



CEB

UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination

HLCM Mutual Recognition Coordination Group

Quiz to raise awareness on Mutual Recognition

For the moderator: The principle of Mutual Recognition

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

Quiz Questions

Category: Overall concept

Question 1	Mutual recognition requires the use of same or quasi-identical Regulations and Rules. The first priority before operationalizing Mutual Recognition is to ensure the closest alignment possible amongst the Regulations and Rules of all UN Organizations.
Option 1.1	Yes, this is a correct statement.
Option 1.2	No, this is not a correct statement.
Correct Answer	Option 1.2 - Explanation: Mutual recognition is based on having comparable regulatory frameworks, but not on having the same or quasi-identical regulations and rules. It allows an organization to rely on another Organization's policies.

Question 2	Which of the following are intended benefits of Mutual Recognition? a) Not duplicating work already done; b) Saving time on a process; c) Increasing collaboration spirit amongst UN Organizations; d) Working around the UN entity's regulatory framework
Option 2.1	All of the above
Option 2.2	a and b
Option 2.3	a, b and c
Option 2.4	a, b and d
Option 2.5	b, c and d

Correct Answer	Option 2.3 - Explanation: Mutual recognition is not intended to circumvent the UN entity's regulatory framework.
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Question 3	The use of the Mutual Recognition principle by two UN system Organizations prohibits any charges from one Organization to the other.
Option 3.1	Yes, this is correct. Mutual Recognition is aimed to support and help each other without any financial exchanges.
Option 3.2	No, this is not correct. A UN system organization can recover added costs incurred to support the Mutual Recognition operationalization by the receiving Organization.
Option 3.3	No, this is not correct. A UN system organization can charge for enabling Mutual Recognition benefiting another Organization as long as the charge does not exceed the estimated benefits for the receiving Organization.
Correct Answer	Option 3.2 - Explanation: Mutual recognition allows a UN system Organization to use or rely on another entity's policies, procedures, system contracts and related operational mechanisms for the implementation of activities. If the use or reliance triggers an added cost for the first Organization, a cost recovery approach could be considered in line with the cost recovery principle agreed upon by the UN system Orgs.

Question 4	The operationalization of Mutual recognition can be facilitated through the use of common tools.
Option 4.1	Yes, this is correct. Two examples being UNGM (for procurement) and Inspira (for rosters)
Option 4.2	Yes, this is correct but only if all UN system Organizations use the same tools (such as UNGM)
Option 4.3	No, tools do not play a role in facilitating the operationalization of Mutual Recognition
Correct Answer	Option 4.1 – See the example of UNGM (used by all), Inspira (used by a few Organizations, hence facilitating it only for those Orgs). Both are contributing to MR.

Question 5	One intended benefit of Mutual Recognition is to remove potential barriers to greater consolidation of shared services within the United Nations system.
Option 5.1	This statement is incorrect. Mutual recognition does not facilitate shared services provision.
Option 5.2	This statement is correct in theory, but in reality, Mutual Recognition does not facilitate shared services provision.
Option 5.3	This statement is correct.
Correct Answer	Option 5.3 – For example, Mutual Recognition facilitates engagement of entities in various efficiency initiatives at country level: Common Premises and future Common Back Offices (CBOs); as well as at global level e.g. entities using UN Web Buy services.

Category: Procurement

Question 6	UNDP suspended a vendor for providing false documentation regarding their company financials. Could the UN Vendor Review Committee recommend a similar suspension based on the Mutual Recognition principle?
Option 6.1	No, this would not be a case of mutual recognition. Mutual recognition in procurement is limited to cases of cooperation, including piggybacking. Due diligence is required. The UN Vendor Review Committee must re-assess the detailed case processed by UNDP.
Option 6.2	Yes, this would be a valid case of mutual recognition.
Option 6.3	Not always. It depends which UN system Organization decided on the debarment and whether their Vendor Review Committee (or equivalent) was assessed to be using the same criteria and sanction guidelines as the UN Vendor Review Committee.
Correct Answer	Option 6.2 - Explanation: Mutual recognition is based on having comparable regulatory frameworks, but not on having the same or quasi-identical regulations and rules. It allows an Organization to rely on another Organization's policies. To further support this approach, the newly released Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) of the UN Vendor Review Committee introduced a simplified process for such cases effective 1 May 2023.

Question 7	UNICEF led a collaborative tender that resulted in global freight forwarding services contracts. The 12 participating UN Organizations implement separate contracts based on the tender outcome. Is this Mutual Recognition?
Option 7.1	Yes, this would be an example of Mutual Recognition.
Option 7.2	No, this would not be a valid case of mutual recognition as the UN Secretariat is not using a UNICEF contract.
Correct Answer	Option 7.1 - Explanation: Mutual recognition in procurement is not limited to piggy backing, it can include recognizing different steps of the process that precede the signature of a contract. Moreover, having one entity not using the services does not mean that the benefit from mutual recognition is not realized since it is being used by others.

Question 8	An UN Secretariat OCHA country office would like to use the existing contract of UN Secretariat Peacekeeping Mission XYZ to purchase fuel in a location covered by the terms of the contract. Is this Mutual Recognition?
Option 8.1	Yes, and UN OCHA will piggyback on the contract of peacekeeping mission XYZ.
Option 8.2	No, UN OCHA and Mission XYZ are both part of the Secretariat. There is no need for mutual recognition between Secretariat entities.
Correct Answer	Option 8.2 - Explanation: There is no need for mutual recognition between UN Secretariat entities, or within different organizational units of a single UN Organization, Fund or Programme.

Question 9	WHO has a Long-Term Agreement with Company L to purchase laptops. If WFP wants to leverage this Long-Term Agreement to purchase networking equipment from Company L, is this a case of Mutual Recognition?
Option 9.1	Yes, WFP can piggyback on the WHO contract and then amend it to expand its scope to networking equipment. This is an example of Mutual Recognition.
Option 9.2	No, WFP would not be applying the Mutual Recognition principle with the intended spirit.
Correct Answer	Option 9.2 - Explanation: Changing the scope of the contract is not piggybacking but truly a sole sourcing strategy.

Category: Human Resources Management

Question 10	The UN Secretariat is recruiting a UNICEF staff member. The staff already took the DSS mandatory training BSAFE while at UNICEF. Would it be a case of Mutual Recognition if the UN Secretariat was to record this mandatory training as complete?
Option 10.1	Yes, this would be a valid case of mutual recognition if UNICEF shares the training certificate.
Option 10.2	No, this is not an applicable case of mutual recognition without first verifying the conditions under which UNICEF administered the training.
Correct Answer	Option 10.1 - Explanation: Mutual recognition is based on having comparable regulatory frameworks, but not on having the same or quasi-identical regulations and rules. It allows an organization to rely on another Organization's policies or practices to administer DSS mandatory trainings in this case.

Question 11	The OneHR centre in Bonn classified a P-4 Budget Officer for UNHCR. Could UNRWA reuse the classification (except for the organizational details that would be adjusted) without going through a reclassification exercise?
Option 11.1	No. Mutual recognition does not extend to post classifications.
Option 11.2	No. In theory it does, but in practice, it cannot be done as the requirements are always different.
Option 11.3	Yes, Mutual recognition applies to post classification.
Correct Answer	Option 11.3 - Explanation: Mutual recognition applies to post classification and can be used provided the changes are not significantly altering the scope of the job profile.

Question 12	Verification of education credentials: Can UN entity accept the checks previously done by the releasing UN Organization at the time of an inter-agency transfer of a staff?
Option 12.1	No, the entity does not know how seriously the prior checks were done and needs to recheck of the validity of the education credentials.
Option 12.2	No, as the verification might have been done a long time ago and might not include the latest education credentials. It is more prudent to reassess all credentials.

Option 12.3	Yes, the entity would not need to redo the checks based on Mutual Recognition, except for those new credentials acquired since the verification was conducted by the releasing Organization.
Correct Answer	Option 12.3 – This is exactly one of the big advantages of OneHR: economies of scale and using MR as an enabler for efficiency.

Category: IT

Question 13	If Entity X experiences a cybersecurity attack, would it be acceptable for Entity X ICT staff to seek the support of relevant ICT staff at other UN Organizations to strengthen their cybersecurity response under the Mutual Recognition principle?
Option 13.1	No, this does not fall under the Mutual Recognition principle, but is a good example of cooperation.
Option 13.2	Yes, but only if Entity X agrees to be cost recovered the time spent by other UN Organizations staff.
Option 13.3	Yes, cooperation for critical incidents falls under the Mutual Recognition principle.
Correct Answer	Option 13.1 – Explanation: Mutual Recognition does not define all forms of cooperation amongst UN system Organisations.