

**Summary of discussions emanating from the Informal Contact Group of Permanent Representatives to Member States on UN-Habitat Communications**

**Wednesday, 10 February 2021  
10:00a.m. to 11:00 a.m. East African Time**

Agenda Items	Highlights by UN-Habitat	Recommendations by Member States
<p><b>1. Implementation of action points from the Informal Contact Group on Communication made at the first meeting in July 2020</b></p>	<p>The UN-Habitat team provided key information on strides made in the implementation of action points from the 2020 PR Working Group by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing regular updates to Member States</li> <li>• Ensuring effective communication with Member States</li> <li>• Hosting regular regional meetings</li> <li>• Making UN-Habitat impact visible</li> <li>• Increasing website and social platform outreach</li> <li>• Improving information flow.</li> </ul> <p>The UN-Habitat team highlighted that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Since July 2020, UN-Habitat has provided a consistent update of UN-Habitat’s financial situation and quarterly updates through the Urban Impact newsletter on major developments including impact stories at regional and country level.</li> <li>ii. In addition, UN-Habitat has facilitated regular meetings between the Executive Director and regional groups and also organized the induction seminar which increased the understanding of UN-Habitat’s work and positive interaction with Member States.</li> <li>iii. UN-Habitat has also increased its social media and website interactions with stakeholders through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued upscale and expansion of UN-Habitat platforms including LinkedIn (grown by 36,000) and Instagram.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p>Member States appreciated efforts made by UN-Habitat in implementation of the action points from previous meeting and recognized that communication with Member States is had significantly improved and was more effective, clearer and simple. They noted the transparency in sharing the information including through the monthly financial information and quarterly impact newsletter. They appreciated the sharing of the roadmap for meetings for Member States had been helpful in the planning by Member States.</p> <p>They recognized that while it is important for the Executive Director to hold regular meetings with regional groups, it would not be practical to hold such meetings monthly.</p> <p>They appreciated additional features on the website included a better structure which is easy navigation and addition of features such as the “Donate now” button, use of storytelling and highlights on the flagship programmes. They however noted with concern the number of downloads on some key products citing the example of the publication on migrants and refugees.</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communication with Member States: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Maintain the current format of communicating with Member States to ensure consistency and predictability in terms of Member states expectations.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved planning for upcoming events and expansion of the use of Trello</li> <li>• Continued upgrade of the website and user friendliness.</li> </ul> <p>iv. Lastly, the team highlighted that updates on the governance of UN-Habitat to Member States has been regulated through the UN-Habitat websites and links have been given preference in communication as compared to sharing heavy documents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii) Share information on selected projects in brief every month, for example those that have been completed, or have had major developments in their implementation, accompanied with contact details for the focal point and their financial information appended. This will be in addition to the monthly financial information</li> <li>iii) Consider shortening the frequency of the urban impact newsletter, which is currently quarterly.</li> </ul> <p>2. Regional Group meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) The Member States value the need to have quarterly meetings between the regional groups and the Executive Director and/or the Deputy Executive Director;</li> <li>ii) Regional Group meetings with ED/DED should be made more interactive and could include sharing of questions or concerns and comments from Member States in advance of such meetings in order to enhance dialogue during the meetings with all issues raised being answered.</li> </ul> <p>3. On Website Format and Content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Under the “ Donate Now” function on the website, it is important for UN-Habitat to provide key highlights on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where the donation is going,</li> <li>• Where the reports of donations are and</li> <li>• Which specific projects the donations will cover under each thematic area on the website, that need financial assistance in form of donation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>ii) Review the editorial tone on the website and ensure</li> </ul>
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		<p>that the content is targeted to Member States and the general audience and not UN-Habitat internal audiences by, for example, using less technical language and spelling out any abbreviations used in the website as a strategy to effectively reach external stakeholders.</p> <p>iii) Add brief abstracts/ introductions of any publications at the very begin of the section, containing the publication and not at the bottom in order to attract more views and downloads.</p> <p>iv) For the flagship programmes, add dates to the information provided as well as contacts for further information and ensure the section is regularly updated.</p>
<p><b>2. UN-Habitat Communications Plan for 2021</b></p>	<p>UN-Habitat laid out the 2021 communication plan which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UN-Habitat high level engagement and publicity in key events in 2021</li> <li>• Highlight climate action in cities</li> <li>• Preparations for WUF 11</li> <li>• COVID-19</li> <li>• Improved content and usability of the corporate website</li> <li>• Improved branding to demonstrate UN-Habitat’s value addition</li> <li>• Enhancement transparency</li> <li>• Improved interaction with Member States</li> </ul> <p>The UN-Habitat team highlighted its efforts to ensure impact is communicated strategically to Member States and external stakeholders which has in turn increased visibility and momentum in the implementation of UN-Habitat’s communication strategy. In this regard, UN-Habitat further explained that this has led to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Reduction of stories that are just about workshops, webinars or capacity building.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>On events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Member States emphasized on the need to formally engage with the Permanent Missions of the respective countries in Nairobi, as they are responsible in providing guidance to their respective Capitals on engagement with UN-Habitat events.</li> <li>ii) The Member States stated that Permanent Missions engagement would open discussions on potential financial and in-kind contributions for delivery of UN-Habitat events.</li> <li>iii) UN-Habitat should highlight/ give spotlight to Member States and Stakeholders providing support to key events</li> </ul> <p>On partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iv) UN-Habitat should also consider communicating more on strategic positioning and common actions with other</li> </ul>

	<p>ii. Increased focus on normative stories of its work rather than simple projects providing housing, water etc</p> <p>UN-Habitat’s team further explained the efforts administered in communicating actions and progress of implementation of the “Abu Dhabi Declared Actions” endorsed at WUF 10 and on working on an appropriate theme for WUF 11 to be launched in May 2021. UN-Habitat called on Member States to join in advocacy around the upcoming WUF 11 theme.</p> <p>UN-Habitat team expressed their eagerness to share the urban COVID data gathered through Readiness and Responsiveness tracker that has led to the UN-Habitat Cities and Pandemics Report.</p>	<p>international organizations such as the work done with the SG report on COVID 19 and cities and, the work being done under the Green Cities Programme designed by UN-Habitat and UNEP.</p>
<p><b>3. Calendar of key events for Communications in 2021</b></p>	<p>UN-Habitat presented a detailed calendar of key events for the year 2021 and expressed their need to progressively develop key messages, enhance social media interactions and strengthen its internal liason with divisions, branches and offices to ensure maximum mileage and consistency</p>	<p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <p>i. Member States encouraged UN-Habitat to share the UN-Habitat Calendar of events for their internal planning and engagement.</p>
<p><b>Other recommendations</b></p>	<p><b>Strategy of Engagement with Geographical Groups of the UN System:</b></p> <p>Poland Stated that on strategic engagement with the WEOG group, it is important for UN-Habitat to consider the countries’ representation in the recruitment of staff members, which brings on geographical diversity. This brings on trust with the WEOG Member States.</p> <p>In addition, Poland recalled the request to the Executive Director to open the Warsaw Office and is awaiting a response on the matter.</p>	
	<p>Member States recommended that the next meeting of Permanent Representatives to Member States on UN-Habitat Communication be adjusted according to the discussions of the next Executive Board Meeting and likely before the CPR high level midterm review meeting. Member States recommended not to have too many meetings in order to give time to the secretariat to implement any recommendations</p>	<p>Agreed</p>

