability to manage teams (United Nations, 2017b). So-called Professional work is conducted by staff in the ungraded, Director, Professional and National Professional Officer categories. Staff in the General Service and related categories, on the other hand, perform administrative work, provide secretarial and clerical support and perform technical functions such as printing, buildings maintenance and security (United Nations, 2017b). So-called General Service work is performed by staff in the General Service, Trades and Crafts, Security, Public Information Assistant and Language Teacher categories. Staff in the Field Service category conduct similar work to staff in the General Service and related categories, but since they are not recruited on a national basis they are not always placed under the General Service and related categories (United Nations, 2017b).

Table 1 below shows the latest sex-disaggregated statistics on the distribution of staff members by category and level throughout the United Nations system.

**Table 1*****Distribution of Staff as of 31 December 2015***

	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Percentage of women</i>
Ungraded <sup>a</sup>	221	81	26.8
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>26.8</b>
D-2	380	169	30.8
D-1	1 138	573	33.5
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1 518</b>	<b>742</b>	<b>32.8</b>
P-6/P-7 <sup>b</sup>	139	56	28.7
P-5	4 046	2 281	36.1
P-4	6 070	4 363	41.8
P-3	5 288	4 407	45.5
P-2	1 464	1 984	57.5
P-1	61	95	60.9
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>17 068</b>	<b>13 186</b>	<b>43.6</b>
NOE	1	1	50.0
NOD	189	146	43.6
NOC	1 616	1 310	44.8
NOB	2 425	1 762	42.1
NOA	1 133	990	46.6
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>5 364</b>	<b>4 209</b>	<b>44.0</b>
FS7	27	0	0.0
FS6	315	71	18.4
FS5	1 097	466	29.8
FS4	1 350	518	27.7
FS3	39	18	31.6
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2 828</b>	<b>1 073</b>	<b>27.5</b>
S-7	3	0	0.0
S-6	6	1	14.3
S-5	15	2	11.8
S-4	20	3	13.0
S-3	90	13	12.6
S-2	115	25	17.9
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>15.0</b>
TC8	2	0	0.0
TC7	10	0	0.0
TC6	17	1	5.6
TC5	36	0	0.0
TC4	17	0	0.0
TC3	5	0	0.0
TC2	4	0	0.0

	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Percentage of women</i>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.1</b>
G7	1 475	2 141	59.2
G6	4 021	6 436	61.5
G5	4 496	6 828	60.3
G4	5 006	3 621	42.0
G3	4 451	836	15.8
G2	4 053	208	4.9
G1	129	44	25.4
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>23 631</b>	<b>20 114</b>	<b>46.0</b>
LT1	8	23	74.2
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>74.2</b>
PIA3	0	1	100.0
PIA2	2	7	77.8
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>72.7</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>50 981</b>	<b>39 481</b>	<b>43.6</b>

*Abbreviations:* D, Director; FS, Field Service; G, General Service; LT, Language Teacher;

NO, National Professional Officer; P, Professional; PIA, Public Information Assistant;

S, Security; TC, Trades and Crafts.

*a*Ungraded encompasses all levels above D-2, including Assistant Secretary-General, Director-General, Deputy Director-General, Assistant Director-General, Under-Secretary-General and Secretary-General.

*b*P-6 and P-7 grades are used in PAHO, UNDP, UNOPS, and WHO. P-6 and P-7 are equivalent to D-1 and D-2, respectively.

*Note. Reprinted from United Nations General Assembly, 2017, pp. 5-7.*

As Table 1 shows, most staff are in the Professional and higher categories (Director and ungraded) and in the General Service category. As of 31 December 2015, the organization had 90,462 staff, compared to 113,344 staff per a report published by the Joint Inspection Unit five years earlier (Wynes, 2012). Out of the total number of staff, 43% are women, who are mostly located in the least senior category: General Service. As stated in the latest report by the Secretary-General on the status of women in the United Nations, “[t]he inverse relationship between seniority and the representation of women [...] continues to persist, culminating in a low of 26.8 per cent at the highest level (ungraded)” (United Nations General Assembly, 2017, p. 1). Unfortunately, the United

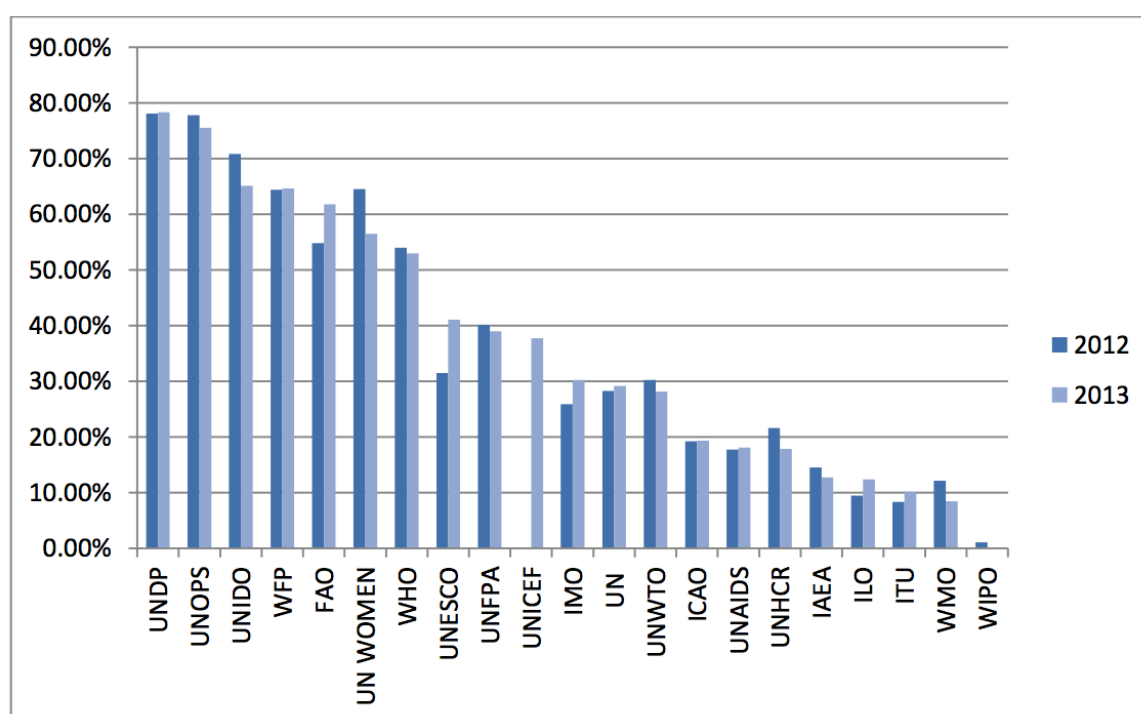
Nations does not keep statistics on the percentage of staff members per length of contract.

The remaining 45% of the United Nations consists of non-staff (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 68). The percentage of non-staff has grown in the last 25 years, with a particular growth in the use of individual consultancies since 2006 (Biraud, 2012, p. 50; Terzi, 2012, p. 10). The latest statistics that included data for the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) stated that approximately 81,000 to 87,000 individuals were hired in 2012 and 2013 as non-staff (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 68).

As shown in Figure 2 below, the percentage of non-staff per organization in the last years has varied significantly. The figure shows statistics for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the World Food Programme (WFP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the United Nations Secretariat (UN), the World Tourism Organization of the United Nations (UNWTO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Telecommunication Unit (ITU), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

**Figure 2**

***Non-Staff Personnel in 2012 and 2013 as a Percentage of the Total Workforce.***



*Note. Reprinted from Terzi and Fall, 2014, p. 12.*

Figure 2 shows that the proportion of non-staff in organizations ranged from about 1% in the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) to 78% in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Non-staff also represented at least half of the personnel in the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the World Food Programme (WFP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Just like there are many types of staff in the United Nations, non-staff also represent a heterogeneous category. A review conducted by the Joint Inspection Unit showed that there are more than 30 different types of non-staff contracts in the United Nations, including: Special Service Agreements, Individual Contractor Agreement, Service Contract, Government Seconded, Supernumerary Contracts, Individual Contractor Contract, External Collaboration Contract, United Nations Volunteer, Individual

Consultant, Individual Specialist, Contractual Service Agreement, Consultant, Casual Labor, Visiting Expert, Professional Service Agreement Subscriber, National Project Personnel, National Correspondent, South/South Subscriber, Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries/ Technical Cooperation among Countries in Transition Expert, Editors, Proofreaders, Teachers, Contractual Service Agreement, Agency Field, Ministry Staff, National Staff, Gratis Personnel type I and II (Terzi, 2012, p. 13). Many of these contracts are similar but have different names. For example, consultants are referred to as Individual Contractors in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Consultants in the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), External Collaborators in the International Labour Organization (ILO), Special Service Agreements in the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Technical Cooperation Contracts in the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Individual Service Agreements in the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Contract Service Agreements in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and National or International Consultants in the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) (Terzi, 2012, p. 48). An individual organization is likely to have a handful of these types of contracts only. For example, non-staff contracts issued in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) can be either Special Service Agreement (issued in the field only), Service Contracts (also issued only in the field), Individual Consultant (recruited internationally or nationally), or Supernumerary (issued in Headquarters only) (Terzi & Fall, 2014a). The type of contract has a bearing on the level of pay, the type of work, the level of responsibility, the length of employment and the type and amount of benefits the contract offers (Terzi, 2012; Terzi & Fall, 2014a).

According to Terzi and Fall, non-staff contracts can be clustered into two major groups:

“(a) non-staff contracts that entail an independent contractual relationship – in the present report, for ease of reference, these are referred to as ‘consultancy-type’ contracts. These contracts, in general, include a lump-sum or daily fee payment with no or very limited social benefits; and (b) non-staff contracts used under a de facto employment relationship to carry out ‘staff’ work – for ease of reference, these are referred to as ‘service-type’ contracts. These contracts, depending on the organization, provide a range of social benefits that are characteristic of an employment relationship.” (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 26)

The first group of non-staff contracts that Terzi and Fall call consultancy-type contracts are usually of a Professional nature and require delivering services or outputs within a specified time frame (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 26). Examples of tasks conducted as part of these contracts include developing concept notes or advisory reports, preparing project documents, providing strategic advice, moderating workshops, etc. (p. 26). Terzi and Fall refer to the second group of non-staff contracts as service-type contracts and explain that they are often used to hire non-staff to perform staff-type work, often for extended periods with unpaid breaks between contracts (p. 27). Unlike with consultancy-type contracts, service-type contracts can entail both Professional or General Service work (p. 51). There is no definite correspondence between contract name and it being a consultancy-type or a service-type contract, since there is no consistency in the usage of contracts in the United Nations (pp. 69-77).

The nature of non-staff contracts can vary extensively. As Biraud points out, “[t]he category ‘non-staff personnel’ is an umbrella for holders of all kinds of contracts, some of which obviously do not and could not be staff functions, while others are labelled as ‘non-staff’ for reasons that are less clear” (Biraud, 2012, p. 4). Given the independence of the United Nations specialized agencies, every organization in the United Nations is able to have its own set of rules and regulations that allows it to deal with personnel issues in whatever way it sees fit (United Nations, 2017c). As a result, the conditions of non-staff contracts depend on individual organizations.

A review of the 16 primary sources and several websites of the United Nations revealed that most organizations do not have detailed data on the use of non-staff contracts and cannot provide a clear profile of the non-staff workforce, its total cost and a breakdown of costs by contractual modality (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. iii). The most encompassing study of non-staff in the United Nations came from the Chief Executive Board for Coordination, which was tasked with studying the situation of non-staff throughout the United Nations but was not allowed by members of its task force to publish its findings. The review stated:

“Based on the information provided by all organizations (except UPU), the data for June 2010 would indicate that the global workforce of the UN Common System is composed of approximately 192,410 individuals, of which approximately 106,301 hold staff member appointments (continuing, fixed, temporary) governed by the respective organization’s Staff Regulations and Rules, and 86,109 individuals hold a variety of non-staff contracts. The non-staff employees therefore represent



approximately 44.7% of the global UN Common System workforce. The variations in the percentages of non-staff employees, in relation to regular staff members, in individual organizations, varies from 70.8% to 10%.” (United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 2011, p. 3)

The draft report by the Chief Executive Board for Coordination collected information from all organizations except for the Universal Postal Union (UPU). The figures it reported coincide with those published by the Joint Inspection Unit three years later. Unfortunately, they do not differentiate among different types of non-staff contracts (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 68).

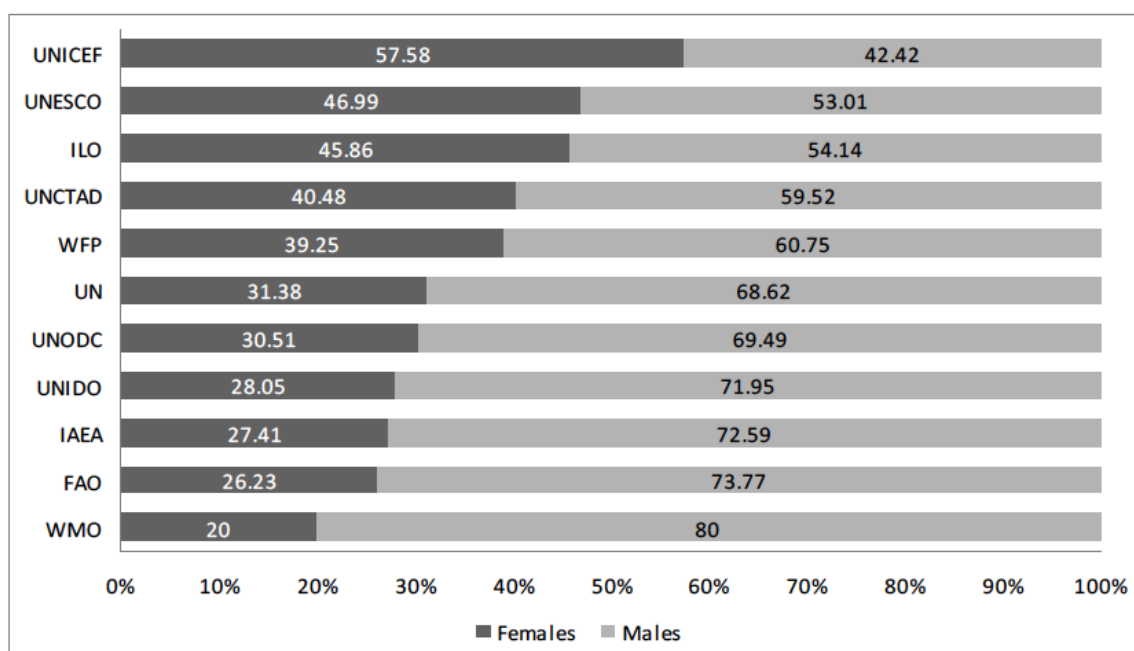
The only organization that was able to provide a more specific analysis of its use of non-staff was the United Nations Secretariat. During the 2012-2013 biennium, it employed 40,655 consultants and individual contractors, 3,051 retired staff and 4,426 gratis personnel, defined as “personnel seconded to the United Nations by Governments or other entities at no cost to the Organization” (United Nations General Assembly, 2014a, pp. 1, 10, 13). Among the gratis personnel, 3,929 were interns, 351 were associate experts, 58 were technical cooperation experts and 88 were type II personnel (a category the report does not define) (United Nations General Assembly, 2014a, pp. 1, 10, 13). Out of all gratis personnel in the United Nations Secretariat, 67% were female (United Nations General Assembly, 2014a, pp. 1, 10, 13).

The United Nations Secretariat was not the only organization in the system to have a majority of consultants and individual contractors among its non-staff. According to the Joint Inspection Unit, consultants comprise the largest group in the non-staff category throughout the United Nations (Terzi, 2012, p. 13). “Since many organizations did not provide a full set of specific statistical data and figures, it was difficult to consolidate comprehensive statistics on the use of consultancy contracts across the United Nations system” (2012, p. 10). As a result of the inadequate statistics on non-staff, it is not possible to state with certainty how common consultancy contracts actually are.

Figure 3 below shows the available data on the use of consultants per organization and by gender. As the figure will make clear, the majority of consultants in reporting organizations were men (Terzi, 2012, p. 30).

**Figure 3**

***Gender Balance of Consultants in Selected Organizations in the United Nations***



*Note. Reprinted from Terzi, 2012, p. 30*

The statistics presented here do not depict the entire United Nations system since only the eleven organizations depicted in Figure 3 report to Member States on matters pertaining to non-staff (Terzi, 2012, p. 36). The following organizations do not report on these matters: the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the Universal Postal Union (UPU), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) (Terzi, 2012, p. 36). Most organizations do not report to Member States on their use of non-staff. Given this lack of information, it is impossible to report on the percentage of non-staff that are consultants, the percentage that are volunteers and the percentage that are interns; the average contract length for non-staff; the average employment length for non-staff; etc.

Given the rift in the United Nations' workforce, the upcoming analysis will distinguish between staff and non-staff and whenever possible provide sex-disaggregated data on subgroups of personnel, such as Professional staff, General Service staff, consultants, interns, volunteers, etc.

## **4.2 Flexibility**

What makes work flexible? As discussed in chapter three, flexible work is here defined as employment that is based on temporary contracts and that, as a result, does not provide security to its workers.

In general terms, the organization has shown a tendency towards increased labour flexibility since the mid 1990s (Biraud, 2011, p. 7). This was exemplified by the Joint Inspection Unit in the following quote about the United Nations Secretariat:

“Initially, all staff of the United Nations Secretariat were treated under one set of Staff Rules and Staff Regulations, known as the ‘100 series’. Over time, contractual arrangements were developed to deal with changing needs and new requirements for greater flexibility. These were addressed through the use of the ‘200 series’ for personnel working on technical assistance projects and, subsequently, through the ‘300 series’, initially introduced for temporary contracts of up to six months. The ‘300 series’ evolved and the appointment of limited duration was introduced to recruit non-career personnel performing time-limited functions. Appointments of limited duration provided fewer benefits than regular staff contracts and were designed to be simple to administer given their temporary nature.” (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 18)

In need of staffing flexibility, the United Nations Secretariat started incorporating fixed-term and temporary contracts under a new set of staff rules and regulations, called “200 series” and “300 series”. The contracts under these series were more flexible than those under the original “100 series” because they were simpler to issue, had fewer benefits and were more economical. By the mid 2000s, however, employees in the United Nations Secretariat and the rest of the system started to express concerns about the new hiring practices. “Discontent ha[d] been growing among the staff due to [sic] being increasingly deprived of their traditional career prospects, with a general feeling of precariousness with regards to job security and resentment over the loss of acquired rights” (Biraud, 2011, p. 7). As a result, the “200 series” and “300 series” staff rules and regulations were abolished and only the “100 series” remained (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 18). Since 2005, three different contracts exist for staff: continuing contracts, meaning open-ended

contracts without an end date; fixed-term contracts, with a duration of one to five years; and temporary contracts, for appointments less than one year long (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 22).<sup>5</sup> These three contracts operate within the “100 series” staff rules and regulations and have similar benefits (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 18).

The new contractual system was still not flexible enough. According to the Joint Inspection Unit:

“Most organizations establish stringent requirements for the creation of staff posts; for example, they need to be approved at headquarters and frequently require the approval of the respective governing body. In addition, staff recruitment processes are often considered cumbersome, involving, inter alia, long advertisement and application periods, the establishment of panels and the participation of central review bodies.” (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 10)

As the extract points out, in most organizations of the United Nations the amount of time required to create a new position, advertise it, establish an interview panel, conduct interviews and issue a new contract is long and impractical. Furthermore, cancelling posts is problematic, making the creation of posts a risky and expensive endeavour (Terzi, 2012, p. 7). The Joint Inspection Unit also pointed out that staff cannot be moved from one division to another, let alone from one organization to another (Terzi, 2012, p. 7). Such stringent regulations on the recruitment of new staff makes staff positions inflexible.

Facing growing discontent among staff because of decreasing labour security (Terzi, 2012, p. 4), the organization seems to have found another way of creating flexibility: hiring non-staff.

“Over the years, while staff contractual modalities have been simplified and reduced, the use and types of non-staff contractual arrangements have increased. The current situation of non-staff contracts is similar to the proliferation of staff contracts with different entitlements described above. There are many different types of non-staff contracts with no or reduced entitlements; however, some non-staff contractual modalities are evolving, offering some but not all of the entitlements of staff contracts, in order to grant some recognition of the fact that

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<sup>5</sup> Unfortunately, at the moment of writing this thesis none of the primary reports nor the official statistics page of the United Nations System Chief Executive Board for Coordination (2017b) are able to provide information on the percentage of staff members appointed under continuing, fixed-term or temporary contracts.

non-staff personnel perform the same or similar functions as staff.” (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 18)

Hiring more and cheaper workers with few, if any, benefits was the organization’s way of handling the growing mandate placed on it by Member States without expanding its financial resources (Terzi, 2012, p. 4). Hiring non-staff became increasingly popular in the last 25 years (Biraud, 2012, p. 50) precisely because non-staff contracts are more flexible than staff ones.

According to Terzi and Fall, in most organizations the recruitment of consultants is flexible because consultancy positions are not usually advertised, especially for consultancies lasting six months or less (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 33). Consultants are hired directly by managers without much involvement from the department of human resources and no involvement from Member States (p. 33). Organizations sometimes require that several candidates be considered for an assignment, but this is not always the case (p. 33). Once a candidate has been selected, it is not uncommon for the organization to issue a contract straight away (Terzi, 2012, p. 26). Consultant recruitment is so flexible that, “in many cases, they have to be on board immediately” (p. 26).

The recruitment of volunteers is also more flexible than the recruitment of staff. As one of the reports by the Joint Inspection Unit pointed out:

“Managers interviewed stated that [United Nations Volunteers] positions could be established relatively easily by the country office without struggling to get regular staff positions from headquarters. [United Nations Volunteers] were considered part of the professional workforce but with fewer entitlements”. (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 31)

As with consultants and other types of non-staff, recruiting volunteers does not require the involvement of an organization’s headquarters and can be done directly in the field by the United Nations Volunteers programme, which really expedites the process (p. 31).

The recruitment of interns is slightly different but still allows for much flexibility. Unlike with consultancy positions, most internship positions are advertised online (Wynes & Posta, 2009, p. 8). Their recruitment usually takes place at the level of the hiring manager, who selects potential candidates from a pool of applicants created by the department of human resources, communicates with them, conducts necessary interviews and selects them. While in most cases interns are given the flexibility to choose the period of their internship, sometimes candidates are given a very short notice before

they are expected to join the organization (p. 10). Internships are temporary, lasting from one month up to a year depending on the organization (pp. 19-20).

Consultancy contracts are also more flexible than staff contracts because they are always temporary. “Many organizations impose restrictions concerning the duration of consultancy and other non-staff contracts” (Terzi, 2012, p. 16). As shown in Table 2 below, most organizations do not allow consultancy contracts to be longer than one year (the only exception being the World Health Organization, which allows for two-year-long contracts). Furthermore, organizations often require consultants to take a mandatory break between contracts. The following table shows that is possible for contracts to be renewed so that non-staff are hired for a long period of time on short-term contracts.

Table 2

*Duration of Contracts and Breaks Applied by Different Organizations in the United Nations System*

Organization	Type of contracts	Maximum duration	Mandatory breaks	Extension
<i>United Nations, funds and programmes</i>				
<b>UN Secretariat</b>	Consultants contracts under ST/AI/1999/7	No	No break required	Maximum 24 months in a 36-month period
<b>UNHCR</b>	Consultancy Contract	11 months	1 month	Maximum of 24 months in a 36-month period
<b>UNDP</b>	Individual Contract (IC)	1 year	No break required	Maximum 3 years
	Individual Contractor Agreement (ICA) through UNOPS to consultants at Headquarters	11 months	1 month	Maximum 3 years
<b>UNFPA</b>	Special Service Agreements (SSAs) to international consultants at a field duty stations	11 months	4 months	No limit for extension
	Special Service Agreements (SSAs) through UNDP to local consultants at a field duty stations	11 months	1 month	No limit for extension
<b>UNICEF</b>	Consultants contracts under HR manual	11 months within the same office, and the same work plan and/or project	1 month	Maximum 44 months within 48-month period
<b>UNOPS</b>	Individual Contractor Agreement (ICA)	1 year	No	Formal review of any contract over 4 years
<b>WFP</b>	Consultancy contracts under FAO Manual Section 317	11 months	1 month	Maximum 44 months within 48 months
<i>Specialized agencies and IAEA</i>				
<b>ILO</b>	External Collaboration Contract	No	No	No limit
<b>FAO</b>	Consultancy contracts under Section 317	11 months	1 month	Maximum 44 months within 48 months
<b>UNESCO</b>	Contract for individual consultants	11 months	1 month	No limits
<b>ICAO</b>	Consultant and Individual Contractor contracts	11 months	1 month	33 months within 36 months An additional final extension may be granted not to exceed 11 months
<b>WHO</b>	Consultancy contract	2 years	No	Extension granted by HRD as appropriate.

Table 2

*Duration of Contracts and Breaks Applied by Different Organizations in the United Nations System (Continued)*

Organization	Type of contracts	Maximum duration	Mandatory breaks	Extension
UPU	All non core contracts are considered as consultancy contracts	n/a		
ITU	Special Service Agreement (SSA)	No	No	No limit
WMO	Special Service Agreements (SSA)	9 months	n/a	18 months within 24 months period
IMO	Technical Cooperation Contracts	n/a		
WIPO	Special Service Agreements (SSA)	No	No	No limit
UNIDO	Individual Service Agreement (ISA)	1 year at a time	No (up to four years of continuous service or total service in a six year period)	May be extended up to 4 years of continuous employment or up to the total duration of 4 years in a 6-year period. Further employment is subject to mandatory review by HRM in consultation with project manager
IAEA	Special Service Agreement (SSA)	1 year	1 month	Up to 2 years
	Contract Services Agreements (CSA)	1 year	1 month	up to 2 years
	Letter of Invitation	10 days	Yes	No
<i>Other</i>				
PAHO	International consultants	1 year renewable once	After continuous contracts equalling 24 months, at least one break of 30 day	
	National consultants	1 year renewable	After continuous or non-continuous contracts equalling 48 months, at least one year break	

*Note. Reprinted from Terzi, 2012, pp. 47-48.*



Working for long periods under short-term contracts is common practice in the United Nations system (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 9). A non-staff survey conducted by the Joint Inspection Unit indicated that “79.3 per cent of respondents had worked in their organizations for more than two years. A total of 42.5 per cent of them declared that they had been working under non-staff contracts for more than six years” (p. 9). According to the Unit, the practice of allowing short-term contracts and imposing mandatory breaks between contracts “can be considered a way of circumventing fair employment practices by not providing a proper contract with full benefits to the employee” (Terzi, 2012, p. 17).

Not only are consultancies temporary, they are also renewed last-minute (p. 5). In a review conducted by the Joint Inspection Unit

“[t]he consultants interviewed complained that often their contracts [were] renewed on the last day of their current contract or even after its expiration. This creates problems for the consultants with regard to their legal status, visa, accommodation arrangements, etc. in the host country.” (Terzi, 2012, p. 16)

By being temporary, renewed last-minute and easy to terminate, consultancies represent an insecure form of labour.

All in all, Joint Inspection Unit reports show important differences in employment flexibility between staff and non-staff, both in terms of contract duration and employment security. On one hand are staff, an unknown percentage of which have temporary contracts lasting less than a year. The remainder staff enjoy job security. For non-staff, contracts are usually shorter than one year and can be as short as a few days. Non-staff often do not know until last minute if their contracts will be prolonged or how long they will have a job for. As stated in one of the reports, “it is clear that the employment situation of ‘non-staff personnel’ is typically more precarious than that of staff or officials” (Biraud, 2012, p. 4). It is also clear that non-staff do not have job security. Unfortunately, United Nations statistics do not account for differences on employment flexibility based on sex, region or ethnicity.

### **4.3 Benefits**

As the reader might recall from chapter three, an employment benefit is a type of indirect compensation given to an employee (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). An employment benefit and an entitlement are very similar, the difference between them

being that an entitlement is a mandatory indirect payment stipulated by law, whereas a benefit is not stipulated by law and therefore not mandatory. Given that both the literature on the feminization of work and the reports published by the United Nations use benefits and entitlements interchangeably, this study will follow the same approach (Standing, 1989, p. 1082; Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 28).

Staff enjoy many benefits. Those on fixed-term or continuous (permanent) contracts are entitled to retirement benefits, medical insurance—including for dependants—maternity and paternity leave, annual leave and sick leave (Wynes, 2012, p. 6). The Civil Service Commission stated that, depending on the category and the hiring organization, benefits for staff members may also include: post adjustment; rental subsidies and deductions; overtime and night differentials; special post allowance; education grant; language allowance; special assistance for disabled dependants; travel expenses; mobility and hardship allowance; removal and shipment costs; home leave; family visit travel; transportation of a privately-owned automobile; adoption leave; special leave with or without pay; official holidays; repatriation grant; termination indemnity and death grant (International Civil Service Commission, 2012). The Civil Service Commission did not specify benefits for staff on temporary contracts, but mentioned that they are similar to those of staff with fixed-term and continuous contracts (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 18). It is clear that staff are not feminized in this respect.

The situation is radically different for non-staff, most of whom have few, if any, benefits.

“In general, non-staff contracts do not include social benefits, namely, retirement benefits, medical insurance – including for dependents – [*sic*] maternity and paternity leave, annual and sick leave, or, if they do, offer fewer benefits and entitlements than staff contracts. In that context, another very important cost factor is that non-staff contracts do not create additional long-term liabilities for the organizations, such as home leave remunerations, after-service health insurance and retirement benefits, for example, relocation and pension payments.” (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 10)

Non-staff are mostly not entitled to health insurance, maternity or paternity leave or a pension. In fact, many non-staff are not entitled to annual or sick leave either, and when they are, they are usually entitled to less days than the minimum of 47 days of annual leave given to staff (Wynes, 2012, p. 19). The fact that non-staff might serve for a long time does not necessarily make a difference, either: “[m]ost organizations do not provide

paid leave to consultants, even when they are employed for long periods” (Terzi, 2012, p. 19).

The table provided in Annex 2 shows the small extent to which non-staff are entitled to public holidays, uncertified sick leave or family leave. The table, published by the Joint Inspection Unit, provides an overview of the benefits given to non-staff per contractual modality and organization in all participating organizations, namely the United Nations Secretariat, funds and programmes, specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 2). It shows a total of 60 contractual modalities in the United Nations system, out of which:

- 52% (31 contractual modalities) offer no annual leave and 3% (2 contractual modalities) state it is “not applicable”.<sup>6</sup>
- 62% (37 contractual modalities) offer neither certified nor uncertified sick leave and 3% (2 contractual modalities) state it is “not applicable”.
- 78% (47 contractual modalities) offer no pension scheme and 8% (5 contractual modalities) state it is “not applicable”.
- 45% (27 contractual modalities) offer no health insurance for individuals and 2% (1 contractual modality) state it is “not applicable”.
- 78% (41 contractual modalities) offer no health insurance for dependents and 5% (3 contractual modalities) state it is “not applicable”.
- 63% (38 contractual modalities) offer neither a maternity or paternity leave, 10% (6 contractual modalities) offer maternity but no paternity leave and 5% (3 contractual modalities) state it is “not applicable”.

The Unit offered no clue as to why some organizations deemed these benefits “not applicable” to some contractual modalities. Given that these benefits are considered basic throughout the rest of the world and are often required by national laws and international conventions (Terzi, 2012; Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 19; United Nations System

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<sup>6</sup> If one contract covered several scenarios and at least one of them stated “yes”, the input for that contract modality is considered to be a “yes”.

Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 2011, pp. 86-104), it would seem fair to count those labelled not applicable as no's. Keeping in mind that this impacts all non-staff contractual conditions in the United Nations system, this would mean that:

- 55% of non-staff contracts do not offer annual leave.
- 64% of non-staff contracts do not offer sick leave.
- 86% of non-staff contracts do not offer a pension scheme.
- 47% of non-staff contracts do not offer health insurance.
- 68% of non-staff contracts do not offer maternity or paternity leave.

All in all, the Joint Inspection Unit findings showed that most contractual modalities for non-staff have few if any benefits.

The table in Annex 2 also shows that entitlements depend not only on contract type and issuing organization, but on contract length. Benefits range from no benefit at all to various levels of benefits (Terzi, 2012, p. 18). The Joint Inspection Unit explained that some organizations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), “provide a better social benefits package to their long-term consultants, particularly for contracts with a term of six months or more” (p. 19). Other organizations, like the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), require at least a three-month-long contract to provide any benefits.

When it comes to consultancies, contract types also impact benefits. “In many organizations, service-type contracts offer better social benefits than consultancy-type contracts, in recognition of the fact that they are for staff-type work” (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 27). Consultancy-type contracts, on the other hand, have few to no benefits since they are meant for short periods—so they “should not receive social benefits similar to those granted to regular staff members” (Terzi, 2012, p. 18). As the Joint Inspection Unit pointed out, the overuse of service-type and consultancy-type contracts means non-staff on consultancy-type contracts end up working for the organization for extended periods of time without any benefits (p. 18).

The report on internships showed that the situation for interns is not better. Out of the 18 organizations covered by the report, only one provides health insurance if the

intern is not insured (Wynes & Posta, 2009, p. 20). Four organizations cover interns against accidents happening in the workplace (pp. 20-21). Only one of the organizations, namely the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), provides travel benefits: “[u]nder certain conditions, IAEA pays for travel of intern from place of residence or education to the duty station for the internship” (p. 20). The report did not discuss annual leave, public holidays, sick leave, maternity leave, paternity leave, family leave, etc. most likely because interns, like other types of non-staff, have few if any benefits.

With one exception, the reports did not provide sex-disaggregated data on the availability of benefits for non-staff. The exception pertained to the availability of maternity or paternity leave benefits. Available data showed that on some types of non-staff contracts, paternity leave is shorter than maternity leave. This is the case for service contractors in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); national consultants, local support personnel or ad hoc workers in the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); individual service contractors on national agreements in the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS); service contractors in the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women); and service contractors in the World Food Programme (WFP) (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, pp. 69-77). Some organizations provide maternity leave but no paternity leave for some of their contractual modalities. This is the case for service contractors in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Those organizations that have volunteers—namely the United Nations Secretariat, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)—grant them maternity leave but no paternity leave. All in all, these sex-specific differences in maternity/paternity leave account for 13 out of 60 contractual modalities in the United Nations system, which means that 21% of non-staff contracts provide better maternity than paternity leave benefits. In other words, women are slightly better off than men in one of the many types of benefits.

#### 4.4 Level of Pay

The third characteristic of feminized work is that it is low-paid. Low-paid work is defined in the third chapter as work that provides an employee with meagre earnings in terms of what other workers in a similar job make in a country—i.e. low-paid in absolute terms—or meagre earnings in terms of what other workers in a similar job make in an organization or company—i.e. low-paid in relative terms. This section will explore the level of pay of staff and non-staff to find out if either group is low-paid in relative or absolute terms.

With the exception of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), staff salaries are determined using a common system of salaries (International Civil Service Commission, 2012, p. vi). This system of salaries determines how much staff should earn according to the nature of jobs, the level of responsibility and skills they entail and the category they belong to—i.e. Professional and higher categories, General Service and related categories, National Professional officers or Field service. By adhering to this common salary system, the organization tries to ensure that staff across the globe are paid the same amount for work of equal responsibility and expertise.

Given that staff in the Field service and National Professional Officers categories represent a small percentage of staff, their salary scales are based on the Professional and General Service categories respectively (p. vi). As stated by the International Civil Service Commission, the main differences in salaries among staff lie between those in the Professional and General Service categories.

Professional staff salaries are determined through a salary scale built around a job classification system.

“The salary of staff in the Professional and higher categories is made up of two main elements: a base or floor (minimum) salary and post adjustment, both expressed in United States dollars. Post adjustment is a cost-of-living adjustment designed to preserve equivalent purchasing power for all duty stations. The term “net remuneration” [...] means net base/floor salary plus the post adjustment applicable for a given location”. (International Civil Service Commission, 2012, p. 1)

Professional staff salaries are composed of two parts: a base/floor salary that ranges between \$46,399 gross (approximately \$38,000 net) and \$189,349 gross (approximately \$140,000 net) and a post adjustment that depends on the living costs at the duty station

(i.e. city) in which the staff member lives (p. 21). To provide an example of the significance of the post adjustment, the International Civil Service Commission stated that, with a net floor remuneration of \$80,245, the final net salary of a Professional staff could be \$80,245 for duty station “x”, \$98,942 for duty station “y” and \$127,830 for duty station “z” (p. 23). Professional staff salaries are based on the highest-paying national civil service in the world, which now is the federal civil service of the United States of America (p. 2). To ensure that the salaries of Professional staff continue to be competitive, the International Civil Service Commission periodically compares them with the best available conditions of service throughout the world (p. 2). Satisfactory service is usually rewarded with an annual salary increment (p. 14).

Field service staff salaries are determined based on Professional staff salaries (p. 18). Field service staff work in peacekeeping missions and in telecommunications systems, so they are also recruited internationally and entitled to a post adjustment. The salary scale for Field staff is also checked periodically against similar jobs throughout the world to ensure that their salaries remain competitive. The report published by the International Civil Service Commission did not state whether Field staff are granted annual salary increments based on satisfactory performance, but given that the rest of the characteristics of their salary scale resembles that of Professional staff, it is likely that they also receive annual increments (p. 18).

Unlike with the previous categories, General Service staff salaries are determined nationally (Biraud, 2011, p. 41).

“For the most part, General Service staff serve at the same duty station throughout their career. An underlying concept of the common system is that these staff should be compensated in accordance with the best prevailing conditions of service in the locality; consequently, they are paid not on the basis of a single global salary scale, but according to local salary scales established on the basis of salary surveys.” (Biraud, 2011, p. 14)

Since General Service staff are compensated according to the best conditions of service in their country, there is no global salary scale for General Service staff. The following figures exemplify General Service staff salaries in the main duty stations: from \$37,369 gross (approximately \$30,000 net) to \$100,507 gross (\$74,000 net) in New York; from EUR 31,496 gross (approximately EUR 24,000 net) to EUR 110,894 gross (approximately EUR 80,000 net) in Vienna; and from KES 689,726 gross (approximately KES 550,000

net) to KES 5,251,738 gross (approximately KES 558,678 net) in Nairobi (United Nations, 2017a).<sup>7</sup> Since General Service staff usually serve in the same duty station, they are not paid a post adjustment fee like the previous two international categories. They also tend to receive annual salary increments based on satisfactory service (International Civil Service Commission, 2012, p. 14).

Salary rates for National Professional Officers are established nationally as well (p. 19). This is because National Professional Officers conduct work that requires local expertise and cannot be sourced internationally. Just as with General Service staff, National Professional Officers salaries are established by comparison with the best prevailing conditions of service in the country in which they work. In fact, “[p]ending the finalization of a separate salary-setting methodology for this category, pay rates for this group of staff are determined using by and large the same procedures as for the General Service staff” (p. 19). The report published by the International Civil Service Commission does not state whether National Professional Officers are also granted annual salary increments based on satisfactory performance.

Given that staff salaries are established by comparison with the best paid jobs in the industry, we can conclude that staff members are not low-paid in absolute terms. Are staff members low-paid in relative terms? One of the main concerns expressed in the sources published by the Joint Inspection Unit was that non-staff are being paid less than staff for conducting similar work (Terzi, 2012; Terzi & Fall, 2014a, 2014b). For that reason, staff are not low-paid relative to other workers in the organization conducting similar work.

What about non-staff? Are they low-paid in absolute or relative terms? Once again, the situation of non-staff is radically different, as the United Nations has not set a minimum wage for non-staff or a common salary scale system like they have for staff (Terzi, 2012, p. 31).

Most organizations have developed individual remuneration schemes for consultants. More specifically, the United Nations Secretariat, the Office of the United

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<sup>7</sup> At a rate of 1 Kenyan Shilling per 0,0097 United States Dollars, this would mean that General Service staff in Nairobi earn somewhere between \$6,706 and \$51,062 gross per year.



Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have schemes for their consultancy-type contracts and most also have schemes for their service-type contracts (Terzi, 2012, pp. 52-54). Other organizations, such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Universal Postal Union (UPU), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), do not have remuneration scheme for either consultancy-type or service-type contracts (pp. 52-54).

Remuneration schemes for consultants do not seem to have the positive effect they were intended to have.

“Managers are supposed to decide which band is applicable, based on the complexity of the work and the expected deliverables to determine the final remuneration within the range of the band, taking into account the experience of the consultant. The decision on the final remuneration is taken either by the hiring manager or by the human resources officer in consultation with the hiring manager. [...] During the interviews, many hiring managers and consultants complained about the lack of clear and comprehensive guidelines regarding remuneration. While some organizations do not have any policy and guidelines at all, available guidelines in other organizations are usually outdated or include only a list of remuneration bands. This often results in significantly different remuneration levels for similar tasks within the same organization.” (Terzi, 2012, p. 32)

As the quote points out, most organizations do not explain how remuneration bands should be used. As a result, hiring managers often determine salaries based on consultants' previous experience instead of the level of skills and responsibilities required by the work. This is sometimes made worse by policy documents on remuneration that “place emphasis on the experience and background of the consultant rather than on the nature and complexity of the work to be performed” (p. 31). According

to Terzi, unclear remuneration schemes result in equal work being remunerated at different levels within individual organizations and throughout the United Nations.

Since remuneration levels are often left for managers to decide, it is not uncommon for consultants to receive low fees. In fact,

“the lack of adequate funding often leads managers to choose a lower level of remuneration. This is often the case when the available fund/budget is not sufficient to provide a corresponding level of remuneration. If there is a scrutiny on remuneration in the organizations, it is to prevent the provision of high consultancy fees; there is no attempt to prevent the provision of a low remuneration”. (Terzi, 2012, p. 31)

Without a mechanism to prevent the provision of low salaries, or at least the establishment of a minimum salary, consultants are prone to receiving lower salaries than other people in the organization conducting similar work. That is precisely our definition of low-paid work in relative terms.

The Joint Inspection Unit also observed that remuneration bands are outdated. As managers frequently pointed out during interviews with the Unit’s inspector, “[t]he remunerations levels in their organizations were established years ago and are no longer aligned to the realities of the market, especially in some areas which require complex expertise” (p. 31). Furthermore, “[t]he Inspector found that proper market research was only conducted in a few cases to determine the remuneration at a given location or within a specialized area of expertise” (p. 31). With outdated remuneration bands that are not based on market research, it is likely that non-staff are low-paid in absolute terms, i.e. paid less than others performing similar work in their country.

Another factor that can bring down non-staff salaries in absolute terms is income taxes.

“There is some confusion about taxation of non-staff salaries. During interviews in the field, some managers indicated that non-staff were exempt from taxation in the host country; however, non-staff denied this. In general, there is a lack of information and consideration of taxation in the calculation of non-staff remuneration. Considering that non-staff individuals are not staff members, hence not subject to staff assessment, their remuneration might be taxable unless there is a separate agreement with the host country government. The interviews reflected that, after tax income deductions, the net salaries of non-staff personnel are significantly lower and may not reflect a competitive remuneration level.” (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 37)

As the quote points out, hiring managers are often unclear on whether non-staff are exempt from paying taxes, which is the case for United Nations staff. Non-staff salaries are determined under the assumption that non-staff are not expected to pay taxes. This is not always the case, however, as some countries expect non-staff to make contributions (p. 37). In these cases, non-staff salaries are not competitive and can be defined as low-paid in absolute terms.

Unlike staff salaries, non-staff salaries are not increased annually based on satisfactory performance.

“A major complaint from non-staff personnel working for United Nations entities for extended periods is the lack of recognition of seniority and relevant salary adjustments. Non-staff contracts are frequently renewed using the same terms of reference (with initial conditions and remuneration) to avoid new recruitment and administrative processes. Non-staff personnel interviewed indicated that they continued to receive the same salary, in real terms, for years, given that most of their contracts did not carry any associated revision clauses linked to annual increases in the cost of living, nor step/longevity recognition based on seniority.” (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 38)

To avoid revising non-staff contracts, hiring managers often end up using the same contracts and prevent non-staff salaries from being raised. Non staff salaries are often not adjusted to account for increases in the cost of living, which for staff members is done by revising their salary scales regularly.

Unfortunately, human resources departments in most organizations do not conduct or openly share statistics on consultants salaries (Terzi, 2012, p. 10), so we do not know how much the largest group of non-staff are currently being paid. What we know from the report published by Terzi and Fall is that:

“Under severe budget constraints, project managers often opt for non-staff contractual modalities instead of staff contracts, for flexibility and cost-savings reasons. By using non-staff contracts, they can also exercise more discretion at various levels, such as selection, remuneration, etc.” (Terzi, 2012, p. 4)

In general, non-staff are paid less than staff (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 10). It is their low level of pay compared to staff what makes non-staff contracts so popular.

Non-staff can sometimes be paid half as much as staff for carrying out similar work. According to the Joint Inspection Unit, the finance committee at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) stated:

“The average yearly cost of a non-staff human resource (NSHR) at Headquarters in 2008 was approximately USD 58,300, and since NSHR are generally employed to carry out professional-level work, this represents a far more economical alternative to creating a professional post (by more than 50 per cent) to meet programme delivery requirements.” (Terzi, 2012, p. 5)

The above statement by the Food and Agriculture Organization is the only instance of a United Nations organization openly accepting that it was paying its non-staff half as much as it would its staff (p. 5).

The sources reviewed showed that volunteers are also paid less than Professional staff for conducting similar work. “In interviews, managers indicated that [United Nations Volunteers] performed the same or similar types of functions as regular staff; however, their associated costs were considerably lower” (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 30). While there is insufficient evidence to show that volunteers are low-paid in absolute terms, it is clear that they are low-paid in relative terms.

The worst situation is by far that of interns, who conduct valuable work but do not earn a salary. According to the report on internships published by the Joint Inspection Unit in 2009, only six organizations out of more than 50 United Nations agencies, programmes, funds, institutions, etc. pay their interns a stipend (Wynes & Posta, 2009). These organizations are the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), which pays its interns up to \$700 per month; the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), which pays them CHF 4,000 per month; the country-office of India, which pays them a lump-sum of INR 15,000; the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which pays them €500 per month if they receive financial support from an institution, university or another source and up to an additional €500 if they need to pay for accommodation; the International Labour Organization (ILO), which pays them up to CHF 1,500 per month; the World Tourism Organization of the United Nations (UNWTO), which pays them €300 per month if they are undergraduate students and €700 per month if they have graduated; and the World Tourism Organization of the United Nations (UPU), which pays interns CHF 1,000 per month in Bern, CHF 1,500 in Geneva and CHF 2000 outside of Switzerland (Wynes & Posta, 2009, pp. 20-21).

Why are intern positions so low-paid in both absolute and relative terms? According to the Joint Inspection Unit, opposing views exist on whether interns should be paid at all.

“On the one hand, those in favour of introducing compensation for their work believe that this is a fair recognition of the qualified work and their contribution to the organization. On the other hand, others consider that an internship is not an employment and should not be seen as such, and therefore a stipend is not the proper way to acknowledge the value of the work.” (Wynes & Posta, 2009, p. 14)

For some, interns should be rewarded for their contribution to the organization. For others, a stipend would entail an acknowledgement of some sort of employment—a term the United Nations avoids. The Unit does not provide a clear explanation of why some argue that interns should not be paid. The fact remains that interns are feminized in terms of pay, or lack of thereof.

Considering the situation of the consultants, volunteers and interns, I believe that non-staff are without a doubt low-paid in relative terms and that they are most likely also low-paid in absolute terms. Given the lack of sex-disaggregated statistics on non-staff salaries, we do not know if low-pay affects women and men equally.

#### **4.5 Level of Skill**

The fourth characteristic of feminized work is that it requires a low level of skill. As mentioned in chapter three, low-skilled work is defined as work that: requires little pre-entry education, such as only requiring a high school degree; requires little post-entry initial learning, consisting of not more than a handful of days; and requires little continuous learning on the job, meaning that on-the-job training is seldom. The following subsections will investigate if staff and non-staff work can be defined as low-skilled.

##### **4.5.1 Pre-Entry Education**

All staff are expected to fulfil minimum education and language requirements dictated by their job category (Fall & Zhang, 2012, p. 4). This was introduced as part of an effort to harmonize recruitment practices in the United Nations system and allow for more inter-agency mobility.

Staff in the Professional category are expected to hold a university degree, but the specific education requirements of a job depend on the job level (p. 11).

“The same level of educational qualification is applied (equivalent to a bachelor’s or master’s degree). A first degree may be required for entry-level positions and

an advanced degree for higher-level and senior positions; a doctorate may be required for certain highly qualified positions at specialized agencies and IAEA". (Fall & Zhang, 2012, p. 11)

The Joint Inspection Unit explains that an entry-level position in the Professional category *may* require a Bachelor's degree, but gives no indication of what an entry-level position is. Is it a P-1 and a P-2? Or P-1s, P-2s and P-3s? Unfortunately, a cursory search on the internet did not provide a reliable clarification on this either. High-level and senior positions may require a Master's Degree, while highly specialized posts may require a doctorate. Given that the report stated that positions *may* require a specific degree, it is likely that the same level of qualification *may not* be required of all Professional staff throughout the United Nations. Generally, Professional staff are required to have more than a high school degree and are therefore not low-skilled in terms of education requirements.

Pre-entry education requirements for General Service staff are less stringent. For General Service staff, "[s]econdary school certification or equivalent and an equal number of years of work experience is required for each grade of the General Services category system-wide" (Fall & Zhang, 2012, p. 11). In other words, General Service staff are only required to have a secondary school certificate. Following our definition above, General Service staff qualifies as low-skilled in terms of education requirements.

Pre-entry education requirements for non-staff do not follow a clear approach. In the case of consultancies, the United Nations does not provide a system-wide policy with specific education requirements (Terzi, 2012, p. 4). Some of the reports analysed indicated that education requirements for consultancies depended not only on the hiring entity but also on whether the consultant was hired to conduct Professional or General Service work (United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 2011, p. 41). This was the case, for example, in the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), where pre-education requirements were low for consultants conducting General Service tasks and high for consultants conducting Professional tasks. Consultants that performed support service functions that had them "engaged in routine mental (non-manual) or physical (manual) work" were required to have a general academic education, such as a secondary school degree, an apprenticeship or training in a specific field such as procurement, finance or information technologies, for example (United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 2011, p. 41). On the other hand,

consultants that performed specialist services were required to possess “knowledge of an advanced type in a field of science or learning, normally acquired through a long period of specialized study in an institution of higher learning (i.e. a master’s degree)” (p. 41). The documents inspected did not provide an overview of the level of pre-entry education required of consultants. This might be the case because not all organizations have policies on the use of consultants and, when they do, they are often unclear or lack adequate practical guidelines (Terzi, 2012, p. iii). Even when entities have policies on consultancies, they might not cover pre-entry education levels. In the case of the United Nations Secretariat, which issued an instruction defining consultants and individual contractors and explaining how to manage their contracts, no mention was made as to the pre-education requirements of either group (United Nations Secretariat, 2013). It is possible that organizations have not yet set minimum education requirements for consultancy candidates.

While organizations might not have policies on the minimum level of education required of consultants, many organizations define consultants using terms such as “highly skilled” or having “special skills”. The United Nations Secretariat stated that “[a] consultant must have special skills or knowledge not normally possessed by the regular staff of the Organization and for which there is no continuing need in the Secretariat” (United Nations Secretariat, 2013, p. 1). A similar explanation was provided by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which stated that “[c]onsultants must possess special skills or knowledge not readily available in the organization and for which there is no continuing need” (United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 2011, p. 73). The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) also share a similar approach (United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 2011, pp. 35, 42, 74, 75, 79, 83).

Organizations seem to require different pre-entry education levels according to the type of consultancy.

“On the nature or scope of functions there are some points of commonality amongst most organizations particularly on the need of specialized knowledge or skills of the individual concerned. Some organizations reflect a more flexible policy particularly when such contracts are established for general service or support functions.” (United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 2011, p. 19)

The extract from the Chief Executives Board for Coordination explains that a high level of skill is required of consultants performing Professional work but that a lesser level of skill is sometimes required of those performing General Service work.

This approach does not seem to be applicable to pre-entry requirements for interns, however, for whom requirements are very variable. As per the definition of intern developed by Wynes and Posta:

“An intern is a student having completed at least the first two years of a university or equivalent educational programme and still enrolled in her/his degree, master or doctoral studies during his/her working period in an organization of the United Nations system.” (Wynes & Posta, 2009, p. 2).

This definition suggests that interns can be anywhere from low-skilled, i.e. not requiring a university degree, to very high skilled, i.e. pursuing a doctorate degree.

All in all, the lack of policies on the use of non-staff and the little consistency in education requirements for consultants and interns makes it difficult to assess whether non-staff are low-skilled in terms of pre-entry education requirements.

#### **4.5.2 Initial Learning**

The United Nations has a set of courses that all staff are required to take within the first six months of joining the organization, regardless of whether they perform Professional or General Service work (United Nations HR Portal, 2017). The courses are: “Basic Security in the Field: Staff Safety, Health and Welfare”; “Prevention of Workplace Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority in the Workplace”; “HIV/AIDS in the Workplace Orientation Programme”; “Ethics and Integrity at the United Nations”; “Information Security Awareness”; “United Nations Human Rights Responsibilities”; “I Know Gender”; and “Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by United Nations Personnel” (United Nations Secretariat, 2017, p. 2).



The only United Nations entity with a public instruction on mandatory courses is the United Nations Secretariat (United Nations Secretariat, 2017). The instruction requires certain staff members to conduct the following additional courses: supervisors take a course on performance management and development learning for managers and supervisors; Professional staff in the P-4 and P-5 levels take a course on management; D-1s and D-2s take part in a leaders programme; the Assistant Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General take an induction programme for senior leaders; staff participating in interview panels take a course on competency-based selection and interviewing skills; staff members in procurement take a course on the fundamentals of procurement, one on ethics and integrity in procurement, one entitled “Best Value For Money” and one that provides them with an overview on the procurement manual; staff travelling to non-headquarters duty stations and missions take an advanced course on security in the field; staff up to the D-1 level that will be deploying to field missions as part of peacekeeping operations take a course on civilian pre-deployment; all staff arriving in a peacekeeping mission take a course on mission-specific induction training; staff in certain duty stations take a course on safe and secure approaches in field environments; and newly appointed senior leaders in peacekeeping operations at the D-2, Assistant Secretary-General and Under-Secretary-General level take a course on senior leadership (pp. 2-3). Most additional courses in the United Nations Secretariat are therefore requirements for staff in the Professional category and above.

While only mandatory courses appear on the instruction of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Human Resources Portal, it is possible that the different United Nations entities also require other sorts of initial learning, such as introductions to individual entities, programme-development software or informal learning that might not be documented in official reports.

Given that all staff members need to take at least eight mandatory courses when joining the organization, it is likely that staff need more than a handful of days of post-entry initial learning. In other words, staff positions do not appear to be low-skilled in terms of the amount of initial learning required to successfully perform jobs.

What about non-staff? Once again, the United Nations has not documented the conditions of their work in this respect. Consultants seem to be neither required nor mostly able to participate in training. “Consultants and individual contractors shall not

receive training at the expense of the United Nations”, states an official instruction by the United Nations Secretariat (United Nations Secretariat, 2013, p. 10). The instruction adds that consultants and individual contractors may only take part in training on safety and security that is mandatory for staff if required to work in the field. While the Joint Inspection Unit did not say much on this matter, it stated that “[c]onsultants who have been working for long periods in an organization should be required to take mandatory training on code of conduct [*sic*], ethics, and accountability” (Terzi, 2012, p. 15). The United Nations Secretariat is therefore not the only entity that prevents its consultants from participating in training. All in all, consultancies seem to require low-levels of initial learning, most likely because consultants are hired to conduct temporary jobs that require expertise they already have.

As for interns, Wynes and Posta stated that some organizations did not provide them with any initial training.

“During the interviews, the Inspectors learned that some organizations did not provide any orientation programme to the interns. Most of the interns felt the organizations should provide better information upon arrival, on different aspects: administrative, logistics and in some cases even on the expected duties.” (Wynes & Posta, 2009, p. 11)

In a bureaucratic organization, training on administrative and logistic issues can be essential to satisfactory job performance. If an intern does not receive basic instructions and orientation on their job duties, it is unlikely that they will be able to perform their jobs satisfactorily.

Another Joint Inspection Unit report stated that, on occasion, interns were invited to participate in training provided to staff members in an informal basis.

“Since interns are not staff members, they are not eligible for the training courses accorded to staff members. Nevertheless, ad hoc training does take place to acquire specific skills required for ensuring the satisfactory performance of their duties, for example specific information technology (IT) applications used in the conduct of their work. In other cases, they are able to participate in training or awareness-raising activities when this does not imply extra-costs for the organizations (e.g., attending public conferences, lectures, or seminars being held in the context of the work of the organization).” (Wynes & Posta, 2009, p. 11)

While the United Nations does not have a policy on intern training or a formal mechanism to ensure they are trained, it seems that interns are able to attend training that can help with their job performance—so long as it does not represent an additional cost to the

organization. The situation remains unclear: do most organizations fail to train their interns upon arrival? Or do they mostly receive ad-hoc training alongside staff? There is insufficient information to assess whether internship positions require a low level of initial learning.

#### **4.5.3 Continuous on-the-job Learning**

According to Botham-Edighoffer, “[t]he UN Secretariat is known for its chronic under-spending in staff training compared with other international organizations and organizations of the public sector” (Botham-Edighoffer, 2006, p. 186). Unfortunately, Botham-Edighoffer did not provide further information on why the Secretariat does not measure up to other organizations. Besides from discussing initial mandatory courses for staff, publications do not discuss the continuous learning needs of staff. From a report on non-staff we gather that staff are provided with more formal training opportunities (Wynes & Posta, 2009, p. 11). We do not know, however, whether these training opportunities happen sporadically or if they qualify as “continuous”. Furthermore, on-the-job learning could take place informally, i.e. without being prescribed by a policy or instruction. With the current amount of information, it is hard to assess on-the-job learning requirements for staff.

Information on non-staff is also scarce. None of the primary sources reported on whether consultants or volunteers are either able or required to attend training long after joining the organization. The closest information on this regard was provided by the Joint Inspection Unit, which gave a short account of training provided to non-staff:

“Organizations provide training opportunities to their long-serving non-staff but this is not systematic or part of a training policy. According to the non-staff survey, 59 per cent of respondents received training. During interviews, non-staff sometimes complained that, although they were doing the same or similar jobs, they received fewer training opportunities than regular staff. In particular, where training must be paid for per participant by the organization, it is mostly staff who are allowed to participate.” (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 30)

The non-staff survey Terzi and Fall refer to is an online survey conducted by the Joint Inspection Unit that gathered the views of 2,151 non-staff holding different types of contracts in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, India, Thailand and Vietnam—i.e. approximately 2% of non-staff in the United Nations system. The Unit

reported that, while many non-staff had received on-the-job training, it is not as common for them to receive it as it is for staff. Once again, the United Nations has not reported on informal on-the-job learning, making it difficult to assess the amount of on-the-job learning necessary for non-staff.

All in all, arguing that jobs are low-skilled would be ungrounded. Statistics on the percentage of jobs that require a university degree are not available, but we know university degrees are a requirement for Professional staff and for some non-staff. Staff receive a significant amount of initial training and it is likely that they are also required to engage in informal learning as well. While non-staff may partake in less training, the Joint Inspection Unit reported that over half of the surveyed non-staff had been trained. Continuous on-the-job learning requirements for staff and non-staff remain unclear. Considering the inconclusive evidence, it is not possible to argue that staff or non-staff conduct low-skilled work; in fact, the opposite might be true.

#### **4.6 Access to Representation**

The fifth and final characteristic of a feminized workforce is that it has no access to union representation. In this respect, the United Nations system is once again divided among staff and non-staff.

Staff members are represented by either a “staff union” or a “staff association”, depending on their duty station (Biraud, 2011, p. 25). According to Biraud, differences in name do not imply significant differences in functions. Having access to representation is significant because “unions make a positive contribution to the welfare of workers by raising wages, improving benefits, giving workers a public or political voice, educating workers, and monitoring work safety and labour relationships” (Hadden, Muntaner, Benach, Gimeno & Benavides, 2007, p. 7). All staff can access representation.

By being classified as non-staff, the rest of the personnel is not part of the population staff unions represent and is therefore not formally represented by them (Terzi, 2012, p. 22). The majority of entities—i.e. the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the International Telecommunication Unit (ITU), the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the United Nations

Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the United Nations Secretariat (UN), the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the World Food Programme (WFP), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO)—do not allow non-staff to participate in staff unions (p. 42). As pointed out by the Joint Inspection Unit:

“While for short-term consultants this may not be a problem, it becomes a concern when non-staff personnel work for longer periods on the premises of the organizations. In the absence of appropriate channels for communicating with the administration, consultants refrain from talking about problems and filing complaints individually, in particular considering their weak statutory position within the organizations. They are often not aware of the applicable contractual provisions, their rights, nor the possibility of informal consultation. They complained that they did not have anyone to consult other than the administration.” (Terzi, 2012, p. 22)

By not having access to staff unions, consultants and the rest of non-staff are left without a safe space to gain information about their contractual conditions and to raise complains without fear of retaliation. As Terzi pointed out, “[a]t non-staff focus-group meetings, when asked what they did when they had problems with their supervisors or managers, some non-staff responded: ‘we can do nothing but pray’” (Terzi, 2012, p. 42). Given that non-staff do not have access to the internal justice system of the United Nations either, in cases of inappropriate behaviour of staff such as harassment, discrimination, abuse of authority and retaliation, there is little non-staff can do to hold staff accountable (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 44). Once again, non-staff can be defined as feminized in terms of their access to representation and staff cannot.

This chapter has sought to analyse the workforce of the United Nations according to the five main characteristics of feminized work. Its results have been mixed and have shown an important rift in the workforce of the United Nations. The following and final chapter will discuss the main findings of this thesis and their relevance and provide the concluding remarks.



## **5. Conclusion**

Since the 1980s, the introduction of new technologies into the workplace and the de-regularization of the labour market have caused employment conditions typically associated with female jobs to spread to both female and male jobs (Standing, 1989). Precariousness has become widespread; the workforce in so-called developed and developing economies now has few if any benefits, no access to representation, and finds itself in feminized jobs—based on non-standard contracts—which, as a result, are flexible, insecure, temporary, low-paid and low-skilled (International Labour Organization, 2013; Quinlan, Mayhew & Bohle, 2001, p. 335).

The present thesis has sought to explore whether the workforce of the United Nations has also succumbed to this feminization. Following Standing's theory of the feminization of the labour force, a feminized labour force was defined as one that is flexible, has few if any benefits, is low-paid, low-skilled and is not unionized (Standing, 1999). Findings are based on the qualitative content analysis of 16 reports on personnel matters published by the United Nations during the past ten years, as well as on the quantitative analysis of the data provided in those reports. The current chapter will present an overview of key findings, discuss what the United Nations can gain from not having a feminized workforce and provide possible avenues of research to help change this situation.

### **5.1 Main Findings**

The United Nations has been moving towards labour flexibility since the 1990s, with the number of consultancies rising since 2006 (Biraud, 2011, p. 7; Terzi, 2012, p. 10). The push for flexibility has resulted in the creation of new types of contracts known as non-staff contracts that are more economical and flexible for the organization (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 10). The organization now faces a rift in its personnel; while staff members have kept their standard working conditions, personnel on non-staff contracts are working in feminized jobs.

Unlike staff members, so-called non-staff face a lot of contractual flexibility. The sources analysed stated that flexibility was one of the reasons that non-staff contracts were introduced in the United Nations system, as staff positions were generally not flexible (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 10). For this heterogeneous group of personnel, however, flexibility is the norm; non-staff contracts are always temporary and often renewed last-minute (Terzi, 2012, p. 5). Contractual flexibility and job insecurity also creates insecurity in other aspects of non-staff lives (p. 5).

Another source of concern for non-staff is that, unlike staff, they are usually not entitled to benefits (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 10). As the sources point out, non-staff contracts are cheaper than staff contracts partially because they are not granted benefits (p. 10). Only consultants conducting General Service work are entitled to holidays, sick days and health insurance and only in some organizations (Terzi & Fall, 2014, pp. 69-77). As per the quantitative analysis, most non-staff contracts do not contain provisions for annual leave, sick leave, pensions and maternity or paternity leave, which are a statutory right for workers in most countries (Terzi & Fall, 2014, pp. 69-77; United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 2011, pp. 101-102). Non-staff are also not entitled to other benefits such as leave for family emergencies, unpaid leave to study, educational grants, home leave, etc. (International Civil Service Commission, 2012) This is the case regardless of how long non-staff work for the organization (Terzi, 2012, p. 19).

The analysis presented here also reveals that, unlike staff, non-staff can have low-paid jobs. Non-staff salaries are not regulated by common salary scales at either the country or international level (Terzi, 2012, p. 31). In fact, according to the Joint Inspection Unit reports, there is no established minimum wage for non-staff, something that managers can often use to push down the salaries of non-staff (p. 31). Some of the non-staff interviewed by the Unit stated that, in the cases where non-staff are expected to contribute taxes to a country, their salaries become less than competitive (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. 37). Non-staff systematically earn less than staff for the same work (Terzi, 2012; Terzi & Fall, 2014a, 2014b).

Unlike staff, most non-staff do not have access to the United Nations staff unions or any other sort of representation (Terzi, 2012, p. 42). Without access to representation, non-staff are left with no voice to express their concerns and are vulnerable to abuse (Terzi, 2014, p. 16).



There is not enough evidence to show if non-staff jobs are low-skilled. Pre-entry education requirements vary according to the organization and type of contract, but seem to follow the same rule as for staff; a secondary school degree is necessary for General Service contracts and a university education is required for Professional contracts. The United Nations does not conduct statistics on what percentage of non-staff jobs are in the Professional and General Service categories; nevertheless, it would be hard to argue that non-staff are feminized based on statistics. The analysis presented here also reveals that initial learning requirements to help workers perform their duties to a satisfactory degree are unclear for non-staff. On-the-job learning requirements are also unclear for non-staff. In fact, most organizations that have policies on consultancies refer to consultants as possessing “special skills” that the organization does not have (United Nations Secretariat, 2013, p. 1; United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 2011, pp. 35, 42, 73, 74, 75, 79, 83). It can therefore be proposed that, far from being engaged in low-skilled work, non-staff are performing high-skilled work.

All in all, employment conditions for non-staff resemble Standing’s definition of feminized work in most respects except for level of skill, which remains unclear. If, in fact, non-staff perform high-skilled work, then it might be worth exploring whether the theory of the feminization of work should be expanded to show that precarious work can also impact skilled work.

While the United Nations might not be feminized in terms of the skillsets required of its employees, it seems to be the case that almost half of its workforce is feminized in every other respect. This feminization impacts both female and male non-staff.

This study has not revealed gender differences in terms of who is most affected by this feminization, since the United Nations does not systematically collect sex-disaggregated statistics on non-staff. We know from the latest statistics on staff members that female staff throughout the United Nations tend to be in lower-paid, lower-skilled positions: while women represent almost half of the General Service staff, they represent one in three Directors and approximately one in four ungraded staff (United Nations General Assembly, 2017, pp. 5-7). As a result of the “inverse relationship between seniority and the representation of women” (United Nations General Assembly, 2017), female staff continue to work under a glass ceiling despite the organization’s attempts to improve this situation (Haack, 2014; United Nations General Assembly, 2010b, 2014b,

2017). As for non-staff, we know that women represent 60% of gratis personnel in the United Nations Secretariat. Since the organization has thus far not made any efforts to improve the situation of non-staff (Terzi & Fall, 2014a; United Nations General Assembly, 2010b, 2014b, 2017) and informal employment tends to impact women more than men (United Nations, 2016, p. 31), it is likely that the situation for female non-staff is worse than that of male non-staff.

## **5.2 Why is the United Nations Feminized?**

How can it be the case that the institution that sets the bar in matters of workers' and human rights has a feminized workforce? In light of the growing mandate of the United Nations and the request by Member States that it to do more without increasing its financial resources, the United Nations found itself in need of more workers but at a lower cost (Terzi, 2012, p. 4). It could be argued that in order to keep staff benefits, the United Nations brought in flexible workers who cost less, who don't have access to the United Nations justice system, staff unions or the protection of national laws and who have no mechanism to complain without risking losing their jobs. The lack of legislation regulating labour practices in the United Nations allows the situation to go on unchallenged: the organization is not bound by national laws and it does not have a policy on the application of international labour practices, which are not currently legally binding for it (p. 8).

The situation in the United Nations also seems to fit the flexible firm model developed by Atkinson. Atkinson argued that, in order to subsidize the security, salaries and career growth of the core workforce of a firm, a periphery needs to exist that is flexible, has no security, low salaries and little chance of career growth (Atkinson, 1984). The rift in the United Nations' workforce fits Atkinson's model; on the one hand there is a core group of permanent career employees with skills and organizational experience, while on the other there is a peripheral group on short-term contracts with little job security, fewer career opportunities, and less training provision as their jobs are less skilled and not firm-specific. Faced with increasing budget restrictions and greater demands from Member States, a peripheral group of flexible contractors and unpaid interns allows United Nations staff members to maintain job security, salaries and benefits—but we do not know for how long.

In its review of the literature this research project has also shown that the United Nations does not apply the Decent Work agenda to its internal operations. Decent work is a concept developed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) that has guided much of the work of the United Nations since 2002 (Posta & Prom-Jackson, 2015). The International Labour Organization states that:

“Decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives. It involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.” (International Labour Organization, 2017)

The research here has shown the extent to which the United Nations does not provide decent work for a huge percentage of its workforce, for whom work does not deliver the fair income, security, social protection for families, career prospects or freedom to organize described by the International Labour Organization. The review of the reports published by the United Nations on the Decent Work agenda shows that none of them deal with the question of whether staff and non-staff in the United Nations system have decent work (George & Chattopadhyay, 2015; International Labour Office, 2002, 2015; International Labour Organization, 2002, 2008, 2012, 2017). The fact that the United Nations does not apply its Decent Work agenda to its own personnel shows a lack of congruence between how the United Nations advises countries to treat their workers and how it treats its own. This incongruence cannot benefit the organization’s reputation.

### **5.3 What can the United Nations Gain from Not Being Feminized?**

Based on the recommendations from the Joint Inspection Unit and the literature on the effects of temporary contracts, it appears that a lot can be gained by improving employment conditions for non-staff. The Joint Inspection Unit argued that “organizations faced reputational risks, high turnover, a lack of stable and motivated personnel and a potential increase in legal challenges owing to the inappropriate use of non-staff personnel” (Terzi & Fall, 2014a, p. iii). Terzi also stated that improved employment conditions can bring about less discrimination:

“Introducing different statuses of personnel for similar work within the organizational workforce, which is no longer subject to a common set of rules and

regulations, is not a fair or socially responsible employment practice. It creates discrimination in the workplace by not providing equal benefits for equal work.” (Terzi, 2012, p. 8)

Research on the effects of temporary contracts also shows that much can be gained from resorting to standard working arrangements. Employees would face less stress, since their jobs would not be poorly designed and they would not have job insecurity (Vahle-Hinz, Kirschner & Thomson, 2013, p. 218). There would be fewer instances of mental health problems, partially as a result of increased job satisfaction and better employment conditions (Scherer, 2009, p. 530). Families would also benefit, since workers on standard contracts can access mortgage and other types of loans, can lease contracts, have better medical insurance and would be entitled to a pension once they leave the workforce (Terzi, 2014, p. 16).

Last, but not at all least, staff members would also stand to benefit:

“The impact of the misuse of non-staff is multidimensional and affects staff and non-staff as well as the organizations concerned. Regular staff feel uncomfortable working side-by-side with non-staff colleagues, while non-staff individuals feel mistreated and consider themselves second-class employees, as frequently expressed at focus-group meetings. Staff and non-staff morale is affected by the improper use of non-staff contractual modalities.” (Terzi, 2014, p. 16)

Staff members are not immune to the employment conditions of their non-staff co-workers, so they are likely to feel more comfortable and safe working side-by-side with colleagues who are treated fairly and on equal terms.

Finally, by ensuring that its workforce does not have feminized working conditions, the United Nations is more likely to bring about gender equality. Precarious work tends to affect women more than men (United Nations, 2016, p. 31). Given that the United Nations has implemented Sustainable Development Goal 5, to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, and has set up an accountability mechanism to promote gender equality and empower women within the United Nations system, known as the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on gender equality and the empowerment of Women (United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2016), it would stand to benefit from getting rid of non-standard contracts that prevent its female workers from having equal opportunities and rights at work.

#### **5.4 Recommendations for Future Research**

The present research project has raised many issues that have yet to be resolved. It has shown that personnel on non-staff contracts are feminized in most respects, but that it remains unclear whether their jobs are low-skilled or not. Could the feminization of work have taken on new characteristics in the 21st century? In this respect, further research on whether high-skilled jobs in other international organizations or other industries are also prone to being feminized in terms of flexibility, benefits, pay and representation but not in terms of skill may be required.

Much could be done within the United Nations to gain a better understanding of the employment conditions of its workforce in general and its female workforce in particular. The United Nations does not collect system-wide data on the percentage of female and male non-staff, the number of women and men in low-skilled non-staff jobs, the number of low-paid non-staff positions held by women or men, or the sex-distribution per type of non-staff position. As a result, this research project was not able to argue whether the feminization of the United Nations affects women more than men. Furthermore, the United Nations does not provide statistics on the percentage of staff members on continuous, fixed-term and temporary contracts, so it is possible that temporary contracts are also an issue for staff members—another matter worth exploring. The organization could benefit from disaggregating data by ethnicity, which in turn would show whether certain ethnicities are more affected by feminized work than others. If a research institution were to approach the United Nations and bring this up, it is possible that the organization make a bigger effort to improve its internal monitoring systems.

This research project has shown that working conditions in the United Nations system are precarious, that they do not meet minimum national or international labour standards and that they are discriminatory to almost half of its workers. If the United Nations is to fulfil its human rights and justice mandates and remain the leading organization in these matters, it is imperative that it rids itself of the contractual arrangements that lead to the creation of a silent workforce.



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## 7. Annexes

### 7.1 Directory of United Nations System Organizations

#### United Nations

- United Nations (UN)

#### Funds and Programmes

- International Trade Centre (ITC)
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)
- United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)
- World Food Programme (WFP)

#### Specialized Agencies

- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
- International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

- International Labour Organization (ILO)
- International Maritime Organization (IMO)
- International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
- Universal Postal Union (UPU)
- World Bank Group (World Bank Group)
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)
- World Meteorological Organization (WMO)
- World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)

#### Regional Commissions

- United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)
- United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)
- United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)
- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
- United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

#### United Nations Research and Training Institutes

- United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)
- United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)
- United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)
- United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)
- United Nations System Staff College (UNSSC)



- United Nations University (UNU)

#### Jointly Financed Bodies

- International Civil Service Commission (UN)
- Joint Inspection Unit (JIU)

#### Related Organizations

- International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
- Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)
- Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO)
- World Trade Organization (WTO)

#### Other Entities

- Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)
- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
- United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR)

#### Chief Executives Board for Coordination

- High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM)
- High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP)
- United Nations Development Group (UNDG)

*Note. Reprinted from United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination, 2017a*



## 7.2 Benefits by Non-Staff Contractual Modality

Contract type	Annual leave	Sick leave certified/uncertified	Pension	Health insurance Individual /Dependents	Maternity - Paternity leave	Hardship leave / R&R	Remarks
<b>FAO</b>							
Local consultant	No	No	No	Yes / No	No	No	This contract type is only reported in Thailand
International consultant	No	No	No	Yes / No	No	Yes – 7 days every 8 weeks (Haiti) Yes (Thailand)	See footnote <sup>35</sup>
Personal services agreement (PSA)	Yes – 2.5 days per month (Haiti) Yes – average 15 days per year (Viet Nam) No (Thailand) Yes – same as staff, namely, 2.5 days per month (India)	No (Haiti) 3 days (Viet Nam) No (Thailand) Yes (India)	No	Yes / No (Haiti, Viet Nam, Thailand, India)	No	No (Haiti, Viet Nam) Yes (Thailand)	See footnote 35
National project personnel (NPP)	Same entitlement as national civil servants	Consultants (nationals and internationals), PSA holders and NPP and in general all non-staff covered by a medical insurance are entitled to certified sick leave. Non-staff are covered under FAO compensation plan (MS 342) for service-incurred illness, accident or death.	No	Yes / No	Haiti – 6 weeks Viet Nam – 4 months Yes, Thailand (same as national civil servants)	No	See footnote 35
<b>IAEA</b>							
Special service agreement	2.5 days per month	No, absences due to illness will be deducted from leave	No	No	No	No	See footnote 35
<b>ILO</b>							
External collaborator	No	No	No	No	No	No	See footnote 35

<sup>35</sup> Malicious acts insurance policy (MAIP). All organizations include MAIP coverage, except ILO (external collaborator).

IMO							
International consultant	No	No	No	No	No	N/A	IMO provides limited insurance coverage to consultants only in the event of service-incurred death, injury or illness (maximum \$185,000)
Local consultant	No	No	No	No	No	N/A	
Temporary employees (interpreters, etc.)	Yes – 2.5 days per month (employees on monthly contracts)	Yes – 2 days sick leave: 1.5 days of certified and 0.5 days of uncertified sick leave per month	No	No	No	N/A	IMO provides limited compensation to temporary employees only in the event of service-incurred death, injury or illness (interpreters: \$600,000, temps: \$114,000)
ITU							
Special service agreement (used for international and local consultants)	No	No	No	Limited coverage / No	No	No	Service-incurred death, injury, disability or illness compensation. Max. CHF 720,000 coverage only for death and injury. International consultants receive DSA, while local consultants are paid in local currency.
UN Secretariat							
Consultancy contract (internationally/locally recruited)	No	No	No	No	No	No	See footnote <sup>36</sup>
Individual contractor	No	No	No	No	No	No	See footnote 36
UN Volunteers (UNV)	Yes – 2.5 days per month (per completed month of service) (Democratic Republic of the Congo)	Yes – 3 days for assignments of 3 months up to less than 12 months; 7 days for 12 months assignments (Democratic Republic of the Congo)	No – UNV is voluntary in nature therefore no provision for pension (Democratic Republic of the Congo)	Yes for individual - full medical insurance coverage and life and disability insurance; For family members authorized by UNV HQ, coverage limited to medical insurance (Democratic Republic of the Congo)	Yes – female UNVs receive 16 weeks of maternity leave; no paternity leave (Democratic Republic of the Congo)	R&R travel – 5 days of R&R plus 1 or 2 travel days for every 6 weeks in hardship duty stations and every 8 weeks in non-family duty stations (Democratic Republic of the Congo)	Insurance for service-incurred death, injury or illness, as determined in conditions of service for international UNV

<sup>36</sup> Insurance for service-incurred death, injury or illness, similar to Staff. Max. \$50,000.

UNAIDS							
Agreement for performance of work	No	No	No	No	No	No	No service-incurred death, injury
Consultancy contract	No	No	No	Yes / No	No	No	Service-incurred death, injury, disability or illness will be covered during the contract period provided a previous medical clearance
UNDP							
Individual contractor	No	No	No	No	No	No	See footnote <sup>37</sup>
Service contractor	Yes, in accordance with the general local practice. 2.5 days/month (Haiti) 18 days/year (Viet Nam) 2.5 days/month (Thailand) 2.5 days/month (India)	Sick leave in accordance with the general local practice. After 3 uncertified sick leave days in any 6 month period, medical certification required.  1 day/month, if more a medical certificate is required (Haiti) Local practice (Viet Nam) Max. 30 days/year (Thailand) 12 days/year (India)	Haiti – No, but a new scheme to include pension will be launched soon Viet Nam – 8.33 per cent of monthly remuneration Thailand – 4 per cent India – INR 416.67 per month = approx. \$90 per year Democratic Republic of the Congo – Yes, included in salary approx. 7.5 per cent	<b>For individual</b> Yes (Haiti) Yes – Van Breda (Viet Nam) Yes, Van Breda (Thailand) \$40.97 per month (India) Yes (Democratic Republic of the Congo)  <b>For dependents</b> Haiti – No, but a new scheme to include dependents will be launched soon No (Viet Nam) No (Thailand) N/A (India) Democratic Republic of the Congo – No, but according to new instruction medical insurance for dependents can be paid for	Yes – in accordance with the general local practice, minimum 16 weeks for maternity and 4 weeks for paternity	No R&R.  Yes – hazard allowance when serving in hazardous conditions as classified by ICSC.  Hazard allowance (Thailand)	See footnote <sup>38</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Service-incurred death, injury, disability or illness compensation: max. \$280,000 coverage for individual contractors hired as international contractors and \$160,000 for local contractors.

<sup>38</sup> The service contract is a decentralized contracting instrument for use only by UNDP country offices and regional centres outside of Headquarters. The SC is not for use in HQ duty stations and liaison offices. Service-incurred death, injury, disability or illness compensation: \$25,000 for death by natural causes or by a non-service incurred related accident; \$80,000 in the event of death caused by a service incurred related accident.

UN Volunteers (UNV)	2.5 days per month (Viet Nam, Democratic Republic of the Congo, India)	7 days per year (Viet Nam, Democratic Republic of the Congo, India)	N/A	Yes for individuals (Viet Nam, Democratic Republic of the Congo, India – for India see rates below) International UNVs - \$131.72 per month; National UNVs - \$35.11 per month  Yes for dependents (Viet Nam, India – for India see rates below: International UNVs - \$72.75 per month; National UNVs – \$30.36 per month)  N/A for dependents (Democratic Republic of the Congo)	Maternity leave – 16 weeks Paternity leave – nil (Viet Nam, Democratic Republic of the Congo, India)	N/A. However, United Nations agencies are encouraged to apply same rules on hardship leave /R&R as applicable to staff members (Democratic Republic of the Congo, India)	
<b>UNESCO</b>							
Special service agreement (field only)	Yes (Viet Nam: yes for contracts 6 months )	Yes (1 day per month for contracts of over / extended beyond 6 months) Yes	No	No	No	No	See footnote <sup>39</sup>
Service contract (field only)	Yes (2.5 days per month), Yes	Yes (1 day per month for contracts of over / extended beyond 6 months) Yes	Yes (included in the salary. The service contract is responsible for payments to the national insurance scheme)	Yes (included in the salary. The service contract is responsible for payments to the national insurance scheme. the service contract has to provide the proof of registration in the insurance/pension scheme) / No	Maternity only	No	See footnote 39
Individual consultant (internationally or locally recruited)	No	No	No	No	No	No	See footnote 39
Supernumerary (HQ only)	No	No	N/A	Registered in French social security, where eligible / No	No	No	See footnote 39
<b>UNFPA</b>							
Consultancy contract (internationally recruited in field duty stations. UNFPA policy applies)	No	No	No	No	No	No	See footnote 39
Consultancy contract – local at field duty stations (UNDP policy on special service agreements applies)	Usually no – for special service agreements of at least 6 months up to 1 day per month if specified in contract	No	No	No	No	War risk insurance if on travel status to hazardous duty station	See footnote 39

<sup>39</sup> Service-incurred death, injury, disability or illness compensation.

Service contract (UNDP policy on service contracts applies)	Yes (1.5 days per month)	Yes, according to local practice (minimum of 1 day per month)	Yes, according to local practice	Yes, according to local practice	Yes, according to local practice, minimum 16 weeks for maternity	No	See footnote 39
Consultancy contract local and international at HQ (UNOPS policy for individual contractor agreement applies)	No	No	No	No	No	No	See footnote 39
<b>UNHCR</b>							
UNOPS individual contractor (locally recruited)	2.5 days per month for contract of 3 months or more (Thailand)	Yes – 2 days per month for contract of 3 months or more (Thailand)	No	Individual: yes, up to \$40,000 per year Dependents: no (Thailand)	16 weeks maternity and 4 weeks paternity (Thailand)	Yes – 2 days per month hardship leave, no travel for individual contractor agreement contract holders (Thailand)	Medical evacuation plan is included. Data as reported by UNHCR Thailand
UNOPS individual contractor (internationally recruited)	2.5 days per month for contract of 3 months or more (Thailand) N/A (India)	Yes – Thailand: 2 days per month for contract of 3 months or more	No	No	No	Yes – 2 days per month hardship leave, no travel for individual contractor agreement contract holders (Thailand)	Transportation and visa cost covered by UNHCR when place of recruitment is outside Thailand. Data as reported by UNHCR Thailand
Individual consultant (local/international)	No	No	No	No	No	No / Yes for international consultant if covered under contract	See footnote 39
Individual contractor	No	No	No	No	No	No, applicable only when on mission	See footnote 39
UN Volunteers (UNV)	Yes – 2.5 days/month (Thailand, Ethiopia, India)	Yes – depends on contract length, 7 days uncertified sick leave within a 12-month period. (Thailand, Ethiopia, India)	No – UNVs receive a resettlement allowance at the time of separation (Thailand) Yes (Ethiopia) No (India)	<b>Individual</b> Thailand – Yes under UNV/UNDP (Van Breda) India – Yes <b>Dependents</b> Yes (Thailand, India, Ethiopia)	Yes – 16 weeks maternity leave No paternity leave (Thailand, India, Ethiopia)	Thailand – Yes to IUNV (USD 750 plus ticket to recognized R&R location) India – No Ethiopia – Yes	Insurance for service-incurred death, injury or illness under UNV/UNDP (Van Breda).
Interpreters	No	No	No	No	No	No	See footnote 39
<b>UNICEF</b>							
Individual contractor	No	No	No	No	No	Viet Nam – Yes, if applicable as per policy India – No	See footnote <sup>40</sup>

<sup>40</sup> Insurance for service-incurred death, injury or illness. Included in evacuation plan if international.



Consultancy contract	No	No	No	No	No	Viet Nam – Yes for international, if applicable as per policy India – No	See footnote 40
UN Volunteers (UNV) (administered by UNDP)	Viet Nam – Yes  India – 2.5 working days per completed month of service which they will be required to take during their term of assignment	Viet Nam – Yes India – Yes 7 days/year uncertified, 6 weeks/year certified	Viet Nam – No India – No	Viet Nam – Yes for individual and yes for dependents if stay is for more than 6 months India – Yes for individual, and yes for recognized primary dependents for limited duration while with the UNV in the duty station	Maternity leave – 16 weeks (Viet Nam, India)	Yes – Viet Nam if applicable per policy.  Yes – India if UNICEF has approved R&R travel for the duty station where the UNV specialist is serving, he/she will be entitled to it.	See footnote 40
UNIDO							
Individual service agreement – international consultant	Yes – 2.5 days for contracts of 6 months or longer	No – up to 2 days/month certified for contracts of 6 months or longer	No	No	No	Rest and recuperation and hardship allowance, relocation/ evacuation	Service-incurred death, injury, disability or illness compensation. Appendix D.
Individual service agreement – national consultant	Yes – 2.5 days for contracts of 6 months or longer	No – up to 2 days/month certified for contracts of 6 months or longer	No	Yes / No	Yes – Maternity: max. 16 weeks. Paternity: max. 4 weeks for contracts of 12 months or longer	Relocation/ evacuation	See footnote <sup>41</sup>
Individual service agreement – local support personnel	Yes – 2.5 days for contracts of 6 months or longer	No – up to 2 days/month certified for contracts of 6 months or longer	No	Yes / No	Yes – Maternity: max. 16 weeks. Paternity: max. 4 weeks for contracts of 12 months or longer	Relocation/ evacuation	See footnote 41
Individual service agreement – ad hoc worker	Yes – 2.5 days for contracts of 6 months or longer	No – up to 2 days/month certified for contracts of 6 months or longer	Yes, through UNIDO in the Austrian social security scheme- health, accident, unemployment and pension insurance / No		Yes – Maternity: max. 16 weeks. Paternity: max. 4 weeks for contracts of 12 months or longer	Relocation/ evacuation	See footnote 41
UNOPS							
Individual contractor agreement National	2.5 days/month for contracts of 3 months or longer - Haiti, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia	2 days/month certified sick leave for contracts 3 months or longer Haiti – Yes, uncertified 6 days/year Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia	Yes – 22.5 per cent (provident fund) (Haiti, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia)	Yes – individual, for contracts of 3 months or longer / provided for dependents, but not funded, as a service at reduced premiums - Haiti, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia	Yes – 16 weeks of maternity leave and 4 weeks of paternity leave for contracts 6 months or longer. - Haiti, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia	No leave – Danger allowance only when required to work and actually do so, and when in hazardous conditions as classified by ICSC No – Haiti, Democratic Republic of the Congo Yes – Ethiopia, but no R&R	See footnote <sup>42</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Locally recruited individual service agreement holders on regular individual service agreements may be entitled to health insurance scheme. Insurance coverage: (a) for medical expenses, excluding dependents, maximum of \$10,000 per year; (b) in the event of death, a one-time lump sum compensation a maximum of \$25,000, and (c) in the event of permanent disability, a one-time lump sum compensation a maximum of \$40,000. It is not applicable to the individual service agreement ad hoc worker category.

<sup>42</sup> Service-incurred death, injury, disability or illness compensation: 36 times monthly fee: individual contractor agreement–national: subject to max of \$500,000 and a min of \$25,000; individual contractor agreement–international: subject to max of \$600,000. Local individual contractors (daily basis contract: subject to max of \$25,000; lump sum contract: subject to max of \$100,000).



Individual contractor agreement International	2.5 days/month for contracts of 3 months or longer - Haiti, Democratic Republic of the Congo	2 days/month certified sick leave for contracts 3 months or longer - Haiti, 6 days/year - Democratic Republic of the Congo	No (Haiti, Democratic Republic of the Congo)	Haiti – No Democratic Republic of the Congo – Yes for individual, no for dependents	Yes – maternity and paternity (Haiti, Democratic Republic of the Congo)	Yes – 2 days per month for contracts of 6 months or more in designated hardship duty stations. - Haiti (2 days/month) - Democratic Republic of the Congo	See footnote 42
Local individual contractors (retainer contract and those paid on a daily basis or lump sum)	No	No	No	No	No	No	See footnote 42
<b>UN-WOMEN</b>							
International special service agreements/individual contracts (SSA/IC)	No – Although it is practice to grant one day of leave per month to full time SSA/IC holders who have worked six months or more.	No	No	No	No	N/A	
Local SSA/IC	No – Although it is practice to grant one day of leave per to full time SSA/IC holders who have worked six months or more. N/A in India	No	No	No	No	N/A	
Service contracts	Yes – local practice up to max. 2.5 days/month - India	Local practice (up to max. 1.5 days/month certified) India – 7 days	Follows local practice India – INR 5000/per year	Follows local practice India – for individual, Van Breda \$49.45 per month / N/A for dependents	Yes (maternity 16 weeks, paternity 4 weeks)	No R&R. Yes – hazard allowance when serving in hazardous conditions as classified by ICSC. N/A in India.	See footnote <sup>43</sup>
<b>UNWTO</b>							
Consultancy contract	N/A	N/A	N/A	Only at the request of the consultant / N/A dependents	N/A	N/A	See footnote 43
External collaborator	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
In-house collaborator	Only if contract is for longer than 6 months	No for uncertified, yes for certified sick leave	N/A	Yes individual (Van Breda) / N/A dependents	N/A	N/A	See footnote 43

<sup>43</sup> Service-incurred death, injury, disability or illness compensation through Van Breda coverage.

WFP							
Consultancy contract – international (in India, contract raised by regional bureau)	No (Haiti, Ethiopia, India)	No <sup>44</sup> (Haiti, Ethiopia, India)	No (Haiti, Ethiopia, India)	Yes Max coverage \$50,000/ year Haiti, Ethiopia, India – yes for individual, no for dependents	No (Haiti, Ethiopia, India)	Haiti, Ethiopia – yes R&R India – no	See footnote <sup>45</sup>
Consultancy contract – local	Haiti – No Ethiopia – Yes, 1 day/month for contracts lasting 6 months or longer India – Yes for SSA lasting six months or longer Democratic Republic of the Congo – Yes for SSA lasting 6 months or longer, 1 day/month	No (Haiti, Ethiopia, India)	No (Haiti, Ethiopia, India)	Yes – Max Coverage \$40,000/ year Haiti – Yes for individual and dependents Ethiopia – Yes for individual and yes for dependents upon payment of a premium India – Yes for individual and on a cost-shared basis for dependents	No (Haiti, Ethiopia, India) No (Ethiopia, India)	Haiti – No Ethiopia – Yes, danger pay only India – N/A	Death and disability coverage included as part of health insurance
WFP special service agreement (SSA) (field)	Haiti – No Ethiopia – Yes, 1 day/month for contracts lasting 6 months or longer India – Yes for SSA lasting six months or longer Democratic Republic of the Congo – Yes for SSA lasting 6 months or longer, 1 day/month	No (Haiti, Ethiopia, India)	No (Haiti, Ethiopia, India)	Yes – Maximum coverage \$40,000/ year Haiti – Yes for individual and dependents Ethiopia – Yes for individual and yes for dependents upon payment of a premium India – Yes for individual and on a cost-shared basis for dependents	No (Haiti, Ethiopia, India)	Haiti – No Ethiopia – Yes, danger pay only India – N/A	Death and disability coverage included as part of health insurance
FAO special service agreement (SSA); (headquarters and liaison offices)	No	No	No	Yes for individual only, Max coverage \$50,000/ year	No	N/A	Death and disability coverage included as part of health insurance
Service contract	Yes – local practice minimum 1.5 days/month (Yes, Ethiopia; No, Haiti), Yes 2.5 days/month in India	Yes – uncertified sick leave days in 6 month period, after this medical certification is required for any medical absence (also Ethiopia and Haiti) Yes, one uncertified leave/month in India	Yes (Ethiopia, 8.33 per cent included in salary) Yes (Haiti 6%+6% national scheme), Yes A lump sum amount per annum (Rs. 5000/- per annum) in India; Yes, 6 per cent included in salary (Democratic Republic of the Congo)	Yes. Max coverage \$40,000/ year, Yes fully contributed by WFP (Henner) in India / Yes (at extra charge borne by the service contract holder and WFP), Yes for individual, yes for dependents on a cost-shared basis (Ethiopia); Yes (Haiti), Yes on a cost-share basis in India; Yes for individual and dependents (Democratic Republic of the Congo)	Yes, local practice. Minimum maternity: 16 weeks, and paternity 4 weeks. Also in Ethiopia and India (8 weeks paternity in India), No (Haiti)	Yes, danger pay (Ethiopia) No (Haiti), N/A in India	Group insurance policy, in the event of death, injury or illness attributable to the performance of official WFP duties

<sup>44</sup> Compulsory medical plan includes a financial compensation for temporary disablement due to illness or accident causing an unpaid absence exceeding 4 days.

<sup>45</sup> Service-incurred death, injury, disability or illness compensation: 2/3 of the annual pensionable remuneration at the P-4/V level plus any applicable compensation under the health/medical insurance plan.

WFP UNV Administered under UNV regulatory framework	Yes (Ethiopia)	Yes (Ethiopia)	No (Ethiopia)	Yes, for individual, Max. Coverage \$50,000/ year (Ethiopia) No for dependents (Ethiopia)	Yes (Ethiopia)	Yes (Ethiopia)	See footnote <sup>46</sup>
<b>WHO</b>							
Consultants	No	No	No	Voluntary complementary coverage may be purchased from the insurance company / No	No	No	See footnote <sup>47</sup>
Special service agreements	Follows local practice (same as those applicable to government civil servants associated with the project or other activity), Yes (Viet Nam, India)	Follows local practice (Same as those applicable to government civil servants associated with the project or other activity), Yes (Viet Nam, India)	No	Subject to conditions set out in the relevant insurance policy, special service agreements are covered for medical expenses, death and disability following an accident or an emergency illness. Yes -Viet Nam / Yes; Yes for individuals, no for dependents (India)	Follows local practice (Same as those applicable to government civil servants associated with the project or other activity), Yes (Viet Nam, India)	No	See footnote <sup>48</sup>
Service Contractors (Viet Nam)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes / No	Yes	No	Contract only found in Viet Nam questionnaire
Agreement for performance of work	No	No	No	No	No	No	See footnote <sup>49</sup>
<b>WIPO</b>							
Individual contractual services	No	No	No	No	No	No	
<b>WMO</b>							
Special service agreement – international and local consultants	No	No	No	No	No	No	Service-incurred death, injury, disability compensation: death \$120,000; disability \$240,000

<sup>46</sup> Service-incurred death, injury, disability or illness compensation: two thirds of the annual pensionable remuneration at the P-4/V level plus any applicable compensation under the health/medical insurance plan.

<sup>47</sup> Service-incurred death, injury, disability or illness compensation subject to limits and conditions set out in the relevant insurance policy, consultants are covered, at the expense of WHO, for medical expenses, death and disability following an accident or an emergency illness.

<sup>48</sup> Special service agreement contract between WHO and a national or resident of a host country for services for either long or short assignments on a specific national project or activity.

<sup>49</sup> The general conditions for agreement for performance of work include: WHO shall not be responsible for any loss, accident, damages or injury suffered by any person whatsoever arising in or out of the execution of work under an agreement for performance of work, including travel. WHO may in certain provide insurance coverage for travel in WHO vehicles.

*Note. Reprinted from Terzi & Fall, 2014, pp. 69-77*



### 7.3 Abstract

Despite the high visibility of the United Nations, little is known about the employment conditions of almost half of its workforce. The present thesis reviews 16 reports published by the United Nations during the past ten years through a mixed methods approach to analyse whether the United Nations workforce is feminized, i.e. whether it possesses informal characteristics such as flexible contracts, no employment protection, few if any benefits, low-pay, low-skilled tasks and a lack of union representation.

The findings suggest that the United Nations is split in half; those appointed as “staff members” enjoy standard working conditions, while those hired as “non-staff”, such as consultants, interns and volunteers, are feminized. It is unclear if this feminization affects women and men equally as the United Nations keeps limited statistics on non-staff. Informal employment tends to affect women more than men, however, so it is likely that female non-staff are especially feminized. By applying the labour standards it sets for the rest of the world to its internal organization, the United Nations would benefit its workforce, boost its legitimacy and set a more general precedent in dealing with the increasing feminization of the workforce.

## 7.4 Zusammenfassung

Trotz der Bekanntheit der Vereinten Nationen sind die Arbeitsbedingungen fast der Hälfte ihrer MitarbeiterInnen intransparent. Die vorliegende Arbeit untersucht, ob das Personal der Vereinten Nationen „feminisiert“ ist, was sich in informellen Eigenschaften wie flexiblen Arbeitsverträgen, fehlendem ArbeitnehmerInnenschutz, keine oder wenige sonstige Sachbezüge, geringer Entlohnung, geringqualifizierten Tätigkeiten und dem Fehlen einer gewerkschaftlichen Vertretung zeigt. Zu diesem Zweck wurden 16 Berichte der Vereinten Nationen der letzten zehn Jahre mit dem Mixed-Methods-Ansatz ausgewertet.

Die Ergebnisse der Arbeit weisen auf eine Zweiteilung der Vereinten Nationen in *staff* und *non-staff* hin. Während der *staff* einheitliche Arbeitsbedingungen hat, wird der *non-staff*, wie etwa BeraterInnen, PraktikantInnen und freiwillige MitarbeiterInnen, feminisiert. Es bleibt unklar, ob die Feminisierung Frauen und Männer im gleichen Maße trifft, da die Vereinten Nationen unzureichende Statistiken über ihren *non-staff* führen. Tendenziell sind jedoch Frauen häufiger als Männer von informellen Beschäftigungsverhältnissen betroffen und somit ist es wahrscheinlich, dass weiblicher *non-staff* besonders feminisiert ist. Indem sie die Arbeitsstandards, die sie für den Rest der Welt definieren, auf sich selbst anwenden, könnten die Vereinten Nationen ihre eigene Belegschaft begünstigen, ihre Legitimität erhöhen und zugleich ein wichtiges Zeichen gegen die zunehmende Feminisierung von Arbeit setzen.