



**Executive Board of the United Nations
Human Settlements Programme
First session of 2023
Nairobi, 28–29 March 2023**

Results of the survey conducted by the secretariat after the second session of the Executive Board of 2022 to evaluate the effectiveness of that session so as to further improve the process and outcome of future sessions**

Note by the secretariat.

I. Introduction

A. Background to and purpose of the survey

1. In line with rule 1.1 of its rules of procedure, the Executive Board of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) “shall meet in regular session two or three times per year, as appropriate, at such times and for such duration as it shall determine”. The functions of the Executive Board are set out in rule 5 of the rules of procedure and include overseeing the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat and ensuring the accountability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of the Programme.
2. In Recommendations on the methods of work of the Executive Board contained in document HSP/EB.2020/20 and which were adopted by the Executive Board at its second session of the year 2020 through Decision 2020/6, paragraph 2, the secretariat is expected to “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”.
3. Following the second session of 2022, the secretariat therefore conducted a survey, the aim of which was to evaluate the effectiveness of that session and explore ways to further improve both the process and outcome of future sessions.
4. On 23 November 2022, the secretariat circulated an electronic link to the survey to all 103 permanent missions accredited to UN-Habitat, with a deadline for submitting responses of 20 December 2022.
5. This report which relays the results of the survey is for information to the Executive Board at its first session of 2023.

II. Participation

4. By 20 December 2022, the secretariat had received seventeen (17) responses only. The seventeen respondents had completed the online survey, which had been set up in such a way, that the responses received were anonymous and the submitters could not be identified. The response rate stood at 16.5 per cent (17 of 103 potential respondents, which are the Permanent Missions accredited to UN-Habitat)

III. Approach and methodology

6. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the 2022 first session of the Executive Board, the survey was designed to explore various themes. Under each of these themes, various questions were designed. The survey followed the same structure used to evaluate the first session of the Executive Board of the year 2022 session. The survey was structured in the following six sections:

- (a) Alignment of the functions and competence of the Executive Board with the provisional agenda of the sessions of the Board.
- (b) Quality and usefulness of the pre-session documents.
- (c) Briefing by the Executive Director.
- (d) The number of sessions per year for the Executive Board; (e) Preparations and implementation of the first session of 2022 of the Executive Board.
- (f) Other questions to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Executive Board.

7. The survey comprised of open-ended questions, ranking questions, multiple-choice questions and single choice questions to explore themes.

8. For ranking questions, a rating scale of level 5 (Strongly agree) to level 1 (Strongly disagree) was used. The scale was as follows:

- Level 5: Strongly agree
- Level 4: Agree
- Level 3: Somewhat agree
- Level 2: Disagree
- Level 1: Strongly disagree

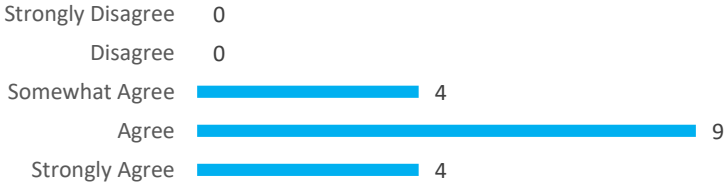
9. The survey comprised 20 questions. Below are the results of the Survey based on the questions.

IV: Survey Results

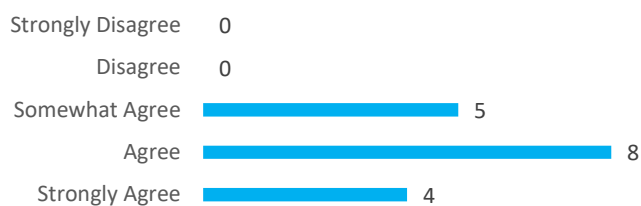
Question 1: How well aligned is the Agenda for each session of the Executive Board, to its functions and competence of strengthening the accountability and transparency of UN-Habitat, and providing an effective oversight mechanism to enhance its normative and operational activities?

Responses:

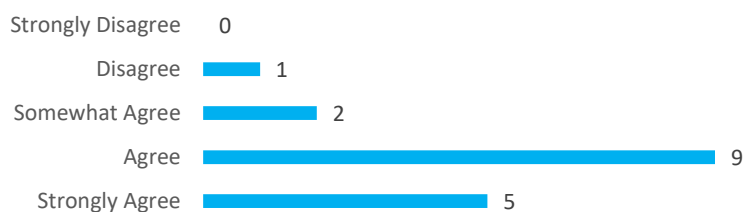
The Executive Board’s functions and competence are clearly understood and consistently adhered to



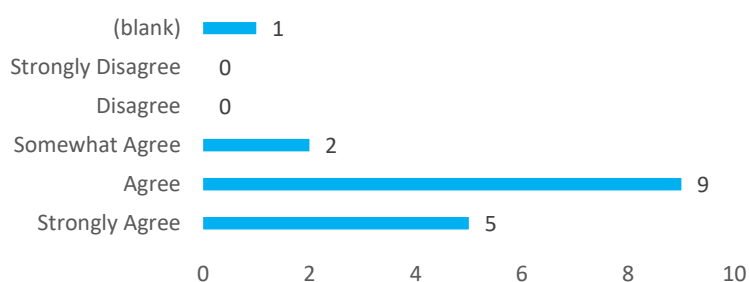
The Agenda for each session is well aligned with the functions and competence of the Executive Board.



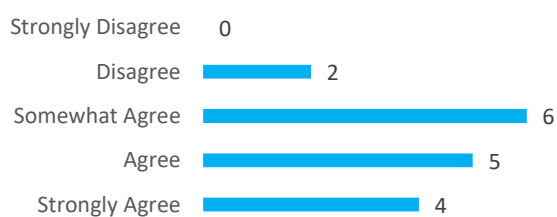
The provisional Agenda is clearly communicated to the Executive Board members for their inputs before being finalized.



The Executive Board Bureau is flexible and responsive in the planning process of the provisional Agenda of the Session to ensure effective oversight role of the Executive Board.

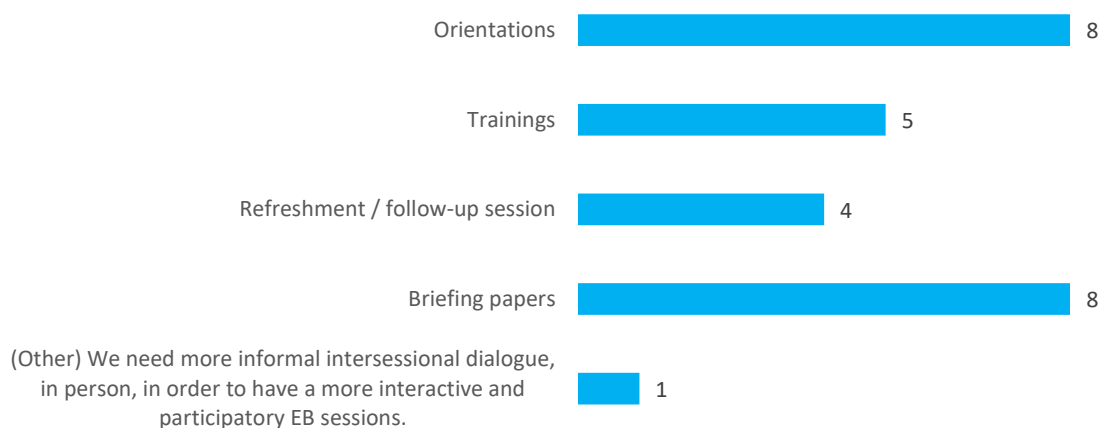


The Executive Board should review its decision 2019/4 which pre-determined what agenda items must be covered at each session.



Question 2: If the Secretariat were to help Member States and their Delegation understand the functions and competence of the Executive Board, what would be a better way to do so?

Responses:



Question 3: Please provide your views/ideas on how the process of drafting of the provisional Agenda for each session of the Executive Board can be improved?

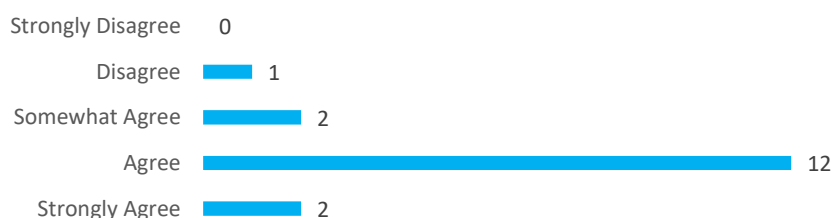
Responses:

- Allow non-Executive Board members to submit proposed agenda items. The joint bureau of governing bodies could meet and decide on the submitted proposals.
- It would be useful to first give an overview of what OUTCOMES other than completing the statutory requirements of the EB are hoped for and then align the agenda to meet those outcomes.
- Need to list all activities/budgets/results summarily of UN Habitat, then identify where guidance/decisions are needed according to RoP.
- Technology should allow an easier access to the updated agenda. During the plenum it should be shown on a screen which point of the agenda we are at.
- The agenda should make provision for draft proposals from Member States on Salient issues before the session.
- The provisional agenda should be more pragmatic and problem-solving oriented, so the process of drafting it should be engaged by the Member States more actively and earnestly.

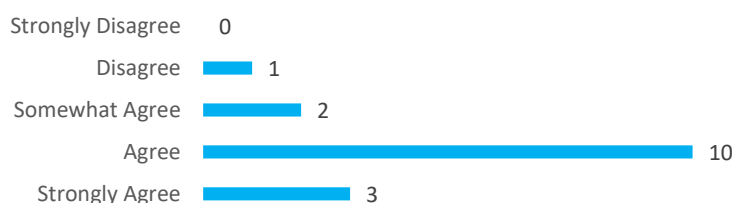
Question 4: How useful are the pre-session documents in their timing submission, accesibility, content and length, in helping delegates to prepare adequately for the Executive Board sessions?

Responses:

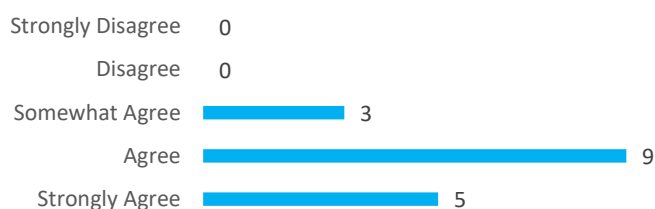
Timely submission and distribution of pre-session documents, in accordance with the Rules of the Executive Board of 4 weeks is adequate.



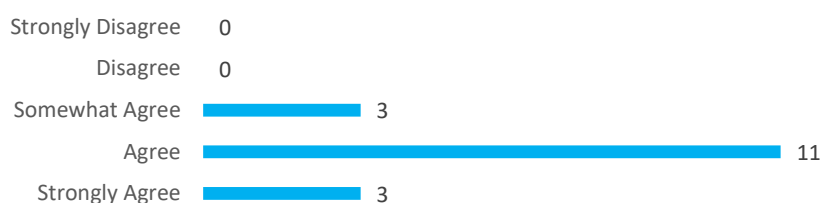
Pre-session documents of 2022 second session were easily accessible to the Executive Board members in a timely manner.



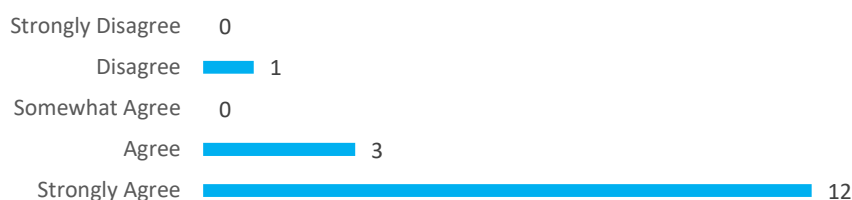
The General Assembly guidance on the length limit of 8,500 words per pre-session document is sufficient, with the exception of specific documents like the work programme and budget and the strategic plan.



Pre-session documents of 2022 second session were easily accessible to the Executive Board members in a timely manner.



Sharing Executive Director/Secretariat presentations prior to the Executive Board sessions would bring about effective and active participation during discussions of Agenda Items.



Question 5: Please suggest on how the quality and the usefulness (*including content and length*) of the pre-session documents be improved.

Responses:

- Documents should be focused. As many issues are very technical, language should be clear on what is the main issue to debate or what is required.
- Hopefully, the figures could be the same or changed simultaneously in the pre-session documents and other online documents at the official website of UN-Habitat.
- I commend the Secretariat for the successful preparation of pre-session documents.
- Not all documents for all sessions were made available sufficiently early. Some documents were provided only a few days before the meeting. A better procedure would be for the Bureau to determine an agenda and afterwards provide all relevant documents at the same time. The piecemeal provision of last documents shortly before the meeting was difficult to handle.

- Report of activities is ok, but increase focus on outcomes and what are challenges and need for continued work.
- Thank you for the good work. We could still improve the whole thing and make it more simple to access. For example, a one-single-document or email with all links could be an idea.

Question 6: Please rate the usefulness of the Executive Director’s pre-session briefing which takes place two weeks prior to each session as provided for under rule 6.10 of the rules of procedure.

Responses:



Question 7: Please provide your views and ideas on how the Executive Director’s pre-session briefings can be improved for both Member States and the Secretariat.

Responses:

- Briefing should not be focus on comment the titles of the agenda or logistical issues, but address main issues of debate and what is needed to the EB to debate and decide. .
- I appreciate the briefings by the ED prior to the EB sessions and such good practice should be continued.
- Member States present issues that concern them directly to be discussed and the outcome be included in the Executive Session.
- Seem to be rushed, Limited time allotted by Habitat to this process.
- Thank you for the good work and the availability for the member states.
- The hybrid format of such briefings should be used even after the Covid.

Question 8: Rule 1 of the [rules of procedure](#) of the Executive Board provides that “The Executive Board of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme shall meet in regular session two or three times per year.” Since the establishment of the Board in May 2019, the Board has met twice in 2020, twice in 2021 , twice in 2022. As per your experience, do you think holding two sessions per year is adequate to cover necessary agenda items and relevant matters?

Responses:



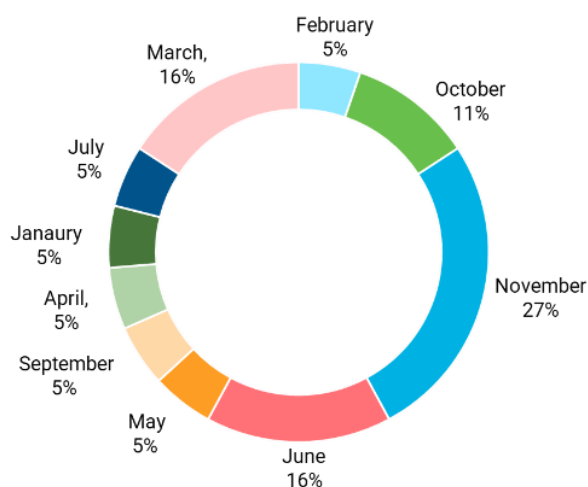
Comment on your answer given above. If ‘Yes’, why; If ‘No’, why.

Responses:

NO	YES
It may make sense to try to move to a schedule with three sessions with a duration of 1.5-2 days each. Not all agenda items need to be discussed at every meeting. There are items more logical to discuss at the beginning of the year and items better fit for the end of the year.	three days twice a year is adequate, the issue is the management of the session and the management of inputs in the sessions.
In a year without UN-Habitat Assembly or CPR mid-term evaluation, three meetings should be considered for increased oversight, if resources are available.	Gives adequate time to implement programs etc.
We could reduce the whole thing thanks to more efficiency. It would also improve sustainability	Sometimes the workload at the State level can be overwhelming. However, emergency Sessions could be called if necessary.
No. There are too many agenda items in each EB session. These could be trimmed down to have deeper discussions on each agenda item. The EB could also consider convening thrice a year so that discussions on all necessary and relevant matters are not compromised.	Yes, holding two sessions of EB per year is adequate because the primary competence of EB is to help UN-Habitat draft a work plan for a new year or a three-year strategic plan and oversee the process, which needs a session to be held at the end or beginning of a year, the other in the second quarter the year.

Question 9: With the understanding that the General Assembly and the Executive Board rules on documentation require about 12 weeks of preparations of pre-session documents, and with the understanding that in line with Rule 1.3, the dates of the sessions of the Board when being set, should take into account the dates of meetings of the UN-Habitat Assembly and other United Nations bodies, including the high-level political forum on sustainable development, when, in your view, during the year should the Executive Board sessions take place? (Indicate months)

Responses:



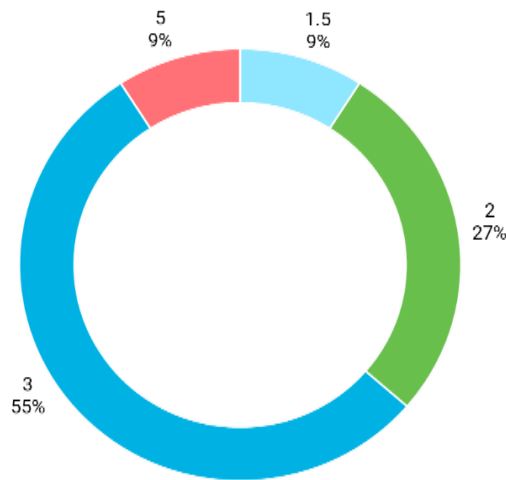
Question 10: The 2022 second session of the Executive Board was held over three days. Was the allocated number of days for that session adequate?

Responses:



Question 11: In your view, how many days should each Executive Board session be and why? (Indicate number)

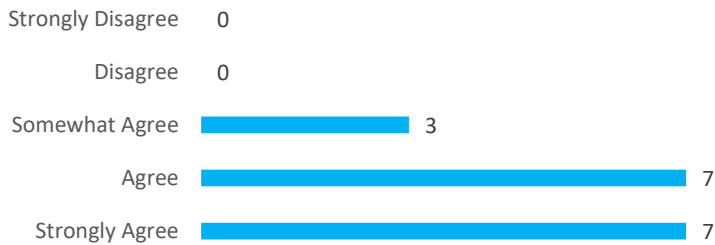
Responses:



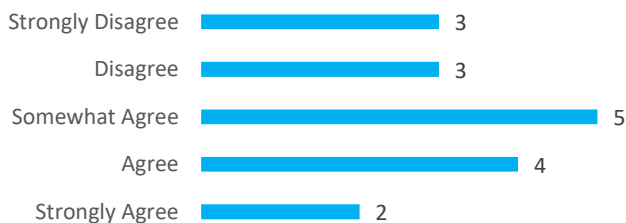
Question 12: The 2022 second session of the Executive Board was held in a hybrid format. How do you evaluate the hybrid format of 2022 second session and its possible application to future Executive Board sessions?

Responses:

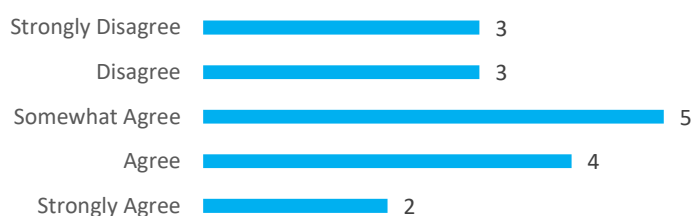
Hybrid format, where in-person participation combined with remote connected participants resulted in the 2022 second session of the Executive Board being successful.



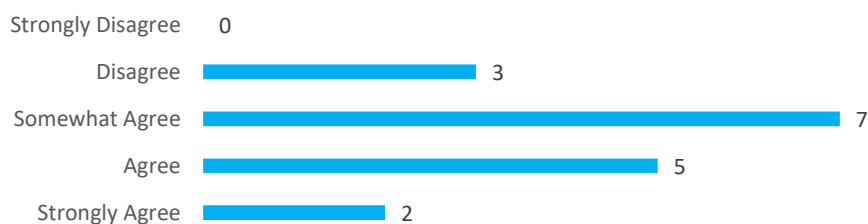
Hybrid format put remote participant at a disadvantage as some struggled to have their voices heard or experienced technical issues that made participation less active.



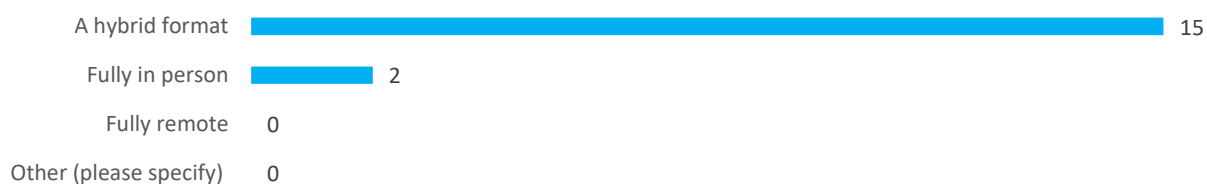
Hybrid format was less conducive format for complex discussions like on taking decisions on resolutions.



Hybrid format was successful but missed body language, facial reactions for remote connected participants.



Question 13: For future Executive Board sessions, what format would you recommend? (single choice only)



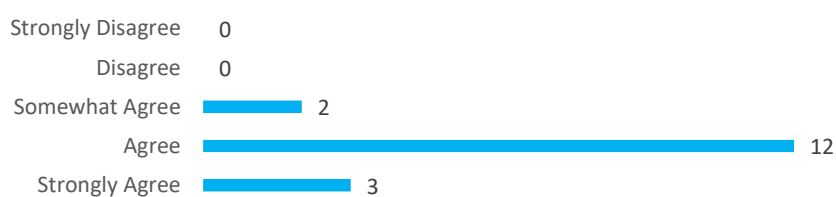
Question 14: Please, provide reasons for choosing the format you recommend.

On Question 14 above, there were no additional comments provided by Member States.

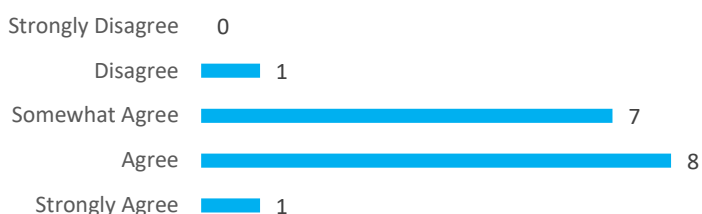
Question 15: How adequate were preparations for the 2023 first session of the Executive Board including meetings of the ad hoc working groups and informal consultations on draft decisions?

Responses:

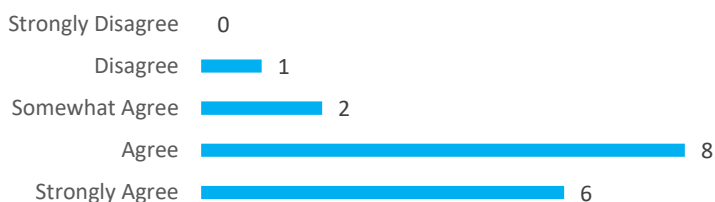
Number of informal consultations on draft outcomes and decisions were adequate



Time allocated to informal consultations on draft outcomes during the session itself was adequate



The delegates discussed openly, stimulating inclusive debate and dialogue on substantive items that resulted in outcome decisions.



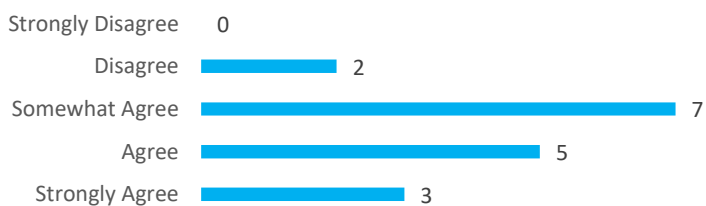
Draft decisions and technical inputs prepared for the Executive Boards' consideration were manageable, in line with the mandate of the Executive Board.



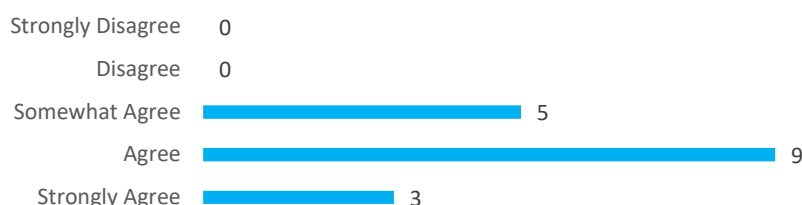
Question 16: How efficient was the management of time allocated for statements during the first session of the Executive Board for the year 2023, including Group and National Statements?

Responses:

Time available to the delegates to discuss and debate on important issues was adequate.



Time available to the during the session was adequate.



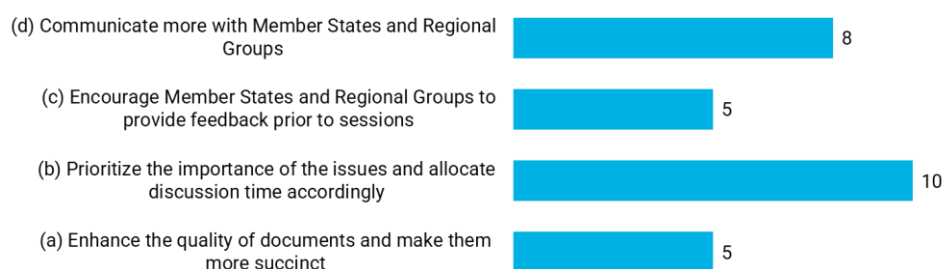
Question 17: Please suggest on how time management of Executive Board sessions can be improved?

Responses:

- National statement in addition to regional groups' statements should be allowed in the opening session.
- Chair's flexibility to add time for national delegations to end their statement, while at the same time enforcing some rigor for participant's largely exceeding their time slot was highly appreciated.
- Less time on each presentation. Share all info prior to meetings, including ppt's. More focused presentations on outcomes (two slides) and one slide on challenges, then over to the MS for discussion.
- Consider to drop intro by ED, and instead go directly to presenter. Sounds like double up and not always very interesting what the ED says. ED can comment briefly only if she has something new and then focus on commenting/clarifying after presentation if asked by MS. We should have more time for interactions and reduce the time were we all know it is ok.
- Minimum of 5 minutes per speaker.
- To shorten the time of general debates and allocate more time to specific problems.
- Be strict with the time limit for statements to allow more time for substantive discussions.

Question 18: Based on your views of the 2022 second session of the Board, give suggestions on how the Executive Director and Secretariat could better support Member States to ensure their active and substantive engagement during the sessions of the Executive Board.

Responses:



Question 19: What measures can the Executive Board consider to improve its effectiveness?

Responses:

- We need more informal and personal dialogue of the issues related to UN Habitat. Delegations need to understand better the agenda and the work of UN Habitat. Orientation sessions for Delegates (New or not new) could be an

example. In person visits of Regional Groups to the UN Habitat offices could be other example of informal and personal dialogue.

- Executive board meetings are not about highlighting the good work, but about working together to move ahead with strategic, open and critical discussions. Of course we need to value the good work, but we should not spend to much time on this. We are together, already convinced about the need for such a UN agency.
- To organize more discussions on the draft outcomes and reports before the sessions.

Question 20: What other comments would you like to make about the Executive Board?

Responses:

- The roles, interactions and relationship between the EB and the CPR must be clarified and agreed by al the membership.
- Thank you for this survey and your strong commitment to make UN-Habitat move forwards and continue to deliver good results.
- To be more focused on the technical functions of the UN-Habitat.