Executive Office Instruction Ref. EOI.SSC.2021.01 Health & Safety and Social & Environmental Management

Authority:

This Executive Office Instruction (EOI) is promulgated by the Chief Financial Officer and Director of Administration, on the basis of a delegation of authority from the Executive Director under EOD Ref. EOD.ED.2021.01 – Occupational Health & Safety and Social & Environmental Management.

Purpose

The purpose of this EOI is to describe the mandatory processes and performance requirements for the implementation of Health & Safety (HS) and Social & Environmental (SE, and together with HS, HSSE) in UNOPS.

Effective Date:

This EOI shall become effective immediately.

Consequential Changes

This EOI version abolishes and replaces EOI.CSG.2017.01: Implementation of Three Levels of Requirements for Health & Safety and Social & Environmental Management of 25 August 2017. The purpose of this revision is to abolish the application of the HSSE levels framework and replace it with core requirements that apply to all UNOPS activities and premises.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Further to the Executive Director's affirmation of her commitment to Health & Safety and Social & Environmental management, as set out in EOD.ED.2021.01: Health & Safety and Social & Environment Management, the purpose of this EOI is to set out the mandatory processes and requirements for HSSE management in UNOPS.

1.2. This EOI applies to the management of HSSE in activities and projects that are controlled by UNOPS, including activities that UNOPS assigns to contractors. For projects without physical sites and where UNOPS has no managerial control, the applicability of HSSE shall be limited to HSSE aspects specifically assigned to UNOPS.

1.3. For all UNOPS standards, templates and other tools referred to in this EOI, please refer to the HSSE Unit intranet or contact the HSSE Unit directly.

2. HSSE Implementation Processes

2.1. The health and safety of all people at UNOPS workplaces and in communities that interact with UNOPS activities shall be considered at all times and throughout the life cycle of UNOPS projects. Similarly, ways to avoid harm to the environment and to people in communities shall also be considered at all times and throughout the life cycle of UNOPS projects.

2.2. Each UNOPS country office with at least five personnel shall have a documented HSSE plan that identifies the HSSE risks and opportunities and the key actions required to address them. Offices with less than five personnel are required to at least carry out an HSSE risk assessment and to do office inspections at least once every six months. HSSE plans are strongly encouraged but are not mandatory for personnel working under partner supervision. Project facilities, such as construction site offices or storerooms, do not need to have separate HSSE plans as they should be covered as part of the project HSSE plans.

2.3. All projects with separate physical locations or workplaces, i.e. projects with premises and work locations that are not part of the country office premises and facilities, shall develop HS plans that address occupational health and safety hazards and other requirements set in the UNOPS HSSE policy EOD Ref. EOD.ED.2021.01.

2.4. The plans mentioned in sections 2.2 and 2.3 shall be used to record the identification and assessment of HSSE risks including the description of the actions or key controls to address the risks. The plans shall also be used to record the arrangements for monitoring HSSE performance.

2.5. The reporting of HSSE incidents is mandatory and shall be done in line with the Instruction on incident management, REF. EOI.SSC.2021.02.

2.6. Reporting of HSSE performance against key performance indicators shall be mandatory and shall be implemented in line with the PQMS process for HSSE monthly reporting.

2.7. All projects with physical sites shall monitor unsafe conditions, unsafe acts and social and environmental risk factors at least once a week and record the findings on an inspection form.

2.8. All supervisors and heads of business units shall ensure that corrective actions from inspections, incidents, HSSE reviews and audits in the areas they supervise are implemented within the timeframes indicated in the action plans.

2.9. The HSSE unit shall provide guidance on the HSSE roles and responsibilities of key role-players in HSSE management.

2.10. All supervisors shall ensure that their supervisees are aware of their HSSE roles and responsibilities and have received adequate training to fulfil the responsibilities.

2.11. All supervisors shall ensure that potential HSSE emergency scenarios have been considered and emergency equipment and arrangements are in place and well maintained so that they are effective when needed. All personnel, including visitors, must be made aware of the emergency arrangements.

2.12. HSSE management activities and controls shall apply to all associated facilities, premises or sites that are exclusively supporting the activities of UNOPS such as warehouses storing UNOPS materials, borrow pits where project raw materials are extracted, or camps where workers are staying for the purposes of working on UNOPS project tasks. UNOPS shall exert its influence to improve HSSE in cases where the associated facilities, premises or sites are being shared with other people that have no connection to the work of UNOPS. However, it is recognised that UNOPS does not have control and responsibility for the activities of people or organisations that do not have a contractual relationship with UNOPS.

3. Health and Safety Performance

3.1. It is mandatory for people at UNOPS workplaces to comply with the UNOPS Golden Rules for addressing fatal or significant hazards. These rules are listed in **3.1** to **3.10**.

- Only competent personnel (licensed, qualified, experienced, and have had job-specific training), who have been adequately resourced, shall be allowed to perform work provided they are authorised to do the work.
- Work at heights, or any work where a risk assessment identifies a danger of falling to a lower level, shall only take place if hazards from working at heights are controlled and if there is adequate fall prevention or protection (safe access, safe platform, protected edges, fall restraint, and fall arrest).
- Installation, repair, or any other work on electrical equipment shall only be performed by competent (licensed, qualified, experienced, and have had job-specific training) personnel.
- Work activities shall not be performed before energy sources have been effectively isolated and locked out, and stored energy has been released/secured.
- Vehicles and mobile plant equipment used for work purposes on-site must address all aspects of safe operation, including being fit for purpose. All personnel shall follow road and site traffic rules, and pedestrians should be separated from mobile plant equipment and vehicles.
- Mechanical lifting operations shall be planned, supervised, and undertaken by competent personnel using certified equipment that has the capacity for the lifts being undertaken. The lifting equipment must not be used for any purpose other than its original design purpose, and the lifts shall only take place after people have been removed from the travel path or drop zone of a suspended load.

- Excavations shall have barricades to prevent people from falling in them, appropriate means of access and egress, and shall be protected from collapse.
- All personnel shall be made aware of how to handle, store, and dispose of any chemicals or hazardous substances they use in their work activities.
- People shall not be allowed to enter a confined space unless they are properly trained, have all of the required safety and rescue equipment, and understand the safe system of work for the specific activity and confined space.
- Any person working in or around water/liquid accumulations or storage facilities shall take the necessary precautions to prevent drowning, including not working alone and wearing a buoyancy vest. UNOPS projects shall take the necessary precautions to ensure that members of the community, with special attention to children, are not exposed to drowning in water bodies that have been created as a result of project activities.
- Access to UNOPS workplaces, premises, and project sites shall be controlled to prevent exposure of the public to hazards. Access control measures shall be supported by informative and warning signs.
- Workers shall be provided with adequate, safe-to-use equipment, including personal protective equipment (PPE). The PPE requirements must be made known to workers before they are exposed to hazards requiring PPE protection. Planned inspections and maintenance programmes shall be put in place for equipment used in infrastructure works.
- Adequate eating areas, toilet facilities, and change rooms shall be provided at workplaces. Culture, hygiene, and gender considerations shall be included in the design and maintenance of the facilities.
- UNOPS business units shall ensure that UNOPS facilities, including external facilities for events hosted by UNOPS, are accessible to people with disabilities.
- Safety-critical tasks such as working at heights, lifting operations, excavations, tasks in confined spaces, and working over water bodies shall be performed under direct supervision. The tasks shall only commence after a written approval in the form of a permit to work has been issued by an authorised person, all permit conditions have been met, and all workers participating in the task have been made aware of the key controls in the risk assessment and the procedure for performing the task.

4. Social and Environmental (SE) performance

4.1. Social and Environmental Management System Approach

4.1.1. UNOPS social and environmental performance shall be based on a management system approach aligned to best international practices and standards.

4.1.2. UNOPS business units and personnel shall operate with the ambition of aligning with the UN Sustainability Strategy 2020-2030 (UNSS), and in particular ensuring that GHG emissions are maintained at a level compatible with limiting the increase in global temperature to 1.5°C as recommended by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

4.1.3. Business units, offices, and projects shall ensure that the applicable SE Plans and relative processes and documents are drafted, maintained, implemented, updated as necessary, and regularly monitored.

4.1.4. Legal and compliance requirements in the social and environmental field in each country shall be identified, recorded, and regularly updated.

4.1.5. The mandatory and recommended SE requirements applicable to all business units will be periodically updated. The list of up-to-date SE requirements is available in the SE section of the intranet.

4.1.6. SE requirements shall be applicable to all business units, premises, and operations where UNOPS exercises direct managerial and financial control; and to the maximum extent possible in those cases where UNOPS can exert influence or indirect control.

4.1.7. Induction, awareness, and training on SE shall be provided to all UNOPS personnel on a regular basis, with due consideration of their job descriptions, roles, and competences.

4.1.8. Supervision of work activities shall include assessment of the relevant SE performance requirements.

4.1.9. The applicable SE requirements shall be communicated to suppliers and contractors as part of the solicitation process. Contractors can be authorised to implement their own SE plans and processes if these are formally reviewed by the UNOPS personnel responsible for SE implementation in the project, and found at least substantially equivalent to the UNOPS ones. Monitoring and evaluation of the external processes shall be carried out according to UNOPS standards.

4.2. In-house social and environmental performance

4.2.1. All offices and facilities shall conform to the "measure, reduce and offset" approach to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions:

- Office premises with an average presence of 5 or more UNOPS personnel shall contribute to the yearly environmental footprint inventory; and maintain regular documentation of significant data to facilitate the inventory.
- Offices shall include in their office plans on a yearly basis proportionate and quantifiable targets and objectives, that support continuous progress towards the indicators of the UNSS and of any other UNOPS priorities.
- UNOPS global climate footprint from offices, facilities, and operations shall be offset on a yearly basis using quality emission reduction certificates recommended by the UN.

4.2.2. All offices and facilities shall aim to adopt a continuous improvement process in relation to:

- Significant environmental aspects such as GHG emissions; waste minimisation and increased recycling, elimination of unnecessary single-use plastic, controlled disposal of hazardous waste; reduced contribution to air pollution and release of hydrofluorocarbons; responsible water and wastewater management; biodiversity conservation; and
- Significant social considerations including but not limited to diversity, accessibility, gender equality.

4.2.3. Minimum SE performance requirements applicable to all offices and facilities have been developed and are available in the SE section of the intranet. These requirements form part of the items verified during the periodic office inspections.

4.3. Social and environmental performance in projects

4.3.1. Minimum SE performance requirements applicable to all projects have been developed and are available in the SE section of the intranet. These requirements form part of the items verified during the weekly site inspections.

4.3.2. Social and Environmental Screening (SES) requirement

- Except for projects limited to the provision of services in a transactional role only (e.g., human resources, procurement, or financial transactional services), all new UNOPS projects shall undergo a Social & Environmental Screening at the pre-engagement phase.
- The Business Developer is responsible for the completion of the SES; key project stakeholders and technical experts shall be consulted to ensure that the Screening is informed by the best available knowledge; and considers direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts throughout the life cycle of the project.
- The SES results indicate in which thematic areas there have been identified risks and opportunities (if any) for the project. These risks and opportunities shall inform the consequent steps of the management system.

4.3.3. Social and Environmental Management Plans

- Except for cases where the SES results indicate that no formal SE requirements apply, all projects shall develop SE plans as detailed by the UNOPS management system, to address the project SE risks and opportunities and other requirements set in the UNOPS HSSE policy EOD Ref. EOD.ED.2021.01.
- The applicable SE plans shall make use of adaptive management; apply the mitigation hierarchy for risks and impacts; follow internationally recognised good practice principles such as the precautionary principle and good international industry practice (GIIP).

4.3.4. All projects shall implement activities of awareness raising and prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment, in a manner proportional to their size and risk profile.