

**MEMORANDUM**

To: All UN-Habitat Staff Members

Date: 15 August 2012

From: Dr. Joan Clos  
Executive Director,  
UN-Habitat



Subject: **UN-Habitat Organizational Responsibility and Accountability Policy**

---

1. In line with the objectives of the organizational review to enhance the efficiency, transparency and accountability in the delivery of UN-Habitat's mandate, an *Organizational Responsibility and Accountability Policy* is presented to all UN-Habitat staff to ensure compliance with the UN Rules and Procedures, the UN Financial Regulations and Rules, Staff Rules, core values and UN-Habitat's established processes and practices.
2. Attached is the document on the revised *Organizational Responsibility and Accountability Policy*.
3. I encourage all UN-Habitat staff members, particularly senior managers to ensure compliance with the responsibilities outlined in the policy and to seek clarifications with the Legal Unit, Office of the Executive Director and the Office of Management where necessary..

Thank you.



## **Organizational Responsibility and Accountability Policy**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. As part of the on-going process of enhancing excellence in management and ensuring that UN-Habitat delivers its mandate and continues to be a high performing organization, UN-Habitat is cognizant of the need to outline the responsibilities and accountabilities of staff, paying due regard to the hierarchical structure of the organization..
2. A stand-alone “*Accountability Framework*” for the organization, is currently being finalized.
3. This policy document serves to provide UN-Habitat staff with the information they need to carry out their responsibilities, accountabilities and duties satisfactorily and in accordance with the rules, regulations, policies and principles of the United Nations.

## **II. ACCOUNTABILITY**

4. At the highest level, the Executive Director is accountable to the Secretary-General through his Annual Compact. This compact sets forth the Executive Director’s obligations in respect of programme priorities and performance measures, programme budget, financial management, conduct (ethics and conflict of interest), regulations and rules and the implementation of evaluation recommendations as well as those of oversight bodies. The Executive Director also commits to a detailed human resources management action plan which also includes enhancing leadership, communications and staff skills. The Deputy Executive Director is, in turn, accountable to the Executive Director through an annual compact based on the Executive Director’s compact with the Secretary-General.
5. UN-Habitat staff are appointed by, and accountable to, the Executive Director for the proper discharge of their duties and the achievement of programme and management objectives.
6. The Executive Director holds Managers accountable for the achievement of results. Managers and staff members are assessed through the annual UN Performance Appraisal System (e-PAS). Satisfactory performance of assigned responsibilities is expected of all staff and is a priority consideration in determining contract renewals, extensions and promotions within the organization.
7. In the event of non-performance or serious mismanagement, the relevant sanctions and/or disciplinary measures provided for in the UN rules and administrative instructions will apply. Furthermore, in case a manager does not properly discharge his delegated authority, the Executive Director may revoke the delegated authority partially or in full,

## **III. COMMITMENT TO THE CORE UN VALUES OF EFFICIENCY, INTEGRITY AND RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY**

8. UN-Habitat staff members must respect and commit themselves to the core UN values, namely, efficiency, integrity, professionalism, accountability and respect for gender/diversity in the exercise of their duties and responsibilities. They are expected to live, respect and embody these values in both their professional and personal lives.

9. All staff members must be fully conversant with the United Nations core competencies: communication, teamwork, planning & organizing, accountability, creativity, client orientation, commitment to continuous learning, technological awareness which define the desirable competencies, capabilities and characteristics that staff should possess in order for the organization to effectively meet its objectives.

#### **IV. COMPLIANCE WITH THE UN REGULATIONS AND RULES AND THE TERMS OF THEIR JOB DESCRIPTION**

10. All staff members, regardless of level, are expected to act in accordance with the basic obligations of proper conduct defined in *Article 1* of the *Staff Regulations* and *chapter 1* of the *Staff Rules* and to comply with all UN regulations, rules and related administrative instructions, including directives issued by the Executive Director and responsibilities assigned to them in line with the hierarchical structure of the organization.

11. Staff responsibilities are clearly defined in their terms of reference during employment (and any changes are updated) providing clear objectives for the post they are to encumber and corresponding actions for them to fulfill the requirements of their responsibilities. UN-Habitat staff members are, therefore expected to effectively and satisfactorily carry out these responsibilities assigned to them in accordance with their job description, including any responsibilities, workloads and assignments that the Executive Director or other managers may ask them to undertake.

#### **V. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN AND BIENNIAL STRATEGIC PLANS**

12. UN-Habitat is committed and accountable for achieving the strategic objectives as defined in the Strategic Plan and the Biennial Strategic plans which are vital in fulfilling its legislative mandates at the country, regional and global levels.

13. UN-Habitat senior managers are responsible for the implementation of the Strategic Plan and the Biennial Strategy plans, the establishment of management strategies for substantive action plans and yearly financial programmes, and their corresponding Programmes of Work.

14. To ensure consistent and coordinated planning, implementation and management accountability for the delivery of UN-Habitat's sub-programmes, it is important to ensure clarity and due diligence as regards responsibility for the results required in the Programmes of work (expected accomplishments, indicators of achievement and outputs) and that these are logically linked and planned objectives are achieved.

#### **VI. RESPONSIBILITY TO IMPLEMENT ANNUAL WORK PLAN FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PLANNED OBJECTIVES**

15. Managers are responsible for implanting the annual work-plans for their respective units based on the Strategic Plan and biennial strategic work programme and the directives issued by the Executive Director and senior management to guide the individual work-plans of staff members under their areas of responsibility.

16. Staff members are responsible for drawing up individual work plans with the guidance and approval of their line managers.

17. Staff members are responsible for implementing activities outlined in the work plans and for carrying out any additional duties assigned to them by their managers. Managers are responsible for assessing staff members' performance. The assessments take into account inputs from Project Leaders and information from the Project Accrual and Accountability System (PAAS) on progress made towards implementing project activities and delivery of outputs.

18. The work-plans of senior managers must be agreed upon with the Executive Director and the Deputy Executive Director in accordance with the UN's mandatory Performance Appraisal System (PAS). The relevant First Reporting Officers shall assist the Executive Director and the Deputy Executive Director in reviewing the work-plans to ensure conformity with the Executive Director's compact and with the accountabilities assigned in the Programme of Work and corresponding projects.

## **VII. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND ALLOCATION**

19. Financial resources are a key ingredient necessary for the successful implementation of UN-Habitat's Programme of Work and organizational activities. This element of accountability requires Member States and other donors to provide adequate financial resources, in order for the organization to implement its mandate. To this extent, a resource mobilization strategy needs to be revamped by consolidating and broadening the organization's portfolio, its existing donor base and secure more predictable multi-year funding.

20. Senior managers have responsibility to ensure effective resource mobilization and allocation by devising and executing result-based resource mobilization and project acquisition strategies and activities.

## **VIII. DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

21. Delegations of authority have been issued by the Executive Director to the Deputy Executive Director, Directors, Regional Office Directors and Branch Coordinators to facilitate the successful implementation of the organization's programme of work.

22. Delegations of authority are issued, and are to be exercised, in accordance with the following principles:

- (a) A delegation of authority, like accountability, is personal, a committee, team or group cannot be held accountable and should not exercise decision-making authority;
- (b) Ultimate responsibility for the manner in which authority is exercised remains with the individual to whom the authority is delegated.
- (c) Authority is possessed solely by virtue of an individual's office and can be extended or withdrawn as and when necessary;

## **IX. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF PROGRAMME DELIVERY**

23. To ensure effective evaluation and monitoring of activities and projects, Managers are responsible for:

- (a) Assessing the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, quality, usefulness and impact of their respective unit's planned programme of work;
- (b) Sharing lessons learned from the implementation of programme and project activities;
- (c) Ensuring that recommendations from audits and evaluation reports approved by UN-Habitat Management are implemented;

24. Through monitoring, evaluation and oversight activities, the Secretary General and Member States measure the degree of effectiveness and efficiency in programme delivery and take appropriate action.