



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME
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FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

TERMS OF REFERENCE JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL OFFICER (JPO)

Position: Urban and Regional Planning for Sustainable Urban Development

Section: Planning and Finance Section

Location: UN-Habitat, Nairobi, Kenya

BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme, UN-Habitat, is mandated by the UN General Assembly to promote socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all. Its mandate is guided by key global frameworks, including the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, the Habitat Agenda, the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements, the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium, and UN General Assembly Resolution A/56/206.

Global Solutions Division

The Global Solutions Division leads UN-Habitat's normative, technical, and strategic work by developing global guidance, tools, and frameworks that support sustainable urbanisation. The Division acts as a centre of excellence, translating global commitments into actionable urban solutions, and ensuring coherence across thematic areas. Through close collaboration with Regional and Country Offices, the Division supports operational delivery while continuously drawing lessons from implementation on the ground to refine, update, and strengthen its normative work.

Planning, Finance and Policy Branch

Within the Global Solutions Division, the Planning, Finance and Policy Branch hosts UN-Habitat's work on urban planning and finance, and urban policy and legislation. The Branch develops normative guidance, methodologies, and tools that support national and local governments in shaping inclusive, resilient, and sustainable cities. The Branch provides technical and policy support to Country Offices and partners, and uses evidence and learning from city level application to improve guidance, strengthen standards, and respond to emerging urban challenges.

Planning and Finance Section

The Planning and Finance Section sits within the Planning, Finance and Policy Branch and leads the Agency's integrated work on urban planning and urban finance. It develops and disseminates normative frameworks, tools and methodologies that connect spatial planning with financing and implementation mechanisms at global, regional and local levels. The Section supports cities and Country Offices in aligning plans with capital investment strategies, municipal finance systems and funding instruments, ensuring that urban development is climate responsive, socially inclusive and economically viable.

Through its work on urban regeneration, public space, local finance, urban health and social inclusion, the Section promotes area based and participatory approaches that link planning, budgets and investment decisions. By leveraging planning and financing tools together, it advances finance ready projects and

strengthens equitable access to basic services, green and clean public space, livelihoods and safe living conditions, contributing directly to resilience, well being and sustainable urban transformation.

The position is attached to the Section and is supervised by the Chief of the Section.

DUTIES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTED OUTPUTS

Within delegated authority, the Associate Programme Officer will be responsible for the following duties:

- Provides support to the overall management of the Planning and Finance Section; supports the facilitation of the Section wide activities and Section's inputs to UN-Habitat wide activities; provides substantive support to development of the Section work plan; works with project managers and other colleagues for the monitoring of the Section workplan and activities; assist in organizing complex activities and events;
- Works with key clients to facilitate the development, implementation and evaluation of the Section workplan and programmes in the field of integrated urban and territorial planning and finance;; monitors and analyzes specific aspects of programme/project development and implementation as assigned; reviews relevant documents and reports; identifies problems and issues to be addressed and recommends corrective actions; liaises with relevant parties; identifies and tracks follow-up actions.
- Carries out basic research on selected aspects of UN-Habitat's programmes, operations and other activities, etc., in the field of urban and territorial planning, municipal finance and local economic development, including their application to emerging issues such urban health, climate change, resilience and social inclusion; collects, analyzes and present statistical and financial data and other information gathered from diverse sources.
- Provides substantive support for normative development as well as to the development, implementation and evaluation of the Section thematic work related to planning in collaboration with partners at city, country and global level, including the review and analysis of emerging issues and trends, participation in evaluations or research activities and studies.
- Provides planning and basic financial and investment alignment support to partners in a variety of contexts, including developing countries and crisis affected areas, in relation to city-wide planning process, investment prioritization and urban regeneration, including review of reports, tools, plans and formulation of recommendations.
- Participates in survey and assessment initiatives; assists with the design of data collection tools; reviews, analyzes and interprets responses; identifies issues and prepares preliminary conclusions, including basic financial and implementation feasibility considerations;
- Contributes to the preparation of written outputs such as draft background papers, analytical notes, sections of reports and studies, inputs to publications and knowledge products related to planning and finance integration;
- Provides administrative and substantive support to consultative meetings, conferences and technical workshops, including proposing agenda topics, identifying participants, preparing background documents and presentations and supporting logistics;

- Undertakes outreach activities; participates in the development of training workshops and seminars; makes presentations on assigned topics; assists in the development of communication and knowledge materials for the Section;
- Participates in field missions, including provision of substantive and administrative support, data collection, focus groups, planning charrettes and stakeholder consultations;
- Coordinates activities related to programme and project funding, including preparation of project documents and submissions, progress and financial reporting, budget tracking and preparation of related programme documentation;
- Performs other duties as required.

TRAVEL

The JPO will undertake official missions related to her/his work programme in different cities for, e.g., guidelines and tool application and training purposes. In most cases, funds can be made available through project sources. It is desirable for the JPO to participate in at least one relevant international conference per year.

TRAINING AND LEARNING ELEMENTS

The JPO will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of training courses provided by the Human Resources Management Service (HRMS) of the United Nations Office of Nairobi (UNON). The courses include language courses in all United Nations languages, computer training, management courses, etc. Within the PFS team, the JPO will have the opportunities of on-the-job training on subject such as project development (e.g. UMOJA), reporting, budgeting, management information systems, advanced software packages, web-page design, desktop publishing techniques, database management. In general, the JPO will have the opportunity to gain experience in working with the United Nations system, as well as with working with international institutions and national and local governments. It is expected that the JPO attends at least one international conference/workshop/seminar per year on a relevant topic and s/he will be exposed to international and local best practices in his field of work, thus expanding her/his understanding of development issues related to urban policies and urban planning.

QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND COMPETENCIES REQUIRED

Advanced university degree (Master's degree or equivalent) in urban planning, sustainable urban development, regional and territorial planning, architecture, development studies, urban economics, municipal finance, urban health with a focus on urban systems, or a related field.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- A minimum of two years of progressively responsible experience in urban and territorial planning, urban development, urban regeneration, municipal finance, local economic development or a related field is required.
- Experience working on sustainable urban development programmes in developing countries or crisis affected contexts is desirable.

- Experience supporting participatory and area based planning processes, urban regeneration initiatives, public space projects or city level planning instruments is desirable.
- Experience in research, data analysis, preparation of analytical reports, and contribution to policy, normative guidance or technical tools is desirable.
- Familiarity with integrated approaches linking spatial planning, municipal finance, climate action, urban health and social inclusion to urban development and investment processes is desirable.
- Experience in project coordination, monitoring and reporting, including budget tracking, preparation of programme documentation and results based management, is desirable.

LANGUAGES

English and French are the working languages of the United Nations Secretariat. Fluency in English, both written and spoken, is required.

Knowledge of another official United Nations language, particularly French, Arabic or Spanish, is desirable.

COMPETENCIES

- **Professionalism:** Knowledge and understanding of current practice and theory of urban and territorial planning, municipal finance and integrated urban development, and their contribution to sustainable and inclusive growth. Familiarity with linking spatial planning, investment planning and implementation processes. Interest in the application of planning and finance tools to public space, urban development, urban regeneration, urban health, climate action and social inclusion. Demonstrates professionalism, efficiency and sound judgement in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results, and remains composed under pressure.
- **Planning and Organizing:** Develops clear goals aligned with strategic priorities; identifies and sequences priority activities; integrates planning, budgeting and implementation considerations; anticipates risks and proposes mitigation measures; monitors progress against outputs and adjusts actions as necessary; uses time and resources effectively.
- **Communication:** Speaks and writes clearly and effectively; is able to present complex spatial, financial or policy concepts in an accessible manner; can express ideas visually through diagrams, drawings or presentations; listens actively and engages in constructive dialogue; tailors communication to different audiences including technical experts, government counterparts and community stakeholders.
- **Teamwork:** Works collaboratively with colleagues to achieve organizational goals; solicits input by genuinely valuing others' ideas and expertise; is willing to learn from others; places team agenda before personal agenda; supports and acts in accordance with final group decision, even when such decisions may not entirely reflect own position; shares credit for team accomplishments and accepts joint responsibility for team shortcomings.

SUPERVISION

The Junior Professional Officer (JPO) will be part of, and work with the Planning and Finance Section located in UN-Habitat, reporting to the Section Chief of the PFS and the Director of the Global Solutions Division.

The supervisor will be responsible for the proper placement of the JPO with appropriate office space, computer equipment and telephone connection. Supervisors will introduce the JPO to the Division and to relevant sections in the whole agency. Both will elaborate on the integration of the JPO's duties into the current work programme and guide the development of the e-Performance documents. General objectives, desired results and anticipated problems will be discussed beforehand with the JPO. The first and additional supervisors will obtain regular feedback on the progress of activities. The JPO is expected to carry out the duties under the general supervision and to consult with the supervisors on issues of policy or other sensitivity matters. Final results of each set of activities will be reviewed for attainment and quality of work. The JPO will be part of the section team and participate in the regular team meetings. As part of its duties, the JPO will take part in missions in the field, in most cases together with at least one other staff, and be encouraged to take initiative during the missions.