

Terms of Reference for Experts of the Expert Working Group on People Centered Smart Cities

1. Mandate

The overarching mandate of expert group, in accordance with operational paragraph 4 of the UN-Habitat Assembly **Resolution HSP/HA.2/L.4 on international guidelines on people-centered smart cities**¹, is to help execute the work of the Executive Director of UN-Habitat in ensuring an inclusive consultation for the development of international guidelines on people centered smart cities through the experts advisory role.

Following the second session of UN-Habitat Assembly, the Executive Director is calling upon Member States to collaborate and contribute with their national, regional and local competences to the development of the international guidelines until the upcoming reopening session of the UN-Habitat Assembly in 2025. Member States are therefore invited to recommend experts to become part of the expert working group (EWG), which will support the development of the guidelines by sharing input and knowledge, lessons learnt through both online and in-person consultations.

2. Scope of work

The scope of the work of the experts comprises activities contained in the 18-month workplan for the international guidelines' development. The workplan timeline is intended to start in September 2023 and last until 2025. At its first online meeting of the EWG (kickoff meeting) to be held in November 2023, the latter develops a plan of action, taking into account the mandate, tasks, expected results and/or possible approaches, as appropriate, defined in the respective activities of the workplan. The plan of action will include specific objectives, indicative time frames and associated actions and deliverables, subject to approval and, as appropriate, will be reviewed by the UN-Habitat Secretariat and the Executive Director.

In the guidelines' development timeframe, the experts are key actors of the EGW, which is the core consultative body supervised and is guided by UN-Habitat Secretariat. They are expected to meet regularly online and participate to in-person meetings, as needed, such as dedicated Expert Group Meetings (EGMs) and regional consultation meetings, organized over the course of the two years. During the EGMs, the experts, through the EWG and with the support of dedicated thematic working groups (TWG) can review the progresses and results of the global assessment titled "World Smart Cities Outlook", evidence and input gathered through regional consultations (to be organized and held by UN-Habitat through their regional and country offices) and the results of other consultations conducted within and outside the UN-wide system. Experts would be contributing to the organization of the EGMs as well as to the content creation by providing their expertise and competences in the field. The experts will strengthen evidence-based decision making and inform the drafting of the guidelines, for which UN-Habitat Secretariat is responsible, bringing sectoral expertise, competences, projects experiences and lessons learnt as well as sharing relevant data and information to the discussion and drafting sessions.

¹ <https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2023/06/2310561e.pdf>

3. Roles and responsibilities

A key function of the expert is to assist and advise as an individual and as part of the EWG the Executive Director of UN-Habitat and the Secretariat in:

- (a) Promoting the adoption of best practices in the development of international guidelines on people-centered smart cities;
- (b) Identifying relevant trends, challenges and opportunities in making cities inclusive, sustainable, prosperous and respectful of human rights leveraging digital technologies;
- (c) Exchanging knowledge, lessons learnt, data and information on policy development, projects' implementation or other activities enabling people centered smart cities approaches at regional, national and local level;
- (d) Advising on recent scientific research, digital technologies, participatory mechanisms, institutional frameworks, educational programmes, standards, amongst others, for people centered smart cities solutions
- (e) Contributing to the discussions on the development of the international guidelines and definition of the approach, principles and guidelines outline
- (f) Providing guidance, technical comments and recommendations to be considered in the State of World Smart Cities Study as well as in EGMs and in regional and other consultations
- (g) Supporting the preparation, agenda setting and thematic discussions of the Expert Group Meetings, as needed
- (h) Contributing to the drafting, undertaking reviews and ensuring completion of the international guidelines on people centered smart cities throughout the two years
- (i) Supporting the dissemination of progresses and results according to any official communication, as requested by the UN-Habitat Secretariat
- (l) Advising on a Roadmap for the implementation of the guidelines, based on the EWG work, results and discussions, beyond 2025

4. Mode of work of expert

The mode of work of the expert will comprise:

- a) Electronic means/modalities; for example, email, video conferencing, collaboration spaces and telephone as needed;
- b) In-person meetings, as deemed necessary, but not exceeding three meetings

Experts can be appointed by the EWG, upon approval of the Executive Director, as co-facilitator (Chair or co-chair) for the EWG or for a thematic working group (TWG).

5. Selection criteria

Experts need to fulfill the selection criteria:

- a) Be resident or be born in the country or region of nomination;

- b) Be nominated by a representative of their national government;
- c) Represent one of the below relevant stakeholders' groups, as cited under operational paragraph 4 of the mandating resolution
 - Civil Society Organization
 - Business and Industry
 - Foundations and Philanthropists
 - Non-governmental organizations
 - International organization (including United Nations and international financial institutions)
 - Member State (governments and governmental entities, including development agencies)
 - Local authorities
 - Scientific and Technological community

Experts' nominations will be evaluated by an Evaluation Board of UN-Habitat which will consider the following aspects for the composition of the Expert Working Group:

- a) Balanced gender and geographical representation;
- b) Balanced thematic competences/areas of expertise of experts composing the EWG

6. Required qualifications and expertise

- a) Advanced university degree (Master's or equivalent) in Business Administration (MBA), Finance, Economics, Electronic Engineering, Political Studies, Law or related field is required. A first level university degree in combination with an additional two years of qualifying experience may be accepted in lieu of the advanced university degree.
- b) A minimum of ten years of progressively responsible experience in digital transformation and smart cities or experience in the fields indicated below:
 - Capacity development and digital literacy
 - Community engagement and participation through digital means
 - Digital governance, standards and interoperability
 - Digital transformation
 - Economic development and shared prosperity
 - Smart cities
 - Digital inclusion, equity and human rights
 - Sustainable digital transformation and environmental sustainability
- c) Proven track records in coordinating and managing projects, research and initiatives in the fields indicated in paragraph 6 (b)
- d) Working knowledge of English and good drafting skills

7. Reporting of the EWG

Reporting will be handled by the Expert Working Group through its Chair and co-chairs to the UN-Habitat Secretariat, on a regular basis.

Any progress report should, to the extent possible, include detailed information on the work undertaken. Progress in the work of the expert group will be captured in the UN-Habitat Secretariat progress update to the Executive Director.

8. Application modality

Expression of interest for expert nomination can be submitted by either a Member State representative or the expert himself/herself through the dedicated platform [here](#).

The expected due date for the expressions of interest will be 30 days from the public release of this call. Notifications will be sent back to applicants within 15 days of the close date of submission of expressions of interest.

Submitted expressions of interest will be reviewed and evaluated by UN-Habitat technical team against the above-cited criteria. Applicants submit their applications in the knowledge that the expressions of interest may be declined without further consideration, subsequent to the outcomes of the review and the evaluation process. and appointed by Executive Director. Some of the nominated experts, not selected as members of the EWG, will remain part of a pool of experts that might be consulted on an ad-hoc basis through other consultation activities.

9. Exclusion criteria

Only complete applications (including attachments) submitted through the platform will be considered. Applications received via email or other correspondence will be disregarded.

A maximum of two experts can be nominated per country. Any additional nomination received by the same country will be disregarded. Therefore, Member States are requested to either nominate the two experts or to share the link for application with only the two experts selected.

10. Terms of engagement

The Experts' collaboration is considered as Member States in-kind support and does not include remuneration.

11. Timeline

The term of work of the experts, part of the EWG, will be bound by the mandate and scope highlighted in sections II and III above, respectively, and the two-year workplan of the Resolution.

12. Annex I

The table below provides an illustrative and not exhaustive list of the areas of expertise the UN-Habitat Secretariat is looking for to develop international guidelines on people centered smart cities. For each area, a list of sub-areas is provided as an example. Expertise in these areas and related sub-areas is necessary to develop guidelines that will address the considerations outlined in the Resolution HSP/HA.2/L.4

Cross-cutting themes	Sub-themes	Rationale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital transformation • Smart Cities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital infrastructures - Cybersecurity and ICT infrastructures protection - Data and privacy - Change management & digital transformation - Smart cities solutions - Financing to foster innovation - Safe and trustworthy deployment of digital technologies - Public procurement for innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring that innovation and digital technologies are used to help cities and human settlements achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda through approaches which are respectful of Human Rights principles and aim to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community engagement and participation through digital means • Digital inclusion, equity and human rights • Economic development and shared prosperity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - E-participation and digital services - Community engagement and participation - Digital solutions to reduce inequalities (targeting vulnerable and marginalised groups) - Digital economy and inclusive socio-economic opportunities - Inclusion and human rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring that digital technologies help reduce spatial, economic, social and digital inequalities and respect human rights; - Creating economic opportunities and an enabling environment through innovation and smart technologies; - Centering smart city activities on people’s needs by maximizing transparency as well as community participation, representation and control;
Capacity development and digital literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital skills development and literacy - Institutional strengthening: digital skills for public officials - Education and training - Knowledge sharing and collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building the appropriate capacity and skills for people-centered smart cities;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research and Innovation in public and private sectors 	
Sectoral themes	Sub-themes	Rationale
Sustainable digital transformation and environmental sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Climate change mitigation - Waste management - Water resources management - e-mobility - Land degradation and natural resources exploitation - Biodiversity conservation - Standards for sustainable digital transformation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring that urban digital infrastructure contributes to reducing the environmental impact of cities;
Digital governance, standards and interoperability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - E-government architecture - E-government coordination and policy-making - Multilevel digital governance: interoperability, exchange, protection and cybersecurity - The regulatory ecosystem: strategies, rules and regulations - Transparency enhancing and governmental mechanisms optimization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitating appropriate multilevel digital governance to guide the development of people-centered smart cities, - Safeguarding public trust by putting cybersecurity measures in place that protect data and infrastructure;