



TERMS OF REFERENCE AND RULES OF PROCEDURE

FOR

THE UN-HABITAT ADVISORY GROUP ON GENDER ISSUES (AGGI)

BACKGROUND:

The twenty first century is an urban century, in which half of the global population lives in cities. Urbanization is a powerful force that generates economic growth, social/political advances and technical and scientific progress. Each week three million people are added to cities in the developing world. One in every three of these people live in urban slums, a number expected to increase. Of these, as many as two-thirds are women and girls, often suffering the worst effects of slum life, such as poor access to clean water, inadequate sanitation, unemployment, insecurity of tenure and gender-based violence. At the same time, it is women and girls who make the difference in urbanization and help communities develop sustainably. Women make a difference in the lives of families and communities to cope with its negative effects, and implement strategies to enhance urbanization. The many roles that women play, at the family, household and community level, vitally contribute to sustainable urban development.

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) originally established as the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS) by Resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations 32/162 of 19 December 1977, and thereafter transformed into a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly of the United Nations by its Resolution 56/206 of 21 December 2001, with its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, has played a pro-active role in recognizing and supporting women's roles in human settlement development.

After the Nairobi Conference in 1985, UNCHS recognized the fact that women were missing from the human settlements agenda and ran a series of regional consultations to address this. Consequently, UNCHS established the Women and Human Settlements Office, to play a role in facilitating external relations of Habitat on women's issues in human settlements, and later created a Gender Mainstreaming Unit to ensure gender mainstreaming across UN-Habitat.

In 1995, during the United Nations (UN) 4th World's Women Conference in Beijing, the then Executive Director of UNCHS, Wally N'Dow, announced the formation of

the Huairou Commission¹ to monitor the Habitat II conference of 1996 from a women's perspective, and as a vehicle to strengthen the involvement of women in the human settlements arena, a role which it has continued to play.²

In this regard, much work has been done by UN-Habitat and its partners (particularly the Huairou Commission) on women's empowerment and gender equality, but more remains to be done.

An evaluation of the gender work of UN-Habitat conducted in 2011 revealed a need for a more focused look at gender mainstreaming and gender equality across all levels of UN-Habitat. Therefore, the Governing Council at its twenty-third session³ through resolution 23/1 (attached as Annex 1 for ease of reference), requested the strengthening of UN-Habitat's gender focus through, among other processes, the formation of an Advisory Group on gender issues. This positive advancement will give stronger emphasis to the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment and will put women at the forefront as vital agents of change in human settlements work.

I. MISSION OF THE AGGI:

1. Advancing women's empowerment and gender equality in sustainable urban development; through the provision of strategic guidance and advice, across policies, programme of work and budgeting at global, regional, national and local levels, taking note of gender evaluations, resolutions and the wider UN context for coherent work on women's empowerment and gender equality.
2. Work of the AGGI will be guided by a common understanding of women's empowerment, gender equality, gender equity and gender mainstreaming, as outlined in Annex 2.

¹ The Huairou Commission, a registered non-governmental organization with a global secretariat in Brooklyn, New York (NY), was established to ensure that grassroots women would have a voice at UN conferences and in other development processes. It develops strategic partnerships and linkages among grassroots women's organizations, advancing their capacity to collectively influence political spaces on behalf of their communities and enhance their sustainable, resilient community development practices.

² Affirmed in *Report to the General Assembly by the Secretary General on Habitat II*, A/Conf.165/PC.3/3 November 15, 1995.

³ Resolution on gender equality and empowerment of women in sustainable urban development (GC Resolution 23/1) April 2011

(a) Principles

3. The AGGI is established as an independent advisory body to the UN-Habitat Executive Director, guided by principles of integrity, transparency, trust and accountability;
4. The work of the AGGI will be guided by a human rights and development based approach, with a focus on affected populations;
5. The work of the AGGI will recognize and support women as active contributors to human settlements and urban development;
6. The work of the AGGI will be informed by and build on good practices and lessons learned from UN-Habitat's body of work as well as wider field of its mandate, including from local level and grassroots initiatives;
7. The AGGI members shall make recommendations relevant to the needs of the Agency, informed by the realities of the global constituency that they represent;
8. The work of the AGGI will address and impact all of the thematic areas of UN-Habitat's work.

II. FUNCTIONS:

(a) Role of the AGGI

9. Advise the UN-Habitat Executive Director on all issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment, including gender mainstreaming efforts, in the work of UN-Habitat;
10. Provide strategic guidance and policy advice to the UN-Habitat Executive Director on the development, implementation and assessment of the Agency's strategic plans, including its gender equality action plans;
11. Advise on strengthening the link and coherence between UN-Habitat's policies and normative framework and its operational activities on women's empowerment and gender equality;
12. Advise on implementation and follow up of resolutions of the Governing Council related to gender, and in addition, the UN-Habitat Executive Director may call upon the AGGI to provide advice on the content of future resolutions, to strengthen their gender perspective;
13. Advise on implementation of findings and recommendations of evaluations as regards to their gender dimensions;
14. Advise on institutional policies, structure and capacities related to the Agency's work on women's empowerment and gender equality;
15. Provide guidance on mechanisms and create a responsive framework for strengthening, structuring and establishing new partnerships with diverse groups and constituencies, *inter alia*, grassroots and women's organizations, UN agencies, multilaterals and private sector, as well as professionals for strengthening the Agency's work in the area of women's empowerment and gender equality in sustainable urban development
16. Advise the UN-Habitat Executive Director on progress, gaps and challenges for ongoing improvements in the Agency's internal and external efforts towards women's empowerment and gender equality;
17. The AGGI may provide additional advice as it may deem necessary and/or as called upon by the UN-Habitat Executive Director in other areas, such as in the development of institutional policies and documents, training, management responses to evaluations or other matters, including support to public outreach and advocacy;
18. Develop its own mode of operation and annual work plan to be approved by the UN-Habitat Executive Director;
19. The AGGI may form thematic sub-groups to facilitate and enhance the delivery of their advisory role to the UN-Habitat Executive Director.

(b) Outputs

The AGGI will deliver:

20. Recommendations and advice to the UN-Habitat Executive Director;
21. A workplan, reviewed and revised annually. Initial plan and revised versions to be approved by the UN-Habitat Executive Director. The workplan will include the activities, deliverables, methodology of deliverables, partners and timelines, reflecting the priorities as agreed by the AGGI.
22. Mode of operations reviewed regularly and revised accordingly. Initial mode of operations and revisions to be approved by the UN-Habitat Executive Director;
23. Comprehensive annual reports (technical and financial) to be submitted to the UN-Habitat Executive Director, outlining its activities, progress on its work plan and recommendations;
24. Summarized bi-annual report to be submitted to the UN-Habitat Executive Director;
25. Ad-hoc reports and recommendations as may be required and necessary;
26. This Terms of Reference may be reviewed regularly and revised as necessary and approved by the UN-Habitat Executive Director.

(c) Role of UN-Habitat

27. In its engagement and interaction with the AGGI, UN-Habitat will demonstrate transparency, integrity, accountability and other United Nations core values;
28. UN-Habitat will maintain an appropriate mechanism for the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of gender mainstreaming and gender equality within its organization and programmes;
29. UN-Habitat will ensure highest-level sustained political will, as well as the establishment of appropriate institutional mechanisms and staffing structures, including senior-level commitment for gender equality and women's empowerment;
30. UN-Habitat will cover the administrative cost of the AGGI which comprise of agreed meeting expenses and the cost of running the AGGI Secretariat in line with a pre-approved budget;
31. UN-Habitat will make available information and relevant documents as may be required to the AGGI members to facilitate their work, as well as provide other support as may be required or necessary;

32. UN-Habitat will provide an enabling environment for the AGGI to liaise and collaborate with relevant UN-Habitat staff members; and facilitate the availability of staff members especially gender focal points (HQ and regional) as may be required/requested by the AGGI for deliberations on gender related issues/topics;
33. UN-Habitat will facilitate contacts and collaboration between the AGGI and other UN Agencies and other relevant organizations/institutions on gender issues related to human settlements, as necessary;
34. UN-Habitat Executive Director will provide feedback/response to the AGGI on submitted recommendations of the AGGI;
35. UN-Habitat will seek to ensure adequate budgetary support for the implementation of recommendations from the AGGI adopted by the Executive Director;
36. As requested by the resolution, UN-Habitat Executive Director will report to the Governing Council on the implementation of gender mainstreaming and gender equality: AGGI members may assist in this reporting, as may be requested by the ED.

(d) Role of the AGGI Secretariat

37. The Secretariat will perform its role under the direct supervision of the UN-Habitat Director, Project Office and guidance from the UN-Habitat Deputy Executive Director. Its work as detailed below shall be in compliance with relevant United Nations rules and regulations.
38. The Secretariat shall facilitate communication between the AGGI and UN-Habitat gender focal points and the other staff members as may be required and necessary;
39. The Secretariat shall facilitate communication between the AGGI Chairperson and the members of the AGGI;
40. The Secretariat shall maintain and facilitate flow of information, share relevant documents (including as generated by UN-Habitat), synthesize information/reports and make information flow manageable;
41. The Secretariat shall provide service to meetings and other activities of the AGGI;
42. The Secretariat may provide other administrative supports to the AGGI as required and necessary.

III. MODE OF OPERATION

(a) Agenda

43. The AGGI Secretariat, in consultation with the Chairperson of AGGI, shall draw up and circulate a provisional agenda to all the AGGI members in advance of the proposed meeting within the agreed number of notification days as stipulated in its mode of operations;

44. The AGGI shall at the beginning of each meeting adopt the provisional agenda and the minutes of the previous meeting as presented by the Chairperson.

(b) Meetings

45. The AGGI may meet at least once a year to prepare the annual work plan, review its progress, set priorities, as well as conduct other relevant business;

46. The dates of the official meetings of the AGGI should coincide with any of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat, the Gender Assembly at the World Urban Forum (WUF) and/or the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW);

47. Meetings can be convened by a two third (2/3) majority;

48. Recommendations and advice to the UN-Habitat Executive Director should be issued through consensus. Where consensus cannot be reached, opinions different to the majority of the participating members shall be included in the report to the UN-Habitat Executive Director, noting the number of members supporting each recommendation;

49. The cost of travel and per diem of participating AGGI members in meetings will be reimbursed in line with the UN financial rules and regulations and in accordance with the pre-approved budget;

50. Ad hoc meetings of the AGGI may be convened if the need arises and subject to the availability of funds. They may be conducted via teleconference as appropriate.

(c) Consultation

51. The AGGI should take advantage of the Gender Assembly, Women's Caucuses, Roundtables, the UN-Habitat/HC managed web portal "Women and Human Settlements", and other spaces (both physical and online) facilitated by UN-Habitat and the broader UN/civil society that are specifically for women's issues, to allow for consultation and engagement with a broad number of women and women's groups working on issues of human settlements and urban development.

(d) Communication

52. The mode of communication of the AGGI will be through meetings that may take place face to face, via teleconference, online and/or emails;

53. The AGGI should also take advantage of the UN-Habitat/Huairou Commission managed web portal entitled “Women and Human Settlements” as a means of communication. A section of the Portal for private communication between members will be established. The Portal may also be used by the AGGI to communicate with women’s organizations working on human settlements and urban development.

IV. MEMBERSHIP

(a) Appointment Criteria

54. The AGGI shall be composed of up to a maximum of 17 members appointed by the Executive Director of UN-Habitat, taking into account the broadest possible representation, including regional and gender balances, consisting of representatives of women’s organizations (grassroots and professional organization), academic institutions, the private sector, local authorities, and policy makers and decisions makers in governments, and reflecting the Habitat Agenda Partners;⁴

55. The members of the AGGI shall serve in their own capacity.

56. All members of the AGGI shall be nominated and appointed on the basis of their experience and expertise on gender equality and empowerment of women in sustainable urban development;

57. In addition to having experience and expertise in gender equality and women empowerment; members of the AGGI shall have knowledge or experience in at least one of the UN-Habitat thematic priority areas, (attached as Annex 3 for ease of reference); in addition to their

58. All members of the AGGI shall serve for a term of 2 years unless by reason of death, resignation or removal due to non-performance. The UN-Habitat Executive Director, in consultation with the AGGI Chairperson, may appoint a person to complete the term of the departing member, with reference to regional and gender balance;

59. A serving member may be re-appointed to the AGGI by the UN-Habitat Executive Director and serve for a maximum of one additional term;

60. Membership of the AGGI is voluntary and members will not be remunerated.

⁴ This is in accordance with GC resolution 23/1, “*representatives of women’s organizations (both grassroots and professional organizations), academic institutions, the private sector, local authorities and policymakers and decision-makers in Governments, taking into account equal regional representation.....*” Please see Annex 1 for full text.

(b) Selection Process

61. A selection process has been established for the initial appointment of the AGGI members (Please see Annex 4). This process will be guided by a workplan and validated and reviewed through its implementation. A proposal for future selection processes will then be submitted accordingly.

(c) The Chairperson of AGGI

62. The Chairperson of AGGI shall be nominated by the AGGI members, and shall serve for a term of one year and may be re-elected for one additional year;

63. Nomination of the Chairperson shall not be valid unless supported by two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members of the AGGI;

64. The Chairperson shall be responsible for communication and coordination between the members of AGGI and the Secretariat, coordinating the work of the AGGI, including leading the reporting on the AGGI's activities (assisted by other members as requested by the Chairperson).

V. FUNDING

65. The AGGI core funding is to be established by UN-Habitat. The core funding will cover the costs of travel and per diem of participating AGGI members in meetings and the cost of running the AGGI Secretariat. The core funding may be supplemented by fund-raising initiatives.

66. The funding for activities of the AGGI shall be derived from fund-raising initiatives and support from donor, governments and other organizations;

67. The use of funds allocated for the AGGI activities are subject to United Nations Financial Rules and Regulations and are disbursed through the AGGI Secretariat. Decisions on allocation of funds are made by UN-Habitat in consultation with the AGGI and according to its approved AGGI Work Plan.

VI. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF OPERATION

68. The AGGI shall not communicate, disclose or make available all or any part of confidential information to any third party without the prior written consent of UN-Habitat;

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69. The members of the AGGI are not to speak on behalf of UN-Habitat or the UN system, or make use of its flags, logos, etc in communication, without obtaining prior approval from the AGGI Secretariat or UN-Habitat;

70. The members of the AGGI shall not act as representatives of the AGGI or UN-Habitat, or publically communicate about confidential information of the AGGI and UN-Habitat, without obtaining prior express written approval from the AGGI Secretariat or UN-Habitat;

71. The members of the AGGI shall hold harmless and defend UN-Habitat and its officials against any action that may be brought against UN-Habitat or its officials as a result of their conduct or use of their position as the AGGI members;

72. Nothing in or relating to the membership of the AGGI shall entitle its members to the privileges and immunities of UN-Habitat and the AGGI members shall not be regarded as staff members of UN-Habitat.

ANNEX 1: GOVERNING COUNCIL OF UN-HABITAT GC Resolution 23/1, APRIL 2011

**Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme
Twenty-third session**

Nairobi, 11–15 April 2011

Resolution 23/1: Gender equality and empowerment of women in sustainable urban development

The Governing Council,

Recalling its resolutions 17/11 of 14 May 1999 on women in human settlements development and in the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), 19/16 of 9 May 2003 on women's role and rights in human settlements development and slum upgrading, 20/7 of 8 April 2005 on gender equality in human settlements development, 21/2 of 20 April 2007 on the medium-term strategic and institutional plan for 2008–2013, 21/9 of 20 April 2007 on women's land and property rights and access to finance, and 22/7 of 3 April 2009 on the work programme and budget of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme for the biennium 2010–2011,

Recalling also Economic and Social Council resolution 2008/34, by which the Economic and Social Council encouraged all United Nations entities to allocate adequate resources for gender mainstreaming, including for mandatory training on gender mainstreaming, especially gender analysis, for all staff,

Recognizing that persistent gender inequality, women's lack of empowerment and inequitable access to land, secure tenure, housing, infrastructure and basic services, in addition to their lack of participation in decision-making, create further challenges within the context of sustainable urban development,

Recognizing also the major development contributions made by grass-roots women worldwide, and that successful urbanization and development processes require grass-roots women's involvement and leadership, which should be supported so as to have a positive impact on sustainable urban development,

Welcoming General Assembly resolution 64/289 of 2 July 2010 establishing the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, which aims to lead to more effective coordination, coherence and gender mainstreaming across the United Nations system,

Taking note of the challenges and progress made in the implementation of the gender equality action plan 2008–2013 described in the report of the Executive Director,⁵

1. Requests the Executive Director to strengthen the Gender Mainstreaming Unit and with the Unit, to manage a unified system of gender focal points and a gender task force effective throughout the United Nations Human Settlements Programme;

⁵HSP/GC/23/5/Add.7.

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2. Encourages the Executive Director to continue strengthening staff capacity and competency in gender mainstreaming, including in the regional offices;

3. Encourages the United Nations Human Settlements Programme to incorporate fully a gender perspective into all its work;

4. Requests the Executive Director to encourage the establishment of a consultative mechanism with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the gender units of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and other relevant agencies with a focus on human settlements, to promote coherence, coordination and alignment within the United Nations system, and, in particular, to involve grass-roots women and community-based organizations, to inform these consultations;

5. Also requests the Executive Director to set up an advisory group on gender issues consisting of representatives of women's organizations (both grass-roots and professional organizations), academic institutions, the private sector, local authorities, and policymakers and decision makers in Governments, taking into account equal regional representation, to advise the Executive Director on all issues related to gender mainstreaming in the work of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and to provide oversight regarding the implementation of the gender equality action plan within the existing programme of work and budget;

6. Requests the Executive Director to submit a report on the implementation of the present resolution to the Governing Council at its twenty-fourth and future sessions.

ANNEX 2: Definitions of Terms

Gender refers to the social attributes and opportunities association with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a women or a man in a given context. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities, assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources as well as decision making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context. Other important criteria for socio-cultural analysis include class, race, poverty level, ethnic group and age.⁶

Gender equality refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boy's Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration-recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a "women's issues" but should concerns and fully engage men as well as women. Equality between women and men is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people centered development.⁷

Gender equity refers to the process of giving fair treatment to women and men. The goal of gender equity looks beyond equality of opportunity as it requires transformative change. Gender equity recognizes that different measures might be required for men and women where: they reflect different needs and priorities; or where their existing situation means that some groups of women or men need special or additional supportive measures to ensure that all are on a 'level playing field'.⁸

Women's empowerment is related to gender equality but distinct from it. The core of empowerment lies in the ability of a woman to plan and control her own destiny. This implies that to be empowered women must not only have equal capabilities (such as education and health) and equal access to resources and opportunities (such as land and employment) they must also have the UN-Habitat to use those rights, capabilities, resources and opportunities to make strategic choices and decisions (such as are

⁶ *Gender Mainstreaming: Strategy for Promoting Gender Equality*, Office of the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (August 2001)

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ *Gender in Local Government: A Source Book for Trainers*, UN-Habitat (2008).

provided through leadership opportunities and participation in political institutions). And to exercise UN-Habitat, women must live without the fear of coercion and violence.⁹

Gender Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implication for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.¹⁰

⁹ *Taking Action: Achieving Gender Equality and Empowering Women*, UN Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality 2005

¹⁰ Report of the Economic and Social Council for 1997 (A/52/3), chap. IV, agreed conclusions 1997/2 (18 September 1997) (from the special session of the Council on gender mainstreaming).

ANNEX 3: UN-Habitat THEMATIC BRANCHES AND UNITS AS OF 1 FEBRUARY 2012

UN-Habitat thematic Branches and Units as of 1 February 2012 - DRAFT

Urban Legislation, Land and Governance Branch Clarissa Augustinus OIC	Urban Planning and Design Branch Raf Tuus	Urban Economy Branch Gulelat Kebebe	Urban Basic Services Branch Bert Diphoom	Housing and Slum Upgrading Branch Mohamed El-Sioui	Risk Reduction and Rehabilitation Branch Jan Meeuwuisen	Research, Policy Studies and Capacity Development Branch Eduardo Moreno
Land and GLTN Unit	Regional and Metropolitan Planning Unit	Urban and Municipal Finance Unit	Water and Sanitation Unit	Housing Unit	Risk Reduction Unit	Global Urban Observatory Unit
Urban Legislation Unit	City Planning, Extension and Design Unit	Local Economic Development Unit	Urban Mobility Unit	Slum Upgrading Unit	Settlements Recovery Unit	Research Unit
Local Government & Decentralization Unit	Climate Change Planning Unit	Youth and Job Creation Unit	Waste Management Unit	Community Management Unit	Shelter Rehabilitation Unit	Capacity Development Unit
			Urban Energy Unit			

ANNEX 4: INITIAL NOMINATION/SELECTION PROCESS OF AGGI MEMBERS

ADVISORY GROUP ON GENDER ISSUES (AGGI): INITIAL NOMINATION/SELECTION PROCESS OF MEMBERS

1. Request for nominations:

- a. Request the CPR for 2 nominees under the category of decision makers in government;
- b. Request Donors for 1 nominee under the category of decision makers in government;
- c. Invite UN-Habitat relevant staff members, AGGI Preparatory Working Group and Partners calling for 1 nomination per person/partner;
- d. Post request/invitation for nomination on the UN-Habitat website.

The TORs and a nomination form - to be duly completed and returned for each nominee - will be included in the invitation for nominations. The nominator/proposer should confirm (to the extent possible) interest and availability of the nominee before forwarding the completed nomination form.

2. Pre-Selection:

- a. UN-Habitat and Huairou Commission to select 3 persons each for a six (6) person Selection Committee;
- b. The two organisations to select additional 2 persons (one each) who will act as receiving point (focal point) for the nominations; these additional two will not be a member of the Selection Committee;
- c. The Focal Points to oversee the intake of nominations and consolidate names of all nominees in a database and allocate numbers to each nominee;
- d. Focal Points send a copy of the list of nominees to the selection committee. Names of the nominees will not appear in this version, only the respective nominee's number indicated.

3. Selection of Nominees:

- a. The Selection Committee will sift through the nominees applying the selection criteria included in the ToR;
- b. The Selection Committee will short-list and submit 30 nominees to the Focal Points;
- c. The Focal Points will restore names to the 30 short-listed nominees and forward the shortlist list to the Preparatory Working Group (PWG).

4. Recommendation of Nominees:

- a. The PWG reviews and recommends 17 nominees out of the 30 names submitted with explanation of each choice. As well, a list of 5 reserved nominees should be selected and submitted;
- b. The 17 nominees are contacted to re-confirm their continued interest;

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c. The names of the recommended 17 nominees (including the reserved 5) are forwarded to the UN-Habitat Executive Director for approval.

A minimum of one (1) and maximum of (2) representative (s) shall be nominated for each constituency/group. Regional and gender balance shall be maintained.

5. Appointments:

- a. ED approves list of nominees.
- b. Appointment letters signed by ED.