



Introductory Statement by Dr. Joan Clos, Executive Director

Six-Monthly Country Activities Report

Agenda Item 6

**HSP/CPR/44/6
Nairobi, 3 April 2012**

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, I would like first of all to congratulate the staff working in our Regional Offices for fully supporting the Office of the Executive Director in reforming the former Regional Technical Cooperation Division (RTCD) to create more robust regional offices with wider functions in the Africa, Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean regions. We have divided the former Regional Office for Africa and Arab States (ROAAS) into two separate offices for Africa and the Arab States.

I would like to congratulate the Government of Kenya for successfully hosting the recent AMCHUD 4 Conference in Nairobi from 20 to 23 March 2012. UN-Habitat will continue providing substantive support to AMCHUD for as long as this is required.

The six-monthly report on UN-Habitat country activities that I am presenting today is divided into two sections. The first section contains a selected number of new and closed projects. The second section presents a tabular overview of all projects that have been initiated or completed in each region during the past six months.

While implementing the organizational reforms, we are developing new projects, opening new activities and creating business to respond to the needs of Member States. In this respect, since Jan 2012, already 16 projects with a total value of US\$23.5 million have been approved by the Project Office.

During the last six months, we have closed or opened several projects, but I will only highlight a few of these.

In the Arab States, we have concluded activities under the project entitled '*Improving Quality and Relevance of Technical and Vocational Education and Training*' in Iraq. This was a joint-project between UN-Habitat, UNESCO and ILO which supported the rehabilitation and modernization of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training sector in Iraq by re-orienting and improving the system to prepare young people for self-employment in industry, construction or the services sector.

In Asia, we have finalized a US\$28 million peace building project in Afghanistan: the '*Peace-Building through Consolidation of Community Solidarity - Phase II*'. The project aimed at securing and stabilizing urban and rural areas across the country by responding to the needs of displaced persons, demobilized combatants and returnees through community empowerment, enhancing their access to basic services and improving their livelihoods.

UN-Habitat continues to initiate new projects. In the period under review, new projects were started in Africa, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, and in the Latin America/Caribbean region.

In the Arab States, we have embarked upon three important new projects. The first is titled '*Towards Sustainable Solutions for Improved Living Conditions of Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon*'. The second is the '*Initiating Durable Shelter Solutions for Iraqi IDPs and*

Returnees”, and the third is *“Urban Planning Support Programme for Palestinian Communities in East Jerusalem”*.

In Africa, we have embarked on the *“Training and Capacity Building Component of the Lake Victoria Water Supply and Sanitation Programme - Phase II in 15 Secondary Towns of the East African Community partner States”*. The projects in this programme are mainly funded by the African Development Bank, the Swiss Development Cooperation, the European Commission and the Government of the United States of America.

In Asia, four new projects have commenced, including the *“Emergency Shelter Support to the Most Vulnerable Population of Sindh”* and the *“Life-saving WASH Interventions for Flood Affected Populations”*, both in Pakistan; and the *“Post-Cyclone Giri Community-Based Emergency and Early Recovery Initiative”* in Myanmar. In Indonesia, we have started the *“Making Urban Investment Planning Work: Building on the Indonesian City Development Strategy (CDS) Process”*. These projects are mainly funded by the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (UN-CERF), Cities Alliance and European Commission.

In the Caribbean we have started five new projects, two of which I would like to highlight. The first is *“Debris Management in Support to the Return Home of Populations Affected by the Earthquake in Port-au-Prince”* and the second is *“Programme to Support the Reconstruction of Housing and Neighbourhoods”*, both in Haiti. These projects are funded by multiple donors and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Based on the completed and new projects in the current reporting period, you will have noticed that, despite the challenges associated with field work and programme execution, UN-Habitat keeps a dynamic portfolio responsive to regional and national needs and requests. Our country projects are all in line with the priorities defined in the MTSIP.

Finally, Mr, Chairman, I would like to inform you that UN-Habitat is already working with governments and partners in the Arab States in finding new ways of reconstruction and rehabilitation in countries affected by recent political uprising.

A Regional Office for Arab States in Cairo has been formally opened, with funding support for the next 5 years from the Government of Egypt. In order to reaffirm our commitment to the region, we will be responding to the invitation of the Government of Kuwait to participate in the next International Conference on Urban Development and Municipal Management, to be held in Kuwait City from 7 to 9 May 2012. Around the time of this conference, I will also take the opportunity to hold discussions with the Governments of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.

If you require more detailed information on our regional and country projects and programmes, please contact the Director of the Project Office or the respective Regional Offices in UN-Habitat.

Thank you for your attention.