



## **Summary of the sixty-third meeting of the Ad-Hoc Working Group on Programmatic, Budgetary, and Administrative matters of the Executive Board**

Monday, 17 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 63<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Ad-Hoc Working Group of the Executive Board on Programmatic, Budgetary, and Administrative Matters of was called to order at 9:00 EAT. The draft [agenda](#) was adopted without any changes.

#### **Agenda item 2: Consultation on the draft international guidelines on people-centred smart cities.**

2. The Secretariat presented the draft international guidelines on people-centred smart cities which can be accessed [here](#).
3. Three statements were presented by experts involved in the development of the guidelines. A summary of their statements can be found [here](#).
  - Mr. Juraj Hošťák, Director General, Innovation and Strategic Development—Ministry of Investment, Regional Development and Informatization, Slovak Republic.
  - Mrs. Rini Rachmawati, Professor, Urban Geography at Gadjah Mada, Indonesia, specializing in smart city and urban development.
  - Mr. Francois Osama, Second Technical Advisor to the Minister of Housing and Urban Development, Cameroon.
4. Member States welcomed the presentation by the Secretariat and provided following questions and observations:
  - Noted that the draft guidelines provided a comprehensive voluntary framework on how digital technologies can be used to help cities and human settlements achieve SDG sustainable development and implement the New Urban Agenda.
  - Appreciated the inclusive and participatory approach as well as the inclusion of the working group's recommendations to the final draft.
  - Expressed concerns about excessive focus on human rights, environment and climate change.
  - Proposed to align the definition of smart cities in the draft guidelines to the agreed language in resolution 2/1.
  - Asked for clarification on the timeframe for review and update of the guidelines to ensure their continuous relevance over time.
  - Enquired how UN-Habitat would assist countries' implementation of the guidelines through capacity building.
  - Requested more information regarding the practical implementation of the international guidelines, including with regard to cost implications and possible risks.
  - highlighted that artificial intelligence could be further considered in the guidelines to enable efficient smart city governance, also taking into account the digital divide.

5. The Secretariat thanked Member States for their inputs and provided the following clarifications:
  - Explained that the experts drafting the guidelines have considered that human rights, environment and climate change are fundamental aspects of their proposal, including with regard to e.g. energy consumption, pollution, health and infrastructure investments.
  - Considered that the proposed definition was more specific than the text provided in the resolution, taking into account a people centred approach.
  - Considered that the guidelines could be reviewed periodically, every five years, while underlying data and statistical information would continue to be updated through the world smart cities outlook reports which will be produced every two years.
  - Confirmed that UN-Habitat will play a critical role in the implementation of the guidelines, through monitoring progress, disseminating best practices, and offering capacity building on demand and subject to available resources.
  - Reminded Member States to submit any written comments on the draft guidelines by 26 February 2025 at the latest.

**Agenda item 3: Consultation on the monitoring framework of the strategic plan 2026-2029.**

6. The Secretariat presented plans to develop a comprehensive monitoring framework for the draft strategic plan 2026-2029. The presentation can be accessed [here](#).
7. Member States welcomed the presentation and responded as follows:
  - Asked if and how UN-Habitat will establish benchmarks and thresholds to measure progress in implementation.
  - Asked if and how the monitoring framework can be adjusted over time to take into account emerging challenges and opportunities.
  - Asked about which parameters that would guide the final selection of indicators, and how to ensure that these indicators are measurable and attributable to the plan.
  - Underlined the need for the monitoring framework to collect data on a global level, minimizing possible duplication of efforts by national governments.
  - Suggested that UN-Habitat may wish to partner with Multilateral Development Banks and other partners to secure additional financial resources in support of implementation of the plan.
  - Recommended including an indicator with reference to group of youth, noting that this group may become highly affected by the housing crisis.
  - enquired if areas that might require new indicators have been identified.
  - Pointed out that the monitoring framework should be relevant for the work of the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on adequate housing for all.
  - Noted that the monitoring framework requires significant financial and human resources to become effective and operational and to ensure comprehensive and reliable data collection.
  - Recognized the need to distinguish between monitoring activities globally versus in-country.
  - Underlined the need to find a balance between qualitative and quantitative indicators.
  - Highlighted the importance of different circumstances and contexts at global, national, regional and local levels.
8. The Secretariat thanked the Member States for the feedback and responded as follows:
  - Confirmed that the monitoring framework will be adjusted as necessary to address new challenges or opportunities.
  - Explained that the benchmarks are defined on three levels, namely, impact, outcome and output, and that the framework will make use of existing data from corresponding SDG and Global Urban monitoring frameworks.
  - Explained that where necessary, UN-Habitat will conduct assessments to determine new baselines, also using existing baseline data from existing programmes and projects.
  - Confirmed that global indicators would be reported twice a year at impact level, that indicators monitoring UN-Habitat's work will be reported at an output level on a quarterly basis and at the outcome level on an annual basis.

- Took due note of the recommendations regarding resource mobilization and a possible indicator relating to youth.
- Confirmed that UN-Habitat will to the extent possible utilize existing indicators for monitoring, but that some areas such as innovation, smart cities and digital transformation may need new indicators.
- Explained that indicators related to housing will be monitored on an impact level through established SDG indicators.
- Explained that qualitative indicators will rely on impact reporting from UN-Habitat subprogrammes.
- Took due note of recommendations relating to qualitative indicators and the need to consider the different contexts at different levels of governance including at the local level and consider them in the future development of the monitoring framework.

**Agenda item 4: Any other Business**

9. No other matters were raised.

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