



The United Nations
sexual and reproductive
health agency

UNFPA Supply Chain Management Unit

Standard Operating Procedure

Tripartite Guidelines for Handling of UNFPA Orders and Shipments (External)

(UNFPA, Suppliers of Goods, and 3PL
Providers)

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A. Purpose and Scope

This tripartite Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) outlines the complete, end-to-end process for managing all international shipments of goods procured under Purchase Orders (POs) and pick slips (PS) from UNFPA's stock at suppliers, issued by the UNFPA Supply Chain Management Unit (SCMU). It applies to all internationally sourced goods and clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of Suppliers, Third-Party Logistics (3PL) providers, and UNFPA personnel from PO issuance to final delivery. The goal is to ensure efficient, compliant, and timely delivery for all parties involved.

This tripartite SOP focuses on touchpoints between the Suppliers of Goods - referred to as "Supplier", the Third Party Logistics providers - referred to as "3PL Providers", and UNFPA - represented by and referred to as "SCMU Supply Team/Focal Point" (from procurement or inventory) or "SCMU Logistics Team/Focal Point".

This SOP shall be completed by more detailed bilateral SOPs between UNFPA and the respective parties.

B. Process Flow

1. Cargo Details Estimation

- At the RFQ stage, the **Supplier** shall provide estimated cargo details to support freight planning and budgeting in UNFPA. These estimates shall be to the best of the Supplier's knowledge. When in doubt, the supplier is requested to provide a conservative estimate of the cargo details (kilograms, number of pallets or number of containers).

2. Purchase Order Issuance by UNFPA

- The UNFPA SCMU **Supply team** issues a Goods Purchase Order (GPO) to the Supplier, attaching updated Shipping Instructions (SI). The SCMU Logistics team, the 3PL provider and the Consignee are all in BCC.
- The SI should indicate if the order is subject to product registration/waiver, green light to ship from the consignee, pre-shipment inspection.

3. Purchase Order Acknowledgement by the Supplier

- At most 5 days after the GPO issuance, the **Supplier** shall acknowledge the receipt of the GPO in the Supplier Portal, confirming their ability to meet delivery requirements and timelines.
- If the delivery timeline cannot be met, the **Supplier** shall immediately let the SCMU supply team know through the Supplier Portal, requesting a GPO revision and submitting a PO Change Order, including an update to the Promised Ship Date.

- The **Supplier** shall not exceed 14 days of deviation (+/-) between the Expected Goods Readiness date Actual Goods Readiness date.

4. Establish Communication between Supplier and 3PL Provider

- At least 21 days prior to the Expected Readiness Date, and subject to successful pre-shipment inspection, sampling and testing (if applicable), the **SCMU Logistics** team shall establish contact between the Supplier and 3PL Provider.

5. Notification of Goods Readiness (NGR)¹

- The Notification of Goods Readiness (NGR) is a critical communication tool designed to enable the Goods Supplier to proactively inform UNFPA and its assigned 3PL provider. This early notification enables all parties to make logistical arrangements and ensure the most efficient and timely pick-up of goods, preventing extended storage in the Supplier's premises. The NGR must contain: delivery schedule (partial or full), pick-up date deviations (if any), and cargo and equipment specifications - using the template available in Annex 3.
- This information is essential for UNFPA and its 3PL provider to book with carriers, plan transportation, and ensure expedited pick-up as soon as goods readiness is officially confirmed and that the Green Light (GL) to Ship has been obtained (if applicable).
- At least 14 days prior to the Expected Goods Readiness - and only once the consignment is cleared from Pre-Shipment Inspection, testing and sampling (if applicable) by the supply Team, the **Supplier** shall share the NGR along with the Proforma Invoice (PI) by email with the 3PL provider.
- Once the logistics plan is confirmed by the SCMU logistics team, the **3PL provider** shall confirm the booking details and share with the Supplier.
- The **Supplier** will then confirm via email to the 3PL Provider the Actual Goods Readiness, Delivery and Pick-up Dates, as per the PO incoterm. The SCMU Logistics team and the SCMU Supply team shall be in CC on both communications.

6. Issuance of Draft Supplier's Shipping Documents (if applicable)

- At least 5 days prior to the Expected Readiness Date, the **Supplier** shall email the Draft Supplier's Shipping Documents to the 3PL provider, with SCMU Logistics and Supply teams in CC.
- The provision of Draft Supplier's Shipping Documents is required only when the shipment is subject to Green Light to Ship from the Consignee. This information is available in the Shipping Instructions (SI).

¹ Note that the Notification of Goods Readiness (NGR) replaces and is a simplified version of the Advanced Readiness Notification (ARN).

- The Draft Supplier's Shipping Documents contain the draft invoice, the draft packing list (including clear cargo details), as well as any additional documents as indicated in the SI.
- The **Supplier** is responsible for the accuracy, completeness and timeliness of the documents, whether draft or final.

7. Obtainment of Green Light to Ship from the Consignee (if applicable)

- As soon as the Draft Supplier's Shipping Documents are received from the Supplier, the **3PL provider** shall consolidate the documents and add any additional draft transport document (i.e. draft air waybill) as indicated in the SI.
- The **3PL provider** is responsible for checking the completeness of the documents in line with the SI, and shall follow up directly with the Supplier in case of any omission.
- The **3PL provider** shall send the consolidated set of draft documents to the Consignee to obtain the Green Light to Ship, with the SCMU Supply team and the SCMU Logistics team in CC.
- Based on this email communication, **SCMU** is responsible for following up on the Green Light to Ship with the Consignee.

8. Freight Booking

- Once GL is obtained from the Consignee (if applicable) or as soon as the NGR is received, and within a maximum of 6 days, the 3PL provider shall ensure that the Freight Booking is confirmed.
- The **3PL provider** shall send the Booking Confirmation to both the SCMU Logistics and Supply teams and the Supplier.
- The **Supplier** is expected to hold the consignment until cargo collection, which is dependent on the scheduled time of the flight or vessel, the date is set as the agreed delivery/pick date between supplier and the 3PL.
- For orders subject to Product Registration/Waiver, Consignee Green Light to ship, or Pre-Shipment Inspections: Booking and shipping arrangements shall only be finalized by the 3PL provider once obtained, completed and confirmed in writing.

9. Cargo and documents Handover

- In accordance with agreed-upon timelines and specifications with the 3PL provider, the Supplier is responsible for delivering goods to the designated loading location (warehouse, port, or airport) in line with the PO/BPA.

- For warehouse collections, the **Supplier** must make the cargo available on time as agreed with the 3PL provider as per the agreed PO Incoterm 2020.
- The **3PL provider** and their assigned transporter are responsible for arriving at the scheduled pickup time and ensuring a timely collection. The transporter must arrive at least 15 minutes before the agreed-upon time to facilitate this.
- The **Supplier** shall share the Final Documents (as indicated in the Shipping Instructions) with the 3PL provider as soon as the goods are packed.
- Any dispute between the Supplier and the 3PL provider (or their transporter), including detention fees for delays, must be resolved between them directly. Only after this initial attempt should the UNFPA Logistics and supply team be involved to facilitate a final resolution, such as a credit note.

10. Forwarder Certificate of Receipt (FCR)

- Within 24 hours from cargo handover, the **3PL provider** shall issue a proof of delivery and send to the Supplier and UNFPA an FCR, signed Air Waybill (AWB) or CMR waybill as proof of goods handover.

11. Advance Shipping Notice (ASN)

- Within 3 days from cargo handover, the **Supplier** must enter the shipment details in the Advance Shipping Notice (ASN) of Quantum's Supplier Profile.
- This entry is a prerequisite to the issuance of the payment to the Supplier. No payments will be made without a valid ASN accompanied by the upload of the complete set of shipping documents.
- Further instructions on the use of the Supplier Portal can be found [here](#).

12. Shipment Execution until Designated Location

- The **3PL provider** shall execute the transport services as instructed by the Freight Purchase Order (FPO) until the designated location.

Annex 1 - Responsibilities Matrix and Timeline Overview

Process	Responsible	Timeline
PO/PS Issuance	UNFPA (Supply)	
PO Acknowledgment	Supplier	Within 5 days of GPO issuance
Goods Readiness Timeliness	Supplier	Max 14 days between Estimated and Actual Readiness date
Establish Communication	UNFPA (Logistics)	At least 21 days before the Expected Readiness Date
Notification of Goods Readiness (NGR)	Supplier	At least 14 days before the Expected Readiness Date
Issuance of Draft Documents	Supplier	At least 5 days before the Expected Readiness Date (if applicable)
Obtention of Green Light to Ship	3PL Provider & UNFPA (Logistics)	Once draft docs are received
Follow up on Green Light to Ship	UNFPA (Logistics)	Once Green Light is requested
Freight Booking	3PL Provider	Within 6 days of receiving NGR or "Green Light"
Issuance of Final Documents	Supplier	Within 2 days of Actual Cargo Readiness
Cargo Handover	Supplier & 3PL Provider	As agreed between the parties
Advance Shipping Notice (ASN)	Supplier	Within 3 days of cargo handover
Shipment Execution	3PL Provider	From cargo handover until delivery

Annex 2 - Acronyms and Definitions

- **3PL:** Third-Party Logistics Provider.
- **AWB:** Air Waybill.
- **BL/BoL:** Bill of Lading.
- **CMR:** Consignment Note (for road transport).
- **FCA:** Free Carrier (an Incoterm).
- **FCR:** Forwarder's Certificate of Receipt.
- **FPO:** Freight Purchase Order.
- **GL:** Green Light.
- **GPO:** Goods Purchase Order.
- **KPIs:** Key Performance Indicators.
- **LMS:** Logistics Management Service.
- **NGR:** Notification of Goods Readiness.
- **PO:** Purchase Order.
- **PI:** Proforma Invoice.
- **PS:** Pick Slip.
- **RFQ:** Request for Quotations.
- **SCMU:** Supply Chain Management Unit.
- **SI:** Shipping Instructions.
- **SOP:** Standard Operating Procedure.
- **SWB:** Sea Waybill.
- **UN:** United Nations.

Annex 3 - Notification of Goods Readiness (NGR) Template

Instructions:

- The Notification of Goods Readiness (NGR) shall be shared at least 14 days or latest 3 days for emergency /stock deliveries before the confirmed date of goods readiness for pickup by the 3PL.
- One (1) NGR per PO and per consignment shall be shared with the nominated 3PL.
- Please indicate in CC your SCMU Supply Focal Point, as well as the SCMU Logistics Focal Point (scmu.logistics@unfpa.org for fresh production, and scmu.inventory@unfpa.org for dispatch from inventory).
- The Supplier's Documents shall be shared with the 3PL as soon as possible.
- The supplier must notify the nominated 3PL upon actual goods readiness.

Email Subject:

[Consignee Country code] | NGR | [Goods PO/Pick Slip numbers] | [Mode of Transport] | FCA [named place]

Email body:

Dear UNFPA's appointed 3PL,

We hereby notify you of the upcoming Goods Readiness for the Purchase Order in subject. Please proceed with freight arrangements, subject to the authorization to ship from the consignee (if applicable):

Shipment Details	
Expected Goods readiness date (should be 2 weeks after submission of the NGR)	[DD/MMM/YYYY]
Full or Partial Shipment:	[Full / Partial]
Is Pre-Shipment Inspection (PSI) completed?	[PSI not required / PSI completed]
The shipment is cleared for dispatch from a regulatory standpoint (if subject to waiver/product registration).	[Yes]
Cargo Details	
Temperature Control	[2-8°C / 15-25°C / Dry Cargo / Specify]
Number of Pallets	
Total Volume (m³)	
Total Weight (kg)	
Container Details (for Sea Freight only):	[No/type of container(s), i.e., 1 x 40RF]

Other important remarks (DG, dimensions, etc)	
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