



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME  
P.O. Box 30030, Nairobi 00100, Kenya  
[unhabitat-info@un.org](mailto:unhabitat-info@un.org) | [www.unhabitat.org](http://www.unhabitat.org)

## FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

### **URBAN BASIC SERVICES SECTION, URBAN PRACTICES BRANCH, GLOBAL SOLUTIONS DIVISION TERMS OF REFERENCE JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL OFFICER (JPO)**

**Position:** Junior Professional Officer (JPO) – solid waste management

**Section:** Urban Basic Services Section

**Location:** UN-Habitat Headquarters, Nairobi, Kenya

#### **Background and justification**

The global scale of urbanization and economic growth are creating a potential “time-bomb” regarding the waste we generate in the world. If not addressed now, the significant negative impact on human health and the environment will be felt by nations at all levels of development. An estimated 2 billion tonnes of municipal solid waste (MSW) were generated in 2015, and this number is expected to grow to 3.4 billion tonnes by 2050 under a business-as-usual scenario (World Bank, 2018). Uncontrolled disposal sites are already a major source of Green House Gases (GHG), and if we continue on the current path the waste sector, particularly food waste, is predicted to account for 8-10% of global anthropogenic GHG emissions by 2025. Additionally, every year at least 8 million tonnes of plastic find its way into the world’s oceans (Jambeck et al., 2015).

The quantity of waste generated grows with socio-economic development, and as the population in cities become denser, acute public health and environmental problems become more commonplace. Poor waste management results in agglomeration of uncollected waste, the build-up of rodent and insect populations, open waste burning with concomitant impacts on public health and pollution of air, soil and water. Furthermore, unmanaged and mismanaged waste is the main source of marine plastic pollution.

On the other hand, waste management offers great opportunities: resource recovery lessens the dependency on resource imports and reduces natural resource extraction; it enhances livelihoods and income for the urban poor through new business models; and improves quality of life for urban citizens.

*UN-Habitat*



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The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) is the agency for human settlements. It 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.

The Urban Basic Services Section of UN-Habitat is mandated to improve the access to urban basic services, including sustainable solid waste management by collecting data on municipal solid waste management, improving policies and guidelines in partnership with local, regional and national authorities, creating an enabling environment for promoting investments in sustainable waste management with a focus on the urban poor and increasing coverage of sustainable waste management services in communities.

### *Waste Wise Cities*

UN-Habitat's Executive Director Ms Maimunah Mohd Sharif launched Waste Wise Cities (WWC) on World Habitat Day in 2018 with a call to action to cities and local governments to tackle the global waste management crisis and supports them in moving towards a circular economy.

Waste Wise Cities has four key action areas: 1) knowledge and good practices sharing; 2) waste data and monitoring; 3) advocacy and education; and 4) project finance and bankability support.

WWC aims to support cities and local governments in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) related to waste and as well as in implementing the New Urban Agenda. Currently WWC has over 175 member cities worldwide, as well as over 30 Affiliates. Together with other partners they form the Waste Wise Network.

### *African Clean Cities Platform*

The African Clean Cities Platform is a platform working for the same missions as WWC, though focusing on the African continent with the aim to realize clean and healthy African countries and cities by 2030. It was established in April 2017 jointly by the Ministry of the Environment of Japan, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), UN-Habitat and the City of Yokohama. Currently 65 cities in 37 countries in Africa are participating. UN-Habitat is hosting the ACCP secretariat and supporting member cities in the assessment of MSW management data (using the Waste Wise Cities Tool, the monitoring methodology for SDG indicator 11.6.1) and development of project proposals based on the generated data. Furthermore, UN-Habitat is setting up the ACCP Partners, a donors' network, to facilitate the connection between its members and potential donors interested in investing in municipal solid waste intervention in Africa.

### *Zero Waste*

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), in its seventy-seventh session, adopted the resolution 77/161 "Promoting zero-waste initiatives to advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development," on 14 December 2022, which proclaims 30 March as the International Day of Zero



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Waste (hereafter Zero Waste Day), to be observed annually. The resolution, put forward by Türkiye with 105 other countries, was adopted unanimously by the UNGA.

In Operative Paragraph 1, the resolution “Requests the Secretary-General to set up an advisory board of eminent persons, based on voluntary contributions, selected on the basis of their knowledge, experience and expertise and with due regard to gender balance and equitable geographic representation, in consultation with Member States, for a period of three years, to promote local and national zero-waste initiatives through, inter alia, the dissemination of best practices and success stories, based on the work of, and without duplication with, relevant existing regional and global platforms, the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), within their respective mandates;”

During the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on Zero Waste, on 30th March 2023, António Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General announced that he is “establishing an Advisory Board of Eminent Persons on Zero Waste” and informed that the secretariat support will be provided by UN-Habitat and UNEP, through a dedicated project office led by UN-Habitat and supported by UNEP.

### **Duties, responsibilities and expected outputs**

1. Support the work of Waste Wise Cities, African Clean Cities Platform, Zero Waste (70%)
  - a. Manage the existing network of members and partners and extend it
  - b. Initiate new partnerships and dialogue between community-based organisations, local governments, MSW service providers, international development partners or other partners
  - c. Support local governments and other stakeholders in the application of the Waste Wise Cities Tool and subsequent development of project proposals
  - d. Organize webinars, trainings and workshops on sustainable solid waste management
  - e. Research, document and evaluate existing innovative approaches and experiences at global level in regard to provision of MSW services, particularly for the urban poor
  - f. Initiate documentation and dissemination of case studies on best-practice models and effective national policy frameworks to address the MSW challenge as well as identify knowledge gaps for the development of online courses or training material
  - g. Assist in Resource Mobilisation efforts by identifying opportunities and preparing proposals for donors including the private sector and foundations
  - h. Support the projects implementation under Waste Wise Cities and African Clean Cities Platform
  - i. Support the work of the Secretariat to UN SG’s Advisory Board on Zero Waste



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2. Support the broader work of the Urban Basic Services Section (30%)
  - a. Assist in providing technical advice on the development and implementation of MSW management in UN-Habitat partner countries to national and local governments.
  - b. Assist in the implementation of UN-Habitat supported initiatives and field projects.
  - c. Research and provide input to talking points, keynote speeches, etc.

### **Travel**

Occasional Travel to key conferences and in relation to on-going projects may be required.

### **Training and Learning elements**

The incumbent will be encouraged and supported to engage in technical or general training and learning activities both at the UN campus in Nairobi, at external conferences and training events, and through courses.

### **Qualifications, experience and competencies required**

#### **Education**

Advanced university degree (Master's degree or equivalent) in Engineering (Environmental/Waste), Environmental Management, Urban Planning, International Development, or in a closely related field. A first-level university degree in combination with two additional years of qualifying experience may be accepted in lieu of the advanced university degree.

#### **Work Experience**

At least two (2) years of relevant experience in solid waste management.

#### **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. Fluency in written and oral French would be an asset. Working knowledge of other UN official languages is desirable.

#### **Competencies**



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**Professionalism:** In-depth understanding of strategic direction and ability to transform it into results-oriented work programme. Ability to identify key strategic issues, opportunities and risks as well as to show persistence when faced with challenges.

**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.

**Planning and 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.

**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 Chief, Urban Basic Services Section, the incumbent will work under the direct supervision of the Programme Management Officer, Waste Management.