

**“Infrastructure Asset Management’s role in a sustainable, inclusive
and resilient recovery from COVID-19”**

High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
Side-event co-organized by UNOPS & UN DESA

Date and time:

15 July 2022, 7:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. EST / 1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. CET

Format:

Register for the virtual meeting on Zoom [here](#).

Background:

Infrastructure is the backbone of economic growth and underpins sustainable development. A recent study¹ by UNOPS, UNEP and the University of Oxford demonstrated that infrastructure can influence the achievement of up to 92 per cent of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) targets. However, in many developing countries, the quality of infrastructure is lacking, which challenges the achievement of the SDG targets.

While hundreds of billions of US Dollars are targeted towards upgrading a wide range of infrastructure systems - from ports, airports, roads, water and sanitation, IT to energy grids-, existing infrastructure assets are neglected in most countries. In addition, new assets are built without putting in place an asset management framework and an enabling environment that supports reliable, inclusive and sustainable essential services that leave no one behind. This is resulting in the unsustainable cycle of build, neglect and rebuild.

The pandemic has exposed our fragility, reinforcing the urgent need to repair, rethink, and invest in infrastructure that will meet our needs in a challenging environment and support the achievement of the SDGs. The effect of poorly designed and maintained infrastructure is a missed opportunity that has consequences for decades to come. In the context of COVID-19 recovery, ensuring that infrastructure can continue to function as intended throughout its lifespan is critical to ensure communities’ resilience, accelerate recovery from the pandemic and meet the SDGs. More than ever, improved infrastructure management is needed as a catalyst for economic recovery, necessary for human development.

Session description:

During the first section of the event, the panel will explore the role of infrastructure asset management in ensuring infrastructure systems are well planned and maintained to reliably serve communities throughout their life cycle. The discussion will highlight the work of UN entities in this area, and discuss lessons learned from delivering infrastructure asset management projects in

¹ UNOPS, UNEP, University of Oxford [“Infrastructure for Climate Action”](#), 2021

collaboration with host governments.

During the second section, the panel will present a pilot project in infrastructure asset management training. The discussion will engage the participants in the core concepts of infrastructure asset management; how it works, what it entails, and how it impacts the resilience of communities to shocks such as COVID-19, climate-related catastrophes and natural hazards.

Questions to be addressed during the side-event:

- What role does infrastructure asset management play in the achievement of the SDGs?
- How can infrastructure asset management support recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic?
What are the lessons learned?
- What is the UN doing to support member states with infrastructure asset management?

Expected outcomes:

The lessons learned and main points of this session will feed into the [UN capacity development initiative on infrastructure asset management](#), to support governments achieve the SDGs and recover from COVID-19.

Further resources:

- [UN handbook for infrastructure asset management](#)
- [Infrastructure Asset Management for Sustainable Development Massive Open Online Course](#)
- [UNOPS - Bangladesh National Resilience Programme](#)
- [Rural Access Index Northern Uganda](#)