



**Executive Board of the United Nations
Human Settlements Programme
Second session of 2020**

Online, 27–29 October 2020

Item 2 of the provisional agenda*

Reports by the chairs of the ad hoc working groups

**Report of the ad hoc working group on working methods on the
proposed working methods of the Executive Board of
the United Nations Human Settlements Programme**

I. Background

1. The ad hoc working group on working methods of the Executive Board of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) was established by paragraph 11 of decision 2019/2 on financial, budgetary and administrative matters, adopted by the Executive Board at its resumed first meeting in November 2019, mandated with the task of assisting and advising the Executive Board on working methods. In the same decision, the Executive Board requested the ad hoc working group to complete its work no later than the second session of 2020.

2. A preliminary organizational meeting of the three ad hoc working groups was held on 16 December 2019, at which the Chair and Co-Chair of the ad hoc working group on working methods were agreed upon as follows:

Chair: Argentina

Co-Chair: Kenya

3. Subsequently, the ad hoc working group met on 29 January, 26 February and 4 March 2020.

II. Recommendations on the methods of work of the Executive Board

4. The ad hoc working group discussed and reached consensus on a set of recommendations on the methods of work of the Executive Board for possible consideration by the Board. The set of recommendations was finalized at the third meeting of the working group, held on 4 March 2020, and was subsequently circulated to Member States for consideration by the Executive Board at its first session of 2020.

5. In the light of the evolving situation regarding coronavirus disease (COVID-19), both in Kenya and globally, the first session of 2020 was postponed until 29 June 2020, and the provisional agenda for the meeting shortened. The first session of 2020 was subsequently resumed on 29 July 2020 to elect the Bureau for the period 2020–2021.

6. At its first session of 2020, the Chair of the ad hoc working group provided a briefing to the Executive Board on the work of the ad hoc working group to date and on the set of recommendations on the methods of work of the Executive Board. He also confirmed that the ad hoc working group had completed its work and fulfilled its mandate, in line with decision 2019/2 of the Executive Board. At the same session, the Executive Board agreed that the set of recommendations on the methods of work of the Executive Board should be considered at the second session of the Board in 2020.

* HSP/EB.2020/19.

7. The set of recommendations on the methods of work is set out in the annex to the present report for consideration and possible adoption by the Executive Board with a view to establishing effective working methods for future sessions of the Board.

III. Discussions on possible draft outcomes to be adopted by the Executive Board at its first session of 2020

8. At its meeting held on 14 January 2020, the Bureau of the Executive Board recommended that the ad hoc working group on working methods should also be responsible for draft outcomes to be adopted by the Executive Board at its first session of 2020. The ad hoc working group agreed to the recommendation.

9. On 9 March 2020, the secretariat submitted draft technical inputs for Member States' preparation of draft outcomes under the auspices of the ad hoc working group for consideration by the Executive Board.

10. Following a preliminary review of the draft outcomes by the ad hoc working group, it was agreed that subsequent to the briefing by the Executive Director, which was then scheduled to take place on 16 March 2020, the working group would meet on the same day for a first reading of the draft decisions to offer Member States an opportunity to provide feedback on the language of the outcome documents as proposed by the ad hoc working group.

11. In the light of the evolving situation regarding COVID-19, both in Kenya and globally, the briefing by the Executive Director was cancelled and the first session of 2020 was postponed until 29 June 2020, with the provisional agenda for the meeting shortened. The outcomes of that session, as recommended by the Bureau, were therefore limited to those that were procedural in nature. As a result, draft decision language already prepared by the ad hoc working group on agenda items dropped from the agenda of the first session of the Executive Board will only be discussed at the second session.

Annex

Recommendations on the methods of work of the Executive Board

I. Executive Board and Member States

1. Invitations are to be issued in a non-personalized manner and directed to permanent missions.
2. Annotated agendas should clearly identify items which are expected to result in decisions, taking into account recommendations from the ad hoc working groups.
3. Sufficient time for informal consultations to conclude draft decisions should be allowed for in the meeting schedule of the Executive Board and parallel sessions should be avoided.
4. Member States are encouraged to submit draft decisions and new proposals to be addressed in draft decisions at least three weeks prior to the Executive Board meeting.
5. Member States should conduct an early review of decision language. With that in mind, a first reading of draft decisions to be considered by the Executive Board could be made during the briefing session of the Executive Director following the briefing. Additional informal consultations on draft decisions should be held between that first reading and the Executive Board meeting. To the extent possible, informal consultations should be concluded before the Executive Board meeting.
6. Concerns and proposals expressed from the floor during the plenary meeting should be taken into account during consultations on the draft decisions and reflected in the daily journal of the Executive Board meeting.

II. Documents and presentations

1. In accordance with rule 6.8 of the rules of procedure of the Executive Board, all official documents relating to items on the provisional agenda of an Executive Board meeting should be submitted no less than four weeks prior to that meeting. Those documents should provide an overview of the matters that the Executive Board is expected to discuss and provide recommendations for the Executive Board to consider.
2. To limit the email load of Member States, documents should be made available on a website that is publicly accessible and notifications should only be sent once.
3. Wherever possible, presentations by the secretariat, in particular those containing new information, should be shared in advance of Executive Board meetings.
4. Presentations should be as concise as possible and address matters for discussion and possible decisions.

III. Role of the secretariat

1. The secretariat is expected to contribute to formal and informal discussions within its mandate and to present all relevant information in a timely, concise, objective and neutral manner.
2. The secretariat should make staff available during formal and informal consultations so as to provide delegations with sufficient information and objective guidance upon request.
3. The secretariat should conduct a survey following each meeting of the Executive Board to evaluate the effectiveness of the meeting, so as to further improve the process and outcome of future meetings.
4. The secretariat should, upon request, facilitate meeting rooms for regional group consultations.