



Executive Board of the United Nations
Human Settlements Programme
First session of 2020

Nairobi, 31 March–2 April 2020
Item 8 of the provisional agenda*

**Action by UN-Habitat to strengthen protection against
sexual exploitation and abuse and workplace sexual
harassment**

**Report on UN-Habitat action to strengthen protection against
sexual exploitation and abuse and against workplace sexual
harassment, as requested by the General Assembly****

Summary

As requested in Paragraph 7 of Decision 2019/4 adopted by the Executive Board during its resumed first session on 19-20 November 2019, the Executive Board shall consider during its 2020 first session a report on UN-Habitat action to strengthen protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and against workplace sexual harassment, as requested by the General Assembly.

Recognizing the importance of transparency and accountability in the United Nations system with respect to fighting sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), since January 2018, the Secretary-General has requested members of the Chief Executive Board (CEB) to certify annually to their governing bodies through a management letter that they have (i) fully and accurately reported all credible allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse related to United Nations staff and affiliated personnel serving in their organization; and (ii) made training on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse available to their staff and affiliated personnel. The Secretary-General further requested that the head of entity provide information on how their organization ensures that its Implementing Partners have minimum standards in place to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse.

Accordingly, a copy of the attached management letter from Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of UN-Habitat, covering the period from 1 January through 31 December 2019 and sent to Member States of the UN-Habitat Assembly on 31 January 2020, is being provided to the UN-Habitat Executive Board for its consideration during its 2020 first session. A copy of the signed management letter has also been shared with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

In addition to its efforts to combat SEA as presented hereby, UN-Habitat further reaffirms its commitment to zero tolerance for any act of harassment, including sexual harassment, discrimination, or abuse of authority and is wholly and firmly committed to ensuring that all staff are aware of the policies presently in place (e.g. ST/SGB/2019/8 on Addressing discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority), as well as what actions are to be taken in respect thereof.

* HSP/EB.2020/1.

** The present document is being issued without formal editing.

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME
Programme des Nations Unies pour les établissements humains
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Nairobi, 31 January 2020

Ref: UNH-OED-OL-200131-02

Excellency,

In accordance with Section 4.6 of the Secretary-General's Bulletin on "Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse" (ST/SGB/2003/13), and consistent with the directive of the Executive Board of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (Paragraph 7 of Decision 2019/4 adopted by the Executive Board during its resumed first session on 19-20 November 2019 and as contained in document HSP/EB.1/11), I, Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Under-Secretary General and Executive Director of UN-Habitat, hereby certify that UN-Habitat has reported to the Secretary-General all allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse that have been brought to its attention and has taken all appropriate measures to address such allegations, in accordance with established rules and procedures for dealing with cases of staff misconduct.

UN-Habitat is further working to ensure that all staff members and affiliated personnel are availed of training focused on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. I wish to emphasize that the current funding challenges faced by the Organization and the lack of adequate resources have an impact on the schedule and methodologies to implement such efforts.

UN-Habitat is also working to raise awareness of its staff members, affiliated personnel and beneficiaries of assistance, insofar as applicable, through appropriate means, regarding the prohibition of sexual exploitation and abuse and ways of reporting such acts.

UN-Habitat has an appointed Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) focal point. The PSEA focal point is developing an awareness campaign, including, inter alia, the issuance of "no excuses cards," which set out the standards and obligations to prevent and report SEA to all UN-Habitat staff and non-staff personnel, particularly those working in field-based locations. The PSEA focal point is further working to establish and improve its Community-Based Complaint Mechanisms and networks in all field-based locations in which the programme is operating.

Consistent with the uniform protocol, UN-Habitat's Agreement with Implementing Partners includes language stipulating that implementing partners shall take all appropriate measures to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse by it or any entity or person employed to perform any services by the implementing partner. UN-Habitat further working toward ensuring better monitoring and oversight of implementing partners, including through a system-wide database "Clear Check", to ensure any cases or potential cases are reported and addressed appropriately. UN-Habitat is committed not to partner with entities that fail to appropriately address sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. To the greatest extent possible, UN-Habitat is also working toward ensuring that implementing partners are required to undergo training on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse.

Recognizing the importance of transparency and accountability in the United Nations system with respect to fighting sexual exploitation and abuse, this has been done in good faith.

Maimunah Mohd Sharif
Under-Secretary-General
and Executive Director

Member States of the UN-Habitat Assembly
Cc: Executive Office of the Secretary-General