

74th Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Programmatic, Budgetary and Administrative Matters of the Executive Board of UN-Habitat

Wednesday, 25 February 2026, 9:00-12:00 Eastern Africa Time (EAT)
Conference Room 9, UNON

Implementing the United Nations Habitat Assembly resolutions through the 2026-2029 Strategic Plan

Report of the Executive Director

I. Introduction

During the third open-ended meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives in May 2025, UN-Habitat presented a new approach towards the presentation and discussion of implementation progress for the Resolutions adopted by successive sessions of the United Nations Habitat Assembly (UN-Habitat Assembly) in 2019 and 2023. The CPR report (HSP/OECPR.2025/4) clustered implementation highlights for all relevant resolutions based on their strongest alignment to the five outcome areas of the Strategic Plan 2026-29, namely, integrated urban and territorial planning, management, investment and finance; participatory multi-level 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. This approach helps to demonstrate how the Strategic Plan will help advance the mandates given to UN-Habitat through these resolutions. It is proposed to continue the same reporting approach for the Executive Board.

Additional details are available through the UN-Habitat online resolution tracker at <https://unhabitat.org/governance/un-habitat-assembly>.

Progress against Resolution 1/1, which mandated the implementation of the UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2020–2023 (extended to 2025 through Decision 2/1 of the UN-Habitat Assembly), was presented at the OECPR (document/HSP/OECPR.2025/5). A final update on this resolution will be provided once the final evaluation of the Strategic Plan has been concluded.

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

The 2026-2029 Strategic Plan captures access to adequate housing, land and basic services as its “strategic focus” and a lever that helps address the broader challenges of poverty, humanitarian crises, and climate change, defined as “impact areas”. This strategic focus is directly underpinned by UNHA2 resolution 2/2, “Accelerating the transformation of informal settlements and slums by 2030” and UNHA2 resolution 2/7, “Adequate housing for all”. It is further supported by UNHA2 resolution 2/8, “Urban planning and sustainable infrastructure”; UNHA1 resolution 1/5, “Enhancing urban-rural linkages for sustainable urbanization and human settlements”; UNHA2 resolution 2/4, “Biodiverse and resilient cities: mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services into urban and territorial planning”; and UNHA2 resolution 2/3, “World Cleanup Day”.

With regards to slum transformation and housing, **resolutions 2/2 and 2/7** have enabled the development of key new normative products and expansion of operational activities. **Under resolution 2/2**, the SADC sub-regional strategy for slum and informal settlements transformation is under development and has been aligned with SADC secretariat priorities. The Informality Taskforce of Cities Alliance has started consultations with its members on how to operationalize the 10 areas of action to deliver the resolution as a multi-stakeholder initiative. The meetings of the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Adequate Housing for All (OEWG-H), convened under **resolution 2/7**, identified informal settlements as a key area of focus.

Significant efforts were undertaken by the Co-Chairs and UN-Habitat to strengthen the visibility and implementation of the mandate of the OEWG-H, as a result of which, by January 2026, 68 countries had nominated 189 experts, broadening intergovernmental engagement. Thematic implementation progressed

through two structured cycles of Expert Group Meetings and Intersessional Meetings. The June 2025 series addressed housing finance, tenure security, informal settlements and social housing. The second cycle (August–September 2025) advanced discussions on housing sustainability, definitions of homelessness and informal settlements, and the Housing Monitoring Framework, with 582 participations recorded.

The second OEWG-H session (22–23 October 2025) witnessed the in-person participation of 48 countries in the plenary meetings. Somalia and Azerbaijan were elected as the new Co-Chairs. The next session is tentatively planned for 26–27 November 2026.

The secretariat also advanced preparatory work on the Housing Knowledge Platform in line with the **resolution 2/7**.

Related to access to basic services, **resolution 2/8** has framed UN-Habitat's work on linking spatial planning with infrastructure, for example through the upcoming publication "*Local Approaches to Financing Sustainable Urban Mobility in Low-Income Countries*". Solid waste management tools are also being integrated under the *Our City Plans* (OCP) platform¹.

The work on land, mandated under **resolutions 2/2 and 2/7** (strengthened land management as part of slum transformation efforts and promotion of land tenure security), has largely stalled due to lack of resources. However, the work on integrated regional and territorial planning to ensure sustainable land use across urban and rural territories continues, mandated under **resolution 1/5**. This is further elaborated under Section III.

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

This outcome is directly underpinned by UNHA2 **resolution 2/8** "Urban planning and sustainable development" and further supported by **resolution 2/5** "Enhancing the interlinkage between urbanization and climate change resilience" and **2/4** "Biodiverse and resilient cities: mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services into urban and territorial planning".

Pursuant to **resolution 2/8**, the *Our City Plans* platform has expanded its 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 set to be applied beyond India, Indonesia, and Kyrgyzstan to Mozambique - with ongoing discussions with the World Bank on further co-developing the manual and guidelines.

The Atlas on Urban Regeneration, developed with the Sustainable Urban Regeneration Lab of Bocconi University, was launched at WUF12, featuring case studies on linkages between spatial planning and physical and social infrastructure. The Urban Regeneration Training package, covering spatial planning, socio-economic assessments, financing, and innovation, has been finalized.

Urban labs continue to provide technical assistance for integrated planning and infrastructure development, now in Mesoamerica, West Africa, Asia and Southern Africa (the last one still under negotiation). Additional portfolio has been acquired in Cuba, Costa Rica, Colombia, Brazil, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Eswatini, Egypt, Jordan, Vietnam, Nepal, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, amongst others. Decentralization of Urban Labs with Regional and Country offices is ongoing, to support efforts in portfolio and capacity development, providing 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.

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

Under the mandate provided by **resolution 2/5**, at WUF12 (Cairo); COP29 (Baku); and COP30 (Belem), UN-Habitat organized, co-organized or participated in over 80 climate change-related events including, *inter alia*, on buildings, housing and climate resilient informal settlements, urban planning, water and sanitation, SDG localization, finance, urban health, loss and damage.

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 on an umbrella project with IUCN on renewing urban waterways in Asia began in late 2025. Concurrently, the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean (CAF) is funding "BiodiverCities for the acceleration of the New Urban Agenda", projects in Mesoamerican countries, building on the BiodiverCities network, a joint initiative of the World Economic Forum and the Humboldt Institute.

UN-Habitat co-organized a biodiversity webinar with the Environmental Management Group (EMG) and

¹Available at UN-Habitat's [Our City Plans](#) online platform

proposed the creation of an ‘issue management group’ on urbanization and land use change. This was approved by the EMG in September 2025, and UN-Habitat will co-lead this group, comprising 51 members, in 2026.

IV. Outcome 2: Participatory multi-level governance and localization of the Sustainable Development Goals

This outcome is clearly underpinned by **UNHA2 resolution 2/6** “Localizing the Sustainable Development Goals”. It is further supported by **UNHA1 resolution 1/4** “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 **UNHA2 resolution 2/5** “Enhancing the interlinkage between urbanization and climate change resilience”.

Under **resolution 2/6**, the Local2030 Coalition engaged over 1,500 local stakeholders in the global processes shaping global agendas (FFD4, WSSD2, and COP30), through wide consultations informing negotiations with whole-of-UN recommendations and local solutions. Within this process and in partnership with the Joint SDG Fund, it also channeled USD 24 million to local financing solutions in eight countries. The engagement process also led action-oriented strategic alliances such as the Seville 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 SDGs is advancing support to National SDG Localization Frameworks in Tunisia and Senegal. Nine more countries joined as partners during a high-level meeting hosted by the Italian Mission in NYC, at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) in July 2025.

Through SDG Cities, UN-Habitat supported the translation of 15 Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) into policies and action. The Agency continued expanding support on SDG Localization by working through specific enablers, namely sports and action-oriented research, in multiple countries. UN-Habitat continues working with the OECD on the Global Stocktake on Localizing the SDGs, bringing new evidence and guidance on localization toward the 2027 SDG Summit.

To advance **resolution 1/4**, the UN Gender Marker on financial expenditure on gender equality and women’s empowerment was fully operationalized across UN-Habitat in 2025. Gender mainstreaming remains a priority at UN-Habitat, both through continuing day-to-day efforts to ensure that all of UN-Habitat’s work is gender responsive as well as through specific outcomes in operational work. In line with these efforts, as part of the updates to the Projects Review Committee, the Chief of the Human Rights and Social Inclusion (HRSI) Unit, who leads gender equality prioritization at UN-Habitat, now has a permanent seat on the Committee. Internal best practices on gender equality continued to be highlighted through the UN-Habitat gender champions award, as well as the HRSI Community of Practice and the Expert Group Meeting series on Human Rights Cities, including gender equal cities.

Partnerships continue to be strengthened, including with other United Nations entities and civil society organizations, in particular as part of the preparations for WUF13. UN-Habitat is also in the process of renewing its memorandum of understanding with UN Women.

To advance the mandate provided by **resolution 2/5**, UN-Habitat organized the fourth Innovate4Cities conference in 2024, convening nearly 2,000 stakeholders across academia and research, government, business, and civil society to present cutting-edge research and practices. Following the conference, UN-Habitat co-published an updated Global Research and Action Agenda on Cities and Climate Change Science (GRAA), identifying current research gaps to guide practice-oriented research and innovation.

The fourth Ministerial Meeting was held at COP30, hosted by the presidency (Brazil) and co-organized by UN-Habitat, advancing the dialogue on multilevel climate action. The operationalization of the Sustainable Urban Resilience for the Next Generation (SURGe) initiative received a significant boost, thanks to the funding committed by the government of the Slovak Republic. Through SURGe, an NDC3.0 tool has been developed, and an initial analysis of the NDCs 3.0 was launched at COP30. The regional roll-out of SURGe has commenced in the African, Asia-Pacific and Latin America and Caribbean regions and a SURGe Hub has been established in Bratislava.

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

This outcome is directly underpinned by **UNHA1 resolution 1/3**, "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 **UNHA2 resolution 2/1** "International guidelines on people-centred smart cities." It is further supported by **UNHA1 resolutions 1/2**, "United Nations System-Wide Guidelines on Safer Cities and Human Settlements"; **resolution 1/5**, "Enhancing urban-rural linkages for sustainable urbanization and human settlements"; **resolution 2/4**, "Biodiverse and resilient cities:

mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services into urban and territorial planning"; and resolution 2/5 ""Enhancing the interlinkage between urbanization and climate change resilience."

Under **resolution 1/3**, UN-Habitat's New Urban Agenda Illustrated, a practical handbook translated into French, Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese and Chinese was digitalized in the form of online self-pace courses aiming at facilitating understanding, implementation and reporting on the NUA. 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 pilot tested on the ground. The platform currently offers courses on 25 topics and has more than 17000 users. Eight languages are featured on the platform.

Under **resolution 2/1**, UN-Habitat was entrusted with developing the International Guidelines on People-centred Smart Cities. An extensive intergovernmental consultation process was conducted, ensuring that the draft guidelines reflected diverse perspectives, built on evidence and addressed the evolving challenges of digitalization in urban governance. However, in the absence of an agreement to approve the proposed text during the resumed second session of UNHA, 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, with the principles outlined in the document, to guide the development of their smart city strategies, investments and other initiatives. Additionally, UN-Habitat and ITU signed an MoU in September 2025 to collaborate on people-centred smart cities as well as on 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 the UN Digital Cooperation Day.

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 Planners² was launched in December 2025, contributing to **resolutions 2/1 and 2/8**; over 70 case studies from 65 countries have been published across four compendiums on urban-rural linkages under **resolution 1/5**; development of the "Hotspot Stoplight" toolkit for biodiverse and resilient cities is well underway, in partnership with the McHarg Center for Urbanism and Ecology, under **resolution 2/4**; and, multiple trainings were organized on enhancing the urban content of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) at WUF 12, COP29 and COP30, and the launch of a comprehensive NDC report is planned at WUF 13, under **resolution 2/5**. A comprehensive global learning process to consolidate thirty years of evidence, lessons, and innovation on Safer Cities is also underway and will culminate in a 2026 flagship report, under **resolution 1/2**.

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

This outcome is directly underpinned by UNHA 2 **resolution 2/3**, "World Cleanup Day". It is further supported by UNHA 1 **resolution 1/4**, "Achieving gender equality through the work of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme to support inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements"; **resolution 1/5**, "Enhancing urban-rural linkages for sustainable urbanization and human settlements"; UNHA 2 **resolution 2/7** "Adequate housing for all"; and **resolution 2/9**, "Creation of a human settlements resilience framework for early warning, foresight, risk reduction, crisis response, and post-crisis recovery and reconstruction."

Resolution 2/3, together with the United Nations General Assembly resolution 78/122, mandated the establishment and annual observation of September 20th as World Cleanup Day. For 2025, no member state expressed interest, and a low-key observance took place at the UN in Nairobi focusing on textile waste. However, 120 clean-up events were registered on the World Cleanup Day celebrations webpage. In addition, Let's Do It World, a UN Habitat knowledge partner on clean-ups, organized a live transmission from Kyiv in Ukraine highlighting the theme "Strive for Five!" (call for 5% of the global population to participate in cleanups in September) and 24.7 million people were mobilized in 190 countries to participate.

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

Similarly to outcome 3, advancements related to partnerships and coalitions building, advocacy and communication, could be presented for each resolution. To give a few examples, under **resolution 2/6**, the SDG Cities Global Community grew to 180 cities, facilitating 33 workshops and exchanges, culminating in the SDG Cities Global Conference hosted by Shanghai with over 500 in-person participants in October 2025. Under **resolution 2/5**, preparations are underway for the 2026 Innovate4Cities conference, to be held in Nairobi in June 2026.

VII. Outcome 5: Effective resource mobilization

² Available at [AI for Spatial Mapping and Analysis: GeoAI Toolkit for Urban Planners | UN-Habitat](https://www.unhabitat.org/ai-for-spatial-mapping-and-analysis-geoai-toolkit-for-urban-planners)

UN-Habitat's 2026-2029 Strategic Plan acknowledges that the implementation of UNHA1 and UNHA2 resolutions has been constrained by limited financial resources. These constraints were partially anticipated through **resolution 2/10, “Equitable financing and effective monitoring of the implementation of resolutions adopted by the United Nations Habitat Assembly”**.

Through this resolution, the UN-Habitat Assembly seeks to improve the funding of 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 its 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 resolution 2/10, decision 2023/6 of the Executive Board, and to the terms of reference for the Funding Window. Engagement with donors on such transfers will be supported through advocacy and communication.

The resolution tracker³ on the implementation of UN-Habitat's resolutions continues to be updated semi-annually.

In addition to actions implemented pursuant to resolution 2/10, UN-Habitat is addressing financial constraints through its new Strategic Plan and its associated Resource Mobilization Strategy, which will be presented at the first 2026 session of the Executive Board. The Resource Mobilization Strategy 2026–2029 provides a structured and forward-looking framework to secure the resources required for the delivery of UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan and mandate. Through a dual focus on targeted fundraising and the fostering of enabling policy and financing environments, the Strategy aims to diversify and stabilize funding.

VIII. Conclusion

The implementation of the 2026-2029 Strategic Plan has begun apace. UN-Habitat is committed to implementing the Plan and delivering its mandates as best as possible – despite an environment of constrained resources and declining capacity. For detailed information on the financial and programmatic status of each resolution, please consult UN-Habitat's online resolution tracker at <https://unhabitat.org/governance/un-habitat-assembly>.

³ <https://unhabitat.org/governance/un-habitat-assembly>