



Summary of the Sixty-second meeting of the Ad-hoc Working Group on Programmatic, Budgetary, and Administrative Matters of the Executive Board

Monday, 10 February 2025, 9:00 –12:00 and 13:00 – 16:00 East Africa Time (EAT)
UNON Conference Room 4

Chair: H.E. Mr. Pedro Leon Cortes Ruiz
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Colombia to UN-Habitat

MEETING SUMMARY

Agenda item 1: Adoption of the provisional Agenda.

1. The meeting of the Ad-Hoc Working Group of the Executive Board on Programmatic, Budgetary, and Administrative Matters was called to order at 9:00 EAT. The [Agenda](#) was adopted without any changes.

Agenda item 2: UN-Habitat Financial Status.

2. The Secretariat presented the financial status of UN-Habitat. The presentation can be accessed [here](#).
3. Member States welcomed the presentation and requested the following clarifications:
 - The time frame for when the financial status would be adjusted, and possible implications for “scalability model”.
 - The meaning of “other staff costs”.
 - Possible flexibility in fund management, e.g. if surpluses in earmarked funds such as technical cooperation may be leveraged to address financial gaps in other areas.
 - What efforts are made to enhance flexibility in resource allocation including through the urban action funding window.
 - What is the status of the trust fund for governance.
 - How may UN-Habitat’s funding base be made more sustainable, considering that only 26 countries contribute to the non-earmarked foundation fund.
4. The Secretariat thanked Member States for their inputs and provided the following clarifications:
 - Confirmed that contributions from Member States for 2024 could be received until end of February 2025 for accounting purposes and that revenue in 2024 did not meet the threshold for the “scalability model”.
 - Explained that “other staff costs” means costs for UN staff that are not working on established posts, such as consultants or UN Volunteers.
 - Explained that the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) has introduced two new standards, effective 1 January 2026, which will regulate the recording of revenue.
 - Explained that the urban action funding window, as referred to in resolution 2/10, facilitates possible re-allocation of earmarked funds to non-earmarked funds; however, such re-allocation can only be done for new projects signed.
 - Clarified that the administration of funds is guided by the corresponding performance obligations agreed with the donor country and that therefore the flexibility of in the urban action funding window is limited.

- Noted that the trust fund for governance is soon depleted, and asked delegations to consider its replenishment.

Agenda item 3: Draft Strategic Plan for the period 2026 to 2029.

5. The Secretariat presented the new aspects incorporated in the draft strategic plan 2026-2029. The presentations made can be accessed [here](#).
6. Member States welcomed the presentation by the Secretariat on the draft Strategic Plan and provided the following inputs and comments:
 - underlined the importance of and requested further information on the monitoring framework of the strategic plan.
 - requested the secretariat to review the language in the Strategic Plan and avoid using any controversial terminology.
 - sought clarity regarding how the normative and operational activities would be monitored and implemented.
 - highlighted that affordability of housing is a priority when addressing adequate housing, especially for developing countries.
 - stressed the pivotal role of national authorities in implementing the Strategic Plan.
 - highlighted the need to mitigate disparities between urban and rural areas.
 - called for action to protect national heritage sites.
 - Highlighted the importance of environmental sustainability and social inclusion, and a more integrated approach to equitable urban development.
 - Recommended that the text in the Strategy is fully aligned with agreed language in the New Urban Agenda.
7. The Secretariat thanked the Member States for the feedback and guidance provided and took due note of the comments and suggestions, with a view to presenting a revised draft at an upcoming meeting, and to make a dedicated presentation on plans to develop a monitoring framework for the Strategic Plan at the next working group meeting on 17 February 2025.

Agenda item 4: Normative and Operational activities of UN-Habitat

8. The Secretariat provided updates on the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat. The presentations made by the Secretariat are available as follows:
 - The presentation on Ethiopia Country Programme can be accessed [here](#).
 - The presentation on Global Capacity Development Support can be accessed [here](#).
 - The presentation on Urban Crisis Prevention and Response Initiatives can be accessed [here](#).
 - The presentation on Insights on the Situation in Sudan and UN-Habitat's response to the Sudan refugee crisis can be accessed [here](#).
 - The presentation on the updates in the Gaza Strip can be accessed [here](#).
 - The presentation on Central America and Dominican Republic Programme can be accessed [here](#).
9. Member States welcomed the presentations and sought clarification regarding the expected action by the Executive Board at its upcoming session under this agenda item, asking for more information regarding lessons learned.
10. Member States provided the following specific comments to each presentation:

On the Ethiopia Country Programme

- Called on UN-Habitat and other Member States to continue supporting Ethiopia to address the urban housing challenge and its urban green corridor projects.

- Inquired about how to scale up the RISE-UP Program (Resilient Settlements for the Urban Poor) in Ethiopia to other cities facing similar challenges.

On Global Capacity Development Support

- Requested more information on the communication strategy of the UN-Habitat Learn Platform and capacity building initiative and underlined the importance of reaching line ministers and municipalities.
- Asked if the University Partnership Framework had already been developed.
- Requested more information on UN-Habitat's plan to support the adoption of revised guidelines on reporting of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

On Urban Crisis Prevention and Response and Activities

- Requested more information on the "Displacement Lab for Solutions", including with regard to location and how related to UN-Habitat's activities.
- Inquired about plans or projects to assist returning refugees in Sudan.
- Requested more information on efforts to gain access to Gaza, to report on damage assessments, and further inquired on the alternative plan should the access not be granted.
- Requested further information on the outcomes of the Global Refugee Forum in December 2024.

Updates on Central America Programme

- Requested more information on UN-Habitat's efforts to improve living conditions in slums, including lessons learned for other regions and possible integration into the UN-Habitat capacity building strategy.

11. The Secretariat provided the following responses and clarifications:

- The expectation is for the Executive Board at its first session in 2025 in March to take note of the normative and operative work.
- UN-Habitat will scale-up its RISE-UP programme following the incorporation of lessons learned on climate, urban biodiversity among others, with a view to developing bankable projects for potential donor consideration.
- Regarding the UN-Habitat learning platform under capacity development, a communication campaign will be launched for stakeholders, including line ministries and municipalities, to support on-line learning products once the technical dimension of the training program has been fully secured.
- The University Partnership Framework was presented and launched at the World Urban Forum and an action plan is under development.
- UN-Habitat has regularly identified and applied lessons learned during various project executions to support countries facing similar challenges; for example, the urban profiling used in Sudan to map and outline the impact of displacement in urban areas and determine conditions to support the returnees took into account experiences from similar work in Syria and Somalia.
- UN-Habitat in Sudan is working closely with UNHCR and IOM to analyse the impact of the movement of returning refugees to infrastructure and services and to develop recovery plans that will improve their living conditions.
- The Displacement Lab is a joint concept model implemented with UNHCR and IGAD, which is de-centralized and flexible based on needs.
- Data created by the Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA) is used to assess damages in Gaza and to develop the Gaza Recovery Framework, which is expected to be adopted by the Palestinian Authority before the end of May; UN-Habitat also cooperates with the Palestinian Housing Council, focusing on neighbourhood data collections. Further information is available on request.
- Activities are in place to sensitize Member States and other stakeholders to the New Urban Agenda and the new 2026 reporting cycle across multiple platforms including regional offices

and events such as the World and Africa Urban Forum.

- The Global Refugee Forum, organized by UNHCR and UN-Habitat, has supported two pledges on human settlements and on integrated settlements approach to refugee presence.
- The success of the Central American regional programme is attributed to involvement from communities benefiting from the program, establishment of coherent and systematic ways of working that leveraged on similarities in different cities and countries, as well as utilization of UN-Habitat's expertise from its core areas of work.

Agenda item 5: Any other matters

12. No other matters were raised.

13. The sixty-second meeting of the ad-hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary, and administrative matters of the Executive Board was adjourned at 16:00 EAT.