Operational Instruction Ref. OI.IPMG.2025.06
Hosting Engagements

Headquarters, Copenhagen

07 Apr 2025

1. **Authority:**

1.1. This Operational Instruction (OI) is promulgated by the Director of the Infrastructure and Project Management Group (IPMG) under OD.EO.2017.02: Management of UNOPS Partners and Resulting Agreements, on the basis of a delegation of authority from the Executive Director.

2. **Purpose:**

2.1. The purpose of this OI is to provide instructions regarding the acceptance, governance and management of Hosting Engagements.

3. **Effective Date:**

3.1. This OI shall become effective **immediately**.

4. **Consequential changes:**

4.1. This OI shall abolish and supersede OI.IPS.2021.01: Hosting Engagements. The purpose of this revision is to reflect the relevant changes related to the internal restructure of IPMG and the abolishment of the prior OI on Due Diligence and its replacement with a new Operational Directive on Due Diligence.

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1. Introduction

1.1. From time to time, two or more interested parties, individuals or entities want to establish an initiative and conclude that, instead of establishing a new legal entity for the initiative, it is best implemented as a programme by UNOPS. Such programmes are considered 'Hosting Engagements' if they meet the criteria articulated in this OI.

1.2. Hosting Engagements shall comply with UNOPS Legislative Instruments and process requirements.

1.3. Since Hosting Engagements have particular characteristics compared to other UNOPS engagements, this OI provides additional instructions regarding the acceptance, governance, and management of Hosting Engagements.

2. Engagement Acceptance

2.1. In order to be accepted as a Hosting Engagement by UNOPS, an initiative must meet the following criteria:

2.1.1. not have legal personality under the laws of any state or national authority;

2.1.2. uphold the values, principles and goals of UNOPS and the rest of the UN system, as well as the normative policy framework of the UN;

2.1.3. be regional, multi-regional or global;

2.1.4. have multiple parties represented in its Board/Steering Committee (Board/SC);

2.1.5. have multi-year funding and the engagement work plan and associated budget are determined on an annual basis by its Board/SC; and

2.1.6. have a UN organization with the substantive mandate of the programmatic area represented in its Board/SC.

2.2. Further to the OI on the Acceptance of Engagement Agreements, the OD on the Due Diligence Framework at UNOPS and this OI, the Guidelines on Hosting Engagements shall address the acceptance of Hosting Engagements and how to comply with the process requirements of these operational instructions.

2.3. If a Hosting Engagement is considered to no longer comply with UNOPS Legislative Instruments and process requirements, including this OI, UNOPS may consider discontinuing the hosting relationship. In such cases, UNOPS shall notify the Board/SC of the Hosting Engagement in writing, allow sufficient time for the Board/SC to address and/or respond to UNOPS concerns and engage in consultations with the Board/SC and the Secretariat to explore solutions. Should the matter remain unresolved, and UNOPS decides to discontinue the hosting arrangement, at least 12 months written notice shall be provided to the Board/SC of the Hosting Engagement.

3. Governance, management and personnel

3.1. A Joint Hosting Agreement (JHA) shall be prepared for each Hosting Engagement and agreed upon/ signed by all of its donors. All such JHAs shall include UNOPS standard clauses for JHAs as reflected in the UNOPS template for Joint Hosting Agreements[1] unless amended in consultation with a UNOPS Legal Advisor.

3.2. Each Hosting Engagement shall have a governance structure that includes a Board, Steering Group or Steering Committee (Board/SC) that is external to UNOPS. The Board/SC must establish by-laws/ specific rules regarding the governance, composition and functioning of the Board/SC. Such by-laws must be consistent with this OI and the JHA of the Hosting Engagement.

3.3. The Board/SC is responsible for establishing the strategy, work plan and overall budget of the Hosting Engagement. The strategy must uphold the values, principles and goals of UNOPS and the rest of the United Nations system, as well as the normative policy framework of the UN.

3.4. A Secretariat established in accordance with this OI (Secretariat) is responsible for implementing the strategy and work plan established by the Board/SC. The Secretariat is part of UNOPS and led by the Head of the Secretariat. The Secretariat shall be structured in accordance with the principles of the UNOPS Project Management Methodology so as to directly manage the resources required to deliver the expected results and may be supported by UNOPS shared support services at the country, regional and global level.

3.5. The appointment of the Head of the Secretariat, including renewal or termination thereof, is made by the UNOPS Executive Director or his/her delegate, in agreement with and informed by the Board/SC, based on a selection/decision-making process involving the Board/SC or its formal designee. In the unlikely event that the parties are not in agreement, then the final decision rests with the UNOPS Executive Director or his/her delegate.

3.6. The Head of the Secretariat is supervised and performance managed by the UNOPS Executive Director or his/her delegate, in agreement with and informed by the Board/SC, based on a process involving the Board/SC or its formal designee. In the unlikely event that the parties are not in agreement, then the final decision in terms of performance management rests with the UNOPS Executive Director or his/her delegate.

3.7. For Heads of Secretariat at the ASG and USG level appointed by the UN Secretary-General, the UNOPS Executive Director or his/her delegate, in consultation with the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, may consider additional reporting lines to supervisors at USG level or above on a case by case basis. In such cases, an agreement must be signed between UNOPS and the UN organization employing the co-supervisor.

3.8. Personnel working in the Secretariat shall hold UNOPS contracts, or be formally seconded or on loan to UNOPS. Secretariat personnel are UNOPS personnel, governed by UNOPS Legislative Instruments and process requirements, using UNOPS approved systems. As UNOPS personnel, individual members of the Secretariat may be provided with relevant UNOPS delegations of authority.

3.9. The Board/SC must include the following members:

1. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1w022fm7dNr4FrKb0CH1mGA_i7WWqipMP4dwAJZ7jKwY/edit

3.9.1. The UNOPS Executive Director, or his/her delegate, who shall participate as a non-voting, ex officio member of the Board/SC.

3.9.2. A UN organization with a relevant normative mandate, in order to ensure that the Hosting Engagement upholds UN values, principles and goals as pertaining to the programmatic content. The UN organization representative shall be duly authorized by his/her organization to represent the organization as a full voting member of the Board/SC. If the UN organization representative is unable to attend, he/she must formally delegate an alternate to represent the UN organization.

3.10. The following shall always apply notwithstanding any Board/SC by-laws:

3.10.1. For the Board/SC to have a quorum, UNOPS and the UN organization with a relevant normative mandate (or their duly authorized proxy(ies)) must be represented at the meeting.

3.10.2. The Secretariat will present, inter alia, a work plan and budget to the Board/SC for approval and shall periodically report on the implementation thereof to the Board/SC.

3.10.3. The Board/SC shall meet at least once a year to review the implementation of the programme and ensure and confirm that such implementation complies with the annual work plan, budget and funding agreements.

3.10.4. All members of the Board/SC, including ex officio members, shall be included in all formal communication to members of the Board/SC.

3.10.5. UNOPS will advise the Board/SC on the administrative and financial implications of decisions of the Board/SC in the context of UNOPS Legislative Instruments, as well as any performance issues of the Hosting Engagement that are known to UNOPS. UNOPS will also consult with and keep the Board/SC and its sub-committees timeously updated on any proposed changes to UNOPS Legislative Instruments that could have a material impact on the operations of the Hosting Engagement and its ability to execute the strategy or that would derogate from the general principles outlined above.

3.11. Hosting Engagements shall be subject to audit by UNOPS Internal Audit and Investigations Group (IAIG) according to the Operational Directive on the Internal

Audit and Investigations Charter. The Board/SC shall be formally informed by the UNOPS representative to the Board/SC before an audit is performed.

3.12. Hosting Engagements shall operate on the basis of full cost recovery following the OI on Engagement Pricing and Costing. The Hosting Engagements: Guidelines shall explain how to do so, considering the fact that Hosting Engagements are multi-year and multi-party initiatives, usually with an indefinite duration.

3.13. Hosting Engagements may have unique branding, including logo, website, email addresses, business cards, etc. Unless otherwise requested by UNOPS, a reference that the Engagement is hosted by UNOPS must be included on all communications platforms, official notices, reports and publications, using the official UNOPS logo where possible.

3.14. Hosting Engagements shall use UNOPS IT systems and infrastructure.

4. Authoritative interpretation

4.1. The authoritative interpretation of this OI shall be made by the Director of IPMG, or other personnel as authorized by the Director of IPMG, in order to provide clarification on the applicability or interpretation of the requirements stated herein.

4.2. Requests for exceptions to the provisions of this OI shall be submitted to the Director of IPMG, or other personnel as authorized by the Director of IPMG, for written approval.

4.3. All ODs and OIs referred to in this OI are the current versions at the time of promulgation and may be superseded by revised versions, and in which case the most current version shall be applicable to this OI.