

PERFORMANCE AT A GLANCE: UNOPS

United Nations Office for Project Services

OCTOBER 2021

Overview

The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) is different from other UN agencies in many ways. Classified in the United Nations (UN) system as an “other entity,” not only does UNOPS’ governance and legal status set it apart from programmatic UN bodies, but also its mandate, business and funding models are different, and result in certain key performance features and requirements for UNOPS.

Understanding demand and responding to needs

As a demand driven organisation, the foundation for UNOPS’ operations is to understand its operational context, respond to demand for its services and solutions, and remain relevant by demonstrating its understanding of wider global issues. This includes identifying where, how and why it can or should respond to global issues, i.e., the business opportunities it has to be aware of. At the same time, as a UN organisation, there is an obligation to meet demands in response to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), other global commitments, and to pressing global needs. The Strategic Plan articulates UNOPS’ value proposition, aiming to better convey and establish the connection between its business model and value chain. The aim is to move up the value chain – to engage with partners “earlier on and higher up” (i.e. engaging with partners higher up in the decision-making process) and to add value to the SDGs.

Its non-programmatic but cross-cutting operational mandate offers UNOPS the flexibility to engage in a wide spectrum of sectors and country contexts. UNOPS is not constrained by a programmatic mandate, nor by earmarked funding, as are many other UN organisations, but can respond to many different types of demand from an array of different partners and seize different opportunities. UNOPS offer services categorised in five service lines and three service types. In addition to the intent to engage “earlier on and higher up,” UNOPS also has a stated intention to increasingly provide integrated solutions. This comprehensive and wide-ranging package of UNOPS operational services lines and solutions sets UNOPS further apart from peers, as it has different ‘identities’ across regions with different types of output. These ‘identities’ can shift and move and evolve in different directions. In addition to being able to track and explain a range of very different results, at the strategic level, UNOPS needs a strong centripetal force to continue in the direction laid out in the strategic plan. This may pose a trade-off with the demand driven business model as demand is varied and constantly changing across countries and context. UNOPS has to consider being strategic verses being responsive to demand, operating based on standardisation (fixed service lines) versus tailoring (feasibility of a large “menu of different

UNOPS’ history is one of continuous change and adaptation, something that has resulted in a culture that values and rewards innovative thinking and informed risk-taking. ... The organisation’s receptiveness to reform and change provides a solid foundation for its ability to adjust to changing circumstances and meet evolving demands.

services”). Flexing and evolving the service lines, whilst maintaining UNOPS’ competitive advantage, is thus one of the future challenges.

In responding to continued or increasing demand for its services, UNOPS must proactively leverage its comparative and collaborative advantage and protect its reputational assets through demonstrable delivery. UNOPS undertakes detailed external analysis, including competitive analysis, as part of regional business planning risk assessments, and applies specific positioning principles in responding to demand, to ensure it is positioned as a trusted and recognised partner with key donors to the regions. Some of the overarching aspects of UNOPS’ comparative and collaborative advantage are summarised below.

Comparative and collaborative advantage of UNOPS

	Comparative and collaborative advantage
UN status	Allows UNOPS to promote and enact the UN Values and Behaviours into its working with non-UN partners.
Mandate	Non-programmatic, self-financing mandate seen as providing greater flexibility than programmatically mandated UN agencies.
Operating model	Lean operating model provides conditions for flexibility and adaptability and responsiveness to market demand, partner need and operating conditions.
Technical knowledge in service lines	Strong technical knowledge and reputation for delivery based on experience and expertise provide enhanced credibility. Service lines meet partner demand.
Implementation excellence	Operating model geared to efficiency and project implementation built on the internationally recognised European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) performance management standards for business excellence, and organisational architecture to ensure application and compliance.
Robust and informed risk management	Risk management systems, processes and tolerance allow UNOPS to work in very difficult operating countries/context including for example, conflict-affected or fragile situations; situations where governance is challenging – or that are experiencing, or have recently experienced – a significant humanitarian crisis.
Competitive fee structure and cost recovery	Lean operating and business model allows for cost advantage to be leveraged. Fee structure and cost recovery perceived as reasonably competitive by partners.

Note: Comparative advantage is understood as a specific advantage (technical expertise; cost efficiency; ability to work in contexts of interest) over other agencies providing similar services. Collaborative partnership is related to mutual benefit from working together in partnerships where UNOPS and its partners agree to contribute resources (such as finances, knowledge and people) to accomplish a mutual goal.

Driven by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), UNOPS has recently extended its data analytics on comparative and collaborative advantage, through a systematic and detailed examination by partner and in region to clearly distinguish UNOPS’ value add alongside identifying alternative providers in these regional operating environments. To maintain and develop the present comparative advantage, partners need to know what UNOPS stands for and can do and clear communication from UNOPS is therefore also fundamental.

With respect to what and how UNOPS delivers in response to demand, UNOPS’ results framework consists of three mutually reinforcing *contribution goals* and four management goals. Its *contribution goals* express the overall value proposition whilst the *management goals* are associated with UNOPS’ excellence agenda. For its contribution goals, UNOPS reports its results in terms of outputs delivered and explains this by reference to its mandate. As a service provider, UNOPS delivers its operational development results through partners who are ultimately accountable for outcomes and impact, whereas UNOPS is accountable for the outputs that can be directly attributed to it. Whilst quantitative targets and metrics exist for the management goals, there are no corresponding targets for the contribution goals. Given the demand driven business model and the service provider mandate, internal success is

perceived more in terms of efficient and increasing delivery, rather than in terms of outcome and impact – a major difference from other UN organisations. This is also reflected in the results management practices. With a results framework where UNOPS is not accountable for outcomes, UNOPS also does not conduct or commission independent evaluation of outcomes or impact. Indeed, whilst UNOPS is data driven in terms of analytics for demand and delivery of output, it has allocated more limited corporate resources to assess, test, examine, report, and share lessons learnt.

Moving “higher up” and along the value chain may come, however, with a shift in attribution and accountability requirements. UNOPS is currently held accountable for delivering output, though is increasingly aware of the need to improve data at project level for output, outcome, and impact in some cases and has a stated intention to gradually improve the way it tracks and assesses direct and indirect contributions, for example to see where projects have most influence across SDGs.

Pursuing this path, UNOPS may be expected to improve its capacity and systems to measure these contributions – something that is methodologically challenging, and which is generally seen to require an independent evaluation or validation function to be fully credible. As this evolution of understanding and demonstrating attributable contribution is further developed in UNOPS, necessary adjustments to the ways in which UNOPS reports its results will emerge. This could also be an opportunity for UNOPS to clarify the boundaries of its accountability within its different types of services and move beyond business metrics of performance (work won/turnover) towards responding to the “so what” questions: what difference are we making? What changed as a result? What implementation capacity have we build in which partners? Opportunities for strengthening post project assessment work on the contribution of the outputs to the partner’s broader objectives exist. Indeed, in addition to better understanding demand, UNOPS needs to understand how and why it delivers effectively – what works, what doesn’t, why, where, for who, and under what conditions. UNOPS has taken initial steps to improve its systems and process for better managing knowledge and lessons learnt. IT upgrades and a Knowledge Management Strategy introduced in 2018 are an indication of intent to significantly improve. These evolving knowledge and data systems are timely initiatives, which can help show both the strong demand for UNOPS services and a correlation with global challenges, but also seize the opportunities of applying recognised implementation efficiency capability in new settings; or with new partners (both within and beyond the UN).

Remaining agile for operational excellence

UNOPS has a strong change management capacity and is on a continuous improvement journey; journey. It’s narrative has evolved over the years from primarily being a technical agent – adopting the role of a contractor – to today being a strategic partner focused on the change it can make to people’s lives and how it responds to the SDGs. UNOPS’ openness and responsiveness to change is an asset in a rapidly transforming world.

UNOPS’ history is one of continuous change and adaptation, something that has resulted in a culture that values and rewards innovative thinking and informed risk-taking. UNOPS’ leadership, which was recently reorganised to be leaner and more flexible, is structured to drive effective collaboration across units. The SLT has clear ambitions for the organisation and has generated a shared vision among personnel and a sense of ownership of its reform programme. The organisation’s receptiveness to reform and change provides a solid foundation for its ability to adjust to changing circumstances and meet evolving demands. The responsive and adept reaction to the COVID-19 pandemic is a recent example of this. UNOPS has demonstrated operational flexibility, appropriately restructuring operational activities by setting up a Global Task Force (GTF) to provide “first line, dedicated support to business units in the implementation of new and current projects related to COVID-19 support to partners, in order to maximise the impact that UNOPS can provide.”¹ It has supported efforts in over 70 countries around the world to mitigate impact since the pandemic’s onset, through delivery of human resource services, emergency health procurement, rehabilitating hospitals/health centres and financing sustainable infrastructure.²

1 UNOPS Global Task Force on COVID-19, 2020.

2 Report of the annual session 2020.

Innovation and change imply risk; carefully managing and mitigating that risk is essential for UNOPS. UNOPS has a clearly articulated risk and quality framework (the Governance, Risk and Compliance framework) to support the organisation in managing risks and is aware of the many different types of risks it is exposed to. At corporate level, these include, for example, financial risk of not meeting net-revenue targets, reputational risk from taking on high-operational-risk projects, and risks of not contributing to the goals of the strategic plan if pursuing an opportunistic engagement approach rather than a strategic one. UNOPS describes the approach to accepting engagement risk as “not risk averse, but risk aware” and refers to “managing through SMART risk response processes.”

UNOPS also has a strong internal control environment. This includes internal audit and investigation, ethics and compliance, and an enterprise risk management framework. External audit, complying with international standards, are mandatory. In addition, UNOPS is regularly assessed by the Joint Inspection Unit of the United Nations System (JIU) and the United Nations Board of Auditors (UNBOA) and has undergone additional EFQM assessments which is unique in the UN system. Audits include a Management response providing a clear action plan for addressing any gaps or weaknesses identified by external audit and responses are closely monitored through monthly reporting in the Quarterly Business Review.

UNOPS’ system of decentralised decision-making, clear target setting, and close performance monitoring is well established. A result of the effectiveness agenda, it allows regular tracking and proactively identifying and addressing any delays or problems. Unique in the UN system, UNOPS has taken inspiration from the EFQM model of business excellence³ and this combined with the project driven organisational structure and decentralised decision-making has contributed to UNOPS’ reputation for excellence in project implementation. UNOPS is well recognised as being an excellent project implementor with a unique strength and track record in implementing infrastructure projects. Moving “higher up” and along the value chain may mean facing new competitors and having to demonstrate its excellence in these new areas, whilst maintaining its existing comparative advantage that supports its financial foundation.

Finally, UNOPS’ organisational structure is consistent with its non-programmatic mandate, and its project driven organisational structure and self-financed business model allows for flexible footprints in the form of physical country presence that respond to and evolve with the demand for its services. Whilst this presents advantages in terms of cost and flexibility, the contingency on demand presents a trade-off with continuity and ability to engage systematically for example in the UN Country Teams (UNCTs), or to develop and engage with new partners unfamiliar with UNOPS. UNOPS has to manage this trade-off, when making decisions on country presence and allocating scarce management resources. Myanmar is one example where UNOPS plays a significant role in the UNCTs as a result of its large and stable presence. UNOPS is also active at senior levels in contributing to and driving elements of the UNDS reform where it can bring its unique experience and expertise to bear. UNOPS, by way of its more private sector approach and its proactive response to the COVID-19 pandemic, is well placed to engage and contribute effectively to the UN system-wide strategy on the future of work and the Future of the United Nations system workforce. This capacity could be seen as an advantage vis-à-vis its future engagement and potential demand for services from sister UN agencies.

Ensuring the conditions of financial sustainability

Unlike many UN organisations with programmatic or normative activities, which are financed predominantly through core and non-core contributions, UNOPS services are provided against coverage of the direct cost, plus a management ‘fee for service’ covering immediate and potential future indirect costs. Many advantages of its business model notwithstanding, it also presents UNOPS with some trade-offs. Financially, this relates to the funding structure: increasing revenue from fees may be needed to further invest in operational excellence, but in the process may jeopardise UNOPS’ competitiveness, and hence its financial foundation. Part of UNOPS’ competitive advantage is its relative low cost, and there is a strong incentive for UNOPS to maintain competitive costs and fees structures. Hence,

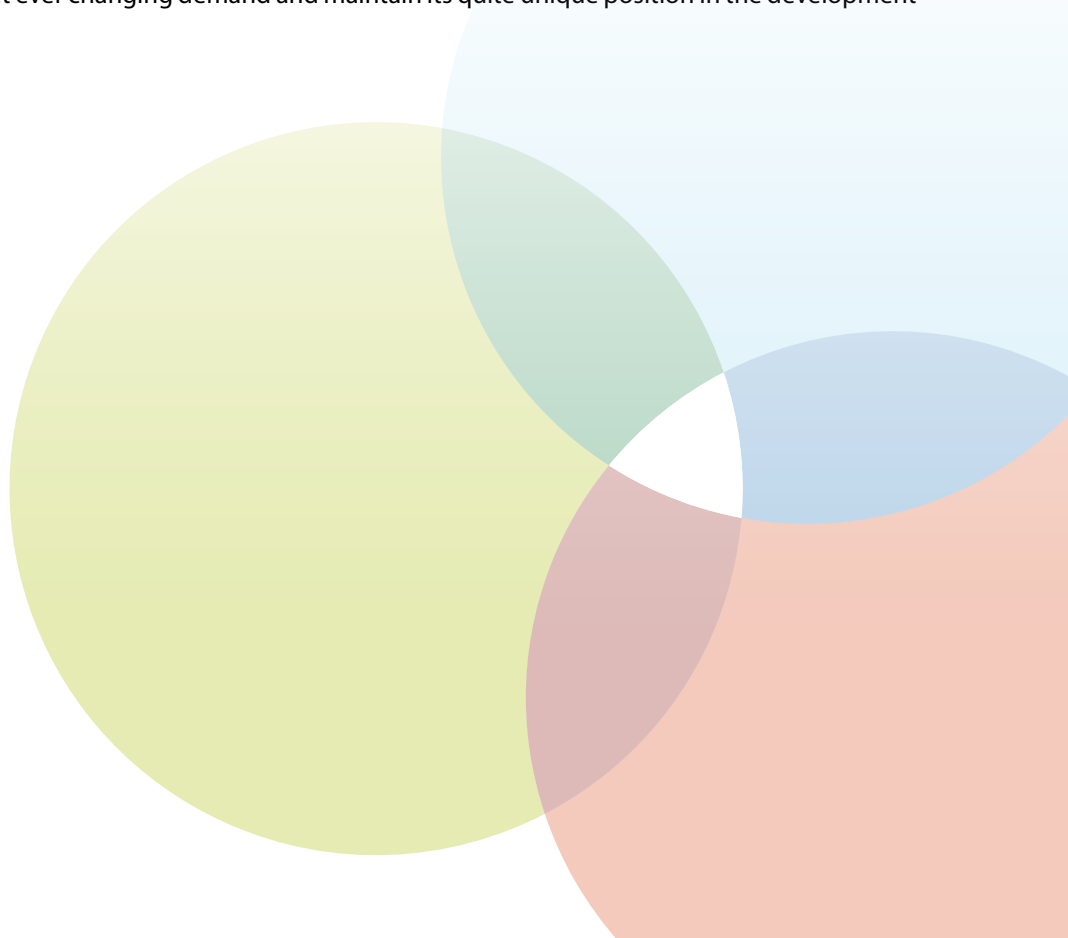
³ <https://www.efqm.org/>

to keep costs low, UNOPS is very cost conscious when allocating corporate resources. Activities aimed specifically at addressing cross-cutting issues or setting up comprehensive and systematic Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems that lay outside the boundaries of a project design, are funded by the management budget and hence compete with funds for other corporate functions including compliance, strategy and governance.

Financial stewardship is one of UNOPS' four management goals and ensuring financial health and sustainability remains a demonstrable strategic priority and focus. The assessment finds UNOPS to have a solid financial framework. The financial framework is reviewed regularly by the governing bodies, and a clear biennial budgetary framework and rigorous budgetary process ensure that priority areas have adequate funding, and that UNOPS has a sufficient level of reserves. Accompanying UNOPS' higher ambitions and engagement in new areas and with new way of working comes increasing risk and a need for significant financial muscle. The increased size, volume, and variety of UNOPS' engagements, and increased risk profile this implies, require sustained and diligent attention to critical financial metrics and indicators, where UNOPS will need the Executive Board's engagement.

Big picture and looking ahead

Looking ahead at UNOPS future trajectory, demand for its services is strong and so is its delivery capacity, as evidenced by the excellent performance in operational management. With a number of new initiatives, UNOPS is broadening both the size and depth of its engagements, working increasingly as a strategic implementing partner and through early engagement with partners higher up in the decision-making process opening up for new opportunities. UNOPS will need to closely monitor whether this growth is fully aligned with its strategic plan and financial viability and robustness. UNOPS overall has a clear and robust architecture and financial framework to help guide its future growth path. Ongoing improvement in the evidence-based nature of its management practices, for example in the form of better clarity on the value it adds in these new markets, and in how it addresses cross cutting issues in its projects, bolstered by metrics and evaluative evidence or reviews of results and lessons learned, would further strengthen this. Likewise, building further on the virtual engagements at country level that has been a result of the COVID-19 pandemic should strengthen UNOPS collaborative engagement with development partners, engagement in UN country teams, and generally in UNDS reform. With this in place, UNOPS could be in a strong position to further flex and evolve its service lines to meet ever changing demand and maintain its quite unique position in the development architecture.



Main strengths and areas of improvement identified in the MOPAN 2020 assessment

Main strengths

- UNOPS is defined by a culture of innovation and a solutions-focused approach, providing a solid foundation for further growth, consistent with its strategic direction.
- Managing and mitigating risk is fundamental for UNOPS; to manage such risks UNOPS has built robust enterprise risk management and internal control frameworks, aligned to an overarching governance, risk, and compliance framework.
- UNOPS is not constrained by a programmatic mandate, nor by earmarked funding, it thus has the possibility to engage where it has strong comparative or collaborative advantage.
- The demand driven organisational structure and operating model gives UNOPS agility, flexibility, and responsiveness; UNOPS is able to rapidly resize and reorient organisational structures including its geographical footprint. This was evident for example in the efforts and initiatives that UNOPS has undertaken in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Decentralised decision-making and the application of systematic management practices and recognised international standards have contributed to UNOPS' reputation for excellence in project implementation. This is an area of permanent focus and one of the pillars for its growth ambitions, together with the continuous adaptation of the type and scope of services provided.

Challenges and areas of trade off

- Its self-financed, non-programmatic, cross-cutting operational mandate provides a large degree of flexibility but also implies a dependence on generating business in a way no other UN organisation has. This can be a challenge and carries several risks (for example financial risk of not meeting net-revenue targets, or operational risk from certain types of projects). Its wide scope for engagement also obliges UNOPS to be critically conscious of how it selects and prioritises projects and partners, to remain consistent with its Strategic Plan and its UN mandate and commitments.
- The lean and flexible structure, with physical country presence contingent on demand for its services, is one of UNOPS' strengths. However, it also presents some degree of trade-off with continuity and ability to engage systematically, for example, in UNCTs, or to develop and engage in new partnerships.

Areas for improvement

- A fundamental aspect of business excellence (the EFQM model) is continuous learning and improvement, and the integration of feedback loops and sharing of lessons learnt is a welcome area where UNOPS has announced its intention to intensify efforts.
- Development results in UNOPS are formally reported in output terms. UNOPS has announced an intention to better track "direct and indirect contributions", and a better consistency in the usage of definitions between UNOPS results terminology and that applied by peers and partners would help clarify the nature and scope of these contributions.
- Given its commitment to UN values and global commitments such as SDGs, reporting on and integrating concerns related to gender mainstreaming, environment, and human rights is emerging as an area for improvement.
- Whilst UNOPS knowledge management system is maturing and improving, two issues are signalled for further consideration: i) the balance between attention to systems for sharing of lessons from implementation versus systems for data analytics by demand, especially given the ambition to evolve the service lines and solutions offered which need to be informed by lessons learnt, and ii) introducing a certain degree of post project assessment work on the contribution of the outputs to the partner's broader objectives would strengthen the credibility of the self-reported results and by implication the accountability to stakeholders.

PERFORMANCE RATING SUMMARY FOR UNOPS

MISSION AND MANDATE:

In its own words, the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) is “focused on helping to improve people’s lives in a practical sense – supporting partners’ efforts to bring peace and security, humanitarian and development solutions to some of the world’s most challenging environments.”

UNOPS commenced operations as a separate and identifiable entity in 1995 and is today a fully-fledged member of the United Nations Development System (UNDS).

UNOPS is a service provider – a central resource in the United Nations (UN) system for procurement and infrastructure – it is non-programmatic and project-based, and is demand driven and self-financed.

GOVERNANCE:

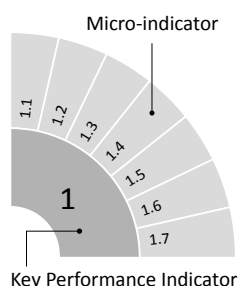
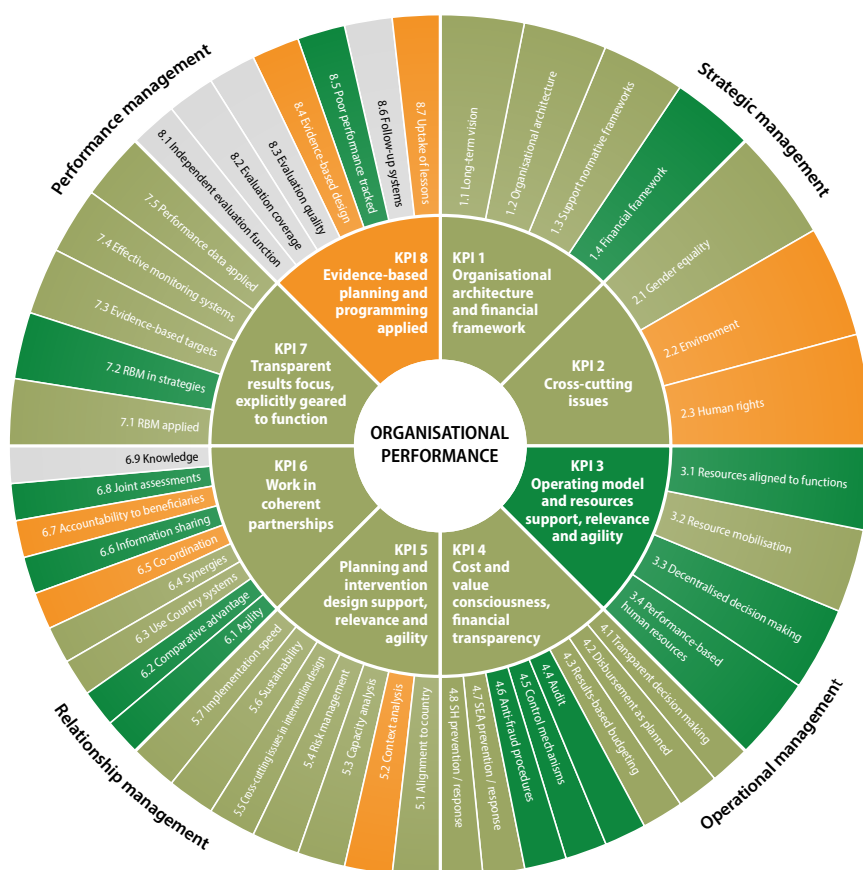
In 2010 UNOPS was formally included in the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and United Nations Population Fund, consisting of thirty-six member states elected by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). The current Executive Director was appointed in 2014 and a new, reduced and streamlined leadership team was introduced in 2019.

STRUCTURE:

UNOPS is structured according to two organisational entity types: functional and geographic. The Senior Leadership Team has seven members, including the Executive Director, and six senior directors with responsibilities for core areas of UNOPS activities.

FINANCE:

In 2018-2019, UNOPS delivered solutions and services worth USD 2.3 billion across over 80 countries, with 57% of delivery in least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing states, and other countries in fragile situations.



How to read these charts

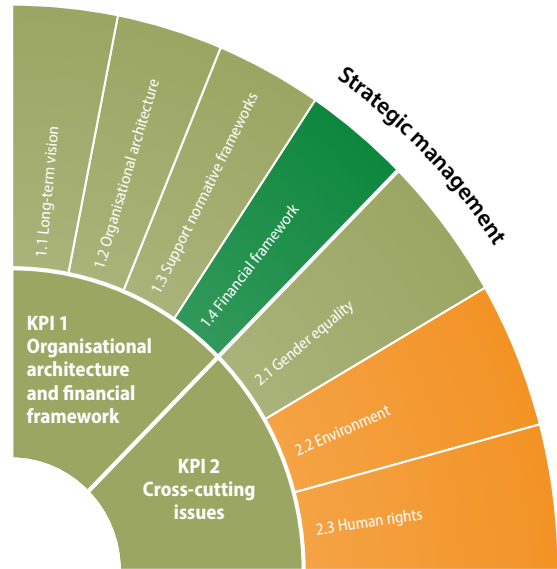
- **Highly satisfactory** (3.51-4.00)
- **Satisfactory** (2.51-3.50)
- **Unsatisfactory** (1.51-2.50)
- **Highly unsatisfactory** (0-1.50)
- **No evidence / Not assessed**

Key findings by performance area

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF UNOPS

UNOPS’ non-programmatic and demand-driven business model makes it a highly agile organisation. Its organisational architecture has been flexibly aligned to support the ambitions of the Strategic Plan. Its financial model and framework, unique in the UNDS system, is strong, and interviews with UNOPS personnel and management demonstrated a clear focus on the principles of financial sustainability and health, with many citing the historic financial situation of UNOPS as a driver for continued vigilance. Among partners, different evidence points to mixed understanding of the pricing policy.

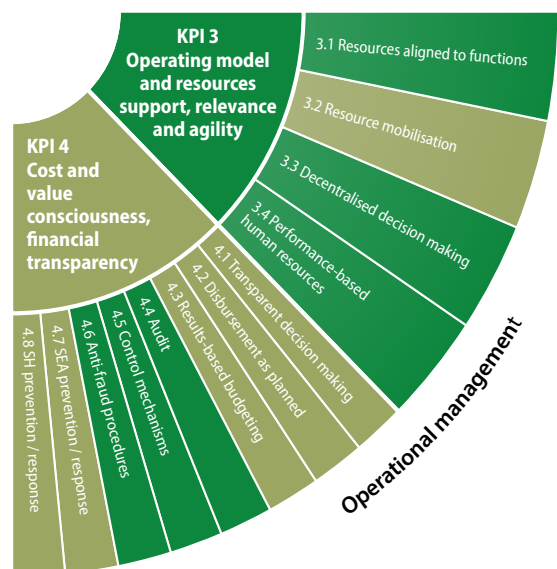
UNOPS is guided by two sets of goals: contribution goals and management goals centred on generating value for UNOPS partners both as an end in itself and a means for further business development. UNOPS must demonstrate value for money and be transparent in its cost structure to remain relevant and competitive.



The project-based nature of work and the demand-driven business model to some extent determines how and where UNOPS can make contributions to SDGs and other global commitments. Given this limitation, while cross cutting issues – in particular gender – are reflected and integrated within UNOPS systems, there remains room for improvement in ensuring that all cross-cutting issues are adequately and consistently addressed. Partner survey results from 2021 for example, show a larger share of respondents agreeing that “UNOPS promotes gender equality” than agreeing that “UNOPS is a trusted partner in climate resilient infrastructure”. Survey results do however also show a lack of familiarity amongst partners with UNOPS work in these areas, in particular with respect to climate resilient infrastructure.

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT OF UNOPS

Organisational structure, including country presence, and personnel and other resources are flexibly, effectively, and cost consciously aligned and deployed in response to evolving demands and requirements of service delivery and business development. While five service lines remain the bedrock of UNOPS expertise, it continuously monitors demand trends and adjusts its response, with accountability and decision-making authority cascaded throughout the organisation, ensuring effective delivery of commitments and awareness of future possibilities. The 2021 Partner Survey found all five service lines to be relevant to partners, and that UNOPS has relevance across all UN pillars. Unique in the UN system, UNOPS’ continuous improvement approaches have been assessed by EFQM.



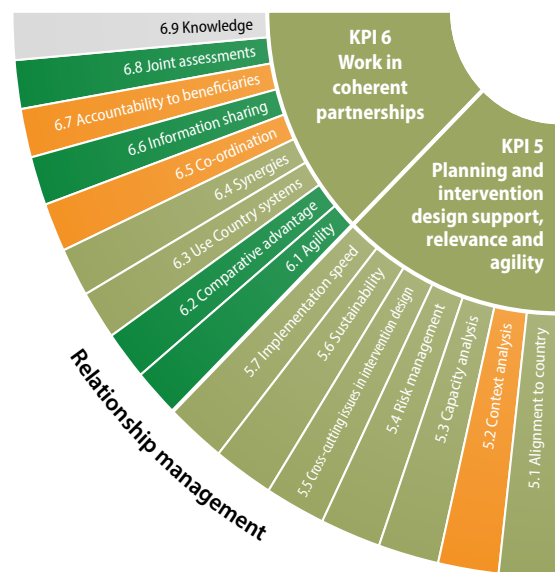
Selection and prioritisation of engagements includes dialogue on design and risk assessments. UNOPS has a strong internal control environment and enterprise risk management framework. In addition, a specific Prevention of Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) Strategy is currently being developed as part of UNOPS ethics and compliance framework. Among other types of risks, SH and SEA risks can be recorded and classified in one UNOPS Projects, through the enterprise risk management functionality available across all projects, engagements and organisational units.

RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT OF UNOPS

Engagement opportunity development and acceptance are framed by regional business strategies and respond to the needs and demands of partners, taking into account national strategies and objectives. Consideration of country context, however, is less systematised and while partner interviews commended UNOPS personnel for their technical expertise, there was in a few cases a perception that some lacked political skills required to operate effectively in highly sensitive contexts. Consistent with this, the assessment considers political risk as the weakest element of UNOPS' otherwise comprehensive risk management architecture as these risk factors were not reflected in risk registers to same extent as other risk categories.

UNOPS' engagements hold multiple accountabilities: to its commissioning partner(s), and to the beneficiaries or stakeholders (direct and indirect). Because UNOPS is a service provider implementing projects on behalf of partners, it considers that the accountability to beneficiaries is primarily with the partner. As a result of this, approval mechanisms do not explicitly include the requirement to assess the extent to which procedures for accountability to beneficiaries will be addressed in the intervention, nor has training been conducted on procedures for accountability to beneficiaries.

Bespoke procedures and tools encourage joint planning and engagement with commissioning partners at project level and mechanisms, including budgetary and governance arrangements, allow necessary project changes and adjustments, as employed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Such joint efforts are less evidenced with respect to development partners, which in some cases can be explained by the scope and type of country presence or the lack thereof which may constrain engagement with UN Country Teams and other development partners. There was a general sense, from the 2021 Partner Survey, of high satisfaction of working with UNOPS, a willingness to work with UNOPS again and to recommend it to others, but that the visibility to external partners could be enhanced and partner communication with stakeholders during collaboration improved.

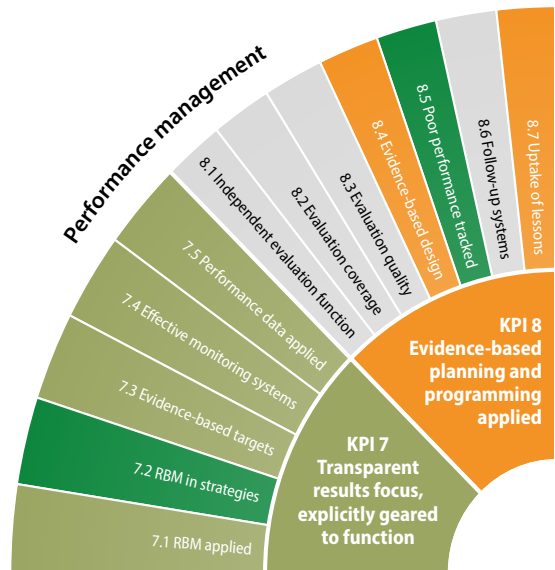


PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT OF UNOPS

UNOPS conceptualises traditional monitoring and evaluation within a knowledge management framework and has, over time, strengthened its focus on results. Management results and targets are clear and tracked in the Balanced Scorecard, and through cascading, regularly updated business plans.

Aiming to better understand the contribution of its output to partner’s broader objectives, internal discussions on measuring and tracking results beyond output have focused on accounting for UNOPS’ contributions, direct and indirect. While impact language is used on UNOPS website, this has yet to be systematically implemented and a better consistency in the usage of definitions between UNOPS results terminology and that applied by peers and partners, may be sought.

UNOPS is strengthening its data for business intelligence, with improvements to a global library for lessons, risks and issues underway as the centre piece of the Knowledge Management Strategy. UNOPS, unlike most multilateral organisations, does not have an independent evaluation function. In the absence of an evaluation function, the assessment of KPI 8 rests on only three MIs. These capture areas in which the UNOPS knowledge management architecture is still being formalised, including disseminating lessons learned within and beyond UNOPS and demonstrating how these lessons are used to develop engagements and improve performance.

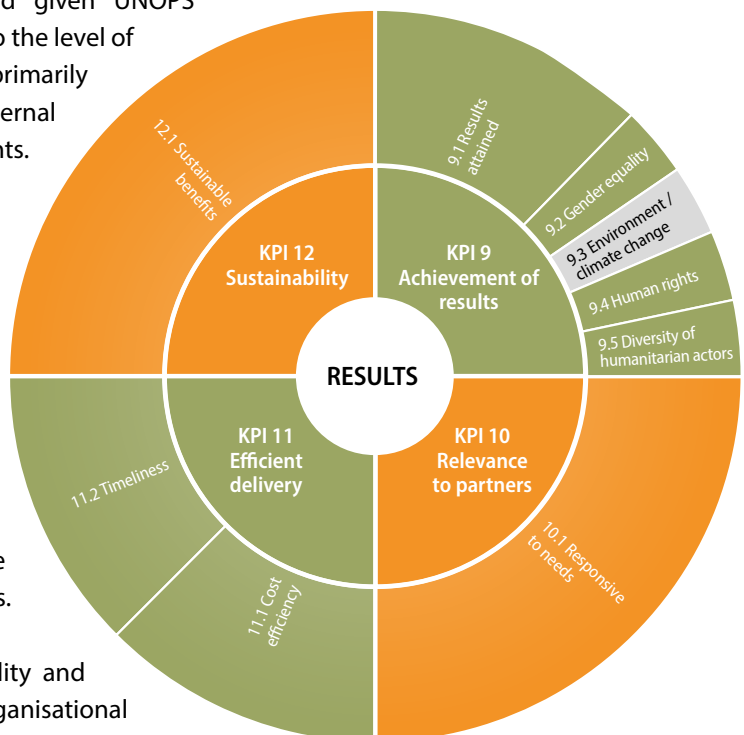


UNOPS’ ACHIEVEMENT OF RESULTS

In the absence of independent evaluation and given UNOPS’ agreement with its Executive Board to report only to the level of output, the evidence base for this results section is primarily internal and self-reported with less independent, external sources than is usually the case in MOPAN assessments.

UNOPS’ strongest features are in the relevance of its interventions and the effectiveness in delivering development output, almost unanimously appreciated by partners and evident in performance data. The financing model encourages financial discipline and efficiency, evidenced in UNOPS comparatively low fees. Self-reporting also shows good goal achievement and contributions to gender related global goals. UNOPS working methods and practices contribute to ensure a certain degree of sustainability of results.

UNOPS’ contribution to environmental sustainability and human rights results have not been rated due to organisational targets not assessing the degree of contribution to results.



About this assessment

This was the first MOPAN assessment of UNOPS. It was championed by France and the United States on behalf of the Network. The assessment covers the period from 2017 to early 2021, though evidence from outside this range may have been used. It relies on three lines of evidence: a document review, interviews with staff at headquarter-level and country/regional-level, and interviews with partners across types and regions⁴.

3.1 Methodology applied in this assessment

The MOPAN 3.1 methodology employed in this assessment uses a framework of 12 key performance indicators (KPIs) and associated micro-indicators (MIs). It comprises standards that characterise an effective multilateral organisation. As part of MOPAN's efforts to ensure its assessments remain relevant to stakeholders and aligned to international best practice, the MOPAN methodology is always evolving. More details are available in MOPAN's 3.1 methodology manual.⁵

Capturing and assessing UNOPS' specific service-provider, demand-driven business and funding models has necessitated several adaptations to the MOPAN framework, in particular mapping terminologies. The assessment for example, interpreted disbursement as delivery in UNOPS' words, programming as engagement, and resource mobilisation as business development. Further information about the application of the MOPAN methodology to UNOPS is available in Chapter 4 of the full report.

About MOPAN

The Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) is a network of 21 members and observers⁶ that share a common interest in assessing the effectiveness of the major multilateral organisations they fund, including UN agencies, international financial institutions and global funds.

The Network generates, collects, analyses and presents relevant and credible information on the organisational and developmental effectiveness of the organisations it assesses. This knowledge base contributes to organisational learning among the organisations, their direct clients and partners, and other stakeholders. Network members and other stakeholders use the reports for their own accountability needs and as a source of input for strategic decision making.

⁴ The standard survey was replaced for this assessment by interviews with partners to avoid fatigue related to UNOPS also conducting its own client survey in the same timeframe. Preliminary results from UNOPS' survey were used for triangulation purposes.

⁵ Available at www.mopanonline.org.

⁶ As at 1 October 2021: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States; the European Union and Qatar are observers.