Committee for Programme and Coordination
Forty-eighth session
9 June-3 July 2008
Agenda item 8
Adoption of the report of the Committee on its forty-eighth session

Draft report

Rapporteur: Ms. Stefania Rosini (Italy)

Addendum

Proposed strategic framework for the period 2010-2011
(Item 3 (b))

Programme 12
Human settlements

1. At its 17th meeting, on 23 June 2008, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 12, Human settlements, of the proposed biennial programme plan (A/63/6 (Prog. 12)).

2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the programme and responded to queries raised during the Committee’s consideration of the programme.

Discussion

3. Appreciation was expressed for the presentation and content of the proposed programme plan for the period 2010-2011. The approval of the medium-term strategic and institutional plan by the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) in April 2007 was welcomed. UN-Habitat was complemented on its coordination with other United Nations agencies, including the United Nations Environment Programme.

4. The refinement of the proposed programme plan to ensure that it was aligned and consistent with the approved medium-term strategic and institutional plan was commended. Clarification was sought as to whether the new Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities had been taken into consideration in urban planning. The five focus areas of the medium-term strategic and institutional plan, namely, effective advocacy, monitoring and partnerships; participatory urban
planning, management and governance; pro-poor land and housing; environmentally sound basic infrastructure and affordable services; and human settlements finance systems were welcomed. The sixth focus, excellence in management, was commended.

5. Reference was made to the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, in which the Office had raised the issue of the UN-Habitat programme being too broad and had advised that UN-Habitat should continue to focus on achievable goals within its limited resources. Concern was expressed that there were too many indicators of achievement in the biennial programme plan and that they were difficult to measure.

6. The increasing number of slum-dwellers referred to in paragraph 12.3 was acknowledged and the fact that in most developing countries the majority of the population lived in informal settlements was emphasized. The view was expressed that financing from the private sector usually focused on the middle- and high-income population and the programme needed to focus on financing shelter for low-income people. The strategy for improving the lives of the poor referred to in paragraph 12.8 (a) of the overall orientation was commended.

7. The view was expressed that the strength of UN-Habitat lay in its normative activities, advocacy and knowledge management in addressing the challenges of chaotic urbanization and they should be highlighted. UN-Habitat was commended for the global campaign on sustainable urbanization and a clarification was sought as to whether there were any concrete results.

8. In subprogramme 1, Shelter and sustainable human settlements development, clarification was sought with regard to the meaning of “fiscal and political decentralization” referred to in indicator of achievement (b) (i) and with regard to the phrase “the links with universities” contained in paragraph 12.11 (d). The strategy of advocacy work referred to in paragraph 12.11 (b) was welcomed.

9. The importance of subprogramme 2, Monitoring the Habitat Agenda, was emphasized. The inclusion of “mainstream gender and promote women’s empowerment” in indicator of achievement (c) (i) was commended. The view was expressed that the realization of the Millennium Development Goals should be included in the programme plan for the next biennium.

10. Regarding subprogramme 3, Regional and technical cooperation, the view was expressed that UN-Habitat should draw on best practices from its technical cooperation activities to address specific urban problems.

11. In subprogramme 4, Human settlements financing, it was observed that the workplan for the biennium would concentrate on water and basic sanitation, and the view was expressed that that focus should be expressed in the objective. Clarification was sought as to what the new and innovative financing initiatives to leverage the contributions of communities were. The view was expressed that experimental activities referred to under the subprogramme should not be presented as the centre of activities, since the steering and monitoring committee was not in place; therefore, it was not clear what could be achieved.

12. The view was expressed that UN-Habitat needed to expand its environmental activities, given the degradation that accompanied rapid urbanization. The impact was especially notable with regard to the pollution of water and rivers, since the
damage could be irreversible. The view was expressed that insufficient good practices were included in the programme.

Conclusions and recommendations

13. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly approve the programme narrative of programme 12, Human settlements, of the proposed biennial programme plan, subject to the following modifications:

Overall orientation

Paragraph 12.4
In the fourth line, insert the words “including disabled people,” after the words “disadvantaged groups,”.

Paragraph 12.5
In the fourteenth and fifteenth lines, replace the words “in line with the ongoing United Nations reforms at the global and national levels,” with “at the global and national levels, in line with the approved United Nations reforms.”.

In the eighteenth line after the word “teams” delete the words “in line with the policy of One United Nations”.

Subprogramme 1
Shelter and sustainable human settlements development

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat
In accomplishment (d), at the end of the paragraph, add the words “and to promote a positive approach of foreseeable natural risk prevention”.

Indicators of achievement
Add the following new indicator of achievement:
“(e) (iv) Increased number of students trained by graduate-level institutions”.

Subprogramme 2
Monitoring the Habitat Agenda

Expected accomplishments of the Secretariat
In accomplishment (a), replace the words “Declaration targets” with the words “Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation”.

Strategy
Paragraph 12.12 (a)
After “resolution 55/2”, add the words “and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation”.

Subprogramme 3
Regional and technical cooperation

Indicators of achievement

At the end of indicator of achievement (c) (ii), add the words “and verified”.

Strategy

In paragraph 12.13 (a), replace the words “with the United Nations reform agenda, especially the One United Nations system at country level” with the words “with the approved United Nations reforms”.

Subprogramme 4
Human settlements financing

Objective of the Organization

After the words “infrastructure and services,”, add the words “mainly water and sanitation,.”.

Strategy

In paragraph 12.14 (f), after the words “non-motorized transport”, add the words “such as bicycles”.

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