

# ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT 2016

Demonstrating Results of the Strategic Plan 2014-2019



**UN HABITAT**  
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE



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PART 1

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

*Demonstrating Results of the  
Strategic Plan 2014-2019*

## 1. Introduction

This is the third Annual Progress Report on the implementation of the six-year strategic plan (2014-2019) prepared in accordance with the Governing Council resolution 25/3 of April 2015. The strategic plan is being implemented through three successive biennial work programmes and budgets (GC resolution 24/15). The report reviews progress made on implementation of the 2016-2017 work programme and budget in 2016 and focuses on the results that are attributed to interventions of UN-Habitat's and those of its partners. Each section starts with highlights of main results noted in 2016, followed by reports on results realized at country, regional and global levels. Results are measured against the defined expected accomplishments (EAs), and progress rated on reported attainment of indicator targets for 2017, together with qualitative analysis of noted changes. It also highlights challenges met and their management, as well as lessons learned.

This report is based on inputs from UN-Habitat branches as well as regional and country offices working collaboratively in an integrated and transformative manner through the matrix system. The reported performance is triangulated with desk reviews of UN-Habitat online materials and various donor and evaluation reports. Two comprehensive evaluation reports, namely, the Evaluation of the Sweden/UN-Habitat Agreement Report of March 2016, and the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) Institutional Assessment Report of January 2017, confirm UN-Habitat's "good performance" and to some extent validate some of the results documented in this report. The mid-term review of the GLTN Phase 2 Programme (October 2016 report) has also been very useful in corroborating results reported on the GLTN programme.

After the Executive Summary the analytical report provides performance details on each of the following sections: Executive Direction and Management; seven sub-programmes/ focus areas and; the two divisions; namely, Programme Division and Management and Operations Division.

## 2. Highlights of 2016

The organization participated in the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito in October 2016, and contributed significantly to the outcome document, the New Urban Agenda. The document reaffirmed "the role and expertise of UN-Habitat...within its mandate as a focal point for sustainable urbanization and human settlements in collaboration with other United Nations system entities ..."; and "recognized the linkages between sustainable urbanization, sustainable development, disaster risk reduction and climate change." *UN-Habitat was given the responsibility of coordinating the "report on progress made in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda every four years, in close collaboration with other UN entities"*. Its role as the focal point includes "follow up to and review of the New Urban Agenda".

Two independent assessments, the evaluation of the Sweden/UN-Habitat Agreement and the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN), are positive about the achievements of UN-Habitat and its partners. Overall, the Evaluation of the Sweden/UN-Habitat Agreement Report of March 2016, noted "good performance...with respect to project/programme designs, implementation processes and results. The report points to good performance on achievement of results at project level." The majority of SIDA funded projects (75 per cent) were rated as highly satisfactory or satisfactory performance. The Evaluation reported improved capacity of the organization to carry out its work. It also identified a number of areas that require improvement and these will be identified in the appropriate sections of this report.

Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) report concluded that "overall UN-Habitat largely meets the requirements of an effective multilateral organization and is fit for purpose, although performance can be strengthened and improved in some areas. It provides deep understanding of the changing nature of urbanization and a capability to adapt and



**75%**  
of SIDA funded projects were rated highly satisfactory or satisfactory performance

respond to these changes. UN-Habitat's organizational architecture is aligned to its mandate and its programme interventions achieve impressive results. The organization brings innovative and creative approaches to operations". It goes on to say that the UN-Habitat demonstrates "relevance and is responsive to demands of partners...It demonstrates transparency and accountability in its operations and strong compliance with financial rules" (MOPAN report pg. 6). The MOPAN Report identifies the following key strengths of UN-Habitat: the strategic plan is aligned to the global sustainable urbanization challenges and implemented consistently; considerable investment was made in the reform of the organization and the matrix approach is working effectively; a strong team approach facilitates agility, learning and efficiency; participatory project design approach ensures relevance and is appreciated by partners; powerful partnerships with city, regional and national institutions are potentially transformative; the organization has embraced results-based management at all levels, improving accountability; and positive results are being achieved across all areas of operation.

Further, the MOPAN report identifies the following areas that require improvement: stabilization of core funding, essential deeper mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues; more comprehensive consultation with beneficiaries required; more comprehensive results analysis required; more learning from evaluations required to improve organizational performance; and more focus on sustainability during interventions.

In addition, the European Commission concluded its Pillar Assessment of UN-Habitat, testing Internal Control Systems, Accounting System, Independent External Audit, Grants, Procurement and Sub-Delegations. The Pillar Assessment found that in all material aspects, UN-Habitat's systems, rules and procedures in these areas meet the requirements of the European Commission.

### 3. Towards effective management of an expanded and integrated portfolio of projects

One of UN-Habitat's aims is to have an expanded portfolio of projects that fully integrates normative and operational aspects of its work. Towards this end, project documents (proposals) are required to demonstrate how proposed activities systematically combine normative and operational aspects. Projects are also expected to adopt an integrated and holistic approach to solving development problems, hence, multi-thematic projects are promoted. Peer review meetings undertaken provide an opportunity for ensuring the above elements are incorporated consistently. Multi-thematic teams are established to collaborate on the formulation of large and complex projects. At the project approval stage, collaboration is formalized through the 'in-house agreements' mechanism to ensure clarity on the various components, the results to be achieved, the roles and responsibilities of various parties and the modality for resource allocation/sharing between regions and branches. This deeper integration and collaboration is due to the implementation of the 'matrix policy' which was approved in 2016.

The level of coherence and alignment of projects to the approved work programme and strategic plan is high. All projects that are approved by the programme advisory group (PAG) are supposed to be aligned to expected accomplishments and outputs of the work programme. In addition, all projects have to specify their linkages with the New Urban Agenda and the SDG targets they are contributing towards. Cross-cutting issues of human rights, gender, youth and climate change are systematically verified for all projects. A new system for Environmental and Social Safeguards was introduced in December 2016 to ensure social and environmental sustainability of proposed projects. Areas for improvement include better tracking of project progress through PAAS and more attention to the institutionalization of project results.



**77%**  
of the indicator targets are either on or before midpoint and will meet target in 2017, 10 per cent were in progress to be met while 12 percent are unlikely to meet the target  
*(Figure 2).*

In 2016, the Project Advisory Group approved 146 projects (up from 83 in 2015). Whilst there was a slight decline in project acquisition at the Regional level in 2016 compared to 2015, there was growth at in branches and other cost centres. Figure 1 presents the new projects with a total value of USD 161.80 million acquired in 2016 and additional funding of USD 54.65 million received for extending projects opened in previous years (cost financial extension).

**Figure 1: Total Grant/Portfolio of USD 216.45 million acquired or extended in 2016**

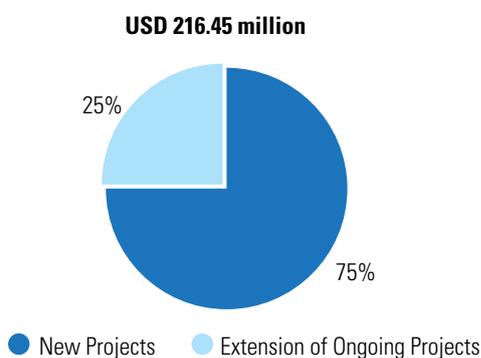


Figure 2 shows the distribution of total funds/ grants, USD 216.45 million, acquired to support approved project portfolio by cost centre. Of this amount, 74 per cent was generated through the regional offices, 19 per cent through the branches and 7 per cent through other cost centres.

**Figure 2: Total grants received in 2016 to support the Approved Project Portfolio**

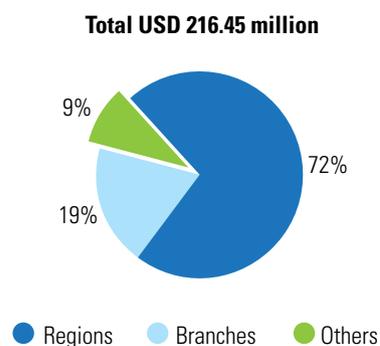


Figure 3 presents the grants/funds acquired to support the project portfolio distributed by regional offices and branches.

**Figure 3: New Project Portfolio Acquired/Extended in 2016 by Cost Centre**



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