



UNOPS STRATEGIC PLAN, 2014-2017

SUSTAINABILITY, FOCUS & EXCELLENCE

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I. FOCUSED STRATEGY IN CONTEXT

1. UNOPS is committed to United Nations coherence and contributing to sustainable results that improve the lives of people in need. It is guided by the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed goals as well as the United Nations policy framework, including General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review.
2. UNOPS is closely following the debate concerning the establishment of post-2015 development priorities. At the midpoint of the present strategic plan it will seek guidance from the Executive Board to ensure that its strategic focus remains aligned with the outcomes of these discussions.
3. With the implementation of the present strategy, UNOPS will enhance its contributions to the abilities of countries and communities to manage projects, infrastructure and procurement in a sustainable manner. The strategy is premised on the need for UNOPS to focus on specific areas, which will allow UNOPS to contribute to world-class performance standards and best practices where it will have the most impact on the development, humanitarian and peacekeeping operations and results of its partners.

A. Evolving global priorities and policy framework

National ownership and capacity

4. National ownership and capacities are strengthening in developing countries. Most developing countries have greater access to domestic funding, whether public or private, and many are becoming less dependent on traditional official development assistance. A number of developing countries have graduated, or are in the process of graduating, to 'middle-income' status, and are ready to share their development experience.
5. At the same time, the current global financial crisis, and major longer-term global trends with respect to the rightful demands of the growing world population for development, climate change, and access to natural resources, food, energy and water, and technological developments, are affecting countries and communities everywhere.
6. The continued relevance of UNOPS, like that of many other actors, depends on how well it adapts to this changing environment. Key shifts in the demand for our services are already discernible. We are held to ever-higher performance standards, and we recognize that our partners are in charge; they decide whether or not to work with us. There are heightened demands as to what and how we contribute and on how we distinguish ourselves from other service providers in the same field. We must offer added value and tangible contributions to the results of our partners, especially to their capacity to deal with challenges. These must include innovative solutions based on world-class knowledge, understanding of local conditions, and creative, problem-solving approaches, responding to the challenges faced by governments and communities.

Sustainable development

7. The outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development ('Rio+20') acknowledges the imperative of sustainable development and the need to integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions at all levels. UNOPS is firmly committed to sustainable development and will focus, within the areas of its mandate, on sustainability in its contributions to the results of partners.
8. Following Rio+20, the Secretary-General articulated the roles of various United Nations bodies in supporting international action. This strategic plan incorporates specific responsibilities assigned to UNOPS by the Secretary-General. UNOPS will continue to follow the work of the United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda, the outcome of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on that agenda, and subsequent efforts to establish priorities for development after 2015.

Development effectiveness

9. The outcome document of the Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness recognizes "that we are united by a new partnership that is broader and more inclusive than ever before, founded on shared principles, common goals and differential commitments for effective international development". A more coherent and efficient United Nations has an important role to play in this partnership.
10. UNOPS contributes to partners' results in some of the most challenging conditions, and notes the High-level Forum agreement on a new global direction for engagement with fragile states. UNOPS is already active in most of the pilot countries and will seek to support the initiative.
11. UNOPS has been recognized for its leadership in transparency, being the first United Nations body to publish comprehensive details on its operations in compliance with the standards of the International Aid Transparency Initiative. Building upon that achievement, UNOPS plans to explore innovative, user-friendly ways of better presenting information on its activities and demonstrating results in real time to partners and the wider public. It will also continue to engage with open data and transparency standards and practices, especially where relevant to its core areas of expertise.

Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review

12. The Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review resolution provides a policy framework for enhancing the coherence and efficiency of the United Nations development system at all levels. The legislative mandates established through the resolution have been reflected and incorporated in the present strategic plan, with emphasis on the instructions of the Secretary-General in that regard.¹ Examples of how UNOPS will fulfil its responsibilities through its partnerships in the United Nations and beyond, and within its focus areas, include:

¹ The Secretary-General's memorandum on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/226

- a) Contribute to improving linkages between operational activities and norms and standards such as for peace, security and human rights and mainstreaming of sustainable development.
- b) Serve as a resource for and contributor to United Nations Development Assistance Framework processes.
- c) Support the development of a common approach for measuring progress in capacity development, and enhanced use of gender measures.
- d) Be a resource for measuring and reporting of results, as well as system-wide evaluation of operational activities.
- e) Enhance mainstreaming of South-South and triangular cooperation into country-level programming.
- f) Support rationalization of business operations and provision of transactional support, including through enhanced interoperability of management systems.

B. Solid mandate and governance

13. In 2010, Member States confirmed the status of UNOPS as a partner, in the United Nations system and beyond, by laying out a solid mandate and governance arrangements in General Assembly resolution 65/176, reconfirming relevant decisions of the Executive Board.
14. The UNOPS strategic plan, 2014-2017, reflects Executive Board decision 2012/16, which “[e]ncourages UNOPS to further mainstream the national capacity development agenda in the competency areas where UNOPS has a mandate and a recognized comparative advantage, namely, project management, infrastructure and procurement, including through the use of local resources”; and decision 2012/24, in which the Board “[e]ndorses the midterm review of the strategic plan, 2010-2013, that highlights the enhanced focus of UNOPS, which seeks to maximize its comparative advantage and reduce overlap and duplication with mandates of partner organizations”, and “[a]ppreciates the increased emphasis on national capacity development and sustainable approaches to project management, procurement and infrastructure”.
15. UNOPS governance arrangements are consistent with those of other United Nations organizations. The Executive Director is accountable to the Secretary-General and the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, which is subordinate to the General Assembly and its Economic and Social Council. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions reviews and makes recommendations in relation to UNOPS biennial budget estimates prior to their approval by the Executive Board. The United Nations Board of Auditors conducts an external and independent audit which is reviewed by the Executive Board as well as the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly. The Policy Advisory Committee provides United Nations policy advice to the Executive Director of UNOPS; and the Strategy and Audit Advisory Committee provides the Executive Director with external, independent advice. The UNOPS Internal Audit and Investigation Group and the Ethics Officer provide further relevant oversight and advice to the Executive Director and the Executive Board.

C. The UNOPS strategic framework

16. The strategic framework of UNOPS establishes its identity and direction for the planning period. It provides the results framework, the approach to results-based management and results-reporting, and accountability for both.²
17. The strategic plan 2014-2017, builds on the lessons learned from prior years, particularly the comprehensive stocktaking reflected in the midterm review of the last UNOPS strategic plan, conducted in 2012.³ In preparation for this new strategic plan, UNOPS has analysed its operational and management results to cover the full period 2010 to 2012.⁴

The UNOPS identity

18. *The UNOPS identity* is articulated through its mission, vision and values.

Mission: serve people in need

19. *The UNOPS mission* is to serve people in need by expanding the ability⁵ of the United Nations, governments and other partners to manage projects, infrastructure and procurement in a sustainable and efficient manner.

Vision: advance sustainable practices

20. *The UNOPS vision* is to advance sustainable implementation practices in development, humanitarian and peacebuilding contexts, always satisfying or surpassing partner expectations.

Values: service to others

21. UNOPS values are firmly grounded in the United Nations Charter and legislative mandates of the General Assembly.⁶ They form the bedrock for the organizational culture, are reflected in its policies, tools, products and services and shape the behaviour of UNOPS personnel. Specifically, they underpin the strong commitment of UNOPS to providing service to others. The four core values of UNOPS are:

² Annex IV: UNOPS results methodology.

³ Midterm review of the UNOPS strategic plan, 2010-2013 (DP/OPS/2012/7), and annexes

⁴ Annex I: UNOPS operational results, 2010-2012; Annex II: UNOPS management results, 2010-2012; Annex III: UNOPS global portfolio, 2010-2012.

⁵ UNOPS may contribute to the expansion of the ability of partners through helping to develop national capacity and/or supplement national capacity when needed.

⁶ In articulating its values and principles UNOPS has drawn on a number of sources, including, among others: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation; the United Nations Global Compact; the United Nations Code of Ethics for individual conduct; and the fundamental values expressed in the Millennium Declaration.

- a) *National ownership and capacity.* We respect and support national ownership and help develop national capacity. This is the foundation for sustainability.
- b) *Accountability for results and transparency.* We ensure our own accountability for resources entrusted to us, and for contributions we make to the sustainable results of our partners. We seek to help our partners exercise their accountability. We believe transparency is essential to ensure accountability and the efficient use of resources.
- c) *Partnerships and coordination.* We recognize that strong partnerships and effective coordination among diverse actors, including the United Nations, governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector are crucial to efficiency and innovation.
- d) *Excellence.* We believe that we will add value and make strong contributions to the sustainable results of our partners only if our practices and performance are of recognized world-class standards of excellence and are well-adapted to local conditions. Within our mandated areas of work, we will seek to contribute to innovation and the adaption of best-practice standards of sustainability and quality.

UNOPS strategic goals

22. The strategic goals of UNOPS drive its focus on national capacity and sustainability. Three contribution goals guide and provide focus for what UNOPS contributes to partners' results and their achievement of development outcomes, and how it does so. In addition, four management goals provide direction for UNOPS to improve its ability to provide partners with high-quality services and ensure the viability of its business model.

Focus on national capacity and sustainability

23. UNOPS contributes to national abilities in its core mandated areas through a range of roles and services. The traditional role of UNOPS is to supplement government capacities when needed. It is expected that demand for high-quality implementation and transactional services will continue to exist in certain development, humanitarian and peacebuilding contexts. Here UNOPS undertakes to respect national ownership⁷, to use national suppliers and the local work force whenever possible, and to develop an exit strategy for its services. Increasingly, UNOPS is asked to help build national capacity by offering advice, best-practice processes, training, exchange of experience and expertise – including through South-South cooperation – and support for enhancing management oversight to improve transparency and accountability.

⁷ In accordance with regulation 18.04 of UNOPS financial regulations and rules, UNOPS has ability to work within country systems while supporting national capacity.

24. The UNOPS approach is framed by the three mutually reinforcing dimensions of sustainability.

(a) *Equitable economic growth:*

- (i) Ensuring optimum economic value by pursuing effective management and investment strategies and practices;
- (ii) Supporting livelihoods through the creation of local employment and income opportunities, enhancement of market access, and use of local suppliers;
- (iii) Considering, where possible, the total cost of ownership (financing, operating, maintaining and replacing assets);
- (iv) Upholding the principles of transparency and accountability.

(b) *Social justice and inclusion:*

- (i) Facilitating a rights-based approach, and the exercise of due diligence and respect for international human rights principles;
- (ii) Engaging local communities and beneficiaries and ensuring equitable access to project benefits, with particular emphasis on protecting the most vulnerable individuals and groups;
- (iii) Facilitating access to food, water, sanitation, energy, health, education, justice and security related services;
- (iv) Mainstreaming gender equality in all activities.

(c) *Environmental impact:*

- (i) Mitigating adverse impacts on the environment and improving biodiversity and ecological resilience;
- (ii) Using renewable resources, taking into account the interactions between human development and environmental sustainability;
- (iii) Increasing the resilience of nations and communities to natural disasters.

Contribute to operational results

25. UNOPS has articulated *three contribution goals* that guide and provide focus for UNOPS contributions to the operational results of partners and their achievement of development outcomes:

- a) *Sustainable project management:* To contribute to the ability of countries to design and implement projects while integrating and balancing social, environmental and economic considerations.
- b) *Sustainable infrastructure:* To contribute to the ability of countries to design, construct and maintain infrastructure, integrating and balancing social, environmental and economic considerations.

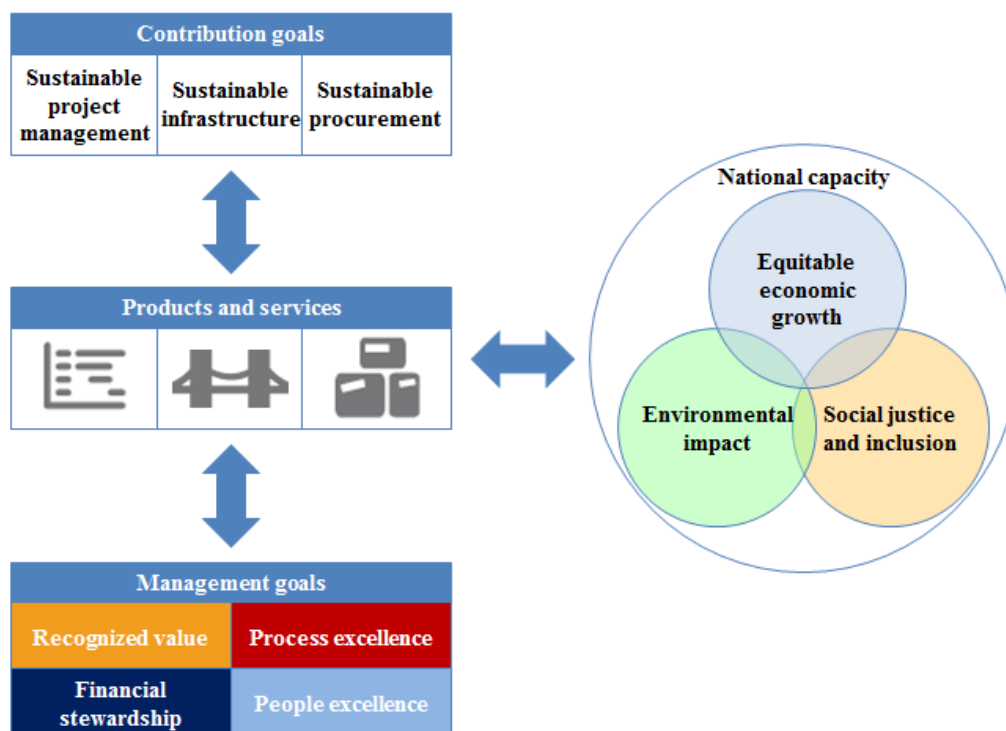
- c) *Sustainable procurement*: To contribute to the ability of countries to manage public procurement and supply chains, integrating and balancing social, economic and environmental considerations.

Achieve management results

26. To drive organizational excellence, UNOPS has articulated *four management goals* which provide direction to how UNOPS ensures the viability of its self-financing business model and builds an organization able to realize its vision. They are:

- a) *Recognized value* – the goal of innovating and delivering products and services that contribute a level of value that is acknowledged by its partners, and in accordance with international standards and recognized best practice.
- b) *Process excellence* – the goal of continually improving the quality, timeliness and efficiency of its operations by innovating and perfecting its processes.
- c) *People excellence* – the goal of empowering its people to perform at a consistently high standard; and being considered an employer of choice, to attract the most talented workforce.
- d) *Financial stewardship* – the goal of safeguarding the financial stability of the organization so as to continue contributing to the United Nations and its partners through a self-financing model.

Figure 1. The UNOPS results framework



Enhance results-based management

27. UNOPS has significantly strengthened its result-based management systems and the way it reports on operational and management results. In order to better manage for and report on results, a considerable effort has been made to improve the UNOPS information management systems. This enabled it to join the International Aid Transparency Initiative in record time and publish detailed project-level information in compliance with the standards of the Initiative. Projects are classified to the standards of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and UNOPS was the first signatory to record geo-coded project locations in its published data.
28. In the coming planning period UNOPS will aim higher, with a particular focus on managing for and reporting on sustainability. It will help strengthen common reporting standards, especially in the areas of physical infrastructure and public procurement, thereby contributing to broader development effectiveness. Moreover, UNOPS is developing a 'sustainability screening tool' for project assessment, target-setting, monitoring and reporting. The new tool, which will be publically available through open-source software, captures the three dimensions of sustainability, as well as contributions towards national capacity development. To that end UNOPS will rely on international standards such as those developed through the global reporting initiative and gender markers established by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee. Associated results information, by individual project or aggregated by country typology, partner or UNOPS delivery practice, will gradually be made available on the UNOPS public website starting in 2014.
29. To enable operational or development results reporting at the outcome level, UNOPS encourages its partners to incorporate such considerations in the design of programmes and larger projects and to undertake outcome and impact evaluations. UNOPS is committed to learning from such analysis, and will offer knowledge resources and specialized technical expertise for partners to draw upon when designing or evaluating programmes and projects within the remit of the UNOPS mandate.
30. UNOPS has made significant progress in the area of management results covering the four perspectives of the balanced scorecard. The majority of performance data is automated and available in real time on the UNOPS intranet, where it is compared with target agreements and is used for internal management purposes. To ensure that key performance indicators on management results are continuously improved and remain relevant for business operations, UNOPS will consult with the Executive Board on its future indicators in the context of the biennial results-based budget estimates and will report on them in its annual reports.

II. CONTRIBUTE TO PARTNERS THROUGH SUSTAINABLE DELIVERY PRACTICES

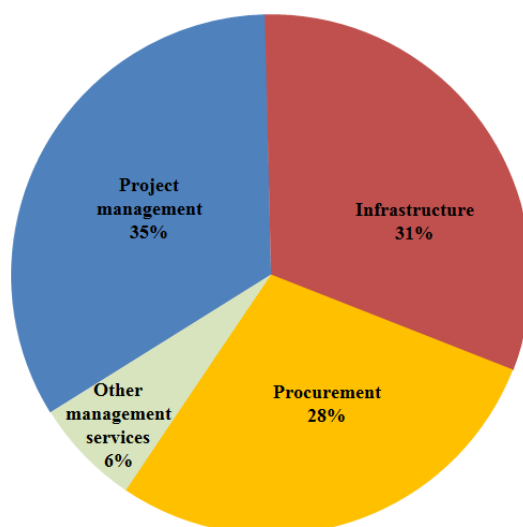
31. Continuing the direction outlined in the midterm review and recognizing that UNOPS responds to partner needs, the organization will focus its efforts on its core areas of mandate and expertise: project management, infrastructure and procurement. UNOPS has already developed core competencies and comparative advantages in those areas.

32. UNOPS recognizes its responsibility as a member of the United Nations family to consider the sustainability of the contributions it makes to the results of its partners. To ensure a clear expression of this intent, UNOPS has labelled its three delivery practices:

- a) *Sustainable project management*
- b) *Sustainable infrastructure*
- c) *Sustainable procurement*

33. During 2010-2012 UNOPS delivered around \$3.3 billion of projects. As illustrated in figure 2, below, 35 per cent can be attributed to project management, 31 per cent to infrastructure, 28 per cent to procurement, and 6 per cent to other management services required by partners.⁸ As UNOPS is demand driven, it is not possible to forecast how this distribution will evolve over time. However, UNOPS is ready for additional responsibilities in the delivery practices, albeit with a stronger focus within each of them.

Figure 2. The UNOPS global portfolio, 2010-2012



34. UNOPS differentiates between three types of services: advisory services, implementation services, and transactional services. They are defined as follows:

- a) *Advisory services.* Contributing to increased national capacity and ownership through advice to partners on best management practices, standards, systems and processes, and related training, in UNOPS-mandated focus areas. In these engagements the advisers are often embedded within partner organizations to help strengthen country systems and

⁸ Annex III: UNOPS global portfolio, 2010-2012. It should be noted that the review was carried out using a newly developed approach to products and services, so as to further focus UNOPS in its areas of mandated expertise. The category 'Other management services' comprises other kinds of management services delivered to UNOPS partners upon request, such as support to the United Nations Development Group and provision of an efficient platform for hosting partner operations.

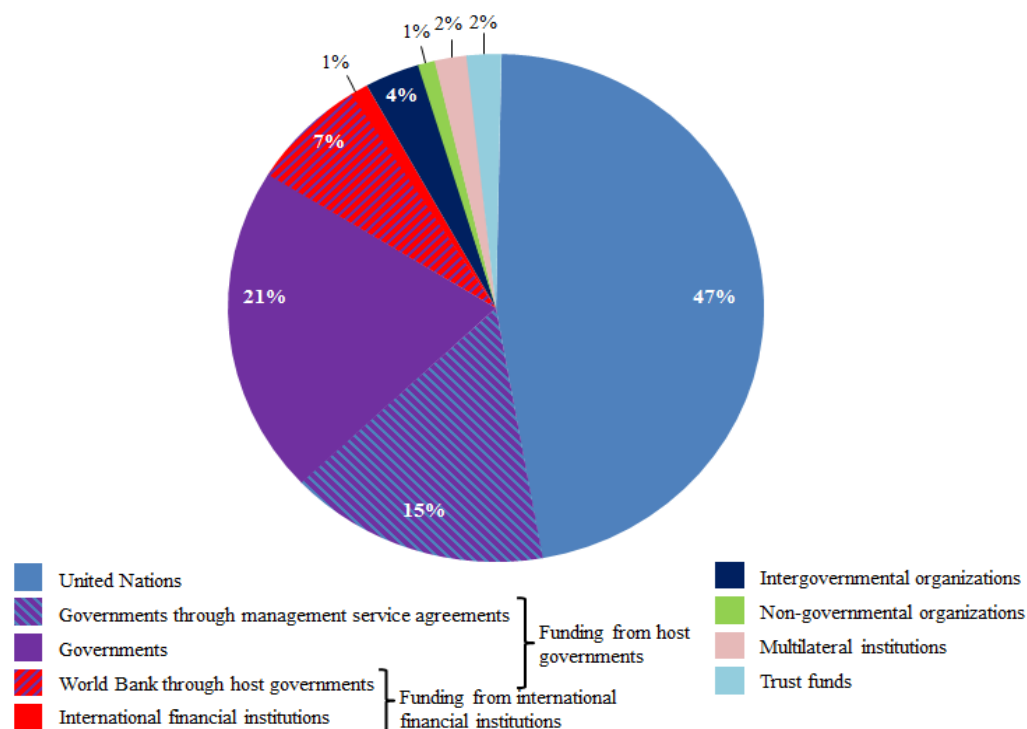
the capacity of national personnel to design, implement and maintain key programmes or functions. UNOPS is responsible for providing the highest-quality advice contributing to partners' results. As stipulated in the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review, UNOPS will deliver advisory services to develop national capacity for an inclusive, equitable, participatory, transparent and accountable national development process.

- b) *Implementation services.* Achieving specific results in implementation service projects, typically at the output level, on behalf of partners. The project plan and a defined project management methodology ensure projects are implemented efficiently and effectively with the involvement of all stakeholders. In working with partners UNOPS delivers relevant added value and contributes to sustainable outcomes. In accordance with the requirements of the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review, UNOPS uses national personnel and available technologies to the greatest extent possible in delivering implementation services.
 - c) *Transactional services.* Providing specific support services, in the United Nations context typically associated with common or shared services, where partners avail themselves of the UNOPS delivery platform. These services are limited to identifiable, specific transactions in areas such as procurement and human resources. Transactional services often do not require project reports or project financial statements but are billed per transaction executed. Since these services are also provided to UNOPS operations, expansion to our partners offers economies of scale, benefiting both parties.
35. UNOPS expects demand for its services to increase. This is particularly the case for advisory services in UNOPS focus areas where Member States have made a strong call for national ownership and capacity development. UNOPS sees this as an opportunity to increase both its added value to partners and the sustainability of the results achieved.
36. This plan lists the products and services of the three UNOPS delivery practices presently being requested by our partners. Over time, it is expected that the variety and nature of certain products and services will evolve, particularly when it comes to sustainability features. To keep pace with developments in technology and partner demand, UNOPS will establish an innovation fund, directing resources to the development of sustainable products and services.
37. In consultations leading to this plan, stakeholders expressed strong support for the proposed focus and appreciated the need to adjust services in line with evolving demand and opportunities. Some stakeholders encouraged UNOPS to contribute in the area of infrastructure for information and communication technology. While this is not currently proposed, it may be one area for future review.

A. Expand contributions to partners

38. General Assembly resolution 65/176 reaffirmed decision 2010/21 of the Executive Board, which encouraged UNOPS “to further enhance engagements as a service provider to various actors in the development, humanitarian and peacekeeping arena, including the United Nations, governments, intergovernmental institutions, international and regional financial institutions, foundations, the private sector and non-governmental organizations”.
39. The distribution of UNOPS support to different partners in the period 2010-2012 is illustrated in the figure below. Over the period, services to the United Nations amount to 47 per cent of delivery, with 43 per cent of UNOPS delivery attributed to governments.⁹ While the exact proportions are likely to vary from year to year, in the longer term UNOPS expects that the development effectiveness agenda will drive an increase in demand from governments.

Figure 3. UNOPS partners, 2010-2012



40. UNOPS will explore opportunities to expand its engagement with United Nations partners. Adhering to the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review principle of aligning United Nations planning and programming documents with national priorities, UNOPS will work closely with United Nations partners at country, regional and headquarters levels. Memoranda of understanding are the primary UNOPS instrument for establishing strategic partnerships with organizations in the United Nations and beyond, and can be used to enhance the complementary and mutual benefits of the partnerships.

⁹ Ibid.

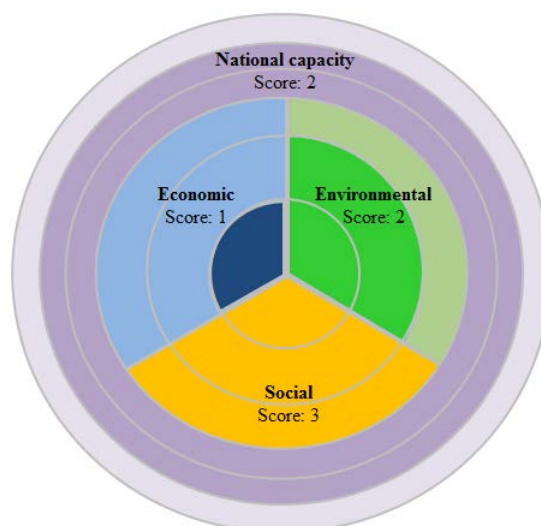
41. Governments have always been a central partner of UNOPS and the entire United Nations family. In line with development effectiveness, it is expected that developing country governments will increasingly be the funders of services rendered directly by UNOPS or indirectly through United Nations partner-supported programmes. As a member of relevant United Nations country teams, UNOPS engages in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework process to ensure that its contributions in project management, infrastructure and procurement are in line with national priorities.
42. In addition to governments and United Nations organizations, UNOPS sees significant potential in the following groups of partners: (a) bilateral donor governments; (b) regional organizations; (c) international financial institutions; and (d) foundations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. Engagement with these partners will take place at central levels as well as in-country, depending on how the partner is organized.
43. Recognizing that partnerships for development play an increasingly important role, UNOPS will build on its experiences with South-South and triangular cooperation, with a particular focus on improved approaches for the transfer of knowledge and capacity, including through public/private partnerships.

B. Drive focus and sustainability

44. UNOPS drives focus through its engagement acceptance process, which is also a central component of the organization's risk management system. The process assures that UNOPS only accepts projects that are aligned with UNOPS strategic plan and relevant UNDAFs. Specifically, this assessment checks that new projects offer effective contributions to national capacity development and incorporate the three dimensions of sustainability.
45. UNOPS is committed to applying the principles of sustainability in its operations and has established a 'sustainability programme' to coordinate and drive a number of related initiatives. Examples include:
 - a) Ensuring that all projects are screened and approved using minimum sustainability standards; with higher sustainability targets negotiated whenever possible.
 - b) Implementing 'gender markers' for all projects.
 - c) Implementing and maintaining an ISO 14001-compliant environmental management system across the organization.
 - d) Adopting sustainability standards throughout the UNOPS supply chain.
 - e) Achieving carbon neutrality in our operations by reducing carbon emissions and purchasing carbon offsets.
 - f) Reinvesting at least half of any financial surplus into innovation for sustainability.
 - g) Raising awareness and providing training for UNOPS personnel.
46. During the period of the strategic plan, UNOPS will further integrate the three dimensions of sustainability into its operations and contributions to partners'

results. A 'sustainability screening tool' is being developed for reviewing UNOPS engagements. It will establish minimum sustainability standards and help guide partners in ensuring that relevant aspects of the three dimensions of sustainability are considered at the project design stage, and specific sustainability targets are agreed. By setting sustainability targets and measuring progress during the life of a project, UNOPS will be able to compare project performance against standard indicators.

Figure 4. Illustration of the UNOPS sustainability screening tool



C. Sustainable project management

47. At the core of UNOPS competencies is a proven capacity to manage operations in peacebuilding, humanitarian and development contexts. The role of the sustainable project management practice is to ensure that all projects apply the established UNOPS project management methodology. This ensures that quality, speed and results are of the highest standard. UNOPS will build on its project management experience to expand its policies, tools and the capacity of its personnel. The practice will offer products and services that provide sustainable solutions and use public and private sector capacity to the greatest extent possible.
48. UNOPS will ensure that all project managers receive advice, support and knowledge to deliver products and services in a sustainable manner. For example, tools for community engagement, gender equality and capacity development will be as integral to project management services as planning and stakeholder management. The methodology will include project success indicators for sustainability.

Sustainable project management products and services

49. UNOPS will ensure a consistent approach to sustainable project management, including capacity development. The products and services offered to partners will focus on two areas.
 - a) Programme and project management: management of full programmes and projects, including responsibility for results.

- b) Portfolio, programme and project support: allows partners to take advantage of UNOPS programme and project management methodology and support while retaining responsibility for results.

50. Opportunities for sustainable project management include:

- a) Advisory services:
 - (i) Capacity assessments;
 - (ii) Programme and project planning;
 - (iii) Advice on project management (specializing in PRINCE2 and Project Management Institute standards and methodologies);
 - (iv) Advice on the setup and management of project management offices.
- b) Implementation services:
 - (i) Implementation of partner projects using the UNOPS project management methodology, expertise and tools (specific areas of UNOPS expertise are outlined in sections D and E, below);
 - (ii) Operation of project management office for partners, including: (a) strategic support and guidance; (b) implementation support; (c) management of best practices; and (d) project support services (human resources, procurement, finance);
- c) Transactional services:
 - (i) Online training; offering project management skills to UNOPS partners
 - (ii) Delivery of specific project inputs such as personnel support services, including the administration of individual contractor agreements on behalf of partners, and financial services, including funds administration¹⁰ and payment services.

D. Sustainable infrastructure

51. UNOPS has a well-established role in physical infrastructure, particularly in transport, buildings, community infrastructure, risk reduction, resilience and climate change adaptation. Delivery capabilities will be further strengthened with a view to ensuring the sustainability of UNOPS contributions to partners' results. UNOPS will position disaster risk reduction at the core of efforts to contribute to the United Nations goal of building a sustainable, resilient future, ensuring that programming and project design are informed by risk assessments.

¹⁰ When performing funds management services, at the request of partners, UNOPS respects the leading role of UNDP in administering multi-donor trust funds in line with the memorandum of understanding covering the UNDP-UNOPS partnership.

Sustainable infrastructure products and services

52. The products and services identified are based on areas where demand is strong, such as roads, schools, clinics, public buildings, prisons, and transitional shelters. It also includes the construction and renovation of United Nations buildings, supporting public works departments and roads authorities, or where future trends open up new opportunities and challenges, such as in risk reduction and recovery, climate-resilient infrastructure, low-carbon emission designs and renewable energy.
53. The products and services offered by UNOPS are based on its ability to deliver appropriate technical solutions throughout the design, construction, maintenance, operations, retrofitting, refurbishment and decommissioning phases of infrastructure. In order to increase sustainability, a tailored, context-driven approach has been developed. This will ensure that all UNOPS infrastructure projects achieve predefined sustainability criteria. In addition, it will facilitate the identification of additional opportunities to increase sustainability and adopt 'future proofing' techniques. Through these standards and approaches UNOPS aims to contribute to a sustainable and resilient future.¹¹
54. UNOPS strives to achieve internationally recognized certifications that demonstrate its commitment to sustainability. At Rio+20 UNOPS announced its policy for sustainable infrastructure. An example of how UNOPS is implementing the policy is its ambition to achieve and maintain ISO 14001 certification of an environmental management system for infrastructure works. Other examples from post-conflict and post-disaster work are the UNOPS labour-based infrastructure projects, where a focus on the engagement of community groups, local labour and local contractors provides livelihoods and contributes to restarting local economies.
55. Opportunities for UNOPS in the area of sustainable infrastructure include:
 - a) Advisory services:
 - (i) Capacity development and advisory services in infrastructure, including strengthening public works and roads authorities, building codes, technical and design specification, and technical advice on specifications, construction, maintenance, rehabilitation and operations.
 - (ii) Advice on the social, environmental and economic sustainability of infrastructure projects and services, including advice to partners on how to meet third-party requirements such as what may be required for loans or grants.
 - b) Implementation services, covering a menu of options ranging from full implementation to a specific part of the infrastructure development or rehabilitation cycle, including project formulation, feasibility studies, designs and drawings,

¹¹ UNOPS participates in the United Nations plan of action on disaster risk reduction for resilience and seeks to integrate the principles of the plan into its infrastructure practice. More information on the UNOPS contribution to disaster risk reduction is available on www.unops.org.

preparation of technical specifications and bid documents, direct implementation, construction supervision, and quality control, operations and maintenance.

E. Sustainable procurement

56. Sustainable procurement is a well-established delivery practice in UNOPS. With the increased focus on development effectiveness there is greater emphasis on efficient, transparent public procurement in developing countries. Looking ahead, the opportunities for UNOPS to add value may lie more in its contributions to national capacity development than in its services as a procurement agent.
57. UNOPS is working towards including sustainability considerations into all of its procurement by introducing appropriate standards for common products and services, such as sustainability audits of its key suppliers. UNOPS emphasizes sustainability throughout the product life-cycle, including maintenance and disposal considerations and technical support on infrastructure contract management. Additionally, UNOPS (the first organization to receive sustainability certification from the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply) plans to renew its current sustainable procurement certification level.

Sustainable procurement products and services

58. UNOPS will assist and guide partners, in the three primary areas of focus for the UNOPS sustainable procurement practice: construction procurement, health procurement, and procurement of common user products and services. UNOPS seeks to increase the overall sustainability of its operations, and those of its partners, by actively guiding them when they procure through UNOPS.
59. Within these areas of focus UNOPS provides the full range of service types. Opportunities include:
- a) Advisory services:
 - (i) Procurement capacity assessments, targeted advice and/or certification against internationally recognized procurement standards, for the entire procurement process or for select parts;
 - (ii) Assessments of the sustainability profiles of partner organizations, and advice on the inclusion of relevant sustainability elements into procurement processes; and
 - (iii) Training and certification of procurement practitioners.
 - b) Implementation services:
 - (i) Planning and implementation of complex procurement processes on behalf of partners upon demand, particularly in the areas of infrastructure, pharmaceuticals and medical equipment, and common user items;
 - (ii) Advancing sustainable procurement practices by implementing sustainable sourcing strategies for partners. These include considerations such as use of labour-based approaches, on-the-job training, social inclusion, health and

safety standards, and due diligence on social and environmental concerns in supplier operations;

(iii) Review and drafting of specification and solicitation documents for complex procurement cases;

(iv) Supply-chain services such as shipping, insurance, and customs clearance, including cold chain and handling of hazardous material, with the possible inclusion of inventory management; and

(v) Public procurement for governments with capacity constraints (relying on the ability of UNOPS to work within the procurement rules and procedures of partners and assist with distinct elements of procurement processes).

c) Transactional services:

(i) Procurement of motor vehicles, including specialized vehicles, protection equipment, and other common user items;

(ii) Procurement of sustainable energy solutions;

(iii) Sustainably sourced building material including energy efficient and energy saving products;

(iv) Sustainability items such as carbon-offset certificates; and

(v) Shared services for United Nations partners for commonly used goods.

F. Develop knowledge in partnership

60. UNOPS will continue to develop strategic partnerships for knowledge and innovation with partners in the United Nations and beyond. Through its knowledge partnerships, UNOPS will strengthen its delivery practices and ensure leadership and innovation in targeted areas of sustainability. These partnerships will provide UNOPS with access to international best practices and enhance the quality of UNOPS services through knowledge-sharing, secondment of personnel, training and qualification programmes, organizational certification, and third party standard-setting and declaration, in addition to direct support to UNOPS projects.

61. UNOPS will seek knowledge partnerships within all three delivery practices. Examples are:

a) In the area of sustainable project management, UNOPS plans to further develop and strengthen its capabilities in the Prince2 and Project Management Institute standards and methodologies. UNOPS also seeks to share lessons learned and project management approaches with partners and other development actors.

b) In sustainable infrastructure, UNOPS will strengthen its partnerships with the firms of Arup and DLA Piper. The Arup partnership provides access to international best practices in infrastructure and sustainability through knowledge-sharing

and secondment of personnel, in addition to direct support to UNOPS projects. The DLA Piper partnership is central to developing and implementing best-practice infrastructure contracts. UNOPS will explore partnerships with institutions or private sector organizations with relevant technical knowledge and related advocacy for sustainable infrastructure, renewable energy solutions, and risk reduction and resilience.

- c) Within sustainable procurement, UNOPS will build on its partnerships with the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply, a leading body for advancing procurement practices, and with the United Nations Environment Programme, through the sustainable public procurement initiative. UNOPS will work with partners to support the development of standards for sustainable procurement. UNOPS is exploring partnerships in relation to environmental product declarations of goods and services.

III. FOCUS ON ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

A. UNOPS excellence model

- 62. In recent years UNOPS has considerably improved the way it manages results, using the 'balanced scorecard'. UNOPS will continue its pursuit of operational excellence by relying on internationally recognized best practices and standards.
- 63. In 2014-2017, a 'UNOPS excellence model'¹² will be developed based on the European Foundation for Quality Management excellence model. The model is based on fundamental concepts of excellence that have been researched and refined following its application in public and private organizations in a number of countries. It shares structural similarities with the common approach used by Multilateral Organizations Performance Assessment Network to assess organizational effectiveness and results. It links a set of organizational enablers: (a) leadership; (b) strategy; (c) personnel; (d) knowledge partners, suppliers and resources; and (e) processes, products and services, with results in relation to (a) personnel; (b) partners; (c) society; and (d) overall business performance.
- 64. UNOPS is committed to benchmarking its performance against world-class standards. To that end, it will use its excellence model to seek an external assessment of its performance measured against similar assessments carried out across a range of industries and organizational types. The results of this assessment will be used to support continuous improvement, as a focus for training, and as motivation in the drive to instil a culture of excellence.

¹² Annex V: UNOPS excellence model

B. Coordinate added value to partners

65. The ability of UNOPS to add value for its partners depends on consistency in delivering products and services on a global scale. Irrespective of their location, partners can gain access to skills and knowledge beyond those immediately available at the local level.
66. The development of UNOPS geographical presences and functions are driven by maximum efficiency and adaptation to partner requirements. A structure of global practices, regional offices, operational hubs, and in-country presence will enable UNOPS to deliver top-quality services to its partners quickly and consistently.

Global coordination and collaboration

67. The UNOPS practice architecture links the geographically dispersed organizational structure for effective collaboration. All entities are comprehensively supported through global functions and are locally empowered to succeed.
68. Partner satisfaction is the ultimate measure of our success; trusted and lasting partnerships are the foundation of our business model, as these lead to return business and good references. In order to support greater collaboration and coordination with its key partners, UNOPS will establish partner management teams for liaison on current projects and future priorities, and for knowledge-sharing. The teams will be coordinated and supported by a global partner services office. That office will also be responsible for managing the parts of the UNOPS project portfolio that are organized either by partner or by theme and that contribute to partners' results in more than one of the UNOPS regions.

Regional offices and subregional operational hubs

69. Management oversight and coordination of country operations are currently decentralized to regional offices. Where appropriate, UNOPS will decentralize further, giving operational hubs subregional responsibility for operations in countries where UNOPS has limited local presence. The goal is to ensure the most cost-efficient support to partners.

Country-level engagement with partners

70. Direct partner relations are normally managed at the country level, where delivery of products and services largely takes place. However, irrespective of where services are delivered, other parts of the organization may be tasked with supporting or quality-assuring specific products and services. The goal is to establish cost-effective country presences that are able to provide the full range of UNOPS products and services at a consistent level of quality, drawing on the rest of the organization for knowledge and support.

C. Empower high-performing people

Leadership and competence

71. To assume institutional leadership in mandated and selected areas and to be known for its dedicated, effective leaders, UNOPS will identify, nurture and develop a cadre of senior managers. Building on its experience with online strategy and

leadership training and certification, UNOPS will explore innovative ways of supporting and building leadership competences within its global management team. UNOPS will continue to encourage managers to participate in resident coordinator assessments and training, and other management and leadership training available in the United Nations system.

72. To allow for a stronger link between (a) individual performance and the corresponding rewards and sanctions, and (b) individual performance and organizational results, the organization plans to standardize its structures, processes and products, and closely link them to equally standardized profiles, including job descriptions. This will clarify individual expectations and will reinforce fairness in performance management and organizational accountability.

Identify and manage talent

73. Talented people are the most important resource of UNOPS. Building on efforts to enhance the management of its talent pool, UNOPS will ensure that talent is identified and available to support the needs of its partners. Among other things, UNOPS will further develop the business advisory role of its human resources function in support of the three UNOPS delivery practices.
74. UNOPS provides a range of professional development courses based on recognized international standards, in addition to a series of mandatory courses covering security and ethics training. To build the competence of its personnel, UNOPS will further tailor its internal learning programme to its business processes.

Promote gender equality

75. The organization will use specific gender targets to increase its female workforce in all locations and at all levels, with the goal of gender parity. It will strengthen its gender policy framework and human resource practices, and will respond to the requirements of the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

D. Ensure efficient and effective business processes and systems

Manage process performance

76. Based on its success in managing its processes and achieving external recognition for its quality management system, UNOPS will further sharpen its approach to process management. Building on private sector best practices, UNOPS is implementing a clearly defined process management framework. In conjunction with that initiative, UNOPS will introduce a new practice and quality management system with strengthened process compliance and internal governance elements. It will adjust controls and delegations of authority based on risk assessments. Process owners will formulate performance indicators and benchmarks, which in turn will be linked to the rewards and sanctions framework.

Support business processes with information and communications technology

77. Information and communications technology support for business processes is a key component of the UNOPS delivery platform. UNOPS seeks to serve its

partners and beneficiaries by delivering products with the highest standards at the lowest feasible cost, including by standardizing and automating as many of its business processes as possible. The integration of existing processes, information and communications technology systems and locations is central to this approach. UNOPS partners would thus benefit from scale and cost savings realized through automation and system integration.

78. In 2012, a study conducted by the Gartner Group found that the functionalities available to UNOPS in its enterprise resource planning system, Atlas, did not adequately meet the operational requirements of UNOPS. UNOPS is exploring alternative platforms with a view to integrating enterprise resource planning functionality with the project management functionality needed to support the UNOPS global delivery platform. The new platform will include a customer relationship management system linked to the existing messaging platform and integrating core processes concerning partner account management.

UNOPS processes as service products

79. UNOPS strives to achieve a level of process maturity that allows the organization to offer its own business processes as products. Where processes are offered as transactional service products, UNOPS will seek to support the United Nations and other partners with additional capacity through shared-service approaches. UNOPS will work with stakeholders to define and strengthen its role as a shared-service provider to the United Nations system and as a service provider to international financial institutions, governments and non-governmental organizations. The offerings will support the United Nations 'delivering as one' initiative, with UNOPS shared services responding to the need for standard operating procedures and harmonized processes, as mandated by the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review. Both UNOPS and its partners benefit from specialization and economies of scale.

E. Manage finances for development effectiveness

Reduced dependence on official development assistance, more added value

80. Effective development cooperation requires the use of "country systems as the default approach".¹³ UNOPS must be prepared for a future in which it potentially manages smaller volumes of funds and increases its advisory services. The importance of UNOPS can thus no longer be judged by its delivery volume but by its contribution to partner results.

Self-financing with full cost recovery at all levels

81. UNOPS will take a two-pronged approach to ensuring the stability of its self-financing model. First, it will consistently attribute direct costs of the organization to projects as appropriate. Activity-based costing will be used to determine the efforts and costs associated with specific processes. This will ensure that costs are

¹³ [Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation](#)

distributed more accurately among projects and should enable UNOPS, over time, to reduce the overall amount needing to be recovered as indirect costs. Second, UNOPS will refine its pricing model for the recovery of indirect costs to include other relevant cost-drivers associated with the value added by UNOPS, thereby distributing its costs more fairly and reducing the risk associated with changes in the composition of its project portfolio. UNOPS will drive strategy and reinforce its self-financing model by assessing the strategic fit and financial viability of all new engagements.

Planning in view of demand

82. As a self-financing organization, the viability of UNOPS requires that its revenue match its management costs. The financial planning will be made and specific targets set in the context of the budgets for 2014-2015 and 2016-2017, respectively. As a high-level planning assumption associated with the present strategic plan, UNOPS estimates that revenue from implementation and transactional services will remain at current levels, while revenue associated with advisory services will increase.



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