

MEMORANDUM

To: All UN-Habitat Staff
From: Dr. Joan Clos 
Executive Director and Under-Secretary General of the United Nations
UN-Habitat

Reference: 2015/001/CC
Date: 26 August 2015

Subject: **Introducing the UN-Habitat Cross-cutting Markers**

Dear Colleagues,

It is my pleasure to announce the launch of the UN-Habitat Cross-cutting Markers, which will come into effect on **1 September 2015**. The Markers have been developed in order to contribute to the success of UN-Habitat projects within the context of the United Nations New Urban Agenda and our emphasis on the three-legged approach to sustainable and inclusive urban development.

The overall goal of mainstreaming UN-Habitat's cross-cutting issues (climate change, gender, the Human Rights-Based Approach, and youth)¹ is to strengthen programmatic synergies while ensuring that project outcomes reach all intended beneficiaries, particularly persons in vulnerable situations. As a result, an effective integration of cross-cutting issues will also increasingly enable the replication and up-scaling of projects.

The **Markers are mainstreaming tools** that serve two main purposes:

- **Quality assurance.** The Markers assure the quality of projects at the level of the Project Advisory Group (PAG), and thus increase accountability and transparency through its monitoring function.
- **Capacity-building.** The Markers build the capacity of UN-Habitat to integrate cross-cutting issues in the project cycle by providing guidance and sharing knowledge, including through staff self-assessment.

In follow-up to directive of 8 July 2015 from Alioune Badiane, the Project Concept Note submitted to Programme Division should detail how the cross-cutting issues will be integrated in the full Project Document subsequent to which directive guidance will be provided by the cross-cutting teams. At the project planning and design stage, a self-assessment rating should be recorded in the Projects Accrual and Accountability System (PAAS) by the project manager prior to submitting the Project Document to the PAG for review and approval. A UN-Habitat project for consideration of the PAG must receive a final rating of '1' or more from the cross-cutting teams in order to be approved. This final rating will be recorded in PAAS. Projects rated '0' (i.e. blind/negative rating by the respective cross-cutting teams) will be disallowed to move to the UMOJA stage to access funding².

The Markers have been designed to be employed at the project planning and design stage of the project cycle. The development of cross-cutting markers for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages of the project cycle is foreseen.

Thank you for your collaboration, and for your commitment to strengthening UN-Habitat's project cycle.

cc. Alioune Badiane
Director, Programme Division

cc. Rosa Muraguri-Mwololo
PAG Coordinator, PAG Secretariat

ⁱ As part of the UN family, UN-Habitat is mandated to respect, promote and protect human rights in all of its activities. In 2003, the UN Common Understanding on the Human Rights-based Approach to Development Programming was adopted to ensure that UN agencies, funds and programmes apply a consistent Human Rights-based Approach (HRBA). In 2011, the UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP) established that all UN agencies, funds and programmes track resources invested in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. Further, in 2013, the UN System-wide Action Plan on Youth established the strategic guidance to the UN system on Youth. Finally, the mainstreaming of climate change at UN-Habitat is guided by a new agency-wide Climate Change Strategy (2014-2019), which was approved by the UN-Habitat Board on 10 May 2015.

ⁱⁱ In the case of climate change, implementation of this particular measure is pending, subject to assignment to the responsible Unit of adequate human resources funded by the core budget. See Agency-wide *Climate Change Strategy (2014-2019)*.