



---

**Executive Board of the United Nations**

**Human Settlements Programme**

**Second session of 2021**

Online, 15 and 16 November 2021

Item 9 of the provisional agenda\*

**Annual report of the Office of Internal Oversight  
Services to the Executive Board**

## **Implementation and follow-up of evaluation reports in UN-Habitat**

### **I. Introduction**

1. The present report was prepared in response to the request by the new Chair of the Executive Board of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) to include a sub-item entitled “Implementation and follow-up of evaluation reports” on the agenda of the second session of 2021 of the Executive Board. That is in line with the Executive Board’s mandate of strengthening the accountability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of, and overseeing compliance with, UN-Habitat evaluations, and supporting audit functions.<sup>1</sup>

2. In the current context of resource constraints, United Nations entities are increasingly required to demonstrate the results achieved and the added value of their work (see JIU/REP/2014/6). In that context, evaluation plays a significant role in helping organizations to respond to such demands, and the ongoing reforms of the United Nations, including in UN-Habitat, have prioritized evaluation as a critical component for improving transparency and accountability and demonstrating the effectiveness, results and impact of the entities (ST/AI/2021/3).

### **II. Mandates for evaluation**

3. Evaluation at UN-Habitat complies with the regulations and rules that govern evaluation in the United Nations, which were first promulgated in the Secretary-General’s bulletin ST/SGB/2000/8 and updated in ST/SGB/2018/3. Rule 107.2 requires that all programmes be evaluated on a regular, periodic basis. The evaluation policy of UN-Habitat aligns with United Nations regulations, stressing that, ideally, all UN-Habitat interventions should be evaluated. However, owing to limited resources, it is not possible for UN-Habitat to evaluate all its interventions, and evaluations should be planned and prioritized during the preparation of the annual evaluation plans of UN-Habitat.<sup>2</sup> The UN-Habitat evaluation plan for 2021 and the status of its implementation are contained in annex II.

### **III. Definition and purpose of evaluation**

4. UN-Habitat adopts the definition of an evaluation used by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) in its norms and standards for evaluation in the United Nations system, in which “evaluation” is defined as an assessment, conducted as systematically and impartially as possible, of

---

\* HSP/EB.2021/12.

<sup>1</sup> Available at <https://unhabitat.org/governance/executive-board>.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), “UN-Habitat evaluation policy” (Jan. 2013), para. 55.

an activity, project, programme, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area or institutional performance. Evaluation focuses on expected and achieved accomplishments, examining the results chain, processes, contextual factors and causality, using appropriate criteria such as relevance, impact, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide credible, useful evidence-based information that enables the timely incorporation of its findings, recommendations and lessons learned into the decision-making processes of organizations and stakeholders.<sup>3</sup>

5. The purpose of evaluation is to promote accountability and learning. An evaluation needs to show evidence in terms of results achieved and lessons learned. It aims to inform planning, programming, budgeting, implementation and reporting and can contribute to evidence-based policymaking, development effectiveness and organizational effectiveness.<sup>4</sup>

#### **IV. Evaluation function at UN-Habitat**

6. The Independent Evaluation Unit, established in 2012, is the custodian and the central coordinating unit of the UN-Habitat evaluation function. To give it independence from substantive and operational divisions, the Unit is located in the Office of the Executive Director. The Chief of the Unit reports to the Executive Director through the Deputy Executive Director. This is in compliance with UNEG norms and standards, which state that “the head of evaluation should report directly to the governing body of the organization or the head of the organization”.<sup>5</sup>

7. The Independent Evaluation Unit has the mandate to plan, manage, conduct, report, disseminate and follow up on UN-Habitat evaluations. It also supports evaluations conducted by the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Joint Inspection Unit. It benefits from a broad network of evaluation professionals, including those of UNEG. The Independent Evaluation Unit represents UN-Habitat in UNEG, which works to support the strengthening and harmonization of evaluation practices in the United Nations system. It holds annual meetings, professional workshops and two-day exchanges among UNEG evaluation professionals on experiences in evaluation methods, principles and management, to build evaluation capacity in the United Nations system.

8. Following the establishment of the Independent Evaluation Unit in 2012, the evaluation policy of UN-Habitat was developed and adopted in January 2013.<sup>6</sup> It provides a framework for the evaluation function and processes to ensure the application of key principles and good evaluation practice in UN-Habitat. The policy is implemented through the revised UN-Habitat Evaluation Framework of 2015 and the *UN-Habitat Evaluation Manual* of 2018. Those guidance evaluation tools are accessible through the front page of the UN-Habitat external evaluation website ([www.unhabitat.org/evaluation](http://www.unhabitat.org/evaluation)) and on the UN-Habitat internal website (<https://habnet.unhabitat.org>). The assessment by the Office of Internal Oversight Services of the evaluation policy, evaluation plans and evaluation reports of UN-Habitat in its biennial studies for the periods 2016–2017 and 2018–2019 on strengthening the role of evaluation and the application of evaluation findings on programme design, delivery and policy directives found them to be of good quality.

9. The roles and responsibilities of the governing bodies of UN-Habitat are set out in section VIII of its evaluation policy, as follows: (a) provide oversight and ensure accountability of the evaluation function of UN-Habitat; (b) endorse the evaluation plans of UN-Habitat; (c) ensure that the UN-Habitat secretariat effectively responds to evaluation findings and recommendations; and (d) request the UN-Habitat secretariat to conduct specific evaluations.

#### **V. UN-Habitat evaluation capacity remains inadequate**

10. An effective and independent evaluation function is critical to the ability of UN-Habitat to demonstrate the achievement of its planned results, account for success or failure and bring about changes to improve its effectiveness and impact. The main constraint with respect to the UN-Habitat evaluation function is insufficient human and financial resources. The evaluation function is under-resourced and overstretched. In its resolution 67/226, the General Assembly emphasized the importance of having independent, credible and useful evaluation functions, with sufficient resources, and promoting a culture of evaluation that ensures the active use of evaluation findings and recommendations in policy development and improving the functioning of the organizations of the United Nations. That ambition has not yet been achieved in UN-Habitat.

---

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Evaluation Group, “Norms and standards for evaluation” (New York, 2016), para. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., para. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., para. 7.

<sup>6</sup> UN-Habitat, “UN-Habitat evaluation policy”.

11. Overall, financial and staffing resources are inadequate to support the effective evaluation function of UN-Habitat. The current staffing capacity is not commensurate with the growing demand and importance of the function. UN-Habitat does not meet the benchmark for a staff ratio of 0.2 per cent of professional evaluation staff to overall organizational staff (see JIU/REP/2014/6). The Independent Evaluation Unit has only two Professional posts, at the P-5 and P-3 levels, and one General Services post, at the G-6 level. Two additional posts, at the D-1 and P-4 levels, were approved by the UN-Habitat Governing Council in the proposed UN-Habitat work programme and budget for the biennium 2018–2019 (see HSP/GC/26/6), but the posts have remained unfunded.

12. At present, there are no earmarked core or extrabudgetary funds allocated to the evaluation function. From an operational perspective, implementation of the Independent Evaluation Unit's work programme depends on resources tied to projects and programmes. The evaluation guidelines establish that projects with a funding budget of \$300,000 or more should include a budget provision for evaluation before being approved for implementation. Although this is enforced at the planning and approval stage of the project, there is no systematic enforcement of funds being allocated for the evaluation function, and, when the project has been completed, the funds planned for evaluation in most cases have been used for something else. That has had the result that the small number of evaluations completed, and the coverage of those conducted, are not representative of the overall work of UN-Habitat. For instance, of the 56 projects and programmes that were completed and were supposed to have been evaluated in 2020, only 21 interventions (38 per cent) were actually evaluated. The Independent Evaluation Unit had prioritized strategic evaluations such as the City Prosperity Index and country programme evaluations of Mozambique and Rwanda, but without funding, those prioritized evaluations could not be undertaken. The Office of Internal Oversight Services' study of the biennium 2018–2019 to strengthen the evaluation function<sup>7</sup> indicates that the funding level of the UN-Habitat evaluation function for the biennium 2018–2019 was some 0.35 per cent of total organizational expenditure, falling short of the minimum benchmark of 1 per cent of programme expenditure for entities of the United Nations Secretariat.

## VI. Types of evaluation conducted by UN-Habitat

13. UN-Habitat has two main categories of evaluative process, distinguished according to who manages them. The first category is external evaluations, which are initiated, managed and conducted by entities outside UN-Habitat, including by the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Joint Inspection Unit. Such external evaluations are requested by the General Assembly, the Committee for Programme and Coordination and United Nations organizations. The Office of Internal Oversight Services is the body of the United Nations system mandated to provide the internal evaluation of the United Nations system. In addition, it provides inspection, audit and investigation services. Its evaluation focus is on broad issues of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of Secretariat programmes and activities. Evaluations undertaken include the following:

(a) Programme evaluations, which assess the programme or subprogramme of a single United Nations entity and are conducted at least once every eight years. The last evaluation of UN-Habitat was conducted in 2015 (E/AC.51/2015/2). The evaluation resulted in seven recommendations, all of which had been implemented by 2019;

(b) Thematic evaluations, which assess crossing-cutting themes across United Nations entities or programmes; for example, the evaluation of the prevention, response and victim support efforts against sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations Secretariat staff and related personnel (A/75/820), published in 2021;

(c) Biennial studies of the evaluation function, which seek to strengthen the evaluation capacity of United Nations entities (A/76/69). The studies are accompanied by the evaluation dashboard for each entity.<sup>8</sup> Evidence from the 2018–2019 dashboard<sup>9</sup> reveals that the UN-Habitat evaluation function has structures, tools and systems in place and that it produces good-quality reports. However, its capacity gap in terms of staffing and financing remains;

(d) Triennial reviews are follow-up studies assessing the implementation of recommendations made in the General Assembly-mandated evaluations. The last triennial review of

<sup>7</sup> Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), *Evaluation Study: United Nations Evaluation Dashboard 2018–2019*, Assignment No. IED-21-011 (June 2021).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

recommendations from the evaluation of the UN-Habitat was carried out by the Office of Internal Oversight Services in 2018 (E/AC.51/2018/2).

14. The Joint Inspection Unit is the only independent external oversight body of the United Nations system mandated to conduct system-wide evaluations, inspections and investigations. The topics of evaluations undertaken take into account the work done and planned by other oversight bodies, including the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

15. In accordance with the provisions of article 11, paragraph 4, of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit, upon receipt of the Unit's reports, the immediate action expected is to distribute the reports to the governing bodies of participating organizations for consideration. For the period 2020–2021, reports issued by the Joint Inspection Unit require consideration by governing bodies of participating organizations and that action be taken on the recommendations assigned to the legislative and governing bodies that are listed in annex II.

16. In addition, other entities and donors often commission evaluations of the programmes and projects of UN-Habitat and institutional evaluations. For example, in 2016, the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) carried out an institutional assessment of UN-Habitat.<sup>10</sup> The assessment concluded that UN-Habitat largely meets the requirements of an effective multilateral organization, although its performance could be strengthened and improved in certain areas. It issued 11 recommendations where improvement was needed. Currently, MOPAN consists of 17 donor countries: Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Republic of Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America. The mission of MOPAN is to support its members in assessing the effectiveness of the multilateral organizations that receive their development and humanitarian funding.

17. UN-Habitat internal evaluations are initiated and managed by UN-Habitat and conducted by external evaluation consultants. The evaluations can be requested by Member States through resolutions of the Executive Board or the Committee of Permanent Representatives, donors or partners, or the management of UN-Habitat. Internal evaluations can further be categorized in terms of who manages the evaluation: centralized evaluations are initiated and managed by the Independent Evaluation Unit, while decentralized evaluations are initiated and managed by programme and project managers.

18. While the principles and standards of evaluation are the same for all types of evaluation, evaluations in both the above-mentioned categories can be further categorized using the following criteria:

(a) What is evaluated.

Examples of this type of evaluation subcategory include the following:

- (i) Policy evaluations (for example, the evaluation of the UN-Habitat Policy and Plan for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women 2014–2019);
- (ii) Strategy evaluations (for example, the evaluation of the implementation of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme Strategic Plan 2014–2019<sup>11</sup>);
- (iii) Project evaluations (for example, the project evaluation for the Making Cities Sustainable and Resilient 2016–2020 project);
- (iv) Programme evaluations (for example, the evaluation of programme support to land governance for peace, stability and reconstruction in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo in the post-conflict era 2014–2019);
- (v) Institutional evaluations (for example, the evaluation of the Regional Office for Arab States 2016) and thematic evaluations, which focus on a specific theme (for example, the evaluation of cities and climate change);
- (vi) Country evaluations (for example, the evaluation of the UN-Habitat country programme in Sri Lanka) and evaluations of events (for example, the evaluation of World Cities Day 2018);

---

<sup>10</sup> Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network, MOPAN 2015–16 Assessments: United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) – Institutional Assessment Report.

<sup>11</sup> UN-Habitat, *Final Evaluation of the Implementation of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme Strategic Plan 2014–2019*, Evaluation Report No. 6/2020 (Nairobi, 2020).

- (b) Who carries out the evaluation.

Examples of this type of evaluation subcategory include the following:

- (i) External evaluation (for example, the external evaluation of the Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance);
- (ii) Self-evaluation (for example, evaluation of the project "Leaving no one and no space behind: strengthening an integrated territorial development for the effective implementation of the New Urban Agenda in Mozambique");
- (iii) Joint evaluation (for example, the joint evaluation of the project "Making cities sustainable and resilient 2016–2019") and self-evaluation;

- (c) Purpose of evaluation.

Examples of this type of evaluation subcategory include the following:

- (i) Outcome evaluation (for example, evaluation of the outcome and impacts of World Urban Forum sessions);
- (ii) Impact evaluation (for example, the publication *Impact Evaluation of the UN-Habitat Housing Approach to Adequate and Affordable Housing and Poverty Reduction 2008–2019*, published in 2020).

## VII. Evaluation planning and budget

19. UN-Habitat prepares its annual evaluation plans through a consultative organization-wide exercise. Topics for evaluation are decided taking into account the evaluations mandated through the resolutions of the governing bodies, the requirements of donors, UN-Habitat management and other development partners, planned external evaluations to be undertaken by the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Joint Inspection Unit, and the tentative completion dates of the projects and programmes. In preparing the budget for a new intervention, evaluation must be included as part of the project cycle.

20. Towards the end of each year, the Independent Evaluation Unit sends out a memorandum inviting all divisions to propose a list of evaluation topics for the following year. The list of proposals is reviewed, consulting a list of tentatively ending projects and programmes generated by the Project Accrued Accounting System and the mandatory evaluations required by governing bodies. The resulting evaluation topics are then prioritized by the Independent Evaluation Unit, using the following criteria: relevance of the topic, risks associated with the intervention, significant investment, demands for accountability from stakeholders, potential for replication and scaling-up, potential for joint evaluation and knowledge gaps. The Independent Evaluation Unit prepares a draft annual evaluation plan, which is discussed with senior management in order to come up with a priority list, which is subsequently submitted to the Senior Management Committee for approval. Once approved, the list becomes the UN-Habitat evaluation plan of the year. The UN-Habitat evaluation plan for 2021 is contained in annex II. However, the implementation of the evaluation plan is flexible and if funding is not assured, what is evaluated will be decided upon by project managers and donors.

21. The financial resources for conducting evaluations at UN-Habitat are derived from two sources: (a) the evaluation budget from core funding, where UN-Habitat allocates funds for mandated evaluations resulting from the resolutions of governing bodies or those initiated by UN-Habitat but not budgeted for; and (b) evaluation resources that have been planned for in projects and programmes. Resource constraints make the existing requirement of evaluating all interventions unrealistic.

## VIII. Evaluation preparation and implementation

22. Evaluation requires careful preparation to ensure its relevance, credibility, high quality and usefulness. That entails identification of the evaluation manager; identification of and consultations with a range of key stakeholders on evaluation design; development of the terms of reference for evaluation; selection of a competent evaluation team; and deciding upon and planning the logistical arrangements.

23. All the evaluations approved in the UN-Habitat annual evaluation plan are managed by the Independent Evaluation Unit. That includes the tasks of ensuring that the evaluation is conducted by an appropriate team; providing technical support and advice on methodology; explaining evaluation standards and ensuring that they are maintained; ensuring that contractual requirements are met; approving all deliverables, including terms of reference, inception reports, and draft and final

evaluation reports; sharing the evaluation results; and supporting the follow-up of the implementation of the evaluation recommendations.

24. Evaluation consultants engaged by UN-Habitat must have knowledge of the United Nations system and its principles, values, goals and approaches, including human rights, gender equality, the Sustainable Development Goals and results-based management. They must also possess professional and technical experience in evaluation, including evaluation norms, standards and ethical guidelines. They should also have technical expertise and knowledge of the subject being evaluated. A reference group is established at the outset of an evaluation to ensure maximum relevance, credibility, high quality and usefulness of the evaluation. The reference group provides the evaluation team with feedback from a technical and methodological perspective. Quality control is exercised throughout the evaluation process. Evaluation managers ensure that evaluations at UN-Habitat are designed and implemented in compliance with UN-Habitat's evaluation policy and the norms and standards of UNEG and are developed on the basis of UN-Habitat's evaluation tools, including formats for the evaluation of terms of reference, the inception report, the evaluation report, the management response and follow-up action plan, and the UN-Habitat evaluation report quality checklist.

## **IX. Reporting and dissemination of evaluation results**

25. The reporting stage involves the review of the key product of the evaluation: the evaluation report. The evaluation manager and stakeholders, including the evaluation reference group, provide comments on the draft evaluation report. The comments are considered and incorporated into the final evaluation report, which should be logically structured, containing evaluation evidence findings, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations. A reader of an evaluation report should be able to understand the context in which the intervention and the evaluation took place, the purpose of the evaluation, what was evaluated, how the evaluation was designed and conducted, what was found, what lessons were distilled and what recommendations were made.

26. The communication and dissemination of evaluation products are essential parts of the evaluation process, informing the target audience of the findings and conclusions resulting from the evaluation. The most common method used is simply to share the evaluation reports. However, other means of communicating findings and conclusions include the preparation of evaluation briefs, newsletters and videos and using simple reporting formats that enable different stakeholders to update the evaluation results. For the purposes of transparency, all UN-Habitat evaluation reports produced by external evaluation consultants are made public on both the external evaluation website and UN-Habitat's internal evaluation website. UN-Habitat evaluation reports that are mandated to be submitted to governing bodies have specific formats and must meet the editorial standards for pre-session documents. For the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit, in accordance with the provisions of article 11, paragraph 4, of the Unit's statute, upon receipt of the report, immediate action is expected to distribute it to the governing bodies of participating organizations for consideration. Review reports of the Joint Inspection Unit can be accessed at [www.unjiu.org](http://www.unjiu.org).

## **X. Use of evaluation findings**

27. The value of an evaluation is determined by the degree to which UN-Habitat staff and management, UN-Habitat governing bodies, donors and other stakeholders use evaluative information to demonstrate accountability, justify resources used, demonstrate effectiveness and help in planning, designing and implementing the programmes. The majority of UN-Habitat evaluations are used to inform new projects and programmes, future operations, work programmes and strategic planning. They are also used to assist in understanding what worked, what did not work, and why, and are used to inform decision-making processes.

## **XI. Follow-up to implementation of the evaluation recommendations**

28. For evaluation to promote a culture of organizational learning and enhanced accountability for results, management needs to consider evaluation findings, recommendations and lessons learned. The management response is a tool to respond to overall evaluation findings and to each evaluation recommendation, specifying actions to implement the recommendation, who is responsible and by what date the action will be implemented. The management response must be concrete, actionable and "owned" by evaluation users.

29. UN-Habitat has an institutionalized evaluation response management mechanism. All UN-Habitat evaluations conducted by external evaluators must have a management response that clearly indicates whether the management accepts, partially accepts or rejects the evaluation

recommendations. In the case of partial agreement or disagreement, the reason must be explained. Upon completion of an evaluation report, the responsible office submits a draft management response that is discussed at the Senior Management Meeting for approval. The management response also details actions to be undertaken to implement each accepted recommendation, the persons and offices responsible for implementing actions, and timelines for the complete implementation of recommendations.

30. Until 2015, follow-up to the implementation of recommendations was done manually. Since then, UN-Habitat has implemented a web-based evaluation recommendation tracking system to monitor and follow up on the implementation of evaluation recommendations. The system is integrated with the Project Accrued Accounting System. The online evaluation recommendation tracking system has proved useful in monitoring the implementation of UN-Habitat evaluation recommendations. By December 2020, UN-Habitat was tracking 421 evaluation recommendations from 54 evaluations. Of those, 72.7 per cent had been implemented, 20.7 per cent were in progress, 4.4 per cent had not been started, and 1.2 per cent had expired.

31. Follow-up and timely implementation of actions for recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit relevant to UN-Habitat and its legislative and governing bodies are tracked using the Joint Inspection Unit's web-based tracking system. Likewise, evaluation and audit recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, and Board of Auditors audit recommendations are followed up and updated using the recommendation monitoring system of the Office of Internal Oversight Services. The Chief of the Independent Evaluation Unit is the focal point for follow-up of the implementation of evaluation recommendations of both the Joint Inspection Unit and the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

## **XII. Suggested issues to be considered by the Executive Board**

32. In fulfilling its mandate of strengthening the accountability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of UN-Habitat evaluations, as well as overseeing their compliance, the Executive Board may wish to take note of the present report and recommend actions to further strengthen the performance of UN-Habitat's evaluation function. It may also wish to decide to make "Consideration of evaluation reports" a standing sub-item under the appropriate substantive agenda for its future meetings. In such meetings, the Executive Board could review and approve annual evaluation plans, review the implementation status of such plans and consider evaluation reports of UN-Habitat, the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Joint Inspection Unit.

33. In recognition of the insufficient capacity and underfunding of the evaluation function, the Executive Board may wish to prioritize support to address the challenge of the capacity gap of the evaluation function, including the mobilization of efforts to ensure the funding of the approved D-1 and P-2 posts, which currently have no funding. There is also a need for a budget framework and a resource allocation plan for the evaluation function, based on the cost of maintaining an effective and sustainable evaluation function that adds value to UN-Habitat in supporting the accountability, learning and effectiveness of the Programme.

34. In accordance with the provisions of article 11, paragraph 4, of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit, the review reports issued by the Joint Inspection Unit during the period 2020–2021, highlighted in annex I, are to be considered by the Executive Board and action is to be taken on recommendations addressed to the legislative and governing bodies.

## Annex I

### **List of review reports issued by the Joint Inspection Unit in 2020 and 2021, with recommendations assigned to the legislative and governing bodies, requiring action by the Executive Board**

1. In 2020 and 2021, the Joint Inspection Unit issued nine reports, of which two were single-organization reports (JIU/REP/2020/4 and JIU/REP/2021/1)<sup>1</sup> and eight were system-wide reports, with a total of 53 recommendations, of which 22 were addressed to the legislative and governing bodies and required action by the Executive Board. The complete reports by the Joint Inspection Unit can be found on the Unit's website (<http://www.unjiu.org>).

#### **I. Review of the state of the investigation function: progress made in the United Nations system organizations in strengthening the investigation function (JIU/REP/2020/1)**

2. **Recommendation 1.** The legislative bodies of United Nations system organizations should request that organizations that have not yet done so include in their internal oversight charters a provision for the periodic revision and, where necessary, update of the charters, and a requirement for their endorsement by the legislative bodies. The updated charters should be submitted for endorsement by the legislative bodies by the end of 2021.

3. **Recommendation 3.** The legislative bodies of United Nations system organizations should request that organizations that have not yet done so consolidate by the end of 2022 all investigations and related activities (namely intake, preliminary assessment and the decision to open an investigation), irrespective of the type of misconduct, in the internal oversight office of each organization.

4. **Recommendation 4.** The legislative bodies of United Nations system organizations that have not yet done so should ensure by the end of 2021 that the heads of internal oversight offices/investigation functions are authorized to open investigations without the approval of the executive heads.

5. **Recommendation 5.** The legislative bodies of the United Nations system organizations should request that organizations that have not yet done so include in their oversight charters by the end of 2021 provisions that:

(a) Make the appointment and dismissal or removal of the heads of their internal oversight offices subject to consultation with and approval of the legislative bodies;

(b) Establish term limits from five to seven years for the heads of internal oversight offices, preferably making the term non-renewable, with a post-employment restriction within the same organization;

(c) Allow for unrestricted access of their heads of internal oversight offices to the legislative bodies and to the respective audit and oversight committees.

6. **Recommendation 6.** The legislative bodies of the United Nations system organizations that have not yet done so should request that organizations update the terms of reference of their respective audit and oversight committees by the end of 2021 to include, where necessary, appropriate provisions to:

(a) Review the independence and mandate of the internal oversight office/ investigation function;

(b) Review its budget and staffing requirements;

(c) Review its overall performance;

(d) Issue related recommendations.

---

<sup>1</sup> Review of management and administration in the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and Review of Management and administration in the World Meteorological Organization respectively.



7. **Recommendation 7.** The legislative bodies of United Nations system organizations that have not yet done so should develop and adopt appropriate formal procedures for the investigation of complaints of misconduct by executive heads and adopt appropriate policies by the end of 2021.

8. **Recommendation 8.** The legislative bodies of United Nations system organizations that have not yet done so should request that organizations establish by the end of 2021 formal procedures for handling allegations of misconduct against heads and personnel of their internal oversight offices in order to avoid situations of conflict of interest.

9. **Recommendation 9.** The legislative bodies of United Nations system organizations that have not yet done so should request that the respective organizations' annual internal oversight activity reports contain information on both complaints and investigations, including details on the number, type and nature of the complaints and investigations and trends in this regard.

10. **Recommendation 10.** The legislative bodies of United Nations system organizations should review the adequacy of resources and staffing of the investigation function, taking into consideration the recommendations of the respective audit and oversight committees, where available.

## **II. Review of policies and platforms in support of learning: towards more coherence, coordination and convergence (JIU/REP/2020/2)**

11. **Recommendation 8.** The governing bodies of United Nations system organizations should, by the end of 2023, approve a common United Nations Organizational Learning Framework, agreed through relevant inter-agency mechanisms, which should contain a set of principles and a plan of action for gradual implementation.

## **III. Review of the United Nations common premises: current practices and future prospects (JIU/REP/2020/3)**

12. **Recommendation 1.** The governing bodies of United Nations system organizations that have not yet done so should, by the end of 2021, give direction to the executive heads on the parameters of participation of their organizations in common premises and request periodic reporting on the results achieved.

## **IV. Enterprise risk management: approaches and uses in United Nations system organizations (JIU/REP/2020/5)**

13. **Recommendation 1.** In order to fulfil their oversight roles and responsibilities, legislative/governing bodies should incorporate enterprise risk management into their meetings at least annually, with substantive coverage determined by the organization's mandate, field network and risk exposure.

14. **Recommendation 4.** By the end of 2022, legislative/governing bodies of participating organizations should request executive heads to report on the outcomes of a comprehensive review of the organization's implementation of enterprise risk management against Joint Inspection Unit benchmarks 1 to 9, as outlined in the report (JIU/REP/2020/5).

## **V. Review of multilingualism in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2020/6)**

15. **Recommendation 1.** The legislative or governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should request the executive heads of their respective organizations that have not yet done so, to prepare a strategic policy framework for multilingualism, accompanied by administrative and operational guidelines for its implementation, and submit this for adoption by the end of 2022.

16. **Recommendation 2.** The legislative or governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should request the executive heads of their respective organizations that have not yet done so, to appoint, by the end of 2022, a senior official as a coordinator or focal point for multilingualism, with clearly defined responsibilities and delegated authority, tasked with the coordination of the implementation of the strategic policy framework for multilingualism across their respective organizations.

17. **Recommendation 4.** The legislative or governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should request the executive heads of their respective organizations that have not yet done so, to introduce, by the end of 2022, learning policies that encourage continuous learning and improvement of the language skills of their staff members in the official languages of the respective organizations, as well as in other languages, as appropriate, securing sufficient funding for this.

## **VI. Review of blockchain applications in the United Nations system: towards a state of readiness (JIU/REP/2020/7)**

18. **Recommendation 1.** The governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should ensure that, when applicable, the use of blockchain applications will be integrated, together with other digital technologies, into the innovation strategies and policies adopted by their respective organizations.

19. **Recommendation 6.** The governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations should encourage Member States to engage with the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law in its exploratory and preparatory work on legal issues that relate to blockchain in the broader context of the digital economy and digital trade, including on dispute resolution, which is aimed at reducing legal insecurity in that field.

## **VII. Review of mainstreaming environmental sustainability across organizations of the United Nations system (JIU/REP/2020/8)**

20. **Recommendation 2.** The legislative organs and governing bodies of the United Nations system organizations that have not yet done so should, by the end of 2022, direct the executive heads to embed environmental sustainability considerations into the management of their organizations and request them to include in the annual report on the work of the organization the results of efforts to mainstream environmental sustainability in the internal management functions of the organization.

## **VIII. Review of United Nations system support for landlocked developing countries to implement the Vienna Programme of Action (JIU/REP/2021/2)**

21. **General call from the Inspector (sect. III.B).** Member States should ensure that important cross-cutting issues that are key to the attainment of sustainable development outcomes, particularly human rights, gender and the environment, are adequately reflected in the development of the next iteration of the programme of action for landlocked developing countries in 2024.

22. **Recommendation 7 (sect. VI.A).** Legislative organs and governing bodies of United Nations system organizations should issue directives, if they have not already done so, by the end of 2022, for their organizations to mainstream the priorities of the programme of action for landlocked developing countries that are pertinent to their mandated work and request that their organizations report periodically on its implementation.

23. **Recommendation 8 (sect. VI.A).** Legislative organs, governing bodies and executive heads of United Nations system organizations should elevate the prioritization assigned to landlocked developing countries to that accorded to small island developing States and least-developed countries.

## Annex II

## UN-Habitat Annual Evaluation Plan for 2021

## Implementation status of the planned evaluation topics

<i>No.</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Title of the evaluation</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Requested</i>	<i>Source</i>
1	In progress	Evaluation of United Nations Development Account projects for tranche 10 (three UN-Habitat projects)	Cluster evaluation	United Nations Development Account	United Nations Development Account funding
2	Implemented	Final evaluation of the end of phase II of “Accelerating climate action through the promotion of Urban Low Emission Development Strategies”	Project evaluation	Management/donor	European Union funding
3	In progress	Terminal joint project evaluation of women’s access to land for peace and development in South Sudan: 2018–2020.	Project	Donor	Peacebuilding Fund funding
4	Implemented	Terminal I programme evaluation of the Municipal Governance Support Programme in Afghanistan	Programme evaluation	Donor	European Union funding
6	Implemented	Terminal programme evaluation of the Kabul Strengthening Municipal Nahias programme 2016–2020	Programme evaluation	Donor	European Union funding
7	Implemented	Terminal evaluation of the Programme Support to Land Governance for Peace, Stability and Reconstruction	Programme evaluation	Donor	Department for International Development/ Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (United Kingdom Government) funding
8	Implemented	Programme support to the development of the National Urban Policy and the New Urban Agenda in Bolivia	Programme evaluation	Donor	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency funding
9	Implemented	Evaluation of the UN-Habitat policy and plan for gender equality and empowerment of women in urban development and human settlements	Policy evaluation	Management	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency funding
10	Not started	Urban pathways “Supporting low carbon plans for urban basic services in the context of the New Urban Agenda”	Programme evaluation	Donor	
11	In progress	Participatory slum upgrading programme phase III	Programme evaluation	Donor	Programme funds
12	Not started	Supporting innovation in water and sanitation in Egypt: clean water for integrated local development	Programme evaluation	UN-Habitat management	Project funding
13	Not started	Afghanistan urban safety and security programme	Programme evaluation	Donor	Funding from Switzerland
14	In progress	Innovative durable solutions for internally displaced persons and returnees in Mogadishu	Programme evaluation	Donor	European Union funding
15	In progress	Evaluation of the outcomes and impact of the tenth session of the World Urban Forum	Advocacy	Governing body decision	Tenth World Urban Forum funds

<i>No.</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Title of the evaluation</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Requested</i>	<i>Source</i>
16	In progress	Final evaluation of the project “Support for Improving Living Environment and Prevention Capacity in Cambodia”	Project	Management	Project funds
17	Implemented	Mid-term evaluation of sustainable cities support project in Guinea 2019–2021	Project	Donor	Project funds
18	In progress	Evaluation of the spatial development framework project in Guinea-Bissau	Project	Donor	Project funds
19	Not stated	Support to reconstruction and peacebuilding of liberated cities in Iraq, phase II	Programme	Donor	Programme funds
20	Implemented	Evaluation of urban corridor autoroute, Yaoundé Nsimalen	Project	Management	Project funds
21	Implemented	Mid-term evaluation of “Achieving Planning and Land Rights” in Area C, West Bank, State of Palestine	Project	Management	European Union funding