



**Executive Board of the
United Nations Development
Programme, the United Nations
Population Fund and the
United Nations Office for
Project Services**

Distr.: General
22 March 2024

Original: English

Annual session 2024

3 to 7 June 2024, New York

Item 18 of the provisional agenda

Statement by the UNOPS Executive Director

**Comprehensive response plan: terms of reference for the
second interim review of the status of implementation of the
remaining recommendations**

I. Background

1. In August 2022, at the request of the Executive Board, UNOPS commissioned two independent third-party advisory reviews. The first review focused on identifying the root causes and institutional vulnerabilities within UNOPS that led to the failures associated with the sustainable investments in infrastructure and innovation initiative ('S3i'). The second review focused on the UNOPS mandate, governance, risk management and internal control systems, performance management and accountability. KPMG Finland carried out the two reviews, and its two reports were finalized on 28 November 2022.
2. KPMG issued 48 recommendations to UNOPS in the second review, five of which were directed to the Executive Board and 43 to UNOPS management.
3. In response to the reviews, the recommendations, and subsequent discussions with the Executive Board, UNOPS drew up a comprehensive response plan. The plan was presented to the Executive Board at its special session 2022. The plan follows the structure of the KPMG report and the 43 recommendations provided and sets out 82 actions required to address the recommendations, focusing on strategy and policy development, organizational structure reforms, and organization-wide process improvements. Some of the actions are targeted at individual processes, while others are cross-cutting and aim to transform the ways of working at UNOPS.
4. Of the 43 recommendations directed to UNOPS management, 33 have been completed to planned scope, two are not operationalised, one is led by the United Nations Office for Legal Affairs, and the remaining seven are outstanding. Of those seven, six will be completed by the end of 2024 and one will continue until 2027. To date, 71 actions have been completed and the remaining 10 are in progress.
5. At the end of 2023, KPMG was commissioned by the Internal Audit and Investigation Group to conduct an initial interim review of the implementation of the comprehensive response plan. KPMG reviewed each area of the plan and confirmed the actions already taken by UNOPS and identified areas for further attention.



6. In its decision 2024/4, the Executive Board:

“Decides that the third-party review on the recommendations that have been concluded by the end of 2024 will be conducted in early 2025, with the exception of one recommendation spanning until 2027 which concerns a multi-year programme on process innovation and digitalization; and Recalls its decision 2023/23 for UNOPS to submit the terms of reference for the external third-party review to the Executive Board for input and validation and requests that UNOPS submits these at the second regular session 2024.”

II. Scope and review process

Scope

7. The objective of this engagement is to assess the implementation of the remaining recommendations with the exception of the multi-year programme on process innovation and digitalization.

Review process

8. The Group will commission an independent service provider to conduct the second interim review, to be conducted under the coordination of the Group Director. The service provider will perform a desktop review of relevant updated material (including manuals, process descriptions and instructions), and will interview staff and key stakeholders involved in the development processes, as well as UNOPS management. Furthermore, UNOPS personnel from different levels and regions will be interviewed to provide a broad perspective of the changes in processes and practices. The material review and interviews are expected to provide a full picture of the implementation of the remaining recommendations.

9. All required information will be made available to the incumbent service provider. The service provider is expected to submit a list of documentation that they may need. The Group will make this information available after consultation with the relevant units or field offices.

III. Reporting

10. The service provider will provide clear reporting concerning actions taken on each recommendation, current status of the area, assessment of level of maturity, and the need for any follow-up actions and recommendations.

11. The Office will issue a draft report to UNOPS management for comments and will submit the unredacted final report to the Executive Board and the UNOPS Executive Director.

Tentative timeline

12. The expected timeline for this engagement is as follows:

Dates	Milestones and deliverables
10 February 2025	Planning commences
24 February 2025	Field work commences
14 March 2025	Field work ends
28 March 2025	Draft report provided to UNOPS management for comment
11 April 2025	UNOPS to provide management comments
25 April 2025	The Group submits its final report to the Executive Board and the UNOPS Executive Director

IV. Qualifications of the service provider

Area of expertise

13. The service provider must exhibit a clear understanding of the requirements, and must demonstrate expertise in each of the areas subject to assessment, including UNOPS governance, risk management, and controls.

Experience

14. The service provider must have a proven track record of a minimum of 10 years of practical and operational experience working with United Nations organizations in the public sector, and must provide evidence of having successfully planned and executed engagements of similar scope and expectation.

Key personnel

15. Each of the key personnel must have at least 10 years of professional experience in the related field, and experience in similar engagements.

V. Proposal

16. The service provider is required to provide a detailed proposal including a breakdown of key activities and deliverables in accordance with the scope of work. The service provider shall provide at least two examples to demonstrate its ability to plan and manage similar engagements. In its proposal, the service provider should demonstrate the ways in which its experts with relevant experience will contribute to the engagement.

Curricula vitae of team members

17. The service provider shall submit résumés or professional profiles, limited to three pages, of key personnel with proven knowledge and experience in management, governance, risk and control, of an organization similar in complexity to UNOPS.

VI. Communication between UNOPS and the service provider

18. The service provider should have an engagement focal point through which all communications with UNOPS are channelled. The service provider should provide weekly updates on the progress of the engagement.

VII. Other considerations

19. The service provider will be responsible for the entire review, which includes planning, reviewing and reporting. Quality assurance on the engagement, which is required, should emanate from the headquarters of the selected service provider.

20. The Group focal point will be responsible for facilitating the review and ensuring that the service provider has sufficient access to personnel, systems, facilities, documents, and other information necessary to enable delivery of the required elements.