UN-Habitat’s Regional Strategic Plans (RS) and Habitat Country Programme Documents (HCPDs)

Background

The approval of the Strategic Plan (SP) 2014-2019 by the Governing Council through resolution 24/15 of 19 April 2013 provided a clear mandate to UN-Habitat to continue developing Habitat Country Programme Documents (HCPDs) and finalize a set of Regional Strategic Plans (RSPs) as a key tools for ensuring successful implementation of both its 2014-15 work programme and the 2014-2019 Strategic Plan.

Moreover, the OIOS evaluation of UN-Habitat (E/AC 51/2014) in paragraphs 24-26 recommended UN Habita t to complete by the end of 2015 the needed RSPs in all regional offices, and to design new HCPDs with the support of regional offices in priority countries.

This progress report highlights the major action taken by the Agency to address the above request and recommendations.

Action 1: New Guidelines and Template for RSPs

The Programme Division (PD) acting as the coordinating hub for the design of the above key outputs has taken the following immediate action in compliance with the previsions of the SP and OIOC aiming at facilitating both the design process:

1.1. Guidelines to the Regional Strategic Plans (RSPs)

a) Basic principles:

- Bridging the normative-operational divide
- Flexibility for regional ownership
- Planning for success (the search for impact)

b) Substantive focus:

- Regional urbanization trends: Challenges and opportunities
- Regional strategy and priority areas
• Strategic results and key outputs
• Implementation mechanisms

1.2. Status of delivery of RSPs (as of June 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ROAS</th>
<th>ROAP</th>
<th>ROLAC</th>
<th>ROA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>1 final document delivered/available</td>
<td>1 final document delivered/available</td>
<td>1 final document delivered/available</td>
<td>1 final document delivered/available</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Action 2: New Guidelines and Template for HCPDs

The Medium Term Strategic and Institutional Plan of UN-Habitat (MTSIP) (2007/2013) listed Habitat Country Programme Documents (HCPDs) among its provisions a series of “quick-win” deliverables. Their primary objective aimed at enhancing the normative and operational framework (ENOF), for a better harmonization of programmes and a greater alignment of UN-Habitat strategic plans with the national priorities. It also contributed to achieving a tangible integration and inclusion of sustainable urban development as designed by UN-Habitat into UNDAF in support of delivering as ONE (DaO).

In that connection, UN-Habitat developed two consecutive generations of HCPDs (over 50 documents in total) designed as planning documents providing a framework to facilitate the translation of UN-Habitat’s normative policy messages into operations at country level. The ultimate expected result of HCPDs was to fertilize the national policies by applying UN-Habitat’s strategic plans to bring about a qualitative transformation of the urban development. Initially, it was envisaged to have each HCPD was co-signed with national government for a greater ownership.

Following up on the renewed mandate provided by the SP 2014/2019 and the OIOS recommendations to UN-Habitat to continue developing these strategic outputs, Programme Division formulated key criteria for the selection of countries and designed a new template aligned with the SP and the work programme of UN-Habitat to support regional offices in the development of the new HCPDs.
2.1. **Criteria for selection of Priority/Focus countries**

The following criteria were drafted and regrouped by PD in order to facilitate the process of selection of priority countries and maximize the potential for the success in planning and implementation of the operations at the country level:

1) Thematic consistency with the SP (2014/2019) and the WP (2014/2015);

2) Functional consistency with the basic principles of the regional strategic plans (mainly towards *bridging the normative and operational divide*), reinforcing the linkages between policy reforms and capacity-building activities;

3) Financial and political commitment by the national governments and their partners, including the external partners such as development banks;

4) Inclusion into an HCPD or UNDAF in agreed priority countries;

5) Availability of international support to complement the national resources in funding UN-Habitat’s inputs and to ensure follow-ups;

6) Potential to engage with others in DaO and opportunities for scaling-up and disseminating good practices in support of the south-south cooperation;

7) Need for geographical and prioritization of LDCs in planned interventions.

2.2. **Status of delivery of HCPDs (as of June 2016)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROAS</th>
<th>ROAP</th>
<th>ROLAC</th>
<th>ROAf</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iraq, sudan, Syria (in progress)</td>
<td>Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan</td>
<td>Cuba, Colombia, Mexico, Brazil</td>
<td>Ethiopia, Rwanda, Nigeria, Uganda</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>