



UNITED
NATIONS

HSP

HSP/GC/21/2



UN-Habitat

**Governing Council
of the United Nations Human
Settlements Programme**

Distr. General
22 February 2007

Original: English

Twenty-first session

Nairobi, 16–20 April 2007

Item 5 of the provisional agenda*

**Activities of the United Nations Human Settlements
Programme (UN-Habitat), including coordination matters**

**Activities of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme:
Progress report of the Executive Director**

Summary

The present report summarizes the activities and actions undertaken by UN-Habitat to implement the resolutions of the twentieth session of the Governing Council. It should be reviewed in conjunction with its addendums, consisting of supplementary reports which provide additional information on follow-up actions of special significance, which are also before the Governing Council for its review and consideration at the current session.

* HSP/GC/21/1.

K0760666 190307

For reasons of economy, this document is printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies to meetings and not to request additional copies. This document is printed on environment friendly paper.

Contents

Introduction.....	3
Resolution 20/1: Youth and human settlements	4
Resolution 20/2: Establishment of the African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development.....	4
Resolution 20/3: Preservation and sustainable development of oases	5
Resolution 20/4: Least developed countries	5
Resolution 20/5: Access to basic services for all within the context of sustainable human settlements....	6
Resolution 20/6: Best practices, good policies and enabling legislation in support of sustainable urbanization and the attainment of internationally agreed development goals	6
Resolution 20/7: Gender equality in human settlements development	7
Resolution 20/8: Sustainable development of Arctic cities	8
Resolution 20/9: Small island developing States.....	8
Resolution 20/10: World Urban Forum	9
Resolution 20/11: Strengthening the Slum Upgrading Facility of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation.....	10
Resolution 20/12: Global campaigns on secure tenure and urban governance.....	10
Resolution 20/13: Housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living for persons who are vulnerable and disadvantaged.....	11
Resolution 20/14: Special Human Settlements Programme for the Palestinian People	12
Resolution 20/15: Habitat Programme Managers and regional offices.....	13
Resolution 20/16: Enhancing the involvement of civil society in local governance	13
Resolution 20/17: Post-conflict, natural and human-made disaster assessment and reconstruction	14
Resolution 20/18: Decentralization and strengthening of local authorities	14
Resolution 20/19: Work programme and budget of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme for the 2006–2007 biennium.....	15
Resolution 20/20: Thirteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development	15
Resolution 20/21: Organization and themes for future sessions of the Governing Council.....	16

Activities of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme: Progress report of the Executive Director

Introduction

1. The 2005–2006 biennium marked a turning point for UN-Habitat. It was a period of continued growth but also a period of consolidation. Four years after attaining the status of a fully-fledged programme, a major effort was undertaken to formulate proposed Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan for 2008–2013 pursuant to the recommendations of the Governing Council at its twentieth session and in line with United Nations system-wide reform.
2. The key components of the Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan include sharpened focus, greater alignment between global and country-level activities, management excellence and the strengthening of human settlements finance in partnership with international and domestic financial institutions to bring pilot initiatives and projects to scale.
3. The Plan features focus areas, result areas and indicators of achievement. The focus areas were determined on the basis of an in-depth analysis of human settlements trends and issues and their relevance to the twin goals of the Habitat Agenda and to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. The corresponding result areas and indicators of achievement were informed by the third session of the World Urban Forum and by extensive consultations involving all staff, external partners and the Committee of Permanent Representatives.
4. The key strategy of the Plan is its enhanced normative framework for operations at the global and country levels. This framework builds on the comparative advantages of UN-Habitat and forges a strong alignment of the organization's core competencies to ensure greater impact and results.
5. A major emphasis of the Plan is on partnerships to help fulfil UN-Habitat's catalytic and coordinating role in attaining the human settlements related targets of the Millennium Development Goals. The Plan seeks to leverage the programme's resources with those of Habitat Agenda partners to attain a substantial multiplier effect within a results-based framework. It also links UN-Habitat's pre-investment capacity-building and grant activities with the loan portfolios of international financial institutions.
6. This approach is also in line with the outcome of the 2005 World Summit, held at United Nations headquarters in New York in September 2005, which, among its recommendations, called for the strengthening of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation (UNHHSF), including its Slum Upgrading Facility, as well as for strategies on the part of the international community and Governments that not only address slum upgrading as called for in the Millennium Development Goals, but also provide for slum prevention. This in turn will require a revitalization of urban planning and planning instruments, particularly in rapidly urbanizing developing countries.
7. In line with these recommendations, and subsequent calls by the General Assembly to strengthen UNHHSF, the Secretary-General of the United Nations promulgated a new special annex for UNHSSF to the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, which went into effect on 1 August 2006. The secretariat's proposals on operational guidelines for implementing these financial rules will be a main item for deliberations at the twenty-first session of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat in April 2007, along with related proposals for resource mobilization in line with the requirements of the new strategic focus contained in the Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan.
8. In accordance with the recommendations of the Governing Council at its twentieth session and the 2005 World Summit, UN-Habitat also initiated the pilot phase of the Slum Upgrading Facility, further strengthened its Water and Sanitation Trust Fund and made substantial progress in the water and sanitation area, initiating the implementation phase of the Lake Victoria regional water and sanitation programme, and made progress in the Water for the Asian Cities Programme, the latter in cooperation with the Asian Development Bank.
9. The intersessional period since the twentieth session of the Governing Council was therefore a period during which UN-Habitat focused its attention on strengthening its capacity and on accelerated implementation of the key components of its work programme in line with goals of the international community, the United Nations system and resolutions and decisions of the Governing Council at its last session, as illustrated in the present report.

Resolution 20/1: Youth and human settlements

10. As called for by resolution 19/13 on the engagement of youth, work continued in close consultation with youth groups, other United Nations bodies and external partners, and the Committee of Permanent Representatives, in developing the Action Plan and Strategy for Youth Engagement. The Action Plan, finalized in January 2006, focuses on five key areas of support to youth empowerment including: youth participation in UN-Habitat organs and forums at the global, national and local levels; youth leadership and entrepreneurship; policies and strategies to strengthen youth participation in local decision making; knowledge sharing and communications; and coordination and partnerships.

11. In line with the Action Plan and in direct response to resolution 20/1, UN-Habitat facilitated the organization and hosting of the World Youth Forum that was held for three days prior to the third session of the World Urban Forum in Vancouver, Canada. The World Youth Forum provided an opportunity for 400 youth participants from over 40 countries to meet, to exchange knowledge, expertise and experience and to prepare their active participation in the World Urban Forum.

12. Similarly, the Global Partnership Initiative for Urban Youth Development in Africa (GPI), initially launched in Barcelona in 2004, has since received support and funding from, inter alia, the Norwegian Government. Resources have been devoted throughout 2005–2006 to establishing one-stop youth centres in East Africa in support of the attainment of human settlements related Millennium Development Goals. The one-stop model supports youth living in impoverished communities in becoming youth leaders and entrepreneurs. Areas of focus include water and sanitation, urban environmental improvements, education, reproductive health, HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention and poverty reduction. Key activities include peer mentorship, the exchange of experience between young people and dialogue between youth groups and local authorities.

13. To date, the Nairobi one-stop centre has helped empower over 3,000 youths through various training and mentoring activities. Stakeholder meetings have been held in Kampala and Dar es Salaam with a view to establishing similar centres in 2007. In Kigali, the centre is partnering with “We are the Future” programme implemented in collaboration with the Glocal Forum.¹

14. A global youth crime prevention award is being formulated jointly with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the City of Vienna. Further to the work on the Global Policy Dialogue on Youth, Children and Urban Governance and the Strategy for Urban Youth in Africa, an interagency working group on young people in emergency and transition has also been established with the United Nations Children’s Fund and now expanded to include a system-wide approach to adolescent development and programming. The Government of the Republic of South Africa has also committed to hosting and sponsoring an international youth crime prevention and cities summit in 2008.

15. Lessons learned from the above activities have helped inform the Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan in the integration of age and gender responsive components of the Plan, including its key focus and result areas. Another separate report (HSP/21/2/Add.2) is dedicated to UN-Habitat’s cooperation with Habitat Agenda partners.

Resolution 20/2: Establishment of the African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development

16. The resolution requests the Executive Director to work closely with the African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (AMCHUD) in achieving the twin goals of the Habitat Agenda and encourages her to provide the necessary support to the Conference and to its equivalent in the Latin American and Caribbean region and to explore the possibility of exchanging experience between the two organs. It further requests her to continue providing support to the Cities Programme of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) and invites Governments in other regions to strengthen similar consultative bodies.

17. Collaboration was intensified with AMCHUD, both within the Commission on Sustainable Development process and within the context of the 2005 World Summit in September 2005. A special ministerial conference was jointly convened with the Governments of Kenya and South Africa in Nairobi on 3 and 4 April 2006. The conference theme was “Achieving the Millennium Development Goals in Africa: strategies for the realization of the World Summit Outcome on Slums”. More than 40 countries were represented at the ministerial level. A framework memorandum for the mobilization of

¹ Glocal is an international non-governmental organization devoted to city-to-city cooperation and peace-building.

Governments on slum prevention and upgrading was drafted and considered with follow-up subregional meetings planned for 2006 and 2007.

18. Similarly, the secretariat was involved at the Eastern African subregional meeting held in Kisumu, Kenya, from 1 to 3 November 2006 in preparing the next ordinary meeting to be held in Abuja, Nigeria, in 2007.

19. The Secretariat undertook the initiative to convene, in collaboration with the Government of India, the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Human Settlements, which took place in New Delhi from 13 to 16 December 2006. Its theme was "A vision for sustainable urbanization in the Asia-Pacific by 2020". A key result of the conference was the establishment of a standing consultative mechanism on the promotion of sustainable development of housing and urban development in the Asia-Pacific region.

20. The conference participants also adopted the Delhi Declaration and an Enhanced Framework of Implementation. To implement the outcome and in the follow-up to the conference, a bureau has been established comprising representatives from six countries and a secretariat has been set up to assist the Bureau in the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. The member countries of the Bureau are Azerbaijan, China, India (Chair), Jordan, Malaysia and Papua New Guinea.

21. UN-Habitat also continued to work closely with the NEPAD secretariat in implementing the NEPAD Cities Programme. A report on the first phase of the programme has been published and was presented to the NEPAD partners during the third session of the World Urban Forum in June 2006. The report highlights the message of UN-Habitat's advocacy campaign in support of NEPAD, stressing that the success of NEPAD will depend to a large extent on responses to the urban challenge facing Africa. The report also contains a work programme for phase II which proposes, among other things, the expansion of the network of African cities.

22. The approach suggested by the report was subsequently adopted at a follow-up meeting held in Nairobi during the fourth session of the Africities Summit, and all stakeholders were accordingly urged to localize the NEPAD objectives taking into account the Millennium Development Goals and the commitment of local governments.

Resolution 20/3: Preservation and sustainable development of oases

23. Follow-up to the resolution was initiated in Morocco in the three oases of Assa, Guelmim and Tata within the framework of the ongoing work on localizing Agenda 21. The oases of Assa and Tata present the particular challenge of being located with urban agglomerations and are therefore being integrated as part of urban environmental planning and management. The three oases form part of a larger programme involving eight oases entitled "Anti-desertification and anti-poverty programme for the conservation of oases", which is being implemented in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme.

Resolution 20/4: Least developed countries

24. The resolution requested that UN-Habitat continue to give special attention to least developed countries in its normative and operational activities and invited the Executive Director to mainstream the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, adopted by the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, in UN-Habitat's activities and programmes.

25. Least developed countries have been mainstreamed throughout the programme's advocacy and monitoring and programmatic and country-level activities. For example, in Tanzania, lessons learned from implementing a crime prevention strategy in Dar-es-Salaam are being integrated into the design of a national replication programme.

26. Technical support has been provided, to date, to 20 national statistical offices in least developed countries for the collection and analysis of key indicators on urbanization, urban poverty and slum formation. While the major focus of these monitoring activities is to provide baseline data for monitoring progress in the water and sanitation and slum upgrading targets of the Millennium Development Goals, key indicators are also collected in collaboration with other United Nations agencies on health, education and nutrition for the urban poor.

27. Campaigns on urban governance and secure tenure were launched in 14 least developed countries and responded to requests for ad hoc technical assistance in a further three countries. These activities involve multi-stakeholder forums to raise awareness of these issues and trends and their policy implications, policy dialogue aimed at forging broad-based ownership in the preparation and adoption of people-centred action plans for slum upgrading and pro-poor housing development, and enhancement of the role and contribution of local authorities in follow-up implementation.

28. The lack of financial resources and investment in pro-poor housing and urban development is arguably one of the major obstacles to urban poverty alleviation and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals in least developed countries. UN-Habitat's strategy in this area is geared towards the attainment of Millennium Development Goal 7 targets 10 and 11 on water and sanitation and slum upgrading. Research, policy advocacy and capacity-building are conceived as fast-track pre-investment packages for follow-up grants and loans. This packaging reduces the lead-time between policy reform, technical assistance and investment in order to maintain political will and momentum through quick-impact initiatives. It is implemented in close collaboration with bilateral donors and the African and Asian Development Banks and engages domestic banking and non-banking financial institutions, including micro-credit facilities, in order to leverage public expenditures with private and community sector capital.

29. Follow-up activities are currently being implemented in Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia in Africa, and in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Nepal and Timor-Leste in Asia. These activities seek to devise new and innovative instruments for leveraging domestic resources with international financing to close the growing gap between the demand for the delivery of municipal services to meet the basic needs of rapidly growing urban populations and the limited financial resources available to municipal authorities to fund those services.

Resolution 20/5: Access to basic services for all within the context of sustainable human settlements

30. The resolution requested that the Executive Director, in collaboration with other relevant United Nations bodies, compile best practices on policies, norms and institutional conditions related to the delivery of basic services, focusing on the respective roles and responsibilities of Governments, local authorities and other Habitat Agenda partners, identify underlying principles on access to basic services for all, and revise and finalize and submit a report containing options on the way forward and recommendations on guiding principles to the Governing Council at its twenty-first session, based on consultations with relevant United Nations bodies and interested stakeholders.

31. In response to this resolution the secretariat has prepared a report entitled "Guiding principles on access to basic services for all" (HSP/GC/21/2/Add.9). The report is based on an in-depth analysis of best practices (contained in document HSP/GC/2/INF.3) and broad-based consultations with relevant United Nations agencies, local authorities, civil society organizations and urban service providers. UN-Habitat is now working with partners on the preparation of more precise guidelines on access to basic services for use by Habitat Agenda partners.

Resolution 20/6: Best practices, good policies and enabling legislation in support of sustainable urbanization and the attainment of internationally agreed development goals

32. The resolution, in recognizing the progress made by UN-Habitat in its work on best practices and the contribution of the Municipality of Dubai in the implementation of the Dubai International Award on Best Practices, encouraged the Executive Director, in cooperation with Governments, to examine modalities for making resources available in support of the transfer of best practices, good urban policies and enabling legislation.

33. Identifying, documenting, disseminating and promoting best practices remain ongoing processes. However, the transfer of lessons learned from best practices has become a major new focus. Dubai Municipality and UN-Habitat have made a commitment to focusing on best practice transfers for the next ten years. As a starting point, the 2006 submissions for the Dubai International Award for Best Practices for the first time included guidelines and a call for documented examples of best practice transfers, as well as policies promoting good practices. The information received is being analyzed. The number of awards has been increased from 10 to 12 per cycle, with at least two awards dedicated to best practice transfers.

34. The Medellin Award and Conference on Best Practice Transfers marked the first concerted approach by UN-Habitat to the systematic transfer of best practices. Held in the City of Medellin, Colombia, in December 2005, a highly innovative system was used to help inform and guide the efforts by the City of Medellin in addressing critical urban issues. The system involved a competition involving existing peer-reviewed best practices from the Latin American and Caribbean region in a bid to transfer their expertise and experience to the City of Medellin. The award consisted of a contract for the transfer of expertise and experience to the City of Medellin in five areas: participatory governance; social inclusion; citizenship; productivity, competitiveness, solidarity; and international outlook. Lessons learned from the Medellin award process are being documented and will be used to develop a guide on best practice transfers in collaboration with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. An international seminar on the transfer of best practices for the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals will be organized in Dubai in 2007. Lessons learned from ten years of the Dubai International Award will be highlighted at this seminar.

Resolution 20/7: Gender equality in human settlements development

35. The resolution, in recognizing progress made by UN-Habitat in the implementation of Governing Council resolution 19/16 on women's roles and rights in human settlements development and slum upgrading, called upon the Executive Director to ensure that all normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat address gender equality and women's empowerment and to prepare and disseminate, in cooperation with Habitat Agenda partners, best practices in gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment in human settlements.

36. In order to address the staff skills gap in gender analysis and planning, five gender learning workshops for 80 staff members were held in November 2005. As a result, gender mainstreaming in project and programme proposals approved by the Programme Review Committee and the number of gender mainstreaming activities within the Strategic Framework 2008–2009 has improved substantially. A Junior Professional Officer/Gender Mainstreaming Officer has been recruited with the help of the Government of Norway to further support gender mainstreaming in all activities and programmes.

37. Gender mainstreaming strategies and action plans were developed in consultation with gender experts, city authorities and non-governmental organizations for the Water for Africa and Asia Cities programmes. The findings from rapid gender assessments carried out in 17 cities in Africa and 4 cities in Asia have been integrated into project design, planning and management to ensure the effective contribution of women as change agents within their respective communities.

38. A number of guidelines for improving gender mainstreaming in disaster management, especially in the areas of gender and governance, and gender and land administration are being prepared for publication. Additionally, a best practices guide on women empowerment and gender mainstreaming in human settlements development, as well as a manual on gender mainstreaming in municipal planning and development, will be developed in 2007 for use by Governments, city administrations and local authorities, training institutions, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations and other Habitat Agenda partners.

39. A programme on capacity-building in participatory planning, budgeting and gender mainstreaming has been designed with the financial assistance of the Government of Spain for implementation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mozambique and Senegal. It is expected that the programme will promote the practical application of gender analysis and planning skills at the city level in support of gender mainstreaming in municipal development.

40. Awards and competitions for women-friendly cities and gender-responsive local governments are being planned in Latin America and the Caribbean and the Asia-Pacific regions before the end of 2007. These competitions are designed as incentives for cities and local authorities to do more for women, to mainstream gender in their activities, to institutionalize gender mainstreaming and to develop a unique data base on women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming in local governance. The Dubai International Award continues to promote gender best practices and to mainstream gender aspects in all submissions. The 2006 cycle includes three award winning gender best practices and many good practices that mainstream gender.

41. The Global Land Tool Network was conceived to address the issues of gender equality in land and property rights and administration. Extensive consultations were held with women's groups and grassroots organizations, including a roundtable for gender and land experts held during the third session of the World Urban Forum.

42. UN-Habitat contributed to the Secretary-General's in-depth study on violence against women. The report, which provides an overview of the causes and risk factors contributing to violence against women, highlighted lessons learned from promising practices in terms of the way forward. The report was released in October 2006.

43. As part of the activities leading up to the signing of the Pact on Security, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region, UN-Habitat in collaboration with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations Population Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Development Fund for Women and GTZ co-sponsored a technical review of draft model legislation on the prevention and suppression of sexual violence against women and children, as well as model legislation on property rights of returning persons. These two instruments, which are of great importance to women, are two of the ten protocols adopted by heads of State under the Pact. Further information on UN-Habitat cooperation relevant to this resolution is contained in document HSP/GC/21/2/Add.3.

Resolution 20/8: Sustainable development of Arctic cities

44. The resolution requests the Executive Director to assist in raising the awareness of the international community of the sustainable development challenges of the far north and the Arctic region, including the indigenous people residing in those areas, invites her to consult with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Arctic Council, the World Bank and other partners and stakeholders to promote improved shelter and infrastructure in the far north and the Arctic region and requests her to compile information on training activities in the far north and Arctic region as a basis for further cooperation.

45. As a first step in following up this resolution, the secretariat established working relations with UNEP/Grid Arendal to map out joint activities between the two programmes of relevance to sustainable development in the Arctic and the Far North, which led to a first contact with the Arctic Council to explore possible avenues for collaboration. Similarly, consultations were held with a wide range of stakeholders including local authorities located in the Far North, academic institutions with programmes dedicated to development issues in the Arctic and civil society organizations representing indigenous peoples in these areas.

46. These and other initiatives led to the participation of the Arctic Council in the third session of the World Urban Forum in the form of an ad hoc networking event which enabled the two organizations to better understand each other's mandates, activities and working methods.

47. Follow-up activities that are envisaged for 2007 include the participation of representatives of indigenous people of the Far North in a forthcoming expert group meeting on urban indigenous peoples and migration and the continued mapping of relevant training activities. Several proposals have also been submitted to various institutions working in the Arctic region to introduce a sustainable human settlements component into current training curricula.

Resolution 20/9: Small island developing States

48. The resolution requests the Executive Director to assist small island developing States in areas relating to disaster preparedness, land registration, urban planning guidelines, hurricane-resistant housing and the developing of a training programme for local authorities and community development groups on the administration and sustainable development of cities and other human settlements, as well as to strengthen cooperation with relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes related to small island developing States to ensure the effective implementation of the human settlements elements contained in the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

49. UN-Habitat has continued its efforts to mainstream small island developing States in its programmes and projects towards the implementation of resolution 20/9 and the Mauritius Strategy. In collaboration with the Commonwealth Local Government Forum a training programme for locally elected leaders was held for the Pacific Islands. Some 30 trainers representing the eight island States of Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu benefited from a training the trainers programme. A direct result of this programme has been the creation of a pool of resource persons in the region who can design and deliver leadership training for elected local leaders. Participants have developed country-specific and institutional action plans to implement country specific training and capacity-building programmes, including local adaptation of the training materials.

50. As part of its overall response to the Tsunami, a \$ 23.5 million Shelter Response and Recovery Programme is being implemented with the United Nations Development Programme and the Government of the Republic of Maldives.

51. UN-Habitat has actively encouraged and facilitated the financing of small island developing States to participate in its international meetings. For example, UN-Habitat financed the participation of delegates from Antigua and Barbuda, Fiji, Jamaica, Papua New Guinea, Saint Lucia, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu in the third session of the World Urban Forum in Vancouver, Canada, in June 2006.

Resolution 20/10: World Urban Forum

52. The report of the third session of the World Urban Forum is contained in document HSP/GC/21/INF/2.

53. In keeping with the Governing Council resolution 20/10 on the World Urban Forum, which stated that the Third Session of the World Urban Forum "should be as inclusive as possible so as to ensure a fruitful and focused dialogue between Governments from all regions, local authorities and other Habitat Agenda Partners," UN-Habitat made concerted efforts to increase the engagement and participation of Habitat Agenda partners in the preparatory process leading up to the session.

54. This effort culminated in the balanced participation of various partners including national Governments (15.7 per cent), local authorities (15.9 per cent), academic and research institutions (12.5 per cent) and non-governmental organizations (25.2 per cent). It is worth noting that private sector participation rose from 8 per cent at the second session of the Forum to 13.4 per cent at the third session. Participation by gender was balanced, with 51.8 per cent male and 48.2 per cent female. Local authority and national Government representatives were equally balanced and together comprised 30 per cent of the participants.

55. Great care was taken to ensure that the concerns of slum dwellers, youth, women and civil society and academics were integrated into the programme. Most notable also was the increased level of participation from the private sector, whose role as the builders and financiers of our towns and cities is of crucial importance. Youth involvement was also strengthened at this session of the World Urban Forum. In the weekend preceding the session, over four hundred youth leaders from more than forty countries assembled in Vancouver to share their experiences and strategies for urban development. Over three days, youth representatives were able to attend workshops and training sessions and discuss issues of relevance to youth in cities, as well as prepare for the session.

56. The key outcomes of the session can be summarized as follows:

- (a) Coming to terms with the urban age;
- (b) From exclusion to engagement – the need to build effective coalitions to address the needs of the urban poor;
- (c) Meeting the financing challenge of slum upgrading and sustainable infrastructure development;
- (d) Reinventing planning: applying new paradigms for sustainable and inclusive urban development.

57. These ideas have already influenced both the theme of the twenty-first session of the Governing Council as well as the proposed Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan for the period 2008–2013. The substantive focus areas of the Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan – advocacy, monitoring and partnerships; participatory urban planning, management and governance; pro-poor land and housing; environmentally sound and affordable basic infrastructure and services; and strengthening human settlements finance systems, are designed in part to respond operationally to issues which arose at the third session of the World Urban Forum. In turn, starting in 2008, a central objective of the World Urban Forum will be reporting by Habitat Agenda partners of their contributions to sustainable urbanization and to the implementation of the medium-term strategic and institutional plan. Further information is available in documents HSP/GC/21/2/Add.1 and HSP/GC/21/INF/2.

Resolution 20/11: Strengthening the Slum Upgrading Facility of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation

58. The resolution requested that the Executive Director accelerate efforts to implement a cooperation framework with the World Bank Group and similar framework agreements with regional development banks so as to harmonize interventions in support of the efforts of States to achieve the internationally agreed development goals on slum dwellers, safe drinking water and basic sanitation.

59. To date, over \$21 million has been contributed for the Facility's activities. Host Governments and Habitat Agenda partners have promoted the Slum Upgrading Facility's programmes in Facility pilot countries, as a result of which the concept is now recognized by domestic banking institutions as a methodology for establishing credit facilities for local community groups' slum upgrading projects. Strong links have been developed with the World Bank Group through the grant agreement on the Facility with the Cities Alliance, alignment of projects with the World Bank and regional banks' projects in the pilot countries and with memorandums of understanding for safe drinking water and basic sanitation with the African Development Bank and the Asian Development Bank. Progress on the three year Facility pilot project has been slower to start than expected, but is now fully active in Ghana, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Tanzania. The mid-term assessment of the pilot project will now take place in early 2008. The longer term operationalization of the Facility will now be viewed in relation to the medium-term strategic and institutional plan, its enhanced normative framework for global and country-level activities and the operationalization of the new rules of the Foundation. Further information is available in document HSP/GC/21/5.

Resolution 20/12: Global campaigns on secure tenure and urban governance

60. The resolution endorses the centrality of the global campaigns as strategic entry points for the effective implementation of the Habitat Agenda. It requests the Executive Director to ensure a higher global visibility of the campaigns, adequate funding, documentation of activities, simultaneous promotion, support for country efforts and capacity-building and mainstreaming of the principles underlying the campaigns. It calls for the elaboration of a forward-looking strategic plan including criteria for identifying priorities and indicators for assessing success and impact.

61. Efforts to ensure a higher global visibility of the campaigns focused on key stakeholder events throughout the reporting period. This included the World Urban Forum, the regional ministerial meetings on housing and urban development in Africa and Asia, the Africities Summit and various technical meetings on issues pertaining to governance and land.

62. The World Urban Forum provided an ideal platform for mainstreaming the principles underlying the twin campaigns, as witnessed by its outcome and call for more participatory planning and decision-making.

63. Other areas in which the campaign principles are being applied include the Global Land Tools Network, officially launched at the third session of the World Urban Forum. This network aims to develop pro-poor gender and age-responsive land tools to improve access to land. Similarly, a major initiative was launched in 2005 in collaboration with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Committee for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on the formulation of housing rights indicators as tools for global monitoring and evaluation. Work also continued throughout the plan period on mainstreaming rights-based approaches to the provision of basic infrastructure and services in partnership with other United Nations bodies including the World Bank, particularly through the Cities Alliance, a joint study on cultural rights to the city with UNESCO, a joint review of best practices in inclusive public administration with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and continued involvement with the World Health Organization on developing health indicators for cities.

64. The elaboration of a forward-looking strategy including indicators for success and impact was undertaken as part of the extensive consultations for the preparation of the proposed Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan. A major outcome of these consultations was convergence on indicators specific to the campaigns and indicators for results-based monitoring and reporting of the Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan. This led the secretariat to merge the twin campaigns on urban governance and secure tenure into a single Campaign for Sustainable Urbanisation². Within the framework of the proposed medium-term strategic and institutional plan, this single campaign becomes an integral part of the results-oriented advocacy, monitoring and reporting strategy of UN-Habitat,

² See chapter IV, section B, of the Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan (HSP/GC/21/5).

working hand-in-hand with the monitoring of global trends and issues in urbanization, urban poverty and slum formation; the efforts of Habitat Agenda partners in the monitoring of progress in pro-poor gender and age-responsive policies and legislation at the country level; and reporting to regional ministerial meetings on housing and urban development and to the World Urban Forum.

Resolution 20/13: Housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living for persons who are vulnerable and disadvantaged

65. The main activities with respect to follow-up to this resolution are those undertaken by the United Nations Human Rights programme (UNHRP), a joint initiative with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Advisory Group on Forced Evictions and the Global Campaigns on Urban Governance and Secure Tenure. Owing to its cross-cutting nature, UNHRP has also worked closely with other programmes and activities of UN-Habitat, most notably with regard to urban safety and security, gender mainstreaming, youth, land, housing and basic services.

66. Work continued with other United Nations bodies and external partners on the issues of older persons and the aging. It participated actively in the 8th Global Conference of the International Federation on Ageing, held in Copenhagen in June 2006. It contributed specifically on policies and practices addressing the needs of older persons in human settlements planning and management and on using their capacity and potential in local development.

67. A draft strategy paper for the mainstreaming of a rights-based approach in general and of housing rights in particular was prepared in May 2005. The paper included specific references to the protection of vulnerable and disadvantaged persons. This paper was prepared in direct response to recommendation 3 of the in-depth evaluation of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme undertaken by the Office of Internal Oversight Services on mainstreaming housing rights within UN-Habitat as well as to the present resolution.

68. A report containing operational definitions for a set of housing rights indicators is currently being finalized by UNHRP. This work is undertaken in close collaboration with the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. After an initial period of testing, the indicators and an accompanying questionnaire will be distributed to United Nations Member States for data collection on housing rights conditions for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.³

69. The UNHRP housing rights documentation centre has been continuously updated with reports on national housing rights legislation and case law to assist Governments and other stakeholder groups in their efforts to improve their housing rights policies and legislation. Governments and stakeholders are furthermore notified of new developments through the newsletter "Housing and ESC Rights Quarterly", published in partnership with the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions.

70. As part of a broader effort to highlight the housing rights of specific vulnerable groups, a report entitled "Indigenous peoples' right to adequate housing: a global review" was published and launched at the fifth session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in May 2005. An expert group meeting on urban indigenous people and migration, to be supported by the Government of Canada, is planned for 2007 as a follow-up to this activity. The outcome of this event will be reported on at the sixth session of the Permanent Forum in 2007. Similar research is planned by UNHRP on the housing rights of peoples with disabilities, internally displaced persons and refugees.

71. Housing rights featured prominently at several major conferences and forums, including a dialogue on housing rights organized jointly with the International Union of Architects in Istanbul in July 2005 during the International Union of Architects twenty-second World Congress of Architecture. Similarly, several activities to promote social inclusion and cohesion in human settlements were organized during the third session of the World Urban Forum, including a dialogue session entitled "Public engagement: the inclusive approach".

72. In June 2005, the Executive Director was appointed as the Secretary General's Special Envoy on Human Settlements Issues in Zimbabwe. Her report on her fact-finding mission to Zimbabwe to assess the scope and impact of Operation Murambatsvina drew the world's attention to the urgent need to come to terms with rapid and chaotic urbanization. While the report highlighted policy and other failures specific to the situation in Zimbabwe, it warned of social, economic and political consequences in the failure of Governments and the international community to come to terms with the housing crisis affecting cities throughout the developing world. The report stressed the urgent need to reform

³ See E/AC.51/2005/3.

inequitable housing policies and urban legislation that have resulted in close to 1 billion slum dwellers living in inhumane and life-threatening conditions.

Resolution 20/14: Special Human Settlements Programme for the Palestinian People

73. In its resolution 20/14 of April 2005, the Governing Council welcomed the progress made thus far in the implementation of the Special Human Settlements Programme for the Palestinian People, expressed appreciation to those countries that had made contributions to the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund of the Programme and the housing sector and reiterated its invitation to the international donor community and all financial institutions to support UN-Habitat in the immediate mobilization of financial resources towards the full capitalization of the Technical Cooperation Trust Fund in order to enhance the effective implementation of the Special Human Settlements Programme and to assist the Palestinian National Authority in its construction efforts in the housing sector.

74. In response to the resolution, UN-Habitat accelerated its efforts in implementing the activities envisaged in the framework of the Special Human Settlements Programme. The Special Human Settlements Programme team worked closely with the Office of the Special Envoy of the Quartet and the United Nations Special Coordinator Office during the preparatory phase of the implementation of the Gaza Disengagement Plan. Proposals were made aimed at providing advisory assistance to the Ministerial Committee of the Palestinian National Authority for the Transfer, Management and Disposal of Assets based on UN-Habitat experience in conflict and post conflict countries. UN-Habitat organized, in cooperation with the Ministry of Local Government, the Association of Palestinian Local Authorities and the Ismailia Sustainable Development Training Centre, a training of trainers and a pilot workshop on leadership and management skills for newly elected Palestinian mayors in Ismailia, Egypt, during the period 14–26 May 2005. UN-Habitat has prepared an urban sector profile study in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The study is based on the European Community's "Consultative Guidelines for Sustainable Urban Development Cooperation: Towards Sustainable Development, A Strategic Approach". It was organized in cooperation with the, Centre for Urban and Regional Planning, An-Najah University, Nablus, and the Palestinian Authority, its local authorities and research institutions. In order to facilitate the preparation of the study and ensure the participation of all stakeholders, advisory and expert committees were established. The advisory committee included in its membership deputy ministers and directors from relevant ministries. The expert committee included the members of the national team and experts from the relevant ministries. Project proposals have been formulated in consultation with the relevant stakeholders in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and in the context of the Medium Term Development Plan 2005-2007 of the Palestinian National Authority. A number of the projects will focus on creating job opportunities to address the critical unemployment problem in the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The project proposals have been submitted to potential donors for funding. The Special Human Settlements Programme team in the Occupied Palestinian Territories participated in the work of the United Nations country team and submitted six project proposals which were included in the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor. The Programme is supporting the activities of the Association of Palestinian Local Authorities and the Union of Local Authorities in Israel.

75. Since the adoption of resolution 20/14, contributions have been made by the following countries to the technical cooperation trust fund for the Programme: China, \$50,000; Russian Federation, \$50,000; and the Sudan, \$70,000. In the Occupied Palestinian Territories, and since the adoption of resolution 20/14, Habitat Programme Managers have met with and requested the support of the local representatives of the international donor community including the Embassy of Japan, the Japan International Cooperation Agency, the Canadian International Development Agency, Belgium Technical Cooperation, Italian Cooperation, the European Commission Technical Assistance Office, the Representative Office of France, the Representative Office of Netherlands, the Representative Office of Norway, the Representative Office of Finland, the Embassy of Turkey and the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

76. The Executive Director visited Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, during the period 10–12 February 2007, where she signed a memorandum of understanding with the Chairman of the Saudi Committee for the Relief of the Palestinian People on mutual cooperation in the context of the Special Human Settlements Programme. The Committee will provide \$ 6.3 million to finance the establishment of a housing and income generating programme for widowed and poor women in Al-Khalil (Hebron), the West Bank. The programme will aim to improve the living conditions of widowed and underprivileged women and their families through the construction of 100 housing units and income generating projects (enterprise activities) in Hebron. It will also contribute to capacity-building for national and local institutions;

enhancement of local economic development; combining shelter with production units and developing mechanisms for various aspects of poverty alleviation.

77. During her visit to Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain, the Executive Director was received by His Highness Shaikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al-Khalifa, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain. His Highness reiterated to the Executive Director the strong support of the Kingdom of Bahrain for UN-Habitat activities in the Arab region. This support was enhanced by a Government pledge of one million dollars to boost UN-Habitat activities in the Arab region, and particularly in the Palestinian territories through a \$ 500,000 contribution to the technical cooperation trust fund for the Special Human Settlements Programme.

Resolution 20/15: Habitat Programme Managers and regional offices

78. In response to this resolution UN-Habitat carried out an independent strategic evaluation of the performance and impact of the Habitat Programme Managers in 2006 (HSP/GC/21/2/Add.10).

79. The report broadly endorses the role and contribution of Habitat Programme Managers as a long-term, strategic investment by UN-Habitat. The report notes that Habitat Programme Manager deployment has led to a more coherent and less fragmented approach to integrating urban issues within the United Nations development assistance framework/poverty reduction strategy process. Key recommendations include that their deployment should be based on clear criteria, including the potential for policy change; that there is a need to support the Habitat Programme Managers through the formulation of multi-year country programme documents; and that there is a need for comprehensive training support and dedicated resources.

80. The recommendations of this report were integrated into the Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan which envisages, through its Enhanced Normative Framework, the establishment of, inter alia, country strategies, of country support teams to provide value added support from all UN-Habitat programme activities to the UNDAF and PRS process, and a programmatic focus on pre-investment capacity building. In parallel, a staff initiation brochure is being produced in 2007 leading towards a more systematic approach to staff induction training. Please also see documents HSP/GC/21/2/Add.8 and HSP/GC/21/INF.4

Resolution 20/16: Enhancing the involvement of civil society in local governance

81. The resolution requests the Executive Director to continue compiling lessons learned and best practices on civil society involvement in local governance. It also requests her to develop tool kits and recommendations for improving access to relevant information, recommends that due consideration be given to civil society involvement in monitoring processes and in programmes and activities and requests UN-Habitat and other partners to provide assistance in capacity-building for civil society.

82. A major effort was made within the framework of the 2006 Dubai International Award for Best Practices to document case studies in civic engagement and participatory local governance. Out of 715 submissions received, 266 practices consisted of initiatives led by civil society and an additional 137 practices related to local authority initiatives that included a strong element of civil society involvement. Steps are being taken to analyse these cases, with a view to deriving lessons learned and pointers for the future for wide dissemination throughout UN-Habitat's flagship and technical publications.

83. Apart from a wider dissemination of existing tools that promote the involvement of civil society, new tools have also been developed and launched, while others are in the pipeline. New tools include a revised version of training manuals on local elected leadership and an expert group meeting was convened for the development of a training companion on participatory budgeting for sub-Saharan Africa. At the same time, the "Practical Guide to Curing and Preventing Corruption in Local Governments and Communities" has been initiated and is in the field-testing stages. Similarly, an internet version of a tool for assessing improvement in governance, particularly the participation of civil society and other stakeholders, has been finalized and is currently available on line. Feedback from users will be carefully monitored to assess its use and usefulness for further refinement, development and dissemination.

84. The Global Urban Observatory, the primary facility for the monitoring of global trends and issues in urbanization and urban poverty, continues to promote and include representatives of civil society in its more than 200 local urban observatories worldwide in data collection and analysis.

Resolution 20/17: Post-conflict, natural and human-made disaster assessment and reconstruction

85. The strategic policy for the role of UN-Habitat in addressing the sustainable human settlements aspects of human-made and natural disaster management, focusing on the comparative advantages of the Programme as called for by this resolution, is described in a document entitled “Human Settlements and Crisis”, which has been distributed to the Committee of Permanent Representatives.

86. The document, which outlines the role of the agency in line with the proposed medium-term strategic institutional plan for 2008–2013, defines its niche within the global family of humanitarian programmes and agencies. The strategic policy has benefited from wide consultation with partners, multilateral and bilateral organizations through two successive sessions of the World Urban Forum and focuses on UN-Habitat’s areas of comparative advantage. The guiding principles have been elaborated further into a set of indicators that accompany both the human settlements and crisis policies and the sustainable relief and reconstruction framework from which the policy is derived.

87. Should the Governing Council endorse the policy at the current session, the Executive Director will have the necessary instruments for mobilizing additional financial resources and completing the process of mainstreaming risk reduction and mitigating the after-effects of disaster throughout the work programme of UN-Habitat.

Resolution 20/18: Decentralization and strengthening of local authorities

88. The resolution requests the Executive Director to take the comments of Governments made by the end of 2005 into account in revising the then draft guidelines on decentralization and the strengthening of local authorities with the support of the Advisory Group of Experts on Decentralization and in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives; to continue supporting the programme of work of the Advisory Group of Experts on Decentralization; and to build on the experience of the Global Urban Observatory to assist United Cities and Local Governments to develop the concept of a local observatory that would assess, monitor and evaluate the state of decentralization and accountability to people at the local level and local governance in the world as important conditions for achieving the goals of the Habitat Agenda.

89. Building on the momentum of the dialogue on decentralization organized during the Governing Council’s twentieth session, which brought together representatives of national and local Governments and other Habitat Agenda partners to exchange views on the guidelines on decentralization prepared by UN-Habitat in collaboration with its partners, the secretariat mobilized members of the United Nations Advisory Committee of Local Authorities and the Advisory Group of Experts on Decentralization to finalize the guidelines on decentralization and continue the work on the compendium of best practices in support of the guidelines; organization of a local government session and a roundtable of mayors during the third session of the World Urban Forum in Vancouver and during the Africities summit in Nairobi to strengthen the linkages between the UN-Habitat and local authorities; consultations with the members of the Committee of Permanent Representatives and other bodies such as the Council of Europe and the African Union on their contribution to the implementation process; and collaboration with United Cities and Local Governments to achieve tangible results in this context.

90. The outcomes of these activities reflect the renewed commitment by all Habitat Agenda partners to further support UN-Habitat in its work of strengthening the status and capacities of local authorities. The draft guidelines on decentralization and the strengthening of local authorities have been revised and will be tabled for consideration by the Governing Council at the current session. A compendium of best practices will also be published in support of the guidelines. The secretariat, in close collaboration with local authorities and their associations, has prepared a resolution which should pave the way for concrete activities to ensure a successful adaptation by interested Governments of the principles outlined in the guidelines. In addition to these normative activities, the secretariat will continue to provide its support to United Cities and Local Governments and its partners in the establishment of a global observatory of local democracy and decentralization as an efficient mechanism to monitor the progress made in this context and provide further recommendations to Governments. Further information is available in document HSP/GC/21/2/Add.2.

Resolution 20/19: Work programme and budget of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme for the 2006–2007 biennium

91. The resolution requests the Executive Director:

(a) To develop an overarching resource mobilization strategy, including options adopted by other United Nations bodies for broadening the donor base and, in particular, encouraging non-earmarked contributions;

(b) To develop, in consultation with the Committee of Permanent Representatives, a six-year Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan, including clear implications for the organizational structure and financial and human resources of UN-Habitat, including at the global, regional and country levels and taking into account wider United Nations reform;

(c) To invite the Office of Internal Oversight Services to undertake, in consultation with the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Nairobi, a review of current administrative arrangements at UN-Habitat, including its relationship with the United Nations Office at Nairobi, in order to enable it to function more effectively and efficiently as a full United Nations programme.

92. The proposed Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan is presented in document HSP/GC/21/5. As requested by the resolution, it is the product of extensive consultations with the Committee of Permanent Representatives, all staff and external partners. It is further informed by best practices of other United Nations bodies and independent assessments of the UN-Habitat's strengths and weaknesses. It is UN-Habitat's response and contribution to United Nations system-wide reform and coherence.

93. The proposed Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan is guided by the overarching goal of sustainable urbanization. Within this long-term goal, the plan proposes a clear and compelling vision for concerted action at all levels to help stabilize the growth of slums by 2013 and to establish the required policy frameworks and capacity for the subsequent reversal of slum formation and the reduction of urban poverty.

94. The key strategic elements of the plan are a sharply focused set of mutually reinforcing focus areas; an enhanced normative framework for aligning UN-Habitat's policy, advocacy, capacity-building and technical cooperation activities to support the efforts of member States; and partnership arrangements to achieve a multiplier effect and to mobilize international and domestic investment to bring pilot initiatives and projects to scale.

95. The key institutional components of the plan are designed to achieve management excellence. They include results-based management, including an integrated knowledge management, monitoring, reporting and evaluation system; organizational adjustments to improve alignment, cohesion and effectiveness; a comprehensive resource mobilization and communication strategy; and human resources management and development. Further information is available in documents HSP/GC/21/4 and HSP/GC/21/5.

Resolution 20/20: Thirteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

96. As requested in the resolution, a report entitled Energy consumption in human settlements is contained in document HSP/GC/21/2/Add.6.

97. In accordance with the resolution, the report highlights the current mandates of the United Nations with regard to energy and of what is being done by whom and where on issues relating to energy and cities. It reviews the state-of-the-art in energy production and consumption and lessons derived from best practices in energy in sustainable urbanization, including its relation with water and sanitation, transport, and cities and climate change.

98. The report constitutes part of UN-Habitat's follow-up contribution to the fourteenth session of the United Nations the Commission on Sustainable Development, held in New York during May 2006, and the themes of the Commission's current two-year cycle on energy for sustainable development, industrial development, air pollution/atmosphere and climate change, leading to the review of progress towards commitments in the respective issue areas contained in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the anticipated discussions on lessons from best practices in preparation for the fifteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, at which specific commitments and plans of action on all four major themes will be negotiated.

Resolution 20/21: Organization and themes for future sessions of the Governing Council

99. The proposed organizational arrangements for the twenty-first session have been prepared in line with the recommendations of this resolution, which called on the Committee of the Permanent Representatives to UN-Habitat, acting as the Council's intersessional subsidiary body, to recommend to the Governing Council further proposals for improving the structure and organization of the twenty-first and future sessions of the Governing Council. At its 24th meeting, on 7 December 2006, the Committee of Permanent Representatives approved a set of such proposals for the twenty-first session, especially with regard to the high-level segment, the dialogue and the theme for the session. The proposed organizational arrangements and proposed theme for the twenty-first session of the Governing Council are contained in annex III of the notification of the session and the annotated provisional agenda for the session (HSP/GC/21/1/Add.1).
