

Draft, version of 16 February 2023

## UN-Habitat Stakeholder Engagement Policy

### 1. Introduction

1.1 This stakeholder engagement policy only applies to stakeholder engagement in the UN-Habitat Assembly, the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR), the Executive Board (EB) and its related working groups<sup>1</sup>, hereafter referred to as intergovernmental meetings. This policy responds to relevant UN-Habitat and UN rules and regulations and builds on the experience of UN-Habitat at all levels. The Stakeholder Engagement Policy applies to the following three different forms of Stakeholder Engagement:

- a) In the preparations for UN-Habitat intergovernmental meetings,
- b) During UN-Habitat intergovernmental meetings,
- c) Post UN-Habitat intergovernmental meetings and follow-up, including structured dialogues and consultations with UN Habitat senior management. [Ad Ref 15 Feb 2023](#)

1.2 The UN-Habitat partnership strategy, implementing partners' policy and standard operating procedures, agreements, and other legal instruments,<sup>2</sup> including Agreements of Cooperation, Memorandums of Understanding, community contracts [\[EGY insertion of a footnote on definition of community contract\]](#), and private sector partnership agreements provide for stakeholder engagement in the implementation of UN-Habitat programmes and projects.

1.3 UN-Habitat is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly<sup>3</sup> to promote sustainable cities and human settlements and adequate shelter for all. [\[H\] {USA+} \[UN-Habitat\] {USA+}](#) is the focal point and coordinating agency for sustainable urbanization, Sustainable Development Goal #11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities<sup>4</sup>) and the custodial agency for the New Urban Agenda<sup>5</sup>. In fulfilling its functions, UN-Habitat works [\[ \] \[primarily\] {NGA+, TZA+}](#) with [Mmember Sstates.\[governments\] {TZA+} \[ and Observer States.\] {PSE+, DZA+, IDN+, ARG+, MAR+, USA-}, \[States non-members of the United Nations\] {ARG+, CHN+, USA+} \[including through local and regional levels , and with Observer States, major groups and other stakeholders\] {MAR+} \[at national, local and regional levels.\] {CMR+, TZA+} \[as well as\] {NGA+,DZA+, PSE-} \[and also\] {NGA+}](#) with local and regional governments, major groups, and other stakeholders [\[as defined in Chapter 4\]](#)

<sup>1</sup> This policy does not apply to non-legislative meetings such as sessions of the World Urban Forum, World Cities Day, and World Habitat Day.

<sup>2</sup> UN-Habitat agreements and legal instruments.

[https://habnet.unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/documents/11662\\_UN\\_Habitat\\_Agreements\\_&Legal\\_Instruments\\_Clearance\\_&\\_Signatories.pdf](https://habnet.unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/documents/11662_UN_Habitat_Agreements_&Legal_Instruments_Clearance_&_Signatories.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> GA Resolutions [32/162](#) of 19 December 1977, [56/206](#) of 21 December 2001, [65/165](#) of 20 December 2010, [66/207](#) of 22 December 2011, [67/216](#) of 21 December 2012, [68/239](#) of 27 December 2013, [69/226](#) of 19 December 2014, [70/210](#) of 22 December 2015, [71/235](#) of 21 December 2016, [72/226](#) of 20 December 2017, [73/239](#) of 20 December 2018 and [75/224](#) of 21 December 2020.

<sup>4</sup> SDG 11: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal11>

<sup>5</sup> The New Urban Agenda: <https://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/>

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{USA+}. [suggestion to use definition of Chapter 4 – NLD, suggestion to use definition of rules of procedure, CHN]

[Alt 1.3 In fulfilling its functions, UN-Habitat works [primarily with ] {NGA+} [to support] {NGA+} Member States, [ States non-members of the United Nations,] {NLD+, CMR+, USA-} at national, regional and local levels, including through working with [members of specialized agencies] {NLD+, CMR+} major groups and other stakeholders as defined in Chapter 4 ] {SWE+, NLD+, CMR+, CHN-}]{IDN reserve}

[ 2 Alt 1.3 In fulfilling its functions, UN-Habitat works [primarily] {NGA+} with United Nations Member States,

1.3 bis UN-Habitat also works with Observer States, local and regional governments, major groups as defined in Chapter 4 of this policy and Chapter 11 of the rules of procedure of the UN-Habitat Assembly.] {MAR+, NGA+, CHN+}

1.4 Stakeholders may attend and contribute to the [public] {CHN+, RUS+, NLD-, USA-, SWE-} intergovernmental meetings in accordance with the Rules of Procedure as well as the resolutions and decisions of the UN-Habitat Assembly<sup>6</sup>, the Committee of Permanent Representatives<sup>7</sup>, and the Executive Board<sup>8</sup>. Expert advice, the sharing of experiences, and scientific contributions to discussions are examples of stakeholder engagement that can be provided either through oral or written submissions, presentations, or the organisation of side events during intergovernmental meetings. Stakeholders are encouraged to enhance their coordinated engagement in the intergovernmental meetings, including through the organisation of stakeholder meetings such as the global stakeholder forum in the run up to the UN-Habitat Assembly.

1.5 While inputs from stakeholders can provide valuable contributions [and facilitate broader recognition and support] {CMR+, RUS+, NGA+, CHN+} to intergovernmental meetings [by the public] {CMR+, RUS+, NGA+, CHN+}, decision-making within UN-Habitat governing bodies remains the prerogative of Member States. [Nonetheless, intergovernmental decisions [tend to] {NGA+} have broader recognition and support from the public if stakeholders' views are considered in agenda setting, policy-making, and decision-making processes. ] {Deletion – CMR+, RUS+, NGA+, USA+, CHN+}

[Alt 1.5 Decision-making within UN-Habitat governing bodies remains the prerogative of Member States, while recognizing that inputs from stakeholders in Agenda setting, policy making and decision-making processes can provide valuable contributions and facilitate broader [public] {USA+} recognition and support [by the public] {USA+} to inter-governmental meetings [and decisions] {USA+}.] {NLD+, USA+, SWE+, CMR+, IDN+, CHN-}

1.6 Stakeholders may organise themselves and identify representatives from accredited organisations within their respective groups to facilitate their contributions to UN-Habitat intergovernmental meetings. Such arrangements are referred to as a Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism. Stakeholders will be guided by the Rules of Procedure of the UN-Habitat Assembly and the Executive Board and adhere to the principles outlined in this policy. Ad Ref 15 Feb 2023

<sup>6</sup> The UN-Habitat Assembly Rules of Procedure: <https://unhabitat.org/hspaha1hls2-decision-11-rules-of-procedure-of-the-united-nations-habitat-assembly>: Rules 10.5, 65-69

<sup>7</sup> The rules of procedures of the UN-Habitat Assembly apply, mutatis mutandis, to the Committee of Permanent Representatives: Rule 29.

<sup>8</sup> The UN-Habitat Executive Board Rules of Procedure: <https://unhabitat.org/hspaha1hls3-rules-of-procedure-of-the-executive-board-of-the-united-nations-human-settlements>: Rule 17.3

1.7 [The Executive Director of – Secretariat to provide legal advice] UN-Habitat [~~'s Executive Director~~] {CMR+} will facilitate the participation and preparations of stakeholders in UN-Habitat intergovernmental meetings, in accordance with Chapter 8 of this policy.

## 2. Purpose of the Policy

2.1. The purpose of the policy is to ensure effective, informed, and meaningful stakeholder engagement and involvement in UN-Habitat intergovernmental meetings. The policy will guide stakeholder contribution in support of Member States and UN-Habitat at three different levels of stakeholder engagement<sup>9</sup>.

2.2. Stakeholder engagement contributes to inclusive decision-making and to building support for the implementation of the decisions, recommendations, strategic plans, and work programmes approved by the UN-Habitat governing bodies. It also facilitates the implementation of the decisions coming from the United Nations General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in relation to UN-Habitat's mandate and work.

## 3. Guiding Principles

3.1 Stakeholder engagement in UN-Habitat intergovernmental meetings is guided by the following overarching guiding principles:

- a. **Acknowledging the intergovernmental nature of UN Habitat processes:** decision-making within UN-Habitat is the prerogative of Member States.
- b. **Actively contribute to the decision-making processes and agenda setting** in accordance with the UN-Habitat Assembly Rules of Procedure<sup>10</sup>, UN Habitat will provide access and participation privileges to all accredited stakeholders to allow them to contribute to decision making in support of Member States in a continuous way during UN-Habitat intergovernmental meetings as well as during inter-sessional periods.
- c. **Emphasizing accessibility to public information:** acknowledging the critical importance of consistent, timely, and accurate information for meaningful stakeholder engagement, UN-Habitat ensures access to public documents and information related to UN-Habitat intergovernmental meetings in a timely manner.
- d. **Respecting diversity of views, equality, non-discrimination, and the principle self-organisation:** all parties acknowledge that there is diversity of views, and are committed to a fair, transparent, open, accountable, and accessible engagement process.
- e. **Striving for transparency, accountability, and mutual benefit:** engagement is based on the premise of mutual trust and benefit, transparency, responsibility, and accountability.
- f. **Improving engagement practices:** All parties are committed to continual improvements to current engagement practices, including by exploring the use of innovative tools, mechanisms, and technology.

## 4. Definition of Stakeholders

<sup>9</sup> As described in item 1.1 above.

<sup>10</sup> Rule 10.5 of the UN-Habitat Assembly Rules of Procedure:  
[https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/documents/2019-08/hsp\\_ha.1\\_hls.2\\_e.pdf](https://unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/documents/2019-08/hsp_ha.1_hls.2_e.pdf)

4.1 For purposes of this policy, stakeholders are non-members of the UN-Habitat Assembly, and Major Groups and other stakeholders accredited to UN-Habitat or in consultative status with ECOSOC, especially:

- a. Non-members of the UN-Habitat Assembly as identified in Rules 66 – 69 of the UN-Habitat Assembly Rules of Procedure, provided they support or work in the fields of housing, sustainable urban development, and human settlements, and support the work and mandate of UN-Habitat namely:

- (i) international, regional, and national organisations
- (ii) local and regional governments of UN Member States or States not members of the UN<sup>11</sup>, and local government networks and associations; and
- (iii) the major groups and other stakeholders outlined below, as well as UN-Habitat established advisory boards and professional networks.

- b. Major groups and other stakeholders consist of 18 groups<sup>12</sup>:

Nine major groups that were formalized by Agenda 21 at the Earth Summit in 1992:

- (i) Women
- (ii) Children and Youth
- (iii) Indigenous People
- (iv) Non-Governmental Organisations (also known as civil society organisations).
- (v) Local Authorities (currently referred to as local and regional governments)
- (vi) Workers and Trade Unions
- (vii) Business and Industry
- (viii) Scientific and Technological Community (the group also includes academia and researchers); and
- (ix) Farmers.

Nine stakeholder groups that were recognized by the Habitat Agenda, adopted in 1996, at the second UN conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), and by the New Urban Agenda, adopted in 2016 at Habitat III, consist of:

- (i) Foundations and Philanthropists
- (ii) Parliamentarians
- (iii) Professional Organisations
- (iv) Persons with Disabilities
- (v) Older Persons
- (vi) Media
- (vii) Grassroots and Informal Sector Organisations
- (viii) Migrants and Refugees; and
- (ix) Volunteer Organisations.

4.2 Furthermore, coalitions, networks and umbrella organisations that comprise accredited and non-accredited member organisations will only be represented in UN-Habitat intergovernmental meetings by members of respective accredited organisations.

<sup>11</sup> “States not members of the United Nations are Cook Islands, Holy See, Niue and the State of Palestine” (note: This is according to the foot note of Rule 64 of the UN Habitat Assembly Rules of Procedures)

<sup>12</sup> Also referred to as Habitat Agenda Partners in the context of Habitat II.

5. **[Accreditation, criteria, and process] UPDATE BY THE SECRETARIAT FOLLOWING THE MEETING HELD ON 6 FEBRUARY 2023**

5.1. The accreditation procedure for the participation of Major Groups and other stakeholders (also known as Habitat Agenda Partners) in UN-Habitat intergovernmental meetings is guided by the rules of procedure of the: UN-Habitat Assembly (66-69); Executive Board (17.3); the UN-Habitat Governing Council Resolutions 19/8 of 9 May 2003 on *Arrangements regarding accreditation of local authorities and other Habitat Agenda Partners* and 26/7 of 12 May 2017 on *Accreditation*; as well as the United Nations Economic and Social Council Resolution 1996/31 on *Consultative relationship between the United Nations and non-governmental organisations*. The procedure is as follows:

- a) The Secretariat to reconfirm, upon request, the accreditation status of the applying organisations, specifically the Major groups and other stakeholders accredited: (i) to the UN-Habitat Assembly and the Executive Board<sup>13</sup>, (ii) to the Second United Nations Conference on Human settlements (Habitat II), and the special session of the General Assembly for overall review and appraisal of implementation of the Habitat Agenda (Istanbul+5)<sup>14</sup>, (iii) to the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III)<sup>15</sup>, and (iv) non-governmental organisations in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council<sup>16</sup>.

To enable the Secretariat to reconfirm the applying organisation's accreditation status, major groups and other stakeholder including non-governmental organisations in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council are required to submit annual reports of the last two years to allow the Secretariat to confirm that the organisation's activities remain relevant to the work and mandate of UN-Habitat.

- b) Local authorities and local government associations recognized by the United Nations Member States or States not members of the United Nations<sup>17</sup> are exempt from the requirement to submit annual reports to the Secretariat. Local authorities will need to notify the Secretariat of their participation through the relevant Permanent Missions in New York or Nairobi.
- c) Other Habitat Agenda partners referred to in rule 68 of the rules of procedure of the UN-Habitat Assembly that are not accredited according to paragraph (5.1a) above may be invited by the Executive Director and accredited to the UN-Habitat Assembly. The Executive Director shall submit the list of such partners to the UN-Habitat Assembly for approval on a no-objection basis.<sup>18</sup> Member States will receive the list 10 weeks in advance of the next session of the UN-Habitat Assembly. The Secretariat will confirm and publish the list of successful partners six weeks before the Habitat Assembly.

<sup>13</sup> Rules 66-69 and Rule 17.3 of the UN-Habitat Assembly and Executive Board rules of procedure respectively.

<sup>14</sup> UN-Habitat Governing Council Resolution 19/8(1).

<sup>15</sup> UN-Habitat Governing Council Resolution 26/7 (2)

<sup>16</sup> UN-Habitat Governing Council Resolution 19/8 (3)

<sup>17</sup> As explained in footnote 11 under Chapter 4.1 (ii) of this policy

<sup>18</sup> UN-Habitat Governing Council Resolution 19/8 (4)

## 5.2 Criteria for accreditation<sup>19</sup>

Under this paragraph, the following criteria for accreditation must be met:

- a. Be a legal entity in at least one country.
- b. The organisation must have been in existence (officially registered) for at least two years as of the date of receipt of the application by the Secretariat.
- c. The organisation's activities must be relevant to housing and sustainable urban development.
- d. The organisation must have a democratic decision-making mechanism.

## 5.3 Supporting documents required<sup>20</sup>

Organisations that seek accreditation and have met the above criteria in paragraph 5.2 are required to apply for accreditation and to submit the following supporting documents to UN-Habitat Secretariat by 30 June or 30 November of each year:

- a. A letter requesting accreditation on the organisation's official letterhead signed by the Head of the organisation. The letter shall include a summary of the organisation's activities, geographical coverage, and a list of its affiliates.
- b. A copy of the organisation's constitution/charter and/or statutes/by-laws and amendments to those documents.
- c. A copy of the organisation's certificate of registration or other proof of existence/recognition by a government authority in countries where registration is not required as proof of existence for two years including stamp of the issuing authority.
- d. Copies of the organisation's most recent financial statement and annual report, at least issued within the last two years.
- e. Information on the governance structure and current office bearers.
- f. **Optional:** Copy of examples of the organisation's most recent publications, articles, or statements.
- g. **Optional :** Organisational chart.

## 5.4 The Registration process

The following processes will apply to major groups and other stakeholder in 5.1 (a-c) above:

- a. Major Groups and other stakeholders in 5.1 (a) above may submit a letter online to the Secretariat requesting reconfirmation. The letter must be on the organisation's official letterhead and signed by the Head of the organisation. Attached with the letter are the organisation's annual reports for the last two years before the UN-Habitat Assembly or the Executive Board Session.
- b. Local authorities in 5.1(b) above may respectively register and notify the Secretariat through the respective Permanent Missions either in New York or Nairobi upon receipt of the Executive Director's invitation.
- c. The local government associations may submit a letter to the Secretariat confirming their interest in attending the UN-Habitat Assembly. The letter must be on the organisation's official letterhead and signed by the Head of the organisation.
- d. The applying organisation in 5.1(c) above shall establish a profile by completing an online questionnaire and attach all the required supporting documents. If successful, the Secretariat will notify the applying organisation at least six weeks before the UN-

<sup>19</sup> This is adapted from ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

Habitat Assembly. They will then be able to register to attend the UN-Habitat Assembly and other inter-governmental sessions. Henceforth, they will be included as Major Groups and other stakeholders (5.1 above).

## **5. Benefits for accredited stakeholders**

All accredited stakeholders enjoy the same privileges, including the following:

### **6.1 Stakeholder participation in preparatory processes for UN-Habitat intergovernmental meetings**

- a) Timely access to public information and documents of the respective UN-Habitat intergovernmental meeting.
- b) Ability to circulate written submissions to the respective UN-Habitat intergovernmental meeting to be made available to Member States in a timely manner.
- c) Contribution to agenda setting through written submissions to the Executive Director for consideration and onward transmission to the Bureaus of the relevant governing bodies.
- d) Structured and inclusive dialogue with the leadership of UN-Habitat's governing bodies and with the Executive Director of UN-Habitat.
- e) Ability to organise side events on issues relevant to the UN Habitat Assembly.

### **6.2 Stakeholder engagement during UN-Habitat intergovernmental meetings:**

- a. Participation in public meetings as observers.
- b. Availability of designated seats in public meetings.
- c. An invitation to make oral statements at public meetings. The presidents or chairpersons will provide opportunities for major groups and other stakeholders to speak on relevant agenda items in an organised manner.
- d. Publication of written statements made by accredited stakeholders during intergovernmental meetings.
- e. Participation in thematic discussions during UN-Habitat intergovernmental meetings
- f. Possibility for stakeholders to share their reflections during the sessions of the governing bodies of UN-Habitat, including on the preparation of the provisional agenda and during discussions on draft decisions and resolutions.
- g. Strategic interaction with various delegations/delegates on sustainable urban development issues.

### **6.3 Stakeholder engagement post intergovernmental meetings and follow-up:**

- a) Support for implementation, monitoring, and accountability for norms and standards through the sharing of experiences on the impact of UN-Habitat work at relevant Executive Board sessions upon invitation by the Executive Director.

## **7. Responsibilities and obligations of accredited stakeholders**

### **7.1 Effective stakeholder engagement comes with the responsibilities and obligations of accredited organisations. These include:**

- a. Respect for the UN Charter, including the UN System Code of Conduct to prevent harassment, including sexual harassment.
- b. Act in accordance with the Rules of Procedures of the UN-Habitat Assembly and the Executive Board, and to the guiding principles laid out in this policy.

- c. Compliance with registration requirements and seating arrangements for each meeting.
- d. Wide dissemination of and adherence by stakeholders to UN-Habitat's policies, decisions, norms, and standards approved by UN-Habitat intergovernmental bodies.
- e. Regular communication with UN-Habitat, exchange of information, including reporting on activities relevant to UN-Habitat's mandate and programme of work every four years in line with the UN-Habitat Assembly using a questionnaire provided by the Secretariat.
- f. Support the operationalization of an inclusive Stakeholder Engagement Mechanism while adhering to the guiding principles, particularly self-organisation, transparency, responsibility, and accountability.
- g. Accredited stakeholders will cooperate, collaborate, and coordinate actions related to engagement in UN-Habitat intergovernmental meetings with other stakeholders, Member States, and UN-Habitat, as appropriate.
- h. Provide feedback on stakeholder engagement in UN-Habitat intergovernmental meetings through stakeholder satisfaction surveys, focused group discussions, consultations, and other means as necessary.
- i. Protect UN-Habitat from any undue influence, especially in the processes of setting and applying policies, norms, and standards.

## **8. The role of UN-Habitat**

**8.1 UN-Habitat facilitates all relevant stakeholder organisations to engage in UN-Habitat** intergovernmental meetings and ensures geographical representation through mobilizing participation from all regions and engaging with associations and networks at national, regional, and global levels. UN-Habitat's contribution is subject to the availability of funds and includes:

- a. Regular consultations and liaison with accredited stakeholders on matters of governing bodies, including information sharing and dissemination, the development of policies, strategic plans, annual work programmes and analytical reports.
- b. Facilitate stakeholders' accreditation, including online application and processing for approval by Member States, online and on-site registration for participation in UN-Habitat intergovernmental meetings.
- c. Mobilisation and facilitation of stakeholder engagement and participation through:
  - (i) Special dialogues and consultations
  - (ii) Expert Group Meetings
  - (iii) Surveys
  - (iv) Advocacy initiatives within the context of UN-Habitat intergovernmental meetings.
- d. Support the convening of the global stakeholder forum prior to the UN-Habitat Assembly, regional stakeholder forums, and annual global stakeholder consultations, and relevant regional meetings, where appropriate and subject to the availability of funding.
- e. Promote monitoring, accountability, reporting, and the harnessing and dissemination of lessons learned on stakeholder engagement and participation in UN-Habitat policy related work.
- f. Facilitate a review and update of this stakeholder engagement policy as appropriate.
- g. Dedicate a unit/section which also serves as the Secretariat and an internal focal point for stakeholder engagement in intergovernmental processes.
- h. Facilitate cross-linkages with other stakeholders working on other relevant global commitments, for example, climate change, disaster risk reduction and resilience, financing of urban infrastructure, housing, and localization of Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda.



## 9. Funding

- 9.1 The UN-Habitat work programme and budget will include a budget for stakeholder engagement, including financing activities related to the implementation of this policy.
- 9.2 Funding will be allocated over a time consistent with the strategic plan for resources like UN Habitat staff, publications, event organisation, and the production of knowledge products.
- 9.3 UN-Habitat will include stakeholder engagement in its resource mobilization strategy, with an emphasis on joint fundraising, and the possibility of supporting the participation of stakeholders from Least Developed Countries like the Trust Fund set up to support the participation of Member States from LDCs.

### References: *[Note: This is not part of the draft policy]*

1. ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31 Consultation between the United Nations and Non-governmental organisations - chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/http://csonet.org/content/documents/199631.pdf
2. UN-Habitat Assembly Rules of Procedure
3. UN-Habitat Executive Board Rules of Procedure
4. Accreditation procedure draft 08May 2019 – Chair’s draft (005)
5. UNCTAD Partnering with Civil Society: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/osgciomisc2014d3\_en.pdf
6. EU Joint Evaluation: Civil Society Engagement in Policy Dialogues, 2012.
7. AfDB CSO Committee TORs
8. GA Resolution 67/290 Format for HLPF.
9. UNAIDS Guidance for Partnerships- Civil Society 2011
10. WHO Basic documents, 49<sup>th</sup> Edition 2020
11. WHO Stakeholder Engagement Framework 2016.
12. FAO Rules of Procedure
13. ILO Guide to participation in general conference.
14. World Bank Civil Society Engagement
15. [Modalities for Stakeholder Engagement in the high-level political forum \(civicus.org\)](http://civicus.org).