

Policy for Translation of Official Documents

A. Introduction

UNFPA herewith issues a revised policy on translations of official documents.

B. General Principles

B.1. Working Languages

In line with other UN agencies, the three official working languages of UNFPA are English, French, and Spanish.

B.2. All translations should clearly and accurately capture the full intent of the original document. Where a dispute arises as to the meaning of a translated document, the provisions of the original language version shall prevail. It is therefore the responsibility of the 'owner' of the document, to ensure that the translation obtained is of the highest quality before the document is disseminated.

C. Procurement of Translation Services

C.1. Translation services must be procured in strict compliance with the [UNFPA Procurement Procedures](#) and all applicable regulations concerning staff employment, specifically:

- i. the United Nations [Staff Regulations](#) and [Staff Rules](#)
- ii. the [Guidelines for the Recruitment of International Consultants](#)
- iii. the [UNFPA policy regarding the Employment of Retirees](#)

C.2. A potential translator's eligibility for employment according to the above listed regulations should be verified with the Division of Human Resources before the translator's services are engaged. When available, a list of official translators pre-approved by the UNFPA Procurement Services Branch may be used. The requesting office will be held accountable for ensuring that UN retirees are not employed beyond their eligibility.

C.3. If available, only the services of translators who charge the United Nations approved rates should be retained. These rates may be requested from the United Nations Documentation Division. In the event that no suitable translator can be identified at the approved United Nations rates, the translator should be selected in strict compliance with the [UNFPA Procurement Procedures](#).

- C.4. In accordance with the Procurement Procedures, a purchase requisition must be raised in Atlas whenever the costs of translation will exceed US\$ 5,000.
- C.5. In an effort to ensure consistent translation of common terms and phrases used within the United Nations, all translators shall be informed upon recruitment of the United Nations Multilingual Terminology Database website: <http://unterm.un.org>.
- C.6. Upon receipt of the translation, the 'owner' of the document is responsible for ensuring that the translation is of acceptable quality.

D. Translation of Headquarters Administration Documents

- D.1. The following are considered Headquarters administration documents:
 - 1. Policies and procedures
 - 2. Communication relating to policies and procedures, or to the Policies and Procedures Manual (PPM)
 - 3. Circulars that impact staff employment in headquarters and country offices
 - 4. Circulars that provide information on resources such as Atlas or the intranet that are essential to work-related tasks
 - 5. Circulars relating to security policy, such as travel restriction alerts or guidelines on MOSS compliance
- D.2. As the above listed categories of documents are generally applicable to all staff, they must be translated into all three working languages.
- D.3. In the case of Policies and Procedures, these must be forwarded to the Programme Support and Regional Desk Branch of the Programme Division for processing and issuance, following clearance by the 'owner' of the document.

E. Funding for Translation

- E.1. Headquarters Administration Documents
 - E.1.1. Translation into Working Languages

Translations of Headquarters administration documents into working languages are charged to the BSB. When a purchase requisition must be created in Atlas for

such translations, the costs are apportioned 80% to Headquarters Administration (FPA 11) and 20% to Headquarters Programme Support (FPA 41). Consequently, the following Atlas chart fields should be used:

74220 FPA11 00050 HADM0809 PU0074 GENOPEX - charge 80% of the total amount

74220 FPA41 00050 HADM0809 PU0074 GENOPEX - charge 20% of the total amount

E.1.2. Translation into Non-Working Languages

Translations of headquarters administration documents into non-working languages are undertaken at the discretion and cost of the organisational unit requiring the translation. Exceptionally, they may be charged to the BSB as described above if the approval of the DED(M) is obtained in advance.

E.2. Other Documents

E.2.1. Translations of documents other than the ones listed in paragraph D.1. into any language(s) appropriate to their target audience are undertaken at the discretion and cost of the organisational unit requiring the translation.

E.2.2. Exceptionally, working-language translations of other documents may be charged to the BSB if the approval of the DED(M) is obtained in advance.