

UN HABITAT

FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES TO UNITED
NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME**

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Agenda Item 9:

**Report on the status of implementation of the New Urban Agenda:
Update on the Quadrennial report (HSP/CPR/69/3)**

Report on the status of implementation of the New Urban Agenda: Update on the Quadrennial report

Background

1. The adoption of the New Urban Agenda (NUA) at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito, Ecuador, in October 2016 and the Sustainable Development Goals, which includes the goal on cities (SDG 11) to *make cities safe, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable*, firmly placed urbanization at the forefront of international development policy.
2. The outcome document of Habitat III invited the “General Assembly to request the Secretary-General, with voluntary inputs from countries and relevant regional and international organizations, to report on the progress of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda every four years”.
3. This report, prepared 18 months after the adoption of the NUA, is the first in a series of five Quadrennial Reports that the Secretary-General will present for the General Assembly between 2016 and 2036. It is a very important component of the follow-up and review on the implementation of the NUA that the Secretary-General submits to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council.
4. The report reviewed the collaborative implementation efforts, data and knowledge platforms and capacities which help framing and monitoring the central role that cities can play in accelerating the development transformations across the 2030 Agenda. It presents a general context and purpose of the report and reiterates the need to position the NUA vis-a-vis other development agendas. The report then recommends the adoption of an incremental approach for the subsequent preparation of Quadrennial Reports.
5. The report complements the SDG11 Synthesis Report¹, under preparation for the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) discussion in July 2018. The SDG11 report details the baselines, challenges and opportunities for urban monitoring regarding all the urban related SDGs, as well as analyses the interlinkages with other global agendas that have implications on sustainable urban development.

Context - Intensification of urban challenges and the recognition of the transformative role of urbanization

6. Since the adoption of the NUA many urban challenges have intensified. Growing inequality, social exclusion, and spatial segregation. Disadvantages continue to concentrate in specific places and with specific people. Urban areas are increasingly epicentres of crises, insecurity, and violence, fuelling instability, displacement and forced migration. Housing remains largely unaffordable both in the developing and developed world and slums continue to grow, disproportionately affecting women, youth, older persons, migrants, and other marginalized groups. Recent data indicates that cities are expanding in unplanned and unsustainable manner. This consumes more land than necessary to accommodate their growing populations.
7. Nevertheless, many cities remain places of innovation, social change, and prosperity. With the adoption of the NUA the international community agreed that urbanization has a potential to drive a positive change. The Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Cities 2030 adopted at the Ninth

¹ The SDG11 Synthesis Report is being prepared by UN-Habitat with inputs from urban related SDG partners globally. It will be submitted to the Economic and Social Council and tabled during the HLPF between 9-18 July 2018.

Session of the World Urban Forum highlighted again the transformative power of cities and recalled the genuine aspiration to leave no one and no place behind.

The preparation of the Quadrennial Report

8. The Quadrennial Report was prepared by UN-Habitat, in its focal point role for sustainable urbanization and human settlements, in close consultation with UN system entities, governments and partners.
9. A preliminary meeting to discuss the process of preparation of the Quadrennial Report was held during the WUF 9 in Kuala Lumpur with the participation of 40 people from national and local governments, UN Agencies, NGOs, private sector, academia and civil society organizations.
10. In order to keep an inclusive and participatory process, it was decided that a working team will establish mechanisms to integrate the views of different partners in the preparation of this Report.
11. UN-Habitat organised an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) in Granada, Spain, on 20-23 March, as a ‘write-shop’; participatory drafting process. Five UN regional economic and social commissions and thirty development and research partners actively participated in the consultation and drafting process in this city, and afterwards through electronic means.
12. The EGM “write-shop” methodology produced the draft report with thematic and general contributions from each participant in their area of specialisation. Besides providing comprehensive, negotiated inputs to the NUA implementation review and reporting strategy until 2036, the EGM established a firm partnership for continued NUA monitoring and reporting.
13. All these submissions and contributions were recorded in a separate document that captured notes, ideas, inputs and proposals from participants. This document, which is more broader and larger in scope than the Quadrennial Report submitted to the Secretary-General Office will be posted in UN-Habitat NUA/SDG web-page before the HLPF meeting².
14. UN agencies were given an opportunity to review the first full draft report prepared through the EGM consultation. Over twenty UN agencies’ were consulted and their contributions strengthened and balanced the report statements. This permitted to have a more synergic approach to the preparation of the Report with the possibility to include more information of what the UN Agencies are doing towards the implementation and reporting of the sustainable urban development agendas.
15. As of April 2018, total of 18 UN agencies reported to UN-Habitat that they have either completed or are in process of preparing an implementation plan aligned to the NUA targets. This consultative process was critical to initiate a UN system-wide collaboration and reporting mechanism, which is now replicated with the preparation of the HLPF Report on Goal 11.
16. The CPR Sub-Committee was updated on the planning, progress and partnerships of the report preparation. The first briefing took place in the Sub-Committee meeting of 23 February 2018 and focused on the specific context, purpose, strategy and options of the report. The second briefing on 28 March 2018 was a special meeting on the Quadrennial Report progress review and introduced to the Sub-Committee the first full draft content outline of the report as prepared during the EGM.
17. UN-Habitat engaged with the Secretary-General Office to review the final submission and make sure all queries and demands were timely responded to. It is quite satisfactory to report to you that the Quadrennial Report proposal was slightly adjusted and edited by the SG Office, keeping the overall content and the spirit of the Report, as it was proposed by UN-Habitat, UN agencies

² The EGM joint outcome document and additional resources on NUA implementation and monitoring will be placed on the dedicated NUA implementation website on nua.unhabitat.org/reporting before the HLPF of July 2018.

and partners. Some recommendations were reviewed and adjusted to fit to the language of the SG Reports.

The Quadrennial Report content and proposals

18. The reporting mechanism designed for the five consecutive Quadrennial Reports considers the need to link NUA to other global commitments and development agendas, as well as the necessity to produce quantitative and qualitative data, including spatial analysis, at different scales to ensure that no one, and no place, is left behind.
19. The Report highlights the need to adopt an incremental and inclusive reporting system. This system builds on existing efforts lead by UNDESA and UNSD, and the current work done by UN agencies and development partners.
20. Understanding that reporting on the progress of the NUA is country-led, but requires the actions of a wide range of stakeholders that complement the work of national governments, the proposed incremental approach focuses on four interrelated elements:
 - i. Reinforcing systems for the production of user-friendly and participatory data platforms;
 - ii. building on existing dynamic platforms for engagement, participation and partnership, integrating partners into the process to produce data, knowledge and reporting;
 - iii. strengthening partnerships with relevant entities of the UN system to ensure a UN system-wide coordination mechanism;
 - iv. developing capacities to report on the effective implementation of the sustainable urban development agendas.
21. These elements are part of an integrated approach that articulates actions deployed by different actors at different levels with the aim to achieve synergic relations, with a stronger coordination of the different global agendas. The integrated approach will assist the NUA partners to produce progress reports on sustainable urbanization with sharper focus on outcomes and impacts.
22. The report presents an overview of the progress made so far in these four different elements, emphasizing that they will constitute the structural basis for the preparation of subsequent quadrennial reports. It analyses the most important stepping stones towards effective implementation of the NUA, considering two essential themes of this agenda: governance structures and supportive frameworks, and planning and management of urban and territorial spatial development.
23. The report then presents the progress made in the effective implementation of the NUA according to the means of implementation as they were agreed in the outcome document of the Quito Declaration.
24. UN-Habitat and the report partners decided on the establishment of an online resource platform for shared materials and resources for the NUA progress monitoring. This will form a part of the global sourcing of NUA progress information and source for reporting.

The Quadrennial Report key recommendations

25. After making an overall analysis of the role of finance, innovations and capacity development that are key elements of the means of implementation, the Secretary-General Report offers key recommendations to Member States in six strategic areas:

- a) An invitation to the UN Statistical Commission and UNSD to consider the adoption of a National Sample of Cities for the harmonization, comparison, and aggregation of data at regional and global scales;
- b) The need for the UN System to strengthen the capacities of national and subnational governments to implement, monitor, and report on the NUA and SDGs, in collaboration with knowledge-based institutions;
- c) The need for the UN system to consider strengthening existing multi-stakeholder platforms that facilitate participation and engagement at all levels in support of Member States reporting efforts;
- d) The request to Member States to further develop, as appropriate, inclusive, evidence based, and integrated National Urban Policies, as catalysts to implement the NUA/SDGs;
- e) The need to support subnational and local authorities' collection and analysis of disaggregated quantitative and qualitative data, including gender indicators, to inform policy-making and ensure that no one and no place is left behind in SDG implementation;
- f) The need to create long-term and predictable financing mechanisms for the implementation and monitoring of the NUA, including the capacity of sub-national governments to raise own-source revenues.

Follow-up to the Quadrennial Report

26. The report was published by the Secretary-General on 1 June 2018. It is available on the NUA implementation website nua.unhabitat.org/reporting. It will be tabled during the ECOSOC meeting of 2-3 July 2018, along with ECOSOC review of the SDG12 (sustainable consumption and production), the SDG6 (water), SDG7 (energy), and the SDG11 Synthesis Report on sustainable cities and communities. The HLPF will discuss the report findings in its July gathering along with the first review of the SDG11 implementation.