

# HabPost

Updates from  
UN-Habitat

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## All hands on deck: the whole-house approach to the Programme Review Committee (PRC)



# Editor's note

Dear Reader,

Among the many things that changed last year, our approach to vetting projects was probably one of the most salient for UN-Habitat. Find out in this issue what the Programme Review Committee is all about, its underlying principles, and the planned next steps.

And for those of you interested and involved in organizing meetings, developing creative content, and writing impactful stories, you will find information on new guidelines including tips and links to resources for a whole-house approach to communication.

Happy Reading,

**The HabPost Team**



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## Alerts

### TRAVEL TO AND FROM KENYA

- **Travellers from Brunei, Czech Republic, Kuwait, Spain and Thailand** are required to undergo mandatory quarantine at their own cost upon arrival in Kenya. The list of approved private quarantine facilities is [here](#) and the list of special quarantine hotel rates [here](#).
- **Travellers to Kenya** must present a negative PCR-based COVID-19 test certificate upon arrival. The test must have been carried out within 96 hours of departure and must be in English. Travellers are also expected to carry with them a Health Surveillance QR code obtained after filling out [this online form](#) and are required to present this code to the Port Health Services officials upon arriving at the airport. If landing during curfew hours, travellers need to arrange for pick-up by sending a copy of their air ticket and boarding pass to the person picking them up or make a booking by email to [unadmin@bcdtravel.co.ke](mailto:unadmin@bcdtravel.co.ke).
- **Travellers leaving Kenya** should check the requirements at their destination and transit points. When needed, travellers can obtain a COVID-19 test and a Trusted Travel (TT) code that can be verified by airlines and Port Health Authorities by visiting MP Shah Village Market, the Aga Khan University Hospital, Nairobi Hospital, the Warwick center outpatient clinics, Pathcare Laboratories, Nairobi West Hospital, Pathologists Lancet Kenya, or IOM.
- Remember, you can see at a glance the travel restrictions and entry requirements across the globe by visiting <https://infopages.traveldoc.aero/Information/Coronavirus>.





## Feature Story

# All hands on deck: the whole-house approach to the Programme Review Committee (PRC)

Management experts tell us that any solid business entity should have a system that vets new investments and ensures their technical soundness, quality, coherence, policy compliance and most importantly likelihood of return on investment. For UN-Habitat, whose bread and butter is increasingly projects, that system is the Programme Review Committee (PRC) – previously the Programme Advisory Group (PAG).

The PRC, chaired by the Deputy Executive Director, has two arms: the Working Group, comprising heads of various branches that review projects, and the Approval Group comprising divisional directors whose role is to approve projects, as the name suggests. The Deputy Executive Director's signs off on projects endorsed by the PRC Working Group, effectively giving the green light (or not) to proceed to the agreement signing stage and project implementation.

In 2020, the PRC Working Group convened 39 times and reviewed a total of 93 project documents. The COVID-19 pandemic stress-tested our ability to navigate volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity – VUCA for short, or what [KC Green](#) would probably coin “this is fine.” COVID-19 becoming the new norm, new rules of planning and execution were needed to succeed in uncertain times.

COVID-19 meant a rapidly changing world. Yesterdays' solutions to the

management of processes quickly became redundant. With the closure of our physical offices and departure from the UNON campus, we found ourselves submerged in an ocean of uncertainty, caught up in the nets of operational frustration, unable to swim freely. Clear project approval guidelines lacked, the PAG transitioned to the PRC – and with it the need for a new membership and new approval guidelines – and new projects still needed to be approved. To ensure

business continuity, the PRC needed adaptive systems, a smaller team for quick decision-making, new policies, and new working modalities.

Innovative solutions were found and the virtual PRC quickly became standard. In the course of the year, we tested new approaches, experimented on-the-spot, learnt and adapted while striving to maintain high project quality. It was a sprint for the most part, but turnaround time for project approval with virtual reviews was fast.

Agility meant breaking all internal silos and co-creating for better delivery. The PRC is therefore anchored in the guiding principle of whole-house approach to project design. Co-creation is intended to help project teams access the wisdom and experience of peers and to generate new, better and more innovative ways to tackle challenges. The collective approach to problem solving aims to improve decision-making, pool limited resources, and better mitigate risks. Combining resources and collective intelligence gives us a chance to better achieve outcomes and make these more cohesive.

With stronger emphasis on co-creation, teams are better able to look into their blind spots and what they need to learn. The process is about the attention and the intention colleagues bring to the table: co-creation is not competition, it is about combining efforts and creating innovative paths to results for the common good.

Accordingly, all projects approved by the PRC Working Group in 2021 were co-created. To fully understand the benefits of co-creation, the PRC will be reviewing these projects halfway through implementation. The intention is to track progress of projects and emerging challenges, mostly to keep them on course but also to collect contextual lessons or knowledge that could inform best practice and the PRC review mechanism.

And with the new PRC in place, financial oversight is tighter. Budgets are better aligned to policies and regulations and Programme Management Officers are no longer behind the scenes for project

design and follow-up. They are now part of the project team and are actively engaged in project budget design and justification and rationalization during PRC meetings.



## What next?

Moving forward, a few pieces of the projects puzzle are coming together for stronger processes and systems:

- The PRC Working Group is working closely with the Project Accrual and Accountability System (PAAS) and Integrated Planning, Management and Reporting (IPMR) teams to co-create an online PRC workflow for all decisions to be managed and archived in an online system.
- The PRC Working Group is reviewing the PRC guidelines for a revised version to be made available in July.
- The PRC Secretariat in collaboration with the Capacity Building Unit will be rolling out the [Results-Based Management \(RBM\) Policy](#), recently circulated by the Executive Director. An announcement regarding training on RBM is coming soon.
- The PRC Secretariat and the Strategic Planning team will be rolling out the Executive Board-approved [Results Framework](#), also recently dispatched by the Executive Director. Same for the Performance Measurement Plan, for which an announcement will follow shortly.
- Regions and Branches will soon be requested to submit their pipeline projects – along with guidelines on what constitutes hard, medium and soft pipelines – to allow the PRC to better plan for future meetings.
- And in a very near future, the PRC will be integrated with a revamped information management system and dashboard, not least to gauge how we can best track the results of the Strategic Plan using indicators from the Results Framework.



## What colleagues say while the PRC continues to learn and evolve

1 The need of the moment (coordination and co-creation) has led to the breakdown of silo thinking, and colleagues in the regions and HQs are interacting more. We should make sure we do not go back into silos.

2 With active co-creation and the dialogues that come with it, we are slowly becoming a creative community. We have higher levels of trust and positive energy among peers.

9 Many of us have not printed a single piece paper since last setting the foot in the office – and that's more than 12 months straight. Which begs the question: do we print out of necessity or out of habit?

3 The speed of decision-making has gone up surprisingly. Higher levels of trust has made us more agile and able to move fast.

8 We are more focused on what is important, and have cut out the non-essential.

4 We no longer run over time during meetings and seamlessly transition between each – a real time saver.

7 There is greater transparency on responsibilities and needs.

6 Collective learning has accelerated processes and responses to various situations.

5 We stopped spending weeks debating solutions. Instead, we have become more organic in problem solving: we do not let the quest for perfection get in the way of delivery.

For more information on the PRC, please contact [Rosa Muraguri-Mwololo](#).

# Getting our story (and events and logo) right: new communication guidelines

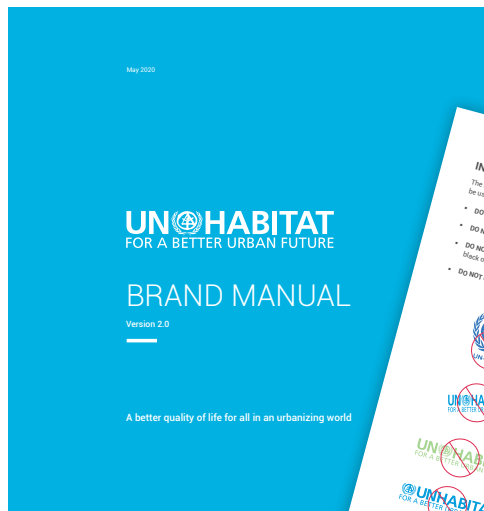
Do you need support in organizing an event, using our corporate logo, or writing an impactful story? UN-Habitat’s Communication and Media Section is a one-stop shop ensuring programmes and projects are widely publicized, material is well-written in a consistent style, our brand is instantly recognizable, donors are highly visible, and events are smoothly run.

The team has used its extensive experience to produce a series of concise guidelines for everyone to use. These aim to ensure consistent, reliable, and high quality outreach to convene major events, produce reports or stories, take photos, use social media or publicize donors. All the Guidelines are on a [Trello board](#) as well as on [Habnet](#).

## Events

The team’s latest tool, the [Events Management Guidelines](#), support one of UN-Habitat’s most important roles as a convener of events of all sizes – from the World Urban Forum to one-hour webinars. These Guidelines will support key partners and the Programme to plan dynamic events and ensure they are consistent with our vision, mission and strategic plans. The Guidelines include

useful pointers on planning, drawing up agreements, logistics, minimizing risk and organizing evaluations. For more information and the latest recommendations on online and hybrid meetings, contact [Silvia Ragoss](#).

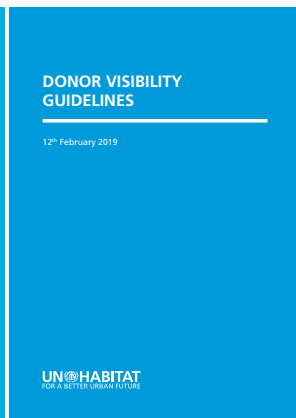
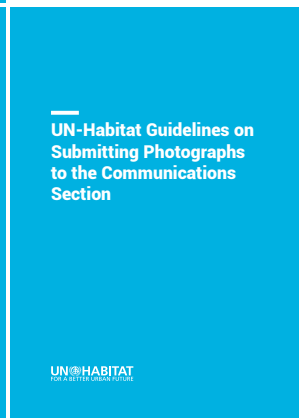
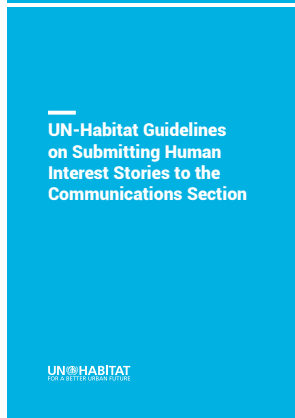
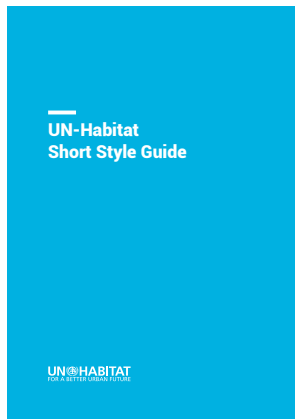


## Logo

“Don’t do it.” If giant sportswear company Nike is able to play around with its communication, it’s because it has established for itself a strong universal slogan. Similarly, all our events as well as our material, signs and exhibitions, must use the UN-Habitat brand correctly. As the [Brand Manual](#) emphasizes, branding needs to be consistent and recognizable. The most important part of our logo consists of the UN-Habitat logo and the tagline (For a Better Urban Future) – in UN blue whenever possible.

The Manual includes information on Roboto, our corporate font, and our secondary font Calibri, templates for letter heads, PowerPoints, branded material and signage, advice on co-branding and branding in UN languages. Get in touch with [Victor Mgenji](#) if you need more information.





## Stories

As well as using the correct branding, we need a clear, consistent writing style to communicate with all stakeholders. The main UN style guide is the comprehensive (but huge) [United Nations Editorial Manual](#). The [UN-Habitat Short Style Guide](#) is just three pages outlining key points such as basic grammar, using UK spelling and advice on writing dates, time, numbers, titles, acronyms, abbreviations and much more. Getting the spelling and grammar right is an important ingredient in producing compelling stories to create a buzz around UN-Habitat projects and explain our impact to the public, donors, national regional and local governments, UN agencies, partners, the private sector and other stakeholders.

The [Guidelines on how to write and submit Human Interest Stories](#) give useful advice on how to tell stories from the beneficiaries' viewpoint and how to include information about the donor, quotes and figures on impact. The best stories feature on the front page of the corporate website, in Urban Impact, the Annual Report, donor reports and other platforms, and are linked through social media to reach the widest possible audience.

But a human interest story and social media post wouldn't be complete without great photos. The [Guidelines on Photography](#) explain how to take compelling images while the [Guidelines on Social Media](#) explain how UN-Habitat uses various platforms, hashtags, tagging and other ways to maximize

exposure. Stories, photos and social media can provide excellent visibility for our donors along with other platforms including events, websites and the media. Apply our [Donor Visibility Guidelines](#) to all UN-Habitat initiatives that receive earmarked funding from donors, or speak to [Jane Nyakairu](#) for more information.

And for those writing reports, the [Publications Citation and Referencing Guidelines](#) is a useful, short version of the advice found in the [United Nations Editorial Manual](#). The [Guidelines for peer review](#) might also come in handy depending on the type of publication you're working on.

## Communicate it away!

Questions, ideas? Contact Susannah Price, Chief of Communications and Media Section, at [susannah.price@un.org](mailto:susannah.price@un.org).

## Vacancies

**Role**  
Chief of Knowledge and Innovation Branch, D1  
**Duty Station**  
Nairobi, Kenya  
**Deadline**  
4 June 2021  
[Apply here](#)

**Role**  
Senior Programme Officer, Human Settlements, P5  
**Deadline**  
25 May 2021  
[Apply here](#)

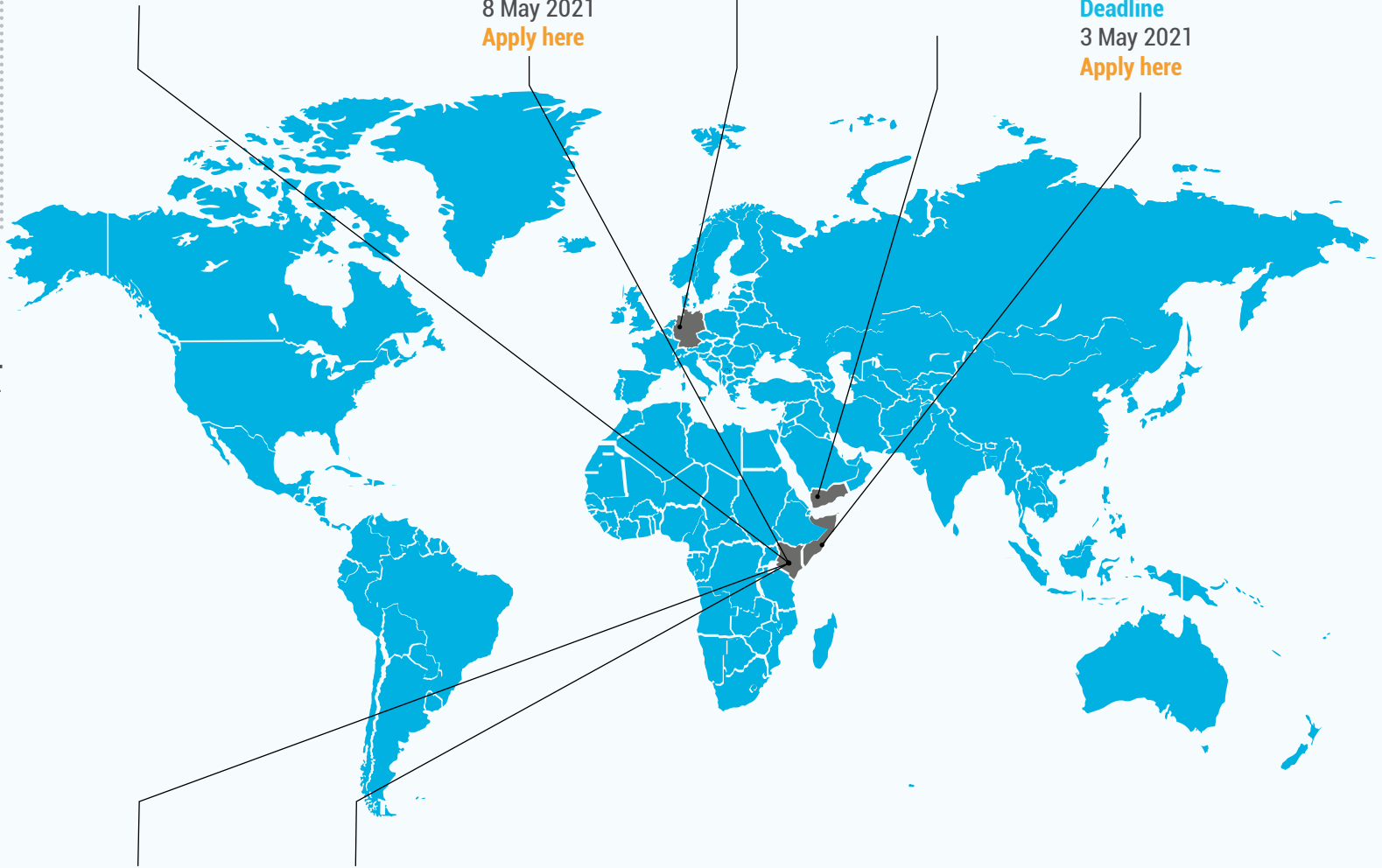
**Role**  
Programme Management Officer, Human Settlements, P3 (Temporary Job Opening)  
**Duty Station**  
Nairobi, Kenya  
**Deadline**  
8 May 2021  
[Apply here](#)

**Role**  
Programme Management Assistant (Project Post), G6  
**Duty Station**  
Bonn, Germany  
**Deadline**  
7 May 2021  
[Apply here](#)

**Role**  
Programme Management Officer (Project Post), P4  
**Duty Station**  
Sana'a, Yemen  
**Deadline**  
20 May 2021  
[Apply here](#)

**Role**  
Programme Management Officer, Human Settlements, P3 (Temporary Job Opening)  
**Duty Station**  
Mogadishu, Somalia  
**Deadline**  
3 May 2021  
[Apply here](#)

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**Role**  
Associate Programme Management Officer (Project Post), P2  
**Duty Station**  
Nairobi, Kenya  
**Deadline**  
7 May 2021  
[Apply here](#)

**Role**  
Programme Management Officer (Project Post), P3  
**Duty Station**  
Nairobi, Kenya  
**Deadline**  
5 May 2021  
[Apply here](#)





## Learning

### Newsletter-ception (newsletters in our newsletter, if you wish)

Learning isn't just about sitting in a classroom or taking an online course. It's also about learnings – the lessons we take away and what we learn by experience. Quite a few things are happening around the house at the moment and colleagues are taking up their pens to keep us knowledgeable.

#### Urban Digest

– *Lebanon Country Office (external)*

UN-Habitat Lebanon has rebranded its quarterly newsletter. Now called Urban Digest, the newsletter provides donors, partners, UN Agencies and local governmental and non-governmental actors in Lebanon a glimpse of the work that the Programme is undertaking in the country. Featuring a mix of beneficiary-focused stories, key programmatic highlights and upcoming activities, UN-Habitat Lebanon's Urban Digest keeps readers informed about the innovative, community-led projects underway in the Lebanon office. This quarter's edition, "[Urban Digest: 2020 Roundup While Looking Ahead](#)" covers the Lebanon Country Programme's response to the Beirut blast, urban crisis response interventions, the COVID-19 response, capacity-building and normative work, and plans for 2021 and beyond.



Future issues will be posted on the UN-Habitat website. For any inquiries, please reach out to [Taina Christiansen](#) or [Lubna Elmahdy](#).

#### UN-Habitat Bulletin

– *Stories of impact for a better urban future in the Philippines (external)*

The UN-Habitat Bulletin is UN-Habitat Philippines' bi-monthly newsletter (read, "every two months") that shares updates and stories of impact of collaboration across UN-Habitat's different country projects. Launched in 2021, the newsletter aims to keep partners and stakeholders informed and engaged, and bring cities and communities to life by showcasing stories from the ground.



Colleagues interested in subscribing to the newsletter may get in touch with [Roanne Duran](#).

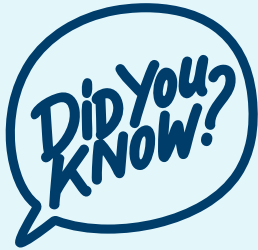
#### Nairobi River Regeneration Initiative (NRR) Newsletter (internal)

The freshly launched monthly Nairobi River Regeneration Initiative (NRR) newsletter aims to update all colleagues on ongoing work on the Nairobi River Regeneration Initiative and foster learning and internal collaboration. A joint flagship initiative of the Nairobi Metropolitan Services and UN-Habitat, the NRR is envisaged to breathe new life into Nairobi's rivers and biodiversity, and reconnect the city to people and nature.



The newsletter is disseminated by means of broadcast. Contact [Laura Petrella](#), [Cecilia Andersson](#), or [Mark Ojal](#) for more information!





## The call for nominations for the 2021 UN-Habitat Scroll of Honour Award is open!

You are encouraged to disseminate this information to your partners and relevant stakeholders. Detailed guidelines for submitting a nomination (which must be in English) and the online nomination form are [here](#). The deadline for submitting the online form is 8 August 2021.

Up to five winners will be chosen to receive a Scroll of Honour Award at the Global Observance of the World Habitat Day on Monday 4 October 2021. In choosing the award winners, the Selection Committee will look at best practices and innovative solutions achievements related to Sustainable Development Goal 11 and the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Attention will be given to achievements related to the World Habitat Day 2021 theme of *Accelerating urban action for a carbon-free world*. World Habitat Day will amplify the global [Race to Zero](#) Campaign and UN-Habitat's [ClimateAction4Cities](#) and encourage local governments to develop actionable zero-carbon plans in the run up to the international climate change summit COP26 in November.



For more information on the Scroll of Honour, please contact [Silvia Ragoss](#).



Download the [guidelines](#).



Fill out the online [nomination form](#).



The UN-Habitat Scroll of Honour Award, which was launched in 1989, is one of the most prestigious human settlements awards. The Award acknowledges initiatives which have made outstanding contributions in the field of human settlements including through the provision of affordable, accessible and adequate housing and improving human settlements and the quality of urban life to leave no one behind.

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## Participate!

Want your story featured? Submit your ideas or reach out to us at [unhabitat-habpost@un.org](mailto:unhabitat-habpost@un.org).

### Editorial Team

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