Reviewer's report

Title: A Framework for Assessing the Impact of the United Nations Fellowship Programmes

Version: 2 Date: 20 October 2009

Reviewer: Zulmira Hartz

Reviewer's report:

This paper covers somewhat innovative approach for program's evaluation in general. For those interested in application of evaluation methods to estimate the effects of HRH training interventions, the piece is a relevant contribution addressing their key issues, but it needs two 'Minor Essentials Revisions:

1) Make a distinction (or an alignment) between 'Impact Assessment'(title), Impact Evaluation (abstract) and 'Performance measurement or story' (Mayne’s Contribution Analyses approach). In this sense the NONIE (Network of Networks for Impact Evaluation) Guidance (2009) can be very useful.

2) Take precaution with the phrase "...contribution analysis ...can be based on assessment of any plausible evidence regardless of the design, method or source used to obtain it"(page 14). Kotvojs & Shrimpton (please complete reference in the manuscript) alert for the misconceptions in the contribution analysis and it would be nice that the authors discuss them, adding some advices in the conclusions.

Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'