



BUILDING CAPACITY IN COUNTRIES IN TRANSITION ECONOMY IN HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT - ARMENIA

*FINAL REGIONAL WORKSHOP OF THE UNDA 9TH TRANCHE PROJECT
“STRENGTHENING NATIONAL CAPACITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE HOUSING IN
SELECTED COUNTRIES WITH ECONOMIES IN TRANSITION”*

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COUNTRY INFORMATION (1)



- Located in South Caucasus without access to seas
- Bordered by Georgia, Azerbaijan, Turkey and Iran
- Sovereign, democratic, social state with a parliamentary system of government (amendments to RA Constitution adopted by referendum held on 6 December 2015)
- Population: 2,984,000 people (65% urban population)
- The country is divided into 10 marzes (provinces) and 915 communities
- Capital is Yerevan
- Area: 29.800 km²
- Most of the territory of the country is the highland with mountains
- Agricultural land accounts for 68.9% of land area, forest land – 11.2%

COUNTRY INFORMATION (2)

- The climate in Armenia is continental
- Earthquake-prone country sometimes accompanied by droughts or floods
- The Spitak devastating earthquake (1988) seized 40% of the territory (21 cities and 342 villages; town of Spitak was completely destroyed) and 40% of industrial capacity has been disabled
- 25 000 people were killed, 140 000 became disabled, more than 0.5 million people lost their homes
- General problems of post-communist transition in Armenia have been compounded by the Spitak earthquake
- Long-term effects of this tragedy continue to be felt until now: industry in the affected areas has not been fully restored
- High unemployment, housing problems and low standards of living are the causes of migration from the country
- In the group of middle-income countries (in the position 137 in the world in terms of GDP)



GENERAL INFORMATION ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (1)

Housing stock

- Total residential area is about 95 million m² (863000 dwellings), of which 54% is urban housing
- Multi-apartment housing stock is 27.6 million m² (18917 buildings with 434353 apartments), of which 94% is in urban communities
- Currently, 99.8% of the country's multifamily housing stock is privatized
- 8000 MABs are managed by owners' management bodies
- Buildings up to 5 floors are mainly built of stone, mostly from - volcanic tuff
- Multi-storey buildings are mainly constructed of panel



GENERAL INFORMATION ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (2)

- In recent years is carried out by a monolithic frame construction technology to meet the requirements for seismic resistance
- More than 60% of the buildings have a service life of at least 45 years
- Technical condition, especially of multi-apartment buildings, is in a serious concern
- 40% of energy saving potential is in building sector (402,000 toe)
- The problem is compounded by poor seismic resistance of the large multi-apartment buildings.

Housing provision

- 31.6 m² floor area per person



GENERAL INFORMATION ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (3)

- The need for housing, according to experts, is very high (despite the high statistical index of housing provision)
- About 30 thousand families are homeless, of which 16 thousand households live in slums (2011 survey)
- About 30 thousand families are in need for better housing conditions

Access to public services

- Population demand for electricity and gas is fully satisfied
- Limited district heating to small number of multi-apartment buildings
- Access to drinking water and sewage systems is high
- Access to household solid waste services is mostly adequate



GENERAL INFORMATION ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (4)

Urban development

Despite the decline in recent years, the urbanization level in Armenia is still high: more than 63% of the population live in cities. More than half of the urban population is concentrated in Yerevan (the capital)

In this point of view, in order to foster the equalizations of urban development, the policy supporting sustainable urban development has already been adopted by the Armenian government (for 2014-2025)

One of the challenges to regional development and efforts to decentralize powers and responsibilities to the local level, is a relatively small size of most of the settlements of Armenia. Focused efforts to solve this problem through the promotion of inter-municipal cooperation and consolidation (associations) of communities

Urban documentation structure

At the national level General Program of Settling approved in 2003 by the Republic of Armenia, defines the general strategic directions of the state policy in the field of urban planning



GENERAL INFORMATION ON HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT (5)

At the regional level ("marzes") projects of territorial planning of separate regions are to be prepared

Monitoring of these documents is carried out at the regional level. This work is funded from the state budget

Local level Urban planning activities within the administrative boundaries of a community governed by the general plan of the community (village) and the draft zoning of urban development activities, which are "urban development program documentation."

Other concepts

Disasters risk mitigation: In addition to the seismic risk strategies, adaptation to climate change is also an important task for Armenia (developed legislation and normative framework for regulating the field).

Historical heritage protection and rehabilitation: Armenia has an extensive legal framework that allows to ensure the safety of historical and cultural environment as a historical heritage on developed territories, and outside of settlements.

Environmental Management issues: Considered in urban documentation as part of impact evaluation from antropogenic activities

Smart cities: It is a comprehensive approach to planning and construction, while maintaining an environmentally friendly, affordable public transport, high quality air and water and effective waste management

KEY POLICY PRIORITIES

1. Ensure and promote a balanced and sustainable spatial planning and urban development
2. Regulation of the existing issues in the sphere of housing
3. Support the management, maintenance and exploitation
4. Improvement of usability, seismic safety and reliability of MABs
5. Implementation of resettlement measures for the residents of emergency MABs
6. Establishment of the environment promoting development of housing construction
7. Enhance the efficiency of land management system
8. Improvement of energy efficiency in MABs



MEASURES DIRECTED FOR SOLVING ISSUES IN COMPLIANCE WITH KEY POLICY PRIORITIES

- The National Action Plan has been developed based on the recommendations of the Country Profiles and in line with the key policy priorities.
- The main areas of the NAP are
 1. Urban development policy
 2. Housing and public utilities
 3. Housing Policy
 4. Construction
 5. Land and property relations
- In total 48 measures are envisioned for objectives to achieve the pre-defined goals.
- Measures are directed towards
 - elaboration of legal acts, regulation of legal framework, analysis of existing issues, which will be financed by maintenance expenses of appropriate state interested bodies and of communities, and
 - fulfilment of several projects, which will require financing from state and community budgets as well as external funds (e.g. international organizations etc.)



KEY OUTCOMES OF COOPERATION

- Proper identification of existing issues in key areas and formulation of appropriate measures
- Raised awareness of the NAP among key stakeholders
- Capacity development of sector policy makers and experts
- Transfer of information and knowledge as well as establishment of linkages between policy makers and experts of the four countries (Armenia, Moldova, Serbia and Tajikistan)
- Initiation of new ideas for cooperation between the UNECE countries
- Approval of the National Action Plan by the Government of Armenia with clear indication of deadlines and responsible persons for implementation of measures (pending)



CHALLENGES DURING THE PREPARATION OF THE NAP

- Non-sufficient level of institutional capacity
- Estimation of the financial resources for implementation of the NAP and formation of the financing model
- Non-clarity regarding financing and international support
- Absence of baseline indicators



LESSONS LEARNED FOR ELABORATION AND EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NAP

- Involvement of a wide spectrum of local stakeholders and IFIs/donors in the elaboration process of the NAP in the early stage.
- Availability of baseline indicators in order to evaluate the progress of the NAP implementation.
- Availability of financing model for assessment of financial resources.
- Ensuring the connection of the NAP with Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable, the New Urban Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- Financial and institutional sustainability of the NAP can be ensured through adoption of the NAP by the government and active work with IFIs working in the country as well as with support by UNECE to involve relevant donor organizations.
- Create a platform (e.g. website, Facebook) for operative exchange of information on implementation of the Country Profiles' recommendations for participants of the joint project.
- Establish Geneva UN Sustainable Housing Chapter Centers in the project countries and involve them in the Network.
- Prepare and issue annual implementation reports of the NAP.
- Promotion of public-private partnership during NAP implementation.



**THANKS FOR
ATTENTION!**

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