

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Issued on: 05 November 2014

ORGANIZATIONAL LOCATION:	UN-Habitat, Housing Unit, Housing and Slum Upgrading Branch
DUTY STATION:	Nairobi, Kenya
FUNCTIONAL TITLE:	Consultant for developing a scoping paper towards a United Nations Housing Rights Programme position on homelessness
DURATION:	A total of 45 working days during the period of 3 months – 1 January – 31 March 2015
CLOSING DATE:	19 November 2014

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this consultancy is to develop a scoping paper towards a United Nations Housing Rights Programme (UNHRP) position on homelessness. The study will examine and assess the possible areas and levels of influence UN-Habitat/UN Office for the High Commissioner of Human rights (OHCHR) could have – under the auspices of the UNHRP - on the advancement of the right to adequate housing and basic services of homeless persons in cities (formal and informal settlements alike).

The consultancy will culminate in a UN Housing Rights Programme (UNHRP) Scoping Paper towards a position on homelessness. The Scoping Paper will have two parts, a Scoping Study and a Position Paper.

The first part - the Scoping Study - will identify the trends in relation to the policy and legal national and sub-national solutions in relation to homeless people through a thorough review of existing literature, legislation, policy, and practice.

The second part - the Position Paper - will on the basis of the findings of the Scoping Study - propose a UN position on homelessness, including a proposed UNHRP Common Understanding on Homelessness. This Position Paper will, in turn, inform and identify possible areas of engagement of UN-Habitat (including through its collaboration with OHCHR under the auspices of the UNHRP) in view of its mandate and programmatic priorities.

The Scoping Paper will be subject to expert peer review and will, funding permitting, serve as input to an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on Homelessness. The EGM is expected to further elaborate and refine the Position Paper, which then will be subject to a wider on-line consultation process. The final product – a UNHRP Common Understanding on Homelessness - is expected in 2016 in advance of the Habitat III Conference to be co-signed by the UN-Habitat Executive Director and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing will be a key partner in this process.

As recognized most recently in the post-2015 Agenda discussions at the global level, including the development of the New Urban Agenda, focus on the vulnerable and marginalized in the process of urbanization requires attention to the rights and needs of homeless people.

Joint UN-Habitat/OHCHR Factsheet 21 on the Right to Adequate Housing describes the current international legal understanding on homelessness (p. 21-22) as follows:

The Special Rapporteur on adequate housing has called homelessness “perhaps the most visible and most severe symptom of the lack of respect for the right to adequate housing.” There is no internationally agreed definition of homelessness. Definitions range from the narrow—equating homelessness with “rooflessness”—to the broad, based on the adequacy of the dwelling, the risk of becoming homeless, the time exposed to homelessness and responsibilities for taking alleviating action.

For statistical purposes, the United Nations has defined homeless households as “households without a shelter that would fall within the scope of living quarters. They carry their few possessions with them, sleeping in the streets, in doorways or on piers, or in any other space, on a more or less random basis.” The Special Rapporteur on adequate housing has noted that narrow definitions are inadequate and that in developing countries the most common definitions recognize that an element of social exclusion is part of the experience of the homeless. UN-Habitat underlines in this respect that homelessness implies belonging nowhere rather than simply having nowhere to sleep. Given the lack of a globally agreed definition of homelessness, limited data are available about the scale of this phenomenon, which in turn impedes the development of coherent strategies and policies to prevent and address it.

The Special Rapporteur on adequate housing has highlighted that poverty is a common denominator in the experience of the homeless. Other causes or factors which make people more vulnerable to homelessness are unemployment, a lack of social security systems, a lack of affordable housing, forced evictions, non-availability of social housing, conflicts and natural disasters, as well as a lack of attention to the needs of the most vulnerable. The “deinstitutionalization” of mental health care, which first started in many countries during the 1960s and 1970s, led to persons with disabilities swelling the ranks of the homeless unless it was accompanied by a parallel growth in community or other support. Besides the violation of their right to adequate housing, homeless persons may be deprived of a whole range of other human rights. Laws that criminalize homelessness, vagrancy or sleeping rough, along with street cleaning operations to remove homeless people from the streets, have a direct impact on their physical and psychological integrity. Merely by not having a secure place to live, nor any privacy, homeless persons are much more vulnerable to violence, threats and harassment.

States’ obligations towards the full realization of the right to adequate housing include taking measures to prevent homelessness. Among the steps to be taken immediately, general comment No. 4 (paras. 10–13) mentions determining the extent of homelessness, as well as adopting a national housing strategy which should reflect extensive genuine consultation with the homeless. General comment No. 7 (para. 17) also emphasizes that forced evictions should not result in individuals being made homeless.

Joint UN-Habitat/OHCHR Factsheet 21 on Forced Evictions describes the prohibition of forced evictions in the context of homelessness (p. 31) as follows:

Forced evictions should not result in homelessness or put people in life- or health-threatening situations. Alternative and sustainable accommodation should be provided before any eviction is carried out.

The United Nations Statistics Division distinguishes two broad categories of homelessness: (a) Primary homelessness (or rooflessness). This category includes persons living in streets or without a shelter that would fall within the scope of living quarters; (b) Secondary homelessness. This category may include persons with no place of usual residence who move frequently between various types of accommodation (including dwellings, shelters or other living quarters); and persons usually resident in long-term “transitional” shelters or similar arrangements for the homeless.

UN-Habitat’s programmatic priorities include urban governance, planning and design, basic services, housing sector assessment and rehabilitation and slum upgrading. Attention to the right to adequate housing, and particular the most egregious violations of this right – such as homelessness - must be adequately reflected in UN-Habitat’s development policies and strategies.

There is an urgent need to support and strengthen the programmes, initiatives and public policies to contribute to the improvement of the living conditions of homeless people living in cities, especially those in the margins of informal settlements and living on the borders of intersectional discrimination of poverty and homelessness.

Moreover, UN-Habitat’s recent direction of its urban development discourse and practice to one compliant with the human rights-based approach (HRBA) to development informs the need to explore in more detail the right of homeless persons. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing will be a key partner in this process.

Homeless people are but one distinct group of vulnerable people in urban settings. While they, as well as many others, come to the city in search of a better life, their vulnerabilities often exacerbate their economic and social exclusion in the city.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The consultancy will deliver the following outputs:

Task 1. The purpose of this consultancy is to develop a scoping paper towards a United Nations Housing Rights Programme (UNHRP) position on homelessness. The study will examine and assess the possible areas and levels of influence UN-Habitat/UN Office for the High Commissioner of Human rights (OHCHR) could have – under the auspices of the UNHRP - on the advancement of the right to adequate housing and basic services of homeless persons in cities (formal and informal settlements alike).

The consultancy will culminate in a UN Housing Rights Programme (UNHRP) Scoping Paper towards a position on homelessness. The Scoping Paper will have two parts, a Scoping Study and a Position Paper.

The first part - the Scoping Study - will identify the trends in relation to the policy and legal national and sub-national solutions in relation to homeless people through a thorough review of existing literature, legislation, policy, and practice.

The second part - the Position Paper - will on the basis of the findings of the Scoping Study - propose a UN position on homelessness, including a proposed UNHRP Common Understanding on Homelessness. This Position Paper will, in turn, inform and identify possible areas of engagement of UN-Habitat (including through its collaboration with OHCHR under the auspices of the UNHRP) in view of its mandate and programmatic priorities.

Output 1: Inception report (7 working days)

The inception report that will describe how the consultant intends to carry out the consultancy.

It should include: preparation of preliminary issues under investigation, approach to/methodology of the study, initial analytical framework, tentative table of contents, an outline for the publication with short descriptions (bullet points) of the content of each chapter; a list of intended reference materials; and a scheduled work plan.

The report should be made available to UN-Habitat two weeks into the consultancy. After receiving the report, UN-Habitat/OHCHR will send its consolidated comments within a week. The consultant will address the comments to the satisfaction of UN-Habitat before payment of the first instalment.

Output 2: First draft publication (28 working days)

The publication should not be more than 50 pages in Microsoft Word with font size 11 (including the front page, disclaimer, reference list, diagrams and tables) and it should address the issues raised in the terms of reference.

The first draft of the publication should undertake the Scoping Study and the Position Paper (see next section for more details).

UN-Habitat/OHCHR will send its comments on the first draft within three weeks.

Output 3: Final draft publication (10 working days)

Final draft publication should incorporate detailed comments received from UN-Habitat, OHCHR and other reviewers.

UN-Habitat/OHCHR will send its comments on the final draft within two weeks.

The UN Housing Rights Programme (UNHRP) scoping paper towards a United Nations Housing Rights Programme (UNHRP) position on homelessness will consist of two parts:

a) Scoping Study

- An in-depth literature review of the impact of the city on the right to adequate housing and basic services of homeless people in cities;
- Review of national/sub-national Laws and Policies related to homeless people;
- Through an examination of submissions to the Universal Periodic Review, an overview of select Law and Policy on homeless people;
- Identify sources of discrimination – vulnerability analysis of homeless people in the urban setting;
- Provide a summary of at least 4 case studies from different regions of the world (urban poor, formal and informal settlements);
- Provide any other items agreed following submission of the inception report.

b) Position Paper

- Proposed Common Understanding on Homelessness, including proposed definition, elements and principles, programmatic considerations and recommendations for priority action

In addition, the Scoping Paper will

- Be easy to read for a non-technical audience and serve as a communication tool.
- Serve as an awareness building tool regarding the relevant subject matter – homeless people in cities;
- Explain the capacity gaps of the rights-holders and the duty-bearers in relation to the realization of the rights of homeless people;
- Suggest policy solutions;
- Suggest areas of possible involvement of UN-Habitat in its normative/policy as well as operational/programmatic work;
- Extract and highlight key lessons and messages in boxes or in the margins of the text.
- Ensure clear and consistent messages to the reader so that anyone browsing through the publication and reading just the key messages should receive a clear idea of what can be done.
- Reference sources with footnotes within the text and provide an annotated list of key resources, including web-sites, at the end from where interested readers can obtain more information using the UN-Habitat style guidelines.

COMPETENCIES

Familiarity with international development agendas in particular with housing and urban policies. Experience and knowledge with the United Nations system, and particularly of UN-Habitat, will be considered as an asset.

Knowledge of issues affecting vulnerable and marginalized people, homeless people in particular

Experience in drafting UN-related meeting notes and reports

Excellent research, analytical, writing and editing skills; excellent oral and presentation skills in English

Prior experience in organizing global/regional events, meetings, or other collaborative events etc

Corporate competencies:

Demonstrates integrity by modelling the UN's values and ethical standards

Promotes the vision, mission, and strategic goals of UN and UN-Habitat

Displays cultural, gender, religion, race, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability

EDUCATION

Master or PhD in urban studies, housing, urban development, geography or human settlements-related field.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Minimum of 10 years experience in research and policy development related to housing, urban development and human settlements issues; or other significant working experience. Experience related to housing rights and evictions a strong asset.

Solid experience in project/programme management
Prior UN/UN-Habitat experience would be an asset.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

Proficiency and excellent analytical and writing skills in English. Any other UN language will be considered an asset.

OTHER SKILLS

Excellent facilitation and communication skills are desirable.

REMUNERATION

Payments will be based on deliverables over the consultancy period. There are set remuneration rates for consultancies. The rate is determined by functions performed and experience of the consultant. The fees will be paid as per agreement.

Applications should include:

- Cover memo (maximum 1 page)
- Summary CV (maximum 2 pages), indicating the following information:
 1. Educational Background (incl. dates)
 2. Professional Experience (assignments, tasks, achievements, duration by years/ months)
 3. Other Experience and Expertise (e.g. Internships/ voluntary work, etc.)
 4. Expertise and preferences regarding location of potential assignments
 5. Expectations regarding remuneration

All applications should be marked “homelessness” in the subject line and should be submitted to:

Ms. Channe Oguzhan
UN-HABITAT, Housing and Slum Upgrading Branch
P.O. Box 30030, 00100 Nairobi, Kenya
Email: Channe.Oguzhan@unhabitat.org

Please also copy Christophe.Lalande@unhabitat.org and Helen.Musoke@unhabitat.org

Please be advised that applicants for consultancies must be part of the Inspira e-Roster in order for their application to be considered. You can reach the e-Roster through the following address: inspira.un.org

Deadline for applications: 19 November 2014

UN-HABITAT does not charge a fee at any stage of the recruitment process. If you have any questions concerning persons or companies claiming to be recruiting on behalf of these offices and requesting the payment of a fee, please contact: recruitment@unon.org