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

Implementation of United Nations Habitat Assembly resolutions through the strategic plan for the period 2026–2029

Report of the Executive Director

I. Introduction

1. During the third open-ended meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), held in May 2025, UN-Habitat took a new approach to presenting and discussing progress in the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the UN-Habitat Assembly at its sessions in 2019 and 2023. The relevant report to the Committee (HSP/OECPR.2025/4) clustered implementation highlights for all relevant resolutions according to their strongest alignment with the five outcome areas of the UN-Habitat strategic plan for the period 2026–2029, namely: integrated urban and territorial planning, management, investment and finance; participatory multilevel governance and localization of the Sustainable Development Goals; knowledge, data, digitalization and capacity development; partnerships, coalitions, advocacy and communication; and effective resource mobilization, as well as the strategic focus on housing, land and basic services. That approach helps to demonstrate how the strategic plan will contribute to advancing progress on the mandates given to UN-Habitat through those resolutions. The same approach is proposed for reports to the Executive Board of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

2. Progress in the implementation of UN-Habitat Assembly resolution 1/1, in which the Assembly mandated the implementation of the UN-Habitat strategic plan for the period 2020–2023 (later extended to 2025 through Assembly decision 2/1), was presented to the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UN-Habitat at its third open-ended meeting in document HSP/OECPR.2025/5. A final update on the implementation of the resolution will be provided once the final evaluation of the strategic plan has been concluded.

II. Strategic focus area: housing, land and basic services

3. The strategic plan for the period 2026–2029 defines access to adequate housing, land and basic services as its strategic focus and as a lever that helps to address the broader challenges of poverty, humanitarian crises and climate change, defined as "impact areas". This strategic focus is directly

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* HSP/EB.2026/1.

underpinned by UN-Habitat Assembly resolutions 2/2, on accelerating the transformation of informal settlements and slums by 2030, and 2/7, on adequate housing for all. It is further supported by resolutions 2/8, on urban planning and sustainable infrastructure; 1/5, on enhancing urban-rural linkages for sustainable urbanization and human settlements; 2/4, on biodiverse and resilient cities: mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services into urban and territorial planning; and 2/3, on World Cleanup Day.

4.   With regard to slum transformation and housing, resolutions 2/2 and 2/7 have enabled the development of key new normative products and the expansion of operational activities. Under resolution 2/2, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) subregional strategy for slum and informal settlement transformation is under development and has been aligned with the priorities of the SADC secretariat. The Informality Task Force of the Cities Alliance has started consultations with its members on how to operationalize the 10 areas of action to implement the resolution as a multi-stakeholder initiative. The meetings of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Adequate Housing for All, convened pursuant to resolution 2/7, identified informal settlements as a key area of focus.

5.   Significant efforts were undertaken by the Co-Chairs of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Adequate Housing for All and UN-Habitat to strengthen the visibility and implementation of the mandate of the Working Group, as a result of which 68 countries had nominated 189 experts by January 2026, thus broadening intergovernmental engagement. Thematic implementation progressed through two structured series of expert group meetings and intersessional meetings. The first series, held in June 2025, addressed housing finance, tenure security, informal settlements and social housing. The second series (August–September 2025) advanced discussions on housing sustainability, definitions of homelessness and informal settlements and the Housing Monitoring Framework. A total of 582 participations were recorded.

6.   At the second session of the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Adequate Housing for All, held on 22 and 23 October 2025, representatives of 48 countries participated in the plenary meetings. Azerbaijan and Somalia were elected as the new Co-Chairs of the Working Group. The next session is tentatively planned for 26 and 27 November 2026.

7.   The secretariat also advanced preparatory work on the housing knowledge platform, in line with resolution 2/7.

8.   In relation to access to basic services, resolution 2/8 has framed the work of UN-Habitat on linking spatial planning with infrastructure – for example, through the upcoming publication on local approaches to financing sustainable urban mobility in low-income countries. In addition, solid waste management tools are being integrated into the Our City Plans platform.[1]

9.   The work of UN-Habitat on land, mandated under resolutions 2/2 and 2/7 (i.e. strengthened land management as part of slum transformation efforts and the promotion of land tenure security), has largely stalled due to a lack of resources. However, as mandated under resolution 1/5, the work on integrated regional and territorial planning to ensure sustainable land use across urban and rural territories continues. For further details, see section III below.

III.   Outcome 1: integrated urban and territorial planning, management, investment and finance

10.   This outcome is directly underpinned by UN-Habitat Assembly resolution 2/8, on urban planning and sustainable development, and further supported by resolutions 2/5, on enhancing the interlinkage between urbanization and climate change resilience, and 2/4, on biodiverse and resilient cities: mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services into urban and territorial planning.

11.   Pursuant to resolution 2/8, the Our City Plans platform has expanded in terms of tools, case studies and thematic content, including planning activities and tools focusing on climate action, participation, socio-spatial inclusion, sustainable urban mobility and urban finance. The Capital Investment Planning Methodology Guidelines are under review and are set to be applied beyond India, Indonesia and Kyrgyzstan to Mozambique. Discussions with the World Bank on further co-developing the Guidelines and the accompanying manual are ongoing.

12.   The Sustainable Urban Regeneration Atlas, developed in cooperation with the Sustainable Urban Regeneration Lab at Bocconi University, was launched at the twelfth session of the World Urban Forum and features case studies on linkages between spatial planning and physical and

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[1]Available at https://ourcityplans.org/.

social infrastructure. The urban regeneration training package, which covers spatial planning, socioeconomic assessments, financing and innovation, has been finalized.

13.   Urban labs continue to provide technical assistance for integrated planning and infrastructure development, now in Mesoamerica, West Africa, Asia and Southern Africa (with the work of the lab in the last region still under negotiation). Additional portfolio elements have been acquired in Azerbaijan, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Egypt, Eswatini, Ghana, Jordan, Kenya, Mozambique, Nepal, Ukraine and Viet Nam, among other countries. The decentralization of urban labs to regional and country offices is ongoing, in order to support efforts in portfolio and capacity development and to provide methodologies and tools for spatial planning, finance and economy and sustainable infrastructure planning. Under the new organizational structure, the urban labs are now located within the Regional Programmes Division.

14.   A collaboration framework is being developed in order to advance engagement with financing institutions.

15.   Under the mandate issued in resolution 2/5, UN-Habitat organized, co-organized or participated in more than 80 climate change-related events at the twelfth session of the World Urban Forum, held in Cairo, and at the twenty-ninth and thirtieth sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Baku, Azerbaijan, and Belém, Brazil, respectively, including events related to buildings, housing and climate-resilient informal settlements, urban planning, water and sanitation, Sustainable Development Goal localization, finance, urban health, and loss and damage.

16.   Under resolution 2/4, UN-Habitat has accelerated the mainstreaming of biodiversity and ecosystem services into urban and territorial planning. Opportunities for investment in and development of pilot projects and programmes with international financial institutions and selected national Governments are being explored. Fundraising with two regional banks in an umbrella project with the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources on renewing urban waterways in Asia began in late 2025. Concurrently, the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean is funding a project entitled "BiodiverCities for the acceleration of the New Urban Agenda", with projects in Mesoamerican countries, building on the BiodiverCities network, a joint initiative of the World Economic Forum and the Humboldt Institute.

17.   UN-Habitat co-organized a biodiversity webinar with the United Nations Environment Management Group and proposed the creation of an issue management group on urbanization and land-use change. The proposal was approved by the Group in September 2025, and UN-Habitat will co-lead the 51-member issue management group in 2026.

IV.   Outcome 2: Participatory multilevel governance and localization of the Sustainable Development Goals

18.   This outcome is clearly underpinned by UN-Habitat Assembly resolution 2/6, on localizing the Sustainable Development Goals. It is further supported by Assembly resolutions 1/4, on achieving gender equality through the work of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme to support inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements; and 2/5, on enhancing the interlinkage between urbanization and climate change resilience.

19.   Under resolution 2/6, the Local2030 coalition engaged more than 1,500 local stakeholders in global processes shaping global agendas, including the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, the Second World Summit for Social Development and the thirtieth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change, through broad consultations that informed negotiations on whole-of-UN recommendations and local solutions. In that process, and in partnership with the Joint Sustainable Development Goals Fund, the coalition also channelled $24 million into local financing solutions in eight countries. The engagement process also led to action-oriented strategic alliances, such as the Sevilla Platform for Action on localizing finance, bringing together 10 Member States and local actors from 20 countries. Embedded in the coalition, the Partnership Platform on Localizing the Sustainable Development Goals is advancing support for national Sustainable Development Goal localization frameworks in Senegal and Tunisia. Nine more countries joined the Partnership Platform at a high-level meeting hosted by the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations in New York during the high-level political forum on sustainable development in July 2025.

20.   Through the Sustainable Development Goals Cities (SDG Cities) flagship programme, UN-Habitat supported the translation of 15 voluntary local reviews into policies and action. UN-Habitat continued to expand support for Sustainable Development Goal localization by working

through specific enablers, namely sports and action-oriented research, in multiple countries. UN-Habitat continued to work with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development on the global stocktake on localizing the Goals, bringing new evidence and guidance on localization for the Sustainable Development Goals Summit to be held in 2027.

21. To advance the implementation of resolution 1/4, the United Nations gender equality marker for financial expenditure on gender equality and women's empowerment was fully operationalized throughout UN-Habitat in 2025. Gender mainstreaming remains a priority, both through continuing day-to-day efforts to ensure that all the work of UN-Habitat is gender-responsive, as well as through specific outcomes in operational work. In line with those efforts, as part of the changes to the terms of reference and the membership of the Project Review Committee, the Chief of the Human Rights and Social Inclusion Unit, who leads gender equality prioritization efforts at UN-Habitat, now holds a permanent seat on the Committee. Internal best practices relating to gender equality continued to be highlighted through the UN-Habitat gender champions award, as well as through the Human Rights and Social Inclusion Unit community of practice and the expert group meeting series on human rights cities, including gender-equal cities.

22. Partnerships continue to be strengthened, including with other United Nations entities and civil society organizations, in particular as part of the preparations for the thirteenth session of the World Urban Forum. UN-Habitat is also in the process of renewing its memorandum of understanding with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).

23. To advance the mandate issued in resolution 2/5, UN-Habitat organized the fourth Innovate4Cities Conference in 2024, bringing together nearly 2,000 stakeholders from academia and research, government, business and civil society to present cutting-edge research and practices. Following the conference, UN-Habitat co-published an update to the Global Research and Action Agenda on Cities and Climate Change Science, identifying current research gaps to guide practice-oriented research and innovation.

24. The fourth Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate Change was held at the thirtieth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change. The meeting was hosted by the party holding the presidency of the Conference (Brazil) and co-organized by UN-Habitat with a view to advancing the dialogue on multilevel climate action. The operationalization of the Sustainable Urban Resilience for the Next Generation (SURGe) initiative received significant additional support thanks to funding committed by the Government of Slovakia. Through the initiative, a tool for the nationally determined contributions to be submitted in 2025 (NDC 3.0) has been developed, and an initial analysis of those contributions was launched at the thirtieth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change. The regional roll-out of the initiative has begun in the African, Asia-Pacific and Latin American and Caribbean regions, and a SURGe hub has been established in Bratislava.

V. Outcome 3: Knowledge, data, digitalization and capacity development

25. This outcome is directly underpinned by UN-Habitat Assembly resolution 1/3, on enhancing capacity-building for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the urban dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as resolution 2/1, on international guidelines on people-centred smart cities. It is further supported by resolutions 1/2, on the United Nations System-Wide Guidelines on Safer Cities and Human Settlements; 1/5, on enhancing urban-rural linkages for sustainable urbanization and human settlements; 2/4, on biodiverse and resilient cities: mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services into urban and territorial planning; and 2/5, on enhancing the interlinkage between urbanization and climate change resilience.

26. Under resolution 1/3, the UN-Habitat *New Urban Agenda Illustrated*, a practical handbook that has been translated into Arabic, Chinese, French, Portuguese and Spanish, was digitalized in the form of online self-paced courses aimed at facilitating understanding, implementation and reporting on the New Urban Agenda. In 2025, additional courses and a webinar learning series were launched. The UN-Habitat Learn platform, created in 2021, supports innovation for learning through the digitalization of high-impact solutions that have been pilot-tested on the ground. The platform currently offers courses on 25 topics in eight languages and has more than 17,000 users.

27. Under resolution 2/1, UN-Habitat was entrusted with developing international guidelines on people-centred smart cities. An extensive intergovernmental consultation process was conducted, ensuring that the draft guidelines reflected diverse perspectives, were built on evidence and addressed the evolving challenges of digitalization in urban governance. However, in the absence of agreement

on the proposed text during its resumed second session, the Assembly took note of the presentation by the Executive Director on the draft guidelines. Some Member States have expressed interest in using the people-centred smart cities approach, on the basis of the principles outlined in the document, to guide the development of their smart city strategies, investments and other initiatives. In addition, UN-Habitat and the International Telecommunication Union signed a memorandum of understanding in September 2025 to collaborate on people-centred smart cities and in areas such as digital connectivity and inclusion, technology-enabled urban development, urban data, cybersecurity, resource mobilization and joint projects, global advocacy and inter-agency engagement, and United Nations Digital Cooperation Day.

28.   Many other achievements could be presented in relation to this outcome, as multiple resolutions contain objectives linked to the development of knowledge, data, digital tools and capacity development. To name only a few: the GeoAI Toolkit for Urban Planners[2] was launched in December 2025, contributing to the implementation of resolutions 2/1 and 2/8; more than 70 case studies from 65 countries have been published across four compendiums on urban-rural linkages under resolution 1/5; the development of the Hotspot Stoplight toolkit for biodiverse and resilient cities, in partnership with the McHarg Center for Urbanism and Ecology, is well under way, in implementation of resolution 2/4; multiple training events were organized on enhancing the urban content of nationally determined contributions at the twelfth session of the World Urban Forum and the twenty-ninth and thirtieth sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change; and the launch of a comprehensive report on nationally determined contributions is planned at the thirteenth session of the World Urban Forum, under resolution 2/5. A comprehensive global learning process to consolidate thirty years of evidence, lessons and innovation on safer cities is also in progress and will culminate in a flagship report in 2026, contributing to the implementation of resolution 1/2.

VI.   Outcome 4: Partnerships, coalitions, advocacy and communication

29.   This outcome is directly underpinned by UN-Habitat Assembly resolution 2/3, on World Cleanup Day. It is further supported by Assembly resolutions 1/4, on achieving gender equality through the work of UN-Habitat to support inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements; 1/5, on enhancing urban-rural linkages for sustainable urbanization and human settlements; 2/7, on adequate housing for all; and 2/9, on the creation of a human settlements resilience framework for early warning, foresight, risk reduction, crisis response, and post-crisis recovery and reconstruction.

30.   Resolution 2/3, together with General Assembly resolution 78/122, called for the establishment and annual observance of 20 September as World Cleanup Day. For 2025, no Member State expressed interest, and a low-key observance took place at the United Nations Office at Nairobi, focusing on textile waste. At the same time, 120 cleanup events were registered on the web page for World Cleanup Day celebrations. In addition, Let's Do It! World, a UN-Habitat knowledge partner on cleanups, organized a live transmission from Kyiv on the theme "Strive for five!", a call for 5% of the global population to participate in cleanups in September, and 24.7 million people in 190 countries were mobilized to participate.

31.   The city of Shaoxing (Shaoxing Municipal People's Government) in China was selected to host World Cleanup Day in 2026.

32.   As in the case of outcome 3, many advances related to partnerships and coalition-building, advocacy and communication could be presented for each resolution. To name but a few examples, under resolution 2/6, the SDG Cities Global Community grew to 180 cities, facilitating 33 workshops and exchanges and culminating in the SDG Cities Global Conference, held in Shanghai, China, with more than 500 in-person participants, in October 2025. Under resolution 2/5, preparations are under way for the 2026 Innovate4Cities conference, to be held in Nairobi in June 2026.

VII.   Outcome 5: effective resource mobilization

33.   The UN-Habitat strategic plan for the period 2026–2029 acknowledges that the implementation of resolutions adopted by the UN-Habitat Assembly at its first and second sessions has been constrained by limited financial resources. Those constraints were partially anticipated in resolution 2/10, on equitable financing and effective monitoring of the implementation of resolutions adopted by the Assembly.

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[2] Available at https://unhabitat.org/ai-for-spatial-mapping-and-analysis-geoai-toolkit-for-urban-planners.

34. Through that resolution, the UN-Habitat Assembly sought to improve funding for 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 decision 2023/6. In 2024, the contribution agreement template was revised to include the elective transfer of project balances to the urban action funding window, with explicit reference to Assembly resolution 2/10, Executive Board decision 2023/6 and the terms of reference for the funding window. Engagement with donors on such transfers will be supported through advocacy and communication.

35. The UN-Habitat resolution tracker[3] continues to be updated semi-annually.

36. In addition to the actions implemented pursuant to resolution 2/10, UN-Habitat is addressing financial constraints through its new strategic plan and the associated resource mobilization strategy, which will be presented at the first session of 2026 of the Executive Board. The resource mobilization strategy for the period 2026–2029 provides a structured and forward-looking framework for securing the resources required in order to deliver on the strategic plan and mandate of UN-Habitat. Through a dual focus on targeted fundraising and on fostering enabling policy and financing environments, the strategy is geared towards diversifying and stabilizing funding.

VIII.   Conclusion

37. The implementation of the strategic plan for the period 2026–2029 has begun apace. UN-Habitat is committed to implementing the strategic plan and delivering on its mandates as effectively as possible, despite an environment of constrained resources and declining capacity. Detailed information on the financial and programmatic status of each resolution is available in the UN-Habitat online resolution tracker.

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[3] Available at https://unhabitat.org/governance/un-habitat-assembly.