WORKSHEET 2.8

Managing the Supply Chain

Subchapter 2.8 · case in the book: Nairobi

When your hotel selects its suppliers for sustainability, are you measuring what those businesses do, or how well they fill in questionnaires? And who checks the gifts that a client's sponsor wants placed in your guest rooms?

This worksheet turns the tools of the subchapter into a form you can fill in. The texts come from the book; the empty columns are for your own property. Adapt it before use: an unadapted checklist is exactly what the book warns against.

Practical application: what to do in your property

Step (from the book)	Done?	What we found / owner
Criteria by category: Otieno wrote a criteria sheet with three criteria for each of the four categories, each with its own weighting: sixty per cent price for the laundry, fifty for floristry and staffing.		
A route for small businesses: Businesses with fewer than ten staff received one page instead of nine and an appointment for a visit, and the deadline became three weeks. Otieno and Odhiambo spent a morning in the studio in Kilimani. Grace Njeri kept the contract, which for the first time names her way of working as a criterion and commits the hotel to payment within ten days.		
Evidence written into contracts: Every contract now carries the criteria and the hotel's right to verify them. The agency ranked first lost the tender because it would not agree to timesheets being checked against the rota.		
Sponsors treated as suppliers: Odhiambo wrote to the client that the hotel would not place products described as carbon neutral on the basis of offsets, and offered to serve the sponsor's drinks at the bar instead. The client agreed. The sponsor sent two cases of juice and a display stand without any climate claim.		

These steps are the book's method, not requirements of ISO 20121. Evidence can take whatever form suits the property; a separate document is needed only where an applicable requirement, or the property's own system, makes it necessary.

Verification Pact: what is believed, tested against the standard

What is commonly believed	What actually holds	Our position
A supplier questionnaire satisfies 8.3	Only partially true. Criteria must be determined, applied, written into documents and taken into account in selection (8.3)	
Without formal tendering, 8.3 does not apply	No. Sustainability must still be considered in selection, evaluation and monitoring (8.3)	

What is commonly believed	What actually holds	Our position
The standard requires three quotes and a three-week deadline	No. B.4 recommends, as guidance, consulting at most three companies and allowing at least three weeks	
The supplier with most certificates is the best one	No. The standard recommends that requirements relate to sustainability performance (8.3)	
A sponsor's products must fit the hotel's principles	Yes. Advertising, products and services of sponsors must be consistent with them (8.3)	
Suppliers must be audited on site	No. B.9 lists on-site audits among several monitoring tools, as guidance	
The lowest price is forbidden by the standard	No. No price is forbidden; price-only treatment is the lowest maturity level in Table A.5 (guidance)	

Common mistakes: a self-check

Mistake (from the book)	Present here?	Action / owner
Sending one questionnaire to every supplier category.		
Awarding points for papers rather than for performance.		
Questioning small local businesses with forms written for corporations.		
Scoring self-declarations on wages without any evidence.		
Stopping after selection, with no contract clause and no evaluation after events.		
Overlooking the client's sponsor, whose gifts guests receive from the hotel.		
Applying the same price weighting to linen and to people.		
Paying small suppliers late while asking them for sustainability evidence.		

Operative synthesis

- **Does each important supplier category have its own criteria?: One form for all hits the essential point for none**
- **Do our criteria describe performance rather than papers?: Otherwise we score administration, not work**
- **Could a business of three people take part in our tenders?: The standard requires the process to be manageable for small businesses**
- **Do we require evidence where a criterion carries real weight or risk?: Self-declarations on wages are always "yes"**
- **Are the criteria in the contracts, with a right to verify?: Without them, criteria last one day**

- **Do we check sponsors' products and advertising before the event?: To the guest, the sponsor's gift comes from the hotel**
- **Act on immediately. Stop any sponsor material carrying claims the hotel cannot stand behind, and check the hours billed by the staffing agency against the rota for the last three events.**
- **Plan for. Write criteria per category, a one-page route for small suppliers, and contracts with a right to verify and a payment term the hotel will keep.**
- **Monitor going forward. Rate suppliers in a few lines after every large event, hold one conversation a year with each, and keep one file per supplier.**

Action plan for our property

Action	Owner	Due	How we will know it worked

Source: Francesco Dore, The Helm and the Lens, Volume 8a «The Helm», subchapter 2.8. Edizioni Effedore, 2026. Clause references are paraphrased; this sheet does not reproduce the text of ISO 20121. It is not legal advice: the law that applies is that of the place where the property operates.