

Reference: UNH-SGB-O-20192

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) presents its compliments to the Permanent and Observer Missions to UN-Habitat and has the honor, on behalf of the Chair of the Ad-Hoc Working Group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters, Romania and the Co-Chair, Pakistan, to provide the attached summary of the discussions during the second meeting of the Ad-Hoc working group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters which was held on Wednesday 26 February 2020 at UNON.

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Permanent and Observer Mission to UN- Habitat the assurances of its highest consideration.



3 March 2020

Permanent and Observer Missions  
to UN-Habitat  
NAIROBI

**Summary of the second meeting of the Ad-Hoc Working Group on programmatic, budgetary and administrative matters of the Executive Board held on Wednesday 26 February 2020 at UNON**

The meeting considered the following items:

**1. Discussions on the draft Work Programme and budget of UN- Habitat for the year 2021**

- a) The Secretariat provided a briefing on the draft work programme and budget for the year 2021, specifically covering the Budget for the year 2021 which was indicated as USD 266.4 Million. The Budget was presented in five segments as follows;

Foundation Non-Earmarked - US\$ 33.9 Million

Regular Budget -US\$ US\$ 14.2 Million

Programme Support US\$ 10.3 Million

Foundation Earmarked US\$44.0 Million

Technical Cooperation US\$164.0

- b) The full presentation made by the Secretariat is available at [https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2020/02/2021-budget\\_presentation\\_to\\_eb\\_working\\_group.v2\\_1.pdf](https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2020/02/2021-budget_presentation_to_eb_working_group.v2_1.pdf)

In the discussions, the following issues were raised:

- i. The draft work programme and budget for the year 2021 should be more specific on how to address gender and geographical distribution.
  - ii. It was recalled that the Executive Board requested in paragraph 6 of Decision 2019/2 that the Executive Director should provide at its first session of the year 2020, a report on UN- Habitat actions to address geographical and gender imbalances in the composition of its staff, with a particular focus on equitable geographical representation and gender balance, including progress in the achievement of its gender parity target for positions financed by all sources of funding.
  - iii. The Secretariat should consider a more realistic budget for the year 2021 and, in this regard, prepare alternative scenarios for the draft budget for the year 2021, including risk assessment, to be shared with Member States for discussion during the next meeting of the Ad-Hoc working group to be held on 11 March 2020.
  - iv. The reform of the development system and management of the United Nations should be mentioned in the current version of the draft work programme and budget for the year 2021.
  - v. The draft work programme for the year 2021 should reflect how UN Habitat is planning to collaborate with other UN agencies and seek opportunities for other cross-sectional subprogrammes.
- c) The Secretariat confirmed that a report on UN- Habitat actions to address geographical and gender imbalances in the composition of its staff, with a particular focus on equitable geographical representation and gender balance will be presented to the Executive Board for its consideration at its first session of the year 2020. It also

confirmed that it had considered the reform of the development system and management of the United Nations in preparing the 2021 draft work programme and budget and was collaborating with other UN Agencies. The Secretariat further emphasized that the recently concluded tenth session of the World Urban Forum (WUF 10) provided a platform to strengthen such collaborations.

**REQUIRED ACTION:**

It was agreed that the Secretariat will prepare the alternative scenarios for the 2021 draft budget as requested for transmission to Member States before the meeting to be held on 11 March 2020.

**2. Status of implementation of the recommendations of the Audit and Evaluation reports for the year ending 31 December 2018**

- a) The Secretariat provided an oral briefing to the Ad- hoc working group on the status of implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of Board of Auditors (BOA) for the year ending 31 December 2018.

The briefing highlighted the following:

- i. The Secretariat is currently working on the implementation of the audit recommendations contained in the 2018 audit report, issued in July 2019.
  - ii. There are multiple formal processes for tracking and reporting the implementation of audit recommendations: i) it is tracked by the BOA and reported to the General Assembly ii) It is formally reported by the Executive Director (ED) to the Secretary General (SG) and reflected in the ED performance compact with the SG and iii) In addition, it is also reported to the Administrative Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) as part of the budget review process.
  - iii. Out of the total 22 recommendations, 10 have already been implemented and 12 are under implementation. The remaining audit recommendations are planned to substantially be completed in time for the upcoming 2019 audit expected by April 2020.
  - iv. The Secretariat is developing a new Cost Recovery Policy and proceeding with ongoing benchmarking with other UN Agencies. The Secretariat also coordinating the discussions with the UN Controller's Office and UNON. The Secretariat is targeting to present the new Cost Recovery Policy at the next session of the Executive Board.
- b) Due to time constraints the status of implementation of the recommendations of the Evaluation report for the year ending 31 December 2018 was not presented.

**ACTION:**

Member States took note of the progress made in addressing the recommendations contained in the Audit and Evaluation reports for the year ending 2018.

### **3. Briefing on the outcome of the just concluded tenth session of the World Urban Forum**

- a) The Secretariat provided a briefing to the Ad- Hoc working group on the recently concluded tenth session of the World Urban Forum (WUF 10) which took place from 8 to 13 February 2020 in Abu Dhabi.

The briefing highlighted the following:

- i. WUF 10 provided for closer UN integration with 4 (four) Under Secretary Generals, 5(five) Assistant Secretary Generals and 10(ten) Regional Representatives and specialized agencies. There was particularly strong presence of UNESCO, UNDP and UNEP.
  - ii. WUF 10 achieved gender equality with a representation of 51% of women and 49% of men.
  - iii. WUF 10 presented an opportunity to highlight contributions and impacts of UN- Habitat's 2014- 2019 Strategic Plan and launching of flagship programmes which have been prioritized the 2020- 2023 Strategic Plan of the UN- Habitat.
  - iv. The Ministerial Roundtable was well attended with high level participation including in the panel discussions by Member States.
  - v. The following four initiatives were part of the WUF 10 legacy:
    - saw the launch of the WUF Alumni network,
    - the launch of the Capital Investment Platform which matches cities and investors in priority areas forming part of UN- Habitat's new stream of work on sustainable finance,
    - a WUF living legacy project demonstrating contribution to sustainable urban development of WUF host cities, and
    - launch of a Public Art for Abu Dhabi, initiative from DMT on a cycling circuit in Abu Dhabi (+400km)
  - vi. The major outcome of WUF 10 is a 'Declared Actions' document, prepared by the Advisory group of WUF 10, which outlines the commitments of stakeholders and partners on the actions they will take in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and New Urban Agenda. The "Declare Actions" document is available at <https://wuf.unhabitat.org/node/145>
- b) The State of Israel stated that it considered WUF 10 to have not lived up to the principles of openness and inclusiveness of the United Nations and requested that UN- Habitat should ensure that all Member States will participate in the next session of WUF, that is WUF 11 to be held in Poland in 2022.

#### **REQUIRED ACTION:**

The Chair of the Ad- Hoc working group requested the Secretariat to share with Member States a one pager on the main outcomes of WUF 10. This document will be transmitted under a separate cover.

**4. Schedule of meetings of the Ad- hoc working group**

- a) The following tentative schedule of meetings was agreed upon:
- i. **4 March 2020:** Presentation on pre-session documents not necessarily requiring approval at 2020 first regular meeting : (i) Presentation of the Draft Capacity Building Strategy (ii) Presentation on progress made on implementing UN Systemwide Guidelines on Safer Cities, specifically, the concept note (iii) Discussions on prioritization process of normative and operational activities within the Strategic Plan of 2020-2023 (iv) Update on the restructuring process.
  - ii. **11 March 2020:** Discussions on the draft work programme and budget of UN- Habitat for the year 2021 and on the alternative scenarios on the draft budget prepared by the Secretariat. The Secretariat was tasked to transmit the alternative scenarios to the Member States before the meeting.
- b) The Chair finally encouraged Member States to provide in writing through the Secretariat any comments they may have on the draft work programme and draft budget for the year 2021. The emails for such written inputs are [UNHABITAT-SGB@un.org](mailto:UNHABITAT-SGB@un.org) and [Chris.mensah@un.org](mailto:Chris.mensah@un.org).