



**BUSINESS
INNOVATIONS
GROUP | BIG**

Advancing Common Business Operations

MUTUAL RECOGNITION CHAMPIONS

TALKING POINTS | *December 2020*

The essence of Mutual Recognition

Mutual recognition allows a UN entity to use or rely on another entity's policies, procedures, system contracts and related operational mechanisms for the implementation of activities without further evaluation, checks or approvals being required.

Our mandate for collaborative work

In Resolution 71/243, the UN General Assembly called for entities within the UN development system to *"operate according to the principle of mutual recognition of best practices in terms of policies and procedures, **with the aim of facilitating active collaboration across agencies** and reducing transaction costs for Governments and collaborating agencies."*

One UN, working in partnership

- ✓ Mutual Recognition fosters a common identity for all UN entities, breaking down silos between organizations
- ✓ Mutual Recognition increases efficiency by avoiding the duplication of activities and delivering better inter-entity services, faster;
- ✓ Mutual Recognition enables deeper forms of harmonization and integration between UN entities worldwide, such as adopting common HR policies and consolidation of warehouse capacity.

What Mutual Recognition means for your organization

Your organization is at the forefront of transformative change. It is increasing the agility of operations by taking steps to develop partnerships and streamline processes.

Yours is one of 20 UN entities who have signed the Mutual Recognition Statement. By doing so, it is helping to remove bureaucratic barriers to active collaboration and to reduce administrative burdens.

You are in great company. The Mutual Recognition Statement has been signed by the Secretary-General himself, on behalf of the Secretariat, together with executive leaders from 20 other entities: FAO; ILO; IOM; ITU; UN Women; UNAIDS; UNDP; UNEP; UNESCO; UNFPA; UNHCR; UNICEF; UNOPS; UNRWA; WFP; WHO; IFAD; ITC; UNIDO and UN-Habitat.

The Mutual Recognition Statement, Factsheet and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) can be found at the Chief Executives' Board website at:

<https://unsceb.org/mutual-recognition>

Implementing the Mutual Recognition Statement

There is no single or definitive approach to operationalizing mutual recognition. Early adopters have assessed their business operations and are delegating to heads of office at regional or country level specific activities where they may enter into active collaboration with other signatories of the Mutual Recognition Statement.

One entity issued a *guide* for country offices making clear where and when mutual recognition could be used to deliver efficiencies that “will have a direct impact on the timely implementation of programme activities”.

Another entity applied mutual recognition by revising *Administrative Instructions* to simplify submissions made for and processing of “UN system cooperation-based procurement.” As a result, if the relevant procurement function determines that the simplified submission is in accordance with the Entity’s rules, then it shall be approved and the relevant contracts committee merely notified, “without further evaluation, checks or approvals”.

For business practices not included in such issuances, managers may be encouraged to make additional *requests for mutual recognition* which could be submitted to Headquarters for approval on a case-by-case basis.

What Mutual Recognition means for you and your team

Harmonization, cooperation and coordination is nothing new to anyone with experience in the UN system.

But in the past, the reality (or perception) may be that innovation has been hampered by differences and incompatibilities of UN entities’ respective regulations, rules, policies or systems.

Mutual Recognition offers a fresh opportunity to advance on that innovation: exploring ways of applying another UN entities’ approaches to deliver better and faster while remaining within the regulatory framework that protects us, our organizations, donors and beneficiaries.

By signing the Mutual Recognition Statement, your organization has **committed to apply, to the greatest extent possible, the principle of mutual recognition** in respect of the administration and implementation of your activities.

You and your team can play a key role in the application of mutual recognition by identifying opportunities to streamline processes and seeking approval from senior management.

