Terms of Reference
for the Mid-term Evaluation of
the Implementation of UN-Habitat’s Strategic Plan, 2014 -2019

I. Introduction and Mandate

1. The Governing Council (GC) of the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat) approved the strategic plan for 2014-2019, together with the biennial programme budget for 2014-2015, at its 24th Session, through Resolution 24/15 of 19 April 2013. In the same resolution, the GC further requested the Executive Director to continue strengthening implementation of the results-based management in all the programmes, projects, policies and activities of UN-Habitat.

2. The UN-Habitat Strategic Plan for 2014-2019 was approved with an evaluation framework. Specifically, paragraph 95 states that all projects with a budget of over US$3 million will be subject to external evaluation upon completion, and the budgets for all such projects will, as a matter of principle, include funds for evaluation. All focus areas of the strategic plan (or sub-programmes of the work programme) will be evaluated at least once during the life of the plan.

3. With respect to the strategic plan itself, there will be a midterm evaluation of the implementation of the strategic plan. This evaluation will include an assessment of the first reporting on the indicators of achievement of the plan’s overall strategic result. The strategic plan will be adjusted on the basis of available information including this midterm evaluation, the outcome of Habitat III, and any changes in the governance structure of UN-Habitat. A final evaluation of the strategic plan, including assessment of the second reporting on the overall strategic result’s indicators of achievement, will be carried out during 2019.

4. The evaluation of UN-Habitat in 2015 by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) recommended that UN-Habitat should commission evaluability, mid-term and final evaluations of the strategic plan. The recommendation was accepted by UN-Habitat Management with the mid-term review scheduled to be conducted in early 2017. The mid-term evaluation will inform the readjustment of the strategic plan within the timeframe of the 26th Governing Council scheduled to be held 3-7 April 2017.

5. The present Terms of Reference (TOR) set out key elements of the mid-term evaluation of the strategic plan. They describe the background and context, purpose, scope and focus, evaluation questions, stakeholder involvement, evaluation approach and methodology, accountability and responsibilities, qualifications of the consultants to conduct the evaluation, provisional time schedule, as well as expected deliverables and resources.

II. Background and Context

6. UN-Habitat is the lead United Nations agency responsible for promoting sustainable urbanization. It is mandated by the UN Generally Assembly to promote socially-and environmentally sustainable towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all and sustainable development. Its broad, multi-faceted mandate derives from three main sources. These are:

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1 The Revised UN-Habitat Evaluation Framework approved in by the Board in 2015 and adopted by the Executive Director January 2016 stipulates the requirement for all projects of US$1 million and above to have an end of project evaluation by external evaluator.
The Habitat Agenda, adopted in 1996 at the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in Istanbul, Turkey, and imbuing UN-Habitat with a mandate to pursue adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world;

The specific mandates that various GA and UN-Habitat Governing Council resolutions have endowed the programme – e.g., the Millennium Declaration (res. 55/2), in particular its target on achieving significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers by 2020, a goal UN-Habitat estimates to have been met twice over; and

The outcomes of relevant international conferences, for instance, in 2002, Member States attending the World Summit on Sustainable Development further mandated UN-Habitat to monitor and report on progress towards the achievement of Millennium Development Goal 7.2

Evolution and Organisational Reform of UN-Habitat

7. UN-Habitat’s evolution reflects the growing importance of urbanization as a priority to the United Nations and its Member States. Its history and development is rooted in two landmark Conferences on Human Settlements. The first, Habitat I, held in Vancouver, Canada, in 1976, established the United Nations Centre on Human Settlements (UNCHS). The second conference, Habitat II, took place in Istanbul, Turkey, in 1996. Here, Member States adopted the Istanbul Declaration and the Habitat Agenda. In the Habitat Agenda, Human settlements problems were framed as an integral element in countries’ broader social and economic development. Habitat Agenda also promoted the concept of partnership and called for a shift in focus toward governance, including greater participation, democracy and civic involvement in urbanization issues. It also gave the agency an explicit normative mandate to support and monitor the implementation of the Habitat Agenda.

8. In the General Assembly resolution 56/206, UNCHS was elevated into a full-fledged Secretariat programme, UN-Habitat, in 2001.3 In the period from 2001-2004, UN-Habitat witnessed rapid growth in the programme’s staff, activities and budget. The 2005 OIOS evaluation of UN-Habitat recommended that UN-Habitat to become more strategic and focused. This led to the formulation of the agency’s six-year Medium-Term Strategic and Institutional Plan (MTSIP) 2008-2013. The MTSIP’s intent was to: (a) sharpen the focus of the work of UN-Habitat and broaden its funding base; (b) strengthen programme alignment and coherence, and (c) apply results-based management (RBM) to enhance value for money, transparency and accountability. It was endorsed by the 21st Governing Council (resolution 21/2) requesting for priority to be given to the proposed institutional reforms necessary to bring about better organizational alignment in the delivery of the medium-term strategic and institutional plan.

The strategic plan 2014-2019

9. The development of the strategic plan 2014-2019 drew from the lessons learned of the implementation of the MTSIP 2008-2013. It is being implemented through programme of work and budget of the biennia 2014-2015, 2016-2017, and 2018-2019. UN-Habitat is implementing the strategic plan and delivering its work in seven focus areas through an organisational structure that is aligned to the focus areas with seven Branches and coordinated with the regional and country level through four Regional Offices, 3 liaison offices, and about 55 Project Management and Coordination Desks (HPMs) at country level.

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2 MDG 7 includes targets on access to safe drinking water and halving the proportion of people who do not have access to basic sanitation by 2015.
3 Resolution 56/206
10. The strategic plan outlines seven focus areas: Urban Legislation, Land and Governance; Urban Planning and Design; Urban Economy; Urban Basic Services; Housing and Slum Upgrading; Risk Reduction and Rehabilitation; and Research and Capacity Development. Four programme areas are to be prioritized during 2014-2019, namely: urban legislation, land and governance; urban planning and design; urban economy; and urban basic services.

11. The plan’s results framework specifies the overall UN-Habitat strategic result as “Environmentally, economically and socially sustainable, gender-sensitive and inclusive urban development policies implemented by national, regional and local authorities have improved the standard of living of the urban poor and enhanced their participation in the socio-economic life of the city”, and focus area strategic results and their indicators of achievement. Strategic results indicators are reported on biennially, whereas indicators of overall strategic results are reported triennially (see Figure 2 below, op.cit, page 35).

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Habitat III

12. In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Agenda 2030 contains 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets to achieve sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental dimensions. UN-Habitat is leading and supporting the implementation and Goal 11: Make cities and human settlement inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. It has already prepared a “Monitoring Framework” as a guide to assist national and local governments in their efforts to collect, analyse and

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4 Draft Strategic Plan, HSP/GC/34/5/Add.2, III. Strategic choice, D. Strategic result, page 10.
validate information as they prepare their country reports. The activities related to the SDGs need to part and integral of our strategic plan and work programme and budget.

13. The Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Development (Habitat III) held in October 2016 resulted in the “New Urban Agenda” outcome document, which stipulates the importance of urbanization as a source of development and an engine for prosperity and human progress, as reflected in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The New Urban Agenda puts in place actions to change the path of urbanization and identifies key actors to carry out the changes. It recognizes UN-Habitat as a focal point in the UN System on sustainable urbanization and human settlements.

14. The significance of the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda outcome document on UN-Habitat underlines the case for revision of the strategic plan.

III. Purpose of the Mid-term Evaluation

15. The purpose of the mid-term evaluation is to assess the relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of UN-Habitat in the implementation of the strategic plan. The evaluation will assess progress towards the achievement of focus areas’ strategic results to inform the revision of the 6-year strategic plan and implementation of the remaining period of the strategic plan taking into account expectations expressed in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development target 11 and the New Urban Agenda.

IV. Objectives

(i) Assess the progress towards the achievement of focus area results and expected accomplishments, as contained in the strategic plan results framework.
(ii) Assess the continued relevance, efficiency and effectiveness of the strategic plan in terms of delivering specialized quality urbanization development.
(iii) Assess performance in terms of business processes, partnerships, cooperation and coordination, accountability (planning, project design and implementation, reporting and evaluation), and resource mobilization.
(iv) Suggest strategic and important programmatic elements, structural and management considerations to be incorporated/prioritized when readjusting and implementing the remaining part of the strategic plan.

V. Scope and focus

16. The evaluation will assess progress in the implementation of the strategic plan with emphasis on the progress in achievement of focus area strategic results over the period 2014-2016. The mid-term evaluation will build on existing strategic plan progress reports and monitoring reports and other strategic plan related assessments/evaluations that have been carried out so far, as well as reports of related institutional processes.

VI. Relevant Evaluation Questions based on Evaluation Criteria

17. The evaluation questions will include, which may be further expanded upon:

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5 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities: SDG Goal 11 – Monitoring Framework, March 2016
• To what extent are the plan and its delivery relevant and consistent with national priorities and needs? Relevance to priorities of Member States, donors and beneficiaries should also be considered.

• To what extent is UN-Habitat progressing towards the achievement of the plan’s strategic results; and if any contributions have been made to achieving sustainable urbanization results globally and at national and local levels?

• To what extent have UN-Habitat’s programme planning, management and monitoring processes, systems and structures been effective and strengthened results orientation?

• How have UN-Habitat’s management systems and structures and organizational incentives enabled appropriate accountability and efficiency in the delivery of the strategic plan?

• To what extent are cross-cutting issues (human rights, gender equality, youth, climate change) effectively integrated into programme designs and implementation of the strategic plan?

• To what extent have the focus areas and various components of the strategic plan effectively and efficiently cooperated and coordinated their activities to deliver integrated quality urbanization solutions?

VII. Stakeholder Involvement

18. One of the key determinants of evaluation utilization is the extent to which clients and stakeholders are meaningfully involved in the evaluation process. It is expected that this evaluation will be participatory, involving both internal and external key stakeholders. This will include representatives of UN-Habitat branches and regional offices, cross-cutting issues focal points, representatives of governing bodies (CPR), Donors, other relevant Habitat partners, and beneficiaries of UN-Habitat programmes and projects.

VIII. Approach and Methodology

19. A variety of methodologies will be applied:

• Desk review of relevant strategic plan documents, regional strategic plans, strategic plan progress performance and monitoring reports and evaluation reports produced during the strategic plan implementation period from 2014 to 2016;

• Interviews with various stakeholders, including relevant UN-Habitat staff, CPR members, donors, and other relevant key UN-Habitat partners;

• Country surveys of selected programme countries (if deemed feasible);

• Group meetings for consultations and validation of findings;

• Triangulation of methods to validate the findings/results of the review; and

• Analysis and synthesis of information should be presented logically to give an overall assessment of progress in the implementation of the strategic plan.

IX. Accountability and Responsibilities

20. The Evaluation Unit will manage the mid-term evaluation process, including preparation, technical support, follow up and dissemination. Branches assisted by the Programme Division and the Quality Assurance Unit within the Management and Operations Division will be responsible for providing monitoring reports that will be provide the basis for the assessment of progress. Offices, Branches and Regional Offices will support and provide other documents.
as requested and review the draft report. A small reference group will be established to oversee the evaluation process with members from the Programme Division, Division of Management and Operations and OED, including the Evaluation Unit. The Reference Group will responsible for review and approval of main evaluation deliverables including the inception report, drafts and final mid-term evaluation report.

X. Qualifications and Experience of the Evaluation Team

21. The evaluation will be conducted by two independent external consultants. The consultants must combined form a team with proven and extensive experience in carrying out institutional, programme and project evaluations and have working experience and/or solid technical knowledge of UN-Habitat. One consultant will be the lead consultant with overall responsibility for delivery of a quality evaluation report in accordance with norms and standards for evaluation in UN-Habitat.

The two International Consultants are expected to have:

a) Extensive evaluation experience. The consultants should have ability to present credible findings derived from evidence and putting conclusions and recommendations supported by the findings.
b) Specific knowledge and understanding of UN-Habitat and its mandate.
c) More than 15 years of programme management experience in results-based management working with international development and/or sustainable urbanization.
d) Advanced academic degree in political sciences, social economy, governance, planning, local public administration, or similar relevant fields.
e) Recent and relevant experience in working in developing countries, the United Nations system and inter-agency coherence and coordination.
f) Fluent in English (understanding, reading and writing) is a requirement.

XI. Provisional Time Schedule

22. The conduct of the mid-term evaluation will take place during ultimo January – March 2017 and is estimated to take six weeks months spread over 10 weeks (2.5 months). The table below indicates timelines and expected deliverables for the mid-term evaluation process.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Development of draft TOR</td>
<td>September-November 2016</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Approval of TOR</td>
<td>December 2016</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Recruitment of the evaluation consultants</td>
<td>January 2017 (2-3 weeks)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Inception phase, including formal document review, development of inception report, work plan, questionnaires, etc.</td>
<td>January 2017 (1-2 weeks)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Data collection phase: Collection of data through interviews, projects analysis, surveys, etc.</td>
<td>February 2017</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Report writing</td>
<td>February 2017</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Review of draft report for factual errors and comments</td>
<td>March 2017 (1 week)</td>
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XII. Key Deliverables

23. The three primary deliverables for this mid-term evaluation are:

(i) **Inception Report** with evaluation work plan. Once approved, it will become the key management document for the evaluation, guiding evaluation delivery in accordance with UN-Habitat’s expectations.

(ii) **Draft Evaluation Report.** The consultant will prepare an evaluation report draft to be reviewed by UN-Habitat. The draft should follow UN-Habitat’s standard format for evaluation reports.

(iii) **Final Evaluation Report** (including Executive Summary and Appendices) should not exceed 40 pages (excluding Executive Summary and Appendices). In general, the report should be technically easy to comprehend for non-specialists, containing detailed lessons learned and recommendations.

XIII. Resources and Payment

24. The consultants will be paid a professional fee and paid DSA when working outside his/her duty station. Travel to UN-Habitat Headquarters, Nairobi is anticipated. Where applicable, travel costs of the consultants (airplane ticket economy class), transfers and daily allowance as per the UN rate is payable in addition to the daily fee. The consultant fees and DSA will be paid on the basis of UN terms and conditions for consultants, taking into account experience and qualifications. It is anticipated that the evaluation will be conducted by two senior evaluators each with more than 15 years of relevant programme management experience.