

Evaluation of the Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative

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Front cover illustration: Extract from the Open UN-Habitat portal visualizing a summary of projects implemented in the Asia region as of July 2016.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CPR	Council of Permanent Representatives
Dfid	Department for International Development
EA	Expected Accomplishment
GAVI	Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation
GC	Governing Council
HAP	Habitat Agenda Partners
HQ	Headquarters
IATI	International Aid Transparency Initiative
JPO	Junior Professional Officer
KM	Knowledge Management
MTSIP	Medium-Term Strategic and Institutional Plan
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PAAS	Project Accrual and Accountability System
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
TAG	Technical Advisory Group
TOR	Terms of Reference
UK	United Kingdom
UNCHS	United Nations Commission on Human Settlements
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UN-Habitat	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
USA	United States of America
USD	United States Dollar

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

1. This evaluation provides a forward-looking appraisal of the UN-Habitat's operational experience, achievements, opportunities and challenges related to the Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative. Lessons from the evaluation findings are expected to help inform decisions in the implementation of UN-Habitat's knowledge management strategy; in planning and designing other knowledge management activities, adjusting and correcting management strategies as appropriate, exploiting opportunities, and generating credible value for targeted stakeholders and beneficiaries, while addressing global aid accountability priorities.
2. This evaluation is mandated and commissioned by UN-Habitat through its Cooperation Agreement with Sweden to Support the Implementation of the UN-Habitat Institutional and Strategic Plans (2012-2015). It will feed into a forthcoming overall evaluation of the Cooperation Agreement.
3. The Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative is part of a UN-Habitat process of change initiated in 2011 to strengthen its transparency, accountability, productivity and efficiency as well as credibility and visibility. UN-Habitat is expected to be able to show donors, partners and the public where and with whom the agency is working, the decisions taken, as well as the funding and reporting related to each project implemented or supported by UN-Habitat.
4. The implementation strategy is to publish International Aid Transparency Initiative data and create an Open UN-Habitat web portal through an information management system integrated into the existing UN-Habitat Project Accrual and Accountability System (PAAS) database.
5. Specifically, the project has four expected accomplishments:
 - i. Increased public trust and discourse/interaction with the organization;
 - ii. Increased productivity within the organization;
 - iii. Increased credibility with donors and partners;
 - iv. Renewed reputation for UN-Habitat as a leader in the global call for aid transparency

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

6. As per the Terms of Reference (Annex 1), the approach and methodology of this evaluation, conducted during the period August through November of 2015, involved three key activities: review of relevant documents, surveys of relevant target audiences, and key informant interviews. Information gathering focused on questions subsumed under the five evaluation rubrics specified in the TOR: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impacts, and sustainability.
7. Document review was useful for understanding such aspects as context, stakeholder roles, activities, and expenditures. Annex 2 presents the list of documents reviewed.
8. Online surveys gathered primarily quantitative information. The stakeholder groups included UN-Habitat staff stationed at headquarters in Nairobi and in regional or liaison offices, as well as donors, members of the IATI Technical Advisory Group (TAG), implementing partners, and representatives from national governments, and international organizations. Far most of the UN-Habitat staff who participated in the survey were stationed in Nairobi.
9. Compared to "others," UN-Habitat staff slightly more often have not heard of the initiative (34%) or do not know much about it (47%), and fewer of them have worked with the data (8%) or been involved in the development of the initiative (11%).
10. All interviewees were actively engaged with matters related to transparency and accountability. Those outside UN-Habitat had not been involved

in development or implementation of Open UN-Habitat, but were knowledgeable about it and all were centrally involved in IATI activities or decision making regarding aid allocation.¹

11. Limitations of this evaluation stem from: (1) absence of certain data; and (2) the difficulty of making definitive causal claims. The first constraint was mitigated by triangulation and exploring patterns in the findings. The second limiting condition was addressed by exploring the initiative as a contributing factor in a larger theory of change model.

FINDINGS

12. The Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative is timely and highly relevant to current trends. The initiative is seen to be supportive of international aid trends and priorities. Open UN-Habitat is anchored in recent strategic documents in which the agency explicitly assigns it a significant role. Survey respondents and interviewees also see the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative as supportive of the needs of donors, partners, beneficiaries and UN-Habitat staff.²
13. Respondents divided on whether the agency's institutional arrangements were adequate for implementation of the transparency initiative. "Lack of leadership and strategic support" were the most significant challenges mentioned by staff. Also work culture was seen as having affected the initiative.
14. UN-Habitat worked with expert partners and forged effective collaborations with organizations that take an active interest in the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative and regard it in glowing terms. Quantitative usage of the web portal seems low.
15. Most UN-Habitat staff indicate that the initiative has had no effect on internal communication within the agency.
16. Learnings from the initiative's implementation relate to gaining greater understandings about the transparency movement in general and its place within UN-Habitat in particular.
17. This evaluation found it difficult to develop an informed assessment of the initiative's cost-effectiveness. Figures for available funds, approved funds and expenditures are not consistent, and no benchmarks or criteria exist.
18. The Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative can be seen within a theory of change that proposes a chain of relationships intended to produce intended outcomes. It assumes that greater transparency, including the publication of open data, will lead to greater awareness and usage of public data regarding UN-Habitat project budgets, activities and results. It further assumes that this will lead to greater accountability, translating into greater public trust, enhanced reputation, and heightened credibility with donors. This in turn, is assumed to result in more funding to support expansion of project work producing assumedly beneficial outcomes for partners and end users, connecting back to transparency and reinforcing trust, credibility and reputation in a continuous feedback loop
19. While the model is persuasive, it is early to make an evidence-based assessment of it. Implementation will require systemic action across the agency, involving behavioral, cultural, procedural and organizational adjustments as proposed in the Recommendations.
20. This evaluation found two different views regarding the adequacy of the data currently accessible on the Open UN-Habitat web portal. Both views concur in their assessment that the data are of high quality. However, beyond this agreement, views differ on whether additional data, beyond the IATI standard, should be included.
21. There is a widespread perception that Open UN-Habitat has positively affected transparency and that the initiative is supportive of UN-Habitat's reputation as a leader in development aid transparency. Several organizations are using the Open UN-Habitat website platform.
22. Most staff reported "no effect" of the initiative on UN-Habitat's productivity.
23. It is still too early to determine whether the initiative will result in increased donor funding. However,

¹ Annex 3 includes the list of interviewees and Annex 5 contains the interview protocol.

² Annex 6 contains the full frequency distributions of survey responses in tabular form, and Annex 7 presents cross-tabulations of survey results comparing responses of UN-Habitat staff with responses of other stakeholders.

positive perceptions among donors and partners suggest favorable prospects.

24. Many external stakeholders see the initiative as having fostered partnerships with donors and partners.
25. UN-Habitat staff are divided on whether the initiative has helped build partnerships within the agency. They overwhelmingly support the initiative's stronger integration in the agency's activities, and increasing internal training and awareness.
26. The most frequent suggestion made by study participants for strengthening UN-Habitat transparency is the inclusion of additional data.
27. Many study participants want to learn more about the transparency initiative. Only a few of them see a risk to publishing open data.

CONCLUSIONS

28. Considerable investment has gone into the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative in terms of financial and human resources. Yet, the potential of these investments and the benefits of recognition do not seem to have been fully realized.
29. Indications clearly point to attainment of technical objectives. However, many UN-Habitat staff remain unaware of the website portal, and very few have used it.
30. Stakeholders see the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative as having advanced UN-Habitat's international standing in development aid transparency. The initiative is seen as being responsive to international aid trends and priorities. UN-Habitat is viewed as playing a leading role in the UN system.
31. Different views exist as to who the beneficiaries of the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative are or should be. These different views have different implications for the future of the initiative.
32. The transparency initiative is part of a broader causal model or theory of change. The initiative itself is insufficient to produce intended outcomes, but it is a necessary contributing factor as part of the larger

package. This evaluation found that effectiveness of the theory of change model underlying the Open UN-Habitat Initiative is hampered by several weak links related to usage, awareness, and adequacy of the open data, and outreach to relevant target audiences.

33. External stakeholders in particular point to limitations of the data, while offering suggestions for expansion beyond the IATI standard.
34. Many see it as UN-Habitat's responsibility to reach out to beneficiaries to promote awareness and usage of the data.
35. The absence of any information on gender and human rights suggests that these crosscutting issues were not considered as concrete concern in the initiative's implementation.
36. Several factors support the desirability and possibility of continuing the initiative. Investments in it have created positive potential. Relatively minor further investments will likely help realize this potential more fully. UN-Habitat has an opportunity to play a leading role in the United Nations system with the experience and ability to be a resource for sister agencies.

LESSONS LEARNED

37. The most important lesson emerging from this evaluation of Open UN-Habitat concerns the sequence of implementation. The emphasis to date has been chiefly on working out the technical aspects. Rather much less attention seems to have been given to the agency's organizational context and work culture within which the initiative is to be used. To be effective, a knowledge platform focused on sharing information needs careful attention to design, data, and organizational context, as well as communication and raising awareness about the platform.
38. The adoption of more transparent practices throughout the agency involves a culture change that requires a long-term approach and a supportive overall strategy. Effective implementation of such a strategy needs to benefit from being grounded in key documents regarding the disclosure and publishing of information, the conceptualization and

implementation of accountability, and knowledge management more broadly.

39. The evidence indicates UN-Habitat made rapid strides in improving transparency. The agency moved from lagging to leading. Development and implementation of Open UN-Habitat demonstrated a keen ability of managing the challenges, while realizing the advantages of being a small agency. UN-Habitat needs to consider how best to exploit this strategic organizational characteristic with wider benefits for the agency as a whole.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 40. Recommendation 1:** Formal and public endorsement of the initiative by senior management. Such validation will set a tone and offer a normative framework that will support actions and practices to strengthen transparency internally and in the field
- 41. Recommendation 2:** Establishing a Focal Point for transparency. This action would help ensure continuity of the initiative, assist in coordination of transparency-related activities, and provide a central point of contact.
- 42. Recommendation 3:** UN-Habitat should decide strategically how and how much to focus future transparency work internally and how much of it externally. This decision is not a binary one, but a matter of balance, which should be carefully informed by priorities and opportunity costs.
- 43. Recommendation 4:** UN-Habitat should strengthen weak links in the Theory of Change model and promote fuller integration of transparency in UN-Habitat's organizational culture and all aspects of its work.
- 44. Recommendation 5:** UN-Habitat should increase usage of the website portal within the agency and beyond. Greater awareness will promote usage,
- which will inform resource mobilization, which, in turn, will benefit consultation with donors, resulting in improved funding prospects.
- 45. Recommendation 6:** This evaluation found strong encouragement for actions that will enhance the value of the Open UN-Habitat portal. Actions that should be considered include:
- i. Increasing the number of published projects that contain documentation.
 - ii. Chunking large document files into smaller segments.
 - iii. Providing periodic project updates.
 - iv. Phasing in a requirement that implementing partners report to the IATI standard.
 - v. Introducing a functionality for feedback and interaction by beneficiaries and users.
 - vi. Including project concrete outcomes.
 - vii. Adding a whistle blower function.
 - viii. Establish valid and dependable monitoring of portal traffic.
 - ix. Explore including a search function for gender and human rights.
 - x. Explore a way to identify projects on a sub-national scale.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

46. As per the TOR (Annex 1), this evaluation provides UN-Habitat, its governing bodies and donors with an independent and forward-looking appraisal of the agency's operational experience, achievements, opportunities and challenges related to the Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative. Lessons from the evaluation findings are expected to help inform decisions in the implementation of UN-Habitat's knowledge management strategy; in planning and designing other knowledge management activities, adjusting and correcting management strategies as appropriate, exploiting opportunities, and generating credible value for targeted stakeholders and beneficiaries, while addressing global aid accountability priorities.
47. The evaluation is included in the 2014-2015 UN-Habitat Evaluation Plan and will synthesize achievements, results and lessons learned from the project. The sharing of findings from this evaluation will inform UN-Habitat and key stakeholders, including governing bodies, donors, partners, and Member States, on what was achieved and learned from the project.
48. Evaluation results will contribute to UN-Habitat's planning, reporting and accountability. The evaluation will also inform UN-Habitat management and Sida in shaping the new cooperation agreement between Sida and UN-Habitat for 2016-2019, while feeding back lessons into the design of knowledge management projects in UN-Habitat.

1.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

49. UN-Habitat is undertaking this evaluation of the initiative in order to assess to what extent the Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative has been useful and relevant, the extent to which the initiative's objectives and expected accomplishments were achieved, whether resources were used efficiently, as well as to assess the sustainability of the initiative.

Key objectives of evaluation are:

- i. To assess progress made towards the achievement of results at the outcome and outputs level of the project;
 - ii. To assess the relevance of supporting a transparent UN-Habitat that improves dialogue with the general public, donors and project countries by creating a 'open' web portal;
 - iii. To assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the project in achieving its expected results;
 - iv. To assess the ways in which the implementation of the Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative has worked out;
 - v. To assess how well management of the initiative, given its knowledge management focus, has learned from and adjusted to changes during implementation;
 - vi. To assess the extent to which cross-cutting issues of gender and human rights were integrated in the design, planning and implementation, reporting and monitoring of the initiative;
 - vii. To bring forward opportunities that indicate potential for long-term partnership between UN-Habitat and IATI and other UN agencies implementing similar transparency initiatives;
 - viii. To make recommendations on what needs to be done to effectively sustain UN-Habitat's knowledge management efforts towards improved transparency and accountability.
50. This evaluation's objectives fall into five interrelated categories, each associated with several key questions, as stated in the TOR:
- i. Relevance (includes consistency with UN-Habitat strategies and international aid trends, responsiveness to needs and priorities of target audiences).

- ii. Efficiency (includes institutional arrangement and management capacity for implementation of the initiative, obstacles and barriers faced, congruence between expected and actual accomplishments).
 - iii. Effectiveness (includes services provided to stakeholders, ownership of the initiative, incorporation of a theory of change, lessons learned, cost-effective delivery, and adequacy of resources).
 - iv. Impact (includes use by target audiences, outcomes for stakeholders).
 - v. Sustainability (includes Participation by stakeholders in design, implementation, monitoring and reporting, alignment with international aid priorities, changes in funding to UN-Habitat, effects on partnerships).
51. The Conclusion Section of this report contains a table with a summary evaluation of each of these criteria.

2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

2.1 MANDATE

52. The Cooperation Agreement between UN-Habitat and Sweden (2012-2015) to Support the Implementation of the UN-Habitat Medium-term Institutional and Strategic Plan (2008-2013) and UN-Habitat Strategic Plan (2014-2019) states that UN-Habitat is responsible for the monitoring, review and evaluation of activities supported under the Agreement as part of its programme management policies, operations and practice. The Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative was funded under this agreement. The present evaluation is thus mandated and commissioned by UN-Habitat in this context. It will feed into a forthcoming overall evaluation of the Cooperation Agreement.

2.2 THE OPEN UN-HABITAT TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE

53. The Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative is part of a UN-Habitat process of change initiated in 2011 to strengthen its transparency, accountability, productivity and efficiency as well as credibility and visibility. The overarching objective of the initiative is 'a transparent UN-Habitat that improves dialogue with the general public, donors and project countries.' The initiative is linked to two strategic entry points of the MTSIP:

- i. Focus area 6: Excellence in management (35 per cent): EA 1: Staff are empowered to achieve planned results; EA 2: Institution aligned to deliver MTSIP results; EA 3: Results-based management principles applied.
- ii. Focus area 1: Effective Advocacy, monitoring and partnerships for sustainable urbanization (65 per cent): EA 1: Improved awareness of sustainable urbanization issues at the national and global levels; EA 2: Habitat Agenda Partners (HAP) actively participate in the formulation of sustainable urbanization policy; EA 3: Monitoring of sustainable urbanization conditions and trends improved.

54. Through the creation of an Open UN-Habitat web portal, UN-Habitat is expected to be able to

show donors, partners and the public where and with whom the agency is working, the decisions taken, as well as the funding and reporting related to each project implemented or supported by UN-Habitat. Specifically, the project has four expected accomplishments:

- i. Increased public trust and discourse/interaction with the organization;
- ii. Increased productivity within the organization;
- iii. Increased credibility with donors and partners;
- iv. Renewed reputation for UN-Habitat as a leader in the global call for aid transparency—including greater debate and discussion around the UN-Habitat Agenda.

55. The initiative addresses the need for UN-Habitat to be more directly accountable to states and global citizens in response to growing international trends to make aid and funding flows more transparent across all global development organizations. It builds on the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), which aims to standardize all data provided by donors and agencies so that it is searchable through a single online portal. By November 27, 2015, IATI had 361 publishers, including Sweden, the United Kingdom, the USA, Canada, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Denmark, the European Commission, Japan, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN-Habitat, the World Bank, the African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Oxfam.

56. National aid donors are increasingly demanding that implementing organizations are signed up to the IATI standard. The UK's Department for International Development, for example, has made it a requirement for any funding, while other countries such as Sweden and The Netherlands have made aid transparency a priority (UN Transparency Working Group Background Document, not dated.)

57. The implementation strategy is to publish IATI data and create an Open UN-Habitat web portal through

the deployment of an information management system that integrated into the existing UN-Habitat Project Accrual and Accountability System (PAAS) database. During the first phase of the project, UN-Habitat uploaded documents from projects approved in 2012 and onwards. Phase two included backdating the database to include all projects that are currently managed by UN-Habitat. The Open UN-Habitat portal is also expected to play an important role in the new UN-Habitat website that will be developed in parallel with the implementation of the Advocacy, Outreach and Communication Strategy, 2012-2016.

58. The initiative was originally planned for 24 months from May 2012 to April 2014 for an amount of USD 773,910 of which USD 581,395 was funded by the donor, Sida, which also funded a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) from Sweden to work on the project. The project period was subsequently revised to 48 months from January 2012 to December 2015, in accordance with the Cooperation Agreement between UN-Habitat and Sweden to Support the Implementation of the UN-Habitat Institutional and Strategic Plans, 2012-2015.
59. The project is supported jointly by the Office of Management (now Management and Operations Division) and the External Relations Division. The Management Office is responsible for the integration of the web portal with the PAAS, accounting for 35 per cent of the project, while the Advocacy, Outreach and Communication Branch runs the web portal long term and handles communication, the public campaign, including the launch of the website and IATI publishing, accounting for the remaining 65% of the overall project.
60. It was anticipated that three full time staff members would be needed during the design and startup phase. To manage the system when fully developed, one full time staff member would be required.
61. The Project Office (Programme Division) was to be consulted throughout the project and has an advisory role to play in regard to integration of project documents into the PAAS and the web portal.
62. As per the TOR (Annex 1), the approach and methodology of this evaluation, conducted during the period August through November of 2015, involved three key activities: review of relevant documents, surveys of relevant target audiences, and key informant interviews. Each of these three methods is described below.

3. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 DOCUMENT REVIEW

63. Document review is useful for understanding such aspects as context, stakeholder roles, activities, and expenditures. For the purpose of this evaluation, it included assessing the following documents:

- i. Original project documents and implementation plans;
- ii. Annual Workplan;
- iii. Monitoring Reports;
- iv. Reviews;
- v. Donor reports and evaluations;
- vi. Strategic plans, as deemed relevant, such as Medium-Term Strategic and Institutional Plan and Strategic Plan (MTSIP), and other relevant UN-Habitat policy documents, in particular on knowledge management;
- vii. Outreach and communication material on the Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative.

Annex 2 presents the list of documents reviewed.

3.2 SURVEYS

64. Surveys were carried out to gather primarily quantitative information from relevant stakeholders. The stakeholder groups included UN-Habitat staff stationed at HQ in Nairobi and in regional or liaison offices, as well as donors, members of the IATI Technical Advisory Group (TAG), implementing partners, and representatives from national governments, and international organizations.

65. The surveys were conducted online, using an initial invitation by email, followed by two reminders spaced about one week apart. Data were collected and analyzed with Qualtrics, an industry-leading provider of online survey software. Data will be

transmitted to UN-Habitat's Evaluation Unit in a user-friendly format for possible future use.

66. The full survey comprised twelve survey questions, several of them with more specific sub-questions. Questions were mostly closed-ended with a limited number of response categories in order to enable quantification, but respondents were given ample opportunities to add open-ended comments related to the issues asked about.

67. The initial questions gathered basic background about the respondents and their level of familiarity with the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative, particularly the website portal available on <http://open.unhabitat.org/>. If respondents indicated they had never before heard of the initiative, they were asked a few more questions before exiting the survey. For respondents with at least limited knowledge of the initiative, subsequent questions asked about perceptions related to the five evaluation rubrics of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impacts and sustainability of the initiative.

68. Lists with email addresses of relevant stakeholders were provided by UN-Habitat's Evaluation Unit. These lists included UN-Habitat staff headquartered in Nairobi and outposted in regional and liaison offices and National Program Managers. Another list of stakeholders, broadly designated as "other," included representatives of national governments, and international organizations, donors, implementing partners, and members of the IATI TAG. Further, a list with the email addresses of registered publishers on the IATI website was created and used as well. An announcement of the survey was also posted on the IATI listserv.

69. Lastly, the survey also relied on two lists targeting specifically selected implementing partners of UN-Habitat projects and selected sponsors of projects included on the Open UN-Habitat website. In summary, the survey used the following sources for respondents:

- i. Selected UN-Habitat staff in Nairobi and outposted;

- ii. Selected representatives of national governments and international organizations, implementing partners, donors, and members of the IATI TAG;
- iii. All publishers with email addresses registered on the IATI website; and
- iv. Subscribers to the IATI listserv.

Response Rate

70. In total, 39 UN-Habitat staff participated in the survey out of 87 potential UN-Habitat respondents identified by the Evaluation Unit, giving a respectable response rate of 45%. There were another 68 respondents from other stakeholder groups (henceforth “Others”). A response rate cannot be calculated for them because the size of the populations they represent is not known. The overall number of respondents (N=107) is more than adequate to allow for quantitative presentation of findings, supplemented by insightful qualitative comments. Not all respondents answered all questions, so that the number of responses varies by question.

Respondent Characteristics

71. Among the 39 UN-Habitat staff members who participated in the survey, 31 were headquartered in Nairobi.³ “Other” respondents numbered 68 of whom several indicated more than one professional identity. Predominant among them were implementing partners (N=23) and representatives of international organizations (e.g., UNDP, UNEP; N=13), followed by members of the IATI TAG with 11 survey participants, and representatives of national governments (N=10). See Figure 1 for further details.

Geographic Distribution

72. Geographic distribution by continent of residence is shown in Figure 2.
73. Familiarity with the Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative UN-Habitat staff and “Others” differ in their level of familiarity with the Open UN-Habitat Transparency

initiative. UN-Habitat staff include a slightly larger number who have not heard of the initiative (34%) or do not know much about it (47%), and a somewhat smaller number who have worked with the data (8%) or have been involved in the development of the initiative (11%), as compared to respondents among “Others” (see Table 1).

3.3 KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

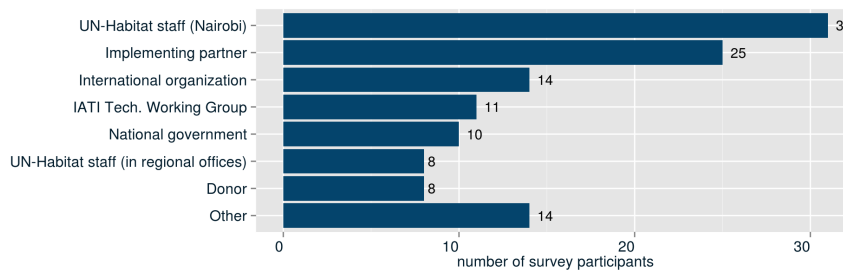
74. The document review and preliminary survey findings helped inform semi-structured interviews with nine key informants, selected in consultation with the Evaluation Unit, including UN-Habitat staff in Nairobi and representatives of Sida, the IATI TAG, and partner organizations. Key informant interviews are the most effective method for collecting in-depth qualitative information, e.g., exploring what worked well, what did not, and why. All interviewees were actively engaged with matters related to transparency and accountability. Those outside UN-Habitat had not been involved in development or implementation of Open UN-Habitat, but were knowledgeable about it and all were centrally involved in IATI activities or decision making regarding aid allocation. The sequenced data collection enhanced the value of the interviews and contextualized the content of interviewee responses against the background of preliminary survey responses. Annex 3 includes the list of interviewees.
75. The interview protocol comprised a series of open-ended questions focused on aspects of the five evaluation rubrics referenced previously (see Annex 5). Interviews were conducted via skype or web ex and were confidential in nature so that this report does not identify interviewees with their responses.
76. The evaluation covers the initiative from its start in May 2012 through June 2015. As per the TOR, this evaluation’s chief focus is on the achievement of expected accomplishments and advice on the initiative’s future. The work proceeded in stages as outlined in Annex 4.

3.4 LIMITATIONS

77. Limitations of this evaluation stem from two main conditions that are common for this type of project. The first of these conditions is the lack of availability of certain data. For example, the scarcity of baseline data hinders the drawing of conclusions that would

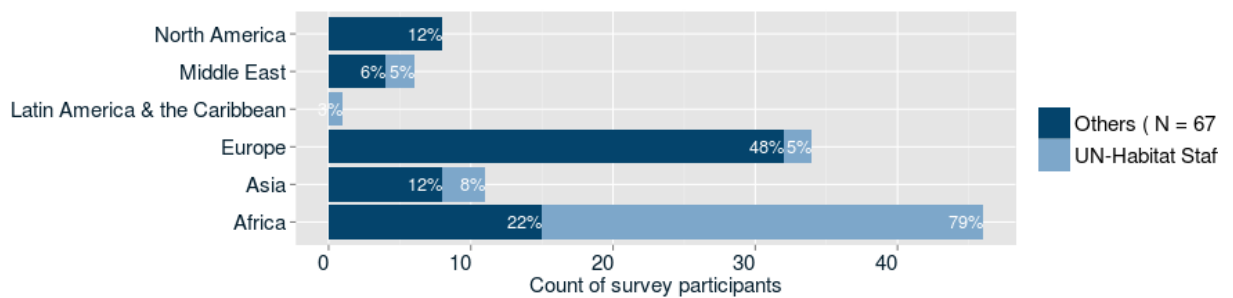
³ This evaluation compared the responses of outposted staff to those of staff stationed at HQ. There was some indication of more critical responses among the former, but for each question the numbers were too small to be reliable. Therefore, these results are not reported.

FIGURE 1: Professional Identifications of Survey Respondents (N=107)*



* Total number exceeds 107 because some respondents indicated more than one professional identification.

FIGURE 2: Survey Respondents by Continent of Residence



unequivocally show changes between the start of the initiative and its completion. Further, the paucity of benchmarks makes it difficult to draw comparative conclusions. Other data limitations relate to, for example, limited information on usage of the Open UN-Habitat web portal. It is also important to keep in mind that the absolute numbers reported here are small and minor differences may produce large but not necessarily meaningful percentage shifts.

78. As per the TOR, a key objective of this evaluation was to “assess the extent to which cross-cutting issues of gender and human rights were integrated in the design, planning and implementation, reporting

and monitoring of the Open UN-Habitat initiative. The absence of any information on these points prevented an assessment of them as intended.

79. The aforementioned constraints were significantly mitigated by triangulation, using survey data in combination with information from the interviews. Data limitations were also addressed by exploring patterns in the data that consistently pointed to particular findings.

80. No information was available to sample crosscheck portal entries against other UN-Habitat data bases. However, the portal was checked for information

TABLE 1: Respondents’ Level of Familiarity with the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative

	UN-Habitat Staff	Others
Never heard of it	34%	32%
Heard of it but don’t know much about it	47%	41%
Have used the data on the web portal for my work	8%	15%
Was involved in development of the initiative	11%	13%
N	39	68

regarding the availability of additional documentation and the reporting of project outcomes, using an especially written computer script to obtain information for all of the portal entries.

81. A second limiting condition concerns the difficulty of making definitive causal claims regarding the initiative, which was implemented non-experimentally in a larger complex dynamic with a broad set of internal and external elements. Therefore, rather than determining cause-effect relationships, this evaluation sought to identify contributing influences. Instead of seeking to measure the extent to which the initiative caused certain impacts, it is oriented to establishing whether and how it has contributed to observed outcomes.
82. As recommended by UNEG, the document review, surveys and interviews undertaken for this evaluation produced information that triangulates the questions asked and forms the basis for the findings presented next. The presentation of findings is organized into the five rubrics guiding this evaluation (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impacts, and sustainability), each oriented to the criteria they subsume and including attention to achievements and challenges. Annex 6 contains the full frequency distributions of survey responses in tabular form, and Annex 7 presents cross-tabulations of survey results comparing responses of UN-Habitat staff with responses of other stakeholders. The most important results are included in the body of this evaluation report.

4. FINDINGS

4.1 RELEVANCE

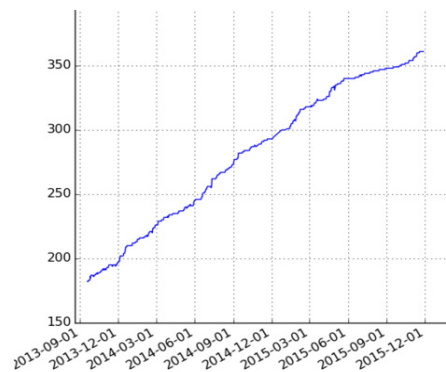
83. The TOR identifies several questions related to the relevance of the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative:

- i. To what extent are the objectives and implementation strategy of the initiative consistent with UN-Habitat’s strategies and the requirements of stakeholders and beneficiaries (UN-Habitat staff, donors, partners, global citizens)?
- ii. To what extent is the initiative responsive to the UN-Habitat’s MTSIP and Strategic Plan?
- iii. To what extent are the initiative’s intended outputs and outcomes consistent with international aid trends and priorities, and the needs of target stakeholders and beneficiaries?

84. Observations regarding these questions are possible on several levels. To begin with, Open UN-Habitat must be seen in the larger context of trends in development aid internationally. In this context, aspects of transparency and accountability have become increasingly important. Prominent benchmarks in this trend are the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005), the Accra Agenda for Action (2008), and the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (2011), leading to the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation as an evidence-based framework to support regular monitoring of progress in implementation of the commitments made in Busan.

85. Important in this regard is also the requirement or expectation of donor countries such as the U.K., Sweden, and the Netherlands that open data be published according to the standard developed by the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI). UN-Habitat signed up in 2011 and in September 2012, it was the fourth UN agency to publish open data to IATI and the 28th IATI member.⁴ The number of organizations publishing open data included in the IATI registry continues to grow rapidly (Figure 3), reaching 361 in November 2015. It is very clear, therefore, that seen against this background the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative is timely and highly relevant to current trends.

FIGURE 3: Growth in IATI Publishers 2013-2015

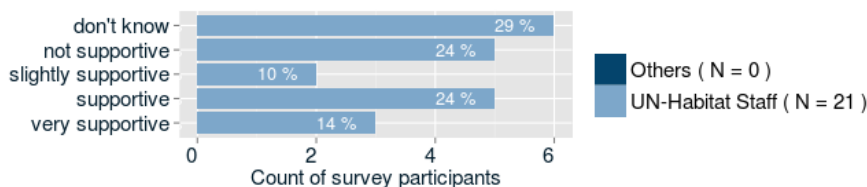


Source: <http://dashboard.iatistandard.org/publishers.html>

86. This observation is confirmed by the survey findings. For example, the number of UN-Habitat respondents who see the initiative as supporting UN-Habitat

4 Other early UN members were UNOPS, UNDP, and UNCDF. See IATI Annual Reports for 2013 (p.96) and 2014 (p. 134) and <http://www.aidtransparency.net/news/unhabitat-become-28th-donor-to-sign-iati#sthash.KIQnYVCz.dpuf>

FIGURE 4: To what extent is the Open UN-Habitat initiative supportive of UN-Habitat strategies?



strategies is twice that of those who do not view the initiative as supportive (Figure 4).

87. An important finding is also that Open UN-Habitat is anchored in recent strategic documents in which the agency explicitly assigns it a significant role. The 2016-2017 Work Programme and Budget, approved by the Governing Council (GC), specifies enhanced transparency and ethical management as an expected accomplishment for the agency. In 2015, with 100% of UN-Habitat projects included in the web portal, UN-Habitat has already met the specified target performance measure of 95% of projects reporting according to the IATI standard in 2016-2017. The percentage of 15% of implementing partners reporting is a target of achievement for 2016-2017. The work programme also calls for training and workshops to improve inter-institutional dialogue for accountability and transparency in urban governance and planning. In addition, the Knowledge Management Strategy identifies Open UN-Habitat as a tool to support the storing, sharing, and use of knowledge across the organizational learning cycle.

“In the future there will be some donors not giving funding if you’re not publishing to IATI. There’ll be more pressure and it will no longer be optional. This implies that UN-Habitat will be better prepared for the future.”

Interviewee

88. A large majority of survey respondents consider the initiative to be supportive of international aid trends and priorities. It is noteworthy that respondents representing other stakeholder groups clearly are even more positive in their opinion in this regard than UN-Habitat staff (Figure 5).
89. Consistent with these favorable opinions, respondents also perceive that the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative is supportive of the needs of donors, most of all, as well as partners (Figures 6 and 7). On this point, other stakeholders tend to be somewhat more affirmative than UN-Habitat staff.
90. In addition, somewhat less so but still convincingly, the initiative is seen as supportive of beneficiary needs. Other stakeholders more often report not having enough knowledge to be able to provide an answer on this point (Figure 8).

91. A further question, asked only of UN-Habitat staff, inquired if the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative is supportive of UN-Habitat staff needs. Once again, a clear majority confirm varying levels of support, with five respondents out of 21 saying they do not know enough to form an opinion (Figure 9).

92. **Summary assessment:** Performance is highly satisfactory. UN-Habitat went from lagging to leading in international development aid transparency. It was one of the first UN agencies to publish to IATI. It actively participates in the IATI Technical Advisory Group and chairs the UN Working Group on Transparency. The Open UN-Habitat data portal has been incorporated in key strategic documents of the agency, such as its approved 2016-2017 Work Programme and its KM Strategy. The initiative is fully consistent with international aid priorities as expressed through the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation and it is seen to support the needs of donors, partners, beneficiaries, and UN-Habitat staff.

4.2 EFFICIENCY

93. The TOR suggest several questions intended to gauge the efficiency of the Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative:
- i. Did the Project Management, the Office of Management, and the Advocacy, Outreach and Communication Branch have the capacity to design and implement the initiative?
 - ii. Were the institutional arrangements of UN-Habitat adequate? What type of obstacles did the initiative face and how has this affected the project?
 - iii. Did delays and other changes during implementation affect cost-effectiveness? UN-Habitat staff, but not other stakeholders, were asked whether the agency’s institutional arrangements were adequate for implementation of the transparency initiative. On this point, respondents divided between

“Lots of internal processes had to be set up before the website could function. We had to work across different divisions and that was tricky sometimes, but we ended up having a very good working relationship.”

Interviewee

FIGURE 5: To what extent is the Open UN-Habitat Initiative supportive of International trends and priorities (including the International Aid Transparency and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness)?

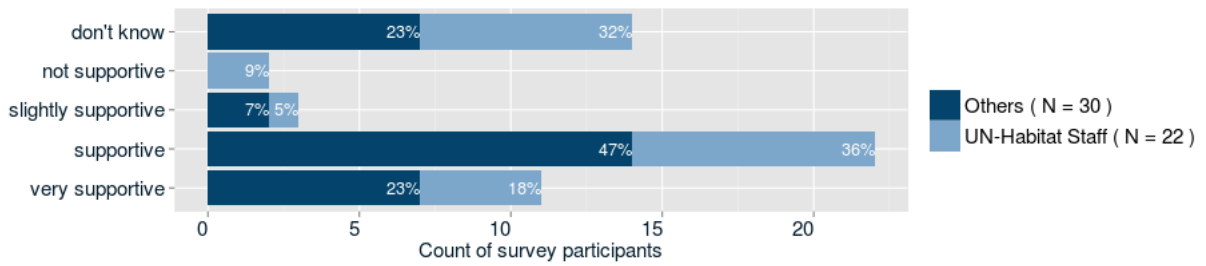


FIGURE 6: To what extent is the Open UN-Habitat Initiative supportive of needs of UN-Habitat donors?

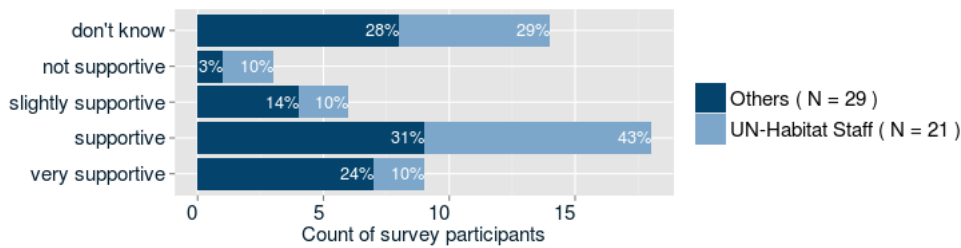


FIGURE 7: To what extent is the Open UN-Habitat Initiative supportive of needs of UN-Habitat partners?

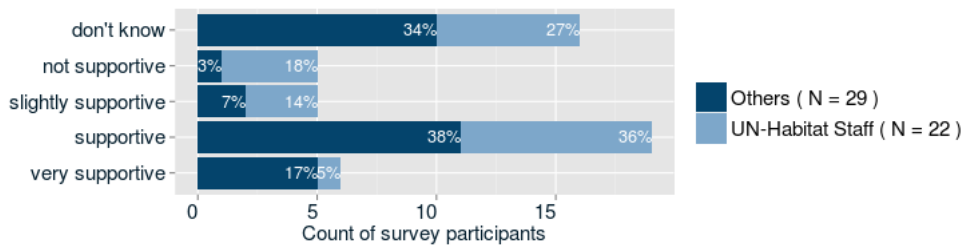


FIGURE 8: To what extent is the Open UN-Habitat Initiative supportive of needs of UN-Habitat beneficiaries?

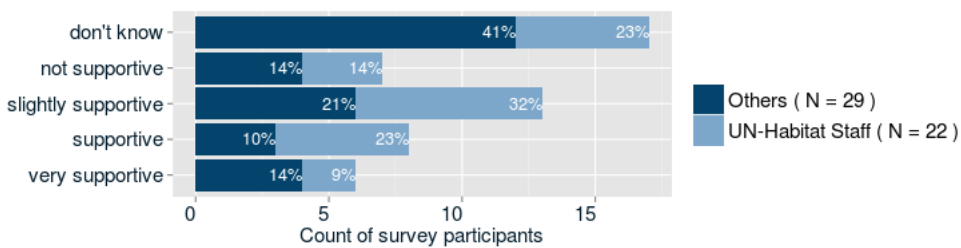


FIGURE 9: To what extent is the Open UN-Habitat Initiative supportive of needs of UN-Habitat staff?

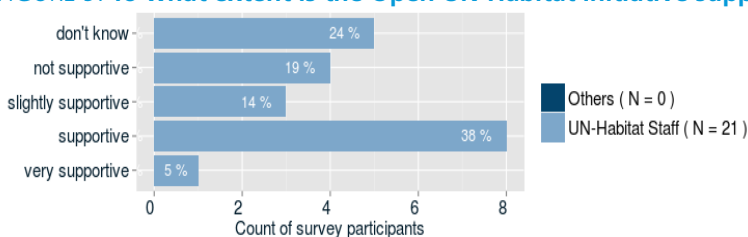
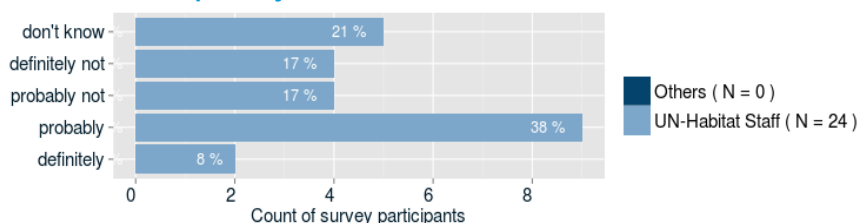


FIGURE 10: Are the agency's institutional arrangements adequate for implementation of the Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative?



11 who said “probably” or “definitely” and eight who indicated “probably not” or “definitely not” (Figure 10). The former cite PAAS and its seamless input into the web portal as a positive and the creation of a single overall project portfolio with regional offices and branches reporting quality data to a central point using uniform standards, whereas those less sanguine reference “lack of support from the top,” a “culture of secrecy,” and “insufficient staff and resources.”

94. Aspects of efficiency in the implementation also include various types of challenges faced in implementation of the initiative. Questions in this regards were asked only of UN-Habitat staff, since external stakeholders were not in a position to offer an informed judgment about what is foremost an internal matter. “Lack of leadership and strategic support” were the most significant challenges mentioned by staff, having affected the initiative “a great deal” (N=9) or “somewhat” (N=3). Only three staff members reported that these factors had “no effect at all,” while five respondents declined to answer for lack of knowledge on this point. Also work culture was seen as having affected the initiative “a great deal” (N=7) or “somewhat” (N=4), twice the number of those who said “not at all” (Figure 11).
95. Additional factors mentioned as having affected the initiative include, in order of decreasing frequency, administrative and managerial hurdles, delays, and financial hurdles, with almost one-half of participating staff reporting insufficient knowledge (Figure 11).
96. In order to enhance the quality of project information published on Open UN-Habitat, training has been

“I don’t believe funding has been a problem. I think the concern has been more about internal culture acceptance and knowledge.”

Interviewee

given to managers in all regions and at HQ as part of the PAAS training to ensure that they are aware of the importance of the information they present to partners on the IATI platform.

97. **Summary assessment:** Performance is satisfactory. Implementation of the initiative successfully overcame initial difficulties and good working relationships are reported to exist. Work was completed on schedule. However, common perceptions regarding institutional arrangements within the agency suggest that stronger leadership and strategic backing as well as more administrative and managerial support are needed to promote a more transparent work culture.

4.3 EFFECTIVENESS

98. As per the TOR and UNEG (2013), the initiative’s effectiveness can be gauged by questions such as:
- What types of products and services did stakeholders receive? What positive changes resulted?
 - Did the outcomes justify the costs and what learning did occur?
 - Was the initiative successful in terms of ownership in relation to UN-Habitat and the needs of stakeholders and beneficiaries?
 - To what extent were the results achieved in line with a Theory of Change?

Stakeholder Benefits and Needs

99. In a narrow view, the principal outcome of the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative is the publication of open data through the newly established web portal (<http://open.unhabitat.org/>). As a narrow indicator of this portal’s effectiveness, the only available measure was Google Analytics statistics.

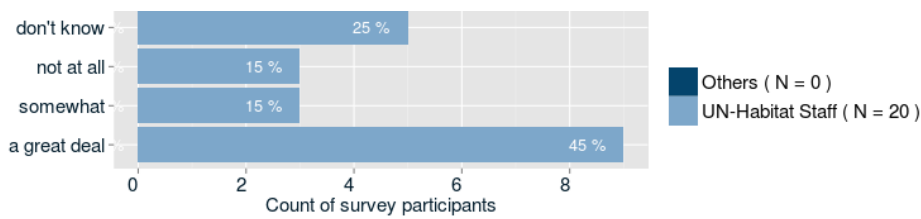
Table two presents a summary of these statistics⁵, broken down according to the main user countries and compared with open data for Sida (<http://www.openaid.se/aid/2014/>) and Dfid (<http://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/>).⁶ The data show very few sessions (just over 3 per day after excluding crawlers and bots), lasting on average just 79 seconds and including a mere two pages. The bounce rate was 72%. This number, generally considered poor, is no doubt

“It is likely that UN-Habitat would not have received continued core support from Sweden without the Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative”

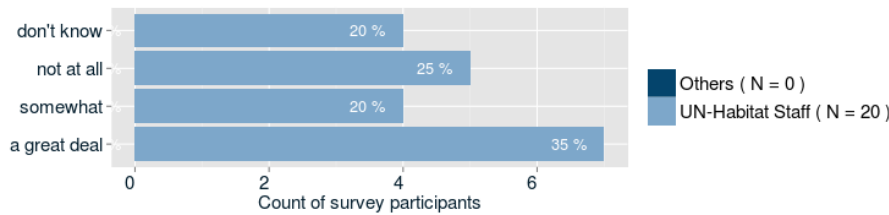
Interviewee

FIGURE 11: To what extent have the following affected the Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative?

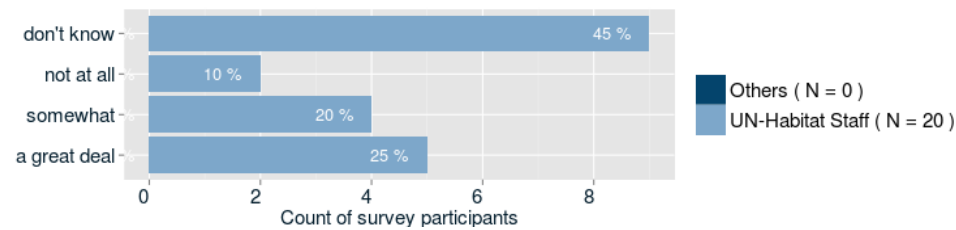
Lack of leadership/strategic support



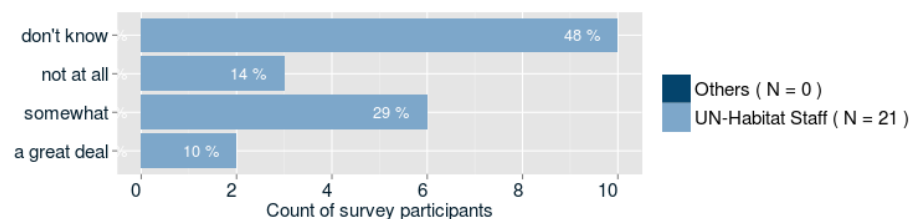
Work culture



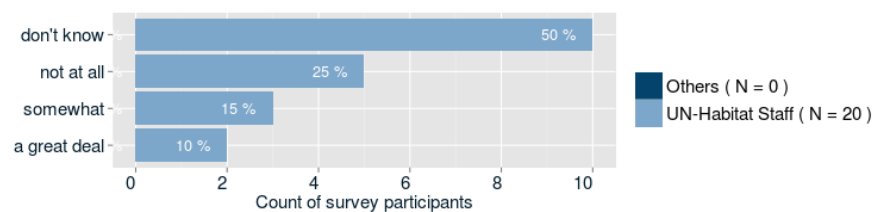
Administrative/ Managerial hurdles



Delays



Financial hurdles



⁵ It should be noted that the statistics shown here are based

inflated because of distortions resulting from bots and crawlers. Indeed, bounce rates for Kenya and the Netherlands are much lower, resp., 39% and 32%, numbers that can be explained by the locations of users at UN-Habitat HQs and the contracted web agency in Amsterdam. Overall, 76% of the sessions lasted less than 10 seconds and 82% lasted less than 1 minute. Of the 335 sessions interacting with the portal from September 1 through September 30, 2015, 254 sessions produced a total of only 252 page views, essentially the landing page and nothing more. All of these measures are low in comparison to data reported by Sida and Dfid (see Table 2).

100. The averages obscure, however, clear country-based differences. For example, for Kenya and The Netherlands, the average session duration, average number of pages visited, and bounce rate on Open UN-Habitat all are more favorable. The proportion of new visitors from these two countries is also lower, meaning that users more often return to Open UN-Habitat for additional information. At the other end, the data show a 91% bounce rate for the

U.S.A. and a 100% bounce rate for China, figures that no doubt reflect bots and crawlers originating from these countries and not representing true users of the site.

101. Aside from distortions not filtered out from the data, as noted above, these web traffic measures are narrowly defined indicators of a narrow view of the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative, seen strictly in terms of quantitative use of the portal, imperfectly recorded. Comments made by survey respondents give more insight into actual use of the published open data. Both UN-Habitat staff and other stakeholders report various reasons for accessing the data. While their number may be small, for them the data serve a useful purpose (see Box 1). Further, UN-Habitat has not yet created great visibility for its open data, either internally or externally, so that relevant user audiences remain unaware of the initiative and the opportunity to access UN-Habitat's open data. In addition, while the number of users may be a useful indicator of success five years down the road, survey respondents and inter-

TABLE 2 : Open UN-Habitat Portal Usage

	All countries	U.S.A. (41%)	Kenya (12%)	U.K. (8%)	Netherlands (8%)	Sida	Dfid
Sessions	335	138	39	28	28	6,484	16,063
Avg.session duration(min.)	1.19	19	2.22	1.35	4.20	3.38	NA
Pages/session	2.07	1.28	2.90	3.5	3.39	3.99	6.99
Bounce rate	72%	91%	39%	71%	32%	48%	49%
New sessions	82%	88%	59%	93%	57%	68%	69%

Source: Google Analytics data: September 1 – September 30, 2015.

BOX 1: Purpose for Using Open UN-Habitat Data

UN-Habitat staff:

- "To compare country portfolios, understand UN-Habitat's geographical priorities, to find project-related documents."
- "To explore list of donors, find out who funded which projects."

Others:

- "To learn from UN-Habitat's experience as my own organization was also involved in a similar project."

- "To find information about UN-Habitat programs. To share with colleagues. To compare with other open platforms. To inform the development of our equivalent product."

viewees within and outside the agency note that changes in attitude and culture are more indicative at the present time. Finally, as shown in the next section of this evaluation, the initiative has had broader impacts, including streamlined integration of IATI standards into PAAS and the adoption of UN-Habitat’s open source code by other organizations.

The right measure of achievement is the spirit of transparency engrained in the fabric of UN-Habitat, and its willingness to share, which says a lot about the organization.

Interviewee

102. As already reported earlier in this evaluation (Section 4.1 on Relevance), stakeholders and beneficiaries predominantly see the initiative as being supportive of their needs. From the interviews it is also apparent that UN-Habitat worked with expert partners and forged effective collaborations with organizations that take an active interest in the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative and regard it in glowing terms. (See Box 5 in Section 4.4. for examples of such positive assessments). In the implementation of the initiative, UN-Habitat adopted an outward- and forward-looking attitude that benefitted the outcome and contributed to a general perception that UN-Habitat is now operating on the forefront of international aid transparency work, effectively engaging with the needs of donors, partners, and beneficiaries.

staff have not heard of it and another one-half do not know much about it), and interviewees indicate that no training material exists as yet and that trainings intended for staff in Nairobi HQs and outposted in regional offices are yet to take place.

Communication

103. In terms of improving awareness and increasing capacity for utilization of the open data UN-Habitat now publishes, the initiative’s full potential remains to be realized. Survey responses point to limited awareness of the initiative (one-third of UN-Habitat

104. An initiative will generally be more effective if it enhances communication. In this regard, the survey responses do not show a strong effect. Most UN-Habitat staff indicate that the initiative has had no effect on internal communication within the agency (Figure 12). However, a few of the staff report a positive influence, in line with comments by several interviewees who observed improved communication between the Division of Management and Operations, the Division of External Relations and the Division of Advocacy, Outreach and Communications.

105. Interventions tend to be more effective when participants learn from the actions being implemented. The survey findings yield a revealing

FIGURE 12: To what extent has the Open Transparency Initiative affected UN-Habitat internal communication

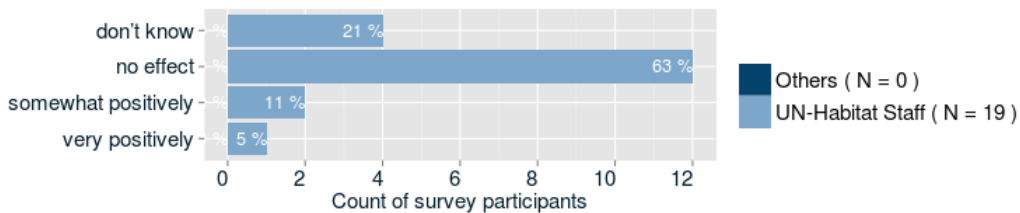
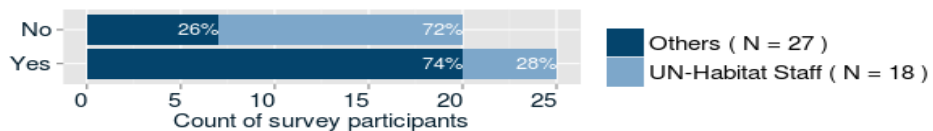


FIGURE 13: Have you learned anything from implementation of Open UN-Habitat?



pattern in this regard, showing a clear divergence between the experience of UN-Habitat staff and other stakeholders (Figure 13). Among the former, 28% say they have learned from the implementation of Open UN-Habitat. In contrast, 74% of other stakeholders report learning. A plausible explanation of this large difference lies in superior communication with external stakeholders (for example through the IATI TAG and the United Nations Working Group), as well as hindrances related to organizational silos within the agency, which are a recurrent theme in comments made by survey respondents as well as interviewees. In the words of one interviewee, “it is difficult to experience learning under conditions of organizational fragmentation and constrained communication.”

106. Among those who do report having learned from implementation of Open UN-Habitat, the obtained insights tend to relate to gaining greater understandings about the transparency movement in general and its place within UN-Habitat more in particular. Others report lessons related to the importance of visible buy-in and early support from top management to promote awareness among staff and create the normative framework needed for the culture change required by global transparency trends (Box 2).

Cost Effectiveness

107. UN-Habitat staff are divided between those who find that the outcomes of Open UN-Habitat justified the costs (N=6) and those who believe the opposite (N=5). However, most indicate that they do not know (N=10, Figure 14). In the words of one respondent: “The costs and results have never been presented and disseminated to UN-Habitat staff.”

108. The project document specifies a budget of a combined total of USD 581,395 for years 1 and 2. This figure is consistent with the amount listed on Open UN-Habitat, which, however, also specifies expenditures of USD 709,383 and income of USD 706,6217. The project’s official interim financial report for 2012-2014 largely clarifies these differences, showing initially approved total funding in the amount of USD 542,281, all of which was received in 2012-2013. Of this amount, USD 536,337 was expended in these same years. Thanks to further negotiations with Sida, an additional USD 164,340 was received in 2014 for a combined total of USD 717,006 of which USD 682,357 was expended by the end of 2014. No budget data were made available to this evaluation for 2015 or 2016, when the project is expected to terminate.

7 See <http://open.unhabitat.org/project/41120-1932/>

BOX 2: Have you learned anything from the implementation of Open UN-Habitat?

UN-Habitat staff:

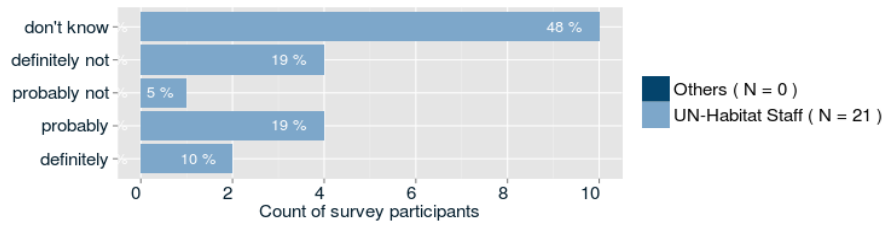
- “Difficulties in introducing new working routines.”
- “I have learnt about IATI and the expectations of transparency from donors.”
- “I have learnt about the international transparency movement and the importance of work culture and a top down leadership both from our experience and from the experience of SIDA as supporting partner.”
- “Technical implementation. From that perspective the project has been very successful. IATI publishing is now firmly entrenched in the organization’s work plan and strategic plan.”
- “Buy-in from top management. It was assumed the project that it had buy-in from top management. However, this was not the case. Therefore, a lot of time and effort was spent to convince colleagues about the necessity of improved transparency. This could have been helped a great deal by a simple memo from the ED to all staff explaining the importance of this work.”

- “Culture change is difficult and sometimes ‘just doing it’ can be the best way. If the project had been waiting for buy-in from top management or for a formal information publishing policy to be adopted, none of this could’ve been achieved.”
- “Internal communications at UN-Habitat is generally poor, and there are no established internal communications channels beyond occasional “urban dialogue” sessions on a thematic topic, sporadic “brown bag lunches” and the intranet. This needs to be improved substantially in order for projects dealing with culture change to succeed.”

Others:

- “The increased role of transparency initiatives in the UN.”
- “Basic knowledge about the UN-Habitat organization.”
- “Since I work with a similar system in my organisation it has been helpful to see the implementation.”

FIGURE 14: Have the outcomes of Open UN-Habitat justified the project costs?



The absence of benchmark data and criteria hinder statements about the initiative’s costs effectiveness, but indications from its sponsor Sida suggest that Open UN-Habitat is considered to have been a worthwhile investment.

is assumed to result in more funding to support expansion of project work producing assumedly beneficial outcomes for partners and end users, connecting back to transparency and reinforcing trust, credibility and reputation in a continuous feedback loop.

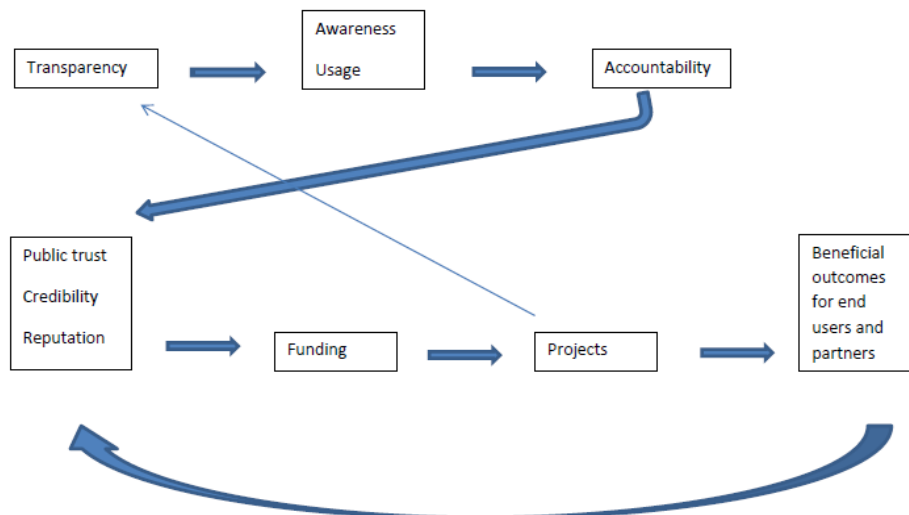
Theory of Change

109. The Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative is not explicitly based on a theory of change. However, from available documentation and from survey responses and interviews it is possible to infer a chain of relationships assumed to produce intended outcomes. Figure 15 visualizes these linkages and their underlying assumptions. It assumes that greater transparency, including the publication of open data, will lead to greater awareness and usage of public data regarding UN-Habitat project budgets, activities and results. It further assumes that this will lead to greater accountability, translating into greater public trust, enhanced reputation, and heightened credibility with donors. This in turn,

110. The model, just described, assumes an ideal sequential progression. Additional pathways are possible. The two dotted lines, for example, show how a perception of greater transparency, particularly when accompanied by greater awareness and usage of the portal, may lead to enhanced credibility, reputation and public trust, without it being backed by greater accountability, as stipulated in the model. Therefore, the transparency initiative is better seen as a contributing factor, rather than a causal factor (see sections 3.4 Limitations and 5.4 Theory of Change).

111. While the theory of change model, just sketched, is persuasive, its underlying assumptions remain

FIGURE 15: Theory of Change underlying the Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative



untested and at this time it is too early to make an evidence-based assessment of it. First, simply not enough time has passed to be able to determine whether certain outcomes will result. For example, it will require more time to develop in donors a fuller recognition of UN-Habitat's transparency work and then for this appreciation to translate into increased funding. Second, in part also as a function of the short time frame, some links have not yet been fully implemented. For example, there is still very limited awareness of Open UN-Habitat within the agency, as illustrated by the finding already reported that 34% of UN-Habitat staff had never heard of it and another 47% who had heard of it but did not know much about it, amplified further by comments as included in Box 3. Lack of awareness of existence of Open UN-Habitat, no doubt, helps explain the portal's limited usage.⁸ Implementation of the model, therefore, will require systemic action across the agency, involving behavioral, cultural, procedural and organizational adjustments as proposed in the Recommendations section of this report.

112. It is possible that anticipated outcomes will not occur owing to external circumstances. For example, implementing partners may resist or may not have capacity for putting in place transparency requirements, or a resource scarce environment may prevent increased funding. While some may consider such situations as constituting a risk, survey responses as well as interview comments make

⁸ In addition, internally usage of the portal may be affected by other tools available to UN-Habitat staff and managers, although interviewees indicate no other single tool provides the same data as Open UN-Habitat. Consistent with survey comments by UN-Habitat staff and managers, they also state that increased portal usage is desirable.

clear that, irrespective of circumstances beyond its control, greater transparency is positioning UN-Habitat better to attract donor support.

113. The integration of transparency in an accountability framework, with clearly articulated criteria and embedded in the organization's practices, also remains to be accomplished. In order to prevent corruption and fraud, it will be necessary to further extend transparency and accountability to implementing partners so that both donors and end users can trace the entire path of funding and verify actual project results. This last point goes beyond the use of open data to their usability and their value to the users. This point emerged as sufficiently salient in the survey and interviews to warrant separate discussion in the next section of this report.

Adequacy of Open UN-Habitat Data

114. This evaluation found two different views regarding the adequacy of the data currently accessible on the Open UN-Habitat web portal. Both views concur in their assessment that the data are of high quality and conform to the IATI standard. However, beyond this agreement, views differ on whether additional data should be included. On the one hand is the perspective that the data, as now available, are adequate and sufficient. A functional, shared platform has been developed, PAAS data are being fed into it seamlessly, and open data are being published according to the IATI standard. Related to this view is a belief that data presentation must be fully automated for efficiency and cost reasons and that more information will also likely be confusing to users.

BOX 3 : UN-Habitat Staff Comments Revealing Need for Efforts to Increase Awareness

- "UN-Habitat should make every effort in communicating and familiarizing its entire staff with the transparency initiative."
- "All staff need to be sensitized about Open UN-Habitat. That way it would be easier for most to assess the usefulness and how to use it."
- "Sensitize staff on the initiative so that they understand the world is scrutinizing them and our global reputation depends hugely on what they find out about us." "I have no idea what Open UN-Habitat is all about."
- "I am not familiar with the site."
- "As if it never existed. It has made no difference. Some do not even know about it."
- "There never was a familiarization process and most people do not understand its purpose in the UN-Habitat system."
- "Make it better known!"

115. On the other hand a view exists, particularly among external stakeholders, that the published data are insufficient and that more data should be included as part of future work on the portal, in addition to the data required by IATI. This view is captured by a representative quote: “Although publishing IATI is a positive thing, the dataset published by UN-Habitat is still very scarce and lacks a full understanding of ongoing projects, a detailed money-trail, and is not clear in referencing how other partners spend the allocated budgets set by UN-Habitat.” A UN-Habitat manager likewise noted that “Beneficiaries and implementing partners need to get involved. The portal could allow them to provide relevant information from their perspectives. This would enable donors to understand the perspectives of the beneficiaries and implementing partners whom we contract to assist us to deliver our programmes.” Various other comments echo these points. They offer practical suggestions and should be seen as expressing constructive appreciation rather than criticism (Box 4; see also Figure 23, Section 4.5). Some data augmentation might be sourced from other UN-Habitat webpages (e.g., <http://urbandata.unhabitat.org/>), but most suggestions made by study participants relate more specifically to the Open UN-Habitat portal.
116. A relevant observation regard the inclusion of other information in addition to the financial data is that Open UN-Habitat already includes additional information under the Results and Documents headings. A script run on the Open UN-Habitat web pages for all 383 projects listed shows that 20% of them include additional documentation. Further, a similar script analysis indicates that 277 projects (72% of all projects in the portal) include a Results section.
117. UN-Habitat is not alone in publishing information to supplement the financial data. Additional information can also be found on the websites of other IATI publishers. For example, Sida’s open data website shows 1,099 projects out of 5,768 total projects of SIDA with some kind of documentation (just over 19%), although often the document is merely a general policy statement on funding conditions, not particular to any project. Dfid’s Development Tracker includes additional documentation for 2,178 of its 4,328 projects listed (50%), ranging from one to 23 documents.
118. **Summary assessment:** Performance is satisfactory. The expectation that the initiative would result in publication of open data for all ongoing projects was fully met. This information is now routinely published and updated on the IATI website and UN-Habitat’s own dedicated web portal, which is now integrated in the agency’s main website. However, use of the data is still quite limited, and there is little evidence that internal communication has benefitted. Remaining challenges include increasing awareness and outreach, as well as responding to interest in publishing data beyond the IATI standard.

BOX 4: Comments from Other Stakeholders Regarding Open UN-Habitat Data

- “It should be shared electronically widely to access by all partners and beneficiaries.”
- “Publishing IATI data is a positive thing.”
- “The platform is there to expand the potential users and value of released data.”
- “It would be helpful to have project updates.”
- “The information is quite limited. More data required!”
- “Credibility would be greatly enhanced if there was more usable data.”
- “While the platform is there, until sufficient data is available there can be no expectation of greater transparency.”
- “The data set is still very scarce and lacks a full understanding of ongoing projects, a detailed money trail and is not clear in referencing how partners spend the allocated budgets set by UN-Habitat.”
- “Include information about the implementing partner, feedback from beneficiaries, photos, videos, conclusions and lessons learnt.”
- “More traceability to connect to data from donors and others.”
- “Include information on results, transaction details, multiple sector codes, beneficiaries, document meta data (and break them up instead of publishing as a batch).”
- “Link to websites of implementing partners.”
- “Upload additional project materials and post regular project implementation updates.”

“In terms of internal processes, the cleaning of the data was an accomplishment.”

Interviewee

121. When asked whether the initiative had affected UN-Habitat’s productivity, most staff reported “no effect” (60%). A few thought the effect had been positive, while 25% said they did not know (Figure 17). However, there is general agreement that the transparency initiative has led to higher quality data, consolidated in one place.

4.4 IMPACTS

119. Expected accomplishments for the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative are assessed internally and externally to UN-Habitat.

Internal to UN-Habitat

120. A large majority of survey respondents (65%) say that Open UN-Habitat has positively affected transparency within the agency (Figure 16). However, UN-Habitat staff are less sanguine in their opinion (53% positive) than other stakeholders (73%), likely reflecting the constrained internal communication reported earlier.

External to UN-Habitat

122. The Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative was launched just after the publication of two assessments critical of the agency⁹ One of the expected accomplishments of the initiative was, therefore, a renewed reputation of UN-Habitat as a leader in development aid transparency. Findings obtained by this evaluation show that this objective was indeed achieved. An overwhelming majority of survey respondents (75%) view the initiative as

⁹ See *Multilateral Aid Review, Ensuring maximum value for money for UK aid through multilateral organisations.* Department for International Development, London, UK., March 2011 and *Australian Multilateral Assessment*, March 2012.

FIGURE 16: To what extent has the Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative affected UN-Habitat transparency?

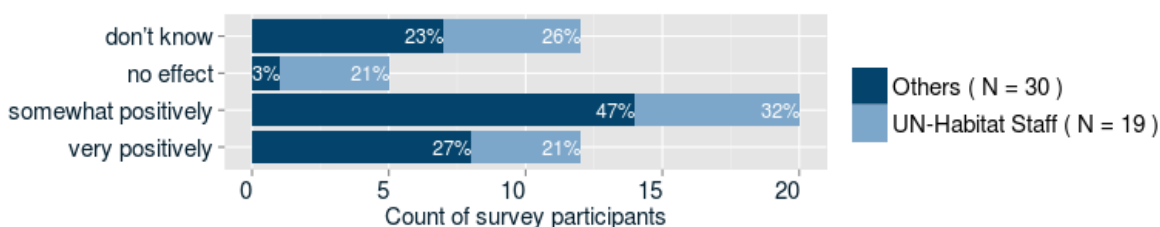


FIGURE 17: To what extent has the Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative affected UN-Habitat productivity?

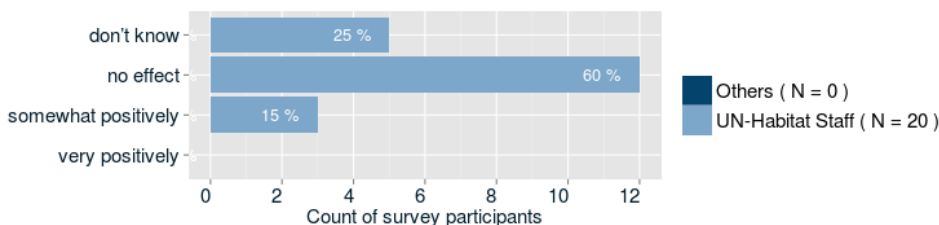
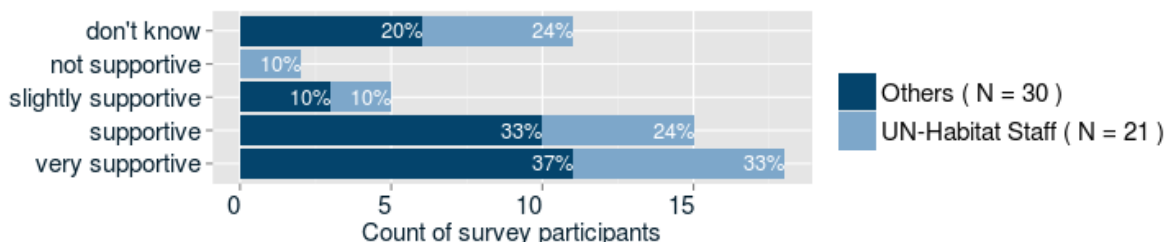


FIGURE 18: To what extent is the Open Transparency Initiative supportive of UN-Habitat’s reputation as a leader in aid transparency?



supporting UN-Habitat's reputation, with other stakeholders being most positive (80%; see Figure 18).

123. Comments made by interviewees reinforce these favorable assessments with phrasing such as "bolstered UN-Habitat's credibility," "great contributor," "high profile," and "on the forefront" (see Box 5). Open UN-Habitat also enables donor countries to show how tax-payers' money is being used.

124. As a further indication of Open UN-Habitat's external impact, a number of organizations are using the website platform of Open UN-Habitat, including UNESCO, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Open Aid.¹⁰

125. Summary assessment: Performance is satisfactory. The initiative is perceived internally and externally as having improved the agency's transparency, but not so much its productivity. The initiative is widely seen as having established UN-Habitat as being on the forefront of international development aid transparency. Several organizations have adopted the agency's platform for publication of open data. Impact will be enhanced by greater portal usage and publication of additional data.

¹⁰ The applicable web addresses are: <http://opendata.unesco.org>, <http://www.openaid.nl> and <http://www.openaidsearch.org>. The framework used by UN-Habitat is called OIPA, developed by Zimmerman & Zimmerman <http://www.oipa.nl/api/v3/docs>, which provides an API for parsing, ingesting, storing and searching IATI standard compliant data sets.

4.5 SUSTAINABILITY

126. As per the TOR for this evaluation, examination of the sustainability of the initiative was guided by several questions, including:

- i. To what extent did the initiative contribute to increased investments and donor funding to UN-Habitat?
- ii. To what extent did the initiative help foster partnerships within UN-Habitat, with IATI partners, donors and other development partners?

Funding and partnerships

127. Opinions among UN-Habitat staff are divided as to whether Open UN-Habitat has contributed to external dialogue concerning funding. Five say there has been a positive effect, while 7 think there has been no effect, and 8 say they do not know (Figure 19). It is still too early to determine whether the initiative will result in increased donor funding. However, external perceptions indicate that "UN-Habitat has done a very good job" (see also comments in-Box 5).

128. According to 50% of the external stakeholders participating in the survey, the initiative has also fostered partnerships with donors. UN-Habitat staff are more reserved in their opinion in this regard (Figure 20).

BOX 5: Comments from External Interviewees on the Open UN-Habitat Initiative

- "Definitely bolstered UN-Habitat's credibility among UN system members."
- "Certainly within the UN system, it accomplished its intended results."
- "Very high profile and engaged participation in the technical community."
- "UN-Habitat has always been a great contributor and participant in the technical community."
- "Open UN-Habitat has definitely made UN-Habitat more transparent. It is on the forefront and one of the leading UN agencies."
- "What UN-Habitat has done was worth doing."
- "UN-Habitat has been one of the leaders on the transparency front."
- "I think it's an exemplary effort."
- "I would give credit to Open UN-Habitat for its accomplishments."
- "I have used it to show how a good transparency program can translate it to good alignment with the larger vision of the SDGs."
- "UN-Habitat is doing a lot of work which is for the benefit of other UN agencies."
- "I really appreciate what Open UN-Habitat done and the importance it has received from the organization."

“UN-Habitat is recognized to be one of the lead agencies doing transparency.”

Interviewee

129. Likewise, among those with an opinion on the matter, the prevalent view is that Open UN-Habitat has fostered partnerships with UN-Habitat partners, again a view that is held more widely among other stakeholders than among UN-Habitat staff (Figure 21).

130. In addition, there is the question of whether the initiative helped foster partnerships within UN-Habitat. Once again, there is no general agreement among staff. Eight say they do not know, five say “not at all,” and five aver “somewhat” with one person choosing “a great deal” (Figure 22). Overall, these responses indicate modest support, reflecting comments made by a number of staff members who provided input into this evaluation (see Box 6).

131. The comments expressed by staff can help inform the future of the agency’s transparency initiative. Relevant in this connection is also an expectation that UN-Habitat will continue its commitment to transparency, as expressed by external interviewees representing donor and partner perspectives and illustrated by the following quote: “Stick with it. It shouldn’t be a flavor of the month sort of thing. The development community is going to come under more scrutiny from donors as resources tighten, so the more you can do to bolster your credibility as a

transparent agency, the better off you’ll be in those conversations with the donors.”

Suggestions for strengthening UN-Habitat transparency

132. In order to improve the likelihood that benefits resulting from Open UN-Habitat will continue after its funding ends in June 2016, survey respondents were asked for suggestions to strengthen the web portal. By far, the first and foremost suggestion is the inclusion of additional data, indicated by 77% of respondents. However, this average percentage obscures a sizable difference between UN-Habitat staff (62%) and other stakeholders who more frequently are proponents (86%; Figure 23). The result is very similar to that found for the provision of a function for including user comments (Figure 24) See also Section 4.3.

“The platform highlights how partial publication against the standard greatly limits the usability (e.g., transaction, recipient or subnational information).”

Interviewee

133. There is support as well for publishing the portal in additional languages, albeit less so (Figure 25). As noted by one respondent, “other languages may help, but to be truly comprehensive, it would also require the translation of documents published in the portal.”

BOX 6: UN-Habitat Staff Comments on Collaboration and Culture of Transparency

- “Management takes transparency seriously through the creation and maintainance of predictable business processes instead of ad hoc opaque changeable processes”
- “The relationship with Sweden has been improved. Relationships with other UN agencies have been greatly strengthened. Working relationships between the Office of Management, External Relations, and the Project Office have been established.”
- “The institutional structure is not as supportive and there is a culture of secrecy and protectionism that hinders transparency”
- “There is no accountability and no champion behind the initiative resulting in little use and awareness of the initiative”
- “We don’t have internal transparency on a number of administrative matters, e.g around staffing, so external transparency is impossible”
- “Work culture hinders the initiative and current disruption of work processes caused by the reorganization has made the atmosphere amongst staff worse and the usage of open unhabitat more difficult”
- “The concern has been more about internal culture acceptance and knowledge”
- “Regular open Q&A sessions with staff; A list of FAQs focusing on operating procedures, a resource mobilisation link in the intranet providing information on ongoing resource mobilisation efforts of different parts of the organisation with a space for comments, a staff focal point.”

FIGURE 19: Has Open UN-Habitat affected external dialogue regarding funding?

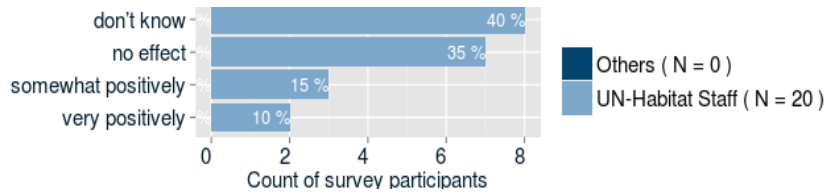


FIGURE 20: Has Open UN-Habitat fostered partnerships with UN-Habitat donors?

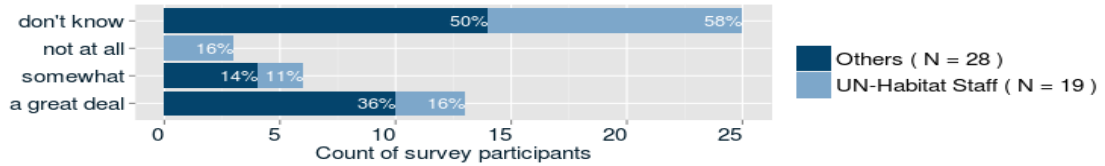


FIGURE 21: Has Open UN-Habitat fostered partnerships with UN-Habitat partners?

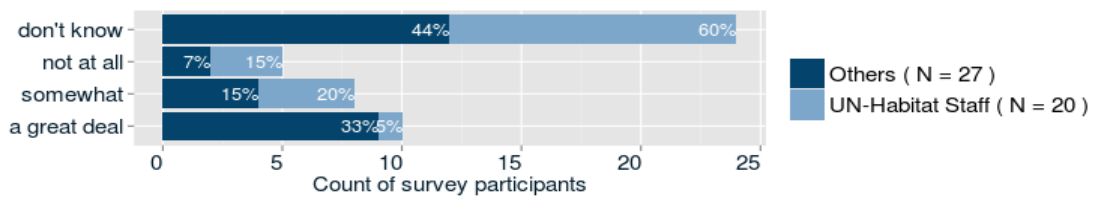


FIGURE 22: Has Open UN-Habitat fostered partnerships within UN-Habitat?

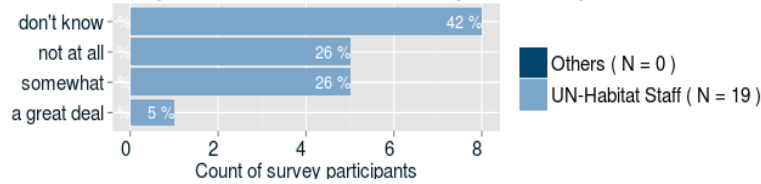


FIGURE 23: To what extent would including additional data strengthen the Open UN-Habitat web portal?

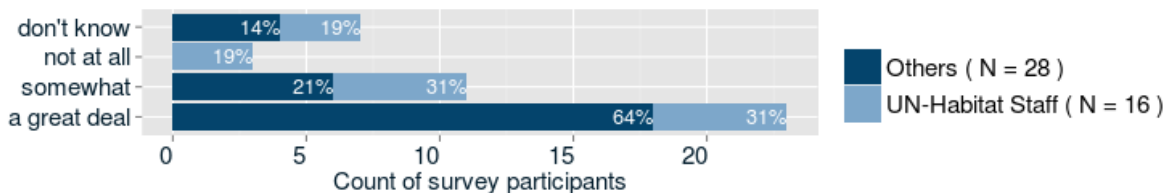


FIGURE 24: To what extent would including user comments strengthen the Open UN-Habitat web portal?

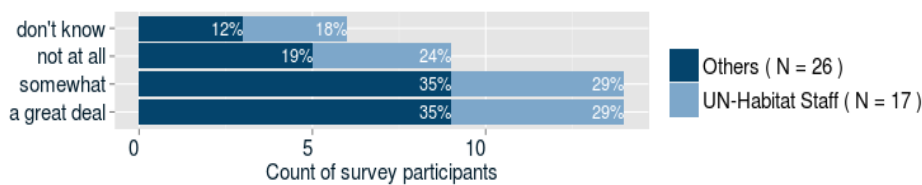
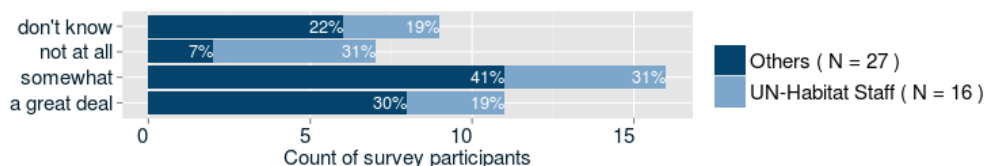


FIGURE 25: To what extent would publication in additional languages strengthen the Open UN-Habitat web portal?



134. Various considerations regarding the future of Open UN-Habitat do not fall within the purview of other stakeholders and were, therefore, raised only with UN-Habitat staff. Two points stand out in particular: stronger integration in UN-Habitat activities, and increasing internal training and awareness, both of which are supported by about 80% of participating staff (Figure 26).
135. About 60% UN-Habitat staff also support additional funding. They offer several reasons for further funding:
- i. Taking the project beyond technical implementation to culture change
 - ii. Regular updating of project information
 - iii. Increasing awareness to encourage usage of available data
 - iv. Training to ensure compliance
136. Finally, mentioned as well, but seen as less important, are increasing internal and external technical support (Figure 26).

Interest and Risk

137. If survey respondents indicated that they had never heard of the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative, they were asked if they would like to learn more about it. Of the 29 who responded to this question, 21 (72%) answered in the affirmative (Figure 27). This widespread interest is an auspicious omen for the future viability and functional significance of Open UN-Habitat.
138. While an initiative can have benefits as found in this evaluation, it is also important to inquire about its possible risks, which could possibly offset or outweigh the positive outcomes. Asked about this, about 20% survey respondents saw some level of

“It was a strange misunderstanding that what we are doing is confidential. So we had to explain that it was simply a matter of having to provide the information when being asked for it or actively putting out the information.”

Interviewee

risk. They mentioned risks that data might not be accurate and not reflecting realities on the ground; that data might expose nascent and emerging programs that are needed but still weak and, therefore, probable targets of funding cuts; that donors might not approve of published data; and that confidential material of implementing partners might be published.

139. In consideration of these concerns expressed by a minority, it must be noted that, while not eliminating all risks, UN-Habitat has put in place various safeguards, including criteria and procedures for cleaning and quality control of data and development of an Information Disclosure Policy. Key informant interviews found no opposition to publication of open data among donors or other stakeholders. Quite the contrary. Further, Freedom of Information legislation would require UN-Habitat to make almost all information available upon request in any case.

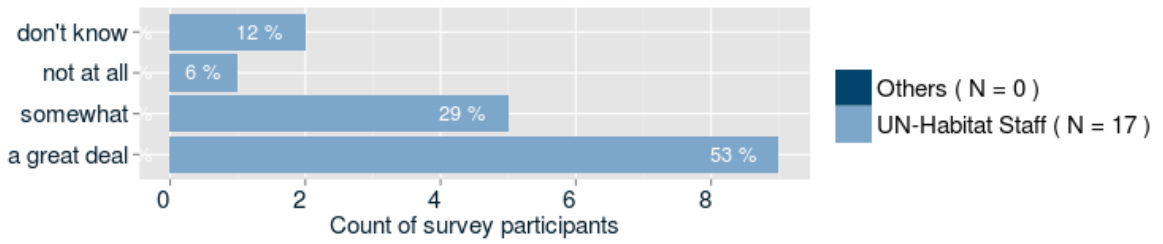
- 140. Summary assessment:** Performance is satisfactory. The jury is still out on actual funding increases owing to the initiative, but prospects are more favorable with improved perception of the agency's transparency by a key donor (Sida) and other external stakeholders. External partnerships are seen to have been strengthened, but there is little indication that internal collaboration is stronger. There is broad interest in learning more about the initiative and only a few see risks in doing so. The future of PAAS and the integration of the IATI standard into Umoja are yet to be determined. Study participants offer concrete suggestions for more fully realizing the initiative's potential. The satisfactory rating of the initiative's performance on “sustainability” took into account constraints stemming from insufficient time having passed to render a definitive judgment. This constraint is not a reflection on the initiative itself, but means more time is needed before a final rating is possible.

“We can do transparency as a box-ticking exercise to protect ourselves from criticism and UN-Habitat is at that stage. But the recognition is that that isn't good enough. And that we have to proactively make more information available”

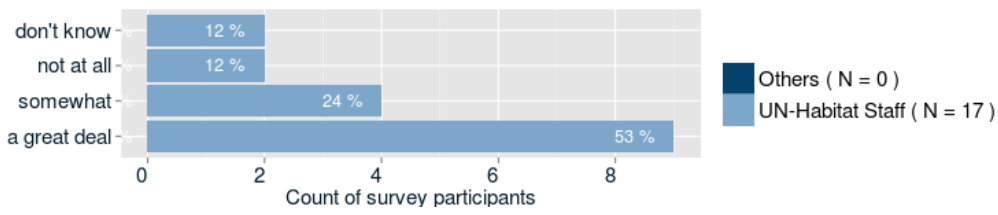
Interviewee

FIGURE 26: To what extent would the following strengthen the Open UN-Habitat web portal?

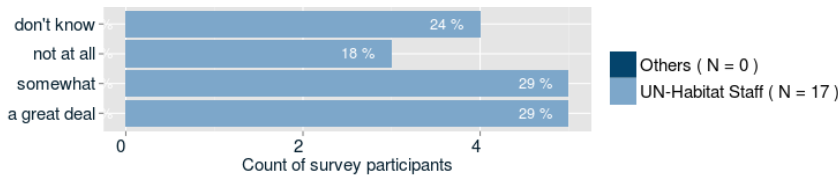
Stronger integration in UN-Habitat activities



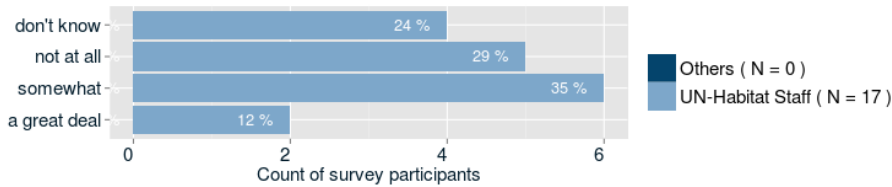
Increasing internal training and awareness



Additional funding



Better internal technical support



Better external technical support

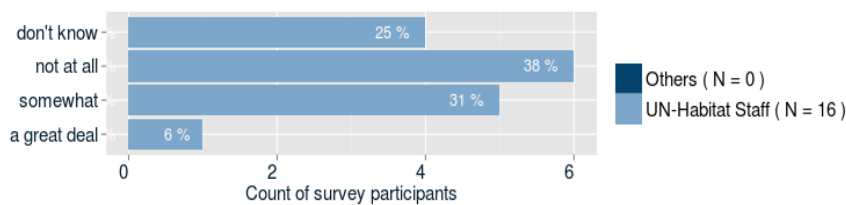
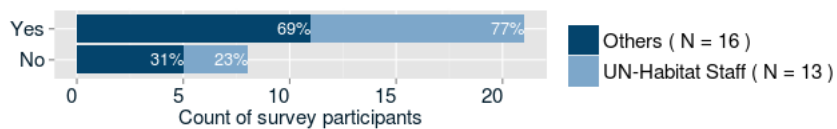


FIGURE 27: Would you like to learn more about Open UN-Habitat



5. CONCLUSIONS

5.1 INVESTMENTS, ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND UNREALIZED POTENTIAL

141. Considerable investment has gone into the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative in terms of financial and human resources. Genuine and sustained commitment of those involved in the initiative's development is apparent. There is considerable positive appreciation of the initiative by external stakeholders. An enhanced reputation in transparency and an increase in credibility among partners and donors are also in evidence. Internally, there is little indication for greater productivity and improved communication, but technical success has been achieved. Yet, the potential of these investments and the benefits of recognition do not seem to have been fully realized.

5.2 SUCCESS

142. The success of the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative has several aspects:

Internal

143. A distinction can be made between the technical aspects of the initiative and its organizational and operational context. Indications clearly point to attainment of technical objectives. The initiative overcame early challenges in the areas of intra-agency communication and quality control, but the issues were effectively resolved. Financial project data are now routinely published, seamlessly integrated with PAAS. An overall project portfolio view with standardized information is now publicly available. However, many UN-Habitat staff remain unaware of the initiative, and very few have used data from the Open UN-Habitat website portal for their work. Some staff members emphasize the importance of reducing organizational compartmentalization and notable endorsement by upper management to bring about the normative framework needed for culture change.

External

144. External stakeholders clearly see the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative as having

advanced UN-Habitat's international standing in development aid transparency. Comments praise the portal's data visualization, and it is a further indication of accomplishment that UN-Habitat's platform is now being used by several other organizations. The initiative is seen as being responsive to international aid trends and priorities. In this regard, UN-Habitat is viewed as playing a leading role in the UN system. External stakeholders tend to be more positive about the transparency initiative than UN-Habitat staff. As is the case within the agency, also outside it, usage of the available open data is very low.

5.3 BENEFICIARIES

145. Different views exist as to who the beneficiaries of the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative are or should be. In one view, the primary beneficiaries are (or should be) UN-Habitat staff (in Nairobi and elsewhere), donors, national government officials, and implementing partners. In another view, additional critically important beneficiaries are (should be) municipal officials and end-users at the community level where projects are realized, enabling them to monitor and audit project activities and budgets. These different views have different implications for the future of the initiative.

5.4 THEORY OF CHANGE

146. The transparency initiative is part of a broader causal model or theory of change (see Figure 14, page 19). When it is working, it is an essential component of the model and when the model is operational, it is sufficient to bring about the intended outcomes. The initiative itself is insufficient to produce these outcomes, but it is a necessary contributing factor as part of the larger package. This evaluation found that effectiveness of the theory of change model underlying the Open UN-Habitat Initiative is hampered by several weak links. These weak links lead to diminished impacts. They relate to usage, awareness, and adequacy of the open data, and outreach to relevant target audiences.

Usage, Awareness, and Adequacy of Data

147. Only a few study participants report having used data from the website portal. Low usage is also suggested by Google Analytics indicators. Open data are now available, but underutilized.
148. Usage of Open UN-Habitat will increase when awareness of it grows. Its recent integration in the agency's main website under the Urban Knowledge tab is consistent with its inclusion in the most recent version of the UN-Habitat Knowledge Management Strategy and should increase its visibility.
149. External stakeholders in particular point to limitations of the data. They give reasons for thinking so and offer suggestions for improvement. Inclusion of additional information puts UN-Habitat in good company and the question may be less one of whether it should be done and more one of when and how it should be done. The Recommendations section of this report suggests the types of data that may be considered for inclusion.

Outreach

150. There is a view that it is not sufficient to merely publish project data, making them publicly available, but that there is also a responsibility to reach out to beneficiaries to promote awareness and usage of the data. This will require developing training material, offering workshops, and developing capacity among implementing partners and end users.

5.5 CROSSCUTTING ISSUES: GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS

151. This evaluation did not find any data on the inclusion of women and gender aspects and human rights in the design, planning and implementation, reporting and monitoring of the Open UN-Habitat initiative, preventing a proper assessment of this key objective. However, the very absence of such information suggests that gender and human rights were not considered as concrete concerns.

5.6 FUTURE OF THE INITIATIVE

152. Several factors support the desirability and possibility of continuing the initiative. Investments in it have created positive potential. Relatively minor further investments will likely help realize this potential more fully. Continuation is also warranted in light of current trends in international development aid transparency. In a future of constrained resources, more funders will also require or expect publication of open data according to the IATI standard. This fact is augmented with recognition by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) that members should be reporting to IATI. UN-Habitat is operating on the forefront of these developments and has an opportunity to play a leading role in the U.N. system with the experience and ability to be a resource for sister agencies.
153. Further, development of the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative appears to foster partnerships with donors and partners organizations, which may favor prospects for future funding.
154. Widespread interest in learning more about the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative among those who had never previously heard of it also suggests that efforts to increase awareness and provide training will find a receptive audience. It is unclear at this time how Umoja will interface with the Open UN-Habitat portal and feed IATI data into it.

5.7 OVERALL ASSESSMENT RATING

155. Table 3, presents an overall summary assessment of Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative. It is based on the UN-Habitat's rating system which assigns numerical scores for performance on each of the five evaluation criteria as follows: Highly satisfactory = 5; Satisfactory = 4; Partially satisfactory = 3; Unsatisfactory = 2; Highly unsatisfactory = 1.

TABLE 3: Summary Rating of Performance

Evaluation Criteria	Rating	Assessment
Relevance	Highly Satisfactory (5)	UN-Habitat went from lagging to leading. It was one of the first UN agencies to publish to IATI. It actively participates in the IATI Technical Advisory Group and chairs the UN Working Group on Transparency. The Open UN-Habitat data portal has been incorporated in key strategic documents of the agency. The initiative is fully consistent with international aid priorities and supports the needs of stakeholders.
Efficiency	Satisfactory (4)	Implementation of the initiative successfully overcame initial difficulties and good working relationships are reported to exist. Work was completed on schedule. However, common perceptions within the agency suggest that stronger leadership and strategic backing as well as more administrative and managerial support are needed to promote a more transparent work culture.
Effectiveness	Satisfactory (4)	The expectation that the initiative would result in publication of open data for all ongoing projects was fully met. This information is now routinely published and updated on the IATI website and UN-Habitat's own dedicated web portal. However, use of the data is still quite limited, and there is little evidence that internal communication has benefitted. Remaining challenges include increasing awareness and outreach, as well as responding to interest in publishing data beyond the IATI standard.
Impact	Satisfactory (4)	The initiative is perceived internally and externally as having improved the agency's transparency, but not so much its productivity. The initiative is widely seen as having established UN-Habitat as being on the forefront of international development aid transparency. Several organizations have adopted the agency's platform for publication of open data. Impact will be enhanced by greater portal usage.
Sustainability	Satisfactory (4)	The jury is still out on actual funding increases owing to the initiative, but prospects are more favorable with improved perception of the agency's transparency by a key donor (Sida) and other external stakeholders. External partnerships are seen to have been strengthened, but there is little indication that internal collaboration is stronger. There is broad interest in learning more about the initiative and only a few see risks in doing so. The future of PAAS and the integration of the IATI standard into Umoja are yet to be determined. Study participants offer concrete suggestions for more fully realizing the initiative's potential.

6. LESSONS LEARNED

Work Culture and Organizational Context

156. The most important lesson emerging from this evaluation of Open UN-Habitat concerns the sequence of implementation. It appears that the emphasis to date has been chiefly on working out the technical aspects of publishing open data in the web portal, integrated with PAAS. Rather much less attention seems to have been given to the agency's organizational context and work culture within which the initiative is embedded and where it is to be used. A reversal of this sequence, or a simultaneous two-pronged approach, might have created a smoother process with more buy-in from UN-Habitat staff and upper management, greater awareness, and more usage of the data. This insight can help inform further decision making regarding the initiative. To be effective, a knowledge platform focused on sharing information needs careful attention to design, data, and organizational context, as well as communication and raising awareness about the platform.

Time and Strategic Grounding

157. Another learning related to the non-technical aspects of the initiative is that the adoption of more transparent practices throughout the agency is not something that happens overnight, but involves a culture change that requires a long-term approach

and a supportive overall strategy. This evaluation has found that effective implementation of such a strategy needs to benefit from being grounded in key documents regarding the disclosure and publishing of information, the conceptualization and implementation of accountability, and knowledge management more broadly.

Realization of Small Size Advantage

158. The evidence indicates UN-Habitat made rapid strides in improving transparency. Thanks to a supportive donor and a small group of dedicated and expert staff working together across different parts of the organization, in less than four years, the agency moved from lagging to leading. Being a small organization within the U.N. system brings with it challenges and constraints. At the same time, it affords opportunities for experimentation and nimbleness. Development and implementation of Open UN-Habitat demonstrated a keen ability of managing the challenges, while realizing the advantages of being a small agency. UN-Habitat needs to consider how best to exploit this strategic organizational characteristic with wider benefits for the agency as a whole.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

159. UN-Habitat's development capacity is, in part, a function of effective Knowledge Management (KM). The Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative should be seen in the context of a broader KM strategy. In this context, Open UN-Habitat is one of several tools, capable of supporting the storing, sharing and application of knowledge in a cycle of organizational learning. For it to function as intended, UN-Habitat should consider the following recommendations:

- i. **Recommendation 1:** Formal and public endorsement of the initiative by senior management. Such validation will set a tone and offer a normative framework that will support actions and practices to strengthen transparency internally and in the field. It will also positively affect the organization's work culture and encourage staff to adopt and integrate transparency criteria more strongly into its practices and operational activities, further promoting communication, trust, efficiency and productivity.
- ii. **Recommendation 2:** Establishing a Focal Point for transparency, possibly within the Knowledge Unit in the Research and Capacity Development Branch that is proposed in the new UN-Habitat Knowledge Management Strategy. This action would help ensure continuity of the initiative, assist in coordination of transparency-related activities across UN-Habitat (internally and vis-à-vis the IATI community), and provide a central point of contact for Divisions, Branches, and Regions, as well as external stakeholders.
- iii. **Recommendation 3:** The transparency initiative can be seen as having reached a fork in the road. UN-Habitat should decide strategically how and how much to focus future transparency work internally and how much of it externally. If the aspiration is restricted to improving internal practices, the emphasis and resource allocation should favor steps leading to better communication, greater trust and collaboration among staff, increased efficiency and more productivity. If there is interest in contributing to and helping shape global transparency processes and structures, serving as a resource to other organizations, and maintaining a role on the forefront of transparency work, UN-Habitat needs to direct efforts and resources accordingly as well. It would mean, for example, choosing between paying the membership fee to have a voice at the table of the IATI Steering Committee, or relying on participation in the IATI TAG and the U.N. Transparency Working Group that UN-Habitat currently chairs. The decision regarding internal and external engagement is not a binary one, but a matter of balance, which should be carefully informed by priorities and opportunity costs.
- iv. **Recommendation 4:** The Open UN-Habitat web portal is part of a larger transparency initiative, which, in turn, is part of a larger theory of change model. In order for the portal and the initiative to be optimally effective, the model as a whole needs to be effective. In order to improve the model's overall effectiveness, UN-Habitat should strengthen weak links in the model (such as low awareness and low usage; see below) and it should more fully integrate transparency in its organizational culture and all aspects of its work.
- v. **Recommendation 5:** In order to more fully realize a return on its investment in Open UN-Habitat, UN-Habitat should increase usage of the website portal. Greater usage will, in turn, require raising awareness of Open UN-Habitat within the agency and beyond. Greater awareness will inform resource mobilization, which will benefit consultation with donors, resulting in improved funding prospects. Specific actions can include workshops and training for staff and implementing partners (possibly coordinated with other IATI members), publicizing and linking the website portal to social media (see also UNFPA's transparency portal), publishing periodic news briefs or blog entries on and about the website and about transparency work more broadly (see also Sida's <http://www.openaid.se/blog/>), and offering webinars on lessons learned.

- vi. Recommendation 6:** This evaluation found strong encouragement for actions that will enhance the value of the Open UN-Habitat portal. Actions that should be considered include:
- a. Increasing the number of published projects that contain documentation beyond the current 20%.
 - b. Chunking large document files into smaller segments, organized chronologically or according to some other logic.
 - c. Providing periodic project updates. As new information becomes available, users will be able to monitor progress towards stated project goals.
 - d. Phasing in a requirement that implementing partners report to the IATI standard. Doing so will make the funding stream more traceable, enabling local beneficiaries as well as donors to track money and increasing accountability.
 - e. Introducing a functionality for feedback and interaction by beneficiaries and users. This feature can be informed by UN-Habitat's experience with a similar function on the Urban Gateway (<http://www.urbangateway.org/>). This feature will facilitate user evaluation of project outcomes.
 - f. Including project concrete outcomes. Donors are increasingly expecting results-based management and operational effectiveness. Providing information on project outcomes will respond to those expectations. It will also provide local beneficiaries with opportunities for auditing and checking results on the ground, thus increasing accountability and reducing waste and corruption. Examples of other organizations whose websites include valuable results information include the Global Fund,¹¹ GAVI,¹² and the Inter-American Development Bank.¹³
 - g. Adding a whistle blower function. Users observing or suspecting fraud should have a reporting channel that shields them from possible repercussions. Without such critically important safeguards in place, users who observe wrongdoing are unlikely to come forward. Lack of such protection undermines an important function of Open UN-Habitat. The Inter-American Development Bank offers an example of a web-based whistleblower function maintained through its Office of Institutional Integrity.¹⁴
 - h. Establish valid and dependable monitoring of portal traffic. Currently, UN-Habitat relies on Google Analytics (effectively used by, for example, Sida and Dfid), but no activity has been recorded since September 22, 2015, and prior data were distorted owing to crawlers and bots not being filtered out. Reliable website traffic data will enable monitoring of usage and changes therein over time. It will also make it possible to assess if and how much usage is affected by blog entries, tweets and other types of announcements.
 - i. Explore including a search function for gender and human rights. Currently, the database can be searched by country region, sector and budget. However, it is not possible to identify projects related to gender and human rights as themes that cut across these parameters.¹⁵
 - j. Explore a way to identify projects on a sub-national scale. UN-Habitat works uniquely in the U.N. system at the level of cities and its implementing partners often are at the local and community level as well. It is, therefore, relevant to be able to search for projects at this scale.

11 See <http://www.theglobalfund.org/en/>

12 See <http://www.gavi.org/>

13 See <http://www.iadb.org/en/office-of-strategic-planning-and-development-effectiveness/development-effectiveness,1222.html>

14 See <http://www.iadb.org/en/topics/transparency/integrity-at-the-idb-group/how-to-report-fraud-and-corruption,2872.html>

15 Although the TOR for this evaluation did not reference youth and climate change, these two themes have been streamlined in UN-Habitat as cross-cutting issues as well. UN-Habitat should, therefore, extend similar search functionalities for all four cross-cutting issues.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme, UN-Habitat, is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities. It is the focal point for urbanization and human settlement matters within the UN system. The agency supports national and local governments in laying the foundation for sustainable urban development.
2. UN-Habitat envisions well-planned, well-governed, and efficient cities and other human settlements, with adequate housing, infrastructure, and universal access to employment and basic services such as water, energy and sanitation. To achieve these goals, derived from the Habitat Agenda of 1996, UN-Habitat has set itself a medium-term strategy approach for each successive six-year period; Medium-Term Strategic and Institutional Plan (MTSIP) 2008-2013 and Strategic Plan 2014-2019.
3. The 'Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative' is part of UN-Habitat process of change initiated in 2011 to strengthen its transparency, accountability, productivity and efficiency as well as credibility and visibility. The overarching objective of the initiative is 'a transparent UN-Habitat that improves dialogue with the general public, donors and project countries'. The initiative is linked to two strategic entry points of the MTSIP:
 - Focus area 6: Excellence in management (35 per cent): EA 1: Staff are empowered to achieve planned results; EA 2: Institution aligned to deliver MTSIP results; EA 3: Results-based management principles applied.
 - Focus area 1: Effective Advocacy, monitoring and partnerships for sustainable urbanization (65 per cent): EA 1: Improved awareness of sustainable urbanization issues at the national and global levels; EA 2: Habitat Agenda Partners (HAP) actively participate in the formulation of sustainable urbanization policy; EA 3: Monitoring of sustainable urbanization conditions and trends improved.
4. Through the creation of an Open UN-Habitat web portal UN-Habitat is expected to be able to show donors, partners and the public where and with whom the agency is working, the decisions taken, as well as the funding and reporting related to each project implemented or supported by UN-Habitat. Specifically, the project has four expected accomplishments:
 - 1) Increased public trust and discourse / interaction with the organization;
 - 2) Increased productivity within the organization;
 - 3) Increased credibility with donors and partners;
 - 4) Renewed reputation for UN-Habitat as being a leader in the global call for aid transparency—including greater debate and discussion around the UN-Habitat Agenda.
5. The initiative addresses the need for UN-Habitat to be more directly accountable to states and global citizens in response to growing international trend to make aid and funding flows more transparent across all global development organizations. It builds on the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), which aims to standardize all data provided by donors and agencies so that it is searchable through a single online portal. By June 2015, IATI had 340 publishers, including Sweden, the United Kingdom, the USA, UNDP, UNFPA, UN-Habitat, the African Development Bank, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Oxfam.
6. The implementation strategy is to publish IATI data and create an Open UN-Habitat web portal through the deployment of an information management system that will be integrated into the existing UN-Habitat Project Accrual and Accountability System (PAAS) database. During the first phase of the project, UN-Habitat uploads documents from projects approved in 2012 and onwards. When the initial phase ends, phase two will include backdating the database to include all projects that are currently managed by UN-Habitat. The Open UN-Habitat is also expected to play an important role in the new UN-Habitat website that will be developed in parallel with the implementation of the Advocacy, Outreach and Communication Strategy, 2012-2016.

7. The project has established further expectations from donors, the global public and project countries for the sustained transparency of UN-Habitat thus ensuring the project continuity. Further, with the benefits that the project is expected to bring in terms of efficiency, promote accountability and credibility, UN-Habitat has a huge investment in keeping the project running into the future as a permanent feature of UN-Habitat.
8. The duration of the initiative was originally planned for 24 months from May 2012 to April 2014 for an amount of USD773,910 of which USD581,395 was funded by the donor, Sida, who also funded a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) from Sweden to work on the project. The project period, however, was subsequently revised to 48 months from January 2012 to December 2015 in alignment with the Cooperation Agreement between UN-Habitat and Sweden to support the implementation of the UN-Habitat Institutional and Strategic Plans, 2012-2015.

1.2 Project Management

9. The project is divided between the Office of Management (Operations Division) and the External Relations Division. The Management Office is responsible for the integration of the web portal with the PAAS, accounting for 35 per cent of the overall project, while the Advocacy, Outreach and Communication Branch runs the web portal long term and handle communication, the public campaign, including the launch of the website and IATI publishing.
10. It was anticipated that three full time staff members would be needed during the design and startup phase. To manage the system when fully developed, one full time staff member would be required.
11. The Project Office (Programme Division) was to be consulted throughout the project and have an advisory role to play in regard to integration of project documents into the PAAS and the web portal.

2. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

12. The evaluation of the Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative project is to provide UN-Habitat, its governing bodies and donors with an independent and forward-looking appraisal of the

agency's operational experience, achievements, opportunities and challenges. What will be learned from the evaluation findings are expected to play an instrumental role in informing decisions in the implementation of UN-Habitat's knowledge management strategy; in planning and designing other knowledge management activities, influencing management strategies, adjusting and correcting as appropriate, exploiting opportunities, and generating credible value for targeted stakeholders and beneficiaries and addressing global aid accountability priorities.

13. This evaluation is part of UN-Habitat's effort to perform systematic and timely evaluations of its projects and to ensure that UN-Habitat evaluations provide full representation of its mandate and activities, including evaluation of knowledge management related initiatives.
14. The evaluation is included in the 2014-2015 UN-Habitat Evaluation Plan and will synthesize achievements, results and lessons learned from the project. The sharing of findings from this evaluation will inform UN-Habitat and key stakeholders, including governing bodies, donors, partners, and Member States, on what was achieved and learned from the project.
15. Evaluation results will contribute to UN-Habitat's planning, reporting and accountability. The evaluation will also inform UN-Habitat management and Sida in shaping the new cooperation agreement between Sida and UN-Habitat for 2016-2019 and feeding back lessons into the design of knowledge management projects in UN-Habitat.

3. OBJECTIVES OF EVALUATION

16. UN-Habitat is undertaking this evaluation of the initiative in order to assess to what extent the Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative has been useful and relevant, extent to which the initiative's objective and expected accomplishments were achieved and resources used efficiently, as well as assess the sustainability of the initiative.
17. Key objectives of evaluation are:
 - a) To assess progress made towards the achievement of results at the outcome and outputs level of the project;

- b) To assess the relevance of supporting a transparent UN-Habitat that improves dialogue with the general public, donors and project countries by creating a 'open' web portal;
 - c) To assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the project in achieving its expected results. This will entail analysis of delivery of actual outcomes against expected outcomes, in terms of delivery of outputs, achievement of outcomes and long term effects;
 - d) To assess the extent to which the implementation approach of the Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative has worked well and what did not work, and was the approach enabling for UN-Habitat to define the results to be achieved through the initiative and to effectively deliver the initiative's outputs and to report on the initiative's performance;
 - e) To assess how well management of the initiative, given its knowledge management focus, has learned from and adjusted to changes during implementation;
 - f) To assess the extent to which cross-cutting issues of gender and human rights were integrated in the design, planning and implementation, reporting and monitoring of the initiative;
 - g) To bring forward opportunities that indicate potential for long-term partnership between UN-Habitat and IATI and other UN agencies implementing similar transparency initiatives;
 - h) To make recommendations on what needs to be done to effectively sustain UN-Habitat's knowledge management efforts towards improved transparency and accountability.
19. The period of the evaluation will cover the start of the initiative in May 2012 up to June 2015 and at a time when most of the outputs and activities of the project has been delivered.
 20. The evaluation analysis will be based on the construction of a Theory of Change of the initiative i.e., outlining the results chain and integrated with the project's Logical Framework (see Annex I: UN-Habitat Evaluation Model).

5. EVALUATION QUESTIONS BASED ON EVALUATION CRITERIA

21. The evaluation will base its rating assessments (see Annex 2: Rating of Performance by Evaluation Criteria) on the criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact outlook and sustainability in line with standards and norms of evaluation in the United Nations system:

Relevance

- To what extent objective and implementation strategy of the initiative is consistent with UN-Habitat's strategies and requirements of stakeholder and beneficiaries (UN-Habitat staff, donors, partners, global citizens)?
- To what extent is the initiative responsive to the UN-Habitat's MTSIP and Strategic Plan?
- To what extent are the initiative's intended outputs and outcomes consistent with international aid trends and priorities, and the needs of target stakeholders and beneficiaries?

Efficiency

- To what extent did the project management, the Office of Management, and the Advocacy, Outreach and Communication Branch have the capacity to design and implement the initiative? What has been the most efficient activities implemented by the initiative?
- To what extent were the institutional arrangements of UN-Habitat (at regional and headquarters levels) adequate? What type of (administrative, financial and managerial) obstacles did the initiative face and to what extent has this affected the project?

4. EVALUATION SCOPE AND FOCUS

18. The evaluation is expected to assess achievements, challenges and opportunities of the Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative through an in-depth evaluation of results achieved. The focus should be on the achievement of expected accomplishments, and to advice on the future of the initiative.

- To what extent did actual results achieve the expected results at output and outcome levels?
- To what extent have delays and other changes during implementation affected cost-effectiveness?

Effectiveness

- To what extent has the initiative's objective and intended results (outputs and outcomes) been achieved or how likely they are to be achieved in line with the Theory of Change (i.e., causal pathways) of the project? In this context cost-effectiveness assesses whether or not the costs of the project can be justified by the outcomes, and how learning (from experience) during implementation was taken into account.
- What types of products and services did UN-Habitat provide to stakeholders and beneficiaries through the initiative? What kind of positive changes to stakeholders and beneficiaries have resulted from products and services delivered?
- To what extent has the initiative proven to be successful in terms of ownership in relation to UN-Habitat and the needs of stakeholders and beneficiaries? To what extent and in what ways has ownership, or lack of it, impacted on the effectiveness of the project?

Impact Outlook

- To what extent has the initiative attained (or is expected to attain) results to the targeted stakeholders, beneficiaries, participants, whether individuals, institutions, etc.?

Sustainability

- To what extent did the initiative engage the participation of stakeholder and beneficiaries in design, implementation, monitoring and reporting?
- To what extent were the focus of the initiative aligned with international aid priorities and contributed to increased investments and donor funding to UN-Habitat?
- To what extent will the initiative be sustainable?
- To what extent did the initiative help foster or

strengthen partnerships within UN-Habitat, with IATI partners, donors and other development partners?

22. The evaluator may expound on the following issues, as necessary, in order to carry out the overall objectives of the evaluation.

- a) Performance issues: Effectiveness of monitoring and reporting of delivery and results of the project;
- b) Adequacy of institutional arrangements for the initiative and relevance of structures to achieve the planned results;
- c) Transparency: Identification of both positive implications and negative implications of the increased transparency and access of donors and citizens to UN-Habitat work; and increased ability of donors/ citizens tracking funding provided to UN-Habitat.
- d) Knowledge management: Influence on the quality of work and communications internally in UN-Habitat, its headquarters and relevant entities, and externally supporting greater dialogue on funding and urban development.
- e) Partnerships: Effect of the initiative on increasing the ability of UN-Habitat to create long term partnerships, especially in areas where actors have previously had little experience working with UN-Habitat.

6. STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

23. It is expected that this evaluation will be participatory, involving key stakeholders. Stakeholders will be kept informed of the evaluation processes including design, information collection, and evaluation reporting and results dissemination to create a positive attitude for the evaluation and enhance its utilization. Relevant UN-Habitat entities, IATI and IATI partners, Sida, relevant United Nations entities and agencies, and stakeholders and beneficiaries of the initiative may participate through a questionnaire, interviews or focus group discussions.

24. Sida, as key donor of the initiative, may take on a direct role in the evaluation. The programme corporation agreement between Sida and UN-

Habitat, Article 10, paragraph 5, specifies that “Sida shall be invited to participate in or nominate representative/s to participate at its own cost, in review or evaluation relevant to this agreement, including missions”.

7. EVALUATION METHODS

25. The evaluation shall be independent and be carried out in line with the evaluation norms and standards of the United Nations System. A variety of methodologies will be applied to collect information during evaluation. These methodologies include the following elements:

- a) Review of documents relevant to the project. Documents to be provided by the project management staff at Headquarters, and documentation available with Sida and partners (such documentation shall be identified and obtained by the evaluator).

Documentation to be reviewed will include:

- Original project documents and implementation plans;
- Annual Workplan;
- Monitoring Reports;
- Reviews;
- Donor reports and evaluations;
- Strategic plans, as deemed relevant, such as Medium-Term Strategic and Institutional Plan (MTSIP) and Strategic Plan, and other relevant UN-Habitat policy documents, in particular on knowledge management;
- Outreach and communication material on the Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative.

- b) Key informant interviews and consultations, including focus group discussions will be conducted with key stakeholders, including each of the implementing partners. The principles for selection of stakeholders to be interviewed as well as evaluation of their performance shall be clarified in advance (or at the beginning of the evaluation).

The informant interviews will be conducted to obtain qualitative information on the evaluation issues, allowing the evaluator to assess project relevance, efficiency and effectiveness.

- c) Surveys. In order to obtain quantitative information on stakeholder's views, questionnaires to different target audiences (project beneficiaries, IATI and relevant IATI partners, Sida and UN-Habitat staff) will be deployed to give views on various evaluation issues.
- d) The evaluator will describe expected data analysis and instruments to be used in the inception report. Presentation of the evaluation findings should follow the standard format of UN-Habitat Evaluation Reports (i.e., evaluation purpose and objectives, approach, findings [achievements and assessments], conclusions, lessons learned, recommendations).

8. ACCOUNTABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

26. The Evaluation Unit of UN-Habitat will commission a centralized evaluation of the initiative and it will manage the evaluation, supported by the External Relations Division/Advocacy, Outreach and Communication Branch. The Evaluation Unit will guide and ensure that the evaluation is contracted to a suitable candidate. The Evaluation Unit will advise on the code of conduct of evaluation and provide technical support as required. The Evaluation Unit will ensure that contractual requirements are met and approve all deliverables (Inception Report/Workplan, Draft and Final Evaluation Reports).

27. A reference group with members from the Evaluation Unit, External Relations Division/Advocacy, Outreach and Communication Branch, Management and Operations Division will be responsible for comments on the inception report and drafts of the evaluation report.

28. The evaluation will be conducted by one international consultant. The evaluator is responsible for meeting professional and ethical standards in planning and conducting the evaluation, and producing the expected deliverables in accordance with UN-Habitat evaluation policy and norms and standards for evaluation.

29. The evaluator will receive technical support from the Evaluation Unit, and the responsible Branch and Divisions. The initiative's project manager will provide logistical support.

9. QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF THE EVALUATOR

30. The evaluation shall be carried out by an international consultant. The Consultant is expected to have:
- a) At least 7 years of relevant experience working in development aid.
 - b) Extensive evaluation experience. The consultant should have ability to present credible findings derived from evidence and putting conclusions and recommendations supported by the findings.
 - c) Specific knowledge and understanding of UN-Habitat and its mandate.
 - d) Experience in working with projects/programmes in the United Nations system.
 - e) Advanced academic degree in political sciences, social economy, institutional theory, communication, or similar relevant fields.
 - f) It is envisaged that the consultant would have a useful mix of experience and familiarity with knowledge management and aid transparency/aid effectiveness issues.
 - g) Fluent in English (understanding, reading and writing) is a requirement.

10. WORK SCHEDULE

31. The evaluation will be conducted for a period of 1 ½ months, spread over 3 months, from July to September 2015. The evaluator is expected to prepare an inception work with a work plan that will operationalize the evaluation. In the inception report, understanding of the evaluation questions, methods to be used, limitations or constraints to the

evaluation as well as schedules and delivery dates to guide the execution of the evaluation, should be detailed.

32. A provisional timetable is as follows in the following page.

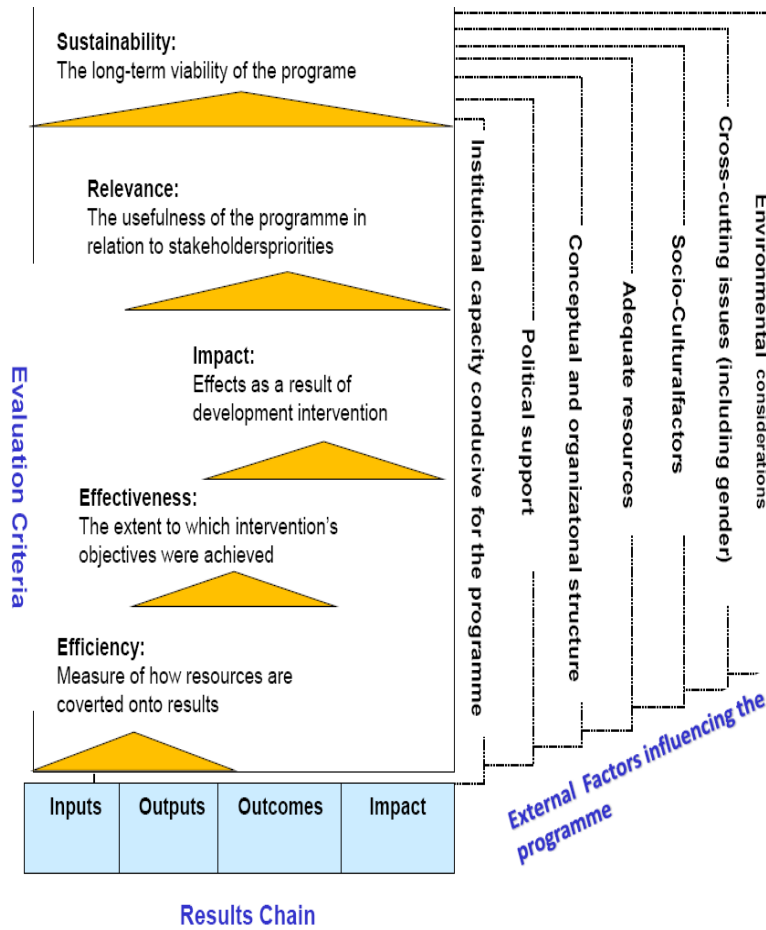
11. DELIVERABLES

33. The three primary deliverables for this evaluation are:
- a) Inception Report with evaluation work plan. Once approved, it will become the key management document for the evaluation, guiding evaluation delivery in accordance with UN-Habitat's expectations throughout the performance of contract.
 - b) Draft Evaluation Reports. The evaluator will prepare evaluation report draft(s) to be reviewed by UN-Habitat. The draft should follow UN-Habitat's standard format for evaluation reports.
 - c) Final Evaluation Report (including Executive Summary and Appendices) will be prepared in English and follow the UN-Habitat's standard format of an evaluation report. The report should not exceed 35 pages (excluding Executive Summary and Appendices). In general, the report should be technically easy to comprehend for non-specialists.

12. RESOURCES

34. The funds for the evaluation of the project are available from project's budget. Daily subsistence allowance will be paid only when working outside the official duty station of consultant. The remuneration rate of the consultant will be determined by functions performed, qualifications, and experience of the consultant. The consultants to conduct this evaluation should preferably be equivalent to P-5 and P-4 levels.

UN-HABITAT EVALUATION MODEL



RATING OF PERFORMANCE BY EVALUATION CRITERIA

Rating of performance	Characteristics
Highly satisfactory (5)	The programme/project had several significant positive factors with no defaults or weaknesses in terms of relevance/ appropriateness of project design/ efficiency/ effectiveness/ sustainability/ impact outlook.
Satisfactory (4)	The programme/project had positive factors with minor defaults or weaknesses in terms of relevance/ appropriateness of project design/ efficiency/ effectiveness/ sustainability/ impact outlook.
Partially satisfactory (3)	The programme/project had moderate to notable defaults or weaknesses in terms of relevance/ appropriateness of project design/ efficiency/ effectiveness/ sustainability/ impact outlook.
Unsatisfactory (2)	The programme/project had negative factors with major defaults or weaknesses in terms of relevance/ appropriateness of project design/ efficiency/ effectiveness/ sustainability/ impact outlook.
Highly unsatisfactory (1)	The programme/project had negative factors with severe defaults or weaknesses in terms of relevance/ appropriateness of project design/ efficiency/ effectiveness/ sustainability/ impact outlook.

Source: UN-Habitat Evaluation Unit 2015

ANNEX 2: LIST OF DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Australian Multilateral Assessment. March 2012 – UN-Habitat

Brief for PAAS integration Sept. 2012

Evaluation of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme. Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services. UN Economic and Social Council. E/AC.51/2015/2. 2015

Information disclosure policy, rev. January, 2013.

In-House Agreement of Cooperation Between the External Relations Division and the Office of Management, Nov. 14, 2013.

Memo for Executive Director on Implementation of an Open UN-HABITAT Transparency Initiative, n.d.

Memo on UN-Habitat transparency information session at UNEP, March 27, 2013.

Multilateral Aid Review; Ensuring maximum value for money for UK aid through multilateral organisations. Department for International Development, London, UK. March 2011.

Open UN-HABITAT Transparency Initiative letter to Ms. Ann Dismorr, Nov. 15, 2011.

Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative Request for Junior Professional Officer, Jan. 18, 2012.

Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative. Annual report 2012.

Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative. Progress report, June 2013.

Resource needs for UN-Habitat's interagency transparency work, Nov. 2013.

Suggested United Nations Open Data and Transparency Network, n.d.

UN-Habitat Scoping Mission To Sweden/UK For Open UN-Habitat Project, n.d.

UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative, March 2015.

UN-Habitat. Knowledge Management Policy. July 2015. Internal document.

UNEG Handbook for Conducting Evaluations of Normative Work in the UN System. Draft #3, May 31, 2013.

United Nations Transparency Working Group Background document, n.d.

Update On The Open UN-Habitat Transparency Project. Sept. 2012.

Update On UN-Habitat's Transparency Work, June 2013.

Work Programme of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and Budget of the United Nations. Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for the Biennium 2016, 22 January 2015, HSP /GC/25/5.

ANNEX 3: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

UN-Habitat

Thomas Melin, Ag.Head, External Relations Division

Jane Nyakairu, Ag. Head, Management and Operations Division

Jeanette Elsworth, Head, Press and Media, Advocacy, Outreach and Communications Branch,

Mohamed Robleh, Methods & Oversight Officer, Management and Operations Division.

Pontus Westerberg, Transparency Affairs and Digital Projects, External Relations Division.

Sida

Mikael Atterhog, Unit for Global Economy and Environment

Other

Cillian Domhnall, Transparency Officer, UNOPS

Martin Akerman, Head of Transparency, UNFPA

John Adams, Head of Business Innovation, DfID

ANNEX 4: WORK SCHEDULE FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE OPEN UN-HABITAT TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE

Task	
1.	Inception Report
1.1	Elaboration of approach and methodology
1.2	Identification of target groups for survey
1.3	Identification of target groups and individuals for interviews
1.4	Identification of documentation for desk review
1.5	Creation of work plan
1.6	Writing of Inception Report
2.	Desk Study
2.1	Review of documents antecedent to the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative
2.2	Identification and assessment of Open UN-Habitat website traffic data
3.	Instrument Development
3.1	Development of core survey questions (shared by all target groups)
3.2	Development of supplemental questions (specific to each target group)
3.3	Piloting and finalizing of survey instrument
3.4	Development of interview protocols (specific to target groups)
3.5	Testing and finalizing of interview protocols
4.	Survey
4.1	Bringing survey questions online
4.2	Collection of survey data
4.3	Analysis of survey data
4.4	Compilation of initial survey results for review by key UN-Habitat staff and management
5.	Interviews
5.1	Skype interviews with selected UN-Habitat staff and management
5.2	Skype interviews with other stakeholders, including representatives of Sida, the IATI working group, donors, and partner organizations
5.5	Compilation of initial interview results for review by key UN-Habitat staff and management
7.	Synthesis
7.1	Distillation of main findings
7.2	Formulation of conclusions and lessons learned
7.3	Articulation of recommendations
7.4	Writing of draft report
7.5	Incorporation of UN-Habitat and Sida comments on draft report
7.6	Finalizing of report

ANNEX 5: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR EVALUATION OF THE OPEN UN-HABITAT TRANSPARENCY INITIATIVE

Questions for interviews with UN-Habitat Staff and Relevant Stakeholders

The following questions have been drawn from the terms of reference for this evaluation and cover general points of interest related to the evaluation rubrics. In the interviews, respondents should feel free to interpret the questions according to their own experiences and to raise additional issues. Given the time available, it is unlikely that all questions can be addressed during the interviews, and respondents should feel encouraged to send supplemental written comments. All interviews are confidential, and the report will not identify responses with any names.

General questions

- How have you been involved with the initiative?
- How well has the initiative responded to needs and priorities of UN-Habitat?

A – Effectiveness

- To what extent has the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative accomplished the intended results (e.g., greater public trust, higher productivity w/in UN-Habitat, greater credibility with donors and partners, renewed reputation for UN-Habitat as a leader in aid transparency work)?
- To what extent has ownership of the initiative, or lack of it, impacted its effectiveness? What has been the involvement of other stakeholders in the design, implementation and monitoring of the initiative?
- To what extent do the outcomes of the project justify its costs?
- Recommendations to increase effectiveness?

B – Efficiency

- Are the resources (financial, human resources, time, expertise, etc.) adequate to achieve the expected accomplishments?
- Do the institutional arrangements provide substantive and administrative support in a cost-efficient manner?
- What has been the effect of the initiative on UN-Habitat's efficiency?

- What is the status of integration with Umoja? Challenges? What's required for it to be successful?

- Recommendations to increase efficiency?

C – Relevance

- What are UN-Habitat's most important strategic statements that underpin the initiative? What has been their significance in advancing the initiative?
- To what extent does the initiative respond to the needs and priorities of relevant stakeholders?
- How has the initiative affected transparency in UN-Habitat?

- Recommendations to increase relevance.

D – Impacts

- Has the initiative had the intended impacts? Evidence? If no, why not?
- Has the initiative affected donor perceptions of UN-Habitat? Willingness to fund UN-Habitat?
- Who have been the primary beneficiaries of the initiative and how have they benefitted?
- How can UN-Habitat increase awareness and use of the initiative? Internally? Externally?
- Recommendations to increase impact.

E – Sustainability

- What are the most important lessons learned from the implementation of the initiative?
- How should UN-Habitat engage with other stakeholders in the future of the initiative?
- How can future actions regarding the initiative help ensure and measure benefits to project beneficiaries?
- What are the budget requirements for continuing the initiative past December 2015?
- Recommendations to sustain or replicate the initiative.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS (specific actions)?

- To improve the Open UN-Habitat web portal?
- To strengthen UN-Habitat's wider transparency initiative?

ANNEX 6: SURVEY FINDINGS ON FREQUENCY OF RESPONSES

Professional identity	Count	Not mutually exclusive groups
UN-Habitat staff stationed at HQ in Nairobi	31	31
UN-Habitat outposted staff in regional or liaison office, UN-Habitat National Program Manager, other.	8	8
Implementing partner	19	25
International organization (e.g., UNEP, UNDP)	11	14
IATI technical working group.	6	11
National government	7	10
Donor	6	8
Other	9	14
IATI technical working group AND Other.	2	
Implementing partner AND Other	2	
International organization (e.g., UNEP, UNDP) AND IATI technical working group	1	
International organization (e.g., UNEP, UNDP) AND Implementing partner	1	
International organization (e.g., UNEP, UNDP) AND Implementing partner AND IATI technical working group	1	
National government AND Donor	1	
National government AND Donor AND Implementing partner AND IATI technical working group AND Other	1	
National government AND Implementing partner	1	

"Q1.3" Continent

	Freq
Africa	46
Asia	11
Europe	34
Latin America & the Caribbean	1
Middle East	6
North America	8
NA's	1

“Q2.1” Summing of Familiarity questions

	Freq
a. Never heard of it	34
b. Heard of it but don't know much about it	46
c. Have used the data on the web portal for my work	13
c. Have used the data on the web portal for my work	1
d. Have been involved in development of the Open UN-Habitat initiative	12
NA's	1

“Q4.1” Would you like to learn more about Open UN-Habitat?

	Freq
No	8
Yes	21
NA's	78

“Q5.1_1” To what extent is the Open UN-Habitat initiative supportive of:-a. International aid trends and priorities (including the International Aid Transparency and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness)

	Freq
very supportive	11
supportive	22
slightly supportive	3
not supportive	2
don't know	14
NA's	55

“Q5.1_2” To what extent is the Open UN-Habitat initiative supportive of:-b. Needs of UN-Habitat partners

	Freq
very supportive	6
supportive	19
slightly supportive	5
not supportive	5
don't know	16
NA's	56

“Q5.1_3” To what extent is the Open UN-Habitat initiative supportive of:-c. UN-Habitat's reputation as a leader in aid transparency

	Freq
very supportive	18
supportive	15
slightly supportive	5

not supportive	2
don't know	11
NA's	56

“Q5.1_4” To what extent is the Open UN-Habitat initiative supportive of:-d. Needs of UN-Habitat donors

	Freq
very supportive	9
supportive	18
slightly supportive	6
not supportive	3
don't know	14
NA's	57

“Q5.1_5” To what extent is the Open UN-Habitat initiative supportive of:-e. Needs of UN-Habitat beneficiaries

	Freq
very supportive	6
supportive	8
slightly supportive	13
not supportive	7
don't know	17
NA's	56

“Q5.1_6” To what extent is the Open UN-Habitat initiative supportive of:-f. UN-Habitat strategies (e.g., MTSIP) [Only asked of UN-Habitat staff.]

	Freq
very supportive	3
supportive	5
slightly supportive	2
not supportive	5
don't know	6
NA's	86

“Q5.1_7” To what extent is the Open UN-Habitat initiative supportive of:-g. Needs of UN-Habitat staff [Only asked of UN-Habitat staff.]

	Freq
very supportive	1
supportive	8
slightly supportive	3
not supportive	4
don't know	5
NA's	86

“Q5.3” Are the agency’s institutional arrangements (at regional and HQs levels) adequate for implementation of the Open UN-Habitat Transparency initiative? [Only asked of UN-Habitat staff.]

	Freq
definitely	2
probably	9
probably not	4
definitely not	4
don't know	5
NA's	83

“Q5.6_4” Have the following affected the Open UN-Habitat initiative?-a. Administrative/managerial hurdles [Only asked of UN-Habitat staff.]

	Freq
a great deal	5
somewhat	4
not at all	2
don't know	9
NA's	87

“Q5.6_5” Have the following affected the Open UN-Habitat initiative?-b. Financial hurdles [Only asked of UN-Habitat staff.]

	Freq
a great deal	2
somewhat	3
not at all	5
don't know	10
NA's	87

“Q5.6_6” Have the following affected the Open UN-Habitat initiative?-c. Delays [Only asked of UN-Habitat staff.]

	Freq
A great deal	2
somewhat	6
not at all	3
don't know	10
NA's	86

“Q5.6_7” Have the following affected the Open UN-Habitat initiative?-d. work culture [Only asked of UN-Habitat staff.]

	Freq
a great deal	7
somewhat	4
not at all	5
don't know	4
NA's	87

“Q5.6_8” Have the following affected the Open UN-Habitat initiative?-e. lack of leadership/strategic support [Only asked of UN-Habitat staff.]

	Freq
a great deal	9
somewhat	3
not at all	3
don't know	5
NA's	87

“Q5.6_9” Have the following affected the Open UN-Habitat initiative?-f. Other [Only asked of UN-Habitat staff.]

	Freq
a great deal	1
somewhat	0
not at all	0
don't know	12
NA's	94

“Q6.1_3” Have the actual results of the Open UN-Habitat initiative met the expected results listed below?-a. Increased credibility with donors and partners

	Freq
definitely	16
probably	16
probably not	4
definitely not	2
don't know	12
NA's	57

“Q6.1_7” Have the actual results of the Open UN-Habitat initiative met the expected results listed below?-b. “Renewed reputation for UN-Habitat as a leader in the global call for aid transparency”

	Freq
definitely	14
probably	20
probably not	3
definitely not	3
don't know	10
NA's	57

“Q6.1_12” Have the actual results of the Open UN-Habitat initiative met the expected results listed below?-c. Increased credibility with donors and partners [Only asked of UN-Habitat staff.]

	Freq
definitely	3
probably	7
probably not	2
definitely not	3
don't know	6
NA's	86

“Q6.3” Have the outcomes of Open UN-Habitat justified the project costs? [Only asked of UN-Habitat staff.]

	Freq
definitely	2
probably	4
probably not	1
definitely not	4
don't know	10
NA's	86

“Q7.1_4” Please, rate the extent to which Open UN-Habitat has affected:-a. UN-Habitat transparency

	Freq
very positively	12
somewhat positively	20
no effect	5
don't know	12
NA's	58

“Q7.1_5” Please, rate the extent to which Open UN-Habitat has affected:-b. UN-Habitat internal communications [Only asked of UN-Habitat staff.]

	Freq
very positively	1
somewhat positively	2
no effect	12
don't know	4
NA's	88

“Q7.1_6” Please, rate the extent to which Open UN-Habitat has affected:-c. UN-Habitat external dialogue regarding funding [Only asked of UN-Habitat staff.]

	Freq
very positively	2
somewhat positively	3
no effect	7
don't know	8
NA's	87

“Q7.1_7” Please, rate the extent to which Open UN-Habitat has affected:-d. Productivity of UN-Habitat [Only asked of UN-Habitat staff.]

	Freq
very positively	0
somewhat positively	3
no effect	12
don't know	5
NA's	87

“Q8.1_1” Has Open UN-Habitat fostered partnerships:-a. With UN-Habitat donors

	Freq
a great deal	10
somewhat	8
not at all	5
don't know	24
NA's	60

“Q8.1_2” Has Open UN-Habitat fostered partnerships:-b. With UN-Habitat partners

	Freq
a great deal	13
somewhat	6
not at all	3
don't know	25

NA's	60
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"Q8.1_3" Has Open UN-Habitat fostered partnerships:-c. Within UN-Habitat [Only asked of UN-Habitat staff.]

	Freq
a great deal	1
somewhat	5
not at all	5
don't know	8
NA's	88

"Q8.3" Have you learned anything from implementation of Open UN-Habitat?

	Freq
Yes	25
No	20
NA's	62

"Q9.1_11" To what extent would the following strengthen open.unhabitat.org web portal?-a. Including additional data

	Freq
a great deal	23
somewhat	11
not at all	3
don't know	7
NA's	63

"Q9.1_12" To what extent would the following strengthen open.unhabitat.org web portal?-b. Including user comments

	Freq
a great deal	14
somewhat	14
not at all	9
don't know	6
NA's	64

"Q9.1_13" To what extent would the following strengthen open.unhabitat.org web portal?-c. Publication in additional languages

	Freq
a great deal	11
somewhat	16
not at all	7
don't know	9
NA's	64

**“Q9.1_14” To what extent would the following strengthen open.unhabitat.org web portal?-d.
Better internal technical support [Only asked of UN-Habitat staff.]**

	Freq
a great deal	2
somewhat	6
not at all	5
don't know	4
NAs	90

**“Q9.1_15” To what extent would the following strengthen open.unhabitat.org web portal?-e.
Better external technical support [Only asked of UN-Habitat staff.]**

	Freq
a great deal	1
somewhat	5
not at all	6
don't know	4
NAs	91

**“Q9.1_16” To what extent would the following strengthen open.unhabitat.org web portal?-f.
Increasing internal training and awareness [Only asked of UN-Habitat staff.]**

	Freq
a great deal	9
somewhat	4
not at all	2
don't know	2
NAs	90

**“Q9.1_17” To what extent would the following strengthen open.unhabitat.org web portal?-g.
Stronger integration in UN-Habitat's activities [Only asked of UN-Habitat staff.]**

	Freq
a great deal	9
somewhat	5
not at all	1
don't know	2
NAs	90

**“Q9.1_18” To what extent would the following strengthen open.unhabitat.org web portal?-h.
Additional funding [Only asked of UN-Habitat staff.]**

	Freq
a great deal	5
somewhat	5
not at all	3
don't know	4
NAs	90

“Q9.1_19” To what extent would the following strengthen open.unhabitat.org web portal?-i. Other

	Freq
a great deal	7
somewhat	4
not at all	0
don't know	15
NA's	81

“Q10.1” To what extent does publication of funding data on the Open UN-Habitat web portal pose a risk?

	Freq
not risky	30
somewhat risky	8
risky	2
don't know	7
NA's	60

“Q11.1” Would you be available for follow up questions or a short interview?

	Freq
Yes	21
No	25
NA's	61

ANNEX 7 :SURVEY FINDINGS ON CROSS-TABULATIONS COMPARING UN-HABITAT STAFF AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

“Q1.3” Your continent of residence:

	Other(N=67)	UN-Habitat Staff(N=39)
Africa	22	79
Asia	12	8
Europe	48	5
Latin America & the Caribbean	0	3
Middle East	6	5
North America	12	0

“Q4.1” Would you like to learn more about Open UN-Habitat?

	Other(N=16)	UN-Habitat Staff(N=13)
No	31	23
Yes	69	77

“Q5.1_1” To what extent is the Open UN-Habitat initiative supportive of:-a. International aid trends and priorities (including the International Aid Transparency and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness)

	Other(N=30)	UN-Habitat Staff(N=22)
very supportive	23	18
supportive	47	36
slightly supportive	7	5
not supportive	0	9
don't know	23	32

“Q5.1_2” To what extent is the Open UN-Habitat initiative supportive of:-b. Needs of UN-Habitat partners

	Other(N=29)	UN-Habitat Staff(N=22)
very supportive	17	5
supportive	38	36
slightly supportive	7	14
not supportive	3	18
don't know	34	27

“Q5.1_3” To what extent is the Open UN-Habitat initiative supportive of:-c. UN-Habitat’s reputation as a leader in aid transparency

	Other(N=30)	UN-Habitat Staff(N=21)
very supportive	37	33
supportive	33	24
slightly supportive	10	10
not supportive	0	10
don’t know	20	24

“Q5.1_4” To what extent is the Open UN-Habitat initiative supportive of:-d. Needs of UN-Habitat donors

	Other(N=29)	UN-Habitat Staff(N=21)
very supportive	24	10
supportive	31	43
slightly supportive	14	10
not supportive	3	10
don’t know	28	29

“Q5.1_5” To what extent is the Open UN-Habitat initiative supportive of:-e. Needs of UN-Habitat beneficiaries

	Other(N=29)	UN-Habitat Staff(N=22)
very supportive	14	9
supportive	10	23
slightly supportive	21	32
not supportive	14	14
don’t know	41	23

“Q6.1_3” Have the actual results of the Open UN-Habitat initiative met the expected results listed below?-a. Increased credibility with donors and partners

	Other(N=30)	UN-Habitat Staff(N=20)
definitely	43	15
probably	27	40
probably not	10	5
definitely not	0	10
don’t know	20	30

“Q6.1_7” Have the actual results of the Open UN-Habitat initiative met the expected results listed below?-b. “Renewed reputation for UN-Habitat as a leader in the global call for aid transparency”

	Other(N=30)	UN-Habitat Staff(N=20)
definitely	37	15
probably	43	35
probably not	0	15
definitely not	0	15
don’t know	20	20

“Q7.1_4” Please, rate the extent to which Open UN-Habitat has affected:-a. UN-Habitat transparency

	Other(N=30)	UN-Habitat Staff(N=19)
very positively	27	21
somewhat positively	47	32
no effect	3	21
don't know	23	26

“Q8.1_1” Has Open UN-Habitat fostered partnerships:-a. With UN-Habitat donors

	Other(N=27)	UN-Habitat Staff(N=20)
a great deal	33	5
somewhat	15	20
not at all	7	15
don't know	44	60

“Q8.1_2” Has Open UN-Habitat fostered partnerships:-b. With UN-Habitat partners

	Other(N=28)	UN-Habitat Staff(N=19)
a great deal	36	16
somewhat	14	11
not at all	0	16
don't know	50	58

“Q8.3” Have you learned anything from implementation of Open UN-Habitat?

	Other(N=27)	UN-Habitat Staff(N=18)
Yes	74	28
No	26	72

“Q9.1_11” To what extent would the following strengthen open.unhabitat.org web portal?-a. Including additional data

	Other(N=28)	UN-Habitat Staff(N=16)
a great deal	64	31
somewhat	21	31
not at all	0	19
don't know	14	19

“Q9.1_12” To what extent would the following strengthen open.unhabitat.org web portal?-b. Including user comments

	Other(N=26)	UN-Habitat Staff(N=17)
a great deal	35	29
somewhat	35	29
not at all	19	24
don't know	12	18

“Q9.1_13” To what extent would the following strengthen open.unhabitat.org web portal?-c. Publication in additional languages

	Other(N=27)	UN-Habitat Staff(N=16)
a great deal	30	19
somewhat	41	31
not at all	7	31
don't know	22	19

“Q9.1_19” To what extent would the following strengthen open.unhabitat.org web portal?-i. Other

	Other(N=16)	UN-Habitat Staff(N=10)
a great deal	31	20
somewhat	25	0
not at all	0	0
don't know	44	80

“Q10.1” To what extent does publication of funding data on the Open UN-Habitat web portal pose a risk?

	Other(N=28)	UN-Habitat Staff(N=19)
not risky	68	58
somewhat risky	18	16
risky	7	0
don't know	7	26

“Q11.1” Would you be available for follow up questions or a short interview?

	Other(N=27)	UN-Habitat Staff(N=19)
Yes	52	37
No	48	63

Evaluation of the Open UN-Habitat Transparency Initiative

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