



UN HABITAT Executive Board
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Human Settlements
Programme

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Executive Board of the United Nations

Human Settlements Programme

Second session of 2022

Nairobi, 21–23 November 2022

Item 13 of the provisional agenda*

**Working methods of the Executive Board, including a
review of the results of the survey conducted by the
secretariat after the first session of 2022**

**Results of the survey conducted by the secretariat after the first
session of the Executive Board of 2022 to evaluate the
effectiveness of that session so as to further improve the process
and outcome of future sessions****

Note by the secretariat

I. Introduction

A. Background to and purpose of the survey

1. In line with rule 1.1 of its rules of procedure, the Executive Board of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) “shall meet in regular session two or three times per year, as appropriate, at such times and for such duration as it shall determine”. The functions of the Executive Board are set out in rule 5 of the rules of procedure and include overseeing the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat and ensuring the accountability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of the Programme.

2. In its decision 2022/3, the Executive Board decided to include in the provisional agenda for its second session of 2022 an item on the working methods of the Executive Board, including a review of the results of the survey conducted by the secretariat following the first session of the Executive Board of 2022. Following the first session of 2022, the secretariat therefore conducted a survey, the aim of which was to evaluate the effectiveness of that session and explore ways to further improve both the process and outcome of future sessions. The report is to be submitted to the Executive Board for consideration at its second session of 2022.

3. The secretariat prepared a survey to evaluate the effectiveness of the first session of 2022 of the Board. On 7 June 2022, the secretariat circulated an electronic link to the survey to all 103 permanent missions accredited to UN-Habitat, with a deadline for submitting responses of 24 June 2022. On 20 June 2022, the Secretariat circulated a reminder to permanent missions accredited to UN-Habitat, inviting them to submit responses by 24 June 2022.

* HSP/EB.2022/14.

** The present document has not been formally edited.

B. Participation

4. By 5 July 2022, the secretariat had received seven responses only. The seven respondents had completed the online survey, which had been set up in such a way, that the responses received were anonymous and the submitters could not be identified. The response rate stood at 6.7 per cent (7 of 103 potential respondents, which are the permanent missions accredited to UN-Habitat).
5. The secretariat hired an independent data analysis expert to review and analyze the responses. The analysis and a summary of the key findings of the survey are set out in the present report, which is submitted for consideration by the Executive Board at its second session of 2022.

II. Approach and methodology

6. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the 2022 first session of the Executive Board, the survey was designed to explore various themes. Under each of these themes, various questions were designed. The survey followed the same structure used to evaluate the second session of the Executive Board of the year 2021 session as well. The survey was structured in the following six sections:

- (a) Alignment of the functions and competence of the Executive Board with the provisional agenda of the sessions of the Board;
- (b) Quality and usefulness of the pre-session documents;
- (c) Briefing by the Executive Director;
- (d) The number of sessions per year for the Executive Board;
- (e) Preparations and implementation of the first session of 2022 of the Executive Board
- (f) Other questions to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Executive Board

7. The survey comprised of open-ended questions, ranking questions, multiple-choice questions and single choice questions to explore themes.

8. For ranking questions, a rating scale of level 5 (Strongly agree) to level 1 (Strongly disagree) was used. The scale was as follows:

Level 5: Strongly agree Level 4: Agree

Level 3: Somewhat agree Level 2: Disagree

Level 1: Strongly disagree

9. The survey comprised 20 questions, as compared to 22 questions in the survey carried out for the second session of the Executive Board for the year 2021. Some questions have been reviewed in order to encourage clearer responses. For example, some questions were restructured into multiple-choice and single-choice questions. Questions 2, 6 and 18 were changed into multiple-choice questions. Questions 8 and 10, were restructured to single-choice 'Yes/No' questions. In all the reorganized questions, an opportunity was offered to the respondents to provide their subjective views, comments suggestions and recommendation.

III. Analysis of responses

A. Alignment of the functions and competence of the Executive Board with the provisional agenda of the sessions of the Board

Question: How well aligned is the agenda for each session of the Executive Board, to its functions and competence of strengthening the accountability and transparency of UN-Habitat, and providing an effective oversight mechanism to enhance its normative and operational activities?

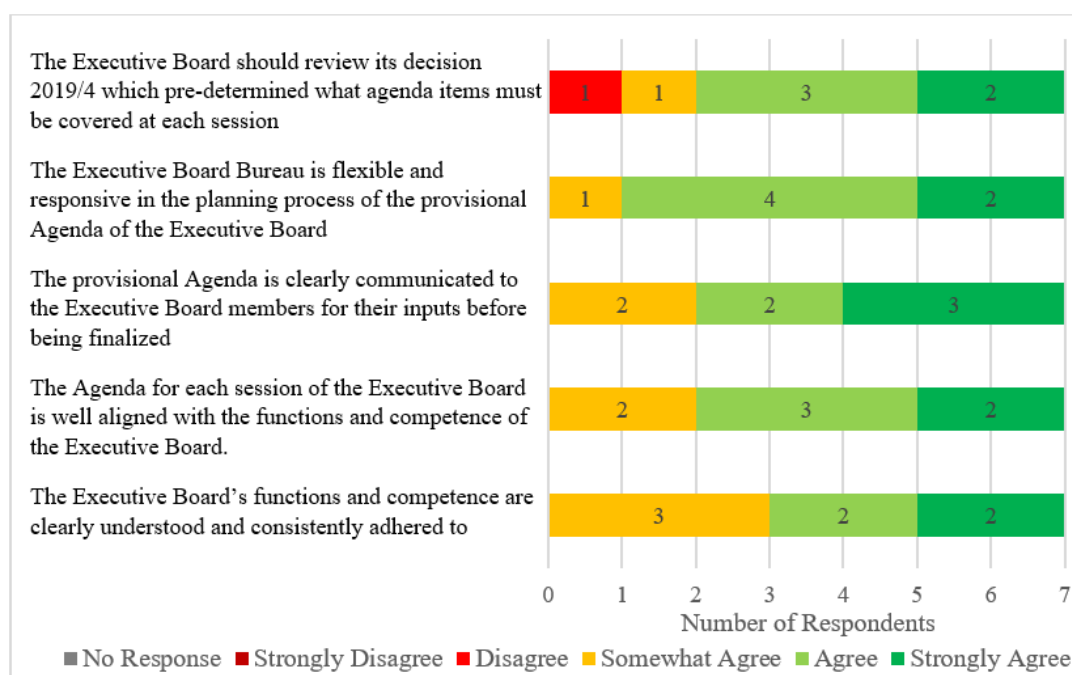
10. A total of five respondents which is 71 per cent, either "strongly agree" or "agree" (two respondents and three respondents respectively) that the Executive Board's functions and competence are clearly understood and consistently adhered to. While one respondent "somewhat agree" and another respondent "disagree" that the Executive Board's functions and competence are clearly understood and consistently adhered to.

11. A majority (six out of seven) of the respondents agree that the agenda for each session is well aligned with the functions and competence of the Executive Board. Among them, two "strongly agree" and four "agree" making it a total of 86 per cent. One respondent "somewhat agree" to the statement.

12. Of the seven respondents, five either “Strongly agree” or “Agree” (three and two respectively) that the provisional agenda is clearly communicated to members of the Executive Board for their input before being finalized, while two respondents “Somewhat agree”.
13. A total of five respondents either “Strongly agree”, “Agree” (two and three respectively) that the Executive Board Bureau is flexible and responsive in the planning process of the provisional agenda of the Executive Board, while two respondents “Somewhat agree”.
14. All seven respondents agreed to some extent that the Executive Board should review its decision 2019/4 which pre-determined what agenda items must be covered at each session. Among them, two respondents “strongly agree”, two “agree and three “somewhat agree”.
15. A respondent, additionally, suggested that the functions of the Executive Board would benefit being better known by Members States through framing remarks at the opening of each session of the Executive Board.

Figure 1

An overview of feedback from Member States on the alignment of the functions and competence of the Executive Board

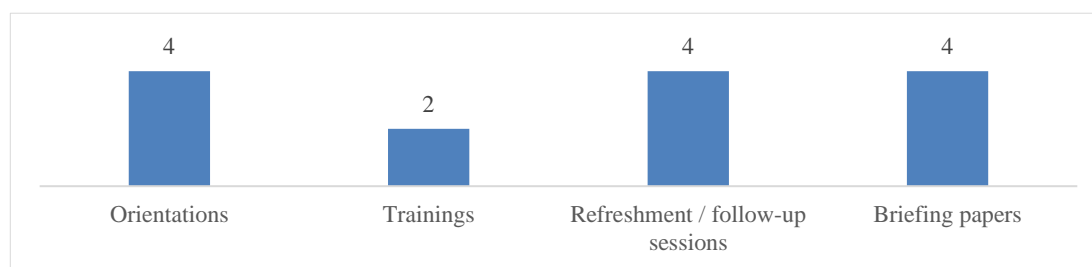


Question: If the Secretariat was to help Member States and their delegation understand the functions and competence of the Executive Board, what would be a better way to do so?

16. This was a multiple-choice question, and six of the seven respondents selected their preferred ways on how the secretariat may help Member States and their delegation better understand the functions and competence of the Executive Board.
17. The responses of four of the six respondents suggested that ‘orientations’, ‘refresher and follow-up sessions’ as well as ‘briefing papers’ can be the effective ways to support Member States and their delegation understand the functions and competence of the Executive Board.
18. Only two of the six respondents further suggested that the secretariat can organize training courses and capacity-building sessions on the functions and competence of the Executive Board for the members of the Executive Board.

Figure 2

Overview of the suggestions provided to the Secretariate on ways to support Member States and their Delegation understand the functions and competences of the Executive Board.



Question: Please provide your views/ideas on how the process of drafting of the provisional agenda for each session of the Executive Board can be improved?

19. Only two respondents provided suggestions on how the process of drafting the provisional agenda for sessions of the Executive Board can be improved while the five others did not respond to this open-ended question. The suggestions provided included the following:

20. Adopting at the end of each session the agenda of the next session does not provide enough flexibility for the Executive Board. The Bureau of the Executive Board should recommend the provisional agenda for the next session agenda a few weeks before the session and the provisional agenda can then be shared with Member States through a no-objection procedure / silent procedure and/or through regional groups consultations.

21. Prioritizing the important items of the provisional agenda and focusing on the most important items only;

B. Quality and usefulness of the pre-session documents

Question: How useful are the pre-session documents in their timing submission, accessibility, content and length in helping delegates to prepare adequately for the Executive Board sessions?

22. Of the seven respondents, five agree (three “Strongly agree”, two “Agree”) that the timely submission and distribution of pre-session documents, in accordance with rule 6 of the rules of procedure of the Executive Board (in all official languages no less than four weeks before the date of the opening meeting of a session) is adequate, while two somewhat agree;

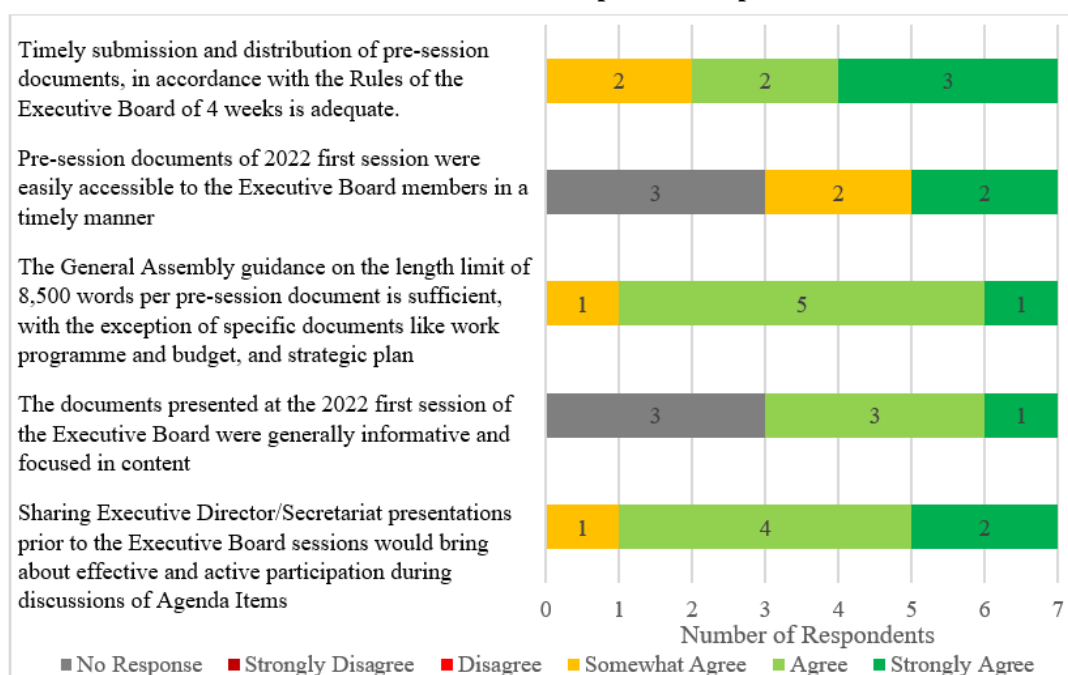
23. Two respondents said that they “Strongly agree” that the pre-session documents for the first session of 2022 were easily accessible to the members of the Executive Board in a timely manner; two said that they “Somewhat agree”, while three respondents did not answer this question;

24. A majority (six out of the seven respondents) of the respondents either “Strongly agree” or “Agree” (one and five respectively) that the guidance of the General Assembly on the limit of 8,500 words for pre-session documents is sufficient, with the exception of certain specific documents, such as the annual work programme and budget and the strategic plan; while one respondent “Somewhat Agree” with the statement;

25. Of the seven respondents, one respondent “Strongly agree” and a further three “Agree” that the documents submitted to the Executive Board at its first session of 2022 were generally informative and content-focused; while three respondents did not answer this question;

26. Two respondents “Strongly agree” and four “Agree” that sharing presentations prepared by the Executive Director and the secretariat with members in advance of sessions of the Executive Board would result in effective and active participation during the discussion of agenda items. One respondent “Somewhat agree” to such proposal.

Figure 3

An overview of feedback from Member States on the provision of pre-session documents

Question: Please suggest how the quality and the usefulness (including content and length) of the pre-session documents can be improved.

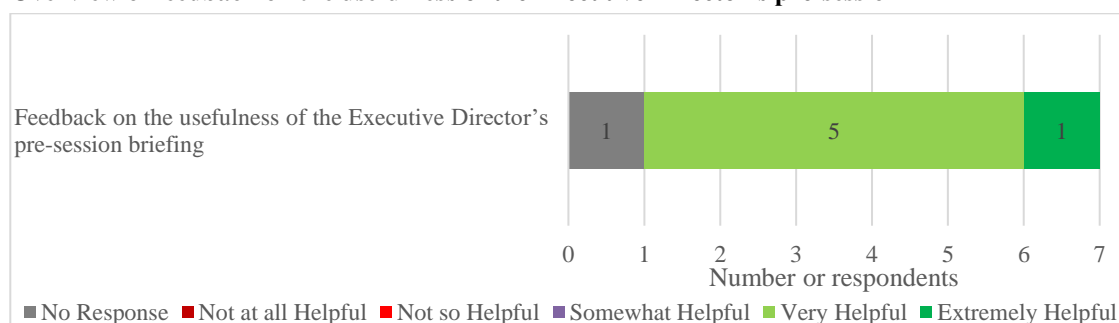
27. Only one response was received for this open-ended question. The respondent suggested that the Secretariat should try to equally balance between the two sessions of the Executive Board being held each year and the pre-session documents presented for consideration by the Board, in order to reduce the number and length of each pre-session document as much as possible. The same respondent suggested that a maximum of six pre-session documents should be presented to the Executive Board at each session, including information documents.

C. Pre-session briefing by the Executive Director

Question: Please rate the usefulness of the Executive Director's pre-session briefing which takes place two weeks prior to each session as provided for under rule 6.10 of the rules of procedure

28. One respondent found the Executive Director's pre-session briefing which takes place two weeks prior to each session as provided for under rule 6.10 of the rules of procedure "extremely helpful" while a majority (5 respondents) found it "very helpful". A respondent did not answer the question.

Figure 4

Overview of feedback on the usefulness of the Executive Director's pre-session

Question: Please provide your views and ideas on how the Executive Director's pre-session briefings can be improved for both Member States and the Secretariat

29. With respect to the pre-session briefing by the Executive Director, two respondents provided the following suggestions:

(a) Secretariat could share the Executive Director’s presentation for the briefing prior to the briefing. This will give the opportunity to the Executive Director to focus only on the key challenges to be addressed at the upcoming Executive Board session and brief Member States accordingly.

(b) The Executive Director’s pre-session briefing should be held earlier than two weeks prior to the session of the Executive Board or the background documents supporting the briefing by the Executive Director should be sent to Member States in advance prior to the briefing.

(c) The briefing should be more interactive in its format.

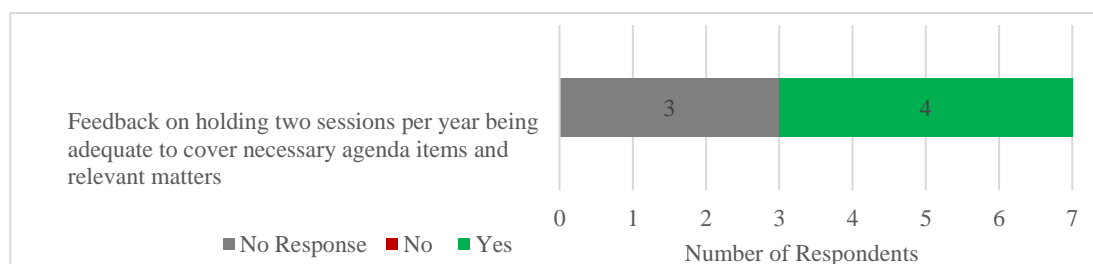
D. Number of sessions per year of the Executive Board

Question: Rule 1 of the rules of procedure of the Executive Board provides that “The Executive Board of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme shall meet in regular session two or three times per year.” Since the establishment of the Board in May 2019, the Board has met twice in 2020 and twice in 2021. As per your experience, do you think holding two sessions per year is adequate to cover necessary agenda items and relevant matters?

30. Based on the experiences of 2020 and 2021, respondents were asked if meeting two times a year is adequate to cover necessary agenda items and relevant matters. Four of the respondents, which represents 57 percent of the respondents, indicated that two sessions of the Executive Board per year is adequate to cover necessary agenda items and relevant matters, while three respondents did not answer the question.

Figure 5

Overview of feedback on holding two sessions per year being adequate to cover necessary agenda items and relevant matters based on the experience of 2020 and 2021



Views of respondents on how many sessions of the Executive Board are needed per year

31. Additionally, an open-ended question was also asked to the respondents to provide their views on how many sessions of the Executive Board are needed per year to cover necessary agenda items and relevant matters and five out of seven responded to the question. The opinions provided by the respondents are as follows:

(a) Two respondents stated that two sessions per annum is adequate. A respondent emphasized that two sessions per year are adequate to discuss on management and budget issues.

(b) Two of the respondents indicated that three sessions per year would be adequate to cover the necessary agenda items and other relevant matters for discussion.

(c) A respondent mentioned that the number of days, either two or three, depends on the length of the agenda items. It should be the Bureau to decide and the Member State to agree through silent procedure or regional groups consultation.

Question: With the understanding that the General Assembly and the Executive Board rules on documentation require about 12 weeks of preparations of pre-session documents, and with the understanding that in line with Rule 1.3, the dates of the sessions of the Board when being set, should take into account the dates of meetings of the UN-Habitat Assembly and other United Nations bodies, including the high-level political forum on sustainable development, when, in your view, during the year should the Executive Board sessions take place? (Indicate months)

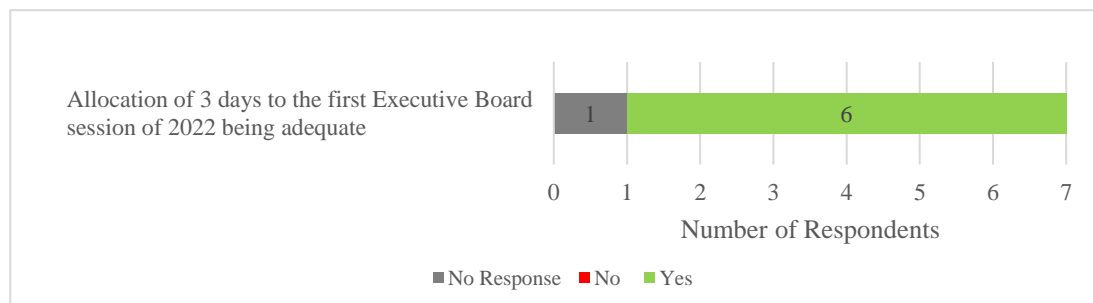
32. Only three respondents responded to this open-ended question. Among the suggestions on when during the year, the Executive Board sessions should take place, included: in April and November, in June and at end of January, in March and in September or October.

Question: The 2022 first session of the Executive Board was held over three days. Was the allocated number of days for that session adequate?

33. Based on the experience of 2022 first session of the Executive Board, respondents were asked if allocating three days for the session was adequate. A majority of the respondents (six) said that three days were adequate. One respondent did not answer the question.

Figure 6

An overview of feedback on the allocation of three days being adequate for the 2022 first session of the Executive Board



Question: In your view, how many days should each Executive Board session be and why? (Indicate number)

34. An open-ended question was asked to the respondents to provide their views on the number of days required for each session of Executive Board. Among the responses received (two), a respondent stated that three days should be allocated for the sessions of the Executive Board as two days may not be adequate to cover all agenda items. One respondent indicated that one day for a session of the Executive Board would be adequate, in order to save time and cost.

E. Preparations and implementation of the first session of 2022 of the Executive Board

Question: The 2022 first session of the Executive Board was held in a hybrid format. How do you evaluate the hybrid format of 2022 first session and its possible application to future Executive Board sessions?

35. More than half of the respondents (57 percent) agreed to some extent that the hybrid format, with a combination of in-person participation and participants connecting to the meeting remotely, produced a successful outcome to the first session of 2022 (one respondent “Strongly agree”, two “Agree” and one “Somewhat agree”). It is important to note that one respondent disagreed that the hybrid format produced a successful outcome of the first session of 2022. Two respondents did not answer the question.

36. Of the seven respondents, six agree to some extent (one “Strongly agree”, three “Agree” and two “Somewhat agree”) that the hybrid format put remote participants at a disadvantage, as some struggled to have their voices heard or experienced technical issues that rendered their participation less active. One respondent “disagrees” and did not believe that the hybrid format put the remote participants at a disadvantage and can make participation less active.

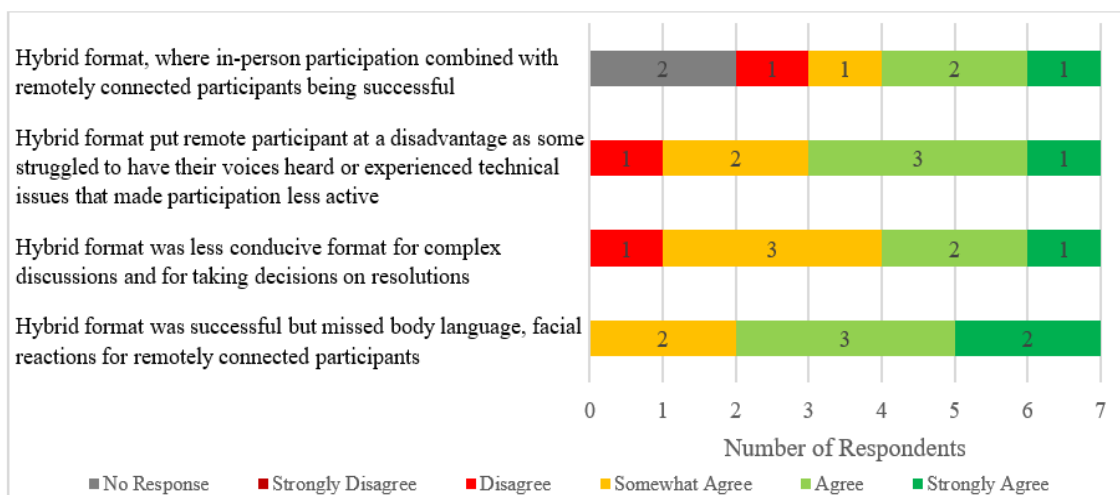
37. A majority of the respondents, 86 percent, (one “Strongly agree”, two “Agree” and three “Somewhat agree”) agree that the hybrid format was a less conducive format for complex discussions, such as those involving negotiating and making decisions on resolutions. One respondent disagrees with the statement;

38. Five respondents agree that the hybrid format was successful, but felt having missed seeing the body language and facial reactions of the participants who were connected remotely (two respondents “Strongly agree”, three respondents “Agree” and two “Somewhat agree”). Two respondents “Somewhat agree” with the statement.

39. Based on the above data, it can be perceived that the hybrid format is not preferred to some extent.

Figure 7

Overview of feedback on hybrid format of the 2022 first session of the Executive Board and its possible application to future Executive Board sessions

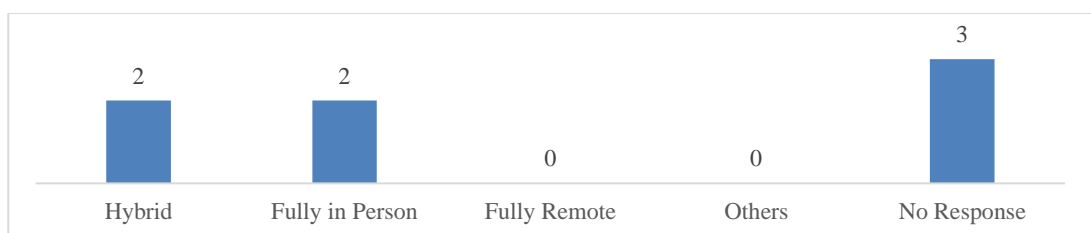


Question: For future Executive Board sessions, what format would you recommend?

40. Only four out of seven respondents answered the question. While the two respondents recommend that the future sessions of the Executive Board to be held in a hybrid format, other two respondents recommend that the future sessions be held fully in-person format. Three respondents did not answer the question.

Figure 8

Overview of recommendation on the format for future Executive Board sessions



Question: Please, provide reasons for choosing the format you recommend.

41. Reason for choosing the format was not provided by any of the respondents.

Question: How adequate were preparations for the 2022 first session of the Executive Board, including meetings of the ad hoc working groups and informal consultations on draft decisions?

42. Of the seven respondents, one “Strongly agree”, three “agree” and one “Somewhat agree” that the number of informal consultations on draft outcomes and decisions considered by the Executive Board at its first session of 2022 was adequate, while two respondents did not answer;

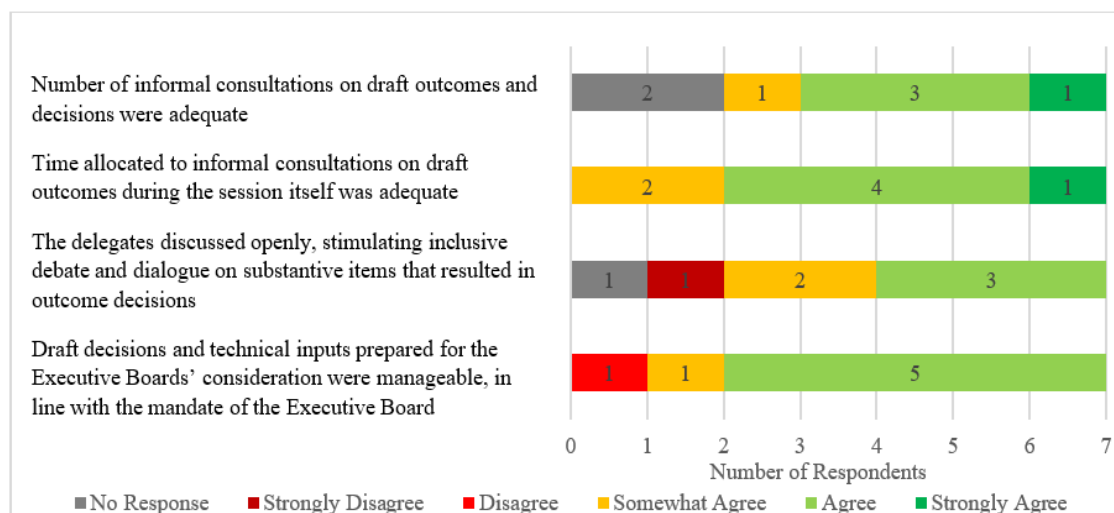
43. All seven respondents agree to some extent (one “Strongly agree”, four “Agree” and two “Somewhat agree”) that the time allocated to informal consultations on draft outcomes considered by the Executive Board at its first session of 2022 during the session itself was adequate;

44. Five respondents agree to some extent (three “Agree” and two “Somewhat agree”) that delegates discussed openly, stimulating inclusive debate and dialogue on substantive items that resulted in outcome decisions, while a respondent opted for “Strongly disagree” and one did not answer the question;

45. A majority of the respondents agree to some extent (five “Agree” and one “Somewhat agree”) that the draft decisions and technical inputs prepared for the consideration of the Executive Board were manageable and in line with the mandate of the Board, while one respondent disagreed.

Figure 9

Overview of feedback from Member States on the adequacy of the preparation for the first session of 2022 of the Executive Board



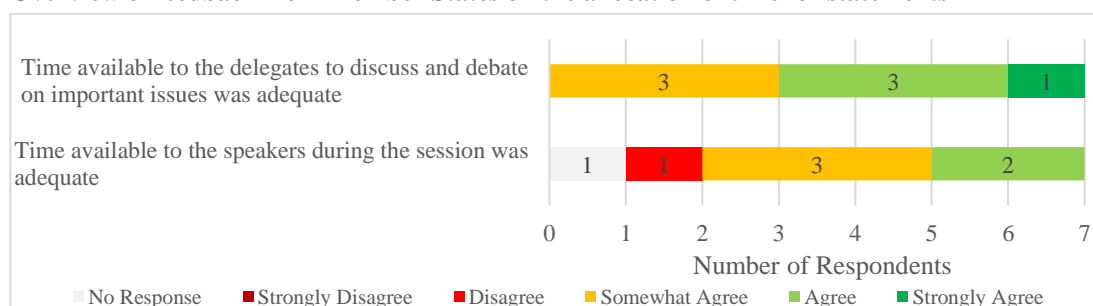
Question: How efficient was the management of time allocated for statements during the first session of the Executive Board for the year 2022, including Group and National Statements?

46. All seven respondents agreed that the time available to the delegates to discuss and debate on important issues was adequate. Among them, one opted for “strongly agree”, three for “agree” and another three for “somewhat agree”

47. A majority of the respondents agreed to some extent that time allocated to the speaker during the session was adequate. Among them, two opted for “agree” and three for “somewhat agree”. It is important to note that one respondent disagreed with the statement. One respondent did not answer the question.

Figure 10

Overview of feedback from Member States on the allocation of time for statements



Question: Please suggest on how time management of Executive Board sessions can be improved?

48. An open-ended question was asked to the respondents on how time management of the Executive Board session could be improved, one respondent suggested that increasing the number of days of the sessions of the Executive Board to three instead of two would provide adequate time for discussion and debate. Other respondents suggested that the sessions of the Executive Board should try to stick to the items listed in the provisional agenda and should not discuss matters that could be under the umbrella of other United Nations entities' jurisdictions.

Question: Based on your views of the 2022 first session of the Board, give suggestions on how the Executive Director and Secretariat could better support Member States to ensure their active and substantive engagement during the sessions of the Executive Board.

49. This was a multiple-choice question where the respondents could make multiple selections from the given options as part of their answers. This question also had a section to provide the respondent's subjective views.

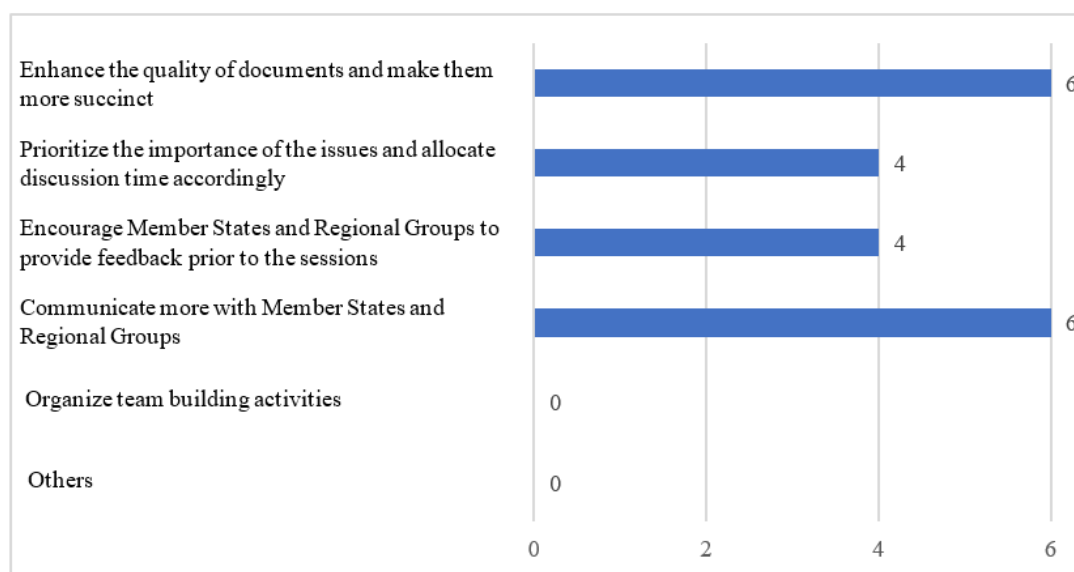
50. Six out of seven respondents answered the question. Six respondents suggested that the Executive Director and Secretariat could better support Member States to ensure their active and substantive engagement during the sessions of the Executive Board by:

- (a) enhancing the quality of documents and making them more succinct. (six respondents)
- (b) prioritizing the importance of the issues and allocating discussion time accordingly and encouraging Member States and Regional Groups to provide feedback prior to sessions (four respondents).
- (c) encouraging Member States and Regional Groups to provide feedback prior to sessions (four respondents)
- (d) communicating more often with Member States and Regional Groups (six respondents)

Other than the given options, respondents did not provide any additional suggestion.

Figure 11

Overview of suggestions provided by the respondents on ways in which the Executive Director and the secretariat could better support Member States



F. Other questions on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Executive Board

Question: What measures can the Executive Board consider to improve its effectiveness?

51. None of the seven respondents provided an answer to this question.

Question: What other comments would you like to make about the Executive Board?

52. Only one response was received for the question. The respondent indicated that the 2022 first session of the Executive Board was a good session and suggested that all pre-session documents presented to the Executive Board should be transmitted to Member States in a timely manner.

IV. Summary of key findings

A. Alignment of the functions and competence of the Executive Board with the provisional agenda of the sessions of the Board

53. All seven respondents gave their opinion on how well aligned the agenda for each session of the Executive Board is to its functions and competence of strengthening the accountability and transparency of UN-Habitat and in providing an effective oversight mechanism for the Programme to enhance its normative and operational activities as follows:

54. 71 percent of the respondents (five out of seven) agreed and 29 percent (two) partially agreed that the Executive Board's functions and competence are clearly understood and consistently adhered to;

55. While six respondents agreed that the agenda for each session was well aligned with the functions and competence of the Executive Board, one partially agreed;
56. Of the seven respondents, five respondents agreed and two partially agreed that the provisional agenda is clearly communicated to members of the Executive Board for their input before being finalized;
57. Of the seven respondents, five respondents agreed and two partially that the Executive Board Bureau is flexible and responsive in the planning process of the provisional agenda of the Executive Board, thus fulfilling its oversight role;
58. Four respondents agreed and three partially agreed that the Executive Board should review its decision 2019/ 4, by which it decided upon certain agenda items that should be included on the provisional agenda for consideration by the Board at certain sessions.
59. A respondent, additionally, suggested that the functions of the Executive Board would benefit being better known by Members States through framing remarks at the opening of each session of the Executive Board.
60. Six of seven respondents provided their suggestion on how secretariat may help Member States and their Delegation better understand the functions and competence of the Executive Board. The responses clearly showed the Member States and their Delegation are open for learning and capacity building efforts. Four of seven respondents believed that ‘orientations’, ‘refresher/follow-up sessions’ and ‘briefing papers’ can be the effective ways to support Member States and their delegation to understand the functions and competence of the Executive Board. The two respondents suggested (two of six) to organize more training courses, capacity-building sessions and regular briefings for the members of the Executive Board.
61. Two of the seven respondents provided suggestions on how the process of drafting the provisional agenda for sessions of the Executive Board could be improved. The suggestions provided included the following:
- (a) Adopting at the end of each session the agenda of the next session does not provide enough flexibility for the Executive Board. The Bureau of the Executive Board should recommend the provisional agenda for the next session agenda a few weeks before the session and the provisional agenda can then be shared with Member States through a no-objection procedure / silent procedure and/or through regional groups consultations.
 - (b) Prioritizing the important items of the provisional agenda and focusing on the most important items only.

B. Quality and usefulness of the pre-session documents

62. Overall, a majority of the respondents agreed that the pre-session documents in terms of timing, accessibility, content and length were useful in helping delegates to prepare adequately for sessions of the Executive Board.
63. Five respondents agreed and two partially agreed that the timely submission and distribution of pre-session documents, in accordance with rule 6 of the rules of procedure of the Executive Board (in all official languages no less than four weeks before the date of the opening meeting of a session), is adequate;
64. Two respondents strongly agreed and two partially agreed that the pre-session documents for the first session of 2022 were easily accessible to the members of the Executive Board in a timely manner;
65. Of the seven respondents, six agreed that the guidance of the General Assembly on the limit of 8,500 words for pre-session documents is sufficient, with the exception of certain specific documents, such as the annual work programme and budget and the strategic plan; while one partially agreed with the statement;
66. Four respondents agreed that the documents submitted to the Executive Board at its first session of 2022 were generally informative and content-focused;
67. A majority of the respondents (six out of seven) agreed that sharing presentations prepared by the Executive Director and the secretariat with members in advance of sessions of the Executive Board would result in effective and active participation during the discussion of agenda items.
68. When asked to provide the suggestion on how the pre-session documents could be improved, a respondent suggested that the Secretariat should try to equally balance between the two sessions of the

Executive Board being held each year and the pre-session documents presented for consideration by the Board, in order to reduce the number and length of each pre-session document as much as possible. The same respondent suggested that a maximum of six pre-session documents should be presented to the Executive Board at each session, including information documents.

C. Pre-session briefing by the Executive Director

69. The survey showed that almost all the respondents (six out of seven) found the Executive Director's pre-session briefing which takes place two weeks prior to each session as provided for under rule 6.10 of the rules of procedure "extremely helpful".

70. With respect to the pre-session briefing by the Executive Director, respondents provided their views and ideas on how Executive Director's pre-session briefing can be improved as follows:

(a) Secretariat could share the Executive Director's presentation for the briefing prior to the briefing. This will give the opportunity to the Executive Director to focus only on the key challenges to be addressed at the upcoming Executive Board session and brief Member States accordingly;

(b) The Executive Director's pre-session briefing should be held earlier than 2 weeks prior to the session of the Executive Board or the background documents supporting the briefing by the Executive Director should be sent to Member States in advance prior to the briefing;

(c) The briefing should be more interactive in its format.

D. Number of sessions per year of the Executive Board

71. Based on the experience of the years 2020 and 2021, four respondents, which represents 57 per cent of the respondents, said that meeting twice a year was adequate to cover necessary agenda items and relevant matters. Two respondents indicated that two Executive Board sessions per annum was the most appropriate option. Furthermore, a respondent emphasized that two sessions per year are enough to discuss on management and budget issues. Two of the respondents indicated that three sessions per year would be enough to cover the necessary agenda items and other relevant matters for discussion. Another respondent mentioned that the number of days, either two or three, depends on the length of the agenda items. It should be the Bureau to decide and the Member State to agree through silent procedure or regional groups consultation.

72. When asked to indicate the preferred month for the Executive Board session to be held, three respondents provided the suggestions. Among the suggestions on when during the year, the Executive Board sessions should take place, included: in April and November, in June and at end of January, in March and in September or October

73. Based on the experience of 2022 first session of the Executive Board, respondents were asked if allocating three days for the session was adequate. A majority of the respondents (six out of seven) said that three days were adequate to discuss necessary agenda items and other relevant matters. As a response to an open-ended question, respondents also provided their opinions on the required number of days. Among the responses received (two), a respondent mentioned that three days should be allocated for the sessions of the Executive Board as two days may not be adequate to cover all agenda items. One respondent indicated that one day for a session of the Executive Board would be adequate, in order to save time and cost.

E. Preparations and implementation of the first session of 2022 of the Executive Board

74. This section of the questionnaire focused on the hybrid format of the first session of 2022; the adequacy of preparations for the session, including meetings of the ad hoc working groups of the Executive Board and informal consultations on the draft decisions of the session; and the time allocated for statements. Respondents were invited to evaluate the hybrid format and its possible application to future sessions of the Executive Board and to make comments and suggestions on each of the topics covered under this section of the questionnaire.

75. Three of the seven respondents agreed and one respondent partially agreed that the hybrid format, with a combination of in-person participation and participants connecting to the meeting remotely, produced a successful outcome to the first session of 2022. However, it is important to note that one respondent disagreed;

76. Of the seven respondents, four agreed and two partially agreed that the hybrid format put remote participants at a disadvantage, as some struggled to have their voices heard or experienced technical issues that rendered their participation less active, while one respondent disagreed;
77. Three respondents agreed and three respondents partially agreed that the hybrid format was a less conducive format for complex discussions, such as those involving negotiating and making decisions on resolutions, one respondent disagree with the statement;
78. A majority of the respondents (five of seven) agreed and two respondents partially agreed that the hybrid format was successful, but they commented on having missed seeing the body language and facial reactions of the participants who were connected remotely;
79. Based on the above data, it can be perceived that the hybrid format is not preferred to some extent.
80. Two of seven respondents recommended the “hybrid” format for future Executive Board session while other two respondents recommended “fully in person” format. Three respondents did not answer the question. Hence, a conclusion could not be drawn regarding which format is most preferred.
81. Respondents provided feedback on the preparations for the 2022 first session of the Executive Board, including meetings of the ad hoc working groups and informal consultations on draft decisions as follows:
- (a) Of the seven respondents four agreed and one partially agreed that the number of informal consultations on draft outcomes and decisions considered by the Executive Board at its first session of 2022 was adequate;
 - (b) A majority of the respondents (five out of seven) agreed and two partially agreed that the time allocated to informal consultations on draft outcomes considered by the Executive Board at its first session of 2022 during the session itself was adequate;
 - (c) Three respondents agreed and two partially agreed the delegates discussed openly, stimulating inclusive debate and dialogue on substantive items that resulted in outcome decisions, while a respondent strongly disagreed;
 - (d) A majority of the respondents (five out of seven) agreed and one partially agreed that the draft decisions and technical inputs prepared for the consideration of the Executive Board were manageable and in line with the mandate of the Board, while one respondent disagreed.
82. Respondents provided the feedback on the efficiency of the time allocation during the first session of 2022 Executive Board as follows:
- (a) Of the seven respondents, four agreed and three partially agreed that the time available to the delegates to discuss and debate on important issues was adequate.
 - (b) Two respondents agreed and three partially agreed that the time available to the speaker during the session was adequate.
83. An open-ended question was asked to the respondents on how time management could be improved, one respondent suggested that increasing the number of days of the sessions of the Executive Board to three instead of two would provide an adequate time for discussion and debate. Other respondents suggested that the sessions of the Executive Board should try to stick to the items listed in the provisional agenda and should not discuss matters that could be under the umbrella of other United Nations entities’ jurisdictions.
84. A total of six respondents provided their feedback on how the Executive Director and Secretariat could better support Member States to ensure their active and substantive engagement during the sessions by:
- (a) enhancing the quality of documents and making them more succinct. (Six respondents)
 - (b) prioritizing the importance of the issues and allocating discussion time accordingly’ and encouraging Member States and Regional Groups to provide feedback prior to sessions (Four respondents).
 - (c) encouraging Member States and Regional Groups to provide feedback prior to sessions (Four respondents)
 - (d) communicating more often with Member States and Regional Groups (Six respondents)

F. Other questions on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the Executive Board

85. No proposals were made by respondents with a view to improving the effectiveness of the Executive Board.

86. In response to the question on ways in which the Executive Director and the secretariat could better support Member States and promote their active and substantive engagement in sessions of the Executive Board, one respondent suggested that all pre-session documents presented to the Executive Board should be conveyed to Member States in a timely manner and also added that the 2022 first session of the Executive Board was good.

V. Conclusion

87. The survey was conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the first session of the 2022 Executive Board of UN-Habitat, with a view to further improve the process and outcome of future sessions, going forward.

88. The response rate to the survey was 6.7 per cent, with seven responses received from the 103 Member States eligible to respond.

89. The results showed that, overall, the functions and competence of the Executive Board are viewed as being aligned with the provisional agenda of the sessions of the Board, guided by its Bureau. The results further showed that the Executive Board could prioritize the review of its Decision 2019/4, which pre-determines what agenda items must be covered at each session.

90. The secretariat is considered to be adhering strongly to the rules of procedure that guide the provision of pre-session documents in terms of timing, accessibility, content and length. This is a key factor in ensuring active participation by delegations, resulting in informed decision-making that supports programme delivery by UN-Habitat.

91. There is also an indication that the members are open to learning and suggested various ways such as orientations, refresher and follow-up sessions, briefing papers and trainings to be effective ways to support Member States and their delegation, to understand the functions and competence of the Executive Board.

92. Briefings by the Executive Director are viewed as informative and respondents felt that it should remain an active tool of dialogue. Few suggestions such as providing Executive Director's presentation prior to the briefing, providing heads up on key challenges to be addressed at the Executive Board session and making the briefing more interactive could add value.

93. With regards to the number of sessions that the Executive Board should hold each year, the appropriate month for the session and the meeting format (in-person, online or hybrid), the survey revealed a broad range of views. With the limited data received, it can be perceived that the hybrid format was not preferred to some extent. A majority of the respondents agreed that holding the session of the Executive Board over three days was adequate.

94. A suggestion to enhance the quality of documents and making them more succinct could be useful to better support Member States' engagement in the sessions of the Executive Board. Consultations between the Secretariat and the Regional Groups was also suggested as a way to support Member States' engagement.

95. The secretariat very much appreciates the time and effort invested by the delegates who responded to the survey. The responses and comments provided have provided valuable insight. In view of the response rate, the secretariat acknowledges that many delegates have not yet voiced their opinions and, on that basis, it will continue to seek the views of all delegations with a view to introducing further improvements into the Executive Board process.
