

**GUIDELINES**  
for  
**PROGRAMME /PROJECT  
REVIEW and APPROVAL**

**Version 2.1 – January 2022**

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	4
Introduction.....	5
1. Purpose of the Programme and Project Review and Approval process.....	5
2. Composition & Responsibilities of different committees and their support .....	5
2.1 Programme Review Committee (headquarters, regional, division) .....	6
2.1.1 Membership and roles .....	6
2.1.2 Responsibilities:.....	7
2.2 Executive Director and Programme Approval Committee .....	8
2.3 Secretariat of the Programme Review Committee (headquarters, regional, division).....	8
2.4 Preparation and schedule of PRC meetings .....	9
3. Central Project Database.....	9
4. Project Review and Approval Workflow .....	9
4.1 Key principles .....	9
4.2 Project/Programme Concept.....	10
4.3 Programme/project Document .....	11
4.4 Three (3)-Step project concept development, review and clearance process .....	11
4.4.1 Step 1: Project concept development.....	11
4.4.2 STEP 2: Submission to the relevant Programme Review Committee .....	12
4.4.3 STEP 3: review by the Programme Review Committee .....	12
4.5 The Four (4)-Step technical review and approval process for project documents .....	13
4.5.1. Step 1: Project document development.....	13
4.5.2. Step 2: Project document submission .....	14
4.5.3 Step 3: Review by the relevant Programme Review Committee .....	14
4.5.4 Step 4: Formal Approval .....	15
5. Delegation of Authority (DOA) to Regional Offices and Divisions .....	16
6. Review and approval workflows for various categories of projects (to be inserted) .....	16
6.1 Global, multi-country or singular country mother/umbrella programmes.....	16
6.2 Scaling-Up projects (Phase II, III, IV etc of an approved project or programme).....	17
6.3 UN or consortium joint programmes at country level .....	17
6.4 EU-Funded Projects.....	18
6.5 Japan Funded Projects (MOFA) .....	18
6.6 UN Development Account supported Projects .....	18
6.7 Adaptation Fund supported projects.....	19

6.8 Humanitarian emergency funded projects (ex. including CERF, OCHA, ECHO) .....	19
6.9 Adjustments to previously approved projects .....	20
6.10 Projects deemed urgent by host governments and/or donors .....	20
ANNEXES:.....	20
<b>Annex B:</b> Cover Page ( <i>used to submit Concept or ProDoc that are not in our template</i> ).....	20
<b>Annex 1a &amp; 1b:</b> Concept Co-creation inputs and Concept PRC review recommendations .....	20
<b>Annex D:</b> Project Submission Checklist ( <i>to be used with all Full ProDocs</i> ).....	20
<b>Annex G:</b> Project Financial Feasibility Checklist ( <i>to be used with all Full ProDocs</i> ).....	20
<b>Annex 2:</b> Response to PRC review recommendation of Full ProDocs (the ED signs this annex for project approval) .....	20

## Executive Summary

These Programme and Project Review and Approval Guidelines apply to all projects and programmes of UN-Habitat and supersedes all previous guidelines. The updated Guidelines are part of UN-Habitat's ongoing reform process and aim at further strengthening the programme and project review and approval process, learning from the existing programme and review process over the first two years of the Strategic Plan 2020-2025. The initial Programme Review Committee Guidelines were issued by the Deputy Executive Director (April 2020).

The main updates in this guideline focus on a greater delegation of authority of programme and project review and approval to the regions and Divisions (for programmes and projects with a 2 million USD budget ceiling). It maintains a focus on a '**Whole-House Approach**' to project design and implementation, centred on co-creation of programmes and projects, integrating our normative and operational work. It allows to strengthen the capacity of UN-Habitat to analyze and monitor the quality and impact of our work, sharing of knowledge and innovation, and to ensure the alignment with our strategic plan. It intends to strengthen also risk management across UN-Habitat's portfolio.

The guidelines detail the full process from project development, to project review and approval. It sets out what criteria are to be used in reviewing programmes and projects. The process maintains a two-step approach whereby a Program Review Committee, at the relevant level (headquarters, regions or division), reviews project concept notes and projects, which are, when cleared, forwarded to the Executive Director by the Chair of the Program Review Committee for formal approval. Where there is contention or doubt, the Executive Director can convene the Programme Approval Committee to resolve the issue.

**\*\*These guidelines are a living document. They are adaptive and will be revised accordingly as the new decentralized structure and process matures.**

---

<sup>1</sup> This includes programmes and projects but is shorted here to programme review

## **Introduction**

The Executive Director abolished the Project Advisory Group (PAG) replacing it with the Programme Review Committee (PRC). She also defined the composition of the PRC, its role, functions and organisation of work.

These guidelines first set out the objectives of the process and consequently details the roles and responsibilities of the different components and the detailed process. The PRC remains the UN-Habitat's technical committee for Quality Assurance for projects at formulation and implementation and an advisory body to the ED on project approvals. Further, the PRC can advise the ED against the approval of any project that is clearly not advancing the interests of the organization or that jeopardises its reputation. That said, the final approval decision on any project will rest with the ED directly or through Delegated Authority

### **1. Purpose of the Programme and Project Review and Approval process**

The programme and project review and approval process has the following objectives:

1. Improve the quality of the programmes and projects in line with results-based management (ex. theory of change, logframes) and allowing for more efficient implementation within agreed budgets and timelines;
2. Ensure a 'whole-of-house' approach to programme and project design and implementation, ensuring an integration between our normative and operational work;
3. Ensure an alignment of programmes and projects with the SDGs, the New Urban Agenda, UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan and overarching priorities, including through an increased integrated approach to urbanization and maximizing our impact against the outcomes of the different subprogrammes;
4. Ensure adherence to all relevant UN-Habitat policies and guidelines, incl. UN financial rules and regulations, ESSS, etc. (see annex);
5. Ensure a better capacity to ensure monitoring across UN-Habitat's portfolio, to manage risk better, ensure environmental and social safeguard systems are in place and allow for better knowledge management and continuous learning.

The process, detailing steps and associated timelines is detailed further in the guidelines.

### **2. Composition & Responsibilities of different committees and their support**

The main Programme Review Committee is based in headquarters in Nairobi. Some of its functions are delegated to Regional Programme Review Committees or Divisional Programme Review Committees which are known as the PRC Local Working Groups (PRC LWG). Based on the sub-delegation of authority, the PRC LWG shall be Chaired by Regional Representatives in offices away from Headquarters. In Nairobi, PRC LWG is chaired by Directors with Delegation of Authority. Where possible, the PRC WG and the PRC LWG shall be chaired by officers at the D1 level. The PRC Working Group is the HQ Team that will oversee all activities of the Regional PRC and the Global Services Division who have been given Delegation of Authority for projects US2 million and below. The PRC WG will approve all projects with budgets above US 2 million. The final approval rest of all programmes and projects rest with the Executive Director. The

Executive Director can convene a Programme Approval Committee if further consultation with the Division Directors is needed.

## 2.1 Programme Review Committee (headquarters, regional, division)

### 2.1.1 Membership and roles

#### *Programme Review Committee (headquarters)*

Special Advisor to the Executive Director	Chair
Chief, Independent Evaluation Section, Office of the Executive Director	Incorporation of lessons learnt, audit recommendations and evaluations
Chief, Programme Development Branch, Global Solutions Division	Alignment with the Strategic Plan, integration, impact and sustainability
Chief, Urban Practices Branch, Global Solutions Division	Alignment with global norms and standards, and integration of global expertise
Chief, Strategic Planning and Monitoring Branch, External Relations, Strategy, Knowledge and Innovation Division	Inclusion of relevant indicators to facilitate monitoring and reporting
Chief, Data and Analytics Section, Knowledge and Innovations Branch, External Relations, Strategy, Knowledge and Innovation Division	?
Director, Management, Advisory and Compliance Service Division	Compliance with policies and guidelines on budgeting, procurement, administration
Representative, Regional Programme Division	Inclusion of relevant regional perspectives
Secretary Programme Review Committee / RBM focal point	Completeness of submission RBM: quality of theory of change, logframe, indicators

#### *Programme Review Committee (regional, division)*

Director or Regional Representative (minimum D1)	Chair
Minimum 3 standing members (minimum P4)	Overall quality control and alignment with UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan, policies and guidelines
PMO	Compliance with policies and guidelines on budgeting, procurement, administration
Ad hoc members drawn from the Communities of Practice relevant to projects under review	Aligning with good practices
Secretary Regional/Divisional Programme Review Committee / RBM focal point	Completeness of submission RBM: quality of theory of change, logframe, indicators

#### Notes

- PRC members can appoint alternates in exceptional circumstances and should seek clearance from the Chair prior to the meeting.

- PRC meetings require a quorum of at least 4 members, including the Chair, but not including the Secretariat.
- PRC meetings are in person or virtual (not by e-mail).

### 2.1.2 Responsibilities:

- Scope:
  - Programme Review Committee (headquarters): from across UN-Habitat with budgets above US\$ **2 million**; umbrella programmes intended to frame with multiple ‘child’ projects; multi-country programmes involving multiple regions; country programme documents (Habitat Country Programme Documents);
  - Programme Review Committee (regional/division): all programmes/projects that fall within the regionals remit for implementation and which have a total budget below US\$ 2 million.
- Review of proposed projects/programmes to ensure full compliance with UN-Habitat’s mandate, strategic plan, work programme, internal policies (incl. ESSS);
- The PRC Chair is accountable to ensure that the sufficient co-creation of the programmes and projects has happened and is documented in Annex 1.a (see further);
- Decide on next steps for each reviewed programme and document the decision in minutes of the meeting, detailing:
  - Summary of main feedback given
  - Decision on next steps: 1) rejection of the proposal; 2) return of the proposal to the project team for further review and re-submission to the PRC; 3) conditional clearance if adjustments agreed are made; 4) clearance of the proposal for onward transition to the Executive Director for approval
- Ensure core information is provided (see cover template) to headquarters on a weekly basis;
- Ensure uploading of all required project documentation into central database;
- The Chair to submit, through the Secretariat of the Programme Review Committee (headquarters) the final recommendation on the proposed programme to the Executive Director for formal approval

### **Additional responsibilities of Programme Review Committee (headquarters)**

Given that project execution/implementation stage is the most critical stage of the project management cycle (in which planned benefits are delivered), the PRC’s mandate has been expanded to include implementation monitoring of approved projects. The new monitoring responsibility includes;

- **Monitor implementation of selected approved programmes/projects** in view of improving downward and upward accountability, identifying lessons learnt and of proposing corrective measures (adaptive management) where need be;

- **Systemic review of programme and portfolio**, drawing on the central project database, against the outcomes of UN-Habitat’s Strategic Plan, UN-Habitat’s result framework, effective and timely performance, and relevant UN-Habitat policies (ex. results-based management) to identify areas for adjustment or further strengthening;

Given the large number of approved and on-going projects, and their varied nature the following criteria shall be used to select projects to be monitored;

- Long-term global programmes, multi-country programmes or large- scale country programs;
- Projects of corporate strategic value going into a new phase or coming to an end;
- Projects with high risks as identified through ESSS;
- Projects with a strong focus on innovation/or experimenting with a new innovation;
- Projects that are delivering results in more than two domains of change in the Strategic Plan
- Projects have strong social inclusion aspects

The PRC (headquarters) will make implementation recommendations to projects teams, to be monitored by the relevant PRC Chair. If serious shortcomings are identified, the PRC Chair can escalate the matter to the Executive Director, recommending corrective measures for her review and validation.

## **2.2 Executive Director and Programme Approval Committee**

Executive Director will review the recommendation of the Chair of the PRC Working Group (headquarters, regional, division), providing an opportunity to the members of the Programme Approval Committee to raise objections by email within 48hrs. If no objections are raised the Executive Director has the final authority to approve all programmes and projects. If objections are raised, the Executive Director can call for a Programme Approval Committee, comprised of the Directors of the different Divisions and the Special Advisor to the Executive Director, to consult on the approval of certain programmes and projects, while retaining the final authority on approval of all programmes and projects.

## **2.3 Secretariat of the Programme Review Committee (headquarters, regional, division)**

Each Programme Review Committee has a Secretariat to support its work, with at least one secretary assigned by and accountable to the Chair for its good functioning.

The secretaries of Programme Review Committees (regional, division) also have a reporting line to the Secretary of the Programme Review Committee at headquarters to ensure coherence in application of the guidelines and to ensure proper record keeping and documentation.

The main responsibilities of the Secretariats are:

- Plan and organize regular PRC meetings and adhoc emergency meetings as requested by the Chair;
- Provide information and guidance to project teams on the use of the guidelines and templates provided;

- Support project teams on application of Results Based Management (ex. theory of change, logframes, etc.);
- Review the completeness of the submissions of all required documentation and ensure timely distribution to PRC members;
- Produce timely minutes of the meeting and share them immediately with the PRC members, the project teams and the PRC Secretariat at headquarters level;
- Ensure timely transfer of all project concepts and documents (incl. all relevant annexes) and their inclusion in the central project database.

## 2.4 Preparation and schedule of PRC meetings

- The Programme Review Committee at headquarters meets bi-monthly on Wednesdays, which should be secured in the calendars of PRC members.
- The Programme Review Committee at regional or division level will set their own calendar, which will be shared with the Secretariat of the Programme Review Committee at headquarter level. All PRCLWGs shall have **fixed meeting days and times on Wednesdays & Thursdays** to allow attendees, especially those from HQ to plan. **Wednesday 1.30- 3.30 will remain reserved for HQ PRC**, considerations for other standing meeting like the PMC should be taken when selecting preferred meeting times.
- Submissions need to reach the PRC secretariat at least 10 days before the PRC review meeting to allow sufficient time for quality and completeness review.
- PRC members receive the documentation for review 7 days before the scheduled review meeting.
- The PRC Secretariat will coordinate with relevant offices to maximize quarterly planning of project reviews.
- The Chair can exceptionally call for an emergency session, for projects of emergency nature (see later) or for other compelling reasons. Submissions need to reach the members at least 3 days before the review meeting.

## 3. Central Project Database

The Strategic Planning and Monitoring Branch and the Programme Development Branch will set up and manage a central project database that is at all times up-to-date and allows for monitoring and analysis of UN-Habitat's programme and project portfolio.

The database will also be accessible to project teams as to identify programmes and projects that aim for related impact against the outcomes of UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan.

## 4. Project Review and Approval Workflow

### 4.1 Key principles

- The programme preparation process comprises of two stages, namely **project concept** before proceeding to preparation of a **full project document**.

- A **standard template** derived from the IPMR template is used for full project documents, and complemented with information specific to UN-Habitat (cover page). The project concept only requires a partial completion (Sections 1-4) of the template.
- UN-Habitat is encouraged to develop as much as possible **mother programmes** (at objective level), in line with the IPMR approach, for review and approval through this PRC process. Child projects, under mother programmes do not need project concepts, but the full documents must go through the PRC for approval. There is **no special template for child projects**, they use the standard PRC template. This is valid for both headquarters (ex. global programmes) and country level (ex. Habitat Country Programme Documents).

## 4.2 Project/Programme Concept

A project Concept provides an opportunity for checking the extent of relevance of a proposed project to UN-Habitat's mandate, their contribution to the outcomes of the Strategic Plan and relevant annual Work Programme. It is also a critical stage to ensure sufficient co-creation involving the relevant headquarter expertise from ERSKI and the Global Solutions Division, ensuring integration of our normative and operational work.

Any UN-Habitat colleague engaging with donors and clients (ex. governments) prior to project concept note approval needs to explicitly explain the programme/project review and approval process within UN-Habitat to his/her counterparts. Project concept approval is required before entering into any binding agreement with donors or clients. Project teams **should submit Concepts as soon as discussions start with potential donors** to avoid 'emergency' review situations.

The PRC Chairs, and its members shall facilitate the co-creation of proposals ensuring adequate consultations between the regions and the branches to ensure **a whole of house approach**.

The project Concept is a useful tool for consultations with funding and implementing partners. It provides clarity on the "why, what, when and how" that allows teams to build up the pipeline for resource mobilization. The review process should ensure among other things alignment of project proposals with the following guiding documents:

- Sustainable Development Goals
- New Urban Agenda
- UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan
- UN-Habitat's annual Work Programme, and its deliverables
- Normative tools and methodologies approved at corporate level
- Relevant global programmes and flagship initiatives
- Where required, UN Country Assessments and Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks and Habitat Country Programme Document

### Mandatory components of the Concept

i) The problem the initiative is trying to solve; ii) the project's main objectives; iii) expected outcomes and indicators, iv) a Theory of Change diagram indicating assumptions; v) relevance of the proposal as well as risks and opportunities that arise through new project, vi) an internal risk

assessment and mitigation measures associated with the implementation of the project; and finally vi) a ESSS Screening report, assessing the potential environmental and social impacts of the project or programme and their relative significance will be attached to the concept note. Project concepts do not require full budgets but projected budgets. Negotiations with donors should include **explicit and separate budgets for monitoring, evaluation and project IT and communication.**

### **4.3 Programme/project Document**

A project document contains all the details needed to ensure securing the necessary funds and the full implementation of the programme/project, as detailed in the template provided (see annex).

**Key will be to have a detailed budget, to be cleared by the relevant PMO under the oversight of the Director of MACS, and that ensure that:**

- The budget is adequate and consistent with the expected outputs described in the project document, covering all direct costs of the projects (see also annex G budgeting guidelines);
- All provisions for UN-Habitat staff travel are related to project activities;
- All costs of project staff are covered adequately, and for new project staff or project staff shared across different projects evidence is provided that positions are fully covered;
- The cooperating agency or supporting organisation is in agreement with the project proposal;

### **4.4 Three (3)-Step project concept development, review and clearance process**

The 3-step process is purposefully aimed at encouraging co-creation, integrating the normative and operational capacity of UN-Habitat, and uptake of existing knowledge and lessons learnt across the agency.

In the following cases no project concept note is needed and project teams can proceed directly to project document development:

- A mother programme (ex. Habitat Country Programme Document, global programme, regional/country umbrella programme) has previously been approved by a PRC (headquarters, regional, division);

#### **4.4.1 Step 1: Project concept development**

##### **Establish a project team**

- Identify a project lead, and additional members of the project team
- Identify and contact in-house subject matter experts through the Communities of Practice that will need to be consulted,

##### **Co-creation of the project concept**

- Draw on the central project database and the Communities of Practice to identify relevant normative tools and guidance and relevant related projects that contribute to similar outcomes of UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan

- Consult with the Programme Development Branch to evaluate potential corporate strategic value and identify options for support from headquarter divisions (low, medium, high).
- Contacting Global Solutions Division's Urban Practice Branch and Programme Development Branch, and relevant regional offices from Regional Programmes Division is MANDATORY. Each branch/regional office will appoint suitable in-house expert to review and help strengthen the proposal. The originating Branch/ Region may also reach out to the subject matter experts/ practice leads directly, but Chiefs of UPB and PDB must always be copied. Use annex 1.a to document consultations that took place and the level of co-creation.
- All project concepts shall be cleared by originating Regions/ Branches before submission to the PRC.
- Note: *Depending on the project type, the project concept can be submitted in the donor template but MUST have the cover page from the PRC template (annex x) that ensures alignment with our mandates, the Strategic Plan and Work Programme and a Theory of Change and a UN-Habitat logical framework that shows the project's Objective, main outcomes and indicators.*

#### **4.4.2 STEP 2: Submission to the relevant Programme Review Committee**

- Submit project concept when ready to Secretariat of the relevant Programme Review Committee (headquarters, regional, division) with the following project concept submission checklist (annex y):
  - (i) A completed the project concept template, including the theory of change and logical framework, (ii) Signed **Annex 1a** (showing co-creation inputs) (iii) a completed ESSS Screening report
- 3 days are required by any the PRC Secretariat to check quality and completeness.
- The PRC Secretariat schedules a review meeting 7 days before the review date and sends out the submitted project concept to the members of the PRC;

#### **4.4.3 STEP 3: review by the Programme Review Committee**

- PRC members are encouraged to share their initial comments with the project team prior to the meeting.
- The Project Team makes a brief presentation (aided by a PowerPoint presentation explaining why, what, how and when aspects of the project) based on submitted Annex 1a highlighting inputs, including issues/concern raised by branches or regions and how they have been resolved or integrated in the project concept.

#### **Key possible decisions of the relevant PRC meeting:**

PRC members aim for decisions by consensus. Should consensus not be attained, a decision will be taken by the **PRC Chair based on a majority**, while the minutes of the meeting will also reflect the minority opinion. The following decisions can be made by the PRC:

- i) Cleared by Chair of the relevant PRC to proceed to full project document (**minutes of the PRC meetings constitutes the clearance**); or

- ii) Cleared subject to required light revisions (**as reflected in the minutes of the PRC meeting**) with a revised project concept and updated Annex 1a to be received and validated by the PRC Secretariat; or
- iii) Reverted to the project team with a request for further revisions (**as reflected in the minutes of the PRC meeting**), including new consultation with relevant offices and subject matters experts / branches and resubmission to PRC Secretary for re-consideration in a future PRC meeting; or
- iv) Rejected with no possibility of revision.
  - **The PRC minutes** will be shared with the project team **not more than 4 days** after the review meeting.
  - The final approved project concept note is uploaded to the central project database, with the minutes of the PRC meeting.

#### **4.5 The Four (4)-Step technical review and approval process for project documents**

At this stage of project development, co-creation with the relevant offices will have taken place and the project team will have taken into consideration improvements, recommendations and suggestions made at the project concept stage listed in Annex 1a. **Any issues around divisions of work or substantive disagreements should have been resolved.**

The PRC will NOT review project documents that are already **negotiated and sealed** with donors and/or clients. These projects should be submitted by the PRCLWG chair, to the PRC Chair (headquarters, the ED), **through the PR WG Chair** with a copy to the Secretariat of the PRC (headquarters) with a strong justification for why the due process was bypassed. A record of such exceptional approval requests will be maintained by the PRC Secretariat (headquarters). For transparency, UN-Habitat shall make these approvals ‘public’ within UN-Habitat .

The PRCs will NOT review project documents developed without collaboration and involvement of relevant Branches/Regions and other internal relevant parties. A Project Submission Checklist (Annex D, as well as Annex 1a & 1b)) signed off by the respective Branch Chief and Division Director or their OICs will accompany the submitted document. For transparency, UN-Habitat shall make these **notifications ‘public’ within UN-Habitat**, in case the project proceeds to being reviewed.

##### **4.5.1. Step 1: Project document development**

###### **Update project team**

- Update project lead, and additional members of the project team (in project template cover page)
- Identify and contact additional in-house subject matter experts through the Communities of Practice that will need to be consulted,

## Co-creation of the project document

- Draw on the central project database and the communities of practice to identify relevant normative tools and guidance and relevant related projects that contribute to similar outcomes of UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan;
- Consult with the Programme Development Branch to identify/update potential corporate strategic value and identify options for support from headquarter divisions (low, medium, high);
- Contacting Global Solutions Division's Urban Practice Branch and Programme Development Branch, and relevant regional offices from Regional Programmes Division is MANDATORY. Each branch/regional office will appoint additional suitable in-house expert to review and help strengthen the proposal. The originating Branch/ Region may also reach out to the subject matter experts/ practice leads directly, but Chiefs of UPB and PDB must always be copied. Use annex **1a and 1b** to document consultations that took place and the level of co-creation;
- Note: *Depending on the project type, the project document can be submitted in the donor template but MUST have the cover page from the PRC template (annex x) that ensures alignment with our mandates, the Strategic Plan and Work Programme and a Theory of Change and a Logical framework that shows the project's Objective, main outcomes and indicators.*

### 4.5.2. Step 2: Project document submission

- All project documents shall be cleared by originating Regions/ Branches before submission to the relevant PRC.
- Submit project document when ready to Secretariat of the relevant Programme Review Committee (headquarters, regional, division) with the Project Document Submission checklist (**annex D**), and the following;
  - (i) A completed the project document template; (ii) Signed **Annex 1a and 1b** (showing co-creation inputs); (iii) signed Annex G (Financial Feasibility Form); (iv) Completed **ESSS Scoping Report or ESSS Development Impact Plan** (Note: not all projects require a Scoping Report or Development Impact Plan - the determination is made at in the completed ESSS Screening Report);
- 3 days are required by any the relevant PRC Secretariat to check quality and completeness.
- Once confirmed complete, the draft project document gets uploaded to the central project database.
- The relevant PRC Secretariat schedules a review meeting 7 days before the review date and sends out the submitted project documents to the members of the PRC;

### 4.5.3 Step 3: Review by the relevant Programme Review Committee

- PRC members are encouraged to share their initial comments with the project team prior to the meeting.

- The Project Team makes a brief presentation (aided by a PowerPoint presentation explaining why, what, how and when aspects of the project) based on submitted Annex 1a highlighting inputs, including issues/concern raised by branches or regions and how they have been resolved or integrated in the project document.

**Key possible decisions of the relevant PRC meeting:**

PRC members aim for decisions by consensus. Should consensus not be attained, a decision will be taken by the **PRC Chair based on a majority**, while the minutes of the meeting will also reflect the minority opinion. The following decisions can be made by the PRC:

- i). Cleared by Chair of the relevant PRC for final approval by the Executive Director (**minutes of the PRC meetings constitutes the clearance**); or
- ii). Cleared subject to required light revisions (**as reflected in the minutes of the PRC meeting**) with a revised project document and updated Annex 1a to be received and validated by the relevant PRC Secretariat; or
- iii). Reverted to the project team with a request for further revisions (**as reflected in the minutes of the PRC meeting**), including new consultation with relevant offices and subject matters experts / branches and resubmission to PRC Secretary for re-consideration in a future PRC meeting; or
- iv). Rejected with no possibility of revision.

- **The PRC minutes** will be shared with the project Team **not more than 4 days** after the review meeting.
- The final approved project document (in PDF) is uploaded to the central project database, with the minutes of the PRC meeting and Annex 2 with approval signature.

**4.5.4 Step 4: Formal Approval**

- The Secretariat of the PRC verifies completeness of final documents (incl. the minutes of the PRC) and submits them through the **PRC Secretariat at headquarters** for final approval of the Executive Director, copying all members of the Programme Approval Committee, which includes the Chair of the PRCWG.
- The Programme Approval Group members have 48hrs to raise an objection to the Executive Director.
- The Executive Director can call for an ad hoc Programme Approval Group to consult on the proposed approval, based on an objection raised by a member or upon her/his request.
- The Executive Director has the final authority to formally approve the project document or to return it to the relevant PRC Chair for further clarifications.
- When approving, the Executive Director, signs and dates the project document. The project team gets notified within 24hrs, with copy to the relevant PRC Chair and Secretariat and copy to the Secretariat of the PRC at headquarters.

- The formally approved and signed project document, the Annex 2 (in PDF), with the minutes of the PRC, get uploaded to the central project database and are transferred into IPMR.

## **5. Delegation of Authority (DOA) to Regional Offices and Divisions**

The Executive Director has sub-delegated the authority and accountability to the Regional Representatives for the Africa Office, Arab States Office, the Asia Pacific Office and the Director for Global Solutions Division, to **approve projects with a value of US\$ 2 million and below from 1 February 2022**, in what shall be hereafter be referred to as respectively the Regional Project Review Committee or the Divisional Project Review Committee.

A director or regional representative with a DOA has to ensure inclusion of relevant branches or regions in the development of the project concept and project document. Projects originating from headquarters with implementation at the regional or country level must consult with the relevant Regional and Country Office, and similarly, Regional Offices must consult with the division and branches working in the relevant thematic focus area.

The following programmes/project do not fall under the delegation of authority, and will continue to be reviewed by the Programme Review Committee at headquarters:

- Programmes and projects developed by other parts of UN-Habitat not listed (ex. ERSKI, Liaison Offices, RPD Nairobi, etc.)
- Programmes/projects or with a value higher than US\$ 2 million
- Habitat Country Programme Documents
- Projects supported by vertical Climate Funds (ex. Adaptation Fund)

Until further notice the following Programme Review Committees will be merged:

- Programme Review Committee for ROAS and ROAF
- Programme Review Committee for Global Solutions Division and ROLAC

## **6. Review and approval workflows for various categories of projects (to be inserted)**

### **6.1 Global, multi-country or singular country mother/umbrella programmes**

The use of umbrella/mother programmes is encouraged both for global programmes), multi-country programmes (ex GLTN, PSUP, basic services, public space, CRGP) or within a singular country (ex. SHURA Afghanistan). This will allow for child projects for which no project concept will be needed and which can be integrated into the IPMR of the mother programme.

Given the scale and scope, project teams must include both country, regional and global expertise and **MUST** be co-designed/created. This project document must be very comprehensive and reviewed by the PRC at headquarter level, especially in regard to long-term and broad-based global appeal, likely sources of funding, and fund-raising strategy. These types of programmes **MUST** come back to the PRC at headquarter level for a periodic/mid-term review (depending on the timeframe) as a quality assurance measure.

Child projects under approved Umbrella/mother programmes can be developed by any office (CO/MCO/Section/Unit) and not only the originating office of the Umbrella Programmes. To ensure alignment of child projects to with the Agency's strategic plan and the Umbrella Programme, the development of child projects should be in close consultation with the proponent of the Umbrella Programme. The Programme Development Branch could facilitate this process if necessary. Note: Child projects should be created in IPMR at outcome level, with grants associated at outcome level. Approval setting should be changed from "outcome and below" to "output and below".

The following conditions will guide the approval of additions/adjustments to Umbrella Programmes:

- i) New phases that **go beyond existing programme's planning horizon** will be considered **new/scale-up phases** and will therefore require a new PRC review.
- ii) If the Umbrella programme receives new funding that introduces **new Expected Accomplishments/Outcomes** to the old programme, this will be considered a **new project** and will require a new PRC review
- iii) All child projects will henceforth to go through the relevant PRC, without the need for a project concept.

**Templates:** UN-Habitat PRC templates will be used for project concepts and full project documents. Where donor templates are acceptable, the submission **MUST** also have the PRC cover page (annex B) that ensures alignment with our mandates, the Strategic Plan and Work Programme, a Theory of Change and a UN-Habitat logical framework, and ESSS screening or scoping report.

## **6.2 Scaling-Up projects (Phase II, III, IV etc of an approved project or programme)**

Scaling up projects will have no project concept but will follow the full project document review and approval workflow.

Lessons learnt from one phase must inform the next phase. An evaluation report may be required in complex projects or those upscaling projects that have been under implementation for more than 5 years.

## **6.3 UN or consortium joint programmes at country level**

These projects will go direct to full project document approval workflow but must show co-creation for components related to UN-Habitat. The project document **MUST** be complete with components of the other joint agencies included, with the **full budget and log frame differentiating UN-Habitat's components and those of other agency/ies**. Further, the budget must illustrate how the coordinating role will be financed and how overheads are distributed.

**Template:** If a joint programme template is used, then it **MUST** have the PRC cover page (annex B) that ensures alignment with our mandates, the Strategic Plan and Work Programme, a Theory of Change and a UN-Habitat logical framework that shows the objectives, main outcomes and indicators, for which UN-Habitat is responsible, and ESSS screening or scoping report.

## 6.4 EU-Funded Projects

The EU projects will follow the project concept and full project document review and approval workflow.

**Template:** If EU templates are used, the submission MUST also have the PRC cover page (annex B) that ensures alignment with our mandates, the Strategic Plan and Work Programme and a Theory of Change and a UN-Habitat logical framework that shows the objectives, main outcomes and indicators and ESSS screening or scoping report.

## 6.5 Japan Funded Projects (MOFA)

Japanese Funded projects will follow the project concept and full project document review and approval workflows. All funded projects should satisfy the requirements of both UN-Habitat and the Japanese government.

The Regional Representative of ROAP will play the role of facilitator and negotiator for projects benefiting from these funds and act as a liaison with the relevant PRC. The regional representative of ROAP will be informed of all proposed projects submitted for review to the respective PRCs.

The ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) in Tokyo starts consulting with UN agencies about possible projects for supplementary budget in countries around April /May. The schedule of consultation in countries and the timeline for submissions differs greatly between regions and between countries. For projects under the JSB, the call is initiated by the respective Japanese embassies in each country who identify the country priorities and scope of the applications that they'll be looking for. The process may go on until October or November of each year.

**Template:** UN-Habitat PRC templates will be used for project concepts and full project documents. If a donor template is used, the submission MUST also have the PRC cover page (annex B) that ensures alignment with our mandates, the Strategic Plan and Work Programme, a Theory of Change and a UN-Habitat logical framework that shows the objectives, main outcomes and indicators, for which UN-Habitat is responsible, and ESSS screening or scoping report.

## 6.6 UN Development Account supported Projects

Annual calls are initiated by the secretariat of the UN Development Account in DESA (<http://www.un.org/esa/devaccount>).

Within the Agency, the Programme Development Branch is the focal point for UNDA projects. In collaboration with the Chair of the PRC (headquarters), an internal selection process is organized to identify the project concepts to be submitted to the UN Development Account for review and potential selection.

The PRC (headquarters) will review and select final concepts and review in the next stage the project documents to be submitted to the UN Development Account for final approval.

**Template:** UN Development Account templates are used for both project concepts and full project documents. The submission to the PRC MUST also have the PRC cover page (annex B) that ensures alignment with our mandates, the Strategic Plan and Work Programme, a Theory of Change and a UN-Habitat logical framework that shows the objectives, main outcomes and indicators, and ESSS screening or scoping report.

## 6.7 Adaptation Fund supported projects

All Adaptation Fund projects will follow the project concept and project document review and approval workflows and be reviewed by the PRC at headquarters.

The Fund submission windows for new project submissions are **early January and early August**. There will be a dedicated Adaptation Fund PRC (headquarters) one month before the formal.

All formal communication with the Adaptation Fund secretariat goes through the subprogramme coordinator (climate change / urban environment).

**Templates:** Adaptation Fund templates will be used. The submission to the PRC MUST also have the PRC cover page (annex B) that ensures alignment with our mandates, the Strategic Plan and Work Programme, a Theory of Change and a UN-Habitat logical framework that shows the objectives, main outcomes and indicators, and ESSS screening report (no scoping report).

The fund has two tracks:

### A: Single Country Projects (2-step process)

1. Concept Note (50 pages max)
2. Project Proposal (100 pages max + 100 pages max for the Annex)

The draft concepts should be submitted to PRC before submission to the Fund.

### B: Regional Projects (3-step process)

1. Pre-Concept note (10 pages max) are also reviewed by the PRC.
2. Concept Note (50 pages max)
3. Project proposal (100 pages max + 100 pages for the Annex)

## 6.8 Humanitarian emergency funded projects (ex. including CERF, OCHA, ECHO)

Only full project documents require review and approval through the relevant PRC. The Chair of the relevant PRC can choose to organize an adhoc online review of the project document with a 48hr return for comments.

Emergency/humanitarian projects are defined (United Nations Development Coordination Office (DCO) as 'Material or logistical assistance provided for humanitarian purposes, typically in response to humanitarian crises including natural disasters and man-made disaster. The primary objective of humanitarian aid is to save lives, alleviate suffering, and maintain human dignity'. Recovery or development-focused projects happening in countries that are conflict are not considered emergency projects. UN-Habitat's Emergency Director is consulted to confirm the humanitarian nature of the project and to identify possible support from headquarters.

**Templates:** For ECHO, CERF and OCHA, donor templates are acceptable. The submission to the PRC MUST also have the PRC cover page (annex B) that ensures alignment with our mandates, the Strategic Plan and Work Programme, a Theory of Change and a UN-Habitat logical framework that shows the objectives, main outcomes and indicators, and ESSS screening and scoping report.

## 6.9 Adjustments to previously approved projects

These are projects being extended in cost (new activities/outputs), in time, or both or with a new geographical scope. No new project concepts are required.

- (i) In a case where the expansion of the project comes with an **additional outcome/s**, the project will be considered **a new project** and will follow the relevant PRC review and approval process.
- (ii) If a project was approved at Branch or Regional level and later receives additional money that makes the **total budget exceed USD 2,000,000**, that project extension will be reviewed by the Chair of the PRC (headquarters) based on a revised project document submission, with an updated log frame (highlighting the new outputs and activities) and updated budget. If the changes are fundamental, the Chair will submit the revised project document to the PRC for review. If not, the Chair can seek approval of the revised project document by the Executive Director.
- (iii) If additional budget makes the **total budget USD 1 million** and above, **the evaluation policy guidelines will apply accordingly** (incl. necessary evaluation budget for UN-Habitat's Evaluation Unit).

## 6.10 Projects deemed urgent by host governments and/or donors

All host government / donor urgent projects will follow the project concept and full project document review and approval workflows and will NOT be treated as emergency projects. Exceptions can only be granted upon a positive recommendation by the Chair of the PRCWG (headquarters) and final approval by the Executive Director.

### ANNEXES:

**Annex B:** Cover Page (*used to submit Concept or ProDoc that are not in our template*)

**Annex 1a & 1b:** Concept Co-creation inputs and Concept PRC review recommendations

**Annex D:** Project Submission Checklist (*to be used with all Full ProDocs*)

**Annex G:** Project Financial Feasibility Checklist (*to be used with all Full ProDocs*)

**Annex 2:** Response to PRC review recommendation of Full ProDocs (the ED signs this annex for project approval)