

UN-Habitat Stakeholder Engagement Policy

Introduction

The Stakeholder¹ Engagement Policy (hereafter referred to as “The policy”) promotes consistence in the way UN-Habitat engages stakeholders at global, regional, national and local levels. The policy responds to the UN-Habitat Governing Council Resolution GC26/7 – Accreditation of 12 May 2017². In this resolution, Member states recognize the need to reform the accreditation system drawing on best practices and models from relevant multilateral institutions, to ensure the active participation of all relevant stakeholders, the monitoring of accreditation, and the enhancement of transparency and accountability. It supports implementation of GA resolutions A/RES/72/226 and A/RES/68/234 with reference to UN-Habitat focal point role in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda (NUA), and enhanced coordination, coherence, accountability and due diligence without imposing undue rigidity in partnership arrangements respectively. The policy supports implementation of UN-Habitat partnership strategy 2017-2022. It takes in account UN-Habitat GC resolution 19/8 and the UN-Habitat Governing Council Rules of Procedures.

The stakeholder engagement policy provides a framework for engagement and participation of stakeholders that are impacted upon by UN-Habitat policies and programmes or can influence UN-Habitat decision-making processes. It supports coherence in engagement of stakeholders in UN-Habitat governance and policy making processes and programmes at all levels within the context of the NUA and SDGs. It is intended to provide a continuous accreditation review and reporting process. It will support enhanced resource mobilization, delivery of results, transparency and accountability, trust and ownership and utilization of stakeholders’ expertise and influence.

Objectives

The objectives of the stakeholder engagement policy are to:

1. Increase stakeholders’ participation in, and influence of UN-Habitat governance, policy and decision-making processes including sessions and intersessions of the UN-Habitat Governing Council and its subsidiary organs.

¹ Stakeholders refer to major groups and other stakeholders currently amounting to 16 partner categories as at Habitat III. These: Civil society, local authorities, private sector, women, children and youth, professionals, foundations, academia and researchers, parliamentarians, trade unions, human solidarity groups, financial institutions, indigenous people, farmers, person with disability, and media.

² This resolution was endorsed in General Assembly Resolution A/72/8 -Report of the UN-Habitat GC.

2. Enhance resource mobilization, private sector engagement, and stakeholders' contribution of knowledge and innovations to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of UN-Habitat programmes at all levels.
3. Promote mutual understanding of organizational mandates, priorities and expectations to facilitate stronger collaboration between UN-Habitat, stakeholders and the UN system.

Guiding Principles

The key guiding principles for the stakeholder engagement policy are as follows:

- a) Equality, accessibility, inclusion and non-discrimination to ensure genuine and meaningful participation,
- b) Shared responsibility and ownership,
- c) Transparency and accountability,
- d) A focus on results, impact and transformative change in lives and processes,
- e) Sustainability towards institutionalization of long term commitment to stakeholder engagement.

Expected Outcomes

This stakeholder engagement policy will lead to:

1. Increased stakeholders' engagement and participation and support for UN-Habitat policies, programmes and financial resources.
2. Increased scope, scale and demand for UN-Habitat's services, partnerships and joint initiatives.
3. Reduced risks, improved credibility, effectiveness and coherence in stakeholder engagement.

The policy is complemented by the following existing policies, strategies and guidelines:

- a) UN-Habitat's Partnership Strategy 2017-2022
- b) Implementing Partners' Policy and Operating Procedures
- c) Guidelines for preparation of legal agreements with stakeholders
- d) UN Global Compact Principles for private sector engagement.

Critical Focus areas of the policy

The stakeholder engagement policy addresses the following three critical areas namely accreditation, enhanced coherence in stakeholder engagement; and stakeholder's participation:

1. Accreditation to the Governing Council

The UN-Habitat Governing Council Rules of Procedure 64 – local authorities and 65-67 Other Habitat Agenda Partners, and Non-Governmental Organizations, GC resolutions 19/8 and 26/7 provide space for stakeholders to participate as observers in public meetings of the UN-Habitat Governing Council and its subsidiary organs. Such participation has been possible based on:

- a) Non-Governmental Organizations in consultative status with ECOSOC
- b) Habitat Agenda Partners accredited to Habitat II
- c) Ad-hoc accreditation of other Habitat Agenda Partners on a no objection basis after the application of the 10 weeks rule.
- d) Stakeholders accredited to Habitat III.

1.2 *Provision for continuous accreditation, review and reporting process*

To strengthen the accreditation process and ensure that accredited stakeholders can participate in UN-Habitat governance and policy decision-making processes, and remain relevant to the overall agenda of UN-Habitat, that is, human settlements and sustainable urban development, this policy provides for continuous accreditation review and reporting process as follows:

- a) Non-Governmental Organizations in consultative status with ECOSOC and stakeholders accredited to Habitat III shall be accredited to attend as observers the sessions of the UN-Habitat Governing Council in accordance with Rule 66 of GC Rules of Procedure, operative paragraph 3 of GC resolution 19/8; and with operative paragraph 1 of the GC resolution 26/7 respectively.
- b) Local governments and associations shall participate in the Sessions of the UN-Habitat Governing Council and its subsidiary organs in accordance with rule 64 of the UN-Habitat Governing Council rules of procedure, and operative paragraphs 2 of GC resolution 19/8.
- c) Habitat Agenda Partners accredited to Habitat II in 1996 shall renew their accreditation, based on accreditation criteria below, and submit all accreditation requirements to the Secretariat for review and processing for onward submission to the CPR for approval.
- d) Implementing partners duly vetted and with on-going agreements of cooperation with UN-Habitat can opt for accreditation to appropriate sessions of the Governing Council.

- e) Other stakeholders not in category a), b) c) and d) above who meet the accreditation criteria below shall apply for accreditation and submit all accreditation requirements to the Secretariat for processing and submission to member states for approval on a no objection basis at least 10 weeks prior to each session of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.

1.2.1 Accreditation Criteria

- i. The stakeholder organization shall be a legal entity duly registered in the country where it is headquartered, with a governance structure, Secretariat, and in existence for at least two years. Organizations and alliances not legally registered shall apply for accreditation through their legally registered affiliate organizations.
- ii. The vision and mission of the stakeholder organization shall be in line with UN-Habitat's mandate on human settlements and sustainable urban development, especially in relation to the NUA and SDGs
- iii. The stakeholder organization should be credible with duly audited accounts, and with a track record and achievements in the field of sustainable urban development.
- iv. Relevant stakeholders operating at global, regional, national or local level shall be accredited, provided they meet the accreditation criteria and requirements.
- v. Multi-stakeholder platforms and alliances shall demonstrate due diligence in their own membership management.

1.3 Reporting process

- a) All accredited stakeholders in categories a), b) c) and d) above shall submit to the Secretariat brief periodic reports every two years about the support given to the work of UN-Habitat, especially on implementation of the New Urban Agenda, SDGs and relevant internationally agreed commitments.
- b) If any stakeholder organization cannot submit a periodic report as required, after three reminders, the Secretariat shall suspend accreditation status with approval of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, and in accordance with ECOSOC resolution 1996/31-*Arrangements for consultation with Non-Governmental Organizations*, especially Part VIII – Suspension and withdrawal of consultative status.

2 Enhanced coherence in stakeholder engagement and influence of policies and decision-making processes, and participation in UN-Habitat work

To-date, UN-Habitat works with several multi stakeholder issue based and cross sectoral networks, alliances, platforms, grassroots, informal sector and community-based organizations

through dialogues, flagship advocacy platforms like WUF and WUC, knowledge sharing, expert group meetings, advisory groups and steering committees, the peoples process, and other relevant medium.

The policy emphasizes strengthening stakeholder participation and voice at all levels building on existing inclusive multi stakeholder platforms and networks. At the same time the policy encourages as appropriate the expansion of stakeholders including identification of new strategic stakeholders and innovative approaches to resource mobilization including from the private sector, social enterprises, foundations, and crowd sourcing.

The policy shall enhance stakeholders' influence of policies, decision-making processes, and participation in the work of UN-Habitat as follows:

2.1 Stakeholder Participation in UN-Habitat Governance and Decision-Making Processes

- a) All duly accredited stakeholders in category 1.2 a), b), c) and d) above shall participate in the Sessions of the UN-Habitat Governing Council, the Committee of Permanent Representatives and its Subcommittees as observers in accordance with Rules 64-66 of the Rules of Procedure of the UN-Habitat Governing Council.
- b) An inclusive multi-stakeholder meeting shall be held before the Governing Council Session to determine collective inputs and messaging to the Session based on their shared innovations, good practices, strategies and identified policy implications related to implementation of the New Urban Agenda and SDGs and UN-Habitat's work. In coordinating the organization of this forum, the Secretariat will ensure balance representation of organizations operating at local, national, regional and global level.
- c) Furthermore, structured dialogues between stakeholders and the leadership of the Governing Council shall be arranged during the Governing Council Sessions.
- d) Stakeholders upon invitation by the President of the Governing Council, or Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives or the respective Chairs of the Sub-Committees shall make oral and/or written statements as inputs to the discussions on relevant agenda items in their areas of work and special competence.
- e) Stakeholders shall continue to participate in the GC Session dialogues as provided in the Governing Council Rules of Procedure.
- f) Member States shall be encouraged to include stakeholders in their delegations to the Governing Council, and as members of National Habitat Committees, where applicable.

2.2 Stakeholder Participation in UN-Habitat's Work

- a) Stakeholders shall continue to serve as members of existing UN-Habitat thematic and cross-sectoral advisory boards and their governance structures, inclusive multi-stakeholder platforms, networks, alliances, grassroots, and community development councils.
- b) Stakeholders through various networks, platforms, alliances including grassroots, informal sector and community-based organisations, and advisory groups shall be consulted during the design of Medium Strategic Plans, respective Work Programmes, and regional and country specific programmes to ensure these plans respond to stakeholder needs and priorities. A Stakeholder participation plan shall be an integral part of the roadmap for preparation of Medium Strategic Plan and related Work Programmes.
- c) Stakeholders shall participate in the preparation of the quadrennial report on implementation of the NUA. They shall continue to be an integral part of UN-Habitat's advocacy, campaign and outreach initiatives such as the World Urban Forum (WUF), the World Urban Campaign (WUC), World Cities Day and World Habitat Day.
- d) Stakeholders shall act as implementing partners for UN-Habitat programmes through open and transparent processes in accordance with the UN-Habitat Implementing Partners Policy and Operating Procedures.

3 The role of the Secretariat³

The Secretariat located in External Relations Division, Partners' and Inter Agency Coordination Branch shall support stakeholders' contributions to UN-Habitat policy and decision-making processes, programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

The Secretariat in liaison with stakeholder's platforms, alliances, networks, grassroots, informal sector and community based organisations shall facilitate stakeholders' participation in the monitoring and reporting on implementation of the NUA and SDGs.

The Secretariat through the Partner Information Management System shall facilitate the accreditation process by performing the following roles:

- a) Process applications for accreditation and submit to the CPR for approval on a no objection basis within four weeks from the date of submission.
- b) Publish an updated list of accredited organizations in December of each year.

³ The Secretariat refers to UN-Habitat External Relations Division, Partners' and Inter Agency Coordination Branch

- c) Submit to Member States for approval a list of stakeholders seeking accreditation which already meet the above criteria, to attend the Governing Council session as observers, 10 weeks before the start of the session.
- d) Present to the CPR a list of organizations that submitted periodic reports. These reports will be uploaded on the CPR portal.
- e) Mobilize relevant stakeholders, in collaboration with other UN agencies and multilateral institutions to participate in UN-Habitat Governing Council sessions and other intergovernmental sessions.
- f) Encourage strong engagement of UN agencies, intergovernmental organizations and other multilateral agencies in the sessions of the Governing Council and its subsidiary bodies.
- g) Provide timely information and documentation to stakeholders to facilitate their participation in and influence of UN-Habitat policy making processes.

To ensure coherence and coordination in stakeholder engagement, UN-Habitat will operationalize its Stakeholders' Collaborative Framework and strengthen its internal coordination of stakeholder engagement. This may include establishment of a stakeholders advisory group, internal stakeholder engagement committee, regional platforms, capacity building and development of guidance tools for effective engagement.

4 Support to Implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Policy

Implementation of the stakeholder engagement policy shall be facilitated by the following:

- a) Access to information through sharing of UN-Habitat Governing Council session papers with stakeholders, publications - reports, brochures, newsletters; press releases, statements and speeches, social media campaigns, websites, online mailing lists, email messaging, etc.
- b) Response to stakeholders' voices, perspectives, etc. through face-to-face and virtual meetings, online surveys and stakeholder interviews, email feedback forms, stakeholders help desk, media articles, voluntary reporting, project/programme evaluations, oral and written submissions.
- c) Stakeholder inclusion and participation in UN-Habitat platforms, networks, advisory boards, steering committees, Expert Group Meetings, workshops, etc.
- d) Collaboration and coordination through joint projects and programmes, joint programming, joint advocacy, joint knowledge generation, data sharing, and innovation,

joint position papers, partnerships, peer to peer exchanges, city to city cooperation, and south to south cooperation.

- e) Capacity building to enhance effectiveness of stakeholders' engagement and participation.
- f) Resource mobilization, leverage, coordination and collaboration with major urban sector donors as per their respective focus areas.

5 Review of impact of the Stakeholder Engagement policy

The progress on implementation and impact of the stakeholder engagement policy shall be reviewed every 4 years.

Continuous stakeholder mapping will be undertaken to establish new strategic partners and platforms that support implementation of urban related SDGs, the New Urban Agenda, and UN-Habitat normative and operational programmes.

Conclusion

This stakeholder engagement policy, when implemented effectively will enhance trust and a sense of ownership of UN-Habitat's work and agenda by stakeholders at various levels. It will promote transparency, accountability, and equality of stakeholders in their engagement and participation towards common goals. This policy will therefore contribute towards enduring partnerships, upscaling quality and sustainability of UN-Habitat's, Member States' and stakeholders' interventions through mutual leveraging of knowledge, expertise and resources.

Annex I: Accreditation requirements

Organizations seeking accreditation to the Sessions of UN-Habitat Governing Council are required to submit the following details to confirm that the organization is a legal entity with established governance structure, and operational areas relevant to human settlements and sustainable urban development.

General Information Required:

- Date
- Name of Organization
- Address
- Telephone
- Email
- Website
- Contact (Name of Head of Organizations and title)
- Scope (National/Regional/International)
- Purpose, objectives and summary of activities

Attachments Required

- The purpose of the organization.
- Documented confirmation of the activities of the organization at the national, regional or international level, especially in areas relevant to housing, urban development and human settlements with detailed information in the country (s) in which they are carried out.
- Copies of the annual or other reports of the organization with financial statements, and a list of financial sources and contributions, including contributions from Governments.
- A list of members of the governing body of the organization and their nationalities.
- A description of the membership of the organization, indicating the total number of members, the names of organizations that are members and their geographical distribution.
- A copy of the constitution and/or by-laws of the organization and a copy of the registration / incorporation of the entity as applicable.

