



35TH HLCM PROCUREMENT NETWORK SESSION
PARIS, 16-18 APRIL 2024
 SUMMARY OF DECISIONS & OUTCOMES



The 35th session of the HLCM Procurement Network (HLCM PN) was hosted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris on 16-18 April 2024 under the following Management Board and Secretariat:

- Chair** Angela Kastner (Director, Procurement & Supply Services, WHO)
- Vice-Chair** Stephen Farrell (Chief, Purchasing and Transportation Section, UNOG)
- Advisory Chair** Elisabeth Eckerstrom (Director, Office of Procurement, UNDP)
- 2nd Advisory Chair** Roberto Samayoa (Procurement Operational Excellence and Compliance, PAHO)
- Secretariat** Kerry Kassow (UNDP)

The session was attended by 36 in-person participants as well as a number of participants who presented topics on a remote basis, representing 27 organisations in total.
[List of participants.](#)

The agenda for the 3-day session was structured around the topics in the below table of contents as well as a session of discussion topics. The latter took place in groups and, similar to the Show and Tell sessions, was not minuted.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

HLCM/CEB Update 2

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



The Working Groups..... 3

1. Harmonisation Working Group 3

2. Sustainable Procurement Working Group..... 5

3. Strategic Vendor Management Working Group..... 7

4. Cognitive Procurement Working Group 10

5. Professional Development Working Group 11

Other topics..... 12

1. PN Strategic Forward Planning 12

2. Applications for PN Membership..... 14

3. UN Global Marketplace Steering Committee Briefing..... 15

4. Business Innovation Group (BIG)/Global Shared Services (GSS) Briefing 16

5. UN Web Buy Plus Business Case..... 17

AOB 18

Show and Tell Sessions 19

Discussion sessions..... 20

HLCM/CEB UPDATE – INFORMATION SESSION
MR. REMO LALLI (CEB SECRETARIAT), HLCM SECRETARY

The PN was provided with an update following the 47th session of the HLCM, which took place on 8-9 April in Nairobi, co-hosted by UN Habitat, UNEP and UNON.

The first half-day of the meeting was dedicated to a joint session with the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) / Business Innovation Group (BIG) on delivering efficiency through innovation and consolidation of UN System business operations. The joint session was an opportunity to engage in discussions on the Common Back Office (CBO) framework and Global Shared Services (GSS) and was timed with the roll-out in Kenya of the first CBO. While it is still too soon to provide concrete information on aspects such as cost benefits, HLCM members were pleased to see this initiative going live. Other pilot offices will follow suit in the coming months.

From the services prioritised under the GSS, the following four initiatives were presented at the meeting:

- UN Booking Hub
- UN Fleet
- UN Webbuy
- UNDP HR & Financial Services on Quantum

A focus area for the remainder of the meeting was staff health, safety, and well-being, which saw the HLCM adopt the workplan for the new UN Executive Group to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Harassment. In addition, the HLCM adopted the programme of work and the structure of the newly established Organizational Health and Safety mechanism.

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



The agenda also included closed discussion sessions on the comprehensive review by the International Civil Service Commission of the UN staff compensation package as well as the experiences and difficulties organisations are currently facing with funding constraints.

At its last meeting the HLCM requested the PN to explore developing a set of principles to guide a system-wide supply chain transformation as well as work on supply chain digitalisation, with a focus on developing workable modalities that can be leveraged through a system-wide approach. The PN provided the HLCM with a document for information on activities to date for the meeting in Nairobi. The HLCM strongly encouraged the PN to conclude and develop a proposal on the integration of supply chain beyond procurement and to look at supply chain in a holistic manner. A full report with demonstrated progress is expected for the HLCM meeting in October.

THE WORKING GROUPS

1. HARMONISATION WORKING GROUP (HWG) – DECISION SESSION

KATINKA ROSENBOM (UNICEF), WG CHAIR

1.1 UN Supplier Code of Conduct

The UN Supplier Code of Conduct (SCOC) has been revised in alignment with the work of the Task Force on Combating Human Trafficking and Forced Labour (HTFL) in Supply Chains responding, amongst others, to the direction of UN Security Council Resolution S/RES/2388, for the UN agencies to strengthen efforts in this area in their procurement and supply chain operations. As custodians of the SCOC, the Harmonisation Working Group Group led a process in early 2023 enabling PN members to engage in the revision process and obtain the necessary clearances in their respective organisations. With final clearance having been obtained from all organisations, the revised document was submitted to the PN for endorsement.

HLCM PN members endorsed the presented and agreed revisions to the UN Supplier Code of Conduct.

1.2 Collaborative Category Management Task Force

At the PN meeting in April 2023, the PN endorsed the ambition, timeline, and approach of the High-level Roadmap and methodology put forth in the Blueprint for Implementation of Collaborative Category Management (CollabCatMan). Since then, the CollabCatMan Task Force has developed a monitoring framework and identified five categories for piloting the initiative. As well as progressing with the pilots, current and coming activities include the following:

- Consultations with Professional Development WG – the aim is to have a town hall information meeting to socialise the concept, decisions and information products.
- Consultations with Sustainable Procurement WG – to ensure Sustainability is considered in all projects, preferably with a member from the SPWG on the project team.

Moving forward, the Harmonisation Working Group will revert to the PN with regular updates on progress of the pilot projects. On that note, the Chair informed the PN that the tender for

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Freight Forwarding (one of the pilot categories and involving 14 agencies) had just been issued.

1.3 Mutual Recognition - UNGM/LTA Enhancement Project

In support of Mutual Recognition activities, a Task Force comprised of 4 lead agencies (UNDP, OPCW, UNESCO, UN Secretariat) developed, in collaboration with UNGM, a proposal for streamlining and optimising the sharing of LTAs. The final functional requirements for the project as well as the project overview were recently endorsed by Harmonisation Working Group members.

Benefits of this project include the following:

- ✓ Single upload by the lead agency
- ✓ Mandatory fields for streamlined communication
- ✓ Piggybacking made easy with detailed agency information sharing
- ✓ Advanced search capabilities (by name, UNSPSC codes, location, etc.) and Regional LTA classifications
- ✓ Sophisticated reporting on procurement trends and collaborations, including improved feedback mechanism with "Report LTA Use" feature
- ✓ Automatic notifications for LTA expiration, extensions, and downloads and many more functionalities
- ✓ Sets the foundation for the future expected Application Programming Interface

There are two LTA posting types:

- (i) LTAs which may be uploaded with all necessary documents once, simplifying the process of enabling access and saving time.
- (ii) Agency-Managed Contracts/LTAs where the lead agency will only share basic contract details and information points ensuring confidentiality and close management of the contracts/LTAs.

The UNGM/LTA Enhancement Project will now be implemented by the UNGM team and launch is expected in 3-4 months' time. In the meantime, the Task Force will prepare communications materials on the project for the agencies. The importance of having the data to report on LTA usage (and non-usage) was emphasised.

The PN asked the Harmonisation Working Group to undertake an update of the table of [PN Member Organisation Contract Award & Delegation of Authority Thresholds](#) (latest version 2020) which is a very useful reference tool. IFAD offered to take the lead on this activity.

The Harmonisation Working Group was thanked for its achievements since the last meeting and for the management and endorsement of the important revisions to UN Supplier Code of Conduct.

Supporting documentation:

[Presentation - Harmonisation Working Group Briefing](#)

[Summary Sheet - Supplier Code of Conduct](#)

[Message to HLCM PN 23 March 2023 on Review and Clearance of SCOC](#)

[Supplier Code of Conduct v.27 March 2023 mapped against current SCOC](#)

[Summary Sheet - UNGM LTA Enhancement Project](#)

[UNGM LTA Enhancement Project - Background Information](#)

[UNGM LTA Enhancement Project - Functional Requirements](#)

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



2. SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT WORKING GROUP (SPWG) – INFORMATION SESSION
 ANNE-CLAIRE HOWARD (UNOPS) & ADENIKE AKOH (UNDP) – WG CO-CHAIRS
 MARCUS MCKAY (UNOPS) – COMBATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND FORCED LABOUR TASK FORCE CO-CHAIR
 AKHTAR ZAZAI (UN WOMEN) – GENDER RESPONSIVE PROCUREMENT TASK FORCE CHAIR

2.1 The SPWG: 2024 and beyond

The PN was reminded that the SPWG was established to exchange experiences, share best practices and lessons learned with SP implementation; identify opportunities for working together and enabling action on operationalising SP considerations in procurement processes; support the development of SP initiatives that further the sustainability agenda in the context of the UN's supply chains; and take ownership of and administer the information and features of the SP section of the UNGM Knowledge Centre platform.

While there are gaps in addressing some topics, priority areas for the group currently include the following:

- Scope 3 emissions
- Gender Responsive Procurement
- Circularity
- Human Rights in Supply Chains
- Sustainable Procurement Indicators
- Development of tools, resources, guidance
- Forced Labour
- Disability inclusive Procurement

Having taken stock of the current situation, the SPWG co-Chairs proposed the following for the next period:

What we need:

-  **A clear vision for the next 5 years**
-  **Different ways of working to create impact**
-  **Leadership for each of the topics**
-  **A Global perspective**
-  **Data**
-  **Lessons learned and best practice sharing**

What we will bring to the next HLCM

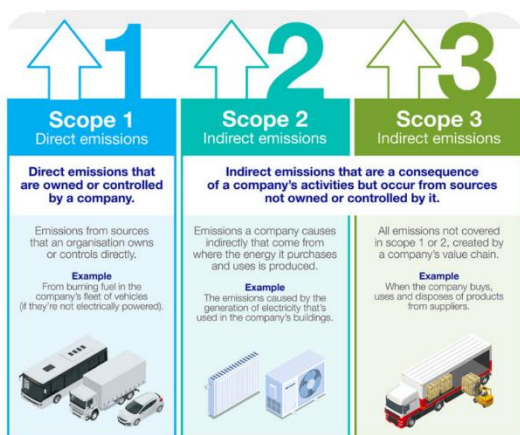
- A vision for Sustainable Procurement to 2030
- A roadmap and taskforce deliverables plan
- New TORs and objectives for the SPWG



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



2.2 Scope 3 Emissions



nationalgrid

This crucial issue was one of the priorities which emerged from the Strategic Forward Planning workshop held at the last PN meeting. It is already a very active area of work across the UN system, and the SPWG would like to contribute to this without duplicating efforts. **It is proposed that a SPWG sub-group (yet to be formed) will be merged with the Sustainable UN (SUN) Scope 3 emissions advisory group formed under [Greening the Blue](#) and a set of outputs will be jointly agreed upon. The subgroup will be open to all interested PN members.**

2.3 Combating Human Trafficking & Forced Labour in Supply Chains (HTFL) Task Force (TF)

Since the last PN meeting UNODC, UNRWA, ICAO, as well as two other UN Secretariat members have joined the Task Force, which is now comprised of 16 organisations with representation being a balance of operational and programmatic experts.



Current TF activities are largely centred around the training and awareness-raising stage of the roadmap.

A soft launch of the online training course on the UNGM was announced at this meeting and this QR code was shared for PN members for review and feedback. The training course will be supplemented with a communications package, which PN members will be asked to disseminate widely within their organisations. Roll out of the course is expected in May.

Other activities in progress include:

- Development of a concept and tools for sensitising suppliers on the risks of human trafficking and forced labour.
- Operational indicators mapping against the procurement cycle as a tool for procurement practitioners.

2.4 Gender-Responsive Procurement (GRP) Task Force (TF)

The GRP Task Force has developed the Gender-Responsive Procurement Model Policy Framework (GRP-MPF) as part of its six-step action plan aligned with the GRP Strategy. Following extensive consultations with PN members, the GRP Task Force submitted the GRP-MPF to the PN for endorsement.

Several members expressed appreciation to the Task Force for its collaborative approach, flexibility and openness to feedback. The PN endorsed the UN Model Policy Framework on Gender Responsive Procurement (GRP-MPF) and it will be at the discretion of each organisation to determine to what extent and/or timeframe for when it will be adopted.

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



2.5 HLCM PN Statement on Sustainable Procurement

The current PN Statement on Sustainable Procurement was published in 2009 and some of its content is very outdated by now. Therefore, the SPWG co-Chairs proposed that it should be updated to reflect present day circumstances.

The PN agreed that the HLCM PN Statement on Sustainable Procurement should be reviewed for potential revisions. All interested PN members are invited to contribute to the process. Given the sensitivities that still exist surrounding Sustainable Procurement in certain circumstances, and to ensure that endorsement of the revised version is not prolonged, it was recommended to carefully manage the ambitions and scope of the revisions.

In closing, the SPWG and Task Forces were thanked for their great efforts. During this session PN members underlined the importance of also engaging with and sensitising Senior Management, Programmes and Donors on Sustainable Procurement matters. Implementing sustainability measures can often contribute to organisations achieving better value for money in the long run rather than the often-used argument of being associated with higher costs. The importance of Sustainable Procurement knowledge-sharing among PN members and being humble about learning from each other was also emphasised.

Supporting documentation:

[Presentation - Sustainable Procurement Working Group](#)

[Presentation - Task Force for Combating Human Trafficking and Forced Labour in Supply Chains](#)

[Presentation - Gender Responsive Procurement Task Force](#)

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

[Summary Sheet - Scope 3 Emissions](#)

[Summary Sheet - GRP Model Policy Framework](#)

[GRP Model Policy Framework](#)

3. STRATEGIC VENDOR MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP – INFORMATION SESSION

FRANCIS BURGA (ILO), MPF REVISION TASK FORCE CHAIR

KERRY KASSOW (UNDP), IPS SUBGROUP CHAIR

3.1 Supplier Performance Evaluation (SPE)

This subgroup was created to share knowledge/best practices, assess the possibility of harmonising approaches on supplier performance rating and related actions and to discuss the potential further use of the UNGM functionality for supplier performance flagging and rating functionality.

The PN was informed that Julius Birungi (WHO) will take over as Chair of the subgroup following the departure of Laszlo Gobolyos (UNOPS). In the coming weeks, testing of the UNGM Supplier Performance Evaluation Tool will take place. The user guidelines will also be finalised and then the tool will go live. Moving forward, activities of the subgroup will include:

- Monitoring of the tool
- Providing feedback to the PN
- Working on the tool system integration where possible and creation of a mass data collection template
- Drafting a Model Policy Framework for SPE and related measures/sanctions (as agreed at the last PN meeting)

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



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

A Task Force was created by the MPF Governance Group to review, modernise and amend the MPF, which was originally developed in 2010. The scope of the MPF revision was expanded to include substantial and editorial changes in the entire document. ILO is currently reviewing feedback received during the recent legal review of the revised document. (This feedback can be found on the [MPF workspace](#) in the UNGM.) A new revised version of the MPF will then be shared for endorsement within the Task Force before the final draft is circulated for PN endorsement. Further to the endorsement of the MPF by the PN, all UN System Organisations will be encouraged to develop their own policy framework on Vendor Sanctions that is aligned, in full or with modifications, with the MPF, in accordance with their respective governance frameworks, mandates and requirements.

The PN was further informed that the following enhancements of UNGM functionalities on Vendor Ineligibility have been implemented:

- Clarification note on Censure
- Automatic alerts to UN Ineligibility List (UNIL) Administrators before expiration of sanctions imposed by their organisation
- Possibility to add information about rehabilitation status against sanctioned vendors

Currently, if an organisation sanctions a registered supplier in UNGM, the submission status is updated to 'Sanctioned' for that organisation only. For other organisations the status remains as 'Registered'. The Task Force proposed that the status is changed from 'Registered' to 'Sanctioned' automatically in the UNGM for all organisations thus no longer requiring each UNIL Administrator to make the change manually. **PN members were presented with a non-objection item on the design of this automatic update of the submission status of a supplier in the UNGM to enable the UNGM team to start assessing the necessary changes in the functionality and the need to submit the project to the UNGM Steering Committee.**

Following the approval of the Model Policy on Gender Responsive Procurement during this meeting, the GRP Task Force Chair expressed interest in discussing with the MPF Task Force about including language in the MPF for sanctioning vendors involved in gender-based violence and discrimination.

3.3 Vendor Risk Management & Due Diligence

Each UN organisation has its own approach to conducting vendor risk management and due diligence. The vetting process is often manual and time-consuming. There is a need to establish a more efficient and possibly automated Vendor Risk Management and Due Diligence process that would enable all the organisations affiliated with UNGM to proactively monitor and manage the numerous risks associated with vendors. The purpose of this subgroup is to establish a robust and standardised Vendor Risk Management and Due Diligence process based on best practices used across organisations and to explore ways to automate it by integrating it into UNGM. After finalising the TOR for the group, a series of discussions and presentations by subgroup members took place to better understand the Vendor Risk Management and Due Diligence process of their respective organisations. A consolidated list of the business intelligence service providers has also been created with the name of the agencies using those firms. However, before progressing any further, the former Chair for the group, Natalia Nedel (UN Secretariat), moved to another position. **The PN agreed that this important area of work should continue. The UN Secretariat offered to identify**

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a new Chair from within the organisation to lead the group and UNRWA expressed interest in a co-Chairing role. Both should confer with the Strategic Vendor Management Working Group Chair, Walter Grandpré (ILO), on this.

3.4 International Procurement Seminars (IPS)

The IPS concept was endorsed at the PN session in October 2019 as the chosen model for UN multi-agency business seminars, with the aim, amongst others, of more efficiently meeting repeat demand from Industrialised Countries to host such seminars. The IPS model asks countries to collaborate/co-host business seminars based on ‘Principles for engagement’ which have been developed by the SVM-WG and as per a calendar published on the [IPS page](#) on the UNGM.

The PN was presented with the 2024 calendar of IPS events and agencies were asked to provide their support to the host countries particularly during the transition period between the outgoing and incoming PN Secretariat, who also Chairs and leads the IPS initiative.

Date	Host Countries	Location	Agencies
20-21 March 2024	Czech Republic, Hungary & Slovakia	Vienna	CTBTO, FAO, IAEA, OSCE, UNIDO, FAO, ILO, ITU, OSCE, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNOPS, UN Secretariat (incl. UNOV & UNODC), WFP, WHO & WIPO
11-12 June 2024	Belgium, France & Estonia	Copenhagen	FAO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNOPS, UN Secretariat, WFP & WHO
13-14 November 2024	China	Ningbo	FAO, IFAD, IOM, PAHO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNOPS, UNRWA, UN Secretariat WFP, WHO and more

PN members who have participated in IPSs are appreciative of the model, which, given the consolidated approach (co-hosting), has improved the efficiency of UN agency participation in business seminars. There is however the ongoing issue of repeat demand from certain countries who do not comply with the IPS model and continue to invite agencies to regular single-country events. It is also recognised that the IPS model is challenging for Developing Countries to undertake both in terms of the associated costs and the scale of organisation/human resources that is required. An alternative could be for agencies to engage with the UN Secretariat, and others, that have business seminars on a regular basis in Developing Countries.

To raise awareness of the UN Secretariat’s Business Seminar programme, which primarily serves Developing Countries, it was recommended that updates on these activities are included as part of the agenda for PN meetings moving forward.

For more information on all of the above see the following: [Presentation - Strategic Vendor Management Working Group](#)

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



- [Summary Sheet - Strategic Vendor Management Working Group](#)
- [Supplier Performance Evaluation Introduction](#)
- [TOR Vendor Risk Management and Due Diligence](#)
- [Summary Sheet - International Procurement Seminars](#)
- [International Procurement Seminars/2024 Calendar](#)

4. COGNITIVE PROCUREMENT WORKING GROUP – INFORMATION SESSION
 MIRANDA CARINGTON (WORLD BANK), WG CHAIR

The WG Chair provided the PN with an update on the activities of the subgroup on Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Procurement. The purpose of which is to establish an AI Sourcing Procurement Guideline for the PN as well as to learn about procurement solutions for common business problems.

The status of activities since the last PN meeting is as follows:

- Use Cases exercise - Complete
- Roll the AI Working Group into the overarching Cognitive Procurement Working Group - On hold
- Host an AI Solutions Expo with ProcureTech/Kearney - Complete
- Maintain an AI Network (Repository of AI learning) - Complete
- Finalise the AI Guideline - In progress

The PN was given a summary of the statistics and feedback from the successful AI Solutions Expo which took place virtually on 5-6 December 2023 conducted by ProcureTech and Kearney. PN members expressed interest in the Expo materials being shared on the Cognitive Procurement workspace on the UNGM.

The next steps for the group will be as follows:



Finally, in response to queries from PN members, the WG Chair briefly offered helpful guidance on how to handle generational/age gap issues and achieve buy-in when implementing AI solutions (e.g., frame the benefits and invite people for input on the solution) as well as how to avoid bias when developing solutions (e.g., build prompts into questions/frameworks, such as, specifying genders etc.) She also encouraged PN members to partner with their current technology suppliers to stay informed and understand solutions that are in the pipeline, and to create sandboxes for exploring and testing when introducing new tools.

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



Supporting documentation:
[Presentation - Cognitive Procurement Working Group](#)

5. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP – INFORMATION SESSION
 BEATRIZ CASTILLO (UNOPS), UN PROCUREMENT AWARDS PROJECT TEAM LEAD

5.1 UN Procurement Awards

This initiative, led by an inter-agency Project Team within the Professional Development Working Group, was developed to celebrate and recognise excellence in the procurement and supply chain management profession across the UN and related organisations. The project has the following objectives:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 Raise the profile of the UN procurement and supply chain profession</p> | <p>3 Showcase procurement and supply chain success stories</p> |
| <p>2 Enhanced motivation of UN procurement and supply chain personnel</p> | <p>4 Promote the work of the HLCM Procurement Network</p> |

The UN Procurement Awards 2024 were launched on 14 February and this year nominations are invited under the following three award categories:

- Sustainable Procurement and Supply
- Collaborative Procurement
- Procurement and Supply Chain Innovation

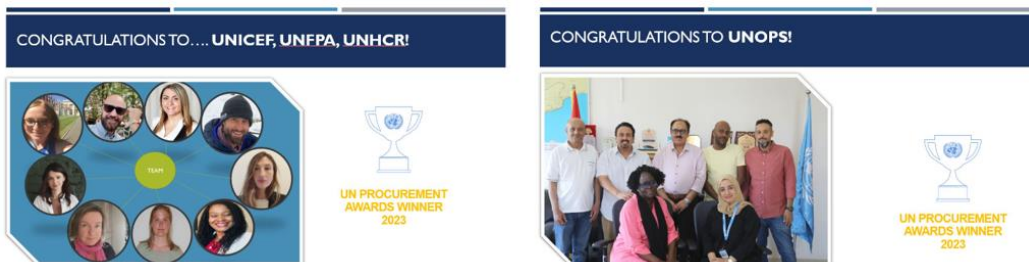
The deadline for submissions for the UN Procurement Awards 2024 is 15 May 2024. More information can be found [here](#). The shortlisted projects will be announced in September and the winners at the PN meeting in October 2024

At the last PN meeting the **2023 award winners** were announced as follows:

- (i) Collaborative Procurement** - UNICEF, UNFPA, UNHCR for 'Joint development of technical specifications for reusable menstrual cups, disposable pads, reusable pads and tampons'.
- (ii) Sustainable Procurement and Supply** - UNOPS for the 'Women-Owned Business initiative in Yemen'.

As also announced at the time, the winners were invited to join this PN meeting remotely to present their projects. This was warmly received by PN members who congratulated the teams once again on their achievements.

More information on the 2023 awards, the winners and the shortlisted projects can be found [here](#).



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



5.2 HLCM-PN Training Course Tables

The PN was also provided with a brief summary of the annual update of the HLCM-PN training course tables.

(i) The PN Training Compendium - a table providing an overview of all procurement training and certification initiatives, which are offered by PN member organisations.

Following the recent update, the number of courses listed has risen to 131 and the number of organisations listed remains at 24.

(ii) Recommended Procurement Training Courses – a table describing any course that a PN member organisation has used and would recommend to other UN organisations (includes training opportunities offered by PN and non-PN member organisations). The purpose of the table is to highlight courses that have been tried and tested to full satisfaction by an organisation.

Following the recent update, 30 courses are now listed as recommended.

The 2024 version of both tables is now available from the UNGM and can be found [here](#).

Supporting documentation:

[Professional Development WG Update](#)

[HLCM-PN Training Compendium 2024](#)

[HLCM-PN Recommended Procurement Training Courses 2024](#)

OTHER TOPICS

1. PN STRATEGIC FORWARD PLANNING – DECISION SESSION

PN MANAGEMENT BOARD

REGINE WEBER (UNICEF), SUPPLY CHAIN WORKING GROUP CO-CHAIR

1.1 Strategic Forward Planning Follow-Up

At the last PN meeting a Strategic Forward Planning workshop took place to identify and prioritise strategic issues that the PN should consider including in its agenda in the coming years. The exercise resulted in the below six topics and related activities being (re)identified as top priorities for the PN's workplan.

1. Accelerate Digital Transformation (including Artificial Intelligence)
2. Inclusion of the Concept of Supply Chain
3. Capacity Building of Staff
4. HLCM PN Structure¹
5. Sustainability
6. Private Sector Dialogue (with large suppliers) and Public Private Sector Partnerships

It was recognised that the PN has added much value throughout the years due to the high level of engagement and strategic deliverables and would like to continue to do so. However, the current reality is such that many organisations are constrained by resourcing

¹ The inclusion of Discussion Topics in the agenda for this meeting was in response to the request for more discussions and knowledge-sharing (versus presentations) that fell under this item. In addition, the need to address the issue with strained Working Groups was listed here.

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issues. While the strategic workshop revealed an appetite for many new initiatives, the PN already has five Working Groups, where, with the exception of a few of the associated Task Forces and Subgroups, there has been a very narrow level of engagement from members and insufficient capacity for some Chairs and active members to progress on tasks. In addition, when certain initiatives, such as tools implemented in the UNGM, have been completed/launched, they are not being used sufficiently and it is difficult to sustain their relevance. Therefore, this session was scheduled for the PN to reflect and discuss how to prioritise and structure its work moving forward.

While some PN members suggested that organisations should include a wider pool of representatives in the Working Groups, in particular junior colleagues and experts outside of procurement, others stated they did not have the capacity to do so. This can be very rewarding for junior staff, however given the nature of some of the topics (e.g., Mutual Recognition, Collaborative Category Management) it can be challenging for some to fully understand the implications and complexities.

It was further recognised that the Working Groups are all largely operating in silos, but there is an increasing number of cross-cutting issues. This can also be said for the PN vis-à-vis the other HLCM networks; the PN should have closer communication with them on cross-cutting issues e.g., with the Digital & Technology Network on the topic of AI.

In conclusion, it was agreed that current items on the Working Group workplans remain highly relevant and should not be postponed or cancelled. The Working Group Chairs should “re-boot” their memberships to ensure re-commitment and that member lists are fully up to date. Cross-cutting issues and fluidity between Working Groups should be taken into greater consideration and be reflected in the ‘Overview of the PN’ document shared at PN meetings. The PN Board will also consider the suggestion of having regular Strategic Forward Planning sessions as part of the agenda for PN meetings.

1.2 Proposed Supply Chain Working Group

At the 46th meeting of the HLCM held on 5-6 October 2023, the PN was requested to develop a set of principles to guide a system-wide supply chain transformation as well as work on supply chain digitalisation, with a focus on developing workable modalities that can be leveraged through a system-wide approach. In addition, one of the agreed outcomes of the above-mentioned Strategic Forward Planning workshop was for an informal group (Task Force) to be created to deliver a concept/Terms of Reference on the ‘Inclusion of Supply Chain topics’. Following the last PN meeting, interested members (IOM, PAHO, UNICEF, UNHCR, IOM, PAHO, UNDP, the UN Secretariat and WFP), in collaboration with the PN Management Board, convened to deliver on this.

The PN was therefore asked at this meeting to endorse a proposed concept note and TOR for a new Working Group on end-to-end Supply Chain. The proposed concept suggests that the inclusion of supply chain and the creation of a Working Group on Supply Chain would acknowledge the expanded nature, different scopes, scales, and complexity of the operations of the different UN organisations and allow for the expansion of dialogue on topics that go beyond procurement and as such lead to an end-to-end consideration of supply chain management in the UN.

Some PN members expressed concerns regarding duplication of work given the cross-cutting nature of topics listed under the scope as well as whether it makes sense to create an additional Working Group given the challenges currently faced by existing groups in terms of

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resources. Interest was also (re)expressed by some in changing the name of the Procurement Network to include Supply Chain. However, as was also agreed at the last PN meeting, this is not a priority given that it is a sensitive issue for some members and the PN Statutes already indicate that Supply Chain is part of the PN mandate.

IAEA, ILO, IOM, UNDP, UN Secretariat, UNRWA, UNOPS, WFP, PAHO and WHO expressed support for the creation of the new Working Group, which UNICEF presented as an opportunity for strategic positioning with the HLCM and HLCP and a platform for discussing cross-cutting topics as opposed to duplicating efforts; including connecting with other Supply Chain networks beyond the UN.

The PN endorsed the proposed concept note and TOR for a new Working Group on Supply Chain. The group will be co-Chaired by UNICEF and UNHCR, and the UN Secretariat expressed interest in a Vice Chair role. As a starting point, the Working Group will define its deliverables, taking current Working Group structures and matrixing aspects into consideration.

Supporting documentation:

[Outcomes Strategic Forward Planning Workshop Montreal](#)

[Summary Sheet - Supply Chain Concept Note & TOR](#)

[Supply Chain Concept Note & TOR](#)

2. APPLICATIONS FOR PN MEMBERSHIP – DECISION SESSION

ANGELA KASTNER (WHO), PN CHAIR

Applications were received from the United Nations International Computing Centre (UNICC)² and the Green Climate Fund (GCF)³ to become members of the HLCM PN. PN members were asked to review and endorse these applications.

2.1 Green Climate Fund (GCF)

GCF has been created under the aegis of the UNFCCC and is the world's largest climate fund, mandated to support developing countries raise and realise their Nationally Determined Contributions ambitions towards low-emission, climate-resilient pathways. The GCF has also requested membership of the UNGM, which is pending the decision on PN membership. According to additional information obtained during the meeting, GCF has UN privileges and immunities and reports to the UN General Assembly. Nevertheless, there was uncertainty as to what extent GCF's capacity as a donor could conflict with the role of PN member.

2.2 United Nations International Computing Centre (UNICC)

UNICC is an inter-agency facility within the UN System providing IT services to its partner organisations. It focuses exclusively on the provision of ICT services to the UN and other not-for-profit organisations on a cost-recovery basis. UNICC is already a member of the UNGM and CPAG. There was however uncertainty as to what extent UNICC's capacity as service provider to the UN could conflict with the role of PN member.

PN members requested more time to consult internally and seek clarity on outstanding matters before reaching a decision on both GCF's and UNICC's applications for membership.

² UNICC is a paying observer of the HLCM FBN, DTN & HRN

³ GCF is a paying observer of the HLCM DTN

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



Supporting documentation:

[GCF - Application for HLCM PN Membership](#)

[UNICC - Application for HLCM PN Membership](#)

3. UN GLOBAL MARKETPLACE STEERING COMMITTEE BRIEFING – INFORMATION SESSION
 NIELS RAMM (UNOPS), UNGM TEAM LEAD

The PN was provided with an update on the UNGM Membership meeting, which was held on 5 April. A summary of each of the agenda topics was shared as follows:

Agenda topics

- 2023 Post factum Financial Report
- 2023 Operational Highlights
- UNGM ‘Next Gen’ Status

2023 Post factum Financial Report

- 2023 operating costs USD 76.5K under the projected amount
- 32 agencies were eligible to pay the membership fee (USD 160K)
- TAS subscriptions generated net revenue under target (684.75K)
- Deficit of USD 13.46K to be funded from the reserve fund
- Reserve Fund value \$610K at end of 2023

2023 Operational KPI's

- 53.5K new vendor registrations in 2023 (+9% increase compared to last year)
- Registration of WOBs has increased by 12% and Disability-Inclusive suppliers by 19 % compared to last year.
- 33.3K procurement notices published in 2023, a 53% increase in 2023, driven by the integration of Quantum.
- Only 0.7% of notices are sustainable - 77.7% of procurement notices are electronic (+133% in 2023)
- 4.3K contract awards published in 2023 - 6% decrease to previous year - Contract value only represents 1.2b.
- 631 LTAs published in 2023 (+63% compared to previous year)
- UNRWA published the majority of LTAs (34%) in 2023

UNGM ‘Next Gen’

- 195 work items prioritized and categorized under 27 projects (prioritisation available on PN workspace)
- Current status – implementation of quick win projects focusing on
 - UNGM revenue generation
 - Tender notice module
 - Enhanced UX
 - Enhanced support experience
- Communication Strategy implementation
 - [LinkedIn](#) profile launched
 - New logo design commissioned
 - Tagline under development
 - New Home/landing page under development
- UNGM Fund's launched
 - AI fund – goal 20K
 - Scalability fund – 15K
 - Comms expertise fund – 20K

In the interests of increasing transparency, PN members were reminded about the importance of posting Contract Awards on UNGM. The API for automating this has existed for a long time, yet only some organisations are using it.

It was also discussed whether alternative funding solutions to the Tender Alert Service (TAS) could be explored to avoid vendors having to pay for the service. The UNGM

Team Lead welcomed contributions to this discussion and working towards finding a solution.

It was raised that with the implementation of e-tendering systems, TORs, specifications, etc., tend to no longer be posted along with Procurement Notices (instead they are accessed when vendors register for the tender). This means that this very useful source of reference for procurement practitioners and vendors is no longer accessible. The UNGM Team Lead informed that organisations can re-programme their e-procurement systems to include the

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documents with the notices, but it will require a collective will for this to be done. To further strengthen communication activities, the UNGM Team will explore the suggestion of creating a UNGM banner/graphic for PN members to add to their email signatures.

Supporting documentation:

- [Presentation - UNGM Briefing](#)
- [Summary Sheet - UNGM Steering Committee](#)
- [2023 UNGM Operational Report](#)
- [2023 UNGM Post Factum Financial Review](#)

4. BUSINESS INNOVATION GROUP (BIG) / GLOBAL SHARED SERVICES (GSS) BRIEFING – INFORMATION SESSION
ROCCO LEONE & ZAMIR FROTAN (UNDCO)

To provide background and context for the agenda item on UN Web Buy Plus, representatives from UNDCO were invited to provide a briefing on BIG/GSS activities.

The PN was reminded about the elements of the UNSDG efficiency agenda, with a particular emphasis on the Business Operations Strategy, Common Premises and Common Back Office, and the respective benefits of each.



Given that the UN Web Buy business case relates to GSS, the latter part of the presentation focused on this. It was explained that GSS are offered by one or more UN entity to provide services on a global scale which are location-independent (e.g., vehicle leasing). This global consolidation of location-independent services drives both efficiency and effectiveness. The following overview of prioritised and pipeline global services was shared.

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Prioritized Global Service (Current Priority)

- UN FLEET (WFP/UNHCR)
- UN Booking Hub (WFP) Mobility
- UN Booking Hub (WFP) Accommodation
- UN Booking Hub (WFP) Medical and Wellness
- UN Web Buy Plus (UNOPS)
- Payment/Invoice Processing (UNDP)
- HR services - Benefits & Entitlements (UNDP)
- Payroll services (UNDP)
- UN Digital ID (Consortium)
- UN Digital Hub of Treasury Solutions (UNDP/UNHCR)
- Vehicle Acquisition (UNS)

Pipeline Global Service

- Travel (UNICEF, UNDP, UN Secretariat, WFP)
- Auctioning Services (UNHCR)
- Digital Disposal and Auction Services (WFP)
- HR Services for Non-Staff Contracts (UNOPS)
- Labor Provision to GSC's / Payments / Other (UNICEF)

PN members were interested in the cost benefits of the efficiency initiatives and were informed that the overall cost avoidance is estimated to be \$310M with over \$150M of this expected to result from the GSS. It was clarified that the set of CBO services can vary from country to country and agencies can join where it makes economic sense for them to do so. The importance of the role that the PN can play in supporting the efficiency agenda was underlined, e.g., the guidance it has developed in areas of strategic importance (gender, disability, forced labour, etc.) is very useful for Country Offices.

Supporting documentation:

[Presentation - System-wide Efficiencies](#)

5. UN WEB BUY PLUS BUSINESS CASE – INFORMATION SESSION

JEAN-VINCENT COLIN (UNOPS)

UN Web Buy (UNWB) Plus has been prioritised as one of the global shared services to be scaled-up under the BIG efficiency initiative. The objective of this session was to present the business case developed under the BIG/GSS framework and detail some of its main components, including a proposed cost recovery approach for agencies interested in publishing their LTAs on UNWB.

The Business case is based on the following three pillars:

- (i) Current UNWB procurement services: MoU, SLA, Matrix of responsibilities available for signature
- (ii) One stop shop for commonly procured items and collaborative exercise
- (iii) Multi-tenant e-catalogue with integration with different agencies procurement systems/ERP

The ask from the PN was as follows:

- To consider signing the existing MOU for UNWB procurement services
- To support the vision of UNWB as the One-UN e-catalogue

The initiative is seen as a collaboration between the UNGM and UNWB as opposed to any form of competition or overlap of the two systems. In short, UNWB will be operationalising LTAs (for buying/"shopping" purposes) whereas the UNGM makes them available for information/piggybacking purposes.

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



To encourage agencies to publish their LTAs on UNWB (point ii in the business case), UNOPS has proposed, for discussion with interested agencies, a cost recovery/fee-sharing modality. It entails sharing with agencies owning the LTAs a portion of the administrative fee charged by UNWB when offering those LTAs to third parties. The current proposal presented for discussion is that this portion could be 15% of the administrative fee collected.

The administrative fee charged by UN Web Buy to the UN system is as follows:

	Below \$200K	Above \$200K
Admin fee applied	3.50%	2.50%

Concerns were expressed about how the initiative aligns with the Mutual Recognition (MR) principle. The PN has been working on and promoting the sharing of LTAs on the UNGM for many years in support of the MR principle. With this initiative and its fee incentive, there might be a risk of some agencies only posting their LTAs on UNWB in future. The UNGM Team Lead agreed that linkage should be ensured each way when an LTA is posted on either platform. UNOPS explained that they viewed these as two potentially complementary approaches.

The UNWB Team Lead confirmed that around 95% of the business on the platform was from non-UN entities.

Some PN members asked for further information on how UNWB was selected and prioritised under the GSS initiative. It was noted that Quantum also has the capabilities of cataloging LTAs and facilitating third party procurement this way.

There were questions raised on the calculations behind the business case that only 15% of the fee would be assigned to the organisation conducting the work on establishing a tender.

It was agreed that more time was needed to reflect on and examine this initiative. PN members were encouraged to study the UN Web Buy Plus MoA and provide feedback to UNOPS. Based on feedback received, UNOPS can further define the concept, and should consider including examples of success stories (e.g., UNHCR, ICAO).

Supporting documentation:

[Presentation - UN Web Buy Plus](#)

[Summary Sheet - UN Web Buy Plus](#)

[GSS Business Case UNOPS - UN Web Buy Plus](#)

[For Consultation Purposes Only - UN Web Buy Plus Template MOA](#)

AOB

(i) Election of new PN Vice Chair and Second Advisory Chair

Anne-Claire Howard (UNOPS) was elected by the PN as the new Vice Chair for the coming year. Stephen Farrell (UNOG) will now transition into the Chair role and Angela Kastner (WHO) will become Advisory Chair.

Frederic Farschi (ICC) was elected by the PN as 2nd Advisory Chair, representing the non HLCM member organisations, for the next three years.

Elisabeth Eckerstrom (UNDP) and Roberto Samayoa (PAHO) were thanked for their 3+ years of dedication to the PN Management Board.

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



(ii) Future meetings

The next PN meeting will be hosted by UNEP in Nairobi on **8-10 October 2024**.

The spring 2025 meeting will take place in New York co-hosted by UNDP, UN Secretariat and UN Women.

In 2025 the PN Management Board will plan for PN meetings to take place ahead of HLCM meetings to facilitate discussion/endorsement of topics before they are submitted/presented at HLCM meetings.

The PN welcomed the new format of including informal discussion topics in the meeting agenda. The following was however noted for future such sessions:

- Each group should have a separate meeting room, and the rooms should be located close together to allow for easy rotation of the groups.
- Groups should be small in size (e.g., 8-10 people).
- Each group should have a moderator to manage the discussions.
- PN members should be provided with the topics in advance to allow for preparation time.

(iii) Farewells

The PN held a farewell event for Kerry Kassow (UNDP) who has been the PN Secretary for the past 13 years. Kerry was thanked for her unwavering dedication to the PN and the Management Board over the years and wished all the best for her new position as Communication's Officer for UNDP Office of Procurement, based in Copenhagen.

The PN also bade farewell to Eero Porko (UNESCO) and Zoran Cikiric (ITU) who will retire from the UN System shortly. Both were thanked for their valuable contributions to the PN. Eero was also thanked for the excellent hosting of this meeting and networking events.

(iv) PN Secretariat transition period

The recruitment process for the new PN Secretariat is currently being finalised. In the meantime, the PN Chair, Stephen Farrell, and the CPAG Secretary, will provide support on any urgent matters that require attention. PN members were reminded that all queries and responses for the past 10 years can be referenced from the [HLCM PN Workspace](#).

SHOW AND TELL SESSIONS

The following 'Show and Tell' sessions were also part of the PN meeting agenda:

Strategic Implementation of ICC Procurement Processes – Frederic Farschi (ICC)
[Summary Sheet](#) | [Presentation](#)

Update on UNDP's Quantum Journey – Adenike Akoh & Roland Koxhaj (UNDP)
[Summary Sheet](#) | [Presentation](#)

Use of Dynamic Purchasing Systems at the European Commission – Marion Courbis (ESM) & Miroslav Ognyanov (EC)
[Summary Sheet](#) | [Presentation](#)

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



ITU - Interpretation Services – Zoran Cikir (ITU)
[Summary Sheet](#) | [Presentation](#)

DISCUSSION SESSIONS

The following topics were discussed in informal break-out groups:

- Donor Requirements: Solar panel supply chains, IFI procurement rules/sanctions, harmonisation of UN response to EU GDPR
- Selection of ERP Systems
- Insurance collaboration in medical area
- Delegation to undertake and approve procurement transactions to non-procurement staff
- Harmonisation of threshold for direct selection