DRAFT Strategy for digital capacity building in UN-Habitat

Capacity Development and Training Unit
Responsible officer: **Raphaëlle Vignol**
Main author: **Vidar Vasko**
April 2021

Table of Contents

1. Enhancing digital capacity building in UN-Habitat

1.1. Rationale

Technology has transformed education worldwide progressively over the last years and in an accelerated and deeply transformative manner since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Innovative tools enable the delivery of completely new learning experiences. Online learning, in particular, allows anyone with internet access to gain knowledge and skills outside of a classical classroom or meeting room setting.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, physical distancing dramatically increased the need to take educational efforts online. Many local government officials, students, NGO workers and others that are served by UN-Habitat's educational and training efforts are currently working from home. With the prospect of a "new" rather than "back to" normal, including a sustained adoption of digital tools and remote work, **there is a demand-driven urgency in delivering purposeful and high-quality digital capacity building**.

Digital capacity building has the potential to reach participants globally in a cost-effective manner. Technology can help to deliver training in a user-friendly, interactive and visually stimulating manner. Remote learning enabled by digital technologies can reduce costs associated with on-site training, transportation and accommodation, and enable capacity building activities to reach a wider audience, therefore increasing the inclusion of individuals who may otherwise not be able to participate.

Therefore, UN-Habitat's Capacity Development and Training Unit initiated the production of this strategy, to support an increased integration of digital tools into the delivery of capacity building activities and programmes.

This strategy complements the Guide to understand and deliver capacity building through digital tools, which offers an in-depth presentation of digital capacity building approaches and tools applicable to the work and mandate of UN-Habitat.

The objective of the strategy is to initiate the development of a roadmap to better integrate the use of digital capacity building into the work of UN-Habitat.

Accordingly, this strategy:

1. Takes stock of existing digital capacity building products and capacity to apply digital capacity building in the delivery of UN-Habitat capacity building programmes and activities.

2. Proposes a rationale and actions for UN-Habitat to build a strong digital capacity building offer.

With regard to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, digital and frontier technologies have been promoted within the UN System. The [Secretary General's Roadmap for Digital Collaboration](#) (2020) represents the overarching framework, and emphasizes strengthening capacity building support at the local level. The [United Nations Development Programme Digital Strategy](#) (2019) represents the approach of a particular UN agency. These strategies, although beyond the scope of digital *capacity building*, provide important guiding principles on digital philosophies and approaches within the UN System. Central to both reports is the concept of increasing digital capabilities and capacities, both for UN colleagues as well as beneficiaries in order to effectively harness the potential of digital technologies, while mitigating risks.

1.2. Digital capacity building in UN-Habitat's approved strategies

In UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan 2020–2023, capacity building is included as a key enabler in the theory of change to achieve the objective: *Sustainable urbanization is advanced as a driver of development and peace, to improve living conditions for all in line with the SDGs*.

A [Capacity Building Strategy](#) was developed in accordance with [Resolution HSP/HA/1/L.6/Rev.1](#), "Enhancing capacity building for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the urban dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", adopted by the UN-Habitat Assembly (27-31 May 2019). It requests the Executive Director of UN-Habitat to draft a strategy for the coordination of capacity building as a cross-cutting function.

The Capacity Building Strategy was adopted by UN-Habitat's Executive Board during its second session of the year 2020. It calls for an increased focus on digital capacity building in UN-Habitat's capacity building work:

C. Promote innovation and new technologies for capacity building

§64. An in-depth study is needed on the use of technology and innovation in the planning, design and implementation of online capacity building activities, e-learning modules, Massive Online Open Courses (MOOCs) and other types of products in order to assess and map experiences, learn from their results, unfold technical viability, and ensure articulation with existing related initiatives at UN-Habitat, such as the New Urban Agenda monitoring Platform.

§65. There is a need for a more structured offer of e-learning and distance-learning products. By adopting an e-learning Strategy, UN-Habitat should enlarge its menu of services to build individual and institutional capacity via online courses, (MOOCs), webinars, podcasts and other forms of

distance-learning. Innovation needs to be consistently pursued in the development and delivery of capacity building.

The Implementation Plan for the Capacity Building Strategy includes, under *Workstream 2: Implement catalytic priority actions both at global and country level*, **the following points related to digital capacity building:**

- *Develop digital capacity building tools on the urban dimension of the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda, and their integration in UN-supported planning processes at country level.*
- *Focus on quick digital solutions for online capacity building, developing online platforms and online training tools, framed by the digital capacity building guidance under development.*

The Implementation Plan further elaborates on digital capacity building under *Objective 2.1: Optimize existing capacity building tools and leverage digital innovation for capacity building*.

This digital capacity building and learning strategy responds to the above organizational demands, and marks an effort to increase coherence, collaboration and synergies around digital capacity building in UN-Habitat.

1.3. Internal consultations

To understand digital capacity building in UN-Habitat, the Capacity Development and Training Unit carried out an agency-wide survey on digital capacity building in UN-Habitat in July 2020.

The content of the survey is presented below:

1. *Please list existing online learning products (e.g online courses/capacity building tools) that are available or are being developed by your team.*
2. *Please list existing relevant high-quality online learning products (e.g online courses/capacity building tools) that are available or are being developed by your partners.*
3. *Would you be willing to contribute to a digital learning committee in UN-Habitat?*
4. *Do you have any suggestions for digital learning products to be developed by UN-Habitat as a priority in the short/medium term?*
5. *Please share any comments, views or ideas you may have regarding UN-Habitat's digital capacity building and learning offer, and how our organization can leverage technology and innovation for learning and capacity building.*

A series of internal consultations followed. The presentation used in the consultations can be found via this link. A list of all consultation sessions can be found in Annex 1.

Consultation agenda items:

1. *Presentation of the current work on digital capacity building led by the Capacity Development and Training Unit (CDTU).*
2. *Understand UN-Habitat's experience with and capacity to develop digital capacity building products, and expectations from senior managers.*
3. *Discuss UN-Habitat's digital capacity building products and initiatives – launched, under development, or planned.*
4. *Discuss opportunities and challenges with digital capacity building, and develop better work streams between your office and CDTU.*

The survey and consultations provided key insights from colleagues throughout the organizations, which were integrated in this strategy paper.

This strategy paper outlines:

1. The use of digital capacity building in UN-Habitat
2. Way forward
3. Vision and expected outcome
4. Proposed actions to achieve vision and outcome

2. The use of digital capacity building in UN-Habitat

This section briefly summarizes the findings from the survey and consultations in 2020 and 2021 on UN-Habitat colleagues' experiences, expectations, opportunities, challenges and suggestions regarding digital capacity building. The survey was disseminated via broadcast email to all staff on two occasions. Consultations were carried out or are planned with key internal actors as well as colleagues who have previous experience of digital capacity building initiatives.

2.1. UN-Habitat existing digital capacity building initiatives

The table below outlines projects in UN-Habitat with a strong digital capacity building component. The list will be continuously updated and is a snapshot of initiatives at UN-Habitat.

myPSUP e-learning platform Hosts 12 courses as of February 2021.	**Launched**
GLTN E-learning platform Hosts 7 courses as of February 2021	**Launched**
National Urban Policy E-Learning Course	**Launched**

Urban Agenda Platform Learn Hosts the New Urban Agenda crash course: Part 1. Several others under development, including the Arabic translation of the New Urban Agenda crash course.	**Launched**
Global Urban Lectures	**Launched**
Block by Block	**Launched**
Urban Thinkers Campus	**Launched**
Local Economic Leadership - online course (currently not available online)	**Launched**
Environmental and Social Safeguards System 3.0 Training	**Launched**
Online course: Practitioner's Guide to Achieve Waste SDGs by 2030: Assessing and planning for enhanced municipal solid waste management	**Under development**
DiMSUR Digital Training Demo — http://dimsur.org/digital-training-demo/	**Under development**
Learn to measure progress towards urban sustainability with Sustainable Development Goal 11 indicators	**Under development**
Urban Rural Linkages online course	**Under development**
E-learning course on sustainable housing	**Under development**
Building urban economic resilience during and after COVID-19 - City Resilience Global Programme	**Under development**
Induction workshop on the United Nations Human Settlements Programme for new representatives of Member States	**Under development**
Urban Economic Resilience Diagnostics and Action Planning – Implementing Diagnostic and Planning Tool (DPT) and Economic Resilience Building Plan (ERBP) in cities	**Under development**
SDG Cities — online courses	**Planned**
Innovation Unit Capacity Building Programme	**Planned**
Global Future Cities Capacity Building Programme	**Planned**
CityRAP online crash course and online CityRAP Training of Trainers	**Planned**
Training module on urban law and policy	**Planned**
. . .	

2.3. Highlights from consultations

This section briefly summarizes key highlights as mentioned by UN-Habitat staff members during the digital capacity building consultations, divided into three focus areas:

1. Current challenges faced by UN-Habitat teams
2. Digital capacity building opportunities and expectations
3. Proposed solutions for enhancing digital capacity building work in UN-Habitat

2.3.1. Current challenges faced by UN-Habitat teams

❏ **Lack of internal capacity for delivering digital capacity building activities**

UN-Habitat staff highlight challenges related to the internal capacity to manage digital capacity building projects. Many deliver synchronous learning experiences, often through a webinar format. Some have experience with asynchronous learning, most often through online courses. All express a desire to improve the quality of their products. There is a need to increase the capacity to organize efficient, effective and engaging webinars and online workshops, and to better use digital tools in general.

Some colleagues point to a surge of "webinar fatigue" during pandemic restrictions. On a related note, others point to an information overload of digital capacity building products, and a resulting need to better differentiate between quality and lesser quality content.

On the specifics of developing digital capacity building initiatives, staff highlight the importance of adequate needs assessment, learning objectives, instructional design (including how to make both synchronous and asynchronous learning fun, interactive and engaging), learner motivation, monitoring and evaluation.

❏ **Need for quality control and sustainability**

Several colleagues highlight the importance of quality control and sustainability of digital capacity building initiativess. In particular in the case of outsourcing, initiatives can reach lower quality, cost more, deliver less, or take longer than expected. The sustainability of an initiative when outsourcing is a challenge. There is a need for internal resources dedicated to ensuring consistent quality and sustainability of digital capacity building initiatives.

❏ **Sharing tool licenses; tool restrictions**

Staff point to the potential of purchasing licenses for digital tools on a corporate level, to enable cost-sharing efficiencies between different initiatives. There are restrictions on using certain technologies as UN staff, which makes it more difficult to carry out activities according to modern digital capacity building good practices. Consultants often do not face the same restrictions as staff.

❏ **Addressing the digital divide; accessibility**

The digital divide is an important consideration for UN-Habitat's to carry out digital capacity building activities. There is a need to develop strategies for how to best deliver learning activities to beneficiaries with none or limited Internet connectivity, as well as to beneficiaries lacking necessary devices for using digital capacity building tools. Blended learning — a mix between physical and virtual activities — is one way to mitigate the effects

of the digital divide. Accessibility for people with disabilities is important to take into account when developing digital capacity building activities.

❏ **Delivering digital capacity building in conflict and post-conflict areas**

In addition to more general digital divide challenges, many UN-Habitat operations are carried out in conflict and post-conflict areas. These contexts may not just lack connectivity, devices, and high bandwidth, but also more basic technology such as electricity. There is therefore a need in such contexts for tailored solutions regarding capacity building in general, and digital capacity building specifically. There is a need for information and internal capacity building on how to carry out digital capacity building in conflict and post-conflict contexts.

❏ **Dissemination and service restrictions**

Staff mention reaching more beneficiaries as a challenge, through for example well-planned dissemination and communication campaigns. Users in some countries can be difficult to reach. For example, China blocks YouTube, so in order to reach Chinese users with video content, it is necessary to utilize alternative hosting platforms.

❏ **Funding and costs**

Funding and cost efficiency are crucial challenges to developing and managing sustainable and impactful digital capacity building initiatives. Many UN-Habitat staff members work without or with few core programmes, and with little budget, and are instead largely project-based and demand-driven. This has to be considered when planning digital capacity building interventions.

Some colleagues suggest developing a business model for UN-Habitat that includes offering paid activities such as online courses.

2.3.2. Digital capacity building opportunities and expectations

❏ **Accelerated demand for digital capacity building under COVID-19 restrictions**

COVID-19 restrictions have led to a greater need to develop digital capacity building activities under existing and future initiatives. Partners and beneficiaries are now more used to digital technologies in their work. Many UN-Habitat staff members expressed the desire to work together with the Capacity Development and Training Unit on planned and possible activities, and are interested in exploring innovative ways to deliver digital capacity building for such activities.

Staff point to the timely focus on digital capacity building, and suggest mentioning this work in strategic discussions with counterparts to show that UN-Habitat has capacity in this area.

❏ **Reuse, adapt and scale existing materials**

Several staff members point to the importance of doing digital capacity building more efficiently by using materials that already exist within UN-Habitat. Translation of existing products can achieve impact on a broader scale. Products can be refocused to a specific national/regional/national/local context, or link to ongoing work in country offices (which can also create resource streams). There is a need to carry out stronger efforts for dissemination and promotion of existing products to increase scale and impact.

❏ **Desire to utilize innovative technologies and peer-to-peer learning**

Some colleagues are interested in using innovative technologies such as Virtual Reality and 360° cameras, as well as gamification, to create immersive learning experiences. Other staff members express a desire to utilize digital technologies to strengthen peer-to-peer learning for beneficiaries and to create communities of practice.

❏ **Digital capacity building can help mitigate climate change effects**

UN-Habitat staff members point out that digital capacity building can significantly reduce greenhouse gas emission, related to travel but also to facilities. This supports the UN Environment initiative [Greening The Blue](), which engages and supports the UN system in the transition towards greater environmental sustainability in the management of its facilities and operations.

❏ **Interest in tools developed by the Capacity Development and Training Unit**

Colleagues express interest in deploying and disseminating the tools presented by the Capacity Development and Training Unit during the consultations — the New Urban Agenda Illustrated toolkit including handbook and online courses — to stakeholders and beneficiaries. Colleagues emphasize the importance of translating such global tools into different languages in order to reach a wider audience, as well as the opportunity of developing online crash courses on other topics related to UN-Habitat's mandate.

2.3.3. Proposed solutions for enhancing digital capacity building work in UN-Habitat

❏ **Corporate guidelines on digital capacity building**

Many UN-Habitat staff members call for corporate guidelines on how to develop digital capacity building activities and are positive towards the creation of an internal guide on digital capacity building.

❏ **A digital capacity building ecosystem for UN-Habitat**

Central to suggestions by staff members is the need to develop a corporate digital capacity building ecosystem that can be utilized by all UN-Habitat colleagues to create digital capacity building experiences. Colleagues express the need to create a repository for digital capacity building initiatives, both internal and external, for example on the Urban Agenda

Platform's [learning page](#). There is a need for seeking synergies at the corporate level with a shared Learning Management System for online courses and other activities. Some colleagues maintain bespoke solutions, but are not fully satisfied or see potential for cost savings through a shared infrastructure and platform.

❏ **Learning pathways**

Coursera and EdX are examples of services that offer not just asynchronous online learning, but learning pathways that combine several courses into a larger programme. Some colleagues suggest that UN-Habitat should aim to create a similar system with internally developed online courses.

❏ **Strategic partnerships**

To implement digital capacity building activities in a cost-efficient and impactful manner, there is a need to seek strategic partnerships within and beyond the UN system. UN-Habitat colleagues mention universities as key partners. University partnerships can scale impact by for example enabling access to platforms with large user bases such as Coursera.

❏ **Internal helpdesk**

Some UN-Habitat staff suggest creating an internal helpdesk for support on digital capacity building tools. Colleagues express the desire for an explicit internal suite of services from the Capacity Development and Training Unit, which outlines different levels of possible support and associated costs. Colleagues note the need to articulate the value of doing digital capacity building in-house as opposed to outsourcing.

❏ **Consider existing capacity building approaches**

Many UN-Habitat capacity building programmes feature strong elements of "learning by doing" approaches such as on-the-job training. In addition, Training of trainers as well as mentoring and coaching programmes are common formats for capacity building activities. Colleagues point to the necessity of considering training needs related to such activities when developing digital capacity building approaches.

❏ **Localized interventions**

Regarding the tools presented by the Capacity Development and Training Unit during the consultations — the New Urban Agenda Illustrated toolkit including handbook and online courses — some colleagues point to the fact that partner institutions may feel like they already have basic knowledge of some concepts such as the New Urban Agenda, and need training on more specific how-to knowledge. There is a need for more specific and localized interventions, for example on a municipality level, in which stakeholders co-create solutions together with UN-Habitat experts.

3. Way forward

3.1. Why digital capacity building?

Based on the findings from the survey and consultations, there is a need and an opportunity for increased investment in UN-Habitat's capacity to deliver digital capacity building activities. The rationale for this is summarized in the below points.

1. **Opportunity to lead:** While COVID-19 physical restrictions linger as of mid-2021, a "new normal" will define the post-pandemic world. UN-Habitat should innovate by embracing digital capacity building methods. Many UN entities have started transforming their delivery models and UN-Habitat has an opportunity to continue leading on innovative capacity building approaches.

2. **Key part of overarching strategy:** A capacity building strategy was adopted by UN-Habitat's Executive Board during its second session of the year 2020. While not intended to replace in-person capacity building, digital capacity building is a key tool to achieve goals as part of a holistic capacity building approach.

3. **Respond to beneficiary needs:** With many local government officials, students, NGO workers and others that are served by UN-Habitat's capacity building initiatives currently working from home, there is a demand-driven urgency in delivering purposeful and high-quality digital capacity building. A corporate digital capacity building strategy increases UN-Habitat's capacity to deliver high-quality capacity building activities, responding to beneficiary needs in a needs-oriented, effective and adaptive manner.

4. **Cost efficiency:** Digital capacity building has the potential to deliver training in a more cost-efficient manner than physical capacity building, by reducing costs associated with on-site training, transportation and accommodation. Digital capacity building activities are also often easier to replicate and adapt once created. A digital capacity building strategy enables cost savings through shared platforms, licenses and procurement processes by different parts of UN-Habitat.

5. **Scalability:** The remote nature of many digital capacity building approaches enables capacity building activities to reach a wider audience, increasing inclusion for individuals who may otherwise not be able to participate. In UN-Habitat, a centralized function that can support colleagues on activity implementation and dissemination will help increase the reach of initiatives.

6. **Strategic insights from data analysis:** The digital format enables unique opportunities for data collection, analysis and reporting. Data on virtual activities

should be merged with data on physical capacity building activities. This enables the extraction of key insights that allow UN-Habitat to better understand the effectiveness of capacity building activities, and to iteratively improve learning activity design.

7. **Innovative learning methods:** Technology can help to deliver training in a user-friendly, interactive and visually stimulating manner.

3.2. Vision and expected outcome

Capacity building is at the heart of the day-to-day delivery of UN-Habitat's support to Member States, national and local governments, partners and a wide range of other urban stakeholders. It is critical that the use of digital capacity building tools and methods are mastered in UN-Habitat in order to develop a clear set of digital capacity building products, as well as a corporate methodology and knowledge management for digital capacity building. This has the potential to increase impact and scale up the use of normative products and reach out to a maximum number of stakeholders for their practical application. It is necessary to create processes to produce, store and disseminate reusable, adaptable and sustainable digital capacity building products. This makes it easier to access, promote, learn from and scale initiatives, reduces costs, and ultimately results in a higher return on investment.

Based on the survey, consultations, and rationale for investing in increased capacity to deliver digital capacity building activities as outlined above, a **vision for digital capacity building in UN-Habitat** is defined**:**

VISION:

> **Digital capacity building approaches are fully integrated into UN-Habitat's suite of services, complementing existing and opening new capacity building opportunities. As a result, UN-Habitat is recognized as a leading UN agency on digital capacity building, carrying out such activities in a cost-efficient and sustainable manner.**

The next section outlines key areas of action to achieve the above vision. **The expected outcome of the identified actions is:**

> **UN-Habitat's capacity building beneficiaries receive relevant, engaging, flexible, user-centred and highly effective capacity building support.**

3.3. Proposed actions to achieve vision and outcome

The proposed actions to achieve the digital capacity building vision and outcome identified above are categorized into 6 focus areas:

1. [Build capacity in UN-Habitat to deliver high-quality digital capacity building initiatives](#)
2. [Scale, reuse and adapt existing products and initiatives](#)
3. [Deliver data-driven insights, map and promote initiatives](#)
4. [Focus on active knowledge creation and sharing through community building and strategic partnerships](#)
5. [Create a digital capacity building ecosystem of technology solutions](#)
6. [Resource mobilization](#)

The rest of the section elaborates on each of these 6 focus areas.

3.3.1. Build capacity in UN-Habitat to deliver high-quality digital capacity building initiatives

❏ **Build capacity in UN-Habitat to deliver high-quality digital capacity building initiatives, while ensuring coordination, coherence and synergies between digital capacity building tools and methods, as well as technical sustainability, through:**

- Sustained internal capacity to manage, develop and advise on digital capacity building, with long-term specialized staff based in the Capacity Development and Training Unit.
- Core resources to carry out capacity building interventions to enhance staff capacity to implement digital capacity building activities, through for example virtual webinars and workshops, and the development of microlearning products such as infographics and videos. It is important however to remain mindful of the digital divide. Therefore, staff should receive guidance on approaches to digital capacity building taking into account a lack of digital devices, lack of connectivity and bandwidth.
- Sustained IT capacities with developers available to support on development and maintenance of digital capacity building tools.
- Roster of digital capacity building consultants and companies available to implement initiatives.

❏ **In the short term, it is recommended to provide in-house technical digital capacity building consulting services to help projects and programmes plan, implement and evaluate digital capacity building activities. Seek synergies and eliminate duplication of efforts by connecting actors from different initiatives as appropriate.** This will help to lower the cost of external consultants. Entire projects, or parts of projects, may still be outsourced to external providers (for example specialized UN organizations, universities, NGOs, private sector digital capacity building providers).

The internal team (Capacity Development and Training Unit) can support this through:
  - Input to terms of references
  - Recruitment/procurement processes and activity planning
  - Maintenance of a network and database of digital capacity building service providers
  - A dedicated platform to host digital capacity building initiatives
  - Guidance on suitable tools depending on project needs
  - Quality assurance checks

❏ **Create and disseminate succinct messaging on takeaways from UN-Habitat's recently produced (2021) digital capacity building guide.**
● Host digital capacity building workshops, presenting case studies on the use of specific approaches and tools. Invite external experts and partner with other UN agencies to discuss innovative approaches to digital capacity building.

3.3.2. Scale, reuse and adapt existing initiatives
❏ **Prioritize flagship and other UN-Habitat substantive tools to be transformed into digital capacity building products.**
● Map key capacity building tools with outcome areas in the Strategic Plan in order to prioritize digitalization. There is a need for a corporate exercise in which existing tools are mapped and evaluated, in order to identify the ones that should be promoted to partners and beneficiaries. This contributes to UN-Habitat's goal to act as a centre of excellence regarding capacity building. This is highlighted in the Capacity Building Strategy Implementation Plan:

***Objective 2.1.2.** Take stock of existing and up-to-date capacity-building tools throughout the organization which can be enhanced and further disseminated.*

***Objective 2.3.1.** Adapt or complete capacity building and training packages to develop and maintain a full capacity building corporate package/suite of services*

❏ **Achieve cost-efficient impact by scaling, reusing and adapting existing digital capacity building processes and products, through:**
● Translating or adapting an existing digital capacity building tool to a local language or context.
● Avoiding creating new platforms to host digital capacity building content. Advise colleagues on the possibility of hosting courses on the corporate learning platform learn.urbanagendaplatform.org.

- When creating new digital capacity building experiences, seek to reuse content from previously created products. For example, use a module of an existing self-paced online course as preparatory learning before a workshop.

3.3.3. Deliver data-driven insights; map and promote initiatives

❏ **Make continuous data gathering, analytics and reporting an integral part of our activities and engagements.**

- The digital format enables unique opportunities for data collection, analysis and reporting. Data on virtual activities should be merged with data on physical capacity building activities. This enables the extraction of key insights that allow UN-Habitat to better understand the effectiveness of capacity building activities, and to iteratively improve learning activity design.

❏ **Establish mechanisms for continuously mapping UN-Habitat and other relevant digital capacity building initiatives**

- UN-Habitat needs to present its digital capacity building products in a coherent and consistent way to facilitate communication, outreach and use. This is highlighted in UN-Habitat's Capacity Building Strategy:

  §43. Adopt an agency-wide approach to capacity building as a cross-cutting issue, with actions to collate and manage the knowledge, expertise and technical tools generated in the different thematic areas of UN-Habitat's work, connecting and leveraging UN-Habitat's normative work at country level, while ensuring continuous learning from its operational work.

- Procedures should be created to track internal, partner and external projects. External projects should be tracked by continuously monitoring trusted sources publishing repositories of digital capacity building products related to sustainable urbanization. A more structured offering will make it easier to integrate digital capacity building products into project proposals for donors.
- To track internal and partner projects, it is necessary to establish Standard Operating Procedures to monitor launched projects as well as projects in progress. This enables internal digital capacity building experts to advise project managers at different stages in the process to ensure consistent quality and enable synergies across similar projects.
- There is a need for a one-stop-shop with UN-Habitat's recommended digital capacity building tools that advance the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. The learning page on the Urban Agenda Platform has been designed for this purpose. UN-Habitat should expand and promote the page as the repository for digital capacity building products related to sustainable urbanization from internal

actors, partners and relevant external actors. On a technical level, it is necessary to further develop the repository to include additional functionality such as filters and a search function.

❏ **Promote UN-Habitat digital capacity building products externally to reach more beneficiaries**
● Utilize existing UN-Habitat platforms such as unhabitat.org, urbanagendaplatform.org, globalfuturecities.org and social media channels to highlight relevant digital capacity building products created by UN-Habitat and partners.
● Invite UN-Habitat's network of partners to share relevant digital capacity building products on their websites, platforms and social media channels.
● Reach out to platforms hosting lists of digital capacity building content and inquire about including UN-Habitat products in their repository to increase dissemination reach.

3.3.4. Focus on active knowledge creation and sharing through community building and strategic partnerships

❏ **Create synergies and shared value through building a digital capacity building community, engaging both within and outside of UN-Habitat.**
● Internally: Sharing experiences and resources, co-creation.
● Externally (e.g. with partners, other UN agencies): Community of practice, agreement-sharing, partnerships.

❏ **Develop strategic digital capacity building partnerships**
In order to scale UN-Habitat's digital capacity building initiatives to reach a broader base of beneficiaries, it is necessary to develop strategic partnerships with e.g. UN agencies, academia, governments and the private sector.
● Work closely with UN colleagues and partners, including the UN Innovation network, UNDESA entities and others to tap into UN learning trends, initiatives and partnerships, and share experiences and resources in line with the One UN spirit.
● Partner on the development of university level digital capacity building products through UN-Habitat UNI, e.g. on the development of MOOCs. MOOCs that are developed together with universities can be published on sites such as Coursera and EdX, which reach a wide base of learners. UN-Habitat can both contribute with expert knowledge and benefit from the latest research in academia, learn about innovative pedagogical approaches, and increase the reach of products to networks of academic practitioners and students.
● Engage with UN agencies specialized in training, e.g. UNITAR, UNSSC and ITCILO to co-create digital capacity building products. This takes advantage of existing

expertise on developing digital capacity building products in a UN context, and builds internal capacity to carry out similar initiatives.

- Leverage existing initiatives and partner with organizations working on digital capacity building related to UN-Habitat's mandate. For example, the [African Cities Lab initiative](#) to provide online training for urban-development professionals in Africa.

3.3.5. Create a digital capacity building ecosystem of technology solutions

Create a digital capacity building ecosystem of technology solutions for delivering online courses; hosting webinars, workshops, and conferences; whiteboard and other collaborative tools in order to ensure consistency of approach, synergies between internal projects, and cost-efficiencies in the procurement/acquisition process. Invest in sustained IT capacities with developers available to support the development and maintenance of digital capacity building tools.

- ❏ **Establish a scalable and reusable digital capacity building platform**
- Further develop and promote the corporate learning platform pilot [learn.urbanagendaplatform.org](#), through the existing partnership between the Capacity Development and Training Unit, the Management and Compliance Division and the Strategic Monitoring and Planning Unit.
- Encourage colleagues to host digital capacity building initiatives on the platform as this enhances the user experience, strengthens the UN-Habitat brand, and enables scale effects in terms of dissemination and analytics. Train relevant colleagues on effectively using the system.

- ❏ **Invest in corporate access to digital capacity building tools**
- Purchase corporate licenses for video conferencing, whiteboard, content creation and other types of tools, such as Articulate Rise, Zoom, Mural and Lumen5. This creates co-sharing cost efficiencies. Advise colleagues on relevant digital capacity building tools available free of charge.

3.3.6. Mobilize resources

Central to the implementation success of the suggested actions is a resource mobilization strategy. This section elaborates on high-level activities to be used as a base for fundraising.

- ❏ **Continue mapping the needs:** In the short term, it is recommended to further take stock of the different needs in UN-Habitat programmes and projects, as well as for other stakeholders, who will need digital capacity building activities, and offer support to these projects.

❏ **Build a digital capacity building offer and packages that can be tailored and localized to different types of beneficiaries:** Identify the different needs among stakeholders at national, regional and city level in Member States to benefit from digital capacity building activities. The need for such capacity building activities was articulated in [Resolution HSP/HA/1/L.6/Rev.1](#): *"Reaffirming the pivotal role of UN-Habitat in the development, dissemination and application of tools and knowledge to support the capacity development of national and local authorities and training institutions and in its partnerships with tertiary education institutions and other stakeholders".*

❏ **Focus on digital innovation:** UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan for 2020–2023 repositions UN-Habitat as a centre of excellence and innovation, with a key outcome area of expanded deployment of frontier technologies and innovations for urban development. This key focus on innovation will be key to attract donor interest.

❏ **Business model**: Explore the possibility of offering learning activities that partners or external actors pay for to use. This could be done by one-time fees or through a subscription model.

5. Annex 1: Consultation sessions

1. Data and Analytics Unit — 20200811
2. Urban Planning Branch session 1 — 20201012
3. Waste Wise Cities Campaign — 20201016
4. City Resilience Profiling Tool — 20201029
5. Urban Planning Branch session 2 — 20201106
6. Key Competencies for Local Elected Leadership — 20201111
7. External Relations, Knowledge and Innovation Division – Strategic Planning and Monitoring Branch — 20201210
8. External Relations, Knowledge and Innovation Division – External Relations and Partnerships Branch — 20201208
9. External Relations, Knowledge and Innovation Division – Knowledge and Innovation Branch — 20201207
10. CityRAP — 20201217
11. Global Water Operators' Partnership Alliance — 20210218
12. National Urban Policies — 20210223
13. Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme — 20210303
14. Regional Office for Arab States — 20210315
15. Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean — 20210315