



HUMANITARIAN
BOOKING HUB    

UN MEDICAL BOOKING SERVICE

Practice Notes for the
Development Coordination Office
Business Operations Strategy



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UN MEDICAL BOOKING SERVICE

Executive Summary

This Practice Note provides information on the **Humanitarian Booking Hub – UN Medical Booking Service**, an innovative **digital platform** for the global operations of United Nations Operational Management Teams (OMTs) and Country Teams (UNCTs) within the Business Operations Strategy (BOS) framework. **The Humanitarian Booking Hub is a UN proprietary online platform** powered by WFP. It allows staff and managers to book and run medical services and optimise daily management of in-field operations. **It standardises business processes, automates request tracking and improves service delivery through real-time monitoring of customer satisfaction.** At the same time, **it promotes synergies and efficiency gains.** It is truly **a UN solution for the UN**, designed in accordance with the Mutual Recognition, Costing and Customer Satisfaction principles.

WFP initially developed the Hub as a corporate tool to run and manage its field services. Now the platform is offered as a global, inter-agency service to the wider UN. A dedicated team coordinates the Hub's implementation whilst providing regular support to participating Agencies in their locations, from the initial contact to service activation and beyond. By implementing their services on the Humanitarian Booking Hub, **Agencies can successfully advance their digital transformation, foster inter-agency collaboration, improve customer satisfaction and contribute to the BOS agenda for common services.**

[Please watch this video for an overview of the Humanitarian Booking Hub.](#)

Introduction: a natural enabler of BOS

The Humanitarian Booking Hub, as a collaborative digital approach tool, is central to scale mature services within the Business Operations Strategy (BOS) framework. BOS is a results-based framework that focuses on joint business operations with the purpose of eliminating duplication, leveraging the common bargaining power of the UN and maximising economies of scale. The BOS was created in 2012 as a response to a call for simplification and harmonisation of the United Nations system. In line with the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) and the repositioning of the UN development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda, the Secretary-General mandates that all United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs) ensure compliance with an improved BOS by 2021, in support of more effective programme delivery.

The Humanitarian Booking Hub is a natural enabler of BOS, as it supports the quick implementation of the framework, with a ready-to-use digital tool, and enhances inter-agency collaboration within the UN system.

The [Humanitarian Booking Hub](#) is the largest UN marketplace for field accommodation, mobility, and wellness services provided by UN Agencies. It supports administrators in digitally transforming their daily activities, aids humanitarian workers in delivering last-mile assistance, automates UN organisational operations data for improved decision-making, and provides emergency preparedness and response services (see Annex 1 for more details of the results and capacity of the Humanitarian Booking Hub in the UN system).

The Humanitarian Booking Hub was conceived in 2015 in response to a growing need for digitalised operations handling in the field. At present, already 9 UN agencies are offering their services through the platform, making **the Hub the largest UN marketplace for UN provided field services.** The current Humanitarian Hub platform is digitally transforming field operations in the following ways:

- **Optimises the use of corporate assets**, for more effective field operations and management of the services.
- Allows automatic reporting of operational service data and KPIs for a more **effective decision making** and a clearer **identification of improvement's opportunities** for the all services offered.
- Provides technical support to **advance the UN Reform Agenda**.

To support the rapid scale-up of COVID emergency response, in April 2020, the Humanitarian Booking Hub expanded its service offerings to include the booking of Global Passenger Air Services. The Hub also rolled out a range of tools and materials for staff and managers, including live travel dashboards and COVID-19 standard preventive measures.



1008 UN field service points in 89 Countries from 10 UN Agencies

- 🚚 2,800+ UN vehicles
- ✈️ 285+ UNHAS flights
- ✈️ 50+ COVID support flights
- 🏠 260+ UN guesthouses
- 🏨 110+ UNDSS hotels
- 🏥 65+ UN Clinics
- 💬 35 UN Counsellors

The platform can also be accessed via a mobile app, available for Android and Apple phones, and it offers the following services: Accommodation, Driver, Clinic, and Medical services.

Objectives

The Hub aims **to enhance inter-agency collaboration** and achieve the following objectives:

- Provide a **custom-made UN solution to UN Agencies** for common accommodation, passenger mobility and wellness services in field operations leveraging on the UN global operations expertise;
- **Eliminate duplication of efforts and leverage economies of scale** by streamlining joint digital operations into a single effort that adopts best practices for the common benefit;
- **Adoption of best practices** by globally streamlining Agencies success stories and service solutions;
- Provide immediate access to a **standardised and digitalised back-office service** with end-to-end service management, including customer booking process, asset allocation, service delivery, electronic invoicing, and automated reporting;

- Allow all Agencies in the same country to use the platform, improving **comparable UN service delivery KPIs and asset sharing opportunities** (i.e. offering spare medical services capacity to Agencies with no medical presence in the country);
- Provide **comprehensive client feedback services** to continuously monitor customer satisfaction, support the UN Reform and promote a client-focused mindset;
- Provide a cost-recovery model for **effective, fair and precise inter-agency cost recovery** solutions and for invoicing.

Potential challenges

Any process involving digital transformation invariably leads to a change management process with its associated challenges:

- Resistance to change in switching from a consolidated manual process to automated digital ones
- Fear of job losses due to digitalisation
- Fear of increased service accountability of established practices

An effective change management support structure and team, with extensive experience and expertise in digitalising field service operations, is in place to manage such challenges with:

- Comprehensive online trainings for staff, guesthouse' managers and administrators.
- Online manuals and video-recordings for step by step support for daily activities.
- 24/7 customer service or questions or concerns.

All services on the Humanitarian Booking Hub are very mature and used by numerous agencies.

Key stakeholders

The Humanitarian Booking Hub is aimed at the following UN stakeholder groups:

1. Personnel

Staff in the field can get real-time information before visiting a UN Clinic and easily book required medical services. At the same time, they obtain automated booking notifications and are given a chance to provide their feedback on the service.

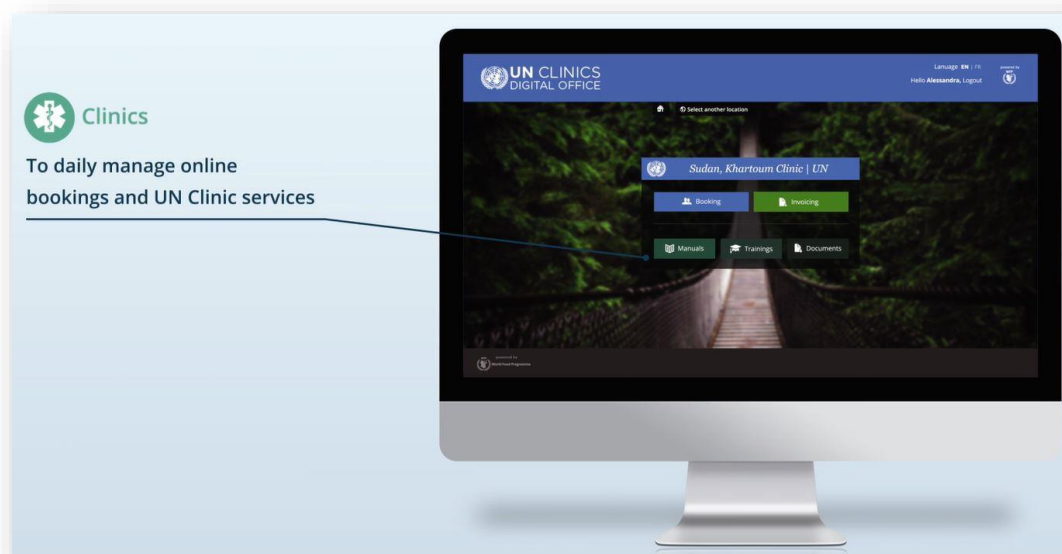
To encourage broad adoption, the Hub is available both in English and French. For security reasons, only humanitarian partners such as UN Agencies, NGOs, stand-by and governmental partners are granted access to the digital platform. Most UN agency staff can access the website using their corporate credentials. Other users are required to create new accounts. Private email addresses are blocked.

2. Service administrators

Doctors and clinic personnel can benefit immensely from a dedicated suite of back-office functionalities called the Digital Office. The Digital Office automates daily management activities, increases service accountability and reduces the number and the duration of manual clerical tasks.

Access to the Digital Office is restricted to designated service management personnel. Through the digital back-office, appointment requests can be accepted, edited or rejected. Designated staff can also send automatic booking confirmation to patients, create invoices,

and retrieve automated reports. Managers can also access dedicated service training, manuals, and documents.



Clinic's dedicated back office

3. Senior management

The platform offers numerous reporting features to assist senior managers in monitoring, and managing data related to service usage and status for a more informed and effective decision-making process. By facilitating data sharing (including customer feedback) between agencies, the use of assets can be optimised, and services improved.

Benefits

With just a few clicks, the UN Medical Booking Service on the Humanitarian Booking Hub makes the booking process simple and effective. The service is already operational in 45 Countries with 70 UN Clinics.

The benefits of the system are:

- Enabling **smooth booking operations** and enhanced user experience
- Improved **medical services management**
- **Automated reporting on KPIs** for informed decision-making
- Opportunities to improve **customer satisfaction** through feedback collection
- **Facilitate the utilisation of common medical services among UN Agencies**

The platform also offers **tools specifically designed to deal with Covid-19 health emergency**, representing an opportunity to digitalise and increase medical services accountability.

Clinic user services

The UN Clinics section provides a convenient world map showcasing all the countries and locations where the service is active, allowing the user to book the desired clinic. Each clinic has a dedicated page with information about its location, available services, pictures and operating hours. The information displayed on the clinic's page can be fully personalised, including additional supporting materials and specific information on different aspects of the service (e.g. insurance policy). Staff can book online, face-to-face consultations or Covid-19 tests for themselves or on behalf of dependents. When using the mobile app, frequently booked locations can be marked as favourites and rebooked with just one tap. Once the

booking has been processed, the confirmed consultation details are emailed to both the patient and the medical personnel.

The UN Medical Booking Service UN Agencies also provide Staff Counselor's services for their staff travelling to the field. Through the platform, staff can access the dedicated section, check information, and directly contact the relevant Counselor. Currently, more than 35 Staff Counselors in the world are hosted on the platform.

Clinic management services

Designated personnel from each clinic is granted access to the dedicated system's back office: The Digital Office. Here, the designated focal point can quickly process appointment requests by accepting, editing or rejecting as required and send automatic confirmations with all relevant details.

Two different booking modalities are available for Clinics:

- Standard booking service: patients can indicate their preferred visit date, and then medical staff can allocate that request according to the operating hours of the clinic;
- Instant booking service: patients can autonomously book an available time-slot for the preferred day of consultation, pre-set by the clinic's staff. This second modality can further reduce the administrative tasks of the clinic booking service.

Types of services currently available are:

- Face to face consultation: staff can book their visit for in-person consultations at the clinic.
- Telemedicine: online consultations have been available to book through the platform since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. It represents the opportunity to also offer medical services to staff outside the CO and eventually in different time zones.
- Covid-19 testing: currently piloting in a few locations, patients can book Covid-19 tests for themselves or dependents.

For all types of services, appointment duration can be personalised according to the Clinics and Medical staff requirements.

Key Performance Indicators

The platform automatically generates major service KPIs based on service utilisation at the agency and country levels for increased accountability, more effective service delivery and continual service improvement. Managers can monitor progress and compare performance pre-and-post platform implementation with the following key country-level indicators:

- Number of patients
- Number of consultations
- Number of generated invoices
- Customer satisfaction index and individual clinic review scores

Common Medical Services

The platform allows UN agencies to extend the provision of field medical services to other UN entities and recover the total cost of the supplied services. Agencies can indicate the number of clinics offered for the common service. These clinics will then be available to book by the staff through the digital platform. Agencies with no Clinics can benefit from the platform by leveraging other agencies' medical services capacities.

Cost Reduction

The use of the platform can digitally transform the cost of service delivery at the field level, allowing automation to drastically reduce or remove various activities (i.e. online bookings with automatic client data retrieval, automatic confirmation emails to patients, automated service

KPIs and monthly reporting, among other benefits.). The UN Medical Booking Service can generate efficiencies for the UN system and reduce overhead costs and therefore release funds for mission-critical activities. It can also allow UN Agencies to increase their medical services utilisation by sharing any spare capacity with other UN Agencies and eventually gathering crucial service data for future optimisation.

The UN proprietary field delivery platform on full cost-recovery

WFP first developed the Hub service in-house for its internal operations before transforming it into a UN proprietary platform for the delivery of humanitarian field services. The platform is offered to UN Partners via a service setup fee, together with an annual operational support flat fee per location, based on the number of assets (guesthouses, vehicles and drivers, clinics). No cost recovery for past digital transformation investments is required. Currently, only UN Agencies can provide services on the Humanitarian Booking Hub.

Implementation of the service

If a UN Agency is interested in offering Medical Services via the Humanitarian Booking Hub, the steps to follow are:

1. The Agency contacts the Humanitarian Booking Hub management by writing to global.humanitarianbooking@wfp.org with a request of interest for the identified services.
2. The Global Medical Service Team sets up an initial meeting for the interested Agency to include both a demo of the system and a joint assessment of service requirements (i.e. the number of medical facilities, list of designated personnel with access to the Digital Back-Office, specific service information, etc.).
3. The Agency then completed a form detailing its medical services composition.
4. The Agency would then go through a trial use of the platform, following which a Service Agreement is signed between WFP and the Agency.
5. The Global Medical Service Team begins rolling out the service on a country-by-country basis (or location-by-location basis depending on the type of agreement signed: HQ level, CO level, etc.). The team provides the required information and relevant documents to start the onboarding process and create the Medical Service Point.
6. The Global Medical Service Team trains medical staff and appointed personnel on the use of the Medical Service Platform through online trainings and remote support.
7. The Global Medical Service Team guarantees its full support throughout the full process by providing bespoke training material (manuals and training recordings) and tailored advice, assisting the digital transformation of all operations.

The implementation phase can take as little as one week or more than one month, depending on the work needed to stock-take the UNCT's or agencies' clinics, medical services, and the speed at which the onboarding process can take place.

BOS 2.0 Implementation

The following recommendations should be considered in the implementation of the Medical Booking Service within the BOS 2.0 stages.

a) Kick-Off: Identify participating agencies for this service; the Medical Service Agreement will provide the accountability framework for this service;

b) Stock Take: Identify UN Agencies in the Country that are running medical services and UN staff already availing of those to assess and map the performances and existence of practice or common services related to Medical Services. The Humanitarian Booking Hub already maps 70 Clinics from 3 UN Agencies.

c) Opportunity Analysis: The Medical Service of the Humanitarian Booking Hub can boost each UNCT/OMT's inter-agency collaboration efforts by offering a UN common platform to provide medical services to Agencies' staff and offer the extra capacity to other Agencies as a common service.

By using the platform for internal service delivery, the Country operations' teams can automatically generate KPIs to support future decision-making on long term asset management. (E.g. optimise administrative time for medical staff, increase the clinic's performance, enlarge accessibility to medical services for staff due to the enhanced visibility through the platform).

Some of the expected key improvements and benefits from the Medical Booking Service adoption are improved customer service, delivery accountability, and digital automation savings.

d) Cost-Benefit Analysis

A simplified Cost-Benefit Analysis is available on the BOS platform to support UNCT/OMTs calculating accumulated cost avoidance if the Medical Service is adopted for local operations.

	Current costs and KPIs					Future costs and KPIs					Cost avoidance and KPIs improvement					Total
	yr 1	yr 2	yr 3	yr 4	yr 5	yr 1	yr 2	yr 3	yr 4	yr 5	yr 1	yr 2	yr 3	yr 4	yr 5	
CLINICS																
One time cost																
Set up costs for medical services platform																
Recurring costs																
Platform licence and maintenance costs																
Annual spent on manual invoicing and reporting																
Annual spent on facility and service quality assessment																
Labour cost																
Annual FTE cost of clinic management (i.e. bookings, occupancy, invoicing, maintenance, reporting)																
Service KPIs																
Customer Satisfaction on service quality (1 to 5)																
Saved time in administrative tasks																

Setup costs refer to the one-time fee of setting up the platform.

Recurring costs refer to platform license fee, maintenance, manual invoicing and reporting expenses, annual spending on facility, and service quality assessment.

Labor costs refer to the clinic's service administrations (i.e. booking, invoicing and reporting activities) and any optional savings from reducing staff in future years due to service digitalisation and possible inter-agency collaboration.

e) Planning Framework

Once agencies have adopted the Medical Booking Service, major delivery KPIs will be automatically generated in real-time by the platform for increased accountability.

Examples of KPIs are the number of visits, the number of generated invoices, generated income, number of patients, and customer satisfaction per service delivered.

f) Implementation Plan

The implementation timeframe will vary according to the size of the assets registered on the platform and of the local team's speed to provide all the necessary information to roll-out the service. For example, an agency with 5-10 clinics may take one week to implement the service whereas, an agency with 50 clinics may take a month or more depending on a number of variables. Convenient timelines will be discussed between the Global Medical Service Team and the agency in question.

g) Sign Off

To ensure successful achievement of quality and efficiency targets, a pilot/beta testing phase can be implemented to address the technical and capacity opportunities before launching the agency-wide program.

Sustainability and Scalability

WFP is committed to the long-term development of the Humanitarian Booking Hub and the service lines offered.

Adoption of the Medical Booking Service will enable Agencies to digitally transform rapidly their field operations and help define a uniform service for all UN personnel and administrators.

The successful adoption model enables WFP's Global Medical Service Team to roll out the Hub to other Agencies with a tried-and-tested approach, leading to reduced implementation times and maximum clinic's staff engagement.

Other sources of information

More information on the Humanitarian Booking Hub can be found at humanitarianbooking.org. Please watch this [video](#) for a brief overview of the available services on the Humanitarian Booking Hub and this [video](#) for a demonstration of the back-office services available in the Digital Office.

UN Agencies wishing to use the Humanitarian Booking Hub to offer Medical Services should contact global.humanitarianbooking@wfp.org.

Conclusion

The WFP Medical Services Booking Hub is an innovative easy-to-use digital platform providing clear benefits for both staff and clinic's management. It has digitally transformed how UN Agencies provide the Medical field service. After the rapid and successful roll out within WFP itself, together with two other UN Agencies, this tried and tested tool is ready for adoption by other UN Agencies to enhance inter-agency collaboration and harmonise in field operations within the BOS framework and in line with the Business Innovation Group (BIG) principles of mutual recognition, costing and customer satisfaction.

[Join us in creating the UN Medical Service together.](#)