



Executive Board of the United Nations

Human Settlements Programme

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Action by UN-Habitat to strengthen protection against sexual and any other type of exploitation and abuse and against sexual harassment in the workplace

Action by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme to strengthen protection against sexual and any other type of exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment in the workplace

Report of the Executive Director

Summary

1. In paragraph 9 of decision 2021/8, adopted at its second session of 2021, the Executive Board decided to consider, during its first session of 2022, action by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) to strengthen protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and against sexual harassment in the workplace.
2. Recognizing the importance of transparency and accountability in the United Nations system with respect to fighting sexual exploitation and abuse, since January 2018, the Secretary-General has requested members of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination to certify annually to their governing bodies, through a management letter, that they have (a) 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 (b) made training on the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse available to their staff and affiliated personnel. The Secretary-General has further requested that heads of entities 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.
3. Accordingly, the requested management letter from the Executive Director covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2021 is set out in the annex to the present report, for the consideration of the Executive Board at its first session of 2022. The management letter has also been shared with the Secretary-General.
4. In addition to its efforts to combat sexual exploitation and abuse, UN-Habitat reaffirms its commitment to zero tolerance of 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 currently in place (such as the Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2019/8 on addressing discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, and abuse of authority), as well as the actions to be taken in respect thereof.

* HSP/EB.2022/1.

5. There have been no reported allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse or sexual harassment involving UN-Habitat staff or non-staff personnel since the last session of the UN-Habitat Executive Board in November 2021.

6. It should be noted that the Secretary General's report to the General Assembly on investigations into sexual exploitation and related offences for 2021, including data on relevant allegations in the preceding calendar year, will be made available online once published. The report of the Secretary-General on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (A/75/754), prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 71/278, 71/297, 72/312 and 73/302, contains updated information on measures to strengthen the United Nations response to sexual exploitation and abuse.

Annex**End-of-year management letter on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse and reporting of allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse**

In keeping 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 with the directive of the Executive Board of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (paragraph 4 of decision 2019/4, adopted by the Executive Board at its resumed first session of 2019 and set out 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 submits an annual action plan on measures taken to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse, and contributes to the annual action plans on measures taken to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse prepared by the Office of the Resident Coordinator in many countries in which it operates.

UN-Habitat has a headquarters-based prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) focal point and has identified regional-level PSEA focal points. Together with senior management, UN-Habitat PSEA focal points work to ensure that training focused on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse has been made available to all staff members and affiliated personnel and to raise the awareness of staff members, affiliated personnel and beneficiaries of the prohibition of sexual exploitation and abuse and ways of reporting such acts, taking a victim-centred approach in all cases. In that regard, UN-Habitat has developed a phone-based application, "Speak up", that provides information for United Nations staff members on relevant policies and how to report incidents of sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse. "Clear Check", a United Nations system-wide database, further assists UN-Habitat in its efforts to ensure that any cases or potential cases of sexual exploitation and abuse are reported appropriately.

UN-Habitat has furthermore committed not to partner with entities that fail to appropriately address sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, and to ensure that its implementing partners have minimum standards in place to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse. Consistent with the United Nations Protocol on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Allegations involving Implementing Partners, UN-Habitat agreements with implementing partners include language stipulating that the implementing partner must take all appropriate measures to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse by it or any entity or person it employs to perform a service on its behalf. UN-Habitat is also working to ensure that its implementing partners 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 of UN-Habitat

14 January 2022

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Executive Office of the Secretary-General