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Statement by the UNOPS Executive Director

Implementation of the restated UNOPS strategic plan, 2022-2025

Report of the Executive Director for 2024

Summary

The present report provides an update on implementation of the restated strategic plan, 2022-2025, with accounts of the realization of ambitions for impact, achievement of implementation and management results, and lessons learned.

The report illustrates contributions that fill implementation gaps to help people in need and support countries in accelerating achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. It shows how the UNOPS role of expanding implementation capacity is an essential complement to other actors' roles in policy advice and financing for development.

In 2024, 5,557 UNOPS personnel implemented a portfolio of over 1,100 projects across more than 130 countries. It expanded implementation capacity for more than 200 partners, providing services amounting to approximately \$2.7 billion.

Activities included procurement of \$1.7 billion worth of goods and services from more than 5,800 suppliers; management of over \$380 million in grants for more than 1,700 implementing partners; and contracts and salaries for 9,577 partner personnel. UNOPS signed close to \$4 billion in new agreements with partners.

UNOPS worked with actors across peace and security, humanitarian and development efforts. About two thirds of the response was in countries in special or fragile situations. About half of UNOPS activities contributed to Goal 3, 'good health and well-being', and Goal 16, 'peace, justice and strong institutions'.

Thematic external evaluations substantiated UNOPS contributions to Goals 1 and 11, and identified causal pathways for direct and indirect contributions filling implementation gaps. Lessons learned highlighted the agility and adaptability of UNOPS in fragile situations, its potential to replicate past experience for projects and partnering, and opportunities to more systematically manage for impact.

This report is complemented by internal outcome-based reports: case studies of 12 projects contributing to the most vulnerable people and 12 of the Goals; and nine country reports illustrating contributions to accelerating achievement of 11 Goals. The UNOPS portfolio analysis illustrates trends over the past decade.



UNOPS saw growth and highest demand from international financial institutions, particularly the World Bank Group. Demand from United Nations partners remained substantial and stable. Demand from vertical funds and multilateral initiatives, donor countries and programme countries decreased somewhat compared to 2023.

Procurement remained the functional service in greatest demand (38 per cent). Infrastructure amounted to 20 per cent, and project management to 13 per cent. Financial management services for funds implementation and grants management comprised 18 per cent, and human resources services 12 per cent.

The 2024 performance indicates progress towards targets set for seven strategic implementation and management goals. Performance towards two thirds of targets improved compared to 2023, and more than 45 per cent were achieved or within 10 per cent of targets for 2025. Performance against three targets warrant additional attention when projects are designed, including for mainstreaming gender and inclusion; climate action and adaptation activities; and procurement and infrastructure capacity development activities.

Lessons learned from 2024:

- (a) Managing for impact requires early information on project objectives beyond outputs, which can be enabled by UNOPS systems and reinforced through institutional capabilities.
- (b) Further systematic approaches to mainstreaming gender, climate action, and capacity development for procurement and infrastructure can be underpinned by robust processes and digital systems.
- (c) Increasing global financial uncertainty underlines the importance of robust financial arrangements and solid forecasting for longer-term planning.
- (d) Focus and reinforcement of performance against annual targets can be enhanced by reducing the number of indicators in the results framework and internal cascading of accountability compacts for senior management, complemented by dashboards and recurrent reviews of performance.

Elements of a decision

The Executive Board may wish to:

- (a) recognize the 2024 contributions of UNOPS to the results of partners in the United Nations system and beyond, and welcome its progress in implementing the restated strategic plan, 2022-2025;
- (b) take note of the lessons learned that can inform the strategic plan, 2026-2029;
- (c) take note of the annual report on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit and annexes to the report on implementation.

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I. Introduction

1. The report on the implementation of the restated UNOPS strategic plan, 2022-2025, reflects 2024 results against the [expanded results framework](#).
2. The presentation of information addresses the request for a more analytical approach in the annual report,¹ and accounts and analysis of UNOPS contributions to partner objectives and development goals.²
3. Informed by the ongoing preparations for the UNOPS strategic plan, 2026-2029, the chapter containing accounts of ambitions for impact is structured around UNOPS missions.

II. Global context

Progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is off track

4. In 2024, progress towards the 2030 Agenda remained off track. Only 17 per cent of the Goals targets are on track; nearly half are showing minimal or moderate progress; and progress on over one third has stalled or regressed.³

Climate change affects those most vulnerable

5. Global greenhouse gas emissions set a new record in 2023.⁴ People living in situations of fragility, conflict and violence are especially vulnerable to the effects of climate change. It is estimated that, by 2030, nearly 60 per cent of the world's extreme poor will live in fragile countries affected by conflict and violence.⁵

The global economy exacerbates inequalities

6. The global economic outlook improved in 2024, but was marked by uncertainty and uneven distribution.⁶ The annual financing gap for developing countries reached about \$4 trillion.⁷

Pact for the future to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda

7. In September 2024, heads and state of government committed to 56 actions to ensure the future we want and to effectively respond to current and future challenges, in partnership with all relevant stakeholders⁸.

The repositioned development system

8. Through the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, the General Assembly establishes key system-wide strategic policy orientations and operational modalities for the development cooperation and country-level modalities of the United Nations development system.
9. The 2024 review reiterated the call on the United Nations development system to seek comparative advantages based on mandates, and to mainstream key decisions into their strategic plans. These include mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals, disability inclusion, climate- and environment-responsive approaches, the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (resolution 76/258), the Antigua and Barbuda agenda for small island developing States (resolution 78/317), the Gaborone programme of action for landlocked developing countries for the decade 2024-2034 (resolution 79/233), South-South and triangular cooperation, and the special needs of middle-income countries.⁹

¹ Decision 2022/13

² Decisions 2021/20 and 2023/16

³ [Sustainable Development Goals Report, 2024](#)

⁴ [UNEP Emissions Gap Report, 2024](#)

⁵ [Fragility, Conflict and Violence](#)

⁶ [World Economic Situation and Prospects as of mid-2024](#)

⁷ [Financing for Sustainable Development Report, 2024](#)

⁸ [Summit of the Future outcome document](#)

⁹ A/C.2/79/L.60

III. Ambition for impact

A. Contributing to impact through projects while harnessing capacity for missions

10. In 2024, UNOPS implemented more than 1,100 projects across over 130 countries¹⁰ for a value of about \$2.7 billion: 83 per cent for development activities, 11 per cent humanitarian, and 6 per cent peace and security.

11. UNOPS assigns projects to the main Goal to which they are expected to contribute. In 2024, two Goals accounted for about half of UNOPS activities: Goal 3, ‘good health and well-being’ (37 per cent); and Goal 16, ‘peace, justice and strong institutions’ (14 per cent).

12. In 2023, the UNOPS Executive Director initiated a process to harness knowledge and capacity through eight missions. These are internal communities and networks intended to foster collaboration; they are not an expression of external programmatic intent.

13. The missions can be summarized in three groups. The following paragraphs illustrate the challenges and examples of the solutions UNOPS has implemented.

Accelerate sustainable development

14. *Triple planetary crisis.* The crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution is an existential threat. Currently [3.6 billion people](#) live in areas highly susceptible to climate change, and [21.5 million are displaced](#) each year by climate-change related disasters.

15. *Energy transition.* By 2030, an estimated 660 million people will lack electricity access and around 1.8 billion will go without clean cooking fuels and technologies. (The energy sector is responsible for 73 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions.)

16. *Just digital transformation.* Approximately [2.6 billion people remain off-line](#), and only 50 per cent of the rural population use the internet (compared to 81 per cent of the urban population).

17. *Food system transformation.* An estimated 28.9 percent of the global population – 2.33 billion people – were moderately or severely food insecure in 2023.

Practical solutions accelerating sustainable development.

Box 1. Examples of projects accelerating sustainable development

External evaluation

Global nature for development. This UNDP programme focuses on promoting and supporting nature-based solutions that accelerate sustainable development. UNOPS provides contract management, procurement and reporting, while UNDP provides technical knowledge and expertise. Initially, the programme comprised three main components: the equator initiative, the national biodiversity initiative, and the global biodiversity initiative. Initiatives under the programme include learning for nature, the nature-for-life hub, and the United Nations biodiversity lab. The programme contributes to Goals 1, 13, 14 and 16.

Paraguay. Funded by Itaipú Binacional, the project provided smallholders with a range of goods and services to address the technological, economic, and environmental barriers to participation in agricultural supply chains. Results included improvement of land, benefiting more than 2,500 farmers, and the organization of 22 agricultural fairs which supported over 10,000 families of farmers in selling their goods. Project contributions include Goals 1, 2 and 13.

Internal case studies

South Asia. The ‘implementation support to the plastic free rivers and seas for South Asia’ project, funded by the World Bank and implemented in partnership with the South Asia cooperative environment programme, has engaged 14,556 people, recovered 7.2 million kilograms of plastic, and recycled 34,427 kilograms. Operating across eight countries, it promotes scalable solutions, collection systems, and recycling innovations. The project

¹⁰ In 2024, project expenses exceeded \$300,000 in more than 130 countries.

contributes to Goals 12, 13, and 14.

North Macedonia. In North Macedonia, the ‘multi-partner environmental fund’ addressed industrial pollution at an abandoned chemical plant near Skopje. From 2019 to 2024, it safely disposed of 1,933 tons of hazardous waste and 666 tons of contaminated soil, improving environmental and public health for over 526,000 people. The initiative supports Goals 3, 6, and 9.

Bridge implementation gaps in challenging contexts

18. *Small island developing States resilience and sustainability.* Sixty-five million people living across 39 small island developing States and 18 territories have limited opportunities to cope with increasing natural disasters, expensive infrastructure, high trade costs and debt distress.

19. *Nexus of humanitarian, development and peace efforts.* [Two billion people](#) live in places affected by conflicts. The number of forcibly displaced people reached 120 million in 2024.

Practical solutions bridging implementation gaps in challenging contexts

Box 2. Examples of projects bridging gaps in challenging contexts

External evaluation

Afghanistan. With funding from the World Bank, the ‘community resilience and livelihoods’ project is designed to address rural and urban areas through provision of grants for women and the most vulnerable, and community institution-strengthening for inclusive service delivery. The project has benefited 7.4 million Afghans, including with improved access to services through the rehabilitation of roads, and has bolstered community resilience to environmental disasters. Women and other socially vulnerable groups have been engaged and supported wherever possible. Project contributions include Goals 1 and 5.

Iraq. With funding from Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau, the local infrastructure in rural Anbar project aimed to improve access to rehabilitated shelters and municipal services for vulnerable populations living in conflict-affected peri-urban and rural settings. The project has benefited more than 250,000 people through rehabilitation of 1,000 housing units and other community infrastructure, and training of civil servants, staff of non-governmental organizations, and community members. Project contributions include Goals 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11 and 16.

Sierra Leone. Funded by the government of Japan, this project aimed to strengthen the resilience of communities affected by massive fires in Susan’s Bay in Freetown. The project provided direct benefits to more than 7,000 people and involved the design and installation of a biogas energy system to provide electricity and lighting. Five communal biodigester toilet facilities were constructed, along with a water tower and tanks. Access steps to Susan’s Bay connecting different parts of the community were reconstructed. The project contributions include Goals 5, 6, 7, 11 and 13.

Ukraine. This project is integrated into the development of reconstruction master plans in the city of Mykolaiv to support immediate recovery efforts in the city and wider Oblast. With funding from the Government of Denmark, the project is focused on revitalizing community-based infrastructure. The support has rehabilitated housing in selected micro-districts, with up to 7,000 beneficiaries benefiting from the rehabilitation of apartment buildings, once complete. Project contributions include Goals 4, 5 and 11.

Yemen. Funded by the World Bank, the ‘integrated urban services emergency project’ addresses the humanitarian and infrastructural crisis caused by ongoing conflict. The objective of the second phase is to restore critical urban services, strengthen local institutional capacity and strengthen resilience against shocks. The support includes restoration of 222 kilometres of urban roads, providing enhanced mobility for 1.2 million people; rehabilitation of access to water for approximately 400,000 people, and sanitation services for approximately 660,000. Restoration of electricity for health facilities has improved health care access for more than 400,000 individuals. Project contributions include Goals 5, 6, 7, 11 and 13.

South Sudan. The South Sudan safety net and productive safety net projects are World Bank-funded. Their aim is to enhance social protection and improve the livelihoods of vulnerable populations through direct income support and labour-intensive public works. The projects have provided temporary income to more than 65,000 households

and have contributed to 572 km of road maintained or rehabilitated, 2390 acres of agriculture land planted, 82 km of drainage constructed, 41,000 m² of facilities constructed or renovated, and 22,790 tree seedlings planted. More than 4,000,000 workdays were created. The main contribution was to Goal 1.

Internal case studies

Haiti. The ‘emergency resilient agriculture for food security’ project, funded by the World Bank and implemented for the Ministère de l’agriculture des ressources naturelles et du développement rural, strengthens resilience and food security in vulnerable regions. It improves agricultural practices and natural resource management, and expands climate- and nutrition-sensitive food production. The project creates 33,000 person-days of work (55 per cent women), rehabilitating 21 km of agricultural roads and expanding irrigation over 200 hectares. Infrastructure upgrades bolster climate resilience. The project addresses immediate food insecurity while ensuring long-term sustainability, contributing to Goals 2, 9, and 13.

Somalia. The ‘joint police programme’, managed by UNOPS since 2018, aims to improve security and justice for 2.3 million people in major population centres and supply routes. The programme focuses on enhancing policing capabilities, supporting legal frameworks, and fostering negotiations between federal and member state authorities. It engaged over 92,000 community members, contributing to Goal 16 and strengthening security institutions, accountability, and community accessibility.

Ethiopia. The ‘response and recovery programme’ in Tigray is government-led and World Bank-funded. UNOPS provides humanitarian aid, rebuilds infrastructure, and restores essential services. Operating in 42 districts, it has benefited over 500,000 people, including 237,000 women and 42,000 internally displaced people. More than 1.7 million gender-based violence survivors and vulnerable individuals received life-saving support, while 1.8 million benefited from prevention efforts. Strengthened local capacities ensure sustainability, aligning primarily with Goals 1 and 2.

Gaza. UNOPS, in partnership with United Nations Mine Action Service, implements the ‘humanitarian mine action to reduce explosive risks faced by civilians’ project, scaling up efforts after the October 2023 escalation. Explosive ordnance disposal officers conducted 305 site assessments, secured humanitarian convoys, and enabled access to shelters, food distribution, and medical facilities. Risk education teams provided safety briefings at explosive ordnance sites, reaching 250,000 people, including in high-risk areas. This work aligns with Goals 16 and 17.

Ukraine. The ‘emergency grant aid for winterization response and provision of housing to vulnerable people of Ukraine’ project, funded by the government of Japan, focused on Kharkiv, heavily shelled in 2022. Despite ongoing attacks, the project repaired 782 apartments, restored roofs on four buildings, replaced 2,406 windows and balconies, and installed 207 doors. It delivered 262 diesel generators and 12 oil transformers. Reaching over 870,000 conflict-affected individuals, it contributed to Goals 3 and 11.

Leave no one behind

Quality health

20. Global health progress has decelerated since 2015. Worldwide, 4.5 billion people lack essential health services.

Social protection, equality, education and jobs

21. Per-capita GDP growth in half of the world’s most vulnerable countries is slower than that in advanced economies. Projects implemented by UNOPS often address social protection, equality, education and jobs as cross-cutting issues.

Practical solutions to leave no one behind

Box 3. Examples of projects aimed at leaving no one behind

External evaluation

Albania. With funding from the European Union, UNOPS is restoring and revitalizing 23 cultural heritage sites damaged in the 2019 earthquake; facilitating cultural heritage management and business plans to ensure the sites become financially sustainable; supporting the socio-economic development of local communities by providing

grants and capacity-building; and highlighting and promoting the richness of Albania’s history for domestic and overseas visitors. Project contributions include Goals 8, 9, 11 and 17.

Cities Alliance. Cities Alliance is a global partnership for the promotion of cities in poverty reduction and sustainable development. Headquartered in Brussels and supported by a secretariat, the partnership has a diverse membership which comes together to strengthen impact and coherence in urban development. At mid-point of the implementation of its strategic plan, 2022-2025, cumulative results note that more than 500,000 people benefit directly from Cities Alliance services, and over \$34 million has been leveraged for investment in cities. Project contributions include Goals 1, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13, 16 and 17.

Nepal (cities for women). Funded by the European Union Nepal office and implemented with UN-Habitat and Cities Alliance, the project aims to strengthen municipal planning and implementation capacities to create women-responsive and climate-sensitive public infrastructure. Implemented in five municipalities over four years, the project focuses on increasing demand for safe public open spaces, fostering participatory approaches to enhancing urban planning and design. One of the key results of project implementation has been strong stakeholder engagement, which is crucial to ensuring longer-term sustainability. Project contributions include Goals 5, 9, 10, 11 and 13.

Internal case studies

The *RBM partnership to end malaria*.¹¹ To counter progress stalled by insecticide, drug resistance and invasive mosquito species, RBM provides technical assistance, financing advocacy, and scales up innovations. Since 2021, it has helped 59 countries secure \$3 billion in funding and distribute 459 million insecticide-treated nets, averting 300 million cases and 1.1 million deaths. RBM aligns with Goal 3.

Myanmar. The ‘access to health’ fund, a multi-donor initiative, improves health outcomes for underserved populations by delivering essential services to remote areas. Since 2019, it has partnered with over 70 organizations to reach more than six million people. The fund supports Goals 3 and 5 by reducing maternal and child mortality, improving sexual and reproductive health, combating HIV, malaria, and tuberculosis, and promoting gender equality.

Greater Mekong subregion. The ‘regional artemisinin initiative’, funded by the Global Fund, combats malaria in the Greater Mekong subregion, by expanding service coverage, improving case management, and strengthening surveillance. Over the past decade, the initiative has helped cut plasmodium falciparum cases by 92 per cent and malaria deaths by 95 per cent. Advancing Goal 3, it drives progress towards eliminating malaria by 2030.

Uzbekistan. The ‘support to the development of oncology services in Uzbekistan’ project, implemented in partnership with the government of Uzbekistan and the Islamic Development Bank, strengthens cancer care across 14 locations nationwide. It improves diagnostics, treatment, and capacity-building, benefiting over 150,000 cancer patients. Initiatives include procuring advanced medical equipment, expanding breast and cervical cancer screening, and establishing a unified cancer registry. Aligned with Goal 3, the project addresses health-care access disparities and supports gender equality.

Paraguay. The ‘sustainable drinking water solutions for rural communities’ project, implemented in partnership with Itaipú Binacional, improved access to drinking water for rural and indigenous communities. From 2020 to 2024, the project built 12 water systems, benefiting over 5,700 people, including indigenous families, rural households, and students. It provided community training in system management and maintenance, supporting Goals 1, 3, and 6.

B. Embedding capabilities for impact management

22. The external thematic evaluations, internal project case studies and country reports depicted in this report demonstrate proof of concept for UNOPS reporting on contributions to outcomes and impact, responding to Executive Board decisions 2021/20 and 2023/16.

¹¹ Formerly Roll Back Malaria

23. Based on the proof of concept and an external benchmarking study, UNOPS will gear its capabilities for more systematic impact management. This ambition will be emphasized in the biennial budget estimates, 2026-2027.

C. Accounting for contributions through external thematic evaluations

24. In 2024, UNOPS commissioned external thematic evaluations of project contributions to Goals 1 and 11, based on 11 project case studies.

25. The main lessons learned reconfirm similar observations from prior-year thematic evaluations and are summarized below:

(a) *UNOPS is agile and adaptable.* The evaluations highlighted the ability of UNOPS to work with partners and to align its comparative advantage within broader sets of priorities in complex environments. The evaluations highlighted the importance of continuity and existing relations when developing new engagements.

(b) *Past experience can be further leveraged for replication of projects and partnering.* There are opportunities for a more focused communication of the UNOPS offering, including based on documented examples which can aid in replicating projects between partners and countries.

(c) *UNOPS can apply a further systematic approach to manage for impact.* More systematic use of results-based management tools will enable UNOPS to have a clearer picture of how it can contribute at the outcome level, and enhance its planning processes.

IV. Implementation results

26. UNOPS implementation results and capacity are a function of three mutually reinforcing elements: mandate for functional services; partnerships; and knowledge and expertise for United Nations objectives.

27. UNOPS project services span procurement, infrastructure and project management, including financial management and human resources. These expand partners' implementation capacity in two mutually reinforcing ways: (a) capacity to support and manage partners' implementation; and (b) technical expertise for capacity development in areas of mandate. UNOPS responds through three service models: (a) support services, (b) technical advice, and (c) integrated solutions combining support services and technical advice.

Box 4. UNOPS implementation at a glance

In 2024, UNOPS implemented a portfolio of more than 1,100 projects across more than 130 countries. It expanded implementation capacity for more than 200 partners, providing project services amounting to approximately \$2.7 billion.

UNOPS procured \$1.7 billion worth of goods and services from more than 5,800 suppliers, and managed over \$380 million in grants for more than 1,700 implementing partners. It provided employment contracts and paid salaries to 9,577 partner personnel.

Forty-six per cent of the goods and services UNOPS procured were sourced from suppliers registered in the same country as the project, and 10 per cent from suppliers in the same geographic region. Approximately \$375 million worth of the procured goods and services was in the health category, and \$334 million related to infrastructure. Almost \$170 million was procured through UN Web Buy Plus.

More than 2,100 solicitation tenders were conducted, almost 80 per cent of which led to a successful award. Sixty-two per cent incorporated sustainable procurement criteria. Seventy-four per cent of the suppliers awarded a tender through 'eSourcing' underwent a sustainability maturity screening of their operations to identify potential risks and opportunities for improvement. To develop capacity in the supply chain, UNOPS conducted trainings for more than 1,600 micro, small, and medium enterprises and women-owned businesses.

Of the implementing partners, 54 per cent were local non-governmental organizations, 17 per cent were United Nations organizations and 8 per cent were central-level government entities. The remaining 21 per cent included intergovernmental organizations, international non-governmental organizations and universities.

UNOPS had six regional offices, 17 multi-country offices and 10 country offices. It was a signatory of 94 cooperation frameworks.

Project outputs completed during the year included 23 hospitals and health clinics, 113 schools, five police stations, one court house and 682 kilometres of road. UNOPS contributed to creating 13.6 million days of paid work for local people. Women undertook 2 million days of paid work.

28. The restated strategic plan summarized UNOPS implementation ambitions under three goals:

- (a) *enable partners* through cost-effective project services;
- (b) *help people in need* through sustainable implementation; and
- (c) *support countries* in accelerating achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals

29. Each goal was complemented by indicators and targets intended to reinforce behaviours and responsibilities falling within the remit of UNOPS management. There are 13 indicators and targets for the three goals.

30. In 2024, performance against six indicators exceeded, met or was within 10 per cent of the 2025 targets. Performance against six indicators improved compared to 2023. Performance against three indicators (mainstreaming of gender and inclusion; activities for climate action and adaptation; and procurement and infrastructure capacity development activities) was below 50 per cent of the target for 2025, warranting additional attention when projects are designed.

A. Enable partners through cost-effective project services

Partners and project services

31. In 2024, UNOPS worked with more than 200 partners. The activities amounted to about \$2.7 billion. The expense associated with activities for partner categories was:

- (a) International financial institutions: \$764 million (29 per cent);
- (b) United Nations entities: \$540 million (20 per cent);
- (c) Vertical funds and multilateral initiatives: \$408 million (15 per cent);
- (d) Donor countries: \$393 million (15 per cent);
- (e) Programme countries: \$336 million (13 per cent);
- (f) Regional and other intergovernmental organizations: \$172 million (6 per cent); and
- (g) Other partners: \$64 million (2 per cent).

32. UNOPS saw growth and the highest demand from international financial institutions, particularly the World Bank Group. Demand from United Nations partners remained substantial and stable. Demand from vertical funds and multilateral initiatives, donor countries and programme countries decreased somewhat compared to 2023.

33. UNOPS functional services are determined at the output level. In 2024, the expense associated with the five functional services was:

- (a) Procurement: \$1,021 million (38 per cent);
- (b) Infrastructure: \$527 million (20 per cent);
- (c) Project management: \$343 million (13 per cent);
- (d) Financial management: \$476 million (18 per cent); and
- (e) Human resources: \$311 million (12 per cent).

34. The sizes of the relative shares of functional services in the 2024 portfolio of projects are similar to those of the 2023 portfolio. The largest change was a slight growth in the relative share of procurement, which increased from 35 per cent in 2023.

35. About 39 per cent of the stand-alone procurement services were medical goods and services. About \$170 million of location-independent procurement services offered through UN Web Buy amounted to some 7 per cent.

36. In high demand as a stand-alone service, procurement was also a significant input for infrastructure and project management. The input of purchased goods and services amounted to \$1.7 billion.

37. Project management in UNOPS is a technical activity for implementation, including when managed as programmes and portfolios. Capacities for programme implementation include (a) financial management services,

comprising implementation of grants and multi-partner pooled funds; and (b) flexible and tailored human resources for United Nations partners.

38. A review of the UNOPS 2024 project portfolio in October of that year revealed that out of 1,075 active projects, 719 were grouped as part of 79 partner programmes and 47 portfolios across the organization. The 126 programmes and portfolios accounted for approximately 67 per cent of all projects within the UNOPS project portfolio.

39. Demand for infrastructure services was mainly in the sectors of ‘social protection’, ‘immediate post-emergency reconstruction and rehabilitation’, ‘basic health infrastructure’, ‘multisector aid for basic social services’ and ‘rural development’.

Respond to partner focus

40. In 2024, UNOPS expanded implementation capacity for many Goals. The share of focus partners engaged in projects with health or climate change objectives was 80 per cent, on par with the target for 2025. Demand for implementation capacity in special or fragile situations remained significant.

41. UNOPS continued to assess global trends and consult with partners to better understand demand. This included the 2024 partner survey, which had a response rate of 22 per cent (987 respondents).

Focus on partner needs and global Goals

42. UNOPS is committed to agreeing with partners on the Goals to which projects will contribute and encourages partners to include evaluations of the projects it implements on their behalf.

43. In 2024, 98 per cent of active projects were linked to a main Goal, exceeding the 95 per cent target for 2025. The share of projects undergoing evaluation was 13 per cent, above the 5 per cent target for 2025.

Enable sustainable supply

44. UNOPS seeks to ensure sustainable supply. The focus is on human rights, labour rights, ethical conduct, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, and environmental responsibility.

45. In 2024, the share of suppliers awarded a tender through eSourcing that were screened for supplier sustainability was 74 per cent, one per cent higher compared to 2023 (albeit below the 2025 target of 80 per cent). The ability to systematically measure capacity development activities for identified suppliers is pending full roll-out of supporting systems.

B. Help people in need through sustainable implementation

Respond through sustainable implementation

46. UNOPS is committed to mainstreaming cross-cutting economic, social and environmental concerns for sustainable implementation. When UNOPS maps all projects to the main Goal to which it will contribute, it also considers and maps projects to any cross-cutting Goals to which it may also contribute.

47. In 2024, many activities were associated with cross-cutting Goals 5 (13 per cent), 8 (14 per cent), 10 (8 per cent) and 13 (7 per cent).

48. UNOPS strives to ensure that social and environmental safeguards are embedded in new engagements. Increasing from 83 per cent in 2023 to 89 per cent in 2024, UNOPS was slightly below its 2025 ambition of 95 per cent of the indicators in its sustainable implementation framework.

49. The number of labour days created for local workers decreased from 23.2 million in 2023 to 13.6 million in 2024, due primarily to a reduction in the number of labour days in one large cash-for-work project in Afghanistan.

50. The share of infrastructure projects with activities for capacity development decreased from 85 per cent in 2023 to 73 per cent in 2024; local community engagement decreased from 75 per cent to 59 per cent; and dedicated measures to enable women and people with disabilities to access facilities and/or services decreased from 81 per cent to 70 per cent. These shares decreased due to the challenging implementation context of a key infrastructure project.

Focus on gender mainstreaming and inclusion

51. UNOPS is committed to human rights for all, and to mainstreaming gender and social inclusion in its engagements, including people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. UNOPS is committed to preventing sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse across its activities.

52. In 2024, the share of relevant projects with activities and budget that addressed gender mainstreaming and social inclusion was 26 per cent, compared to the 60 per cent target for 2025. This was a decrease from 37 per cent in 2023, due mainly to a change in the assessment methodology, which was enhanced with further expertise in gender mainstreaming.

Enable climate mitigation and adaptation

53. UNOPS is committed to combating climate change, biodiversity loss, and ecosystem degradation. It works to ensure that its infrastructure and procurement projects consider greenhouse gas emissions.

54. In 2024, the share of infrastructure and procurement projects that considered greenhouse gas emissions, proposed options for reduction or adaptation, and had a budget for related activities, was 31 per cent – an increase of five percentage points compared to 2023, but below the target of 80 per cent for 2025.

55. UNOPS has established an internal climate action programme to speed up efforts to ensure that its projects include responses to climate change.

C. Support countries in accelerating achievement of the Goals***The countries where UNOPS worked***

56. In 2024, 91 per cent of UNOPS response was for in-country activities in more than 130 programme countries. Another 9 per cent was for global activities, managed mainly from Geneva, New York and Copenhagen. Sixty-six per cent was in countries in special or fragile situations. The regional distribution of in-country activities was 37 per cent in Asia, 32 per cent in Africa, 16 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean, 5 per cent in Europe, and 1 per cent in Oceania.

57. UNOPS was a signatory to 94 United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks active in 2024. This report is accompanied by nine country reports illustrating UNOPS contributions to accelerating countries' achievement of 11 Goals. The country reports cover UNOPS contributions in Albania, Argentina, Haiti, the Philippines, Serbia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, and Yemen. The reports draw on the reporting produced for the United Nations development system, including 'UN INFO'.

Respond through technical analysis

58. UNOPS has a mandate to support capacity development for public procurement and infrastructure. It can support common country analyses through technical advice in assessing programme country capacities for transparent and fair public procurement and infrastructure.

59. In 2024, UNOPS provided technical advice on infrastructure and/or procurement capacity assessments for 13 of 31 relevant common country analyses. Three out of five cooperation frameworks from relevant countries with start dates in 2024 focused on public procurement and infrastructure.

60. There is an opportunity to further enhance strategic collaboration with resident coordinators and other United Nations entities through a more deliberate engagement in country-level analysis and planning processes.

Focus on country priorities

61. UNOPS has committed to responding based on country priorities set in cooperation frameworks, national development plans or nationally determined contributions, with particular emphasis on health and climate change.

62. In 2024, the share of relevant countries supported through projects with health or climate change objectives was 75 per cent, compared to the 80 per cent target for 2025. Eighty-four per cent of UNOPS plans reflect current cooperation frameworks, national development plans, and/or nationally determined contributions, compared to the 2025 target of 95 per cent.

63. UNOPS will continue to consult partners on needs and priorities in elaborating country-level plans, building on relationships with local governments and other key stakeholders.

Enable national capacity

64. Together with partners, UNOPS can develop the capacity of interested national institutions in public procurement and infrastructure, as stand-alone expertise or to complement implementation management.

65. In 2024, the share of new public procurement and infrastructure projects that included activities for capacity development of national institutions with budgeted outputs was 39 per cent, approximately halfway to the 2025 target of 80 per cent.

66. Inclusion of capacity development activities is ultimately dependent on partners' demand for these activities. UNOPS will seek to more systematically convey to partners its potential value-add for capacity development in public procurement and infrastructure.

V. Management results

67. UNOPS has oversight and governance arrangements consistent with those of other United Nations organizations. The Executive Director is accountable to the Executive Board and the Secretary-General, and the Board of Auditors provide external oversight.

68. The UNOPS demand-driven operating and financial model, based on full cost-recovery, is unique in the United Nations system. UNOPS does not receive any core contributions, but instead charges a management fee for the projects it implements. The fee covers institutional governance, oversight, representation and continuous improvement.

69. The unique operating and financial model permeates all of UNOPS processes and systems for managing the organization and implementation of projects, with a resulting focus on agility and efficiency.

Box 5. UNOPS management at a glance

In 2024, the UNOPS workforce comprised 5,557 personnel, 736 of whom were employed on staff contracts and 4,821 as individual contractors. The UNOPS workforce was 51 per cent female and 49 per cent male. In senior positions, 45 per cent were female and 55 per cent were male. Of the international workforce, 55 per cent were from the Global South and 45 per cent were from the Global North. In senior international positions, 42 per cent were from the Global South and 58 per cent from the Global North. The average age of the UNOPS regular workforce was 42 years, and the average tenure with UNOPS was 5 years.

During 2024, UNOPS issued more than 1,900 new base contracts for its personnel. The number of contracts issued and separations occurring are indicative of the demands of a project-based organization. The overall turnover rate was 17 per cent; 15 per cent for women and 19 per cent for men. The turnover rate was down from 21 per cent in 2023 and 19 per cent in 2022.

From a management reporting perspective, the annual expense of project activities amounted to \$2.7 billion with associated management fees of \$111 million for implementation of the activities. Management expenses for the year amounted to \$112 million, producing an indicative operational result of negative \$1 million in net revenue. In 2024, UNOPS signed close to \$4 billion in new agreements with partners, including almost 300 new engagements.¹²

70. At the end of 2024, only one of the 43 recommendations from the third-party review addressed by the comprehensive response plan remained open. That recommendation concerns the multi-year process innovation and digitalization programme, implementation of which is expected to continue at least until 2028.

71. Following the decisions of the Executive Board at its second regular session in 2024, a third party review on the status of implementation of the comprehensive response plan and a third party formative evaluation of the process innovation and digitalization programme will be presented at the annual session 2025.

72. The restated strategic plan summarized UNOPS ambitions for the organization under four management goals:

¹² The financial numbers reflect management reporting and may be subject to change. UNOPS produces annual financial statements which are audited and verified by the United Nations Board of Auditors.

- (a) people culture;
- (b) partner trust;
- (c) process excellence; and
- (d) financial stewardship.

73. Each management goal was complemented by indicators and targets intended to reinforce behaviours and responsibilities falling within the remit of UNOPS management. The results framework included a total of 24 management indicators and targets.

74. For 2024, performance against 11 indicators exceeded, met or came within 10 per cent of the 2025 targets. Performance against 18 indicators improved compared to 2023. Performance against one indicator was below 50 per cent of the target for 2025; it pertains to progress rate of the digital transformation programme.

A. People culture

75. The goal for ‘people culture’ is “an inclusive, fair and positive workplace culture where people can contribute, grow and develop”.

Embrace a culture of United Nations values

76. UNOPS aspires to gender parity and geographical representation in its workforce. It is committed to zero tolerance of sexual exploitation and abuse.

77. In 2023, UNOPS met 68 per cent of its internal targets on gender and geographical representation, an improvement compared to 54 per cent in 2023 (albeit below the 95 per cent target for 2025).

78. The share of internal targets met on protection from sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment was 100 per cent, exceeding the 2025 target of 95 per cent.

79. The UNOPS commitment to shaping organizational culture includes dedicated efforts to enhance gender parity, balance geographical representation, and further strengthen measures for prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment.

Attract, recognize and develop talent

80. UNOPS seeks to attract, develop and retain talent, skills and capabilities to deliver on partner needs. Regular feedback and opportunities for professional development are emphasized.

81. In 2024, 90 per cent of personnel completed performance appraisals in a timely manner, four percentage points lower compared to 2023 and below the 2025 target of 98 per cent. Ninety-five per cent completed the mandatory training on time, meeting the 2025 target.

82. The UNOPS commitment to shaping organizational culture includes dedicated efforts to better attract and retain personnel.

Reinforce accountability for leadership and a positive culture

83. Personnel engagement and well-being remain central to the ability of UNOPS to support partners and countries. In October 2024, a revised culture and engagement survey introduced a new culture index alongside the engagement measurement.

84. The October 2024 engagement score rose slightly, to 3.82 from 3.76 in 2023, placing UNOPS in the 29th percentile of the global supplier database. The culture index was 3.68, setting a baseline for improvement.

85. Management recognizes the need for progress and has distributed the culture and engagement survey results across regions, countries, and teams. Managers with reports are required to lead culture conversations and develop action plans, supported by 160 trained culture ambassadors. From December 2025, managers’ survey results will factor into their performance assessments.

86. The share of offices reaching the composite ‘goal zero’ target for safeguarding health and safety was 90 per cent, approaching the target of 95 per cent for 2025.

B. Partner trust

87. The goal for ‘partner trust’ is “to build trust and create value with partners”.

Preserve partner trust

88. Partner trust is earned through the value created and collaborative engagement, ensuring clarity of mutual expectations.

89. Every two years, UNOPS issues a partner survey to seek feedback on trust, areas for improvement, and indications of future demand. The 2024 partner survey had close to 1,000 respondents and reflected across-the-board improvement on key questions compared to the 2022 survey.

90. In the 2024 partner survey, 83 per cent of respondents expressed trust in UNOPS, an increase of four percentage points since 2022, and just below the 2025 target of 85 per cent. Seventy-two per cent indicated that UNOPS met their expectations for timely completion of projects, an increase of five percentage points since 2022, and just below the 75 per cent target set for 2025.

Collaborate for value

91. UNOPS aspires to learn from experience, good or bad, to share knowledge with current and future partners, transferring experience within and across sectors, Goals and country contexts.

92. In 2024, the share of integrated solutions with complete documentation and published project examples is estimated to be 25 per cent, meeting the 2025 target. UNOPS is seeking to better inform the design of projects based on examples of success and lessons learned, so that practical solutions with impact can be replicated for new partners and countries.

93. UNOPS internal missions are expected to serve an important function in exploring the replicability and scalability of existing projects, and the incorporation of lessons learned into future projects, in collaboration with partners.

Demonstrate transparency for purpose

94. UNOPS aspires to align its data with United Nations standards and enhance transparency by publishing information on the partners, Goals and countries supported through its global portfolio.

95. UNOPS has implemented 100 per cent of United Nations data standards. In 2024, UNOPS completed 50 per cent of country-level UN INFO reporting – an improvement compared to 18 per cent in 2023, but still below the target of 80 per cent by 2025.

96. The degree of compliance with country-level UN INFO reporting reflects that UNOPS has signed a high number of cooperation frameworks in countries where it is non-resident and has little activity. UNOPS will review its practices for signing cooperation frameworks and country-level reporting, and explore options for providing targeted support for fulfilling the requirements.

C. Process excellence

97. The goal for ‘process excellence’ is “to enable cost-effective operations through digital processes”.

Manage process and energy efficiency

98. UNOPS strives to align authority with responsibility, ensuring that the right people, in the right place, have the delegated authority they need to manage; that checks and balances are calibrated based on cost-benefit and risks; and that flexibility implies accountability for results and adherence to United Nations values and principles.

99. In 2024, UNOPS met 84 per cent of its targets for process excellence, compared to a target of 95 per cent by 2025. At the time of writing, UNOPS was finalizing data collection for 2024 greenhouse gas emissions, to be included in an annex to this report.

100. UNOPS has established a climate action programme as an organization-wide initiative to achieve its climate commitments, including reducing corporate emissions to reach net zero before 2050, accounting for emissions in the UNOPS supply chains, and driving climate resilience in UNOPS projects.

Respond to oversight recommendations

101. UNOPS will respond effectively to oversight recommendations. The 2024 implementation rate for internal audit recommendations was 96 per cent, above the 2025 target of 95 per cent. Internally, UNOPS met 81 per cent of management targets for implementation of oversight recommendations, slightly below the 90 per cent target for 2025.

Innovate operations platform and services

102. UNOPS works to ensure that processes and information systems are integrated and fit for purpose. In 2024, the share of projects for which time, cost and scope were tracked using digital systems was 74 per cent, compared to the 95 per cent target for 2025.

103. The share of focus areas under the digital transformation programme completed was 23 per cent compared to the target of 60 per cent for 2025. At the first regular session 2025, UNOPS presented a report on implementation of the process innovation and digitalization programme, which aims to optimize processes and adopt appropriate digital systems.

D. Financial stewardship

104. The goal for ‘financial stewardship’ is “to balance risks and opportunities through adequate resourcing”.

105. UNOPS is the only United Nations entity operating on a demand-driven, cost-recovery basis. As a going concern, it must be able to withstand fluctuations in demand while covering the costs of institutional structures and improvements and preserving the cost-effectiveness essential to being a partner of choice.

106. The commitment to zero net revenue increases the need for iterative planning and close monitoring of changes. This will require longer-term forecasts as well as regular review and adjustment of performance.

Resource organizational capacity

107. UNOPS strives to ensure that it is resourced according to the requirements of a United Nations organization. It has committed to evolving in line with the need to develop and manage its global portfolio based on partner requirements and available technologies.

108. In 2024, the ratio of management expense and expense against the comprehensive response plan, in relation to project expense, was 5 per cent – within the targeted range of 4-7 per cent for 2025. To manage for zero net revenue in 2025, UNOPS reduced the number of management-funded resources by 47 positions – 29 from its headquarters and 18 from its regions.

109. The share of UNOPS country and multi-country offices resourced in line with organizational design was 79 per cent, compared to the 95 per cent target for 2025.

Ensure transparent and fair financial management for partners

110. UNOPS is committed to achieving the target for zero net revenue approved by the Executive Board. Its cost recovery model ensures transparent and fair recovery, aligned with the cost classification of the Finance and Budget Network of the High-level Committee on Management of the Chief Executives Board.

111. In 2024, net revenue from operations was a negative \$1 million. UNOPS considers this result satisfactory in the context of overall project expenses of \$2.7 billion and management expenses of \$112 million.

112. UNOPS submitted 70 per cent of financial client reports on time, a marked improvement compared to 57 per cent in 2023, but below the 95 per cent target for 2025. Client reporting is expected to further improve as process innovation, automation and digitalization expand partners’ access to data.

Enable accurate financial planning

113. UNOPS is committed to accurate financial planning, including forecasting. In 2024, 72 per cent of projects provided timely forecasting throughout, compared to the target of 95 per cent for 2025. More robust planning and forecasting will enable timely implementation of partner commitments.

114. UNOPS is working on refinements to its processes and systems to enable international public sector accounting standards (IPSAS) revenue classification based on project outputs. The refinements should result in a further systematic reflection of UNOPS responsibility and control with respect to outputs, and thus its role as principal or agent.

115. UNOPS will enhance its ability to enable accurate financial planning, including through longer-term planning and corresponding rolling forecasts. Augmented digital systems are expected to aid the balancing of fee and management expenses needed to achieve zero net revenue.

VI. Lessons learned and the way forward**A. Lessons learned**

116. Effective outcome-based reporting requires managing for impact throughout the project life cycle. The project design phase lays the groundwork for effectiveness. This will require earlier establishment of information on partners' objectives and desired outcomes, enabled by systems and aided and reinforced through institutional capabilities.

117. Comparatively low performance on indicators for mainstreaming of gender, climate action and adaptation, and capacity development in procurement and infrastructure projects, highlight the importance of a further systematic approach to address these issues, underpinned by robust processes and digital systems.

118. Increasing global financial uncertainty underlines the importance of robust financial arrangements and longer-term planning. The endorsement by the Executive Board in its decision 2025/6 of piloting a revised calculation methodology and disclosures for liquid excess reserves provides for funding of longer-term commitments while ensuring that there is no accumulation of liquid excess reserves.

119. Reducing the number of indicators in the results framework and employing internal cascading in accountability compacts for senior management, complemented by dashboards and recurrent reviews of performance, may help to focus and improve overall performance against annual targets.

B. The way forward

120. UNOPS will present its strategic plan, 2026-2029, to the Executive Board at its second regular session 2025, staking out the way forward for the four year period. The strategic plan will be informed by, inter alia, the results and lessons learned presented in this report.