

# REPORT

## of the Workshop on Strengthening National Capacities for Urban Planning, Housing, Energy Efficiency and Disaster Risk Reduction

### Organization and attendance

1. The Workshop on the Strengthening National Capacities for Urban Planning, Housing, Energy Efficiency and Disaster Risk Reduction was carried out within the framework of the “Strengthening national capacities for sustainable housing in selected countries with economies in transition” project, which is implemented from 2014 until 2017.
2. The workshop took place in Yerevan on 13-14 October 2014, which was organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, International Financial Corporation and the Ministry of Urban Development of Armenia.
3. The working languages of the workshop were English, Russian and Armenian.
4. The workshop was attended by 76 representatives from executive, regional, and local government bodies, international organizations, different organizations operating in the urban planning and housing sectors, UNECE secretariat, UN-HABITAT offices, as well as local experts and international experts from Belarus and Bulgaria.

### Objective

The objective of the workshop was to support discussions on policy implementation in the fields of sustainable urban development, housing end energy efficiency and strengthen national capacities for the policy development on housing and urban issues.

### Workshop Proceeding

The Workshop was opened by Mr. Narek Sargsyan, Minister of Urban Development of RA, who welcomed participants and thanked the Housing and Land Management Committee of UNECE and UN-Habitat for their efforts in organizing the Workshop. Mr. Sargsyan presented the background and needs of the workshop, as well as introduced briefly the current situation and challenges of the urban development and housing fields in the Republic.

The meeting was also welcomed by Mr.Simon Papyan, the First Deputy Minister of Nature Protection of RA, Mr.Haykaram Mkhitaryan, Deputy Minister of Emergency Situations f RA, Ms. Gulnara Roll, Head of Housing and Land Management Unit of UNECE, Mr.Vahan Kotanjyan, Regional Advisor on Energy, UNECE and Mr.Paulius Kuliauskas, Inter-Regional Advisor of UN-Habitat.

Ms. Ruzan Alaverdyan, Deputy Minister of Urban Development of RA chaired the Workshop.

The workshop was organized in a form of five substantive sessions, besides an opening and a wrap-up session. The topics of the sessions were as follows:

Day 1 (13 October)

### **SESSION I Activities of state agencies in urban planning, housing and disaster risks reduction in Armenia**

In the first session the representatives of RA Ministries of Urban Development, Emergency Situation, Energy and Natural Resources, Labor and Social Affairs and of State Committee of the Real Estate Cadastre presented the state policies and steps taken by the Government of RA in the fields of Urban Planning, Land Management, Disaster Risk Reduction, Housing Policy, Social Housing and Energy Efficiency.

### **SESSION II Challenges of sustainable urban development: international practices in urban planning and smart cities**

The representatives of UN-Habitat, Ministry of Architecture and Construction of Belarus and experts from Belarus and Bulgaria presented the international practices in urban policies, legal aspects and urban planning processes in Belarus and in Bulgaria.

Ms. Gulnara Roll, Head of Housing and Land Management Unit of UNECE has informed the Workshop about UNECE work on urban development, the Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management in the UNECE regions and also introduced the Smart city project, objectives and highlighted the importance of participation of Goris city as a pilot city in the «Smart Urban Solutions for transition and developing countries» project of UNECE in cooperation with OiER (Organization for International Economic Cooperation), the Environment Agency Austria, the Dubai Real Estate Institute, UN-Habitat and ISOCARP.

In the second session the national experts presented the activities in the field of Urban Planning and Development of Masters plans in Armenia, and also the Mayor of Goris presented the background information of Goris city, its issues, and challenges.

Day 2 (14 October)

### **SESSION III Energy Efficiency in Housing**

In this session, information was shared with the participants about programs and projects executed by international organizations in the field of Improvement of Energy Efficiency in buildings (Housing and Public Sector); in particular projects implemented by UNDP-GEF, EBRD, Habitat for Humanity Armenia, Armenian Renewable resources and Energy Efficiency Fund.

By experts were presented also the Mild Home project in EU states, Energy efficient planning in Belarus and activities of UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management in Energy Efficiency in housing.

#### **SESSION IV Activities of municipalities and NGOs in urban planning, housing and disaster risks reduction in Armenia**

This session was dedicated to the perspectives on municipal level in the fields of urban planning, housing and energy efficiency.

The experts presented the Strategic Development Plan of Yerevan city, Social and Energy Efficiency Housing project in Dilijan city, Residential energy efficiency project for low-income households in several communities.

During this session participants were informed about the recent initiatives of implementation of Covenant of Mayors in Armenia.

#### **SESSION V Activities of donors and international organizations**

During the workshop session, representatives of international organizations, acting in Armenia (International Financial Corporation-IFC, Eurasian Development Bank, EBRD, Asian Development Bank, GIZ) shared information about the programmes and projects executed by international organizations and directly or indirectly dealing with issues of urban development and energy efficiency.

#### **Conclusion**

Closing the Workshop the participants expressed their thanks to UNECE, UN-HABITAT and Ministry of Urban Development of RA for providing this opportunity to discuss and exchange experience among countries from different regions in the fields of sustainable urban development, housing and energy efficiency, which was much appreciated and also were expressed the appreciation to the organizers of the workshop and thanked the participants for their active involvement in the discussions.