

Physical infrastructure

UNOPS manages physical infrastructure projects in some of the world's most challenging environments, with the aim of always satisfying partners by meeting world-class standards of quality, speed and cost-effectiveness.

Through the projects it manages, UNOPS works hard to raise national capacity, using local contractors and setting international standards. Labour-based works and support to local contractors, help restart local economies and provide livelihoods in post-conflict and post-disaster environments.

With its proven track record, specialized expertise, worldwide presence and adherence to UN principles and values such as accountability and transparency, engaging UNOPS bring many benefits for partners.



Irrakandi bridge, Sri Lanka, restored with Government of Spain tsunami funding with UNOPS as implementing agency.

Proven track record

In recognition of its expertise and experience in managing projects in post-conflict, post-disaster and geographically difficult environments, Secretary-General Kofi Annan designated UNOPS as the lead United Nations entity for complex infrastructure projects in peacekeeping settings.

Furthermore the Executive Board reconfirmed UNOPS mandate on 11 September 2009 to include the role as a central resource for the UN system in procurement and contracts management as well as in civil works and physical infrastructure development, including related capacity development activities.

UN principles and values

Always adhering to UN rules and regulations, UNOPS maintains a physical presence on the ground during periods of conflict or crisis and promoting the ownership and engagement of governments and local communities.

UNOPS transparent, accountable services meet the highest international standards. Partners are assured consistent performance to agreed standards of quality, timeliness and cost, and safeguards against implementation risk.

Specialized expertise

Long term agreements with international consultants in areas of specialized expertise allow UNOPS to rapidly and economically mobilize to project sites. This experience and proven track record in physical infrastructure in developing environments allows partners to enjoy the benefits of specialization, shared knowledge and economies of scale.

UNOPS implement infrastructure projects with experience in the local context combined with professional international inputs resulting in the highest standards both in design, construction, health and safety, environmental performance as well as sustainability and national capacity development

Worldwide presence

With regional offices in Bangkok, Copenhagen, Johannesburg, Panama City and New York, and more than 20 operations and project centres around the world, UNOPS has the knowledge, capacity and regional presence to implement successful physical infrastructure projects worldwide.



Finished prison at Pol-e-Charkri, Afghanistan, funded by Government of Italy and partly rehabilitated by UNOPS.

UNOPS service options

UNOPS has established modalities and service lines to meet various partner needs.

Full project management

Through full project management implementation, UNOPS assists partners by taking the full burden of implementing the physical infrastructure component of their programme, reducing complexity and risk whilst increasing efficiency.

UNOPS works with full involvement and close consultation of partners. The partner is usually a key member of the UNOPS project board leaving them with control and knowledge of their projects, but not the burden or responsibility.



New buildings at Biayi Public School, DR Congo, constructed by UNOPS as part of a World Bank rehabilitation project.

All three modalities provide professional project management that includes: planning, full time active supervision, contract management, quality control and occupational health and safety monitoring. In house technically skilled managers and project personnel ensure high quality, low risk, efficient and rapid implementation.

These types of projects can also be referred to as “turn-key” projects, as UNOPS hands them over to partners in a ready-to-use condition.

UNOPS offers three basic turn-key modalities:

- Contract management
- Labour-based implementation
- Direct implementation

The modality selection depends on partner goals, local environment and the skills base available in the country.

Service-only assistance

UNOPS offers service only assistance to fill voids in capacity or systems, when partners can implement the infrastructure projects themselves. The primary difference between these and full implementation is the partner implements the project, while UNOPS assists only as requested. Partners retain project management responsibility and control. They procure and engage the contractors and consultants and UNOPS provide support on a fee basis.

Currently UNOPS offers two service only lines:

Design

The Physical Infrastructure Design Unit (PIDU) is a global service centre which provides professional, cost effective and timely design and project documentation services to meet client needs worldwide. PIDU comprises a multidisciplinary team including architects, civil, mechanical and structural engineers, quantity surveyors, drafters and technical support.

Supervision

Some partners require support to professionally supervise their infrastructure projects. UNOPS supervision service line can provide full time professional site supervision, with experience in the local context, and personnel who operate within clear and transparent rules and procedures.

Experience and capacity

UNOPS has extensive experience designing, constructing, rehabilitating and maintaining physical infrastructure in all kinds of terrain, including in some of the world's most challenging conditions.

Recent UNOPS projects range from small-scale, labour-intensive, community-based road maintenance projects to multi-million dollar highway construction programmes involving local and international contractors.

UNOPS has erected and rehabilitated schools, hospitals, clinics, community centres, laboratories, government buildings, courthouses, police stations, prisons, customs and border crossing facilities and United Nations agency compounds. Further experience includes constructing and rehabilitating water supply networks and sanitation systems, ports, harbours, airports, generators and electricity supply networks across the globe.