

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Alignment of the 2021 sessions of the Executive Board with the preparation and approval of the draft Work Programme and Budget for the year 2022.

Introduction

1. It is noted that in line with the functions of the Executive Board as prescribed in Rule 5 of the Rules of procedure, the oversight role of the Executive Board on the Work Programme and Budget is key. It is to this extent that it is desirable for the sessions of the Board in any given year to be aligned with the preparatory and approval process for the annual work programme and budget.
2. Rule 6 of the rules of procedure requires that the “Executive Board shall adopt its annual workplan at its first regular session each year” and that “Discussion of the workplan should start no later than the last session of the Board held the previous year”.
3. This note is prepared following the request of the Bureau of the Executive Board at its meeting held on 7 October 2020. It is intended to provide further information on the following:
 - a. the alignment of the 2021 workplan of the Executive Board with the approval process of 2022 draft Annual Work Plan and Budget consideration by the Executive Board at its second session in October 2020
 - b. Possible date of the next session of the Executive Board, and,
 - c. Possible agenda of the next session of the Executive Board
4. The Note may support the Executive Board is discussing the alignment of its sessions in 2021 with the preparations of the 2022 draft Work Programme and Budget and in determining the dates for its 2021 sessions as well as in drafting the possible agenda for the 2021 first session.

A. Option for the alignment of the 2021 workplan of the Executive Board with the approval process of 2022 draft Annual Work Plan and Budget for consideration by the Executive Board at its second session in October 2020.

5. At its 2020 second session to be held from 27 to 29 October 2020, the Executive Board may:
 - a. Decide on the budget priorities of UN-Habitat for the year 2022;
 - b. Empower the Ad-Hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters of the Executive Board to:
 - i. Discuss the Draft Work Programme of UN-Habitat for the year 2022 in readiness for submission to UNHQ in New York by **15 January 2021**. This will allow the Secretariat to prepare the initial draft budget for 2022 with

an initial working figure for the resource envelope of the foundation non-earmarked fund of the 2022 draft work programme and budget. The Ad-Hoc working group could therefore meet during the week of 11-15 January 2021 in order to meet the deadline of 15 January 2020 for submission of the draft work programme to New York.

- ii. Discuss the draft budget of UN-Habitat for the year 2022 in readiness for submission to UNHQ in New York by **15 February 2021**, without the need for further discussion by the Executive Board at an early session in 2021. The Ad-Hoc working group could therefore meet during the week of 8-12 February 2021 in order to meet the deadline of 15 February 2021 for submission of the Budget to the Controller in New York.

B. Date for the next sessions of the Board in 2021

6. The **possibility of a first session for 2021 being held in February 2021** has been examined and considered not practical for the following reasons:
 - a. The preparation of the draft work program and budget usually benefits from the guidance received from New York in early January each year regarding the parameters for the regular budget. Only then does Budget preparation begin for 2021
 - b. The preparation of the draft work programme and budget document requires a significant time, and given point (a) above, the implication is that the document would not be available in a timely manner and in the UN official languages in line with the Rules of procedure for a February 2021 first session of the Executive Board if it were to be held in early February 2021.
 - c. It is recommended that first session of the Executive Board in 2021 which will also consider the status of the draft work programme and budget 2022 takes place when the report of the Secretary General on the same has been availed, usually at the end of March each year. This was, the Board will have additional information based on the Report of the Secretary General.
 - d. In addition, it is to be noted that all pre-session documents are usually prepared within a minimum of two months prior to each session. In this regard and to enable more substantive reporting and engagement with the Board at its first session if held in April 2021, the period between November 2020 and February 2021 offers a wider window for substantive reporting and pre-session documentation. A first session in early February 2020 would imply that, pre-session documents would cover progress reports for November 2020 only to enable timely editing and translation prior to the session.
7. It is therefore recommended that the Executive Board may **hold its first session for 2021 in late March or April 2021** with the possibility to have the documents fully translated into language versions for consideration, including the status of the draft work programme and budget 2022. This will also allow for substantive reporting on other agenda items.
8. In addition, the Board at its first session if held in April 2021 may offer guidance to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) on the draft

work programme and budget for 2021 which is in tandem with the Secretary General's report through a conference room paper.

9. The Executive Board may further consider holding its second session in **October 2021** given that in June 2021, there will be the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) high level midterm review meeting. At that second session of 2021, the Board will have the report of the ACABQ and will be in a position to consider and approve the 2022 draft work programme and budget. This session could be held during the week 18-22 October 2021.
10. In the event that the Board **recommends a third session in 2021**, the following implications may need to be taken into account:
 - a. The resources available from Conference Services for documentation and interpretations may have been already have been exhausted by the first and second and sessions of 2021 and by the high-level mid-term review of the CPR and as such, these costs would need to be fully sourced by UN-Habitat.
 - b. The timelines for preparations towards a third session of the Executive Board in 2021 would not be realistic given the requirement of ten weeks for documentation timeline , these being six weeks for submission of such documents to conference services and four weeks for documents to be availed to member states prior to the session in line with rule 6 of the Rules of procedure. The 10 weeks rule does not include the time required by the Secretariat to prepare the documents, usually estimated between two to four weeks and this implies a total minimum preparatory lead time of two months to any session.
 - c. Additionally, a third session in 2021 may not have any substantive issue to discuss that would require a specific action by the Executive Board, if the second session to be held in October 2021 is exhaustive.
11. Please see the Annex to this Note below for the proposed timelines in aligning the Executive Board session with the preparations and approval of the 2022 draft work programme and budget. The planning process flow of UN-Habitat Annual Programme of work and budget is also detailed.

C. Possible Agenda for the next session of the Board in 2021

12. The Executive Bard in its **Decision 2019/4 on the “Workplan of the Executive Board for 2020”** passed at its 2019 resumed first session held in November 2019 also detailed items for consideration after 2020 as below.
13. **Paragraph 4** of Decision 2019/4 states that, after 2020, the following items will be included on the provisional agenda of Executive Board sessions for consideration at its first session of each year:
 - (a) The annual work programme and budget of UN–Habitat;

- (b) The report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the proposed work programme of UN-Habitat and the budget of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlement Foundation;
 - (c) The annual report on the implementation of the UN-Habitat strategic plan;
 - (d) An annual report on the Executive Director's actions to update and improve the internal management, policies and procedures of UN-Habitat;
 - (e) An annual report on UN-Habitat actions to strengthen protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and against workplace sexual harassment, as well as any other type of exploitation or abuse;
 - (f) An annual report on UN-Habitat actions to address geographical and gender imbalances in the composition of its staff;
14. In **paragraph 5** of the same decision 2019/4, the Executive Board decided that, after 2020, the following items will be included on the provisional agenda of each Executive Board session for consideration:
- (a) Financial situation of UN-Habitat, the use of resources, the resource mobilization strategy, the ongoing restructuring of UN-Habitat and the financing of UN-Habitat, including the implementation of the resource mobilization strategy in accordance with the strategic plan;
 - (b) Reports of any ad hoc working groups established by the Executive Board;
15. And finally, in **paragraph 6** of the same decision 2019/4 the Board also decides that the following items will be included on the provisional agenda of Executive Board sessions *on a regular basis*:
- (a) Implementation of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the UN-Habitat Assembly;
 - (b) Briefing by the Executive Director on the implementation of the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat, including a briefing by the Executive Director on country activities that may not be covered in the annual report;
 - (c) Annual report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services to the Executive Board;
 - (d) Annual report of the Ethics Office to the Executive Board;
 - (e) Briefing by the Executive Director on progress made in the implementation of the United Nations development system reform until it is concluded;
16. The above paragraphs of decision 2019/4 already give guidance on what the provisional agenda for the 2021 first session could look like, for purposes of further consideration by the Executive Board.

17. Also, it is to be noted that the 2020 second session taking place at the end of October 2020 will have covered many of the annual reports including, the OIOS report, the Ethics office report, actions to strengthen protection against sexual exploitation and abuse ,among others which are mentioned in the relevant paragraphs of decision 2019/ 4 as above. Some of the annual reports come from the General Assembly and may not be available in time for the first session in 2020.
18. A proposed draft of the items towards the consideration of the provisional agenda for the 2021 first session for further review and consideration by the Executive Board is as follows.
 1. Opening of the meeting;
 2. Organizational matters:
 - i. Adoption of the agenda and the workplan for the first session of 2021;
 - ii. Adoption of the report on the first session of 2021.
 3. Reports of the ad hoc working groups established by the Executive Board;
 4. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters including the implementation of the resource mobilization strategy in accordance with the strategic plan;
 5. Status and discussion on the annual work programme and budget of UN–Habitat for the year 2022;
 6. Briefing by the Executive Director on the implementation of the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat, including a briefing by the Executive Director on country activities that may not be covered in the annual report;
 7. Implementation of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the UN-Habitat Assembly;
 8. Briefing by the Executive Director on progress made in the implementation of the United Nations development system reform;
 9. Other matters;
 10. Closure of the meeting.

SEE ANNEX REFERRED TO BELOW:

ANNEX: PROPOSED TIMELINES FOR THE 2021 SESSIONS OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD ALIGNED TO THE APPROVAL PROCESS OF THE DRAFT 2022 WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET

KEY DATE	KEY ACTION RELATED TO THE WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 2022
27-29 OCTOBER 2020	2020 SECOND SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Consideration of the date and agenda for the next session of the Executive Board and Work plan for 2021; b. Consideration of budget range for 2022; c. Possible empowerment of the Ad-hoc working group to discuss the draft Work Programme and budget for 2022; d. Consideration and approval of the draft Work Programme and Budget for 2021 of UN-Habitat by the Executive Board.
December 2020	General Assembly approves 2021 Regular Budget proposal
First week of January 2021	Receipt of guidance from New York on the parameters for regular budget preparation to enable preparation for the draft budget for 2022 to commence
Week of 11-15 January 2021	Meetings of the Ad-Hoc working group on programmatic budgetary and administrative matters to discuss the draft Work Programme for the year 2022, as may be empowered by the Executive Board
15 January 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Submission of the Draft Work Programme 2022 to UNHQ in New York (Controller) b. Preparation of Draft Budget 2022 based on the Draft Work Programme 2022 subject to the initial budget range for 2022 as agreed during the second session of 2020.
Week of 8 -12 February 2021	Meeting of the empowered Ad-Hoc working group on programmatic budgetary and administrative matters to discuss the draft Budget for the year 2022, as may be empowered by the Executive Board.
15 February 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Submission to New York (Controller and the ACABQ) of the Draft Budget 2022 (General Assembly Format¹) based on Draft Work Programme 2022 and draft budget as discussed by the Ad-Hoc working group. b. Preparation for submission to the Executive Board and ACABQ of the Draft Budget 2022 (Executive Board Format²) based on the Draft Work Programme and draft budget as discussed by the Ad-Hoc working group
Late March/ April 2021	2021 FIRST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Discussion on the status of the draft work programme and budget for 2022. The Executive Board will be expected to review the draft budget and provide final guidance on resource envelope for foundation non-earmarked fund to enable the Secretariat to finalize the budget and submit it to New York. b. Pre-session documents in official languages and more substantive updates on status of programme implementation
31 May – 4 June 2021	(CPR HIGH LEVEL MID TERM REVIEW MEETING)

¹ This version elaborates into detail the regular budget resources while highly summarizing all other funding sources of the draft budget, including the foundation non-earmarked budget. The main objective is to detail to the General Assembly how Regular Budget resources are being. All other funds are combined together and indicated as 'Extrabudgetary resources', without specifying them separately. The General Assembly version is therefore not appropriate for the Executive Board's consideration as the Board will require details of each fund separately. The format and type of budget tables are very different from what is being prepared for the Board's consideration.

² This is the specific version of the draft Work Programme and Budget that is adapted for the Executive Board's consideration, using the format and tables as recommended by the ACABQ. The tables indicate all the funding segments, including the foundation non-earmarked budget.

Week of 18 – 22 October 2021	2021 SECOND SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD a. Receipt by the Executive Board of the ACABQ report b. Consideration and approval of the draft work programme and budget for the year 2022 c. Consideration of budget range for the year 2023
December 2021	General Assembly approves 2021 Regular Budget proposal

UN-Habitat Annual Programme of Work and Budget Planning Process Flow

