COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF GOVERNANCE MODELS IN UN PROGRAMMES

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Purpose

- Compare governance models in selected UN programmes: UNDP, UNHCR, UNODC, WFP and UN Women
- Extract lessons for UN-Habitat
- Improve the functioning of the governance structure
Thematic areas

- Structure of governing bodies
- Work planning and reporting
- Financial cycles and structures
- Provision of administrative and financial services
Assessment criteria:

- **Effectiveness** – ability and capacity to deliver high quality, timely results
- **Efficiency** – the cost of governance
- **Accountability** – ability of stakeholders to hold UN-Habitat accountable
- **Voice and representation** – ability of stakeholders to have their views considered in the decision making process
Governance challenges:

- Weak effectiveness:
  - Meets only biannually
  - Responsibilities unclear between GC, CPR and Secretariat
  - Governs through resolutions – not an executive entity
  - Does not meet operational needs

- Insufficient value added (compared to costs):
  - Limited feedback on strategic and substantive issues and support to the Secretariat
Governance challenges

- Limited accountability:
  - GC weak mandate (advisory body to the General Assembly)
  - Limited oversight of total budget
  - Few mechanisms holding UN-Habitat accountable to benchmarks and standards

- Voice and representation
  - Traditional stakeholders well represented
  - Need to include new and untraditional groups supporting the sustainable urban agenda
Solutions and options

- EB’s more effective:
  - Meets more frequently. Decision and business oriented
  - Support timely decisions for operational activities
  - Higher level of involvement

- Efficiency
  - Fewer members, but more frequent meetings
  - Higher value – but not less costly
  - Provides regular strategic and administrative feedback
  - Hybrid model more expensive including both a Council and a Board
Solutions and options

- **Accountability**
  - EB offers stronger accountability
  - Clear mandates and lines of authority
  - Stronger role in performance monitoring

- **Voice and representation**
  - Hybrid model supports both a “democratic forum” for policy discussions and an executive entity (UN Women)
  - The Executive Committee option scores lower on voice and representation
Work planning and reporting

- Too many planning and reporting processes and documents (duplication)
- Work programme and budget prepared too long time in advance
- Limited oversight of total resources
- Lack of mechanisms for adjustments
Solutions and options

- Most programmes moved towards harmonisation and alignment
- Less problematic for programmes not part of the UN Secretariat and regular budget support (UNDP, UNODC)
- High level of earmarked funding remains a universal challenge
- Boards can maintain better oversight
- Programmes delinked from UN Secretariat has more flexibility
Provision of services

- Unclear delegation of authority between UN-Habitat and UNON
- Low efficiency and lack of Service Level Agreements
- Inability to deliver in timely and responsive manner at country level
Solutions and options

- All other agencies have full delegated responsibilities for recruitment and procurement
- Efficiency and effectiveness could be improved through better communication and service agreements
- The other agencies either organise recruitment and procurement internally, or outsource and offshore certain functions based on needs
Overall conclusions

- UN-Habitat an exceptional case
- Most other programmes have higher scores on performance criteria
- UN-Habitat efficiency and effectiveness seriously constrained in times of financial crisis
- Scope for incremental managerial reforms, but:
- Major reforms required to improve effectiveness, efficiency, accountability and voice and possibly future funding