



**UNITED
NATIONS**

HSP/EB.2026/INF/11



**United Nations
Human Settlements
Programme**

Distr.: General
30 September 2026

Original: English

**Executive Board of the United Nations
Human Settlements Programme
Second session of 2026**
Nairobi, 24 and 25 November 2026
Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

**Update on normative and operational activities of
UN-Habitat, including activities in areas affected by conflict
and disasters**

Highlights of normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat for the period January – June 2026

Report of the Executive Director

I. Housing, Land, and Basic Services

1. At the thirteenth session of the World Urban Forum (WUF13) held in Baku in May 2026, UN-Habitat advanced adequate housing and informal settlement transformation as global priorities. The roundtable and high-level dialogues mobilized governments and partners around secure tenure, housing finance, inclusive development and sustainable housing systems. An intersessional meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG-H) on housing advanced discussions on environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient housing systems ahead of the third session of the OEWG-H scheduled for November 2026. UN-Habitat also launched the paper on “*Scaling Circular Construction to Realize the Right to Adequate Housing for All: Policy Pathways*” at WUF13.
2. UN-Habitat supported the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Informal Settlements Transformation Strategy, validated by ministers responsible for human settlements and disaster risk reduction, providing a regional framework to improve living conditions, tenure security and resilience, and integrate informal settlements into sustainable urban development.
3. At a pre-WUF13 event marking the twenty-year journey of the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN), partners identified five priorities: land for housing and informal settlement transformation, crisis contexts, climate action, women’s land rights and land-based financing.
4. UN-Habitat provided technical and knowledge support to China, Kenya, Mongolia and South Africa on urban sprawl, urban-rural connectivity and climate risks. It finalized the *Global Trends and Insights on Urban-Rural Linkages* report, the fifth *Compendium of Inspiring Practices on Urban-Rural Linkages* and the Flows-to-Action framework and advanced the agenda at the second African Urban Forum (AUF2), WUF13 and the 17th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP17).

* HSP/EB.2026/17.

5. UN-Habitat provided housing and land technical cooperation in Cabo Verde, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Uganda, Iraq, Palestine and Jordan. In Cabo Verde, it supported the application of the property tax code in pilot municipalities. In DRC, under the “*Programme d'appui à la mise en œuvre de la réforme foncière pour le sécurisation des investissements verts, la gestion durable des forêts et de la paix sociale en RDC*” (PARF II) funded by the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI)-, the organization supported implementation of the National Land Policy and land reform, including provincial land authorities, cadastral procedures and a land information system. In Uganda, four local governments mapped and registered customary land rights, issuing 18,583 Certificates of Customary Ownership to 13,825 beneficiaries, including 6,985 women, 8,825 men and 5,988 youth. In Iraq, 1,706 households converted occupancy certificates into formal land titles, and seven minority-community households received compensation-claim support. Finally, in Jordan, UN-Habitat strengthened housing and rental-market evidence to inform housing policies and the National Housing Strategy update.
6. Under the Harare Sustainable City Initiative in Zimbabwe, funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), UN-Habitat supported 12,917 vulnerable households in accessing basic services, processed 165.99 tons of waste, trained 519 stakeholders, established three Integrated Resource Recovery Centres and two Multifunctional Clean Energy Centres, and contributed to green building standards, circular economy reforms and waste management policies.
7. In the United Republic of Tanzania, UN-Habitat supported a national policy brief on solid waste management and marine litter. Waste Wise Cities assessments informed the “Climate and Clean Air Coalition Regional Roadmap to End Open Burning of Waste in Asia”. The International Day of Zero Waste campaign reached over 25 million users and strengthened partnerships with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), Association of Volunteers in International Service (AVSI), governments and local authorities.
8. UN-Habitat supported sustainable urban mobility in 29 cities across 22 countries, including street redesigns benefiting 106,000 people in Nairobi. Sustainable urban mobility plans, transport strategies and implementation plans were developed in seven cities. African Ministers endorsed the Pan-African Action Plan for Active Mobility, being rolled out in five countries, while the Global Alliance of Cities for Road Safety (ACRoS) and coordinate by UN-Habitat, expanded to 39 member cities.
9. Through GWOPA, UN-Habitat reached 305 institutional and 2,300 individual members; the Water Operators (WOPs) Observatory recorded 493 partnerships involving 773 operators. The EU-WOP Programme supported 21 partnerships and 34 utilities in 20 countries, improving drinking water access for 368,997 people and sanitation for 28,145 and training 7,976 utility staff. A fourteen million Euros (EUR 14m) Phase II programme was launched for the period 2026–2030.
10. UN-Habitat improved a Nairobi school’s infrastructure through gender-responsive sanitation, rainwater harvesting and water storage. Under the Citywide Inclusive Sanitation Programme, a Joint City/Utility Urban Sanitation Master Plan Guide was developed, and institutional capacity diagnostics were completed for the cities of Mafra, Nakuru, Pasto and Tultitlán .
11. Through the eighth Replenishment Cycle of the Global Environment Facility (GEF-8), UN-Habitat advanced urban energy for the Nairobi Sustainable City Integrated Project. The organization supported Ghana on urban energy access and Kenya on the Green Building Standards review, as well as UN-Energy advocacy on energy access and affordable housing.

II. Environment and Climate Action

12. Under the Sustainable Urban Resilience for the Next Generation (SURGe) Initiative, the publication *Urban Content in NDC 3.0* established cities as central to national climate commitments. SURGe helped translate its findings into practical support through workshops in Africa, Asia-Pacific, and the Caribbean, while amplifying messages at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP30), at WUF13, and at the 64th Session of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies (SB64).
13. UN-Habitat and the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate (GCoM) co-hosted the Innovate4Cities Conference (I4C26) in June 2026 at the UN-Habitat headquarters in Nairobi, its first edition in Africa. Almost 5,000 online registrants and 1,200 in-person participants joined 128 sessions connecting governments, researchers, practitioners, businesses and communities. It hosted the largest in-person review of the IPCC Special Report on

Climate Change and Cities, a Local Leaders Forum, Member State dialogue and the third AI x City Climate Action Hackathon, strengthening science-policy-practice collaboration and elevating African, Indigenous and community-led knowledge

14. The I4C26 Conference contributed to advancing multilevel climate action, linking science to action via the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) SRCities process. Regional strategies supported over 12 countries through regional workshops in the Caribbean and Africa, and prioritization of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) related activities.
15. Under the Science to Action workstream supporting the IPCC Special Report on Climate Change and Cities, UN-Habitat and GCoM convened a workshop in Brussels in April on communicating urban climate action, identifying priority actions and strategies based on the report. The I4C26 Conference in June 2026 hosted the world's largest in-person review of its Second Order Draft, building on the First Order Draft input process in December 2025.
16. Through the Resilient Settlements for the Urban Poor (RISE UP) flagship programme, UN-Habitat supported cities and national counterparts to translate climate commitments into locally led action, advancing climate, urban and biodiversity Multilayered Vulnerability Assessments and Urban Resilience Action Plans. A second Global Workshop in Nairobi convened cities from nine countries to strengthen implementation, finance readiness and partnerships.

III. Urban Crisis Prevention and Response

17. UN-Habitat supported crisis-affected communities across 23 countries, demonstrating the value of urban and spatial approaches to crisis prevention, response, recovery and solutions to internal displacement.
18. Through the Geneva Technical Hub 2.0, a multi-partner initiative led by UNHCR, UN-Habitat provides expertise on sustainable settlement planning to strengthen climate resilient human settlements benefiting displaced and host communities, with support from ECHO and the Swiss Development Cooperation. By June 2026, planned support included Burundi on planning and flood risk management, the Central African Republic on sustainable planning in migration contexts, and Chad on analyzing the spatial evolution of displacement-affected areas.
19. In Palestine, UN-Habitat finalized the UN Strategic Housing, Land and Property (HLP) Framework for the Gaza Strip. This is being operationalized through a partnership with UNDP, with support from Norway. The Gaza Urban Profile provides evidence for area-based recovery planning. UN-Habitat also finalized a pilot housing repair project, with support from Japan, helping 70 families to return and ensuring basic habitability. It also created extra hosting capacity, taking more families out of camps. Additional actors are now helping to scale the approach.
20. UN-Habitat, with funding from the United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF), supported Colombia's Ministry of Housing, Cities and Territory to strengthen housing policies for victim reparations, including informal settlement mapping methodology and technical advice on temporary rental subsidies.
21. UN-Habitat continues to support resilient reconstruction and urban recovery. In Afghanistan, with funding from the Afghanistan Humanitarian Fund (AHF), the Special Trust Fund for Afghanistan (STFA) and, in earthquake-affected areas, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), community-driven interventions provided shelter, HLP, basic services and climate-resilient infrastructure for displaced people and returnees, applying build back better approaches. In Mozambique, with funding from Norway and Sweden, City Resilience Action Plans prioritized investments in four cities, supporting implementation of the Government's Flood Reconstruction Plan.
22. Ukraine remained a key focus, with completed projects on inclusive recovery and digital tools, supported by Germany, complemented by new proposals with UNHCR and UNICEF for housing and resilience planning in frontline areas.

IV. Urban Policy, Planning and Finance

23. UN-Habitat advanced National Urban Policy processes in Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Egypt, Mozambique,

Paraguay, Saudi Arabia and Senegal through policy frameworks, demonstration projects and coordination mechanisms. It developed guidance on socially inclusive National Urban Policies and risk management and fostered policy dialogue through partnerships, advocacy and WUF13 sessions.

24. UN-Habitat strengthened legal and institutional frameworks in Botswana, Kenya, Malaysia, Syria and Ukraine, advancing climate-responsive planning, housing, land and property rights and local governance reforms. Normative products addressed adequate housing, food loss and waste and conflict recovery, while the 11th International Urban Law Conference held in Mexico City in May 2026 promoted methodologies for effective legislative frameworks.
25. UN-Habitat advanced metropolitan governance through technical cooperation, partnerships and advocacy, including preparations for the Global State of Metropolises Report, a contribution agreement with the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona, progress on the MetroHUB Centre partnership with Politecnico di Milano and guidance on metropolitan housing management.
26. UN-Habitat launched the “*Guide to Creating Urban Public Spaces for Children; Legislation, Governance and Finance of Public Spaces;*” and the guideline on “*Engaging Youth in Making Cities Healthier*” in addition to three policy briefs. The Public Space for Early Childhood Development initiative progressed in Brazil, Colombia and Mexico, while the Young Gamechangers Initiative advanced in Senegal, Colombia and India, adding two public spaces in Senegal and completing its external evaluation. Block by Block progressed toward scale-up as Games for Urban Futures, with engagement at the Games & SDGs Summit in Nairobi. In partnership with WHO, UN-Habitat is laying the foundation to renew the *Housing and Health guidelines*.
27. UN-Habitat delivered Own Source Revenue analyses for Penang, Malaysia, and Bangui, Central African Republic, launched financial strategies in Senegal and Tunisia, and finalized fiscal space assessments in six African capitals.

V. Multilevel Governance and Localization of the SDGs

28. UN-Habitat advanced SDG localization and multilevel governance as a practical means of addressing everyday challenges, including adequate housing, secure tenure, basic services and resilience.
29. As permanent co-chair of the Local2030 Coalition and host of its Secretariat, UN-Habitat strengthened a coordinated UN system support for SDG localization by building national and subnational government capacity and connecting territorial priorities with UN entities, development partners, financing and locally led solutions.
30. At WUF13 in Baku, the Local2030 Coalition convened its Steering Committee and presented the *Road to Baku: The Local Way* report, bringing local evidence into a major international forum. In April, it advanced the Seville Platform for Action, co-led with Spain and OECD, through dialogue connecting territorial priorities with national and international financing.
31. With the support from Spain and the Basque Country, the second Bilbao Bootcamp, held in June 2026, convened 227 participants and 20 country teams, applying the Localization Blueprint and SDG Localization Marker through programme design, investor clinics and a partnership marketplace. Twelve (12) new joint programmes are expected to receive USD 36 million in catalytic financing, building on USD 44 million invested across 38 countries that helped leverage USD 235 million; up to USD 340 million in potential co-financing was identified.
32. UN-Habitat led the implementation of National SDG Localization Frameworks and the related Handbook under the Partnership Platform on Localizing the SDGs. Its Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) Peer Learning Series convened 17 countries across five sessions, culminating in a VNR SDG Localization Joint Message included by countries such as Italy, Senegal, Brazil, Mozambique and Jordan in their 2026 VNRs and presented at the 2026 High Level Political Forum (HLPF). The Platform’s 2026 Annual Meeting gathered over 200 in-person participants and initiated the design of its second phase.
33. UN-Habitat launched the SDG Cities Lusophone Network and continued global engagement with more than 300 cities across 80 countries through the SDG Cities Global Community. In November 2026, Shanghai will host the 2026 SDG Cities Global Conference.

VI. Knowledge, Data and Digitalization

34. UN-Habitat continued advancing knowledge, data and digitalization for policy design and implementation on adequate housing and sustainable urbanization. The *World Cities Report 2026: The Global Housing Crisis – Pathways to Action* examines the multidimensional drivers, impacts and potential solutions to the global housing crisis, drawing on new global housing data and positioning housing as a key entry point for inclusive and sustainable development. Launched at WUF13 in Baku, it recorded 23,833 combined page views and downloads by 20 August 2026.
35. UN-Habitat led key global monitoring and reporting processes, including the mid-term review of the New Urban Agenda, informing the Secretary-General's Quadrennial Report to the General Assembly, and the global SDG 11 review presented at HLPF 2026, including the launch of the *SDG 11 Global Report 2026*. Housing and urban data systems were strengthened through the Degree of Urbanization methodology (DEGURBA), digital mapping and Earth Observation technologies for profiling slums and informal settlements, and targeted capacity development in ten countries. These efforts strengthened global housing data on adequacy, affordability, informality and spatial inequalities and national and local capacities to produce comparable, policy-relevant information.
36. UN-Habitat further operationalized the Global Urban Data Coalition (GUDC) as a multi-stakeholder platform for addressing critical gaps in urban and housing data, integrating statistical, geospatial, Earth observation and emerging digital data. Its two technical streams advanced harmonized methodologies for monitoring slums and informal settlements and urban expansion and vacant land. At its third general meeting during WUF13, members reviewed progress, the proposed 2026–2029 work plan, member contributions, and links to SDG 11 reporting.
37. Through UNITAC, UN-Habitat supported digital tools for urban recovery and resilience in Ukraine and Namibia. In Ukraine, over 45 local officials across four municipalities were trained in data-driven recovery planning, contributing to a digital Urban Recovery Planning System (URPS). In Namibia, UNITAC supported Windhoek's People-Centred Smart City Strategy, delivered seven profile reports covering 162 informal settlements across seven cities, and deployed the Digital Job Card in four municipalities. Partnerships also advanced informal-settlement mapping (UNITAR/UNOSAT), resilient cities and just digital transitions (UNEP), people-centred smart cities (ITU/U4SSC), and the Global Digital Compact through the Mayors for Digital Cooperation alliance (ODET).

VII. Capacity Development

38. UN-Habitat advanced the Global Urban Leadership Programme through strategic partnerships, leadership training, peer learning and competency-based capacity development, connecting government officials, urban practitioners, technical experts, academia and centres of excellence to strengthen capacities for transformative, resilient and inclusive urban development.
39. Through its partnership with the Republic of Korea, UN-Habitat's International Urban Training Centre delivered programmes on regional economic development, urban economic services and infrastructure, and housing and urban resilience. A Training of Trainers strengthened Hanoi officials, national experts and training specialists; a programme for officials from Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) and Myanmar addressed country-office priorities. A third programme on the Housing at the Centre Approach for Urban Resilience in Asian Cities was delivered in August 2026.
40. UN-Habitat mobilized specialized expertise for projects in Kosovo¹, Ukraine and Cambodia through Arcadis and its Cooperate Social Responsibility (CRS) programme, covering social and affordable housing, blue-green networks and nature-based solutions for urban recovery, and community-based adaptation and ecosystem resilience.
41. UN-Habitat piloted a competency-based approach to urban resilience in Belize and Zambia, assessing competency gaps, strengthening practical capabilities of government officials and practitioners and fostering collaboration across government, cities, academia and professional disciplines.
42. UN-Habitat expanded its digital learning portfolio through 30 free, self-paced multilingual courses, including

¹ Any reference to Kosovo in United Nations documents and United Nations websites, whether to the territory, institutions or population, is to be understood in full compliance with Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo. Kosovo is therefore not listed as a country".

The Housing Primer: Why Adequate Housing Matters, a mobile micro-learning course launched at WUF13, and *Key Principles for Effective Urban Governance: Public Oversight, Dispute Resolution, and Ensuring Equality for All*.

43. UN-Habitat launched the first WUF Academy at WUF13, connecting universities, schools, training institutions, practitioners and innovators through nearly 100 Academy events and more than 40 masterclasses. Its WUF Academy Campus provided an interactive learning space, with partners delivering around 50 short academic lectures and innovation-led workshops.

VIII. Global Advocacy and Partnerships

44. UN-Habitat advocated for WUF13 through more than 135 mobilization activities across over 40 countries, 23 multilingual information sessions, eight media briefings, diplomatic briefings in New York, Geneva, Nairobi and Baku, and 36 regional and in-country advocacy initiatives by Country Office teams. These events raised awareness of adequate housing and sustainable urbanization, encouraged participation and strengthened engagement with policymakers, journalists and urban development stakeholders. This outreach contributed to strong WUF13 participation totaling 58,000 participants, including 110 Ministers, 78 Deputy Ministers, 96 Ambassadors/Permanent Representatives, 18 Governors, 10 Deputy Governors, 110 mayors, 27 Deputy Mayors, 260 exhibitors, and 564 main session and partner-led events
45. Extensive engagement of stakeholders for WUF13 preparations included virtual meetings to plan for Assemblies and Roundtables, and to consult on the WUF13 outcome document – *the Baku Call to Action*. Over 3,500 stakeholders and organizations participated, creating momentum for the event. Engagement was coordinated with 11 stakeholder groups through bilateral meetings with key partners and organizations, sectoral meetings, including with climate organizations, and by convening a Global Stakeholder Dialogue with the Executive Director. The stakeholder-developed *Baku Call to Action* was a significant outcome of WUF13, presenting a roadmap for addressing the drivers of the housing crisis, responding to its direct manifestations and transforming housing systems to achieve a sustainable future for all.

IX. Human Rights and Social Inclusion

46. Human rights, gender equality and social inclusion remained central priorities, with emphasis on advocacy and convening. UN-Habitat promoted equal land rights for women and girls, including at the seventieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women in partnership with Tajikistan and Kenya. The Nepal Country Team and GWOPA were recognized as 2026 UN-Habitat Gender Champions. At the 2026 ECOSOC Youth Forum, UN-Habitat and UNEP co-organized the SDG 11 thematic session on youth-led responses to housing insecurity, climate vulnerability and urban inequality.
47. In preparation for WUF13, UN-Habitat strengthened coordination on gender equality and the rights and inclusion of older persons, Indigenous Peoples, children and youth and persons with disabilities. Regional children and youth consultations informed Forum preparations and related Local2030 Coalition processes. Dedicated assemblies, roundtables and pavilions at WUF13 supported integration of human rights, gender equality, accessibility, safety and social inclusion across the Forum and the Baku Call to Action, with support from UN Women, OHCHR, the UN Youth Office and UN DESA.
48. UN-Habitat advanced gender-equitable and disability-inclusive climate infrastructure at Innovate4Cities 2026 and contributed urban perspectives to UN reporting on youth and disability inclusion, including the Secretary-General's report on *Policies and Programmes Involving Youth* for the sixty-fifth session of the Commission for Social Development and implementation of the resolution on Inclusive Development for and with Persons with Disabilities.