

UNOPS ED Remarks for the Joint Meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN Women and WFP 29th May 2020

Check Against Delivery

- UNOPS's contribution to COVID-19 response has focused on what we do best: action on the ground.
- We are an operational agency, not a programmatic one.
- We work closely with governments and other partners in more than 80 countries
- And we are fully self-financed - a project-based organisation. In 2019, we delivered almost \$2.3 billion worth of support to our partners.
- Our unique business model allows us to respond quickly and effectively to requests by the governments, International Financing Institutions, private partners as well as UN sister agencies that call upon us.
- We add value by improving speed, reducing risks, boosting cost-effectiveness and increasing quality.

Our Covid response has focused on all three dimensions: to help countries prepare, respond and recover.

We do this in close coordination with UN agencies at country level.

In particular, we also value our existing and expanding partnerships with IFIs to jointly support governments.

Today, I would like to highlight some of this work: how we support countries to provide a safety net, create jobs and boost the local economy.

- In partnership with IFIs, UNOPS helps governments establish and strengthen their national social protection system, to protect the most vulnerable.
 - In South Sudan, the WB-funded 'Safety Net Project' provides livelihood support to 430,000 vulnerable people through cash transfer and creation of temporary employment over the next 2 ½ years.
- Strengthening the private sector is fundamental not only for economic recovery, but also for social stability and community resilience. UNOPS helps build capacity of the small/middle sized enterprises so they have access to global markets.
 - In Serbia, funded by the EU and Switzerland, UNOPS is supporting local start-up businesses, improving the livelihood of more than 270,000 people, and indirectly benefiting nearly one million people. The project has attracted more than €10 million worth of investments in economic and social projects, and led to the creation of 100 businesses and 700 jobs.

- Infrastructure plays a key role in job creation, economic recovery and attracting private investment. With ODA resources overstretched, attracting private investment is crucial.
 - UNOPS Sustainable Infrastructure Impact Investments (S3I) initiative helps mobilise private investments into countries we operate in, while ensuring contributions are making a positive social, environmental and economic impact. In Ghana, UNOPS helps construct 200,000 affordable homes that could generate 3,000 new local jobs.

As you can hear, many of our services that contribute to the socio-economic response to COVID-19 are not new to UNOPS.

With the experiences gained over the years, we are actively involved in the UN-wide efforts, making our operational expertise available to help make things happen on the ground.