

**Summary of the sixth meeting of the ad-hoc working group on stakeholder engagement policy of the Executive Board – Rev.1**

**Monday, 7 November 2022 – 10:00 – 12:00 East Africa Time – Conference Room 4**

**Chair:** Mr. Patrick Egloff  
Deputy Permanent Representative of Switzerland to UN-Habitat

**Agenda item 1 - Adoption of the Agenda**

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am EAT. The working group adopted the provisional agenda for its sixth meeting without any change as follows:

1. Adoption of the provisional Agenda
2. Discussions on the revised draft stakeholder engagement policy
3. Any other matters

**Agenda item 2 – Discussions on the revised draft stakeholder engagement policy**

**Under this item, the Chair gave the following background:**

The Chair recalled that during its two previous meetings held on 21 September and 5 October 2022, the ad hoc working group discussed the Zero Draft stakeholder engagement policy. The Chair further noted that based on the contributions received and with the technical support from the Secretariat, he shared with the ad hoc working group a revised draft, namely the Stakeholder Engagement Policy Draft 1.0 (revised Zero Draft) on 28 October 2022.

**Upon invitation by the Chair, the Secretariat provided an introductory briefing on the revised Zero Draft. The briefing by the Secretariat highlighted the following:**

- i. The Secretariat recalled that the Zero Draft (Chapters 1-9) served as the basis for discussions by the ad hoc working group at its fourth and fifth meetings held respectively on 21 September 2022 and 5 October 2022.
- ii. The Secretariat noted that after these 2 meetings, it received additional written comments from 2 Member States. The Secretariat also noted that stakeholders had an opportunity to provide technical inputs to the Zero Draft.
- iii. The Secretariat indicated that it took every contribution received into account when developing the revised Zero Draft.
- iv. The Secretariat noted that the revised Zero Draft contains additional information on references to key background documents, including resolutions, policies, strategies, handbooks, and practices in relevant United Nations entities and other multilateral organizations.

**After the briefing by the Secretariat, the discussions highlighted the following:**

- v. One Member State acknowledged that the revised Zero Draft was more concrete and particularly the language related to the decision-making process. The Member State also expressed the need to clarify the scope and objective of the Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism.
- vi. One Member State distinguished three types of engagements in the revised Zero Draft which include a. engagement with stakeholders in the sessions of the governing bodies of UN-Habitat, b. engagement with the management of UN-Habitat, c. provision of inputs to the work of UN-Habitat. The Member State further recommended that the revised Zero Draft should clearly differentiate these three different types of engagements. With respect to Chapter 3 on Guiding Principles, the Member States felt that the content of the chapter lacked clarity, in particular when it comes to the implementation mechanism of the specific principles.
- vii. One Member State suggested the inclusion of the word “Member States” in paragraph 1.2 of Chapter 1 to read as follows “*UN-Habitat is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to promote sustainable cities and human settlements and adequate shelter for all. It is the focal point and coordinating agency for sustainable urbanization, and the custodial agency for the New Urban Agenda. In fulfilling its functions, UN-Habitat works with **Member States**, local and regional governments, major groups, and other stakeholders*”.
- viii. One Member State recommended the inclusion of a reference to the relevant General Assembly resolutions in paragraph 1.2 of Chapter 1 which currently reads as follows “*UN-Habitat is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to promote sustainable cities and human settlements and adequate shelter for all. It is the focal point and coordinating agency for sustainable urbanization, and the custodial agency for the New Urban Agenda. In fulfilling its functions, UN-Habitat works with local and regional governments, major groups, and other stakeholders*”.
- ix. One Member State noted two editorial mistakes in pages 12 and 13 of the [Background Document to the Development of a Stakeholder Engagement Policy](#) circulated by the Secretariat on 28 October 2022 and suggested that it be corrected as follows “*Hong Kong, China*”.
- x. One Member State suggested that paragraph 1.1 of Chapter 1 includes a reference to the Executive Board and to the Committee of Permanent Representatives, as follows: “*This stakeholder engagement policy only applies to stakeholder engagement in UN-Habitat intergovernmental processes involving the UN-Habitat Assembly and its subsidiary organs, **namely Executive Board and the Committee of Permanent assembly (CPR)**. The UN-Habitat partnership strategy, implementing partners’ policy and standard operating procedures, and other legal instruments provide for stakeholder engagement in UN-Habitat programmes. This policy responds to UN-Habitat Governing Council resolution 26/7, UN-Habitat Assembly decision 1/3, as well as UN-Habitat Executive Board decision 2020/6*”.
- xi. One Member State suggested an amendment for paragraph 1.3 of Chapter 1 to read as follows “*The UN-Habitat Assembly and its subsidiary organs, and the Executive Director, are ~~mandated~~ **encouraged** to support the participation of stakeholders as they deliberate and make decisions regarding UN-Habitat policies and programmes. Expert advice, sharing of lived experiences, and scientific contributions to discussions are all examples of stakeholder engagement*”.
- xii. One Member State suggested an amendment for paragraph 1.3 of chapter 1 to read as follows “*The UN-Habitat Assembly and its subsidiary organs, and the Executive Director, ~~are~~*

~~mandated to~~ **may** support the participation of stakeholders as they deliberate and make decisions regarding UN-Habitat policies and programme **when it considers it appropriate as in rule 17 of the rules of procedures of the Executive Board of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme**. Expert advice, sharing of lived experiences, and scientific contributions to discussions are all examples of stakeholder engagement”.

- xiii. One Member State noted that the rules of procedure of the governing bodies of UN-Habitat already provide for a stakeholder engagement mechanism and recommended that such rules of procedure be reflected in paragraph 1.3 of Chapter 1.
- xiv. One Member State indicated that the decisions and resolutions adopted by the UN-Habitat Assembly, the Committee of Permanent Representatives and the Executive Board also provide further guidance on stakeholder engagement.
- xv. One Member State suggested that paragraph 1.5 of Chapter 1 should provide a clear structure for stakeholder engagement with terms of reference.
- xvi. One Member State suggested that paragraph 1.5 of Chapter 1 should refer to the United Nations Charter and to the United Nations Code of Conduct and should read as follows “*Stakeholders may organize themselves to facilitate their contributions during sessions of the UN-Habitat Governing Bodies. Such an arrangement, hereinafter referred to as a Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism (SEM), will be self-organized and must adhere to the principles outlined in this policy and be guided by the rules of procedure of the UN-Habitat Assembly, **the United Nations Charter and the United Nations Code of Conduct on sexual exploitation and abuse and reassessment***”.
- xvii. With respect to paragraph 1.5 of chapter 1, one Member State noted that the working group should refrain from micro-managing the work of stakeholders, underlining that stakeholders engaging with UN-Habitat were already organized to strategize towards delivering effective contributions.
- xviii. One Member State suggested that paragraphs 1.1 and 1.6 of Chapter 1 be combined to read as follows “*This stakeholder engagement policy only applies to stakeholder engagement in UN-Habitat intergovernmental processes involving the UN-Habitat Assembly and its subsidiary organs. The UN-Habitat partnership strategy, implementing partners’ policy and standard operating procedures, and other legal instruments provide for stakeholder engagement in UN-Habitat programmes. **This policy responds to UN-Habitat Governing Council resolution 26/7, UN-Habitat Assembly decision 1/3, as well as UN-Habitat Executive Board decision 2020/6 to UN-Habitat and relevant UN regulations and rules and builds on the experience***”.
- xix. One stakeholder expressed its support to paragraph 2.1 of Chapter 2 which reads as follows: “*The purpose of the policy is to ensure informed and meaningful stakeholder engagement and participation in UN-Habitat intergovernmental processes, with an emphasis on stakeholder contribution to support Member States and UN-Habitat in policy development and decision-making in an inclusive and continuous way*”.
- xx. One Member State suggested that paragraph 2.1 of Chapter 2 should read as follows: “*The purpose of the policy is to ensure informed and meaningful stakeholder engagement and participation in UN-Habitat intergovernmental processes, ~~with an emphasis on~~ **to facilitate** stakeholder contribution to support Member States and UN-Habitat in policy development and decision-making in an inclusive and continuous way*”.

- xxi. One Member State suggested that paragraph 3.2 of Chapter 3 on Guiding Principles which reads as follows “*Decision-making within UN-Habitat is the prerogative of Member States*” should be the first principle listed in the Chapter, as it acknowledges the intergovernmental nature of UN-Habitat’s processes. The Member State also noted that the following principle was missing in the chapter of the revised Zero Draft: “*Transparency and Accountability: engagement with stakeholders is based on the premise of mutual trust and benefit, transparency, responsibility, and accountability*”.
- xxii. One Member State noted that Chapter 3 on Guiding Principles lacks information on the principles stakeholders should adhere to when engaging with Member States.
- xxiii. One Member State recalled that at one of the previous meetings of the ad hoc working group, it was suggested simplifying the guiding principles and inserting the section related to accountability and responsibilities of stakeholders to an Annex to be developed at a later stage.
- xxiv. The Chair emphasized that the working group should aim towards consolidating a concise policy document without too many Annexes and should rather consider insertion footnotes.
- xxv. One Member State suggested that the principles included in Chapter 7 on Responsibilities and Obligations of Accredited Stakeholders should be incorporated in Chapter 3 on Guiding Principles.
- xxvi. One Member State expressed its support to paragraph 3.1.a of Chapter 3 which reads as follows “*Demonstrate benefits to housing and sustainable urban development; be relevant to UN-Habitat mandates; and the stakeholder’s organizational objectives aligned with the purposes, spirit, and principles of the United Nations Charter*” and noted that the first line of the paragraph should be retained.

**In light of the views expressed by Member States, the Secretariat responded as follows:**

- xxvii. The Secretariat took note of the comments and contributions and indicated that these will be duly taken into consideration.
- xxviii. The Secretariat indicated that the amended version of the revised Zero Draft would clarify the different types of stakeholder engagement, recalling however that the main focus of the stakeholder engagement policy should be on stakeholder engagement in intergovernmental processes as there is no such existing policy for now.
- xxix. With respect to paragraph 1.3 of Chapter 1, the Secretariat informed that there was a footnote referencing rule 10.5 and 65 to 69 of the [rules of procedures of the United Nations Habitat Assembly](#) and rule 17.3 of the [rules of procedures of the Executive Board of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme](#) . The Secretariat also noted that rule 10.5 of the rules of Procedures of the United Nations Habitat Assembly provides that the Executive Director may take into account suggestions made by any intergovernmental organization entitled to notification under rule 66. The Executive Director may also submit for the consideration of the Committee of Permanent Representatives suggestions from the organizations referred to in rules 67 and 68.
- xxx. The Secretariat informed that the stakeholder engagement mechanism is a system which allows stakeholders to choose how they want to be represented, including the possibility of grouping themselves during the sessions of the governing bodies.

- xxxi. The Secretariat noted that when stakeholders apply to be accredited, they are guided by the rules established by United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

**Upon invitation by the Chair, the Secretariat provided an introductory briefing of chapter 4 - Definition of Stakeholders. The briefing by the Secretariat highlighted the following:**

- xxxii. The Secretariat noted that the definition of stakeholder provided in the revised Zero Draft is in line with the rules of procedure of the governing bodies of UN-Habitat. The Secretariat further recalled that it circulated on 28 October 2022 a [Background Document to the Development of a Stakeholder Engagement Policy](#) to provide a broader view on how stakeholders currently participate in UN-Habitat's activities.
- xxxiii. The Secretariat noted that as requested by the ad hoc working group at its previous meeting, paragraph 4.2 of Chapter 4 elaborates on the major groups and stakeholders as follows: *“Major groups and other stakeholders consist of 18 groups: Nine major groups that were formalized by Agenda21 at the Earth Summit in 1992: Women; Children and Youth; Indigenous People; Non-Governmental Organizations (also known as civil society organizations); Local Authorities (currently referred to as local and regional governments); Workers and Trade Unions; Business and Industry; Scientific and Technological Community (the group also includes academia and research); and Farmers. Nine additional stakeholders that were recognized by the Habitat Agenda, adopted in 1996, at the second UN conference on human settlements (Habitat II), and by the New Urban Agenda, adopted in 2016 at Habitat III, consist of: Foundations and Philanthropists; Parliamentarians; Professional Organizations; Persons with Disabilities; Older Persons; Media; Grassroots and Informal Sector Organizations; Migrants and Refugees; and Volunteer Organizations”*.

**After the briefing by the Secretariat, the discussions highlighted the following:**

- xxxiv. One Member State suggested that paragraph 4.1 reads as follows including the insertion of a footnote in line with the foot note contained in Rule 64 of the rules of procedure of the UN Habitat Assembly, as follows: *“For purposes of this policy, stakeholders are non-members of the UN-Habitat Assembly identified in rules 66 – 69 of the UN-Habitat Assembly rules of procedure, provided they support or work in the field of housing and sustainable urban development and also support the work and mandate of UN-Habitat; namely, international, regional, and national organizations; local and regional governments **of UN Member States or States not members of the UN<sup>1</sup> of nations recognised by the United Nations**, through their organized constituency of networks and associations; and the major groups and other stakeholders defined below, as well as UN-Habitat established advisory boards and professional networks”*.

<sup>1</sup> **“States not members of the United Nations are Cook Islands, Holy See, Niue and the State of Palestine”** (note: This)

- xxxv. One Member State noted that stakeholders are not a homogeneous group and suggested to categorize stakeholders in 2 or 3 concentric rings as “core stakeholders”, “wider stakeholders”, etc. depending on how close the various groups would be to the work and mandate of UN-Habitat.
- xxxvi. One Member State suggested that rules 66-69 of the rules of procedure of the UN-Habitat Assembly should be fully quoted in full in paragraph 4.1 of Chapter 4 which currently reads as follows *“For purposes of this policy, stakeholders are non-members of the UN-Habitat*

*Assembly identified in rules 66 – 69 of the UN-Habitat Assembly rules of procedure, provided they support or work in the field of housing and sustainable urban development and also support the work and mandate of UN-Habitat; namely, international, regional, and national organizations; local and regional governments of nations recognised by the United Nations, through their organized constituency of networks and associations; and the major groups and other stakeholders defined below, as well as UN-Habitat established advisory boards and professional networks”.*

- xxxvii. One Member State noted that stakeholders being referred to in the revised Zero Draft should be stakeholders accredited to UN-Habitat and to ECOSOC and suggested that it should be the first sentence of Chapter 4, followed by a description of the different groups of stakeholders.
- xxxviii. One Member State suggested that paragraph 4.1 of Chapter 4 should read as follows “*For purpose of this policy, stakeholders are non-members of the UN-Habitat Assembly identified in rules 66 – 69 of the UN-Habitat Assembly rules of procedure, provided they support or work in the field of housing and sustainable urban development **and human settlements** and also support the work and mandate of UN-Habitat; namely, international, regional, and national organizations; local and regional governments of nations recognised by the United Nations, through their organized constituency of networks and associations; and the major groups and other stakeholders defined below, as well as UN-Habitat established advisory boards and professional networks”.*
- xxxix. One Member State noted that the Zero Draft mentioned academia as one of the major groups of partners and that it should also be reflected in the revised Zero Draft.
- xl. One Member State suggested that the revised Zero Draft should mention the groups of stakeholders that cannot be accredited to UN-Habitat.
- xli. One stakeholder emphasized the importance of not adding the definition of stakeholders in an Annex to the draft and suggested that it be inserted as a table in the main document to create more clarity.
- xlii. One Member State emphasized the importance of the placeholder in Chapter 5 – on Accreditation, criteria and process.

**In light of the views expressed by Member States, the Secretariat responded as follows:**

- xliii. The Secretariat noted that paragraph 4.4 which reads as follows “*Major groups and other stakeholders consist of 18 groups: Nine major groups that were formalized by Agenda21 at the Earth Summit in 1992: Women; Children and Youth; Indigenous People; Non-Governmental Organizations (also known as civil society organizations); Local Authorities (currently referred to as local and regional governments); Workers and Trade Unions; Business and Industry; Scientific and Technological Community (the group also includes academia and research); and Farmers”* captures academia, research and farmers in the last sentence and indicated that it can be rephrased to be more fitting.

**Upon invitation by the Chair, Member States provided comments on Chapter 6 – Benefits of all accredited stakeholders. Their comments highlighted the following:**

- xliv. One Member State suggested that the benefits of stakeholders should be merged and grouped in categories, *i.e* benefits of stakeholders during the sessions of the governing bodies, benefits of stakeholders in their contribution to UN-Habitat’s work. The Member State further suggested that the draft should provide the possibility for stakeholders to

organize side events during sessions of the governing bodies of UN-Habitat.

- xlv. One Member State suggested that Chapter 6 should provide clarity on statements that can be delivered by accredited stakeholders during the sessions of the governing bodies of UN-Habitat.
- xlvi. One Member State enquired on the meaning of the word “structural” in paragraph 6.1 g which reads as follows “*Structural and inclusive dialogue with the leadership of UN-Habitat governing bodies*”.
- xlvii. Two Member States and one stakeholder suggested that the revised Zero Draft should provide the possibility for stakeholders to share their reflections during the sessions of the governing bodies of UN-Habitat, including on the preparation of the provisional Agenda and during discussions on draft decisions and resolutions.

**In light of the views expressed by Member States, the Secretariat responded as follows:**

- xlviii. The Secretariat acknowledged that it would correct paragraph 6.1g of Chapter 6 to read as follows “~~Structural~~ **Structured** and inclusive dialogue with the leadership of UN-Habitat governing bodies”.
- xlix. The Secretariat noted that under the current practice, stakeholders do not participate in the informal consultations on draft decisions and resolutions to be adopted by the governing bodies of UN-Habitat. The Secretariat however noted that when stakeholders are attending the meetings of the governing bodies of UN-Habitat, they can submit their suggestions on draft decisions and resolutions through Member States. In addition, stakeholders can provide expertise and thematic contributions to the agenda items.

**Agenda item 3 - Any other matters**

- 1. The Chair noted that the next meeting of the working group will be held on Wednesday 16 November 2022 from 10:00 to 12:00 EAT and will discuss Chapters 6-9 of the revised Zero Draft.

**There were no other matters considered and the Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:03hrs East Africa Time**