



BUSINESS INNOVATIONS GROUP | BIG

Advancing Common Business Operations

UPDATE 3 *3 December 2018*



Below is a summary of the BIG Project Update provided at the UNSDG Business Innovations Strategic Results Group (BIG) meeting held on 3rd December 2018

Introduction

The BIG co-chairs, High Commissioner Filippo Grandi and Executive Director David Beasley informed the UNSDG Principals meeting where the **Mutual Recognition Statement** has been introduced and warmly welcomed by the other principals. Seven UN entities have already signed the statement, including the United Nations Secretary-General. Further follow-up will be done in order to have more entities opt-in and to encourage principals to communicate the Mutual Recognition throughout their organisations.

The co-chairs had registered expectations from Member States for **efficiency gains** resulting in tangible savings, but had not yet seen a mature discussion of the investments required to realise these savings. Through the Project Team, they had initiated this discussion with Member States at an informal in New York.

The co-chairs stressed the importance of ensuring the addressing of expectations from some stakeholders that other parts of the ongoing UN reform will be financed directly from efficiency gains in business operations, and emphasised the importance of ongoing communication in regard to savings not being the primary driver of the respective optimization efforts, and that the majority of envisaged savings will be enabled by reducing and moving HQ structures from high-cost to low-cost locations. Furthermore, the UNSDG stays committed to the QCPR instructions to channel efficiency gains back into entity programmes at the country level.

A **BOS** workshop, including BOS, entity focal points have met to initiate the process leading to an Improved BOS, and to plan the necessary mechanisms to ensure support, quality assurance, and compliance by all UN country teams (UNCTs) by 2021. The importance of providing supported models based on country typologies instead of a one-size-fits-all approach was re-emphasised.

In regard to **Common Premises**, the need to clarify roles between the BIG Project Team and the Task Team for Common Premises and Facility Services was also requested. There was agreement that UNSDG principals should communicate to their respective organisations the instructions to pursue Common Premises as a default for all expiring leases and new office premises.

The importance of having the UNSDG BIG efforts being steered by value for money and **client satisfaction** was reiterated.

Work on common digital **service centres** was introduced, and the co-chairs called for this work to be closely linked to the BIG Project Team.

The importance of **communication**, especially from Principals, was discussed throughout the meeting, and the co-chairs committed to continue to provide leadership also in support of a strong communication role from their peers.

Next Steps

1. Co-chairs, supported by the BIG Project Team and DOCO:
 - a. to appeal with fellow principals and EOSG for staffing/financial contributions to BIG efforts, including its project team;
 - b. communicate with EOSG on correlation between timely investments and timelines;
 - c. continue communication with fellow Principals towards opting-in to Mutual Recognition;
 - d. suggest all UNSDG Principals to internal instructions their entities to pursue Common Premises solutions as the default for all expiring leases and new office premises;
2. Clarification of roles and division of labour of the BIG Project Team, and the UNSDG BIG Task Team on Common Premises and Facility Services.
3. Digital services centre efforts to be closely linked to the BIG Project Team.

