

PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT BRANCH, GLOBAL SOLUTIONS DIVISION
TERMS OF REFERENCE
JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL OFFICER (JPO)

Position: Junior Professional Officer (Cities and Climate Change Specialist)
Branch: Programme Development Branch
Location: UN-Habitat Headquarters, Nairobi, Kenya

BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

Strengthened Climate Action and improved Urban Environment in an urbanizing world

Urbanization is one of the global megatrends of our time, unstoppable and irreversible. In 30 years from now, two-thirds of the world's population is likely to live in urban areas. Ninety per cent of urban growth will occur in less developed regions, such as East Asia, South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, at a rapid pace and in situations in which capacity and resources are most constrained and development challenges most intense. Urbanization in those parts of the world is largely unplanned, fuelling the continuous growth of informal or slum settlements. Although the world has made significant progress in reducing poverty since 2000, inequality is rising in the cities of both the developing and developed world.

It is clear that climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing cities. Cities account for between 60 and 80 per cent of energy consumption and generate as much as 70 per cent of human-induced greenhouse gas emissions. Climate change projections predict significant impact on human development progress within the coming few decades with significant implications for urban systems and the urban poor. Urgent and radical action to transform urban systems to contribute to achieving the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius is required well before 2030.

UN-Habitat's Response

The New Urban Agenda sets out a shared vision for cities and other human settlements towards strengthened climate action responses and an improved urban environment. The Paris Agreement defines roles for countries and stakeholders in respect of all elements of climate action. In response to the increasing challenges posed by climate change, Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change have developed nationally determined contributions as a commitment to advance the Paris Agreement. In 2017, a review by UN-Habitat of 164 nationally determined contributions found that 113 had moderate or strong urban content, predominantly focused on adaptation, or a combination of adaptation and mitigation actions, while only a very small number focused exclusively on mitigation.

In UN-Habitat's Strategic Plan 2020-2023, climate change is elevated to one of the four Domains of Change implemented through Sub-programme 3: Strengthened Climate Action and improved urban Environment. This domain of change focuses on the intersection of cities and other human settlements with climate and the environment. This domain of change comprises three outcomes that together aim to strengthen climate action and improve urban environments to create systemic

change by designing integrated solutions that balance the patterns of human life and the built and natural environments in cities. Those outcomes are as follows:

- (a) Reduced greenhouse gas emissions and improved air quality;
- (b) Improved resource efficiency and protection of ecological assets;
- (c) Effective adaptation of communities and infrastructure to climate change.

The elevation to a Sub-programme provides for an opportunity to support the re-orientation of UN-Habitat's climate portfolio and help build UN-Habitat's climate change and urban environment programme as well as better align and coordinate with UN sister agencies UNEP, UNDP, UNFCCC and other leading partners.

DUTIES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTED OUTPUT

1. Research, document and evaluate existing innovative approaches and experiences at the global level with regard to models for improving city climate action, particularly in developing countries and emerging economies.
2. Initiate documentation and dissemination of case studies on best-practice models and effective national and/or local policy frameworks to address the role of cities and the private sector in the delivery of climate adaptation and mitigation action.
3. Review emerging policy, financing and technological developments and commercial applications in city climate adaptation and mitigation measures and assist in developing appropriate policies, plans, strategies, and business models that can be piloted in UN-Habitat technical cooperation programmes on climate change.
4. Undertake research and develop guidance materials on improved urban climate action based on UN-Habitat and partner knowledge and best-practices, furthering integration between normative and operation activities.
5. Assist in mobilizing additional resources for the expansion of UN-Habitat's climate action and urban environment portfolio by identifying opportunities for strategic partnerships with climate finance institutions, the private sector, municipalities, donors, foundations and international organizations and by preparing proposals for funding;
6. Participate in scoping missions under global, regional and country programmes, to capture knowledge, prepare proposals and work plans for specific interventions
7. Assist in the design and delivery of technical cooperation and training activities on city climate action
8. Work implies frequent interaction with counterparts, technical staff in relevant branches and units and in UN funds, programs and other UN specialized agencies. Representatives

and officials in national and local governments, international organizations, partners, consultants.

TRAVEL

Occasional Travel to key conferences and in relation to on-going projects will be required once the UN COVID travel restrictions are gradually eased.

TRAINING AND LEARNING ELEMENTS

The incumbent will be encouraged and supported to engage in general training and learning activities both at the UN campus in Nairobi, at external training events and through electronic courses. The Human Resources Management Service of the United Nations Office at Nairobi offers a wide range of cross-cultural training workshops or language classes.

The knowledge around urban climate change is rapidly evolving. The incumbent will contribute to and participate in trainings, workshops and conferences organized by or participated in by UN-Habitat exposing her/him to the cutting-edge knowledge.

QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND COMPETENCIES REQUIRED

Education

Advanced University degree (Masters or Equivalent) in Urban Studies, Environmental Sciences or related fields such as Public Administration with knowledge on climate change, or a first degree with the relevant combination of professional and academic qualifications.

Work Experience

At least two (2) years of relevant experience in public, private or community organisations with a focus on practical implementation of city climate action projects and programmes or the management of climate action strategies at the national and/or city level.

Languages

English and French are the working languages of the United Nations Secretariat. For the post advertised, excellent fluency in oral and written English is essential. Knowledge of another UN official languages would be regarded as an asset.

Other Skills

Understanding of diverse institutional cultures and the specific needs and conditions of developing countries is desired. Experience partnering with civil society and local governments addressing the climate vulnerabilities of the poor would be a bonus.

Competencies

Professionalism: Shows pride in work on cities and climate change and in achievements; is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results; shows persistence when faced with difficult problems or challenges and remains calm in stressful situations.

Communication: Speaks and writes clearly and effectively; listens to others, correctly interprets messages from others and responds appropriately; asks questions to clarify, and exhibits interest in having two-way communication; tailors language, tone, style and format to match the audience; demonstrates openness in sharing information and keeping people informed.

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

Under the overall Supervision of the Coordinator, Programme Development Branch, the JPO will work under the direct supervision of the Sub-programme Coordinator for DoC3 Strengthened Climate Action and improved Urban Environment.