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Implementation of the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat, including reporting on programmatic activities in 2025 and the implementation of subprogrammes, flagship programmes and technical cooperation activities

Efforts to reconstruct human settlements in Ukraine affected by the conflict **

Report of the Executive Director

I. Introduction

1. This report is in response to Decision 2024/2 and related Paragraph 7, which *Requests the Executive Director to report to the Executive Board on other urban crises, upon request by affected Member States and members of specialized agencies of the United Nations system;* and to the request by Ukraine for the Executive Director to present a comprehensive report on efforts to reconstruct human settlements in Ukraine affected by the conflict at its third session of 2025. The report also aligns with paragraph 3 of Decision 2022/6 that recommends the Executive Director to report to the Executive Board on the ongoing activities of UN-Habitat in countries, territories and areas affected by conflict and disaster in a uniform manner, in line with the mandate of UN-Habitat. Additionally, the report has been revised and resubmitted to the first meeting of the Executive Board 2026, in accordance with paragraph 2 of decision 2025/7, which reads "Also takes note of the draft report entitled ´Efforts to reconstruct human settlements affected by conflict in Ukraine" and requests the Executive Director to apply terminology that conforms with the relevant mandates of UN-Habitat, including the use of "Ukraine affected by the conflict", and to submit a revised version to the Executive Board at its first session of 2026´".

II. Scope of the report

2. This report was established as an update of the report on the efforts to reconstruct human settlements in Ukraine affected by the armed conflict, prepared for the Second Session of the Executive Board held on 4-6 December 2024. The armed conflict in Ukraine remains ongoing with hostilities continuing and no durable ceasefire in placed[1]. The report is based on the current situation on the ground and uses data available as of 30 September 2025.[2]

* HSP/EB.2026/1.

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

[1] As of 30 September 2025.

[2] Unless specified otherwise, the data used in this report has been provided by the Government of Ukraine

3. The report provides a brief overview of the impact of the armed conflict on human settlements in Ukraine, UN-Habitat's contribution to urban recovery and the way forward.

III. Assessing the impact of the conflict on the human settlements in Ukraine

4. Ongoing assessments of the impact of the armed conflict on the human settlements in Ukraine are fundamental to guide recovery and reconstruction efforts, both in terms of damage and changes in demographics and economic activities.

A. Current impact of the armed conflict on urban areas in Ukraine

5. Human settlements in Ukraine have been severely affected. Cities have experienced significant damage to infrastructure, housing, and essential services due to the conflict. Over 13 percent of the total housing stock has been either damaged or destroyed and has affected more than 2.5 million households, making housing the most impacted sector. The scale of damage to the housing sector is aggravating the already existing shortage of adequate, affordable, and safe housing in Ukraine[3].

6. Ukraine faces a large-scale displacement crisis, with half of the internally displaced (IDPs) in conflict-affected regions. The total number of IDPs in Ukraine equals 3.76 million[4]. In Western and Central Ukraine, approximately 79,000 displaced people in 1,800 collective sites are in inadequate shelters, with limited access to services[5]. Refugees from Ukraine reached approximately 5.7 million globally[6].

7. Since February 2022, the number of persons with disabilities increased by 300,000 (7.4% of the population)[7]. Persons with disabilities continue to face challenges and obstacles in the built environment (e.g., housing, bomb shelters, public transportation).

8. The armed conflict has increased the gap of expertise needed, including skilled urban planners, to meet its urban planning needs and urban reconstruction requirements.

B. Instruments to support recovery and reconstruction in Ukraine

9. Despite the ongoing armed conflict, the Government of Ukraine has been leading early recovery and reconstruction efforts alongside an ambitious economic transformation and institutional alignment agenda, and in line with Ukraine's aspiration towards European Union accession. Recovery and reconstruction priorities were discussed at the Ukraine Recovery Conference held in July 2025 in Rome, Italy.

10. In 2023, a Multi-Donor Coordination Platform for Ukraine has been set up to support repair, recovery and reconstruction processes and to help bridge the gap between needs and resources[8]. International institutions, including the United Nations, actively contribute to the coordination efforts of the platform.

11. The Government of Ukraine has developed the Ukraine Plan linked to the Ukraine Facility, proposed by the European Union for the period 2024-2027, in a total amount of Euro 50 billion. The Ukraine Plan is a programme of actions and reforms, which includes macro-financial scenarios for recovery, and cross-cutting issues such as European integration, digital transformation, green transition, and regional development[9].

12. In June 2022, the Law#2254-IX entered into force, introducing the term '*complex recovery programme'* for regions and municipalities. This law requires regions and municipalities to produce a regional or local programme of restoration of territories, which defines the main spatial, urban planning and socio-economic priorities and includes a set of measures to ensure the restoration of the territory.

13. The Ministry for Development of Communities and Territories facilitates the coordination and efficient reconstruction of conflict-affected regions. Territorial communities are responsible for

[3] https://ukraine.un.org/en/290001-fourth-rapid-damage-and-needs-assessment-rdna4-february-2022-december-2024

[4] IOM, Global Data Institute, Displacement Tracking Matrix, April 2025

[5] Ukraine Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan, January 2025

[6] UNHCR, October 2025, https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine

[7] Ministry of Social Policy, Family and Unity of Ukraine, September 2023

[8] https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/read_23_383

[9] https://neighbourhood-enlargement.ec.europa.eu/european-neighbourhood-policy/countries-region/ukraine/ukraine-facility_en

developing planning documents, establishing communication with international partners, and implementing restoration projects locally.

14. The recovery and development work of the United Nations in Ukraine is guided by the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2025-2029 targeting Human Capital and Population Dynamics, Inclusive Economic Growth, Environment and Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

IV. UN-Habitat's contribution to urban recovery in Ukraine

A. Principles

15. UN-Habitat interventions are undertaken in line with the below principles of action, defined in its Country Programme Framework:

(a) Supporting initiatives led by Ukrainian national and sub-national governments and communities, ensuring full local ownership through participation of civil society, academia and the private sector.

(b) Engaging in area-based approaches across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, through enhanced coordination and collaboration across organisations.

(c) Strengthening existing approaches and capacities in Ukraine, ensuring transmission of knowledge and skills to partnering organisations, including the Government, Ukrainian planning organisations, academia, the civil society, among others.

(d) Promoting social inclusion and participatory approaches to ensure that the needs of all are accounted for, including women, persons with disabilities and other groups at risk of vulnerability.

B. UN-Habitat's response in Ukraine

1. Overview of UN-Habitat's work in Ukraine

16. UN-Habitat has been collaborating with the Government of Ukraine, through the Ministry for Development of Communities and Territories, providing technical assistance in various instances for a sustainable urban recovery.

17. UN-Habitat has been engaging through the following inter-connected areas of work:

(a) **Policy advisory at national level**, for the creation of an enabling environment for urban recovery through the development of an Urban Recovery Framework (URF), based on diagnostics of key areas for urban recovery, including capacities for urban planning and built environment management; regulatory frameworks for recovery and reconstruction planning; housing; smart cities and digital governance, etc.

(b) **Technical support in strategic and territorial planning for urban recovery** through a participatory, evidence-based, spatial and integrated approach. The Ukraine Urban Lab, convening expertise from Ukraine and abroad, collaborates with selected local governments and communities to co-develop statutory recovery planning documents.

(c) **Knowledge and capacity development**, enhancing spatial planning and provision of urban basic services capacities, as well as urban expertise essential for Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction, in the public and private sectors and among civil society organizations.

(d) **Development of digital solutions and capacities** for data-informed and participatory recovery planning efforts.

18. UN-Habitat's current work in Ukraine is being funded by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany-BMZ (11.8 million USD), UNICEF (0.9 million USD), the Government of the Slovak Republic (270,000 USD) and the Government of the United States of America (50,000 USD).

19. UN-Habitat's leveraged corporate support with key technical contributions from the United Nations Innovation Technology Accelerator for Cities (UNITAC) and the Global Water Operators' Partnership Alliance (GWOPA).

20. UN-Habitat's office in Kyiv is co-located with the UN Resident Coordinator Office and most of the UN agencies facilitating collaboration across the UN system, including UNOPS, UNICEF, UNDP, UNHCR and IOM. To date, UN-Habitat team is composed of twenty-one (21) personnel.

21. UN-Habitat activities are being delivered under the umbrella of the UN Sustainable

Development Cooperation Framework 2025-2029, which has succeeded the UN Transitional Framework for Ukraine 2022-2024.

2. Achievements so far

22. In support of the urban recovery framework in Ukraine, UN-Habitat has supported the conceptualization of the development of thematic papers on critical topics, including housing, local recovery, decentralization, capacities in the built environment, land management.

23. UN-Habitat has been providing technical support at the request of the government, on selected normative areas, including the ongoing reform of the Housing Code of Ukraine. UN-Habitat has also contributed to the finalization of the concept of the Urban Development Code led by the Parliament.

24. UN-Habitat Ukraine Urban Lab has been supporting local-level recovery planning in eight municipalities across three regions (Kyiv, Lviv, Poltava). Eight city profiles and eight statutory recovery plans, that will better inform decision making processes, have been adopted by the respective city councils. The plans include the identification of short, medium and long-term recommendations, strategies and actions for the recovery and reconstruction of human settlements.

25. UN-Habitat continues to promote replicable models, document lessons learned and encourage inter-hromada collaboration. By connecting local governments with Sister Agencies, IFIs and donors, and aligning local recovery efforts with national strategies, UN-Habitat works to set a foundation for resilient, locally-led recovery.

26. Capacity development activities, including on-the job training, training sessions, workshops and peer-learning activities, have been implemented, benefitting over 80 local officials and 180 university-level students, among others.

27. UNITAC supports digital urban data generation and analysis for evidenced-informed and participatory decision making. UNITAC, in collaboration with the Ukraine Urban Lab, contributed to urban profiling, introducing or upgrading digital technologies and innovation to guide and support local recovery planning. Digital tools include analysis and visualization of geospatial data, scenario planning, as well as public participation. The deployment of the tools is associated with relevant IT assessment activities and relevant training to the partner municipalities.

28. In line with the restoration of urban basic services, UN-Habitat, through the Global Water Operators Partnership Alliance (GWOPA) is also supporting the improvement and management capacities of heavily damaged water and sanitation services in Zaporizhzhia Region and Krivy Rih, notably through peer-learning mechanisms and pilot projects.

29. UN-Habitat collaborates with a wide range of partners, including the Ministry of Development of Communities and Territories of Ukraine, UNICEF, Agency for Legislative Initiatives, Restart, Ro3kvit, IMPACT, Urban Reform, Kharkiv School of Architecture, Kyiv School of Economics, Alliance of Ukrainian Universities and Cedos.

C. Lessons Learned, gaps and challenges

30. UN-Habitat identified the following lessons and gaps, based also on feedback from national and local governments and partners:

At local level:

(a) All levels of government identified inter-hromada collaboration as an effective tool to reducing costs through reaching scale, sharing capacities, basic services and infrastructure (e.g., education, waste management, etc.), as well as promoting integrated territorial approaches.

(b) The use of spatial analysis and planning is recognized by participating municipalities as a powerful approach to streamline and prioritise short-term and long-term interventions, as opposed to the current focus on lists of projects, and nurture strategic and inter-municipal investments to identify priority interventions in the short term, recovery options in the medium term and reconstruction solutions in the long term.

(c) Several municipalities expressed interest in further support from UN-Habitat to translate the recovery plans into capital investment planning and development, and effective implementation of projects.

(d) The integration of digital tools has brought new opportunities for evidence-based planning. However, the limited digital capacity at the local level and the fragmented data landscape have posed challenges. Lessons learned include the importance of combining high-tech tools with capacity development and ensuring that data efforts are demand-driven and directly tied to local planning processes.

At national level:

(a) The Government and the private sector recognize the need for developing long-term capacities of national/regional/local governments and built environment practitioners beyond the short-term recovery needs. Transformative changes should happen to train the next generation of urban planners and architects.

(b) Coordination of stakeholders in the area of urban recovery and reconstruction planning could be enhanced, overcoming scattered interventions and duplication of efforts at local level. The Ukraine Urban Lab is engaging in sharing experience and lessons learned to foster a community of practice on local recovery planning.

(c) Legislations and policies for recovery and reconstruction planning are complex and often challenging to apprehend and implement. There is a need for a more focused legislation and policy environment that further enables local level recovery and reconstruction initiatives.

(d) There is a need to update the General Territorial Planning Scheme of the Ukrainian Territory as the strategic umbrella document at the national level, to new realities, development goals and unfold alignment of territorial and cross-border planning strategies.

31. Challenges and risks confronted by UN-Habitat include:

(a) Operating in the context of an ongoing armed conflict has presented a wide range of operational and programmatic challenges due to the volatile security situation. Therefore, the project has adopted a geographically diverse approach, maintained updated contingency plans and provided regular support for staff well-being, including mental health services.

(b) There is a need to better coordinate approaches, share experience and lessons learned to improve the overall quality of recovery planning and sectoral interventions, as well as ensure an even distribution of support among Ukrainian municipalities. It could be addressed through strengthened coordination mechanisms and platforms for exchange and live learning.

(c) At the local level, capacity constraints, staff turnover, and military conscription have affected the engagement of national partners, organizations and institutions. This is being mitigated through sustained technical support, diversified range of partners and digital solutions enhancing the accessibility of technical assistance.

(d) The funding for urban recovery and reconstruction activities is very limited. Securing a strong donor base is a prerequisite to sustain UN-Habitat presence in Ukraine.

V. Way forward

32. Building on lessons-learned, emerging needs and requests for support by Ukrainian counterparts and stakeholders, UN-Habitat, in consultation with the Ukrainian authorities, is proposing to pursue and extend the scope of work as follows, pending sufficient funding:

33. Continuing the development of the Urban Recovery Framework and implementing selected recommendations:

(a) While the current project has focused on diagnostics of regulations, policies and mechanisms at national level, for urban recovery and reconstruction, it will be important to continue diving further into more sectorial analysis and technical support to the Government of Ukraine, including on housing, urban development, inter-hromada cooperation, people-centred smart cities as well as territorial planning at the national level, focused on urban and territorial regeneration.

(b) UN-Habitat could also provide technical support for the implementation of selected recommendations and supporting the reform for urban recovery. This may include:

- Development of a national-level macro-economic diagnostic in support of a revamped General Territorial Planning Scheme for Ukraine and a sound identification of priority investment locations;
- Enhancing the training of urban practitioners in the long term, through the development of curricula on urban issues and sustainable reconstruction, ensuring their integration into public and private education systems and other relevant sectors;
- Continued support to the reform of the Housing Code and the creation of the Urban Development Code.

34. Sustaining and Advancing Municipal Planning and Projects:

(a) UN-Habitat was requested to support the development of sectoral plans such as water and sanitation recovery plans and industrial/ regeneration plans, and the preparation of capital investment projects.

(b) Besides, UN-Habitat was asked to expand its assistance to additional municipalities requiring local recovery and planning support, specifically in Eastern regions, to assist in restoring living conditions, facilitating returns and fostering urban regeneration. UN-Habitat is well positioned to provide technical assistance to IFIs for the implementation of recovery projects in partner municipalities in support of the statutory recovery plans.

(c) UN-Habitat could scale the digital urban recovery planning system to other locations in Ukraine. A stronger integration of the digital tools and data visualization with existing methodologies could further support urban recovery in Ukraine and beyond.

35. Supporting knowledge exchange and management on spatial planning for recovery

(a) The Ukraine Urban Lab would continue its engagement in detailed methodologies so as to upscaling spatial analysis and planning in support of prioritization of short-term and long-term interventions, and strategic and inter-municipal investments. This is to help facilitate evidenced-based decision-making and leveraging capital investment projects triggered from the Ukraine Facility and other bilateral funds.

36. Supporting additional data collection and analysis to support longer term urban and territorial regeneration strategies:

(a) UN-Habitat could develop a State of the Ukrainian Cities Report, an adaptation of UN-Habitat's global knowledge product diagnosing urbanization in Ukraine, considering pre-conflict shifts in urbanization trends, decentralization, and conflict-induced changes in demographics and economic dynamics.

(b) In the same vein, UN-Habitat could develop a dedicated Housing and Land Management profile to inform the reconstruction process and provide scenario planning.

37. Supporting investment for recovery and reconstruction and establishing a broader donor base is needed, in support of urban recovery activities:

(a) The Government of the Slovak Republic and UN-Habitat are about to sign a Memorandum of Understanding to develop a Ukraine Urban Support Hub in Košice, Slovakia to leverage regional expertise in support of urban and territorial recovery in Ukraine.

(b) UN-Habitat is further engaging in collaboration and joint initiatives development with Sister UN Agencies and international partners to prompt broader and catalytical support to recovery and reconstruction, including through an urban working group under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator.

Annex

Update on the activities for the period November 2025 – February 2026

Additional achievements during the period

38. At the national level, the draft concept of the Urban Development Code led by the Parliament and supported by UN-Habitat was positively received at the Parliament. This opens the way (subject to funding) to draft the ensuing enforceable legal and regulatory framework that would comprehensively regulate the areas of spatial planning, land management, construction and financing in support of post-war recovery and approximation with the EU standards.

39. Building on the adoption of statutory recovery plans, the UN-Habitat Ukraine Urban Lab has continued to provide technical support to partner municipalities in translating these plans into implementable actions. This has included the preparation of implementation roadmaps, the development of project briefs, the designs of neighbourhood-level plans as well as strategies for blue-green networks and public spaces. In parallel, the Ukraine Urban Lab has prepared lessons-learned documents and organized knowledge exchange sessions with national and international partners to promote peer learning and foster a community of practice on local recovery planning.

40. In terms of capacity development, an additional 80 local self-government officials completed the housing and urban recovery capacity development course and received European higher-education credits.

41. The Ukrainian Water Operators' Partnerships (WOPs) Community of Practice, supported by the Global Water Operators Partnership Alliance (GWOPA), is now hosted on a new interactive digital platform to strengthen peer learning and collaborative streams among utilities.

Immediate way forward and perspectives

42. The Ukraine Urban Support Hub in Košice, Slovakia aimed at leveraging regional expertise in support of urban and territorial recovery in Ukraine, will be established by the Government of the Slovak Republic during the first semester of 2026. UN-Habitat will provide selected technical assistance to the Hub. This collaboration is expected to lead to the identification of further areas of collaboration and funding opportunities.

43. UN-Habitat, in collaboration with sister UN agencies such as UNICEF, UNHCR, and UNOPS, is advancing joint proposals to strengthen recovery and reconstruction in frontline hromadas. These efforts focus on integrated urban and area-based recovery planning, durable housing solutions, incl. for IDPs, community engagement and critical infrastructure restoration. Together, these actions aim to build resilient, inclusive, and sustainable urban recovery processes that not only address immediate needs but also lay the foundation for long-term stability and growth.

44. UN-Habitat is advancing a proposal to develop a Spatial Development Framework for Ukraine, grounded in proven methodologies and designed as a country-wide spatial analysis. This framework will provide a transparent, evidence-based baseline to guide recovery and development, while creating a shared platform for the Government, local authorities, and partners to align investments, policies, and city pathways toward a cohesive and competitive national future. The Government and IFIs echoed significant interest in this tool.

45. The principal project currently under implementation in Ukraine is scheduled for completion by the end of April 2026. Without the timely mobilization of additional resources, UN-Habitat will likely to be compelled to close its in-country office and manage residual activities remotely. This would significantly constrain the Organization’s ability to sustain the progress achieved so far, despite the continued and increasing demand for support from national and local partners in Ukraine.