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## CCAMTAC Regional Webinar on

### ”Talent Management, Staff Development and Mobility at the IMF – Any Lessons for the Region?”

Monday, December 11, 2023

#### Introduction and Moderation:

**Mr. Norbert Funke**, Director, CCAMTAC

#### Presenters:

**Ms. Quatrina Pohan**, Senior Human Resource Officer, Talent Assessment, IMF

#### Interventions:

**Ms. Ivana Jablonská**, CCAMTAC Regional Advisor, Government Finance Statistics and Public Sector Debt Statistics

**Ms. Gohar Abajyan**, Senior Data Management Officer, Middle East and Central Asia Department,

**Mr. Karen Sargsyan**, Secretary General, Ministry of Finance

**Mr. Michael Germershausen**, Managing Director, Eurasian Region, Antal International

Staff mobility, development and training are important to build skills and foster staff development. At the same time, excessive mobility may hinder continuity and advancing a reform agenda. Amid this background, the webinar brought together representatives from the IMF, CCAMTAC, country authorities, and a recruitment firm.

Quatrina Pohan explained the mobility policies of the IMF, which encourage staff to gain a diverse range of experiences within the organization and also outside to enhance their career profiles and effectiveness. For example, senior economists have a mandatory mobility requirement after seven years in the same department. Training programs related to professional skills, soft skills, and leadership further support staff development. While generally beneficial, mandatory mobility also leads to some challenges, for example the need to balance business continuity while maintaining consistency of service delivery and a risk to lose institutional knowledge.

Recognizing the importance of staff mobility as part of a professional life cycle, Ivana Jablonská stressed that it is vital to ensure a good handover of responsibilities. In delivering technical assistance in the Government Finance Statistics area, CCAMTAC has faced issues with a lack of staff continuity. In the absence of a good handover of responsibilities, there is a large risk that past technical assistance would need to be (partially) repeated. Ensuring continuity in counterpart institutions is a significant element of the efficiency of technical assistance. This has also been discussed in CCAMTAC workshops.



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Zooming in on appropriate handover, Ms. Gohar Abajyan shared the experience of the IMF's Middle East and Central Asia Department. Handover notes can help to ensure continuity. Good notes need to include key information, such as key contacts, information on processes, important files with "read me" instructions, and relevant links. Implementing good handover may require a manager's involvement and appropriate incentives. The more the handover becomes embedded in the corporate culture the better.

Mr. Karen Sargsyan shared the experience of the Ministry of Finance of Armenia which strives to be the best employer in the country. The Ministry puts significant emphasis on inclusiveness i.e., involving junior staff in the preparation of decisions; staff development, including training opportunities outside Armenia; and soft skill and managerial training. The Ministry has started with retreats, bringing together junior and senior staff in a relaxed atmosphere. By developing its staff, including promoting top talent, the Ministry has been very successful in retaining strong performers. The Ministry is currently assessing options to increase worktime flexibility.

Looking more broadly at the labor market and expectations of employees, Michael Germershausen noted that his company's most recent regional survey shows that the job search period of employees in the region is much shorter than for example in Western European countries. For more than 40 percent of employees, the job search period is less than a month, resulting in higher and faster staff turnover. In addition to salary, the reasons for changing jobs include in particular better possibilities of flexible working hours, remote work, and training opportunities. Priorities would differ between age groups; in particular very young employees would value highly the ability to work from home.

During the general discussion, the questions to the speakers and comments covered (i) the optimal rate of mobility; (ii) different expectations of age groups, and (iii) possibilities for remote work. The discussion highlighted ongoing changes in expectations of employees. With higher turnover, from a managerial perspective it is important to put in place a mechanism for continuity and efficient handover.