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**Update on the implementation of all the resolutions adopted
by the United Nations Habitat Assembly of the
United Nations Human Settlements Programme**

Implementation of resolutions adopted by the United Nations Habitat Assembly

Report of the Executive Director

I. Introduction

1. At its first two sessions, held in 2019 and 2023, the United Nations Habitat Assembly of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat Assembly) adopted a total of 15 resolutions on various topics, including both thematic and cross-cutting ones. The present report provides a summary update on the implementation of those resolutions. The limited core resources of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (from the regular budget or the non-earmarked Foundation budget) have been strategically deployed to directly and indirectly support such implementation, in conjunction with earmarked (extrabudgetary) resources, where available.

2. There are, however, important process distinctions between the resolutions adopted at the first and second sessions of the UN-Habitat Assembly, which could be attributed to the streamlined resolutions support process established within the secretariat prior to the second session of the Assembly, building on the lessons learned from the first session, and the stronger relationship established between the secretariat and the Executive Board, which had been nascent at the time of the first session, in 2019. The transformation of the budget into a spending plan and the emphasis on costing the implementation of each resolution through an accompanying programme budget implication have been helpful in determining what it would take to implement each resolution. The programme budget implication remains an important signpost to guide resource mobilization for implementation of the resolutions adopted at the second session and one of the benchmarks against which the success of implementation can be assessed.

* HSP/EB.2024/1.

II. Implementation of resolutions adopted by the United Nations Habitat Assembly at its first session, held in 2019

A. Resolution 1/1: United Nations Human Settlements Programme strategic plan for the period 2020–2023

3. Pursuant to resolution 1/1, implementation of the UN-Habitat strategic plan for the period 2020–2023 is under way and a midterm evaluation has just been completed. By its decision 2/1, the UN-Habitat Assembly extended the period covered by the strategic plan until the year 2025.

B. Resolution 1/2: United Nations System-Wide Guidelines on Safer Cities and Human Settlements

4. Implementation of resolution 1/2 on the United Nations System-Wide Guidelines on Safer Cities and Human Settlements is proceeding, albeit relatively slowly owing to the absence of a dedicated funding stream. Despite the significance of the issue of increased crime and violence facing cities and urban areas globally, there has been limited success in mobilizing extrabudgetary resources for the implementation of the Guidelines. The challenges faced with regard to the Foundation non-earmarked budget and the periodic liquidity freezes imposed within the regular budget have further hindered implementation of the resolution. Earmarked resources from the United Nations trust fund for human security and soft-earmarked funding received from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency under the programme cooperation agreement for the period 2020–2025 have been the chief sources of funding for the implementation of the resolution.

5. Despite the challenges, some progress has been made, such as the development of an urban safety monitoring prototype; the introduction of an e-learning introductory module on UN-Habitat Learn, the online learning platform of UN-Habitat; and the commencement of a cities peer review and learning process led by the secretariat and Global Network on Safer Cities partners (Habitat Norway, the World Organization of United Cities and Local Governments and VibeLab Germany).

6. Broader United Nations collaboration has been advanced through joint pilot activities with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (evidence-based community safety policies), the Human Security Unit (human security participatory appraisals and plans), the Office of Counter-Terrorism (the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact) and the Office for Disarmament Affairs (a module on gun-free zones).

7. The Resident Coordinator's Office in South Africa is considering a joint programming framework with several other United Nations entities in order to scale up the implementation process in the country. Egypt is organizing an expert group meeting in Cairo in April 2024 to review the implementation of the safer cities concept in Africa, ahead of the twelfth session of the World Urban Forum, being held in Cairo in November 2024.

C. Resolution 1/3: Enhancing capacity-building for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the urban dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

8. In response to resolution 1/3, UN-Habitat is continuing to implement its capacity-building strategy for implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda (HSP/EB.2020/13/Add.1), with the objective of enabling capacity-building at scale.

9. The UN-Habitat draft strategy on digital capacity-building is intended to guide the institutional mainstreaming of innovative capacity-building approaches, mixing digital and in-person activities; to enable cost efficiencies and scaled impact; and to increase institutional learning and replication. Use of UN-Habitat Learn is accelerating progress on the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by improving implementation and monitoring of training activities and products and expanding reach to a wider audience. Currently, UN-Habitat Learn offers 30 courses to more than 10,000 active users.

10. UN-Habitat is strengthening engagement with universities, training institutes, the private sector and global initiatives. In 2022, it launched the *Linking UN-Habitat and Universities: Harnessing the Potential of Knowledge Partnerships* report and is developing an internal framework to increase the coherence and efficacy of its partnerships with academia. Multiple partnerships were established or renewed in 2023 – for example, with the Institute for Housing and Urban Development Studies, the Commonwealth Sustainable Cities Initiative, the University of Twente Faculty of

Geoinformation Science and Earth Observation, University College London and the International Urban Training Centre. From 2021 to 2023, the Shelter Program, in partnership with Arcadis, conducted 28 missions, with experts providing technical support to UN-Habitat in the development of sustainable urban solutions and capacity-building, benefiting more than 600,000 community members.

11. UN-Habitat is also taking steps towards ensuring structured and innovative approaches in order to increase institutional capacity to assess and address capacity gaps at scale. The Capacity Development and Training Unit is exploring new technologies and methods to qualify and quantify capacity gaps experienced by local and national governments in their efforts to achieve the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda, specifically in terms of human capital (i.e., competencies, skills, knowledge, behaviour) at the individual and institutional levels. Increasingly, the Unit facilitates coordination and provides support on capacity-building to projects and programmes.

D. Resolution 1/4: Achieving gender equality through the work of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme to support inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements

12. In accordance with resolution 1/4, gender mainstreaming remains a priority for UN-Habitat, and there has been a marked improvement in gender mainstreaming efforts in projects presented for review from the field and regional offices and from headquarters in Nairobi. A concerted effort is being made through the Gender Champion Award, launched in the first quarter of 2024, to recognize those projects that have successfully mainstreamed gender equality. In 2023, reporting under the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women revealed improvement in key areas; for 2024, a specific UN-Habitat action plan to improve progress under the United Nations System-wide Action Plan has been drawn up. The reconstitution of the Advisory Group on Gender Issues is in the final stages and a call for nominations for new members of the Group will be shared with partners and Member States by mid-2024.

E. Resolution 1/5: Enhancing urban-rural linkages for sustainable urbanization and human settlement

13. UN-Habitat has effectively implemented resolution 1/5 through advocacy, knowledge and operational activities, leveraging partnerships to overcome financial constraints.

14. In collaboration with Songyang County, China, UN-Habitat convened the Third International Forum on Urban-Rural Linkages, held in November 2023. With approximately 180 participants from 18 international organizations and 17 countries in attendance, the Forum underscored the importance of urban-rural connectivity on a global scale. In March 2023, an expert group meeting on recovering territorial balance in the European context was convened, hosted and supported by the regional government of Extremadura, Spain.¹

15. The publication of the fifth and sixth editions of a newsletter on urban-rural linkages² and of the third edition of the *Compendium of Inspiring Practices on Urban-Rural Linkages* underscores the focus on knowledge management. In addition, in collaboration with the University of Nairobi, policy reviews were undertaken across five African countries – Cameroon, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal and Zimbabwe – leading to the establishment of the Centre for Urban-Rural Linkages in Africa at the University of Nairobi in October 2023.

16. Lastly, despite financial limitations, UN-Habitat has supported 10 countries in integrating urban-rural linkages into their national policies and strategies since the adoption of the resolution. The soft-earmarked funding received from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency under the programme cooperation agreement for the period 2020–2025 has been the chief source of funding for its implementation.

¹ See 2023_02_27_CN-EGM-Merida_v1_eng.pdf (urbanpolicyplatform.org).

² Available at https://urbanpolicyplatform.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/URL-5th-NewsLetter_web.pdf and <https://urbanpolicyplatform.org/download/url-6th-newsletter/>, respectively.

III. Implementation of resolutions adopted by the United Nations Habitat Assembly at its adjourned second session, held in 2023

A. Resolution 2/1: International guidelines on people-centred smart cities

17. In response to resolution 2/1, UN-Habitat has been working with stakeholders on the development of international guidelines on people-centred smart cities, which it aims to complete by June 2025.

18. In November 2023, the Executive Director of UN-Habitat appointed a dedicated expert working group, composed of 31 experts nominated by Member States, to ensure a globally inclusive consultation process, as requested by the UN-Habitat Assembly in paragraph 4 of the resolution. The experts held their first meeting in December 2023 and have been holding monthly consultations since early 2024 to steer the preparation of the guidelines. Following a call for expressions of interest to host global and regional meetings, issued in November 2023, two expert group meetings are now on the calendar. The first will be held in Strasbourg, France, in April 2024 and the second in Baku in October 2024.

19. In addition, several countries have expressed initial interest in hosting regional consultations to review the draft international guidelines and ensure an inclusive process. Furthermore, preparations are under way to organize dedicated consultations with stakeholders on key thematic issues. UN-Habitat has presented information on the preparatory process of the guidelines at a number of smart city events globally, as part of its wider outreach and engagement efforts.

20. In tandem, UN-Habitat is drafting a global study entitled “World smart cities outlook”, with a partner selected through an open and competitive call, to provide input into the drafting of the guidelines.

B. Resolution 2/2: Accelerating the transformation of informal settlements and slums by 2030

21. The work of UN-Habitat on slum upgrading and transformation has been central to the pursuit of its mandate since its inception and has been funded through a combination of core and extrabudgetary resources. However, the implementation of resolution 2/2 has been hindered by declining extrabudgetary resources. Pursuant to paragraph 6 of the resolution, a minimum level of technical support capacity is being maintained through ad hoc extrabudgetary funding. Since June 2023, technical assistance has been provided in this manner to 10 countries and one subregional dialogue. Technical capacity is supported by an internal community of practice, and a concept note requesting technical assistance funding has been developed.

22. Pursuant to paragraph 7 of the resolution, the preparation of a global report on slums and informal settlements will be completed in 2024, thus providing an evidence-based foundation for future activities. A regional framework and working group on slum transformation in Southern African Development Community countries has been launched, with UN-Habitat support. A memorandum of understanding on slum transformation has been developed with the Organization of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, which represents 79 Member States.

23. Pursuant to paragraph 8 of the resolution, an outline for guidelines on a multiple partnership approach for informal settlement and slum transformation has been developed, facilitated by in-kind contributions from partners. A tentative offer to host a follow-up meeting to develop a first draft is being explored.

C. Resolution 2/3: World Cleanup Day

24. Building on UN-Habitat Assembly resolution 2/3, adopted in June 2023, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted resolution 78/122 of 8 December 2023 in which it proclaimed 20 September as World Cleanup Day, to be observed annually from September 2024. In its resolution, the General Assembly invited UN-Habitat to facilitate the observance of World Cleanup Day and stressed that the costs of all the activities arising from the implementation of that resolution should be met through voluntary contributions.

25. UN-Habitat is preparing to launch a call for expressions of interest to host World Cleanup Day 2024. An Agreement of Cooperation with an implementing partner would facilitate outreach and help to mobilize communities to conduct clean-ups on the day itself. Sufficient resources for the facilitation of the international day will be required, and outreach to several countries is under way to explore

possible funding support. In addition, a strategic planning retreat will be held in Panama in cooperation with the non-governmental organization Let's Do It World, which mobilizes people worldwide to join local, national and regional clean-up events. In 2023, 198 countries and territories and more than 19.1 million people were involved in organized clean-ups.

D. Resolution 2/4: Biodiverse and resilient cities – mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services into urban and territorial planning

26. In response to resolution 2/4, UN-Habitat has been engaging with the resolution's co-sponsors to raise financial and political support for the implementation of the resolution. The Government of Costa Rica is collaborating closely with UN-Habitat on the implementation of a project on cities and nature, with a focus on planning for the future on the basis of a preserve- conserve-restore-create spectrum, funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. As part of the proposed toolkit on urban development for more biodiverse and resilient cities, the project is piloting a multidisciplinary mapping methodology. The aim is to equip local governments with spatial information so that they can proactively project urban expansion, predict land-use conflict zones, plan for biodiversity preservation, and prevent replication of mistakes at the peri-urban edge. Data collection and ground-truthing of this methodology is being carried out in the first quarter of 2024 in the greater metropolitan area of San José. There are plans to launch the multidisciplinary mapping tool at the twelfth session of the World Urban Forum.

27. In May 2024, a regional expert group meeting will be convened under the above-mentioned project with a focus on promoting the mainstreaming of biodiversity and ecosystem services in territorial planning and management; aligning multilevel urban policies biodiversity hotspots; and sharing practices that contribute to more biodiverse and resilient cities. As was requested by the UN-Habitat Assembly in its resolution 2/4, a report on the expert group meeting and progress on the toolkit will be presented to the Executive Board at its last session of 2024.

E. Resolution 2/5: Enhancing the interlinkage between urbanization and climate change resilience

28. With regard to multilevel climate action and the request contained in resolution 2/5 for UN-Habitat to continue the practice of organizing relevant meetings, including ministerial meetings, UN-Habitat co-chaired the Local Climate Action Summit and co-hosted the second ministerial meeting on urbanization and climate change at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Also at the Conference of the Parties, UN-Habitat discussed the urban dimension of nationally determined contributions with Member States; an in-depth analysis on the matter is being prepared.

29. UN-Habitat has further strengthened the linkages between climate change and urbanization in its work, as is borne out by the increase in the number of projects and the funding volume for subprogramme 3, on strengthened climate action and improved urban environment. There is a growing portfolio of projects in support of the flagship programme Resilient Settlements for the Urban Poor, and methodological support for Member States and cities is being developed to accelerate that support. UN-Habitat is also publishing new climate-change-related tools and guidelines. However, the limited core funding has constrained efforts to provide direct support to Member States in response to urban climate change challenges and to be able to grow the project portfolio in keeping with demand.

30. The operationalization of the Sustainable Urban Resilience for the Next Generation initiative is viewed as a way to strengthen the implementation of subprogramme 3 by UN-Habitat and in collaboration with a wide range of partners. Other efforts to be pursued in 2024 include broadening the donor base, publishing the *World Cities Report 2024: Cities and Climate Change* and supporting the development of a special report on cities and climate change to be issued by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, including by convening the Innovate4Cities Conference in 2024.

F. Resolution 2/6: Localization of the Sustainable Development Goals

31. Resolution 2/6 is being implemented through organizational consolidation, multiple normative, operational and capacity-building activities, and the acceleration of resource mobilization efforts.

32. Pursuant to paragraph 2 of the resolution, normative and capacity-building highlights include: (a) the development and launch of the action-oriented voluntary local reviews methodology; (b) the launch of a policy paper series on localization of the Sustainable Development Goals, in cooperation with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs; (c) the development of a new training module on localization of the Goals, in partnership with the World Organization of United Cities and Local

Governments; and (d) the conceptualization of a comprehensive capacity-building package for United Nations resident coordinator offices and country teams, offered in the framework of the Local2030 Coalition. When it comes to advocacy, planning is under way with regard to the high-level political forum on sustainable development, the Summit of the Future, the twelfth session of the World Urban Forum, the fifth United Nations World Data Forum and the twenty-ninth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Active engagement in the regional forums on sustainable development is also planned. Operational activities to support voluntary local reviews are ongoing in 15 countries, with each voluntary local review serving as an entry point for the city concerned to engage with the broader SDG Cities process.

33. The Local2030 Coalition has partnered with the Joint SDG Fund and the Government of Spain to develop a “SDG localization marker”, thereby ensuring that joint programmes across the Fund’s portfolio effectively give priority to localization efforts. The Local2030 Knowledge and Scientific Network, supported by Italy, is also ready to be launched, with pilot activities being carried out in Jordan and Tunisia.

34. Pursuant to paragraph 4 of the resolution, UN-Habitat has continued to conduct outreach and provide support to multiple partners, cities and Member States with regard to applying the global urban monitoring framework in their urban monitoring systems. More than 80 additional cities have now applied the framework, while another 42 cities have requested support in adapting and applying the framework to their local structures. The acceleration in uptake follows the earlier linkages and alignment made between the application of the framework, the SDG Cities programme and SDG localization approaches. The data collected from the roll-out of the framework have improved data coverage in relation to cities in the Global Urban Indicators Database and will be available for use in progress reporting, such as for the *World Cities Report 2024* and the 2026 quadrennial report on the New Urban Agenda.

35. UN-Habitat has continued to work closely with the European Commission, the World Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, as well as with the regional commissions, to implement key interventions in around 15 countries, with a view to applying the degree-of-urbanization approach used to define cities and human settlements and thereby increasing the coverage of Goal 11 and urban monitoring framework indicators. To scale up those efforts and expand interventions to cover more countries, UN-Habitat, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Children’s Fund launched a three-year multi-partner programme, in July 2023, to advance the implementation of the degree-of-urbanization approach in 43 additional countries. With the exponential growth in demand for the framework and for overall urban data support, UN-Habitat is working on new partnerships at the global level and within the United Nations system and regions, including by working with framework pioneer cities to support other cities.

G. Resolution 2/7: Adequate housing for all

36. Implementation of resolution 2/7 is well under way. Pursuant to paragraphs 1 and 8 of the resolution, a needs assessment is being carried out, which will contribute to the technical development of the proposed platform for achieving access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing. The platform is projected to be launched in 2025. The process will ensure that the platform provides a broad range of policy best practices and examples that support the progressive realization of adequate housing and facilitates collaboration and informed decision-making on adequate housing for all.

37. Pursuant to paragraph 1 (c) of the resolution, in December 2023, UN-Habitat convened an expert group meeting on housing indicators. The recommendations arising from that meeting will contribute to the deliberations of the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on adequate housing for all.

38. Pursuant to paragraph 2 of the resolution, UN-Habitat has provided advice on the possible activities and programme of work of the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on adequate housing for all to the ad hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters for its consideration and possible recommendation to the Executive Board.

H. Resolution 2/8: Urban planning and sustainable infrastructure

39. In order to implement resolution 2/8, a concept note and a resource mobilization strategy have been drafted and are being utilized to initiate action.

40. Pursuant to paragraph 1 of the resolution, the Our City Plans platform has been updated with infrastructure tools and related processes, starting with urban mobility. The other existing sectoral

tools will follow. At the same time, the need for additional tools (such as for regional scale planning) has been identified.

41. Pursuant to paragraph 5 of the resolution, discussions have been initiated with the Cities Investment Facility in order to identify relevant information and partners. These discussions will be extended to other in-house programmes in 2024. The integration of planning and infrastructure with technical assistance and tools is advancing through a series of relevant projects; new projects (such as Adaptation Fund and Green Climate Fund projects on urban planning and green infrastructure, African Development Bank Climate Action and the Water as Leverage programme) are being formulated to raise additional extrabudgetary resources.

42. Pursuant to paragraph 6 of the resolution, resources need to be identified so that normative and operational activities can be accelerated and capacities established to respond to requests for support received from Member States.

I. Resolution 2/9: Creation of a human settlements resilience framework for early warning, foresight, risk reduction, crisis response, and post-crisis recovery and reconstruction

43. The implementation of resolution 2/9 has so far been focused on utilizing existing resources to build outreach with a broad range of partners in order to facilitate the development of the global framework, as requested by the UN-Habitat Assembly in paragraph 1 of the resolution. Discussions have been initiated with the World Meteorological Organization, with a view to collaborating on the Early Warnings for All initiative.

44. Some strategic partnerships have been established on the use of artificial intelligence and technology innovation, with the aim of creating an intelligent model for gathering data and information and providing city profiles and diagnostics on resilience. In addition, UN-Habitat has been mapping ongoing country-level initiatives that contain relevant components on access to data and science, as well as on developing capacities for resilience-building and risk reduction in countries and regions, such as Malawi, Mozambique and the Sahel. Urban recovery frameworks are being initiated and/or developed in contexts such as in the Syrian Arab Republic and Ukraine.

45. Pursuant to paragraph 2 of the resolution, the reactivation of the emergency response fund is under consideration and is included in resource mobilization efforts. UN-Habitat is working with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to expand the use by UN-Habitat, in its crisis response, of existing standby partnerships within the United Nations Secretariat.

J. Resolution 2/10: Equitable financing and effective monitoring of the implementation of resolutions adopted by the United Nations Habitat Assembly

46. By its resolution 2/10, the UN-Habitat Assembly seeks to improve the funding of underfunded resolutions by establishing the urban action funding window as a new funding mechanism, complemented by regular reporting on the implementation of resolutions. In 2023, the funding window was established within the financial system of UN-Habitat, and its terms of reference were endorsed by the Executive Board in its decision 2023/6 (see HSP/EB.2023/23), adopted at its third session of 2023.

47. In 2024, the contribution agreement template will be revised to include the elective transfer of project balances to the funding window, with explicit reference to resolution 2/10, decision 2023/6 of the Executive Board and the terms of reference of the funding window. Engagement with donors on such transfers will be supported through advocacy and communications. By 2025, the tracking system on the implementation of resolutions will be publicly available and updated on a regular basis.