



UN-HABITAT

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**Financial, budgetary and administrative matters: update on
the implications of the UN80 initiative for the structure,
staffing, budgetary planning and work of UN-Habitat**

Implications of the UN80 initiative for the structure, staffing, budgetary planning and work of UN-Habitat

Report of the Executive Director

I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to decision 2025/6 of the Executive Board of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the present document provides an update on the implications of the UN80 initiative for UN-Habitat. It complements the report of the Executive Director on the structure and division of responsibilities for the implementation of the strategic plan for the period 2026–2029 (HSP/EB.2026/4). The document is organized into four substantive sections that address the implications of the UN80 initiative for the structure, staffing, budgetary planning and work of UN-Habitat (sects. II–IV, respectively) and the way forward (sect. V).

II. Implications of the UN80 initiative for the structure of UN-Habitat

2. As a direct result of the UN80 initiative, a total of 16 positions funded by the regular budget were abolished with effect from 1 January 2026.
3. UN-Habitat's anticipation of the post cuts in its new organizational structure, which was aligned with its strategic plan for the period 2026–2029, enabled a smooth transition to the reduced workforce through functional realignment, task reabsorption and redistribution, resulting in minimal disruptions of internal operations. The measures taken included consolidating administrative and programmatic functions, streamlining reporting lines and strengthening efficiency through a more agile organizational structure.
4. While the organizational structure of UN-Habitat broadly remains as presented at the third session of 2025 of the Executive Board, the organization continues to review possible opportunities for redistribution and consolidation within the divisions in order to achieve further efficiencies.
5. Since March 2026, the UN80 initiative has advanced from its initial diagnostic phase to an implementation phase, with growing emphasis on structural and programmatic realignments across the United Nations system. While no changes to the governance structure or legislative mandate of UN-Habitat have been proposed, the organization is expected to participate in system-wide reforms

* HSP/EB.2026/17.

intended to strengthen coherence within the sustainable development pillar, including joint knowledge hubs, expertise-on-demand mechanisms and regional platform arrangements. Those reforms may influence future modalities of programme delivery and inter-agency collaboration but are not expected to alter the core mandate of UN-Habitat as the focal point for sustainable urbanization and human settlements.

III. Implications of the UN80 initiative for UN-Habitat staffing

6. In addition to the reduction in the number of regular budget posts, UN-Habitat is assessing future workforce requirements in the context of emerging developments under the UN80 initiative related to shared expertise, mobility and common service arrangements. Particular attention is being given to preserving specialized expertise in urbanization while increasing organizational flexibility through workforce planning, skills mapping, cross-functional teams, digital learning and workforce redeployment mechanisms.
7. UN-Habitat is also participating in United Nations Secretariat-wide efforts to identify opportunities for greater efficiency through location-neutral support services and the potential redistribution of selected administrative functions to lower-cost duty stations where appropriate. Any such measures will be implemented while safeguarding operational effectiveness and programme delivery capacity.
8. To ensure that UN-Habitat can sustainably deliver on its mandate within the streamlined structure, UN-Habitat appeals to Member States to increase their support through the provision of Junior Professional Officers and gratis personnel. Additional contributions in those categories, coupled with enhanced capacity-building for existing teams, will be essential to help UN-Habitat absorb consolidated functions and maintain the level of technical expertise required to implement its strategic plan for the period 2026–2029.

IV. Implications of the UN80 initiative for the budgetary planning and work of UN-Habitat

9. The UN80 initiative calls for a shift in the ways in which the United Nations plans and administers resources, and UN-Habitat continues to regard internal restructuring and collaboration across pillars with a view to maximizing efficiency as essential to achieving cost reductions, yielding not only budgetary savings but also an optimal use of scarce resources. Furthermore, the implementation of General Assembly decisions on mandate life-cycle management and results-based resource allocation is expected to strengthen the alignment between mandates, resources, performance indicators and reporting requirements across the organization.
10. Since March 2026, the UN80 initiative has expanded its focus from immediate budget reductions to a broader transformation of administrative and business processes. In this context, the Secretariat is developing a unified services road map aimed at standardizing and modernizing administrative services across the United Nations system. As implementation progresses, UN-Habitat will continue to engage actively to ensure that efficiency gains reinforce programme delivery and responsiveness to the needs and requests of Member States. Implementation will require appropriate coordination across business, administrative and technology functions to ensure a smooth transition, interoperability and continuity of services.
11. UN-Habitat also expects opportunities to arise from the establishment of system-wide digital, data and technology initiatives under the UN80 framework, including shared data platforms and technology accelerators. Those initiatives could enhance evidence-based urban policy analysis, knowledge management, monitoring of Sustainable Development Goal localization, and support for Member States. Alignment with relevant United Nations-wide standards and shared solutions will be important to promote interoperability, security, cost-effectiveness and sustainable digital investments.
12. UN-Habitat is also exploring how the proposed joint knowledge hubs (work package 7) and expertise-on-demand mechanism (work package 8) could leverage the organization's comparative advantages in housing, informal settlement upgrading, urban data, Sustainable Development Goal localization, climate resilience and local government support. Such mechanisms could increase the visibility and accessibility of UN-Habitat expertise across the wider United Nations development system and country teams.

V. Next steps

13. UN-Habitat will sustain its active engagement in UN80 discussions, surveys and consultations, and convey its strategic priorities in alignment with its strategic plan for the period 2026–2029, including with respect to regional and country-level reforms.

14. Since the launch of the UN80 initiative, UN-Habitat has engaged with the process as it has evolved across its three workstreams: efficiency in the United Nations Secretariat (workstream 1); mandate implementation review (workstream 2);¹ and structural and programmatic realignments (workstream 3). The UN80 initiative action plan,² issued by the Secretariat in November 2025, grouped 87 actions into 31 work packages across those workstreams. Continued implementation of the initiative will create further opportunities for UN-Habitat to reflect on mandate delivery, operational efficiency and its contribution to system-wide coherence.

15. While UN-Habitat has not been assigned any leading or co-leading role in UN80 workstreams, it is part of the Development (Secretariat) Cluster, co-led by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Environment Programme and the Economic Commission for Africa, and it engages actively in United Nations system-wide discussions as needed.

16. As discussions on work package 6 (Regional reset and regional platforms) continue under workstream 3, UN-Habitat will continue to closely monitor the potential implications for its regional architecture and support functions. At present, no decisions have been taken that would affect the location, mandate or operational structure of UN-Habitat regional offices. However, enhanced alignment between regional structures in the United Nations development system and country-level support mechanisms may require adjustments in coordination arrangements and service delivery models.

17. Since the issuance of the UN80 initiative action plan, the Secretary-General has established implementation arrangements designed to ensure coordinated execution of the initiative across all workstreams. UN-Habitat will continue to contribute, upon request, to consultations and technical discussions concerning sustainable development reforms, the urban dimensions of regional reset processes, and mechanisms intended to improve access to specialized expertise across the United Nations system.

18. UN-Habitat has welcomed and will continue to support ongoing efforts under the UN80 initiative to strengthen system-wide coherence in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Given the increasingly recognized role of sustainable urbanization in achieving multiple Sustainable Development Goals, UN-Habitat will in particular continue to advocate for the integration of urban perspectives into United Nations development system reforms, regional platforms, joint knowledge hubs and expertise-on-demand arrangements.

19. Through its co-chairing role in the Local2030 Coalition and the convening of the World Urban Forum, UN-Habitat will also contribute to advancing system-wide coherence and integration at the global, regional and local levels. Those platforms provide opportunities to reinforce the linkages between sustainable urbanization, localization of the Sustainable Development Goals and integrated support for Member States.

20. Looking further ahead, UN-Habitat will continue to monitor and assess the implications of UN80 reforms as implementation advances. While the initial phase of the initiative focused primarily on efficiency gains and budgetary adjustments, current discussions increasingly emphasize system-wide collaboration, integrated delivery models, knowledge sharing, digital transformation and effectiveness of mandate delivery. UN-Habitat will remain actively engaged to ensure that the reforms strengthen the organization's capacity to support Member States in advancing sustainable urbanization and implementing the New Urban Agenda in the context of achieving the 2030 Agenda.

¹ See <https://mandates.un.org/>.

² A coordination framework, planning and accountability tool and transparency measures shared with Member States by the Secretariat on 7 November 2025. Available at <https://www.un.org/un80-initiative/en/un80-initiative-action-plan>.