

Labour-based implementation

Labour-based infrastructure projects are short and medium-term infrastructure projects that generate employment by maximizing the use of available labour.

UNOPS labour-based infrastructure projects engage community groups in implementation and deliver durable and sustainable work that meets international standards. Labour-based works, and support to local contractors, help restart local economies and provide livelihoods in post-conflict and post-disaster environments.

UNOPS has the capacity to create many hundreds of thousands of labour days through labour-based infrastructure implementation. With activities in over 80 countries, UNOPS has extensive experience in designing and implementing labour-based projects and is able to quickly mobilize resources.

Labour-based infrastructure projects are not only short-term employment opportunities for local communities. They can contribute to local economic development by opening up new business opportunities and by improving standards of living, especially in rural areas. For example, new roads give better access to markets, cutting transportation costs, while irrigation gives higher productivity. Agro-forestry creates income from otherwise unproductive lands.



Local women working along Sake - Masisi road

To ensure project success, UNOPS involves local communities in all phases. For example local authorities at site level are involved in design and implementation.



Gawarshad Begum Women's Garden, Herat, Afghanistan

Examples of recent UNOPS projects which used labour-based implementation include:

The Sake-Masisi road in DR Congo is being rehabilitated using labour-based methods, providing employment opportunities for local communities. The project is being implemented by UNDP within a joint UN/DRC Government strategy to re-establish state authority in the region and improve security, goods traffic and freedom of movement for local populations.

The Community Access Programme in Sri Lanka established to rehabilitate and construct up to 400 km of durable, maintainable, paved all-weather roads as well as to replace and rehabilitate bridges and drainage structures throughout the region. The programme, funded by the EU, also includes the maintenance on 250 km of road surfaces by the rural councils throughout the district and has provided three million days of work for local people through labour based implementation. It also improved access to services that are fundamental to growth and poverty alleviation.

The Afghanistan Conservation Corps has generated 400,000 labour days which have benefitted thousands of households living in rural and isolated parts of the country. The project is funded by the government of the USA and works with the government of Afghanistan to restore and manage forests, rangeland and watersheds sustainably.