National Conference sets the course for sustainable infrastructure in Ethiopia

Addis Ababa, 27 March 2024 - The systemic approach to the sustainable and climate-resilient infrastructure is one of the key preconditions for the continuous and equitable growth of Ethiopia. The priorities in the development of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH), road and transport, housing, and energy infrastructure should be financially supported by national and external resources, while inclusive planning and design are important not to leave any vulnerable groups behind.

These are the key messages of the National Conference on Climate Resilient Sustainable Infrastructure organized by UNOPS in collaboration with the Ethiopian Civil Engineers Association (EACE) in Addis Ababa, on 26 and 27 March 2024. The two-day workshop had the objective of facilitating policy-making in the area of sustainable infrastructure, sharing best practices among different stakeholders, and providing the opportunity to discuss some of the cutting-edge technologies in infrastructure.

H.E. Mr. Wondemu Seta, State Minister of Urban and Infrastructure, speaking at the event said: “As we embark on these crucial deliberations today, I urge every one of you to approach the discussions with a spirit of collaboration, innovation, and determination. The decisions we make here will have far-reaching implications for generations to come, shaping the future landscape of our nation and our planet”. He stressed that the participants need to leverage their collective expertise, experiences, and insights to identify actionable solutions and best practices in sustainable infrastructure development. Actions that will drive progress and transformation in our communities.”

During the last two days, infrastructure and project management experts were actively participating in the presentations and plenary sessions about WASH, irrigation, sustainable road and transport, sustainable housing and energy, and financing and project delivery. Their main focus was the policy briefing for climate-resilient sustainable infrastructure, integrating planning encompassing social, environmental, and economic sustainability, and national policy innovations in this area.

UNOPS, within its mandate to implement infrastructure, is committed to helping countries gain a better understanding of how their infrastructure planning, delivery, and management practices compare to recognized global best practices, and how they could improve.
“I am very proud of our joint results with the Government of Ethiopia and donors, as a partner of choice, in the area of infrastructure development in different regions. From the reconstruction of primary schools and health centers in Tigray, the installation of medical incinerators in eight different regions, and the design and rehabilitation of the one-stop shop centers for refugees, to the construction of latrines and water points in the Somali region”, said the UNOPS Ethiopia Multi-County Office Director and Representative to the African Union, Mrs. Worknesh Mekonnen Gonet. “We at UNOPS anticipate the future with the infrastructure designed and built to suit the needs of all its beneficiaries, including women, children, persons with disabilities, older or marginalized people. We are dedicated to the sustainable infrastructure which is resilient to climate change and climate-compatible.”

The infrastructure is significantly impacting 92% of targets within all 17 Sustainable Development Goals and can stir the development positively or negatively. When developed in a sustainable, climate-resilient, and inclusive manner, it can create efficient transportation and green energy, contribute to new employment opportunities and quality housing, and improve access to fresh water and sanitation.

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