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Executive Board of the United Nations  
Human Settlements Programme  
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**Annual report on action by the Executive Director to update  
and improve the internal management, policies and  
procedures of UN-Habitat**

## **Actions to update and improve the internal management policies and procedures of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme\*\***

### **Report of the Executive Director**

#### **I. Introduction**

1. This report provides a comprehensive overview of the initiatives undertaken to strengthen the internal management policies and procedures of UN-Habitat during the biennium 2024-2025. These efforts are aligned with the organization's strategic objectives to promote efficiency, transparency and accountability across its operations. The report highlights key achievements and improvements in the following critical areas:

- (a) Management of Financial and Human Resources
- (b) Delegation of Authority
- (c) Procurement Guidance
- (d) Digital Workflow Management
- (e) Communication Procedures
- (f) Legal and Compliance Oversight
- (g) Management of Internal Policies and Procedures

#### **II. Management of financial and human resources**

2. During the reporting period, to ensure the efficient management of financial and human resources, measures have been taken in the following areas:

(a) UN-Habitat has made notable progress in improving financial management practices with the creation of a comprehensive budgeting tool. This tool simplified financial planning for programme management officers by enabling budget-class calculations of planned expenditures. It

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\* HSP/EB.2025/1.

\*\* The report has not been formally edited.

further consolidates cost elements into an automatically generated summary table, ensuring accuracy and consistency in budget preparation.

(b) The Human Resources and Training Unit developed a detailed guidance document outlining the contractual modalities available at UN-Habitat. This document equips managers with the necessary information to select appropriate modalities when creating or modifying positions, as well as when hiring personnel or consultants. It supports informed decision-making that aligns with organizational goals and staffing needs.

(c) A new guidance document on recruitment processes has been introduced, providing a clear framework for all stages of recruitment. This includes post creation and budget approval, job analysis and classification, development of job descriptions, eligibility screening, evaluation and final selection. By standardizing these processes, the document ensures transparency, efficiency and compliance with organizational policies.

### **III. Delegation of authority**

3. The Executive Director has taken proactive steps toward enhancing delegation of authority within UN-Habitat, signalling a commitment to empowering staff with greater decision-making responsibilities. Currently, consultations are ongoing with the Department of Management Strategy and Compliance (DMSPC) and the Department of Operational Support (DOS) to analyse the current delegation of authority limit of USD 50,000 and explore opportunities to enhance decision-making responsibilities within the organization.

### **IV. Procurement guidance**

4. Efforts to improve procurement processes during the reporting period focused on simplification and enhanced guidance:

Significant steps have been taken to enhance the submission of technical advisory requests, which can now be made through the iNeed system or directly via a dedicated UNGCS email. This streamlined process facilitates easier access to support and ensures timely responses. Additionally, the UNON Procurement Management Unit now provides updated product identification numbers (PIDs) for pass-through equipment. A dedicated website has been introduced to maintain up-to-date PIDs for all goods and services, ensuring efficient procurement tracking.

### **V. Digital workflow management**

5. The Executive Director, during the reporting period has implemented strategies aimed at enhancing organizational operations through digitization. These initiatives encompass measures taken to streamline operations at all levels of the organization:

(a) The Digital Transformation Taskforce within UN-Habitat has reviewed and mapped out all existing workflows within the organization with the aim of digitizing the existing processes through a strategic collaboration with the United Nations International Computing Centre which would eventually lead to the development of the Digital Workspace.

(b) The Taskforce on Internal Processes compiled a repository of existing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to centralize resources and aid in their future archiving. This repository facilitated easy access to organizational workflows and enhances compliance with established protocols.

(c) All checklists available on Habnet were converted into user-friendly Microsoft Planner formats. Where appropriate, binary and multiple-choice checklists were further digitized using Microsoft Forms, to ensure consistency across workflows and to improve end-user accessibility.

### **VI. Communication procedures**

6. Communication processes were improved to enhance internal coordination and external engagement:

(a) The Communications Team launched the CHAT (Communications Hub and Toolkit) portal, consolidating materials, guidance and SOPs into a single accessible platform. This tool provides comprehensive support for corporate communication needs.

(b) A document outlining procedures for communication with Member States was finalized and circulated. This guide standardizes engagement practices, ensuring clear and consistent messaging.

## **VII. Legal and compliance oversight**

7. UN-Habitat undertook the following actions to enhance legal and compliance frameworks:

(a) The Implementation Strategy for the Partner Policy and accompanying Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) was reviewed and shared with the Legal Office for validation. The finalized documents will guide partner engagement in alignment with organizational policies.

(b) Feedback was collected from colleagues who utilize community contracts and revision to the policy and SOPs are underway. The updated documents will ensure clarity and consistency in community contract management.

(c) Guidelines on the use of various legal agreement templates and related delegation of authority were finalized and are pending review by the Head of Legal. These guidelines aim to standardize legal practices across the organization.

## **VIII. Management of internal policies and procedures**

8. UN-Habitat has taken important steps to improve its regulatory processes, but the absence of a comprehensive Regulatory Framework highlights an opportunity to do better. Several regulatory instruments are in place – including policies, guidelines and standard operating procedures. A working group led by the Oversight and Internal Controls Unit is developing a Regulatory Framework, which will serve as a guiding tool to streamline the creation, dissemination and compliance of regulatory documents across the organization.

## **IX. Conclusion**

9. These initiatives reflect a commitment to enhancing organizational efficiency and accountability. Through continued innovation and adherence to best practices, UN-Habitat is well positioned to meet its operational goals and deliver on its mandate effectively.

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