

Annex 5: UNOPS 2022 annual report on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit

I. Summary

1. This annex presents responses of UNOPS management to the recommendations issued by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) in the reports relevant to UNOPS. The provision of this annex is in accordance with the recommendation given in the JIU management letter JIU/ML/2016/14 ‘*Acceptance and Implementation of JIU Recommendations by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)*’ that the UNOPS Executive Director set up a system to report to the Executive Board on JIU reports and recommendations.
2. In line with General Assembly resolution 59/267 of 23 December 2004, and as reiterated in resolution 62/246 of 3 April 2008, the present report provides a synopsis of management responses to the recommendations and draws attention to the recommendations directed to the legislative bodies of United Nations system organizations.
3. During 2022, UNOPS implemented 23 out of 30 outstanding recommendations issued by the JIU between 2017 and 2021 thus leaving seven unresolved recommendations from 2021, which are discussed in detail in section IV of this report. Combined with the six recommendations issued in 2022 and yet to be resolved, there are currently 13 recommendations to be implemented by UNOPS.
4. The topics addressed by the recommendations implemented during 2022 included, for example, mainstreaming of environmental sustainability across the organization, identification and analysis of common cyber security challenges and risks as well as the responses thereto; and review of the business continuity management framework to identify gaps, good practices and lessons learned from the pandemic and remediation actions.
5. In 2022, the JIU issued one report directed to UNOPS, which is presented in table 1 below.

II. Overview of Joint Inspection Unit reports issued in 2022

6. All the six recommendations relevant to UNOPS are addressed to the executive head.

Table 1: JIU reports directed to UNOPS in 2022

Summary of recommendations					Implementation status		
Reference	Name of report	Addressed to executive head	Addressed to governing body	Total directed to UNOPS	Not accepted/not relevant	Implemented	In progress
JIU/NOTE/2022/1	Review of United Nations system support for landlocked developing countries to implement the Vienna Programme of Action	6	0	6	-	-	-

III. Synopsis and review of relevant Joint Inspection Unit reports and recommendations in 2022

A. Review of measures and mechanisms for addressing racism and racial discrimination in United Nations system organizations: managing for achieving organizational effectiveness (JIU/NOTE/2022/1)

7. The review examined how entities in the United Nations system have upheld, in their own institutions, the provisions in the legal and policy frameworks established under the auspices of the United Nations for addressing racism and racial discrimination in Member states. It provides a description and analysis of the manifestations and configurations of race, racism and racial discrimination across the United Nations system, and of the measures and mechanisms adopted and implemented to enhance effectiveness, coherence, continued relevance and sustainability in preventing and addressing racism and racial discrimination in organizations in the United Nations system.
8. The JIU issued a report containing six recommendations to UNOPS all of which are addressed to the executive head. All the recommendations have been accepted by the organization and are in the process of being implemented.

IV. Unresolved Joint Inspection Unit recommendations 2019-2021

Recommendation summary 2021		
Reference and name of report	Recommendation description	Latest implementation status
JIU/REP/2021/4 Review of the management of implementing partners in United Nations system organizations	Recommendation 1 The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should, by the end of 2024, develop, through consultations in the appropriate inter-agency mechanisms, a common system-wide definition and a set of agreed guiding principles and standards for implementing partners that is informed by a risk-based and strategic approach to partnerships and results-based management methodology.	UNOPS consulted other agencies in 2022, to identify the inter-agency mechanisms that are currently available and was made aware that ad-hoc initiatives are led by different agencies and interested agencies participate in the initiatives (such as PSEA for IP, Capacity Assessment etc). There is no inter-agency mechanism that has been formed to work on this aspect and when formed, UNOPS will participate to establish and adopt a common system-wide definitions, principles and standards. In 2022, UNOPS promulgated a revised OI on Grant Support that takes into account the risk-based and strategic approach for engaging with implementing partners which are reflected in the process requirements.
	Recommendation 2 The executive heads of organizations of the United Nations system should, by the end of 2023, include in their annual reports on the work of the organization a section on the engagement and management of their implementing partners, including important details useful to the legislative organs and governing bodies.	From the existing systems and data available in UNOPS, UNOPS is working on understanding how the following information on implementing partners can be identified. These may be included in the annual report for 2023 and internal coordination is in progress with organisational stakeholders to ensure these can be reported.
	Recommendation 7 The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should develop, by the end of 2024, key performance indicators for the management of implementing partners and establish systems to collect, monitor and report the performance data.	UNOPS intends to develop a grant management tool that will enable an online work flow process for the complete grant support process as well as ensure availability of relevant KPIs, documents for key processes such as selection, award, agreement and amendment, reporting (interim, final, M&E) during 2023-24.
	Recommendation 8 The executive heads of United Nations system organizations should, by the end of 2023, share among themselves, through existing inter-agency mechanisms/forums, their specialized training materials and modules for the management of implementing partners, including due diligence, risk and capacity assessments of partners, results based and risk-based performance monitoring, fraud prevention, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, capacity-building, working with local non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations, the harmonized approach to cash transfers and the United Nations Partner Portal.	UNOPS participates in the inter-agency forum on PSEA for Implementing Partners. UNOPS has developed its own resources aligned with the inter-agency harmonised tool. UNOPS assessed the inter-agency capacity assessment tool and completed organisation wide consultation internally to understand the opportunities/challenges of adopting the tool. Based on these consultations, it was decided to develop its own self-assessment tool. UNOPS has received a proposal from UNICC for joining the UNPP and is currently working on the agreement to join in 2023.

	<p>Recommendation 10</p> <p>The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should, by the end of 2024 and with the support of the Development Coordination Office, resident coordinator offices and the United Nations country team mechanisms, agree upon specific measures to further strengthen inter-agency coordination for improving implementing partner management at the country level and report on the implementation to their respective legislative organs and governing bodies from 2025.</p>	<p>UNOPS consulted other agencies in 2022, to identify the inter-agency mechanisms that are currently available and was made aware that ad-hoc initiatives are led by different agencies and interested agencies participate in the initiatives (such as PSEA for IP, Capacity Assessment etc). There is no inter-agency mechanism that has been formed to work on this aspect to date and when formed, UNOPS will participate.</p>
<p>JIU/REP/2021/5</p> <p>Review of the ethics function in the United Nations system</p>	<p>Recommendation 4</p> <p>The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations who have not yet done so, supported by the ethics functions of their respective organizations, should, at the latest by 2025, evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency, including “value for money”, of their financial disclosure and declaration of interest programmes and, on the basis of the findings, propose changes to the relevant policies where appropriate.</p>	<p>UNOPS accepted this recommendation. The Ethics Office will conduct a review of the effectiveness and efficiency of the UNOPS financial disclosure and declaration of conflicts-of-interest programme on the basis of lessons learned from the 2022 and 2023 exercises and will aim to propose changes to the programme as per the recommendation.</p>
<p>JIU/REP/2021/6</p> <p>Business continuity management in United Nations system organizations</p>	<p>Recommendation 4</p> <p>The executive heads of the United Nations system organizations should, by the end of 2024, report to their legislative organs and governing bodies on progress towards the implementation of the policy on the organizational resilience management system and its revised performance indicators, and highlight good practices and lessons learned, especially in the area of business continuity management.</p>	<p>UNOPS fully implemented its organizational instruction on business continuity planning by creating, testing and updating its business continuity plans. A significant change that introduced system-wide resilience in 2022 was the transfer of all UNOPS IT infrastructure to the cloud instead of physical servers at UNOPS offices. This change has significantly reduced location dependency since UNOPS personnel are able to work from any location. Although the changes were aimed at addressing efficiency, modernization and resilience, other positive outcomes were realised. For example, systems that are not location dependent allow for more flexibility and continue to be relevant in achieving work-life balance as more personnel work away from the office. There has also been a reduction in the environmental footprint.</p>