



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME
P.O. Box 30030, Nairobi 00100, Kenya
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FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

Regional Office for Africa (ROAf)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL OFFICER (JPO) – Urban Resilience

POSITION: Urban Resilience Support

SECTION: Regional Office for Africa (ROAf)

LOCATION: Nairobi, Kenya

BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

The Sub-Saharan African region faces significant exposure to extreme weather events like floods, droughts, cyclones, and rising sea levels. These natural hazards are compounded by other threats, including earthquakes, volcanoes, environmental degradation, and uncontrolled urbanization. These events result in loss of life, livelihoods, and the displacement of millions of people. Additionally, rapid urban population growth in the region has led to an accumulation of risk in cities and towns due to weak governance capacities. Much of this growth occurs outside official planning frameworks, leading many to seek housing in informal settlements in high-risk areas. Urban risks are further exacerbated by the increasing severity of unpredictable climate change effects.

The African continent hosts six Small Island Developing States (SIDS), three in the Indian Ocean (Comoros, Mauritius, and Seychelles) and three in the Atlantic Ocean (Cabo Verde, Sao Tome and Principe, and Guinea Bissau). Despite differing in geographic location, economic development trajectories, and social contexts, African SIDS share characteristics that make them vulnerable to adverse climate events, including sea-level rise, flooding, and cyclonic activity in the Indian Ocean. These events disproportionately affect SIDS due to their reliance on natural resources for economic activities like agriculture, fishing, and tourism, and the fact that many settlements and assets are located in low-lying coastal zones.

In response, UN-Habitat, through its Regional Office for Africa (ROAf), has developed a portfolio of work on disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, and urban resilience in Sub-Saharan Africa. This includes normative, policy-level, and practical interventions at the regional, national, and city levels. UN-Habitat has also developed the City Resilience Action Planning (CityRAP) Tool to help local governments build urban resilience. In 2020, UN-Habitat launched a multi-country Adaptation Fund project to strengthen urban climate resilience in vulnerable countries and cities. ROAf is actively expanding its activities for SIDS and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and its Member States to scale up its work on disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, and urban resilience.

UN-Habitat is also partnering with UNDP on various initiatives, including a Joint Regional Programme on Smart Urban Resilience in Sub-Saharan Africa, which focuses on settlements and key nodes within systems of cities facing multiple risks.

Furthermore, through its flagship programme on People-Centered Smart Cities, UN-Habitat is fostering innovation and integrated approaches to advance sustainable urbanization in Africa. This is particularly



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important as Africa experiences rapid urbanization, and many countries are interested in digitalization and smart cities as a response to urbanization and climate change challenges.

DUTIES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTED OUTPUTS

Under the overall supervision of the Director of the Regional Office for Africa, and the direct supervision of the Human Settlement Officer, the JPO will:

- Support the monitoring and implementation of urban resilience and disaster risk reduction activities and projects across Sub-Saharan Africa and African SIDS.
- Contribute to the development of knowledge products, tools, and guidance materials related to urban resilience, climate change adaptation, and disaster risk reduction.
- Assist in resource mobilization efforts to expand the urban resilience portfolio by identifying and prioritizing funding opportunities for new projects and developing concept notes and project proposals for the purpose.
- Provide coordination support on urban resilience and smart cities initiatives, liaising with regional and country offices.
- Actively engage with relevant stakeholders and partners both from the UN system and other institutions and entities contributing to ensure coordination, strengthen existing partnerships, and establish the basis for possible new collaborations.
- Support the enhancement of online platforms and social media to improve knowledge management and communication on urban resilience.
- Undertake data collection, analysis and research to strengthen the knowledge base on urban risks and resilience strategies.
- Participate in the design, organization and facilitation of workshops, expert group meetings, and events to expand partnerships and support capacity development.
- Prepare basic background papers, presentations, reports, and correspondence.
- Any other relevant tasks and duties as required.

TRAVEL

Travel within the region may be required to support project implementation and monitoring.

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. The JPO will have the opportunities for on-the-job training in the management and administration of a United Nations programme on all subjects listed under "Duties" above. All training courses available to staff members will also be available to the JPO. JPO will also have the opportunity to experience job shadowing of different roles in ROAf to effectively learn the dynamics and different functions of work of UN-Habitat and to have better understanding of required competencies for these positions. The JPO



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training programme includes on-boarding briefings, training on UN/UN-Habitat policies and procedures, peer coaching/learning, and performance management.

QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND COMPETENCIES REQUIRED

Education: Advanced university degree in urban planning, engineering, environmental studies, development studies, or related field. A first-level university degree in combination with two years of highly qualifying experience may be accepted in lieu of an advanced university degree.

Work experience: 2 years relevant work experience at the national or international level relating to sustainable urban development, climate resilience, disaster risk reduction or smart cities.

Competencies:

- **Professionalism:** Strong analytical and planning skills required; demonstrates professional competence and mastery in urban resilience, climate change adaptation, disaster risk management and sustainable development; is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results; ability to apply judgment in the context of assignments given, plan own work and manage conflicting priorities motivated by professional rather than personal concerns; shows persistence when faced with difficult problems or challenges; remains calm in stressful situations; takes responsibility for incorporating gender perspectives and ensuring the equal participation of women and men in all areas of work.
- **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 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.
- **Planning & Organizing:** Develops clear goals that are consistent with agreed strategies; Identifies priority activities and assignments; adjusts priorities as required; allocates appropriate amount of time and resources for completing work; foresees risks and allows for contingencies when planning; monitors and adjusts plans and actions as necessary; uses time efficiently.



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- **Technological Awareness:** Keeps abreast of available technology; understands applicability and limitation of technology to the work of the office; actively seeks to apply technology to appropriate tasks; shows willingness to learn new technology.

Languages: English and French are the working languages of the United Nations Secretariat. For the post advertised, fluency in oral and written English is required. Knowledge of French or Portuguese is an advantage.

SUPERVISION

The JPO will work under the supervision of the designated Human Settlements Officer in the Regional Office for Africa. The incumbent will collaborate with a diverse team and benefit from the guidance of experienced technical specialists across the Branch/Division.