



The seventieth meeting of the ad hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters of the Executive Board

Monday, 3 November 2025, from 11.00 to 13.00 and 14.00 to 16.00 East Africa Time

Update on the preparations for the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the midterm review of the New Urban Agenda**

Report of the Executive Director

1. The present report provides an update on the ongoing preparations for the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly dedicated to the midterm review of the New Urban Agenda. It includes information on the development of the Secretary-General's quadrennial report on progress made in the implementation of the Agenda. Section I presents the background and objectives of the report. Section II outlines recent global initiatives undertaken in support of the 2026 quadrennial report, including capacity-building efforts aimed at enhancing monitoring and reporting mechanisms, as well as mobilization activities and planned engagements designed to generate momentum in the lead-up to the midterm review. Section III details the preparatory process for the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly.

I. Introduction

2. The New Urban Agenda, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito in 2016 and endorsed by General Assembly resolution [71/256](#), presents a shared global vision for inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable urban development. It serves as a key implementation framework for the urban dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals, structured around three transformative commitments-social, economic, and environmental-supported by essential means of implementation.

3. In line with resolution 71/256, the Secretary-General is mandated to report every four years on progress in implementing the Agenda, with voluntary inputs from Member States and relevant entities. Two quadrennial reports have been submitted to date, in 2018 and 2022, providing assessments and strategic guidance.

* HSP/EB.2025/16.

** The present document is being issued without formal editing.

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4. The 2026 quadrennial report will serve as a midterm review, assessing progress, identifying challenges, and outlining strategic actions to advance implementation. It will reinforce the Agenda's role in accelerating the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals.
 5. This report highlights recent progress in implementing the New Urban Agenda, including preparations for the 2026 quadrennial report, capacity-building efforts, stakeholder engagement, and mobilization strategies. It also outlines the preparatory process for the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly, a key forum for strategic reflection and dialogue.
 6. All implementation activities are closely aligned with the development of UN-Habitat's strategic plan for 2026-2029. The plan reaffirms UN-Habitat's core mandate on housing and harmonizes implementation tools-such as governance, spatial planning, resource mobilization, and innovation-with the Agenda to ensure coherence and impact.

II. Quadrennial report of the Secretary-General on progress in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda

A. Preparation of the 2026 quadrennial report

7. UN-Habitat has commenced preparations for the 2026 quadrennial report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. Recognizing the limited submission rate of national progress reports during the previous cycle (40 out of 193 Member States), efforts have been intensified to support Member States in the current 2022–2026 cycle.
8. The quadrennial report will integrate various input streams: (a) official submissions from Member States, including national progress reports, dialogues and survey responses; (b) contributions from the United Nations system and other multilateral institutions, including global and regional datasets and estimates produced by UN-Habitat and partners; (c) inputs from stakeholders and local actors, such as case studies and practices captured through dialogues, consultations and surveys; and (d) complementary desk reviews of related processes, including Voluntary National Reviews, Voluntary Local Reviews and other thematic assessments. While quantitative data will form the foundation, the report will emphasize practical, scalable and impactful solutions and good practices that have driven progress. An inclusive global consultative approach will be undertaken, including virtual meetings with stakeholders and a UN system-wide consultation to gather sectoral and regional insights.
9. The preparation of the quadrennial report will be closely coordinated with the global synthesis report on SDG 11, also scheduled for presentation in 2026 at the High Level Political Forum. This integrated approach will enhance coherence, depth, and policy relevance across both reports.

B. Overview of the Roadmap to the 2026 midterm review

10. UN-Habitat is following a strategic roadmap to build momentum toward the 2026 midterm review of the New Urban Agenda. This roadmap focuses on strengthening capacity development, advancing advocacy, promoting participatory progress review, and enhancing the New Urban Agenda platform to support implementation and engagement. A high-level meeting will be convened by the General Assembly in 2026, on the margins of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, where the global synthesis report on SDG 11 will also be presented.
11. Furthermore, the biennial report of the UN Secretary-General on the Implementation of the Outcomes of the United Nations Conferences on Human Settlements and on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), and the Strengthening of UN-Habitat in 2026 is a complementary opportunity to consider progress with NUA implementation. This report focuses on the functioning, governance, and institutional strengthening of UN-Habitat but also progress in implementing the Habitat III outcomes.
12. It directly underpins the Second Committee resolution on “Implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conferences on Human Settlements ... and Strengthening UN-Habitat.”
13. To broaden participation, UN-Habitat will mobilize its regional and country offices, engage stakeholders through multi-level urban forums, and leverage advocacy platforms and global events.

C. Capacity development for effective monitoring and reporting

14. Knowledge and capacity development is central to the effective implementation and monitoring of the New Urban Agenda. UN-Habitat, guided by its capacity-building Strategy (2020), continues to support Member States across its programming efforts and through the dissemination of tools such as the *New Urban Agenda Illustrated* handbook. Related self-paced online courses provide deep dives in the dimensions, means of implementation and monitoring mechanisms of the NUA, available in multiple languages and accessible to all interested. These efforts respond to resolution 1/3 of the UN-Habitat Assembly and build on UN-Habitat's expertise, know-how and existing resources, leveraging digital technologies and instructional design processes notably through the UN-Habitat Learn platform, initiated in 2020 to expand reach and impact in capacity development,

15. In preparation for the 2026 quadrennial report, UN-Habitat launched a new capacity development initiative in the form of a "Learning Series" focused on monitoring the Agenda's transformative commitments. The Series primarily targets national and local focal points, regional bodies, and other interested stakeholders. The Series comprises moderated webinars across regions and languages, and a set of supporting resources made available online. This effort aims to support governments, local governments and other stakeholders navigate the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, exchange and hear from practices across the globe and eventually improve both the quality and quantity of national progress reports. The learning series offers guidance and peer to peer exchange on challenges, opportunities, successful practices in data collection, stakeholder engagement, policy development and reporting modalities. Additional training activities—including webinars, in-person sessions, and urban forums—will be continued throughout 2026 and will support collective thinking around gaps and needs for further acceleration of the NUA implementation. This continued effort will aim to:

- Deepen collective understanding of the Agenda's role in advancing the SDGs;
- Facilitate peer exchange and reflection among reporting Member States;
- Enhanced insights and use of monitoring tools and data;
- Facilitate sharing of practices and solutions;
- Promote stakeholder engagement and participation in implementation and reporting.

D. Enhancing the New Urban Agenda platform to support implementation and engagement

16. UN-Habitat has initiated the renewal of the Urban Agenda Platform, originally launched in 2020 as a global portal for resources, training, and data to support implementation. Key components include multilingual Agenda resources, national reporting tools, and strategic data and case studies. Following assessments, the Platform is being redesigned to be more participatory, inclusive, and user-friendly. The updated version will launch in January 2026, tailored to the needs of Member States and stakeholders.

17. Regional efforts to advance the New Urban Agenda are progressing. Malaysia is developing a New Urban Agenda Asia-Pacific Regional Platform, supporting Member States, cities and regional partners to implement the New Urban Agenda in the Asia-Pacific region, strengthening awareness, knowhow, monitoring and reporting. The Kingdom of Morocco has expressed interest in establishing a New Urban Agenda African Regional Platform to support implementation and reporting. UN-Habitat has issued guidelines to assist Member States in developing such platforms, which will strengthen localized monitoring and facilitate the generation of regional and national case studies.

E. Mobilization towards the 2026 midterm review of the New Urban Agenda

National reporting and Member State consultations

18. National Progress Reports are a critical input to the Secretary-General's 2026 midterm review of the New Urban Agenda. To complement these reports, UN-Habitat has developed an additional survey to facilitate experience-sharing among Member States.

19. To support reporting efforts, UN-Habitat has made available the following resources aiming to strengthen Member States' capacity to monitor, report, and engage effectively in the midterm review process.

- Revised Guidelines¹ for reporting on the New Urban Agenda in English, French, and Arabic
- Reporting Template² for national submissions
- Branding Kit³ to support communication and visibility
- E-learning Course⁴ on monitoring transformative commitments
- Webinar Package⁵ for training on reporting processes

20. The current cycle anticipates at least 55 national submissions. Beyond increasing report quantity, emphasis is placed on fostering inclusive national review processes that enable reflection, learning, and strategic adjustment. These processes also serve to highlight achievements, share lessons learned, and mobilize partnerships for sustainable urban development.

21. Member States have been encouraged to submit their reports by mid-October 2025. UN-Habitat has issued several notes verbales to inform and encourage participation. The quadrennial report is scheduled for presentation to the United Nations Economic and Social Council during its Management Segment, in accordance with the following timeline:

- Input collection: by mid-October 2025
- Drafting: by December 2025
- Revision: by February 2026
- Clearance: by April 2026

Stakeholder engagement and consultations

22. Urban forums have emerged as inclusive platforms for mobilizing action on the New Urban Agenda. These forums support localization, evidence-based policymaking, and can inform national progress reports. In 2024, UN-Habitat published a guide on multilevel urban forums⁶ to enhance their role in policy dialogue and reporting. UN-Habitat has actively provided technical and coordination support to national forums that have enhanced stakeholder engagement and also fed into Voluntary Local Reviews and Voluntary National Reviews. At the regional level, UN-Habitat participated in the Africa Urban Forum in Addis Ababa (September 2024), hosting a session to align the New Urban Agenda with the African Union's Agenda 2063. The session reinforced regional commitment to the 2026 reporting cycle. Similar efforts were undertaken through the eighth session of the Asia-Pacific Urban Forum (APUF-8) in Suwon, Republic of Korea (October 2023), where UN-Habitat co-led sessions on financing and local implementation and reporting of the New Urban Agenda.

23. As part of preparations for the 2026 midterm review, UN-Habitat has developed comprehensive stakeholder surveys covering a broad range of partners including member states, UN entities, international organisations, local and regional governments, civil society, academia and private sector, to assess progress since 2016, identify key urban trends, and inform the Secretary-General's quadrennial report.

24. In May 2025, UN-Habitat convened the Global Stakeholder Forum with participation from over 600 stakeholders from 125 countries, strengthening their role in monitoring and reporting on the New Urban Agenda and SDG 11 and facilitate the exchange of good practices. In addition, UN-Habitat has continued to support specialised platforms such as the Advisory Group on Gender Issues, and the Youth Advisory Board to ensure that the perspectives of women and youth are consistently reflected in global reporting.

UN system and international organizations engagement and consultations

25. The mobilization of the UN system to enrich the mid-term review of the NUA is key. Towards this, UN-Habitat is in dialogue with UN entities on their contributions to the mid-term review and

¹ Available at <https://www.urbanagendaplatform.org/news/revised-urban-agenda-guidelines>.

² Available at <https://www.urbanagendaplatform.org/submit-report>.

³ Available at <https://www.urbanagendaplatform.org/submit-report>.

⁴ Available at <https://www.urbanagendaplatform.org/learning>.

⁵ Available at <https://www.urbanagendaplatform.org/node/2627>.

⁶ Available at <https://unhabitat.org/multi-level-urban-forums-a-guide>.

collaboration towards major milestones in 2026. As part of this, UN-Habitat has developed a survey targeting United Nations entities and international organizations to assess progress since 2016, identify key urban trends and challenges, and inform the Secretary-General's report. Several meetings are planned to initiate and strengthen engagement across the UN system and international partners.

New Urban Agenda at the World Urban Forum 13

26. After the creation of the New Urban Agenda during the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urbanization (Habitat III), the General Assembly, through its resolution A/RES/71/256, identified the World Urban Forum (WUF), as one of the key platforms to support the reporting on the implementation of the NUA. At the twelfth session of the World Urban Forum, held in Cairo in November 2024, numerous sessions on the NUA took place to raise awareness on the 2026 reporting cycle. Member States and stakeholders shared lessons and recommendations, including the need for stronger integration into national policies, improved indicators, inclusive implementation, and enhanced coordination and financing.

27. The thirteenth session of the World Urban Forum (WUF13), which will be held in Baku from 17 to 22 May 2026, will serve as a central platform for the midterm review. A full day ministerial meeting on the NUA will be organized on the first day of the Forum. The NUA ministerial meeting aims to reflect on progress, achievements and challenges experienced in the first decade of implementation; and on Member States' priority actions towards achieving the NUA's vision by 2036. The ministerial meeting will enable Member States to present national statements; and will feature substantive discussions to provide insights on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda in relation to the adequate housing agenda. This meeting presents opportunities as part of the overall New Urban Agenda mid-term review and the High-Level Meeting of the UN General Assembly on the NUA in 2026. By reaffirming political commitment at the ministerial level, the meeting will not only consolidate accountability for past commitments but also set the pace for scaling up successful policies and actions while addressing persistent gaps. The deliberations will provide an opportunity to align national and local urban agendas with broader global priorities on housing, poverty eradication, climate action, social inclusion, among others.

III. Preparations for the High-Level meeting of the General Assembly on the midterm review of the New Urban Agenda

28. In accordance with General Assembly resolution [A/C.2/79/L.18/Rev.1](#), the President of the General Assembly will convene a two-day High-Level Meeting in July 2026, at the margins of the High-Level Political Forum, to assess progress in implementing the New Urban Agenda. The meeting will bring together Member States and stakeholders engaged in urbanization, housing, public services, land use, and sustainable development. The High-Level meeting will adopt a concise and action-oriented political declaration to renew commitment and accelerate the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. The meeting presents a key opportunity to renew political commitment, identify implementation gaps, and align the New Urban Agenda with the 2030 Agenda, the Financing for Development process, the World Social Summit 2025, and future global development frameworks.

29. The concise and action-oriented political declaration of the High-Level Meeting will identify gaps and areas requiring renewed commitment, while setting out concrete measures to strengthen UN-Habitat as the leading UN agency on sustainable urbanization. This positioning is essential to ensure that housing, land, and basic services remain central to the international development agenda in the decades to come. Politically, the meeting will reaffirm urbanization as a cross-cutting enabler of peace, prosperity, and climate action, highlighting its role in delivering on the Pact for the Future and other intergovernmental processes. The outcome of the High-Level Meeting will also benefit from the deliberations of the thirteenth session of the World Urban Forum in Baku and on the 2026 Quadrennial Report on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, ensuring coherence across processes and providing an integrated basis for the Second Committee General Assembly resolution on "Implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conferences on Human Settlements and of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), and strengthening UN-Habitat" in October 2026.

30. To ensure meaningful and forward-looking outcomes, early preparations are essential. UN-Habitat has developed a tentative roadmap to guide a structured and inclusive process:

31. September 2025: Member States invited to express interest in co-facilitating the process

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32. Early October 2025: Co-Facilitators appointed by the President of the General Assembly;(one from a developed country and one from a developing country) focal points designated
33. October–December 2025: Co-Facilitators, with UN-Habitat support, define the work plan, consultation modalities, and focus areas
- January–April 2026: Consultations with Member States and stakeholders
 - May 2026: Zero draft shared on the concise and action-oriented political declaration of HLM at the World Urban Forum
 - May–July 2026: Consolidation of inputs and intergovernmental negotiations
 - July 2026: 2 days High-Level Meeting convened at the margins of the High-Level Political Forum 2026
34. Throughout the entire process, UN-Habitat will play a facilitative and substantive support role to ensure coherence, inclusivity, and alignment with the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, the 2030 Agenda, and the Financing for Development track. The High-Level Meeting will be a critical step in consolidating global consensus on urbanization and in placing UN-Habitat firmly as the UN agency for sustainable urbanization in the decade ahead.
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