



SUMMARY OF 30TH HLCM PROCUREMENT NETWORK VIRTUAL SESSIONS PARTS 1 & 2 – 28TH OCTOBER & 4TH NOVEMBER 2021

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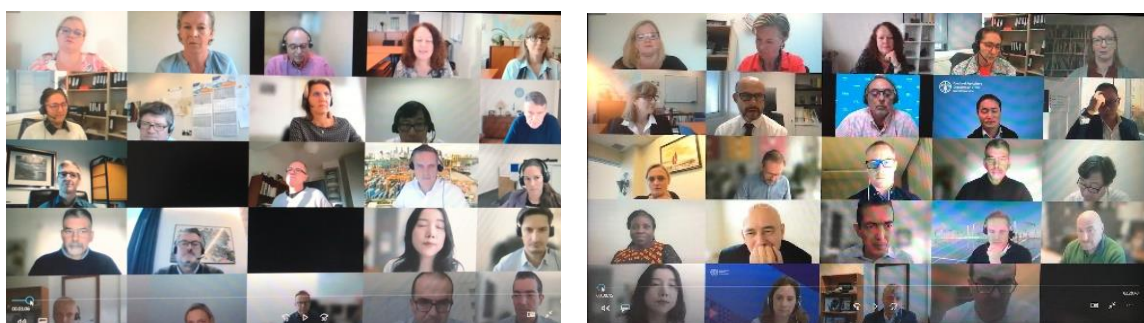


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PART 1 - THURSDAY 28TH OCTOBER 2021

THE SESSION WAS ATTENDED BY 46 PARTICIPANTS, REPRESENTING 29 ORGANIZATIONS [LIST OF PARTICIPANTS](#)

1. HLCM/CEB UPDATE

MR. REMO LALLI (UNOG), HLCM/CEB SECRETARIAT

The PN was provided with an update on the recent 42nd session of the HLCM, which took place virtually over two half-days. The first half-day was dedicated to a retreat on the

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successes and challenges experienced by member organizations under the pandemic. Engaged discussions took place both in plenary and through themed break-out sessions, with a particular focus on ongoing efforts in rearranging workforce, office space, presence in duty stations and new modalities of working. **Overall, the virtual retreat proved to be an extremely successful exercise for brainstorming and sharing knowledge and was recommended to the PN as a future activity. The discussions have set the scene for the forthcoming development of the HLCM's Strategic Plan for 2022-2025, the scoping of which will begin before year-end. All the HLCM networks will be engaged in this in due course.**

The regular session on the second half-day focused largely on the [UN Secretary-General's report "Our Common Agenda"](#), which was prepared in response to the Resolution¹ adopted by the General Assembly on the 21st September 2020. The report refers to the five drivers of change mentioned at the last PN session, also known as the 'quintet of transformation'; a set of cross-cutting agendas that underpin many of the initiatives proposed for transforming the UN system.



PN members were encouraged to study the report and the approach proposed through the quintet of transformation as it is expected to become the leading narrative in operational management across the UN system in the coming months, and therefore provides strong support for the work and priorities of the HLCM and its networks moving forward.

Finally, the HLCM Secretariat thanked the PN Management Board and Sustainable Procurement (SP) Working Group Chairs for responding to the request from the Secretary-General's Senior Management Group to map supply chains and procurement and produce recommendations to improve circularity. The [concept note](#), which was developed as an initial step, was well received by the HLCM at its recent session and preliminary results are anticipated by the spring 2022 session. The initiative² is expected to increase the prominence and visibility of the already very active SP Working Group. **Participation will be in an opt in/opt out basis, but those interested were encouraged to join and engage actively.**

¹ [A/RES/75/1](#) The mandate: "We request the Secretary-General to report back before the end of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly with recommendations to advance our common agenda and to respond to current and future challenges."

² The topic is further discussed under the SP Working Group update in Part 2, item 2 of this report.



For additional information on this session see the [presentation](#).

2. HARMONIZATION WORKING GROUP

MR. ERIC DUPONT (UNFPA), WG CHAIR

An update was provided on the below initiatives:

(i) Common definition of 'Outsourcing'

Paragraph 62 in the JIU report states: *"To this end, the Inspector recognizes that a definition exists in the UN Procurement Practitioner's Handbook and proposes that deliberations be undertaken through relevant inter-agency platforms, such as the Procurement Network of the High-level Committee on Management, to arrive at a certain level of common systemwide conceptualization of outsourcing"*.

The PN agreed that the understanding of 'Outsourcing' is ambiguous across the UN System and the existing definition requires improvement to enable consistent reporting. Therefore, it was agreed that the Harmonization WG would take this work forward. A sub-group was created, under the leadership of UNICEF, to further develop the definition. The group submitted the final draft definition to the wider Harmonization WG in September in preparation for PN endorsement at this session. The full definition document can be accessed [here](#), however the essence of it is as follows:

*"An organisational decision, based on conscious and deliberate exercise of choice made at country, regional or HQ level, to engage an external business or private entity to deliver part of the **non-core activities** e.g., IT services, vendor creation services, etc., that currently are performed internally, reached as a result of one or several of the following **business considerations**:*

- *Economic consideration - outsourced solutions are less costly / more flexible spend Economies of scale*
- *Skills / equipment shortage*
- *Assessment that there is no need to have strategic control of outsourced area*
- *Desire to free up staff time for staff to focus on more strategic and value adding activities*
- *Classification resulting in routine or necessary activities being outsourced"*

The decision to outsource is to be made by the appropriate BU lead/manager of the UN organization and there will be no specific joint reporting on outsourced activities by the UN agencies.

The PN endorsed the revised definition of Outsourcing³, and the UN Procurement Practitioner's Handbook will be amended accordingly in due course. UNICEF was thanked for taking the lead on this work.

(ii) Common definition of 'Major UN Supplier'

UN Security Council Resolution S/RES/2388 (2017), Article 31: *"calls upon United Nations system organizations to enhance transparency in their procurement and supply chains and step up their efforts to strengthen protections against trafficking in persons in all United Nations procurement and to that effect request **major suppliers** to establish and implement*

³ Following the session, the definition document has been finalised and made available here: https://www.ungm.org/Shared/KnowledgeCenter/Pages/Harmonization_OutsourcingDefinition

All documents related to the meeting are available on the HLCM-PN Workspace on www.ungm.org or by contacting the PN Secretariat on kerry.kassow@undp.org



anti-human trafficking policies and disclose information on measures taken to counter trafficking in persons in their operations and supply chains.”

Given the above, the Human Trafficking and Forced Labour Task Force (TF) asked for the support of the Harmonization WG in defining the term ‘Major UN Supplier’, which will enable the TF to focus its attention on a clearly defined group of UN vendors. A sub-group was created with the support of the UNOPS/ASR team and ILO to carry this work forward. Following analysis and discussion, the sub-group agreed that it would be best to focus on the individual agency approach of a cumulative procurement value threshold for each UN organization rather than the across-all-UN-agencies approach. Agencies can then at their own discretion determine whether some of their vendors should be included for reasons other than volume i.e., if the vendor is considered critical/high-risk by the agency. **A few scenarios using ASR data have now been analysed, but the group is now also considering identifying specific procurement categories (as some entail higher risks than others) using the UNDP/UNEP ESG-rated Procurement Portfolio Management tool, which was presented at the PN session in spring 2021. In parallel, the Human Trafficking and Forced Labour TF has drafted definitions of Major Supplier; one relating to Human Trafficking and Forced Labour and a similar more general one for the Harmonization Working Group. The WG will review and ensure that alignment is maintained between the two definitions as the work moves forward (and the document will be amended so that items (i) and (ii) are listed as “and/or”). The plan is to submit the finalised common definition of Major UN Supplier for endorsement at the PN session in spring 2022.**

(iii) Category Management

Further to the *call to action* on Category Management by the UN Secretariat and UNICEF at the PN session held in Spring 2021, the Harmonization Working Group was tasked with taking the work forward. Since then, it has been clarified that the overall objective of the project is to build on the Strategic Category Management that is already taking place between agencies driven by their mandates, as well as initiatives within agencies, and to build on this with an aim to broaden it to multi-agency level, and using the lead agency(ies) concept for key categories. It is envisaged that collaboration could take place in various constellations. The first step of the project will be to establish the overall principles, and the starting point of which should be to examine the following:

- ✓ ASR data - identify key spend/strategic categories
- ✓ What is already being done by the agencies in terms of Category Management (often linked to mandates) - which strengths & weaknesses exist, where expertise is located, etc.
- ✓ Lessons learned and experiences to date from e.g., previous similar studies and other collaborative projects such as vehicles, ICT, freight forwarding, Covid response activities, etc.

An essential element for successful implementation, and which was also highlighted at the last PN session, will be obtaining early buy-in from the agencies – the UN Secretariat recommends informing Heads of Organizations in writing about the exercise with an appeal for full support.

UNICEF intends to support the project by providing a strategic consultant and will confirm this as soon as possible. Similarly, the UN Secretariat will ensure that its Project Manager for Category Management joins the initiative. Once UNICEF confirms availability of the

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consultant, the Harmonization WG, and those nominated so far to be part of the project, will be reconvened and a small Steering Committee will likely be formed. The plan is to present the principles to the PN for endorsement at its spring 2022 session, and then begin delivering the project.

For more information on all of the above see the following:

- [Presentation - Definition of Outsourcing](#)
- [Summary Sheet - Definition of Outsourcing](#)
- [Definition of Outsourcing Document and Annexes 1, 2 & 3](#)
- [Presentation - Definition of Major UN Supplier](#)
- [Summary Sheet - Definition of Major UN Supplier](#)
- [Task Force Definitions of Major UN Supplier](#)
- [Presentation - Category Management](#)

3. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

MR. TORBEN SOLL (UNDP), WG CHAIR

The PN was given a brief update on the below topics:

(i) Translation of Procurement Practitioners Handbook (PPH)

The PPH is a valuable resource for procurement practitioner's but until recently was only available in English and French. Since the last PN session, the PPH has been translated into Spanish, by a professional translator funded by UNDP, and is available from the [UNGM](#). The handbook has also recently been translated into Chinese by a UNFPA colleague in Bangkok and will be made available once quality control and typesetting have been finalised. **UNOG offered to assist with the review activities of the Chinese version. The UN Secretariat requested whether UNRWA could support with the translation of the PPH into Arabic and offered to contribute to this. UNRWA responded favourably subject to financial contribution to the activity. Any PN members with the need for a Russian version should contact the WG Chair to discuss. As mentioned on the UNGM/PPH page, in the event of uncertainties in the translated versions, it will always be the content of the English (master) version that prevails.**

(ii) Knowledge sharing sessions – lessons learned during the pandemic

The pandemic situation has brought about changes in the way training is carried out – many agencies have gone from providing face-to-face training to virtual/online/mixed training. Since the last PN meeting, several sessions have taken place among the Working Group to share knowledge, experiences, best practices, etc. from these new training modalities. The following findings are common for all who have taken part:

Advantages	Challenges
Global Outreach	Bandwidth/connectivity issues
Less Travel	Less “corridor talk”/networking
Reduced carbon footprint	Less team spirit/team building
Cost reductions	Online fatigue
Shorter courses possible	Finding ways to foster engagement

(iii) UN Procurement Awards

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This concept was developed to celebrate and recognize procurement and supply chain excellence across the United Nations. It was approved by the PN in 2019 and the entire framework was in place and ready for launch. However, due to the COVID-19 situation, and as previously communicated, it was decided in spring 2020 to postpone the Awards to 2021. After follow-up consultation with the PN Management Board, a 'soft launch' of the concept is now recommended for 2022, with only one of the initial five categories to be launched, i.e., the Sustainable Procurement award. Following the departure of the project leader, Mr. Santiago Millan (UNOPS), Mr. Leendert Coljin (OPCW) has expressed his willingness to take-over as interim project manager, supported by Beatriz Castillo (UNOPS), on the condition that a minimum of 2-3 new members join the Award project team.

The PN approved the proposal for a 'soft launch' of the UN Procurement Awards – Sustainable Procurement category – and the award ceremony will take place at the PN session in autumn 2022. ICC volunteered to join the project team, the UN Secretariat agreed to propose a participant, UNICEF will consider the possibility. The PN Secretariat volunteered to join the evaluation team, and the Sustainable Procurement Working Group will tentatively provide support with the review of submissions. ASG Mr. Christian Saunders will explore whether the concept can be linked to the annual Secretary-General Awards – this would greatly raise the profile of the PN award scheme.

For more information on all of the above see the following:

[Summary Sheet](#)

[General Presentation](#)

[UN Procurement Awards Presentation](#)

[UN Procurement Awards Concept Note](#)

PART 2 - THURSDAY 4TH NOVEMBER 2021

THE SESSION WAS ATTENDED BY 42 PARTICIPANTS, REPRESENTING 25 ORGANIZATIONS [LIST OF PARTICIPANTS](#)

1. STRATEGIC VENDOR MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

MR. WALTER GRANDPRÉ (ILO), WG CHAIR

MS. FRANCIS BURGA (ILO), MPF REVISION TASK FORCE COORDINATOR

MR. LASZLO GOBOLYOS (UNOPS), SPE SUB-GROUP COORDINATOR

MS. KERRY KASSOW (UNDP), IPS SUB-GROUP COORDINATOR

MS. NATALIA NEDEL (UN SECRETARIAT), VENDOR RISK MANAGEMENT & DUE DILIGENCE SUB-GROUP COORDINATOR

MS. BÉRÉNICE BESSIÈRE (WIPO), INNOVATIVE CONTRACTING & SUPPLIER RELATIONSHIP SUB-GROUP COORDINATOR

The PN was provided with an update on the work being undertaken by the following sub-groups:

(i) Model Policy Framework (MPF) on Vendor Sanctions Governance Group update

A total of 12 agencies have adopted the MPF (UNDP, UNOPS, FAO, UNRWA, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Secretariat, WFP, UNHCR, ICAO, WIPO, ILO), representing 80.50% of the total procurement volume in 2020. Eleven other agencies are either working on adopting a policy or interested in doing so in the future.

All documents related to the meeting are available on the HLCM-PN Workspace on www.ungm.org or by contacting the PN Secretariat on kerry.kassow@undp.org



(ii) Revision of the Model Policy Framework (MPF) for Vendor Sanctions

This Task Force was created by the MPF Governance Group to review, modernise and amend the MPF, which was originally developed in 2010. Sections that have been reviewed so far include, the scope of the MPF, basic definitions (proscribed practices), mandate of the sanctions board, and different stages of the proceedings and sanctions. Latest discussions have been on scope of censure and how to clarify that it does not affect the eligibility of a vendor, and various types of vendor sanctions and their scope. The next topic for discussion is the disclosure of decisions of the sanctions board and common actions (the UN Ineligibility List).

(iii) Supplier Performance Evaluation (SPE)

This sub-group was created to share knowledge, assess the possibility of harmonising approaches on supplier performance rating and related actions (e.g., potential suspensions due to performance issues) and to discuss the potential further use of the UNGM functionality for supplier performance flagging and rating functionality. Based on the workplan presented at the PN session in spring 2021, the group has produced two main deliverables:

1. A technical document capturing identified requirements for enhancements to the UNGM vendor rating functionality.
2. An advanced version of the Guidelines on the usage of the UNGM vendor rating functionality. The Guidelines will be finalized once the UNGM functionality is enhanced (point #1 above) as certain screenshots and explanations will have to be adjusted accordingly.

As this session to the PN was asked to endorse the decision: *to proceed with the enhancements of the UNGM vendor rating functionality and agree to obtain the commitment by a critical number of HLCM PN UN agencies to use the functionality, to the extent possible.*

A condition of the decision was the UNGM Steering Committee's endorsement of the system enhancements and the commitment by UN agencies to use the functionality⁴.

If endorsed, the PN would then have to decide whether the development costs should be covered by agencies committed to using the system or fall under general UNGM activities (i.e. funded by all UNGM members).

Discussion revealed that while the PN is supportive of this initiative, there are yet specific uncertainties that need to be addressed before it can be fully endorsed. These include the following:

- **Agencies have differing systems (binary response systems, 4-star rating, etc.) and would have to map these with the proposed UNGM rating system, which is a 5-star rating system.**
- **The vendor rating functionality in the UNGM would require manual data entry by the agencies, which puts a demand on resources - this can be challenging for agencies with large procurement operations, and in particular those that are decentralised. For this to be successful there would need to be a stronger commitment from the**

⁴ Prior to this session, the proposal had also been presented to the UNGM Steering Committee and Membership, but for review and information only, pending PN decision.

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agencies than has been seen with the Contract Award and LTA upload functionality in the UNGM. Automation of the process would be preferable (this was foreseen at a second stage of the project but may need to be implemented earlier).

- Discussions would also need to take place with agency IT experts to ensure that the uploading of data from ERPs to the UNGM is technically feasible.

It was reiterated that the performance rating system is for internal information-sharing only and not for the purpose of sharing with or sanctioning vendors.

The PN agreed that the decision should be amended as follows: *to proceed with the enhancements of the UNGM vendor rating functionality*. However, the sub-group will need to address the concerns and challenges that were raised before any further endorsement can take place. The PN Chair invited agencies who are committed to implementing the system to join/continue with the sub-group.

(iv) International Procurement Seminars (IPS)

The IPS model was developed particularly to meet the repeat demand from Industrialized Countries to host UN multi-agency business seminars, and do so in a more efficient, cost-effective, and sustainable manner. Following a two-year pilot period, the IPS model for multi-agency business seminars was endorsed by the PN at its session in Valencia, October 2019. IPS events take place in accordance with a calendar published on the UNGM and are subject to a submission/evaluation process of proposals from Member States interested in hosting such an event.

Due to the global pandemic situation, it has not been feasible for physical events to take place, therefore a switch was made to a virtual format. Three IPS events have taken place on a virtual basis so far. At the PN session in spring 2021, the IPS sub-working group was encouraged to build on this format and to explore a hybrid model moving forward.

The IPS sub-group agreed that the hybrid/virtual model was the most favourable solution post-pandemic, and it will be piloted and fine-tuned throughout 2022. The hybrid model will offer flexibility and means that host entities can choose to invite participants to attend the IPS physically or virtually. In terms of UN participation, it will be at the discretion of each individual agency whether their representative(s) will attend remotely or in person. Agencies participating in IPS events were urged to ensure that their presentations are as concise, lively and interesting as possible in order to ensure audience engagement and to avoid screen fatigue.

(v) Vendor Risk Management & Due Diligence

The objectives of this sub-group include:

- Establishing a standardized process for Vendor Risk Management and Due Diligence.
- Defining a strong/comprehensive monitoring program to perform due diligence to research potential and current vendors by integrating into UNGM the data on vendors from multiple sources.
- Piloting common vendor evaluation criteria and process for one commodity/service.

The Terms of Reference for the group are currently being finalized and work will be underway shortly.

All documents related to the meeting are available on the HLCM-PN Workspace on www.ungm.org or by contacting the PN Secretariat on kerry.kassow@undp.org



(vi) Innovative Contracting and Supplier Relationship

Discussions have recently continued on this topic and the following has been agreed by the Strategic Vendor Management Working Group (SVM-WG):

1. Innovative Contracting - this initiative will be limited to 'show and tell/experience sharing' moving forward and be part of the regular SVM-WG proceedings.
2. Supplier Relationship - originally the plan was to develop and launch a supplier award programme. However, the WG decided that such an initiative carried too many risks and that a reference letter for suppliers could be a safer option to pursue. **Over the coming weeks a guidance note on how a reference letter could be issued to a supplier will be drafted by the sub-group coordinator. This proposal will have to be examined in the light of the relevant clauses in the General Conditions of Contract of the UN agencies.**

For more information on all of the above see the following:

[Presentation](#)

[Summary Sheet - Revision of the MPF](#)

[Summary Sheet - Supplier Performance Evaluation](#)

[Draft Guidelines for the UNGM Vendor Rating Functionality & UNGM Requirements](#)

[Summary Sheet - International Procurement Seminars](#)

2. SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT WORKING GROUP

MS. ISABELLA MARRAS (UNEP) & MR. NIELS RAMM (UNOPS), WG CO-CHAIRS

MR. VANJA OSTOJIC (ILO) - HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND FORCED LABOUR TASK FORCE COORDINATOR

(i) Concept Note on SP for a Circular Economy⁵

Following a meeting of the UN Secretary General's Senior Management Group on the 7th of April 2021, the HLCM was asked to "map supply chains and procurement and produce recommendations to improve circularity". To support this, the HLCM PN Chair, in collaboration with UNDP, the UN Secretariat and the co-Chairs of the SP Working Group drafted a concept note presenting the below four recommendations on how circularity can be advanced in the context of the PN's on-going work on sustainable procurement.

1. Clear commitment and continuous communication from top management (SG, DSG, Agency heads).
2. The main UN procurement categories will be mapped and analysed by spend for sustainability and circularity opportunities.
3. Resources must be made available for capacity development programmes including market readiness assessments.
4. The Sustainable Procurement Indicators should be reviewed to ensure they capture circularity considerations in procurement.

To achieve the above, the concept note proposes the establishment of a new workstream on circular procurement under the SP WG. UNDP, UNEP, UNICEF and the UN Secretariat have already agreed to take the lead on developing Terms of Reference, including funding and resources needed for the project. Other PN members were invited to join the initiative. It was

⁵ As also mentioned under the HLCM Secretariat's briefing in Part 1 of this session

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highlighted that circularity extends beyond the procurement function, therefore, ultimately involvement of other parts of the HLCM will also be necessary.

(ii) Reporting on SP in the UN System

The PN was provided with a snapshot of the sustainable procurement data which has been reported on in the 2021 Greening the Blue Report. The SP WG proposes that in future agency names are published in the report alongside SP achievements. This will be discussed further in due course.

For the 39 UN organizations that submitted data to ASR:

The adoption or planned adoption of sustainable procurement policies by UN entities increased from

59% in 2019 to
85% in 2020.

The adoption of measurable sustainability targets increased from

36% in 2019 to
41% in 2020.

With regards to the type of sustainability considerations addressed,

92%
of reporting entities stated they addressed environmental sustainability aspects.

Social and economic sustainability considerations are reportedly addressed by

80%
of reporting organizations each.

(iii) Human Trafficking and Forced Labour Task Force (TF)

In response to the UN Security Council Resolution 2388⁶, the HLCM PN agreed to develop and implement a common approach to combatting human trafficking and forced labour in UN supply chains. At its October 2020 session, the PN unanimously endorsed the project document entitled, [Human Trafficking and Forced Labour in UN Supply Chains: Policy Framework](#). As a result, the TF, in collaboration with an external consultant, has now developed the actual Policy Framework, the purpose of which is to clearly demonstrate the UN and PN's commitment to combatting human trafficking and forced labour in its supply chains. The proposed Framework is based on the best practices outlined in the normative frameworks and government guidelines of international organizations. It will be supported by corresponding capacity building initiatives, practical due diligence measures, and performance reporting. The TF Coordinator and external consultant provided the PN with a detailed overview of the approach, methodology and roadmap for developing the Framework, which has resulted in the following outputs:

1. [UN Statement on Forced Labour & Human Trafficking in UN Supply Chains](#)
2. [Proposed amendments to the UN General Conditions of Contract](#)
3. [Proposed amendments to the UN Supplier Code of Conduct](#)
4. [Substantive Guidance for Addressing Forced Labour and Human Trafficking in UN Supply Chains⁷](#)

PN members are required to review the draft Policy Framework (i.e, all of the above), engaging policy, legal, and contract management colleagues as necessary, and share their respective comments with the Task Force by the 31st January 2022. Any questions can be submitted to pcrt@ilo.org. The PN Chair urged PN members to actively participate in this consultative process.

The proposed changes to the UN General Conditions of Contract and the UN Supplier Code of Conduct have been submitted to the Legal Network (under the leadership of UN/OLA), for

⁶ Article 31 "calls upon United Nations system organizations to enhance transparency in their procurement and supply chains and step up their efforts to strengthen protections against trafficking in persons in all United Nations procurement and to that effect request major suppliers to establish and implement anti-human trafficking policies and disclose information on measures taken to counter trafficking in persons in their operations and supply chains."



their review and feedback. The UN Secretariat offered to assist with follow-up on this to ensure timely response.

The Task Force and the Consultant will review consolidated comments during a sense-making workshop, which will take place in February 2022, and present the final version of the Policy Framework for endorsement at the PN session in spring 2022.

It was noted that the Guidance document is quite voluminous, but once feedback on the content has been received and consolidated, the structure and “packaging” of the final product will be considered. It will also be examined how the proposed amendments to the General Conditions of Contract and Code of Conduct can be shared with the PN in a clearer format.

For more information on all of the above see the following:

[Summary Sheet - SP WG](#)

[Concept Note on SP for a Circular Economy](#)

[Summary Sheet - Task Force on Human Trafficking & Forced Labour](#)

3. UNGM STEERING COMMITTEE BRIEFING

MR. KIYOHIRO MITSUI (UN SECRETARIAT), UNGM STEERING COMMITTEE (SC) CHAIR & MR. NIELS RAMM (UNOPS), UNGM PROGRAMME MANAGER

The UNGM SC Chair provided the PN with the following key updates from the recent UNGM membership session.

(i) Mr. Leendert Colijn (OPCW) has been elected as the **new Vice Chair** of the UNGM Steering Committee.

(ii) The UN Secretariat has selected Dun and Bradstreet as the provider of **business intelligence services**. It became evident that it would be too costly to integrate these services with the UNGM, as originally considered, therefore, the UN Secretariat is negotiating with D&B on how the contract best can be made available to other UN agencies. More information will be provided on this in due course.

The UNGM Programme Manager informed that the **UNGM Rolling Budget for 2022-23 has been approved** (with all UNGM staff now included under the regular budget) and provided the PN with some **highlights from the UNGM Mid-Year Operational Report**, which included the following:

- ✓ Efficiencies achieved through the launch of the new UNGM help centre and ticket management system - has reduced intervention by helpdesk staff by 62%, meaning that resources can be deployed to other areas, such as data integrity project work.
- ✓ Supplier Eligibility - 1963 potential matches with sanctioned vendors have been reviewed by UNGM in the 1st semester 2021. An ongoing challenge is delays in second level review of potential matches by the agencies (ILAs), which exposes the UN to risk of doing business with a sanctioned entity.
- ✓ Accessibility and digital inclusion enhancements which have been implemented in the UNGM to ensure that all suppliers, in particular persons with disabilities or some form of impairment, can navigate and interact with the UNGM site – approximately 70% of the public interfaces on the UNGM now have augmented accessibility.



For more information on all of the above see the following:

[Presentation](#)

[Summary Sheet - UNGM Rolling Budget 2022-23](#)

[UNGM Rolling Budget 2022-23](#)

[Summary Sheet - Mid-Year Operational Report 2021](#)

[UNGM Mid-Year Operational Report 2021](#)

4. AOB

(i) Nominations for new Harmonization Working Group Chair

The Chair of the Harmonization Working Group, Mr. Eric Dupont (UNFPA), will retire at the end of March 2022 (the PN hopes he will be able to join for the 2022 spring session, so this meeting was not yet a farewell). **The PN Chair therefore called for nominations for a new WG Chair. Those interested should contact the WG Chair on dupont@unfpa.org and/or the PN Secretariat on kerry.kassow@undp.org.**

(ii) PN Spring session 2022

The PN agreed, pandemic situation permitting, that the spring 2022 session should take place in person. The hope is that most core representatives will be able to join physically, but there will also be a virtual connection allowing others to join. **IFAD (Rome) has kindly offered once again to host the meeting given that proceedings could not take place as planned there back in March 2020. The UN Secretariat also offered to host a hybrid session if need be. A firm decision will be taken on this in the New Year, but in the meantime a 'save the date' message will be circulated.**

(iii) Show and Tell sessions

The PN Chair informed that, similar to last year, two virtual 'Show and Tell' sessions will be scheduled for towards year-end, allowing agencies to share initiatives, lessons learned, best practices, etc. **So far 5-6 topics have been proposed by various PN members and others were invited to submit their ideas.**

(iv) Discontinuation of LIBOR

Given that [LIBOR](#) will no longer be valid after the end of this year, OPCW enquired as to how other affected agencies are amending their contractual instruments, specifically in relation to dispute resolution. **It was agreed that the original enquiry (from IFAD) would be re-circulated, and that discussions could continue electronically.**