



BUSINESS INNOVATIONS GROUP | BIG

Advancing Common Business Operations

UPDATE 4 *22 February 2019*



This email update is sent from the [Business Innovations Group \(BIG\)](#) Project Team lead to the [member entities](#) designated representatives to BIG, and is intended to provide an update on the work of the BIG Project Team.



Mutual Recognition Statement

11 signatures have been collected to date, including those of the Secretary-General for the UN Secretariat, and of ILO, IOM, ITU, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNOPS, WFP and WHO. UN Women also agreed to sign shortly. The document itself has been transferred to the HLCM secretariat and they will work to gather further signatures.

The Project Team's focus has shifted towards gathering participants to work on operationalizing mutual recognition, particularly as it applies to common back offices, the network of global shared service centres, and common premises. A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document on the application of Mutual Recognition is being drafted and will soon be available to guide staff accordingly.



Client Satisfaction System

- **Costing Principles** – As one of the foundational documents for common services, the Project Team has developed high level costing principles to guide how prices are established for inter-agency service provision. The Project Team is now working on a companion document to clarify definitions of terms and of cost categories. These principles will go through a final approval process and be disseminated widely.
- **Customer Satisfaction Standards** – The Project Team is developing a set of policy standards with minimum requirements for service providers, which will cover both objective and subjective measures of service quality. For example, service providers must use a case management system, actively solicit feedback from clients and have a clear system to gather the information and make necessary changes. These standards will be submitted for approval by end of Q1 2019



Business Operations Strategy

The BOS guidelines are updated, and the inter-agency working group is now creating an online platform for the development and tracking of new BOS, targeting April 2019 completion. The improved BOS aims to reduce time and complexity, while focusing on common services with a high return on investment. The new BOS builds on lessons learned from BOS experiences worldwide and aims to reduce development time from an average of 27 weeks to eight weeks. It will move the entire process online and include a simplified Cost Benefit Analysis tool as well as the ability to track progress and measure impact over time.

To enable us to reach 100 per cent by 2021, we shortly intend to suggest for BIG approval a UNSDG BOS Task Team that will provide both HQ quality assurance and field support through identification, refinement and circulation of country level best practices.



Common Back Office

The Project Team is currently at the design phase, with concept notes being developed and discussed. The Project Team is preparing to deploy to some select country offices to work with the UN country teams to conduct cost-benefit analysis and define the business case for which functions should be included in a CBO.



Global Shared Services

The Project Team is currently at the design phase, with concept notes being developed and discussed. The network of Global Shared Service Centres will initially focus on creating a 'marketplace' concept for service provision. A template for a 'service portfolio' is being finalized as well as a draft terms of reference for a Global Shared Services Board, as was recommended by the Joint Inspection Unit.



Common Premises

Jointly with the Task Team on Common Premises and Facilities Services (TTCP+FS), the Project Team conducted a workshop last week to define the way forward in meeting the Secretary-General's target on common premises. The workshop built on the Common Premise strategy previously developed by TTCP+FS, which remains sound and relevant, and focused on detailing an implementation plan to achieve it. This included reviewing existing guidelines, defining requirements and deciding on the establishment of a new inter-agency database of UN premises, and defining the initial investment required to achieve the target.

As the definition of Common Premises is any UN controlled office location with two or more UN entities co-located, and the target of 50 per cent requires very large-scale change, the focus of implementation it is not on creating UN houses nor limited to capital cities. The priority is on shifting the culture within the UN system to a default position of co-location in every practical scenario. This is particularly relevant in subnational locations where existing data suggests there are many very small UN offices which may be able to co-locate with others in that area.

Cross-cutting items

- **Efficiency Tracking** – This is very important to Member States and is related to the nearly finalized funding compact dialogue. The Project Team has developed a methodology for reporting back office costs which could be replicated over time. This will be shared with an external consulting team which has been engaged by the Executive Office of the SG for validation before data is requested from UN entities.
- **Funding Compact** – The Project Team continues to engage on the funding compact document to ensure that it is accurate and reflects realistic outcomes.
- **Team structure** – The Project Team currently consists of 7 full time members, 2 temporary Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), and a data management team under contract. There is a continued focus on identifying Subject Matter Experts to be onboarded for the full design phase of CBO and GSSC and hope to have support for change management in the near future. The vacancy announcement for SMEs can be found [here](#) and will close on 28 February, which we appreciate if you could please circulate.

Engaging with the BIG Project

We are also looking to engage with more stakeholders at entity, regional or country level as part of our change management effort. You will find attached a brief presentation outlining the updates, which we have shared via webinar with general audiences and the RC community. You may wish to use this to raise awareness of the work of the BIG and the Project Team within your organization. If you desire a presentation to your organization or country team, we will be happy to provide additional information.

