**Annexes**

**The UNOPS strategic plan, 2018-2021**

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# Annex I. Why UNOPS exists

*The UNOPS mandate*

1. On 1 January 1995, UNOPS commenced operations as a separate and identifiable entity. In the United Nations system, UNOPS is a subsidiary organ, classified as ‘other entity’[[1]](#footnote-1) (rather than fund, programme or specialized agency). UNOPS is a fully fledged entity of the United Nations development system.[[2]](#footnote-2)

2. Since 1995, through resolutions and decisions, Member States have evolved the UNOPS mandate, particularly with respect to the nature of its project services and the types of partners with whom it is expected to engage.

3. By 2017, the legislative basis for UNOPS contributions had been firmly established through a number of resolutions and decisions, including General Assembly resolution 65/176, and Executive Board decisions 2009/25, 2010/21, 2013/23, 2015/12, 2016/12, 2016/19 and 2017/16.

4. From a functional perspective, UNOPS project services comprise: infrastructure, procurement, project management, human resources, financial management, and other management services (General Assembly resolution 65/176).

5. General Assembly resolution 65/176 encouraged UNOPS to expand its engagement with various actors in the development, humanitarian and peacekeeping arenas. By 2010, UNOPS was mandated to make its expertise available to governments (recipient and donor), the United Nations system, and other partners – including intergovernmental institutions, international and regional financing institutions, foundations, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector.

6. In 2013, the Executive Board emphasized the competitive advantages of UNOPS in its mandated areas of expertise – procurement, infrastructure and project management, including provision of implementation, transactional and management advisory services – and called on other United Nations system entities to seek efficiency gains through greater collaboration with UNOPS (decision 2013/23).

7. As summarized in the UNOPS midterm review of its strategic plan, 2014-2017 (DP/OPS/2016/5), endorsed in decisions 2016/19 and 2017/16, Member States have, over the years, recognized UNOPS expertise and encouraged it to be a resource for expanding implementation capacity[[3]](#footnote-3) for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by providing:

(a) management support services;

(b) specialized technical expertise, including for capacity development; and

(c) support to the expansion of resources for the 2030 Agenda.

8. In the same decisions, the Executive Board aligned the UNOPS contribution goals – its overall value proposition – with those three areas of expertise.

*The Secretary-General’s vision for prevention*

10. In a letter to all permanent representatives of Member States of the United Nations,[[4]](#footnote-4) the Secretary-General summarized the strategic context and laid out his vision for the United Nations as a platform for prevention enabled through management reform:

 *“Through a series of recent global agreements on sustainable development, climate change, sustaining peace, disaster risk reduction and financing for development Member States have provided a broad vision of the future they want. I am committed to advancing meaningful reforms to adapt the United Nations to this complex world, so it can effectively serve all of its Member States in achieving that future and managing shared challenges and opportunities along the way.* [...]

*While the universal and comprehensive agenda for sustainable development and sustaining peace pledged to “leave no one behind”, the goals of peaceful coexistence and development are at risk in many countries. The fundamental norms and values of the United Nations are being disregarded. Millions flee in search of safer, better lives, even as doors are closing in many places. Brutal and violent conflicts continue to rage in many corners of the world, taking countless lives and displacing millions more. For many others, sustainable development seems distant. Terrorism and violent extremism are affecting all regions of the world. Climate related natural disasters are becoming more frequent and their destructive powers more intense.*

*By prevention, I mean doing everything we can to help countries to avert the outbreak of crisis that take a high toll on humanity, undermining institutions and capacities to achieve peace and development. I mean rededicating ourselves to the UN Charter and the mandate of Agenda 2030 and ensuring that our assistance goes to those who need it the most. Prevention should permeate everything we do. It should cut across all pillars of [our] work, and unite us for more effective delivery.*

*Preventing human suffering and ensuring progress on the SDGs are primarily the responsibility of Member States. But the United Nations has a vital supporting role. We need to become much better at it, building trust with Member States and all stakeholders. I see us doing this in four ways: A surge in preventive diplomacy; Agenda 2030 and Sustaining Peace as essential to long-term prevention; Strengthening partnerships; and Reforms to overcome fragmentation and consolidate our capacities to meet the prevention challenge.”*

## A. The global context: global agreements and United Nations reform

11. Global agreements adopted by the beginning of 2016, and other documents informing the 2030 Agenda, include:

1. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;[[5]](#footnote-5)
2. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development;[[6]](#footnote-6)
3. The Paris Agreement;[[7]](#footnote-7)
4. The Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review;[[8]](#footnote-8)
5. The World Humanitarian Summit;[[9]](#footnote-9)
6. The New Urban Agenda;[[10]](#footnote-10)
7. The Political Declaration of the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020;[[11]](#footnote-11)
8. Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want;[[12]](#footnote-12)
9. The High-level Independent Panel on Peacekeeping Operations;[[13]](#footnote-13)
10. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2015-2030;[[14]](#footnote-14)
11. The High-level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda;[[15]](#footnote-15)
12. The Small Island Development States Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway;[[16]](#footnote-16)
13. The Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024;[[17]](#footnote-17)
14. Rio +20: The Future We Want;[[18]](#footnote-18)
15. The Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation;[[19]](#footnote-19)
16. The Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020;[[20]](#footnote-20)
17. The System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women;[[21]](#footnote-21)and
18. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.[[22]](#footnote-22)

## B. The operational context: people and countries

### The challenges of people and countries

12. In 2017, 7.4 billion people are living across more than 200 countries and territories where economic and human development varies considerably. The risks they face are multifaceted and interlinked.

13. In 2015-2016, UNOPS activities totalled $2.8 billion of delivery: 83 per cent represented in-country activities across 121 countries, while the other 17 per cent was for global activities, mainly from Geneva, New York and Copenhagen.[[23]](#footnote-23)

14. The midterm review illustrated that there is high correlation between UNOPS in-country activities and the challenges of people in different countries and contexts.[[24]](#footnote-24) An updated contextual assessment follows.

#### Development

15. Forty-seven per cent of world population – 3.5 billion people – live in 75 countries that are low- and lower-middle income and below the 2nd quartile of the human development index. UNOPS had activities in 67 of those countries, representing 71 per cent of in-country delivery.

#### Least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, and small island developing States

16. Thirteen point two per cent of world population – 977 million people – live in 48 least developed countries. UNOPS had activities in 45 of them, representing 65 per cent of in-country delivery.

17. Six point six per cent of world population – 489 million people – live in 32 landlocked developing countries. UNOPS had activities in 23 of them, representing 24 per cent of in-country delivery.

18. Point nine per cent of world population – 70 million people – live in 57 small island developing States. UNOPS had activities in 22 of them, representing 5 per cent of in-country delivery.

#### Conflicts and displacement

19. In 2015, the world saw 38 highly violent conflicts.[[25]](#footnote-25) UNOPS had activities in 27 countries directly affected by those conflicts, representing 57 per cent of in-country delivery.

20. Almost 41 million people across 53 countries were internally displaced due to conflict. UNOPS had activities in 47 of those countries, representing 67 per cent of in-country delivery.

21. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support conducted 16 missions – nine in Africa, four in Asia, two in Europe, and one in the Americas – including 113,000 personnel, with an annual budget of around $8 billion. UNOPS had activities in all 16 countries, representing 29 per cent of in-country delivery.

#### Climate change, disasters and displacement

22. Forty-seven point five per cent of world population – 3.5 billion people – live in 71 low- and lower-middle income countries that are below the 2nd quartile on the climate change adaptability index. UNOPS had activities in 66 of those countries, representing 63 per cent of in-country delivery.

23. More than 19 million people were displaced due to disasters in 2015; 70 per cent of these people live across 58 low- and lower-middle income countries. UNOPS had activities in 53 of those countries, representing 74 per cent of in-country delivery.

#### Urbanization

24. Fifty-four per cent of the world population – almost 4 billion people – live in urban areas. Thirty-four per cent of these people live in urban areas across 82 low- and lower-middle-income countries. UNOPS had activities in 73 of those countries, representing 79 per cent of in-country delivery.

#### Transparency

25. Twenty-nine point seven per cent of world population – 2.2 billion people – live in 65 low- and lower-middle income countries that are below the 2nd quartile on the corruption perception index. UNOPS had activities in 59 of those countries, representing 75 per cent of in-country delivery.

#### Information and communications technology (ICT)

26. Forty-seven per cent of world population – 3.5 billion people – live in 67 low- and lower-middle income countries that are below the 2nd quartile on the ICT development index. UNOPS had activities in 62 of those countries, representing 67 per cent of in-country delivery.

### People’s risks in fragile situations

27. The concepts and approaches to determining which countries are subject to which types of risks and fragilities are evolving. This is also affects the discourse of resilience. As part of the ‘big data’ revolution, assessment methodologies are also bound to evolve. Nevertheless, there is increasing attention to the usefulness of assessing fragility and resilience based on data concerning the multiple risks that affect people’s ability build better lives.

28. A number of country risk indexes exist. UNOPS has assessed its country presence against three of them: (a) the humanitarian risk index, also known as ‘INFORM’; (b) the global adaptations risk index, focusing on climate change; and (c) the global conflict risk index. The assessment reconfirms that UNOPS activities are concentrated in countries where people face the highest risks.

29. Assessment against the humanitarian risk index illustrates that in 2015-2016, 90 per cent of UNOPS in-country activities were in 83 countries with risk levels above the 3rd quartile. Forty-two of those countries had risk levels above the 4th quartile, and 38 per cent of world population lives in those countries, which accounted for 74 per cent of UNOPS in-country activities.

30. Assessment against the global adaptations risk index illustrates that in 2015-2016, 75 per cent of UNOPS in-country activities were in 85 countries with climate change preparedness levels below the 2nd quartile. Forty-five of those countries had preparedness levels below the 1st quartile, and 17 per cent of world population live in these countries, which accounted for 57 per cent of UNOPS in-country activities.

31. Assessment against the global conflict risk index illustrates that in 2015-2016, 78 per cent of UNOPS in-country activities were in 62 countries with risk levels above the 3rd quartile. Thirty-three of those countries had risk levels above the 4th quartile, and 39 per cent of world population lives in those countries, which accounted 62 per cent of UNOPS in-country activities.

32. As would be expected, there is significant correlation between risk levels and recognized country classifications. For example, 44 of the 48 least developed countries suffering from structural impediments to sustainable development[[26]](#footnote-26) are above the 3rd quartile on the humanitarian risk index, and 27 are above the 4th quartile. Similarly, 19 of the 20 countries belonging to the g7+ that have signed up to the New Deal for Fragile States [[27]](#footnote-27) are above the 3rd quartile on the humanitarian risk index, and 13 are above the 4th quartile. Eighteen g7+ countries are also least developed countries.

### The sustainable development goals

33. When the sustainable development goals were adopted, 65 per cent of world population – 5 billion people – lived in 75 countries below the 2nd quartile on the sustainable development goals index. UNOPS had activities in 67 of those countries, representing 69 per cent of in-country delivery.

34. During 2015-2016, while UNOPS activities were associated with several goals, 79 per cent of activities gravitated towards five of them – in order of volume, 3, 16, 11, 9 and 13.

35. Goal 3 – good health and well-being – accounted for 27 per cent of delivery. Eighty-seven per cent of delivery under goal 3 represented stand-alone procurement, financial management, project management and human resources services; the other 12 per cent represented infrastructure.

36. Goal 9 – industry, innovation and infrastructure – accounted for 9 per cent of delivery. Approximately 90 per cent represented infrastructure, mainly in the area of transport.

37. Goal 11 – sustainable cities and communities – accounted for 12 per cent of delivery. Thirty-five per cent represented infrastructure, mainly buildings; 65 per cent represented services, mainly in the areas of human resources and project management.

38. Goal 13 – climate action – accounted for 7 per cent of delivery. Fifty-three per cent represented project management, 31 per cent represented financial management, and the remaining 17 per cent represented mainly human resources and stand-alone procurement services.

39. Goal 16 – peace, justice and strong institutions – accounted for 24 per cent of delivery. Ninety-two per cent of that delivery represented stand-alone procurement, project management, financial management, and human resources services; the other 8 per cent represented infrastructure.

40. In addition, UNOPS contributed to goal 2 – zero hunger – which accounted for 6 per cent of delivery, and goal 17 – partnerships for the goals – 5 per cent. The remaining 10 per cent pertained to engagements directed towards other or multiple goals.

41. The annual UNOPS partner survey helps the organization to understand the future expectations of its broader constituency. In 2016, UNOPS interviewed 522 partners; 76 per cent volunteered an indication of the goals towards which they would anticipate future demand for project services.

42. Partners’ feedback confirms that the UNOPS services are relevant across all the goals. It also suggests that the goals can be clustered into three main groups based on the number of partners anticipating demand: (a) highest demand: 3, 6, 9, 11, 16 and 17; (b) medium demand: 1, 4, 5, 7, 8 and 13; and (c) lowest demand: 2, 10, 12, 14 and 15.

43. Throughout the planning period, UNOPS will focus on further developing solutions and approaches that directly or indirectly expand the capacity of countries to mitigate risks faced by their people. It will: (a) expand the range of solutions offered in contexts where it already has significant presence and knowledge of the local context; and (b) enhance transfer of proven knowledge and solutions across similar contexts. It will focus efforts based on past and anticipated demand.

44. A deliberate, systematic approach to knowledge management will be the prerequisite for realizing those ambitions. It will require systematic cataloguing of demand and experience; ability to attract, retain and link people with needed expertise; development of strategic knowledge products, as well as tools and approaches enabling more qualitative and earlier engagement with partners. UNOPS will invest in institutional capabilities to increase the sophistication through which relevant data, information and knowledge are generated, recorded, shared and recognized, internally and externally.

### Development financing

45. In 2013, government expenditures in developing countries were $7 trillion and international financial flows to developing countries were $2 trillion.[[28]](#footnote-28)

46. In 2014, net official development assistance (ODA) was $135 billion, around 0.3 per cent of gross national income in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries, and 6.5 per cent of the international financial flows to developing countries.

47. In 2015, OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) estimated that 41 per cent of 2013 OECD/DAC ODA, excluding debt relief, went through multilateral institutions: 41 billion as core funding for multilateral institutions and 18.2 billion as earmarked non-core funding.[[29]](#footnote-29) Thirty-one per cent of the OECD/DAC core and non-core contributions were concentrated in organizations of the United Nations system.

48. In 2015, the United Nations reported $48 billion as total financing for 2014: 55 per cent earmarked, 29 per cent assessed contributions, 10 per cent core, and 6 per cent other revenues and fees. The distribution on main United Nations system activities was: 62 per cent for operational activities for development – divided among development (37 per cent); and humanitarian (25 per cent); other 38 per cent comprised global norms, standards, policy and advocacy (21 per cent); and peacekeeping (17 per cent).[[30]](#footnote-30) The size of UNOPS annual delivery is around 3 per cent of United Nations expenditure and approximately 1 per cent of net ODA.

49. The Addis Ababa outcome document estimates the annual infrastructure investment gap in developing countries to be in the range of $1-1.5 trillion.

## C. The strategic framework: purpose, vision, mission and goals

#### Realizing strategic objectives

50. Internally, the strategic goals (contribution and management goals) will frame the development of business strategies and joint initiatives aligning and integrating efforts at the country, regional and global levels. The UNOPS budget estimates for the first two years of the planning period will establish overall institutional key performance indicators for its strategic goals. These, in turn, will be operationalized through internal business strategies, compacts, work plans and scorecards, and monitored through dashboards based on real-time data.

51. Measuring organizational performance against established standards and objective criteria creates a significant disciplining effect – and commonly understood business intelligence is a strong basis for establishing collective priorities for investment and constructive engagement in continued innovation of the services and delivery platform.

# Annex II. What UNOPS aspires to do

## A. The mandate: services, expertise and partners

### Legislative basis for contributions

52. The UNOPS contribution goals state the overall value proposition for its mandated project services, namely, what it can contribute towards the 2030 Agenda, including towards countries’ achievement of the goals.

### Flexible and modular project services

53. UNOPS is committed to maintaining and further developing its advantage in providing integrated, reliable and efficient management support services for partners in the United Nations system and beyond.

#### Quality through certified functional service lines

54. In infrastructure, the UNOPS health and safety and environment management systems are now based on internationally recognized standards, while contracts have long been based on the standards of the International Federation of Consulting Engineers. With the University of Oxford, it has developed an evidence-based approach to long-term infrastructure planning.

55. In procurement, the sustainable practices of UNOPS have for the second time been recognized by the Chartered Institute for Purchasing and Supply at the ‘gold’ level. UNOPS continues to enable sustainable procurement through its ‘eSourcing’ platform and procurement policy. It has tailored the ‘eCommerce’ solution ‘UN Web Buy Plus’ to include more sustainable options, and launched, inter alia, a ‘Possibilities’ portal and forum’ to enhance opportunities for women- and youth-owned businesses to become suppliers to the development sector.

56. In project management, UNOPS was the first organization in the world to be accredited for training and consulting by both APMG International and the Project Management Institute. It has established a vibrant global practice of certified project managers, and has developed tools and guidance, including to integrate sustainable implementation approaches into projects.

57. In human resources, UNOPS has developed an individual contractor modality offering the speed and flexibility needed by field operations, and benefits packages for personnel, including health insurance and pension plans. In the human resources network UNOPS will continue to support development of flexible contracting modalities responsive to the United Nations operational environment.

58. In finance, UNOPS was among the first United Nations organizations to transition to the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (known as ‘IPSAS’), and has maintained its track record of unqualified external audit opinions.

#### Integration of knowledge and expertise through service types

59. *Transactional services* are typically generic support services related to human resources, procurement and financial management. Whether produced and delivered locally or as global shared services, clear standards reduce the complexity of management and ensure speed and control of delivery, and economies of scale. Cross-functional integration is enabled through business processes supported by information technology. Transactional services are delivered as stand-alone offerings or as integral components of implementation services.

60. *Advisory services* entail the imparting and development of knowledge to expand the capacity of people and systems. They span functional technical expertise responding to the institutional needs of partners; the integration of sustainable approaches balancing social, economic and environmental considerations for implementation; and the embedding of United Nations norms and standards in integrated, context-specific service offerings that contribute to global goals and local objectives. They typically comprise specialized expertise grounded in core competencies in infrastructure, procurement and project management. Advisory services are delivered as stand-alone offerings or as integral components of implementation services.

61. *Implementation services* comprise project and programme management on behalf of partners, designed in response to their needs and typically agreed for realization of benefits at the output or outcome level. They include infrastructure construction, civil works, and contract management. Implementation services often involve a blend of transactional and advisory services tailored to contributing to achievement of goal and/or to context-specific objectives.

#### Partners’ demand and response to the UNOPS value proposition

62. The UNOPS partners indicate future demand for all service lines and types. Congruent with the UNOPS mandate, more than half of the partners indicate demand for project management and implementation services. At the same time, 30-40 per cent of partners anticipate demand across all other service lines and types.

63. Between the different categories of partners the net promoter score is high, regardless of which service line or type they anticipate having in demand. [[31]](#footnote-31) Government partners anticipate a particularly high demand for UNOPS advisory services and specialized technical expertise. Transactional services, especially for human resources, seem attractive to partners in the United Nations Secretariat.

64. Across different categories of partners, the net promoter score is high, regardless of which service line or type they anticipate having in demand. Across the service lines, the breakdown is: infrastructure 43 per cent, procurement 48 per cent, project management 4 per cent, human resources 38 per cent, and financial management 35 per cent. Across the service types, the breakdown is: implementation 43 per cent, transactional 33 per cent, and advisory 51 per cent.

#### The partners UNOPS worked with

65. The United Nations system remains the largest group of UNOPS partners, accounting for 40 per cent of delivery during the biennium (16 per cent on behalf of United Nations development system partners). Governments accounted for 24 per cent of delivery; close to half of this was from non-OECD/DAC governments. Trust funds accounted for 11 per cent of delivery. The remaining 25 per cent was mainly for multilateral institutions, international financial institutions, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental institutions, and foundations.

66. Demand from the United Nations system was primarily for stand-alone procurement and other management support services. During the biennium, stand-alone procurement accounted for 41 per cent, project management, 28 per cent, human resources services, 17 per cent, and financial management services, 6 per cent.

67. The UNOPS service mix for trust funds includes financial management and other management support services. Over the biennium, financial management services accounted for 41 per cent, project management for 34 per cent and stand-alone procurement for 22 per cent.

68. The majority of demand from governments is for infrastructure services. Over the biennium, nearly 41 per cent of government demand was for infrastructure, with another 34 per cent for stand-alone procurement. Project management services accounted for 18 per cent.

#### Project services delivered in 2015-2016

69. The UNOPS biennial delivery totalled $2.8 billion – $1.4 billion in 2015 and $1.4 billion in 2016. Analysis of the UNOPS biennial portfolio confirms that the foundation of its work is efficient management support services. The analysis further illustrates the areas where technical expertise and sector-specific knowledge and experience contribute to effectiveness.

#### Infrastructure

70. Infrastructure services comprised a fifth of UNOPS delivery during the biennium. They spanned sectors such as transport, utilities, and waste, including enabling assets such as buildings. In 2015 and 2016, close to half was in buildings and approximately a fifth in transport.

71. UNOPS infrastructure services include planning, design, construction, rehabilitation, client infrastructure, contract administration, site remediation, operations, and maintenance, as well as technical assistance and training.

#### Procurement

72. Over the biennium, UNOPS procured close to $1.6 billion worth of goods and services. Many constitute vital project inputs for infrastructure projects, while others are the outputs of stand-alone procurement services. Stand-alone procurement represented approximately a third of UNOPS global delivery.

73. UNOPS procurement services comprise end-to-end procurement, including warehousing and distribution. They include training and technical assistance for distinct parts of the supply chain such as planning, sourcing, solicitation and contract management.

#### Project management, financial management, human resources and other management services

74. Approximately half of the biennial delivery was in the area of project management, financial management, human resources and other management services. Of that amount, approximately 13 per cent represented project management, 53 per cent financial management, 31 per cent human resources services, and 4 per cent other management services.

75. Services provided in the area of project management included the establishment and operation of project management offices and teams, technical assistance, and training. In financial management, services provided included grants management and grantee selection. In human resources, services included management of personnel contracts and recruitment; and in the area of other management services, services included travel management, communication and outreach, and operations of information and communications technology systems.

76. Finally, UNOPS provided secretariat services for international initiatives. Through this delivery modality, UNOPS provided financial management, procurement, project management and human resources services accounting for roughly 8 per cent of 2016 activity, compared to 7 per cent in 2015.

#### The suppliers UNOPS worked with

77. In 2016, the five largest United Nations Standard Products and Services Code segments accounted for 59 per cent of total UNOPS procurement of goods and services. The segments were:

(a) building and facility construction and maintenance services;

(b) public order and security and safety services;

(c) vehicles and their accessories and components;

(d) pharmaceuticals, including contraceptives and vaccines; and

(e) medical equipment, accessories and supplies.

78. Of the $1.6 billion worth of goods and services procured over the biennium, 31 per cent were supplied by vendors registered in the Americas, 26 per cent in Europe, 25 per cent in Asia, and 17 per cent in Africa. Thirty-eight per cent were for projects delivered in Africa, 22 per cent in Asia, and 22 per cent in the Americas. As much as 66 per cent of goods and services were supplied by vendors from 165 non-OECD/DAC countries.

## B. Operational ambitions for 2018-2021: a known and recognized resource

[*There is no annex for this section*]

## C. A accountability for operational value: direct and indirect effect

### The UNOPS role in the ‘overall value chain’

#### Accounting for results

79. In the past, UNOPS has accounted for its operational value and contributions to partner results primarily by reporting on the outputs its delivery has enabled. Over the past four years it has developed a comprehensive classification of outputs, which is aligned with its service lines and types.[[32]](#footnote-32) This is an important source of business intelligence that has permitted a more sophisticated account of its contributions.

80. In 2016, UNOPS conducted its first ex-ante review of how its portfolio of projects had been associated with the 17 goals. Based on its comprehensive output catalogue, UNOPS was able to illustrate the varying partner demand for different service lines and types, across countries, contexts and goals. The analysis also highlighted that UNOPS can expand partners’ implementation capacity in different parts of the ‘overall value chain’ and interlinked ‘results chains’.[[33]](#footnote-33)

81. At its core, the ‘overall value chain’ should be understood to comprise the widely recognized ‘results-chain’ logic derived from the ‘logframe’ approach. It includes the strategic and programmatic decisions for prioritizing and designing individual interventions. The UNOPS results methodology is described in DP/OPS/2013/3, annex IV.

#### Impact of efficiency

82. Efficient use of finite resources will be essential to achieving the 2030 Agenda. As a strategic measure to continuously improve its operations and demonstrate added value, UNOPS will develop the key performance indicators for its management support services to demonstrate the impact of the speed and quality of its processes.

83. In project management, the indicators may include: project start-up times, on-cost and on-schedule project delivery, and project closure times. For infrastructure projects, they may also include: design review completion, accidents and injuries, and environmental management.

84. In procurement, UNOPS has implemented a new ‘eSourcing’ system. Indicators may include: duration of the solicitation process, share of successful tendering, bid compliance, on-time delivery based on purchase order and receipt dates, and completeness and quality of goods received based on receipt amounts and rejections.

85. For human resources services, indictors may include: selection and recruitment speed, timeliness of contract issuance and renewals, and timeliness and precision of payroll. Indicators for financial services may include: on-time financial project reporting; on-time payments to suppliers; and payment rejections.

### UNOPS in countries

86. During 2015-2016, UNOPS in-country activities accounted for 83 per cent of its total delivery. The activities spanned 121 countries: 51 in Africa (33 per cent); 34 in Asia (36 per cent); 25 in the Americas (12 per cent); six in Europe (2 per cent); and five in Oceania (1 per cent). The activity level in different countries depends on demand: 74 per cent of in-country activity took place in 42 countries with humanitarian risk levels above the 4th quartile on the INFORM risk index.

87. In 11 of those countries, accounting for 59 per cent of in-country activity, the level exceeded $35 million: Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, Iraq, Mali, Myanmar, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Syria.

88. Except for Iraq and Syria, all are least developed countries, and five of them are among the 20 countries that have signed up to the New Deal for Fragile States: [[34]](#footnote-34) Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Somalia and South Sudan.

89 In alignment with the Chief Executives Board principles for collaboration, UNOPS measures to focus its engagement and collaboration at the country level may include development of country partnership plans to: (a) Align UNOPS in-country activities behind national needs, priorities and plans, considering the priorities of donors and international financial institutions; (b) Target the operationalization and resourcing of the UNOPS in-country value proposition towards areas and approaches where expansion of implementation capacity can have the greatest impact; and (c) Serve as a platform for engagement and collaboration with other in-country stakeholders, including United Nations system partners and the private sector.

# Annex III. How UNOPS will manage

## A. Governance, risk and compliance: simplify and empower

### External governance, and United Nations coordination and collaboration

#### External governance

90. UNOPS is an integral part of the United Nations development system. Throughout this plan UNOPS has embedded provisions of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review that are directly relevant to its mandate and unique business model. In the coming years, UNOPS will closely follow the process of further aligning the development system, and, within its remits, support the expansion its implementation capacity through management support services and specialized technical expertise.

### Internal governance, and management coordination and collaboration

#### The UNOPS structures for management coordination and collaboration

91. UNOPS has refined its global organizational structure in recent years. Its global portfolio of projects is organized in geographical regions that manage several country and multi-country offices. Those business units may, in turn, be organized in country or local project offices. All global projects are organized in service clusters embedded within one structure. This permits management oversight, coordination and integration of in-country operations. A global shared services centre model facilitates the provision of internal support services on a cost-recovery basis.

92. UNOPS headquarters provides executive and institutional strategic direction. This comprises a number of functional groups responsible for policy development and advice, including the processes, tools, and guidance that enable practitioners to execute requirements and appropriate management oversight. Headquarters also embeds risk management and internal oversight functions.

93. UNOPS has three main forums for institutional coordination: (a) the Senior Leadership Group, which meets weekly, to advise on short-term operational and strategic issues; (b) the Corporate Operations Group, which meets monthly, to advise on strategic issues for the medium and longer term;[[35]](#footnote-35) and (c) a larger global leadership meeting that is convened annually to develop collective means to operationalize medium- and longer-term strategic priorities. In addition, the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts provides independent external advice to the Executive Director.

#### Governance, risk and compliance: culture, structure and policies

#### Culture

94. The Governance, Risk and Compliance initiative seeks to affect organizational culture and stimulate principled performance throughout UNOPS. Principled performance is the “reliable achievement of objectives while addressing uncertainty and acting with integrity”.

95. In 2016, the Executive Director set out 10 overarching principles and imperatives for all UNOPS activities and the conduct of all UNOPS personnel.[[36]](#footnote-36) Through a number of initiatives over the coming years, UNOPS will seek to instil these throughout the organization. This will entail emphasis on leadership capabilities, including the responsibility of leaders to execute the UNOPS strategy and drive principled performance.

#### Structures

96. In 2017, the Executive Director set out the UNOPS organizational principles and governance model.[[37]](#footnote-37) The UNOPS governance model ensures that duties and powers are transparently segregated at all levels, organized into five blocks: (a) external oversight; (b) Executive Office oversight; (c) operations management; (d) risk, compliance and financial controllership; and (e) assurance.

97. In alignment with those principles, UNOPS is preparing an update of the policy that regulates its global structure. The objective is to further delineate authorities and responsibilities among its business units, including the principles under which its revenue, cost, and cost-recovery centres operate.

98. The policy update will clarify, inter alia, (a) the functional scope and core responsibilities of headquarters entities; (b) the distinction and reciprocity of policy vis-à-vis operational authorities and responsibilities; and (c) the organizing principles and scope of the country and multi-country offices embedded in regional structures.

99. In response to the call of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review for enhanced transparency of the country presence of development system entities, the latter will include introduction of external naming conventions which, based on objective criteria, more clearly express the country coverage of country and multi-country offices. It will also lay out the associated authorities and responsibilities at the country level, including for strategic engagement with partners, and documentation and sharing of experience.

#### Policies

100. In 2017, the Executive Director promulgated a new legislative framework[[38]](#footnote-38) that establishes the different types of policies, instructions and guidance documents governing all UNOPS activities.

101. Since 2010, UNOPS has developed and maintained a comprehensive internal policy framework. By the end of 2016, the framework comprised 106 internal policies – 36 organizational directives and 70 administrative instructions – totalling 1,135 pages of prescriptive content.[[39]](#footnote-39) Several policies are issued pursuant to legislative decisions, others on the advice of management, and internal or external audit.[[40]](#footnote-40)

102. UNOPS has embarked on a comprehensive overhaul of its policy instruments. The objective is to simplify and reduce the number of policies, while ensuring that their implementation is supported by UNOPS processes. The expected outcome is empowerment of personnel to perform their functions efficiently, with assurance that they are in compliance with policy. The process is coordinated and prioritized through a legislative framework committee.

103. The legislative framework delegates authority for issuance of policy instruments to functional directors. They, in turn, are responsible and accountable for simplifying and reducing the volume of prescriptive content, ensuring that business processes and tools facilitate efficient implementation and appropriate control, and monitoring the exercise of functional delegations within the areas for which they are accountable.

104. Implementation efforts will include development of advanced ‘dashboards’ to improve internal transparency, managerial oversight, and assurance that operations are performed efficiently and in compliance with policy and standards. They will help identify functional areas, business processes and business units where improvements of policy, tools, competencies or resourcing are needed. Those efforts may be supplemented by the strategic recommendations of internal and external audit, and other oversight functions.

#### Engagement acceptance and assurance

105. UNOPS has rolled out a new process for assessing and managing project risks. The process will ensure: (a) earlier, more systematic assessment of a broad range of risk categories associated with new projects, and better categorization of the projects UNOPS seeks to engage in; (b) improved efficiency and effectiveness of UNOPS recurrent projects assurance; and (c) a comprehensive risk assessment of the UNOPS portfolio of ongoing projects. This will ensure, inter alia, that project records provide reliable information for real-time knowledge-sharing and strategic assessment and assurance of potential and ongoing activities.

#### Information and communications technology

106. UNOPS will continue to invest in ICT to further embed it throughout the UNOPS delivery platform and enable UNOPS to develop unique solutions that differentiate its service offerings and deliver greater value. ICT will provide a foundation to leverage innovation taking place at the country level and allow for rapid adoption of new approaches and tools while ensuring appropriate information security controls. To facilitate the digital transformation of UNOPS, ICT will utilize cloud services to improve collaboration and productivity and will leverage emerging technologies, such as machine learning, to: (a) identify trends and patterns, gain business insights, and inform decision-making; and (b) build ‘smarter’ systems for the future.

## B. Management ambitions for 2018-2021: quality and principled performance

### Drive quality and principled performance through balanced performance management

#### Partner value

107. *Partner value* – deliver innovative services and solutions contributing value recognized by partners and in accordance with international standards and recognized best practices.

108. The drivers and initiatives for partner value include:

1. *Manage partner value*
2. Coordinate global, regional, and country-based strategic customer relationships, and knowledge management and liaison, to develop the global portfolio;
3. Strengthen tactical client relations and service quality management; and
4. Solicit systematic partner feedback through annual survey.
5. *Partner for knowledge and effect*
6. Engage more strategically, and earlier, with partners in the development process, and higher up in government;
7. Develop and maintain memorandums of understanding and host country agreements with partners;
8. Enhance capabilities for strategic and targeted engagement with country teams; and
9. Expand targeted knowledge partnerships with the United Nations, academia and other partners for specialization of technical expertise.
10. *Communicate contribution of value*
11. Maintain annual reporting based on the global reporting initiative, supplemented by substantiated project examples;
12. Leverage website and other online platforms for communications and branding;
13. Align brand manual and website content to clearly communicate the value proposition established in the UNOPS strategic plan
14. Provide real-time project information compliant with the standard of the International Aid Transparency Initiative, supplemented with additional data enabling systematic knowledge management;
15. Develop intellectual knowledge products for mandated areas;
16. Engage substantively in relevant high-level global and regional events; and
17. Develop a comprehensive communications strategy aligned with the strategic plan.

#### People excellence

109. *People excellence* – empower people to perform at consistently high standards in a culture conducive to principled performance, making UNOPS an employer of choice attracting and retaining a talented workforce.

110. The drivers and initiatives for people excellence include:

1. *Embrace a culture founded in United Nations values and principles*
2. Enhance gender and geographic (North-South) balance;
3. Maintain a gender advisory panel to propose targeted initiatives to drive gender parity; and
4. Strengthen representation of national professionals from the Southern hemisphere.
5. *Attract, recognize and develop talent*
6. Increase outreach and identification of skills and competencies for new focus areas, including local national talents and diasporas;
7. Proactively identify career and development aspirations, and match people and roles;
8. Embed competency framework in talent recruitment and performance management;
9. Maintain talent benches and rosters for business-critical roles;
10. Further develop the holistic learning approach comprising personal, professional and leadership development; and
11. Develop effective approaches for internal skills and knowledge transfer.
12. *Reinforce leadership*
13. Reinforce leadership responsibility for strategy execution;
14. Strengthen feedback culture and reinforce accountability for people management;
15. Annually assess and take action on personnel engagement levels across the organization;
16. Enable leaders to meet the challenge of managing personnel; and
17. Create conditions conducive to leadership and organizational development, including through change management and excellence engagements.

#### Process excellence

111. *Process excellence* – drive measurable improvement of quality, efficiency and reliability of operations through simplification and innovation of processes, based on clear standards and delegated authority enabled through information technology.

112. The drivers and initiatives for process excellence include:

1. *Manage efficiency and consistency*
2. Develop the breadth and depth of systematic business intelligence available to inform management decisions, including for quarterly business reviews;
3. Improve real-time monitoring of processes and operations, including through quarterly engagement assurance and monitoring of oversight recommendations;
4. Maintain focus on process optimization and efficiency-gains through shared services;
5. Embed functionally defined efficiency and compliance measures for core processes into ‘OneUNOPS’[[41]](#footnote-41); and
6. Embed functional process guidance through the practice and quality management system.
7. *Benchmark performance*
8. Maintain capacity for assessment and benchmarking of organizational excellence;
9. Advance and maintain business records in accordance with relevant standards;
10. Reinforce functional responsibility for design, documentation, management and continuous simplification and benchmarking of business processes;
11. Internally benchmark compliance with security, health, safety and environmental standards;
12. Benchmark address of oversight recommendations internally and externally.
13. *Innovate services and delivery platform*
14. Consciously optimize and innovate functionalities of ‘OneUNOPS’, including a broader menu of global shared services;
15. Strengthen the global support services practice;
16. Expand sustainable choices on ‘UN Web Buy Plus’;
17. Expand targeted development of long-term agreements with suppliers;
18. Pursue continued integration of ‘eSourcing’ with the Global Marketplace;
19. Expand measures to facilitate integration of small and medium-sized enterprises, and women and youth owned businesses, in the development supply chain;
20. Maintain and develop approaches enabling awareness and dissemination of innovative, sustainable products and services of small and medium-sized enterprises, including through the ‘Possibilities Portal’;
21. Support measures that enable local contractors to engage in international tendering and comply with health, safety and environmental standards;
22. Support introduction of human resources contract modalities that enable efficient administration, and the speed and flexibility needed for the operational environment; and
23. Incorporate strategies and action plans for innovation into longer-term regional business strategies.

#### Financial stewardship

113. *Financial stewardship* – safeguard the demand-driven, self-financed business model and ability to invest in innovation for the benefit of governments, the United Nations and other partners, and the people they serve.

114. The drivers and initiatives for financial stewardship include:

1. *Manage growth and delivery*
2. Maintain the clear structures for revenue, cost and cost-recovery centres underpinning the self-financed business model and global organization;
3. Enhance sophistication in use of order-book information to allow dynamic expansion or contraction of enabling functions at global, regional and country levels; and
4. Ensure a healthy balance of management expense and turnover, with due consideration to the UNOPS risk profile and longer-term development.
5. *Attribute costs to value*
6. Based on current cost-recovery principles, further develop cost-recovery models aligned with service lines and types to ensure full cost attribution and recovery, including of knowledge costs;
7. Strengthen internal controls, ensuring alignment of engagements and cost-recovery policy;
8. Explore feasibility of enhanced standardization for recovery of personnel-related costs; and
9. Continue to explore the ability to utilize and fully leverage shared services so as to ensure full and equitable cost recovery.
10. *Invest in knowledge and innovation*
11. Develop and invest portions of revenue in improvement and change projects to innovate services and strengthen institutional capabilities supporting achievement of the UNOPS contributions goals and associated ambitions.

## C. Management reform and innovation: develop, enhance and strengthen

### Organizational excellence

115. In 2017, UNOPS commissioned an external excellence assessment to take stock of its performance against the internationally recognized model for organizational excellence it adopted in 2013.[[42]](#footnote-42) The model has since been an important strategic reference point for a holistic approach to excellence.

116. In the 2017 assessment, UNOPS was recognized for ‘5-star excellence’. An organization recognized for 5-star excellence: (a) is a high performing organization where change is the norm; (b) improves, refines and simplifies the practices it uses to achieve its goals; and (c) has ongoing results in line with its strategy. In 2013, UNOPS was recognized for ‘4-star excellence’.

117. The assessors engaged and consulted with more than 120 UNOPS personnel representing offices around the world. Their conclusions provided evidence of significant progress since the first assessment in 2013, and highlighted areas for focus to accelerate the trajectory towards organizational excellence. These are summarized below.

118. The achievements and strengths highlighted include:

1. Partner satisfaction is at high levels;
2. People are dedicated and highly qualified, and carry out the UNOPS mission every day;
3. Projects are set up and realized with outstanding speed and flexibility;
4. Growth is continuous;
5. Financial foundations are strong;
6. Risk management has been consistently improved;
7. Drive for continuous improvement was evident throughout the whole assessment, and driven by systematic improvement approaches, including in: (i) partnerships, (ii) leadership, (iii) human resources management, and (iv) implementation of ‘OneUNOPS’; and
8. Strategy has, through the midterm review, considered changes in the external environment and internal capabilities, and laid solid foundations for new ambitions.

119. Areas for attention as UNOPS strives to achieve next level of excellence include:

1. Management of change and strategic improvements: [[43]](#footnote-43) (i) Ensure strong focus on a few vital changes in support of new strategic ambitions: strategic engagement with partners and social impact investment; and (ii) Maintain focus on initiatives already launched to ensure consistent deployment throughout the organization;
2. Strengthen brand and positioning based on a shared understanding of new elements of the value proposition, internally as well as externally;
3. Ensure human resources strategies are developed to foster leadership styles and attract competences needed for the new ambitions of more strategic engagement and social impact investment; and
4. Invest in knowledge management: (i) Pilot approaches for systematic and substantiated assessment of project’s contributions towards goal and/or context-specific outcomes and impacts; (ii) Strengthen arrangements for process management, including through leading indicators and external benchmarking; (iii) Develop systematic approaches to fostering innovation and sharing new ideas; and (iv) Deploy a more structured approach to developing knowledge partnerships.

120. The conclusions and recommendations of the assessment were commensurate with priorities highlighted by UNOPS global leaders through internal consultations leading to the development of the plan. These have been central in shaping the internal agenda for management reform and innovation, and targeting the core capabilities for strategic investment.

### Focused improvement and building of institutional capabilities

121. Building on its agile business model and organizational excellence, UNOPS will continue to deliver high quality through innovative services and solutions, and engage strategically with partners to ensure that its full value proposition becomes better known. It will thus strengthen its position as a known and recognized United Nations resource for Member States and the Secretary-General to expand implementation capacity for impact across peace and security, humanitarian and development efforts.

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1. In the United Nations system UNOPS is classified as ‘other entity’ (DPI/2470 rev.4), signifying, inter alia, its unique, demand-driven business model and status as a self-financed non-programmatic entity. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. While UNOPS is an entity of the United Nations development system, UNOPS is not a ‘fund, programme or specialized agency’. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Guided by their demand, UNOPS can expand partners’ ability to realize their objectives through developing and/or supplementing their implementation capacity. In accordance with financial regulation 18.04, it can work within country systems while supporting national capacity. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Letter of the Secretary-General to all permanent representatives of Member States of the United Nations, New York, 3 May 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. A/RES/70/1 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. A/RES/69/313 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21 [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. A/RES/71/243 [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. A/70/709 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. A/RES/71/256 [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. A/CONF.228/3 [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. [Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want](http://www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/pdf/au/agenda2063.pdf). African Union Commission, 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. A/70/95–S/2015/446 [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. A/RES/69/283 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. “[A New Global Partnership: Eradicate poverty and transform economies through sustainable development.](https://www.un.org/sg/sites/www.un.org.sg/files/files/HLP_P2015_Report.pdf)” *The Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda.* United Nations, 2013 [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. A/RES/69/15 [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. [The Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024](http://unohrlls.org/custom-content/uploads/2015/03/Vienna-Programme-of-Action.pdf), United Nations, 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. A/RES/66/288 [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. “[Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation](http://www.oecd.org/dac/effectiveness/49650173.pdf)” *Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness*. Busan, Korea, 2011 [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. A/CONF.219/3/Rev.1 [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. CEB/2006/2 [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. A/CONF.177/20/Add.1 [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. 2015-2016 delivery expenditure is used as a proxy the UNOPS activity level. The activity in different countries is calculated as a percentage of total in-country activity. It should be noted that actual percentages may be higher in different contexts, insofar as some contextual data-sets do not cover all countries; similarly, the 17 per cent of global delivery also is directed to these contexts. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Unless otherwise indicated, all data in the following sections is derived based on the sources cited in the DP/OPS/2016/5, annex I. Calculations have been updated to reflect the most recent source data. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Conflict Barometer 2016, Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research, 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Least developed countries are identified by the Committee for Development Policy based on three criteria: gross national income per capita; the human assets index, and the economic vulnerability index. List of least developed countries (as of 16 February 2016), Department of Economic and Social Affairs, handbook on the least developed country category, 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Source: the g7+ website [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Data based on OECD/DAC, World Bank development indicators, and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, available at the Development Initiatives on the Financing for Development website [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Multilateral Aid 2015, OECD/DAC, 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Financing the United Nations Development System, 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Annex II [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. DP/OPS/2016/5, annex II [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Source: the g7+ website [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. The group also performs the functions of the organizations risk committee, and it 2017 its modalities were supplemented with quarterly in-person business reviews. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Executive Director principles [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. EOD/ED/2017/02 [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. EOD/ED/2017/01 [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Management response to DP/OPS/2017/3 and DP/OPS/2017/4 [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. DP/OPS/2016/5, paragraph 96 [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. DP/OPS/2016/5, paragraphs 58-60 [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. DP/OPS/2013, paragraph 63 [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. The quarterly business review process was highlighted as a forum for closed-loop management. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)