

**INDEPENDENT EVALUATION
OF THE UNDA 10th TRANCHE PROJECT “EVIDENCE-BASED
POLICIES FOR SUSTAINABLE HOUSING AND URBAN
DEVELOPMENT IN SELECTED COUNTRIES WITH ECONOMIES IN
TRANSITION”**

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

**The evaluation has been commissioned by the UNECE Housing and Land
Management Unit (HLMU)**

Evaluation Report



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ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

DAC	Development Assistance Committee
HLMU	Housing and Land Management Unit
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSO	National Statistical Office
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PMU	Programme Management Unit
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDA	United Nations Development Account
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Program.

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II. Executive summary

This evaluation report aims to:

1. Provide an independent evaluation of the UNDA 10th Tranche project “Evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in selected countries with economies in transition”, implemented by the UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit of the Division of Forests. The list of selected countries included Albania, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine.
2. Assess the extent to which the expected outcomes and objective of the UNDA 10th Tranche project “Evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in selected countries with economies in transition” have been achieved.
3. Review the causes and factors of success and failure in terms of development of evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development results in the recipient countries.
4. Take a stock of findings and make conclusions accompanied by recommendations for possible improvements of the UNECE activities in supporting the development of evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in the UNECE region.
5. Assess how gender equality, rights-based and the most vulnerable inclusion approaches considerations were included in this project.

The project falls under the mandate of **subprogramme 8 Housing, Land Management and Population of Programme 17 Economic development in Europe**¹. Component 8A focuses on Housing and Land Management; the core objective of this component is to improve housing, urban and land governance, and promote the evidence-based formulation and implementation of sustainable housing, land, population and social cohesion policies in the region.

The project builds on the activities and outcomes of the UNDA 9th tranche project “Strengthening national capacities for sustainable housing in selected countries with economies in transition”, with a total funding of US\$ 533,000 and implemented by the UNECE and UN-Habitat in 2014-2017².

The UNDA 9th tranche project was aimed to support developing the capacity of countries with economies in transition to develop policies for sustainable housing, urban development, and land management through the preparation of National Action Plans on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development. Implementation of that project showed the need in the evidence-based approach to developing and implementing national policies, which became the focus of the project currently evaluated.

Furthermore, the project supported the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development³ and the New Urban Agenda adopted by the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito, Ecuador in 2016.⁴

¹ [https://undocs.org/a/74/6\(Sect.20\)](https://undocs.org/a/74/6(Sect.20))

² <https://www.unece.org/housing/unda.html>

³ https://ec.europa.eu/environment/sustainable-development/SDGs/index_en.htm

⁴ <https://unhabitat.org/about-us/new-urban-agenda>

The overall goal of the UNDA 10th tranche project is to strengthen national capacities for the development of evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in six selected countries: Albania, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine. The project was implemented jointly by UNECE, as an Executing Entity (Lead Agency) and the United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-Habitat), as a Cooperating Agency. Originally the project was designed for four countries, Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine; in 2019, the project received additional funding from the UNDA residual funds and included two additional countries to the project – Belarus and Kazakhstan. This fresh funding facilitated the implementation of additional activities, including organization of six workshops in the six project beneficiary countries.

From 2016 to 2020 the project assisted the interested national governments in the selected beneficiary countries from the UNECE region by elaborating a policy paper and guidelines for the collection and analysis of the national data on housing and urban development, providing advice on the development of evidence-based policies, promoting intersectoral cooperation, building capacity on sustainable housing through the provision of advisory services, preparation of training materials, organization of workshops and online trainings.

KEY FINDINGS:

The evaluation key findings, conclusions and recommendations are based on documents consulted, the written responses to the evaluation questionnaire and in-depth interviews of stakeholders from the pilot countries, and UNECE staff:

- 1. Many countries in the UNECE region are confronted with multiple serious challenges in the housing and urban management sector. The UNDA 10th Tranche project responded to these persisting challenges in a highly relevant way.**
- 2. The UNDA 10th Tranche project was very well aligned with the global and regional priorities and the programme of work of the UNECE and pertinent in way of achieving the SDGs.**
- 3. The coherence of the implementation of activities in the required sequence was slightly diminished by the protracted process in the completion of the Guidelines on evidence-based policies and decision-making for sustainable housing and urban development. The process was jeopardized by the fact that the pertinent global SDG indicators were adopted by the UNGA much later than expected.**
- 4. The UNDA 10th Tranche project outputs were consistent with its expected outcomes and its overall.**
- 5. Almost all planned activities and all planned outputs have been delivered.**
- 6. The UNDA 10th Tranche project objectives have been achieved within the anticipated budget and allocation of resources. The human and financial resources allocated to the project have been used efficiently and commensurate to its results.**
- 7. Implementation of several activities has been undertaken behind the planned timeframe. The main reason of implementation delays was the same as explained under key finding 3.**
- 8. The international partners and beneficiaries have declared a sound level of the ownership of the outcomes of the work.**
- 9. In responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNDA 10th Tranche project activities have been re-organized in a relevant and consistent way.**
- 10. The gender, rights-based and disability inclusion approached have not represented an important focus of the project.**

KEY CONCLUSIONS:

The evaluation resulted in the following key conclusions:

- 1. The Project was highly relevant in responding to the needs and priorities of the beneficiary countries, consistent with the respective global and regional priorities, and well aligned with the program work of the UNECE, as well as with the pertinent sustainable development goals. The high extent of the relevance and consistency was buttressed by the relevant information analysis and specific conclusions and policy recommendations available in the UNECE Country Profiles on the Housing Sector. However, there were shortcomings in applying gender, rights-based and disability inclusion approaches in the design and with partial results in considering these issues during the implementation activities.**

2. The outputs generated by the Project were fully consistent with the overall objective/impact and expected outcomes. All planned outputs have been delivered.
3. Few minor shortcomings identified with regard to the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation plan were linked to the constraints from DESA preventing the hiring of a dedicated project Manager, at least during key phases, as well as to the governmental changes in several recipient countries (Albania, Georgia, Ukraine).
4. The Project delivered several very positive outputs: the Guidelines on evidence-based policies and decision making for sustainable housing and urban development, trainings and training materials for facilitating the application of the Guidelines in the recipient countries. These outputs are highly relevant and pertinent also for the use in other UNECE region countries and beyond. The numerous capacity development activities were well suited for the achievement of the Project outcomes. However, the exact extent of the achievement of the outcomes is difficult to assess fairly at this junction. The current assessment is based on the feedback received from the stakeholders which in majority of cases indicated that the Project activities and outputs resulted in an important step forward in strengthening national capacities of beneficiary countries to collect pertinent data for and develop evidence-based policies housing, urban development and land administration.
5. The level of coherence in the implementation of activities in the required sequence was slightly diminished by the delays in the process of finalization of the Guidelines for evidence-based policy and decision making.
6. Contributions of the Project capacity development activities for achieving the outcomes/overall objective was not systematically measured during the national workshops. The capacity development workshops' relevance, pertinence, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, as well as the overall impact were not formally evaluated and/or documented.
7. The logistical modifications related to pending activities as of April 2020 were highly coherent with the initial Project design. A modified implementation mode of the pending activities was aligned consistently with the planned outputs, outcomes and the overall impact/objective of the Project. The process of redressing logistics related to several pending activities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic was simplified by the fact that the Project was at the outbreak of the pandemic in its "recapitulation" phase. Modified approach was not related to mitigating the impact of COVID-19 in the pilot countries.
8. The overall evaluation of the Project rated 3 evaluation criteria, relevance, coherence and sustainability, at a highly satisfactory rating, and 2 evaluation criteria, effectiveness and efficiency, at a partially satisfactory rating. The ratings at little satisfactory level, or not satisfactory level, were not considered as appropriate by any of the interviewed stakeholders.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:

The evaluation resulted in the following key recommendations:

1. UNECE to continue an intensive support to the UNECE region countries with economies in transition and regular dialogue with their national authorities, with pertinent sectoral responsibilities, to keep the momentum for maintaining their commitment to developing evidence-based policies in the sector.
2. In the future, systematically assess, monitor and document the usefulness and expected impact of the capacity development workshops by canvassing feedback from the participants through a well-tailored questionnaire, quiz approach application and internet based tools as e.g. Survey Monkey. These assessments should include a space for qualitative comments and proposals by participants
3. Reinforce the staffing capacity of the HLMU to ensure the long-term sustainability and efficiency of the UNECE assistance in the implementation of evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in the UNECE region by mobilizing additional extrabudgetary and UNDA resources. Increasing staff resources above 5% in UNDA project would also help to increase the efficiency and decrease the reliance on consultancies.
4. In the future projects, introduce more comprehensive project performance monitoring tool facilitating the assessment of the ongoing impact of the activities vis-a-vis the achievements of the project's expected outcomes and its overall objective.
5. Subject to availability of human and financial resources, create in UNECE a dedicated webpage for sharing the training materials, lessons learned, best practices examples in collection of data and developing evidence-based policies on housing, urban development and land management.

6. **Ensure that aspects related to gender, rights-based and vulnerable groups inclusion approaches are fully considered in the design of the future projects, as well as during their implementation activities.**

III. Introduction

The process of urban development is among the most significant global trends of the 21st century. Today, 55 per cent of the world's population lives in cities. By 2030, projections show that 60 per cent of people will be urban dwellers. That proportion is set to increase to 68 per cent by 2050. Urbanization is not only a demographic or spatial phenomenon but a force, which if steered correctly, can help the world overcome some of its major challenges, including poverty, inequality, environmental degradation, climate change, fragility and conflict. These are all critical elements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.⁵

As the 21st century unfolds, an increasing majority of the world's population will live in urban settlements. Human wellbeing in urban areas relies on a complex web of interconnected institutions, infrastructure, services and information. People are drawn to urban areas as centres of economic activity, opportunity and innovation. But urban settlements are also the places where stresses accumulate, or sudden shocks occur that may result in social breakdown, physical collapse or economic deprivation. That is, unless a city is sustainable, smart, and resilient. In the 21st century, global pressures that play out at a city scale – such as climate change, disease pandemics, economic fluctuations – pose new challenges. The scale of sustainable housing and urban settlements' complexity is increasing due to the number of people living in cities.

The UNECE Housing and Land Management Component of Subprogramme 08: Housing, Land Management and Population is addressing persisting challenges faced by cities in the 21st century. The objective of this Component is to contribute to strengthening of member State-owned programmes and policies promoting decent, adequate, affordable, energy-efficient and healthy housing for all, sustainable cities, sustainable urban development and land management. The strategy of the Component is based on the implementation of the core interlinked functions, namely, international policy dialogue, normative work and capacity building and the sharing of best practices and lessons learned in all areas of the Subprogramme work. To contribute to the strengthening of member State-owned programmes and policies, the subprogramme supports member States, including national, regional and local governments and other key stakeholders, in the review of progress in achieving the SDG, including the implementation of measures to accelerate the achievement of the Goals, and in exchanging experiences and best practices in these areas.

This report presents a comprehensive information of evaluation results of the UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit's assistance to the countries with economies in transition in strengthening national capacities in the development of evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in the context of the UN Development Account (UNDA) 10th Tranche project "Evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in selected countries with economies in transition" (thereafter referred to as "the Project"). The evaluation covered the full project implementation during the period of June 2016-December 2020. For conducting an external evaluation of the Project, the UNECE hired an independent evaluation consultant from July to November 2020.

The Project was implemented by the UNECE, as a lead agency and the UN-HABITAT, as an implementing partner. Additional advisory support was provided by the University of Geneva. The national stakeholders of the project were governments, including representatives of housing and urban development (key stakeholders), energy, finance, statistics and environmental authorities in the beneficiary countries. Local authorities, private sector, academia and civil society, were also involved in the Project.

The focus of this evaluation exercise was to conduct an external independent assessment of the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the UNECE and its implementing partners activities and to measure the extent to which the objectives of the UNDA 10th Tranche Project in supporting the selected UNECE Member States were achieved.

- **Project's Background**

In the UNECE region, the only intergovernmental body addressing the housing and urban development challenges is **the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management**, established in 1947. It is the highest policy-making

⁵ UN-Habitat Flagship Programme – SDG Cities.

body of UNECE in housing, urban development and land management. The Committee includes representatives of governmental institutions - ministries, agencies - dealing with housing, economic development, urban planning and development, and land administration and management and holds its sessions annually. **The Bureau** of the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management coordinates the implementation of the Committee's programme of work between the annual sessions.

In 2000 and 2006, the 56 UNECE member States articulated and affirmed their vision of the role of the Committee and the scope of its activities. The 2000 Ministerial meeting on Human Settlements reviewed and appraised the implementation of the Habitat Agenda in the ECE region as a contribution to the special session of the General Assembly, Istanbul +5 held in 2001. (See the Report on the Ministerial Meeting and the annexed Ministerial Declaration)⁶ The objective of the meeting was to foster discussion on the vision and direction of future work to improve housing and urban conditions in the ECE region. As an outcome, the Ministers and Heads of States adopted the "ECE Strategy for a Sustainable Quality of Life in Human Settlements in the 21st Century".⁷ This document is based on the provisions of the Habitat Agenda and Agenda 21, with particular emphasis on issues of common interest and concern for all countries of the ECE region.

The goal of the Committee, as outlined in the strategy is "to promote the sustainable development of human settlements in the ECE region while fostering economic and social prosperity and supporting democratic governance". The strategy's goals and challenges were validated in 2006 when the Ministerial Declaration on Social and Economic Challenges in Distressed Urban Areas in the UNECE region was adopted. This document considers that "significant challenges have also been noticed in Western Europe" and that "Informal settlements and distressed urban areas reflect a lack of planning and adequate housing policies." The adopted 2006 Ministerial Declaration, along with the 2000 Strategy, guide the Committee's work and reflect the experience, needs and approaches shaped by six decades of cooperation amongst the ECE Housing and Land Management community. To support this work: the Real Estate Advisory Group (2007) and the ad hoc Working Group on a Possible Framework Convention on Sustainable Housing (2010) have been established.

Development of evidence-based national policies on housing and urban development informed by rigorously established objective is part of the Committee's program of work. The UNECE Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management are country-based comprehensive studies which provide evidence on the national implementation of policies on housing and urban development. These studies were developed for all 18 countries with transition economies. They form the basis for the discussions of evidence-based policies on housing and urban development in the Committee

In October 2013, the Ministerial Meeting on Housing and Land Management adopted a Strategy for Sustainable Housing and Land Management in the UNECE region for the period of 2014-2020.⁸ This strategy contains several specific goals and objectives concerning housing, urban development and land management policies to be achieved by 2020.

In November 2017, the draft Geneva Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development was adopted by the Committee on Housing and Land Management.⁹

In 2014, the Committee also agreed on the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing¹⁰, a comprehensive non-legally binding document, which contains specific principles and objectives for achieving sustainable housing and urban development in the UNECE region beyond 2020. The Geneva UN Charter was endorsed at the Commission session in April 2015.

The above mentioned Ministerial-level documents and the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing established clear objectives for the further work of the Committee on the development of capacities for evidence-based policies on housing and urban development in the UNECE member States. The Project was designed to facilitate the achievements of these objectives.

The Project also played an important role in supporting the expected accomplishments of the UNECE Strategic Framework for 2016-2017 in its Sub-program 8A of the program "8 "Housing, Land Management and Population" in the following areas:

- (a) "Improved capacity for policy formulation and implementation in housing, planning and land administration in the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and South-Eastern Europe"; and
- (b) "Strengthened implementation by countries of UNECE guidelines on housing and land management, including on energy efficiency, informal settlements, transparency in land and real estate markets and on improved safety in buildings"

⁶ <https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2000/ece/hbp/ece.hbp.119.add.1.e.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2001/ece/hbp/ece.hbp.120.pdf>

⁸ <http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/sust.hsng.strategy.pdf>

⁹ [unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2017/ECE_HBP_2017_1.en.pdf](https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2017/ECE_HBP_2017_1.en.pdf)

¹⁰ https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/EN_Geneva_UN_Charter_on_Sustainable_Housing.pdf

The Project was implemented by the UNECE and UN-HABITAT that are strategic partners on issues related to urban planning, housing and land management in the UNECE region, given their expertise and complementary mandates in these areas. UNECE has been cooperating with the UN-Habitat on the development of evidence-based policies on housing and urban development for many years. This close cooperation includes also activities on the development of approaches to monitoring of the housing and urban development policies through the UN-Habitat Global Housing Strategy and Global Network on Sustainable Housing.

This long-standing cooperation led logically to the decision that the implementing entities of the project were the Housing and Land Management Unit of the UNECE Forests, Land and Housing Division (UNECE); and the United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-HABITAT).

- **Subject of the Evaluation**

Subject of the evaluation is the UNDA 10th Tranche project “Evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in selected countries with economies in transition”. According to the Project Document’s logical framework prepared in 2016, the **overall objective** of the UNDA 10th tranche Project was “to strengthen national capacities to develop evidence-based policies to achieve inclusive and sustainable housing and urban development in four selected countries with transition economies in the UNECE region; and to support realization of the achievement of SDG 11.” Four selected countries were originally: Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine. In 2019, when an additional funding was mobilized, the list of recipient countries was extended to six countries: Albania, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine.

The logical framework stipulated that the objective of the project should be pursued by achieving the following **results/outcomes**:

- (EA1) Strengthened national capacity of beneficiary countries to **collect data** on housing, urban development and land administration
- (EA2) Strengthened national technical capacity of relevant government agencies in beneficiary countries in the UNECE region to **develop evidence-based policies** on housing, urban development and land administration.

The logical framework envisaged that both, the overall objective and the expected outcomes would be achieved by the implementation of the following **activities**:

- (A1.1) Conducting **four advisory missions** to discuss with the countries approaches and technical tools for the collection of data on housing, urban development and land administration relevant to sustainable development and human settlements in the four beneficiary countries.
- (A1.2) Development of a **policy paper** with the methodology for data collection on housing, urban development and land administration relevant to the 2030 Agenda.
- (A1.3) Organization of **four national validation workshops** to elaborate the **guidelines for the data collection** needed to review the implementation of policies on housing, urban development and land administration.
- (A1.4) **Advisory missions to four countries** to meet with the government officials and technical experts involved in the data collection to provide **policy advice on the actual data collection and the implementation of the national guidelines** for the data collection.
- (A2.1) Preparation of **training materials** in English and Russian on the development of evidence based sustainable urban development policies.
- (A2.2) Organization of four national **training workshops** to support the development of evidence-based sustainable housing and urban development policies.
- (A2.3) **Advisory missions** of UNECE and UN-Habitat staff to the countries to assist in further adoption of evidence-based policies on housing, urban development and land administration.
- (A2.4) Preparation of the project report containing **regional guidelines** for the development of evidence-based policies.
- (A2.5) Organization of **one regional meeting for UNECE member States to share lessons learned** on the development of the methodology of the data collection and support to the related sustainable housing and urban development policies. – will be organized on 3-4 October 2019 in Geneva.
- (A2.6) Organization of **six capacity-development workshops** to support implementation of the guidelines on evidence-based policies. This activity was added upon the receipt of the additional UNDA residual funds. In 2019 the activities were extended by adding four additional workshops for beneficiary countries (2.6.1) and two workshops for additional countries that requested support (2.6.2).

The project was financed from the UN Development Account in its 10th tranche. Its original budget was US\$ 499'000. The additional funding of US\$ 90'000 for the Activity 2.6. was mobilized in 2019.

The Project's implementation time was of four and half years (from June 2016 to the end of 2020) and the total funding of US\$ 589'000. For a comparison its predecessor funded from the UNDA in its 9th tranche had a budget of US\$533,000. UN DESA funded some 40 projects under the UNDA 10th tranche globally, with an average budget between US\$ 455'000 to 1'000'000. Thus, the Project under evaluation is one of the smallest ones in respect of its budget.

The Project was implemented in the framework of the UNECE subprogramme 8A "Housing and Land Management Subprogramme", which was managed by the Housing and Land Management Unit. The Subprogramme 8A's annual regular budget makes around US\$ 700'000 per year, which includes four regular budget positions. Calculating the Housing and Land Management Unit's approximate regular budget for four and half years (June 2016-December 2020), the budget of the Project represented about 18.7 % of its regular budget during that period.

The principal responsibility of the Housing and Land Management Unit is to serve as a secretariat of the Intergovernmental Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management and its Working Party on Land Administration with the key deliverables represented by parliamentary documents and meetings. The Unit's technical assistance projects are well integrated into the program of its work with intergovernmental bodies which work successfully since 1947. The project outcomes long-term **sustainability** is ensured that they are part of the intergovernmental process and outcomes are reviewed annually at the Committee session and biannually - at official meetings of the Working Party on Land Administration.

Unlike other UNECE subprogrammes, the subprogramme 8A is very small in terms of the number of regular staff. As a consequence, regular staff members have to support the development, implementation and evaluation of technical assistance projects. Therefore in terms of the project resources, the subprogramme 8A depends much more than other UNECE subprogrammes on the project resources for consultancies to ensure a smooth projects' implementation.

- **Purpose of the evaluation**

The primary purpose of this external evaluation is to assess the extent to which the objectives of the UNDA 10th tranche project "Evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in selected countries with economies in transition" were achieved. The evaluation report presents a summary of evaluation results of the UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit's assistance provided in the framework of the Project to six pilot countries (Albania, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine). In line with the UNECE Policy for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women this evaluation also assesses how gender equality considerations were included in this project. The results of the evaluation are expected to contribute to a long-term vision and strategy concerning evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in the countries with economies in transition. The results of the evaluation can also be used to improve the future UNECE technical assistance activities in the subject area.

- **Scope of the evaluation**

The evaluation's scope included the full project implementation during the period of June 2016-December 2020 in six pilot countries (Albania, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine). To this end the evaluator reviewed, gauged and analyzed the pertinent documents/reports produced in the framework of the Project during the period 2016-2020. During this period the Project supported the development of the evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in six countries with economies in transition, mentioned above. Therefore, the evaluation focused on the activities, processes and arrangements for supporting the evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in recipient countries. In all these countries a special attention was paid on the assessment of the extent to which its planned impact was realized and the expected outcomes and outputs achieved. Attention was paid to the factors/circumstances that influenced the results, whether intended or unintended, management and monitoring processes and the Project interaction with key stakeholders. The UNECE staff who participated in these activities, the national focal points of the recipient countries as well as major international partners (UN-HABITAT, University of Geneva) were consulted/interviewed during the evaluation process.

The universally recognized values and principles of human rights and gender equality need were integrated at all stages of an evaluation, in compliance with the United Nations Evaluation Group's revised gender-related norms and standards. Therefore, the evaluation assessed how the vulnerable groups and gender considerations were included in the process whether sufficient

information was collected during the implementation period on specific result indicators to measure progress. All available information, documents, brochures and the Project's progress reports were reviewed and analyzed by the evaluator.

IV. Evaluation methodology and limitation factors

• Methodology

The evaluation framework, as it was framed by the Evaluation Terms of Reference (TOR) prepared by the UNECE, provided a foundation for the study. The respective TOR cleared by the UNECE Programme Management Unit (PMU) are available in annex 1.

The evaluation activities were guided by the basic principles of effective and sound evaluation including:

- The OECD/DAC evaluation criteria as an essential background (Box 1.1)
- Special emphasis on distinguishing as rigorously as possible, at all stages of the evaluation process, between findings (facts), conclusions (interpretation of the facts, drawing on the judgement of the evaluator), and recommendations (reasoned advice based on the evaluation findings and conclusions).

Box 1: The OECD-DAC Evaluation Criteria

The five OECD-DAC evaluation criteria are:	
•	Coherence: The compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution
•	Effectiveness: The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve its objectives, and its results including any differential results across groups.
•	Efficiency: The extent to which the intervention delivers or is likely to deliver results in an economic or timely way.
•	Relevance: The extent to which the intervention objectives and design respond to beneficiaries' global, country and partner/institution needs, policies and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change.
•	Impact: The extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.
•	Sustainability: The extent to which the net benefits of interventions continue or are likely to continue. ¹¹

The final evaluation report's structure and methodology was designed in compliance with the UNECE Evaluation Policy and Evaluation Guide¹² and reflecting the United Nations Evaluation Group norms and standards.

In line with the TOR the evaluation addressed the following issues, relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, as follows:

1. Review of the relevance of the Project's design and activities in light of the specific needs of the beneficiary countries, the UNECE mandate as expressed in the UNECE Programme of Work, the Subprogramme 8A - Housing and Land Management Component and SDGs.
2. Assessment of the level of coherence in the collaboration with the UN system, other international organizations and consistency of the outputs with the overall objective and expected outcomes.

¹¹ <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

¹² https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/press/pr2014/UNECE_Evaluation_Policy_October_2014.pdf

3. Assessment of the effectiveness of the Project's activities and outputs in achieving expected impact and challenges faced in the process.
4. Assessment of the efficiency with which these activities were implemented.
5. Review of the sustainability and ownership of the Project's outcomes in the recipient countries.

For each of the evaluation criteria a cluster of questions was established, including the assessment of the levels of accomplishment: high, partial, little and not at all.

The relevance of the Project's activities with regards to gender equality, empowerment of women and incorporation of the perspective of the most vulnerable groups was reviewed as well. Ethical standards were considered throughout the evaluation and all stakeholder groups were treated with integrity and respect for confidentiality. The approach was guided by the gender-responsive methodology, methods and tools in line with the United Nations Evaluation Group norms and standards. Gender equality approach was addressed by continued efforts to ensure the participation of both women and men in the project key activities and its decision making and guidance providing arrangements. Evaluation disaggregated data collected by sex. A gender analysis was reflected in the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations.

The evaluation was based on a variety of evaluation tools.

- A desk review included reading and analysis of all relevant documents in the first instance. Among others papers the desk review included the project document and information on project activities, developed Guidelines publication, including the policy paper, workshop agendas, reports of the national workshops. These documents were provided by the Housing and Land Management Unit. In addition, evaluator reviewed UNECE Biennial Performance Reports of the UNECE Subprogramme 8A "Housing and Land Management", data and information collected during the interviews and others. It also included countries' context analysis, review of strategic plans and priorities of the UNECE as well as financial and budgetary analytics.
- In-depth skype-based interviews were organized with the national coordinators of the project, representatives of national governments and relevant stakeholders in Albania, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine, as identified and proposed by UNECE, with partners involved in the project, UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit, UN-Habitat and University of Geneva. All stakeholders interviewed were actively involved in concrete project activities at national and regional levels, and many of them also in the global sessions held in the UNECE Geneva. Originally planned face-to-face interviews with the key stakeholders could not be conducted due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- The evaluator attended virtually the final project meeting in Geneva on 8-9 October 2020 at margins of which he held some of the interviews with project participants and representatives of governments. The meetings with the project leaders and other stakeholders were organized by the Housing and Land Management Unit.
- To enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the interviews, the evaluator developed an evaluation questionnaire (see Annex 3) to guide discussions and to receive an additional feedback from the interviewees.

The feedback received from the interviews and completed questionnaires was integrated into the evaluation report after a careful analysis and triangulation. The research methods applied were predominantly qualitative, with a quantitative element limited to descriptive statistics. The outcomes generated by desk reviews, interviews and evaluation questionnaires were synthesized and aggregated by main issues. The data and information received were triangulated and cross-validated considering carefully the issues of convergence and divergence. Evaluation methods and sampling paid also attention to the needs of the most vulnerable groups of population. With regard to the most vulnerable, the project yielded positive results in Kyrgyzstan and Albania. In both countries the housing needs of the most vulnerable were addressed by the concrete actions of the governments as a concrete result of the Project interventions. The list of all documents reviewed is in Annex 2.

To facilitate evaluation process and ensure its transparency the evaluation matrix was designed by the evaluator (Table 1). The matrix brought to one place an overview of the evaluation criteria, key questions related to each criterion, data sources, data collection and analysis methods and indicators of success. Key questions related to each of the five evaluation criteria are described in the section containing the evaluation findings.

Table 1: Evaluation matrix:

Evaluation criteria	Data sources	Data collection and analysis method	Indicators of success
Relevance	The project documents, logical framework, monitoring documents, policy guidelines, financial reports, mission and workshops' reports, country and smart cities profiles, feedback from interviews.	Review/analysis of key documents related to the Project, individual interviews, focus groups session, questionnaire, analysis, synthesis, triangulation and cross-validation of views and information.	Extent to which achieved outcomes/outputs are consistent national priorities and the needs of beneficiary countries, the UNECE mandate and relevant SDGs. Degree of congruence between the perception of what is needed by the Project planners/implementers and the perception of what is needed as seen by beneficiaries including gender and vulnerable groups consideration.
Effectiveness	The project documents, logical framework, monitoring documents, policy guidelines, financial reports, mission and workshops' reports, country and smart cities profiles, feedback from interviews.	Review/analysis of key documents related to the Project, individual interviews, focus groups session, questionnaire, analysis, synthesis, triangulation and cross-validation of views and information.	Extent to which the expected results of the Project's activities/outputs have been achieved. Extent to which the challenges/obstacles to implementing of planned activities/outputs and achieving the expected outcomes/impact have been addressed effectively.
Efficiency	The project documents, logical framework, monitoring documents, policy guidelines, financial reports, mission and workshops' reports, country and smart cities profiles, feedback from interviews.	Review/analysis of key documents related to the Project, individual interviews, focus groups session, questionnaire, analysis, synthesis, triangulation and cross-validation of views and information.	Extent to which human and financial resources have been used wisely to achieve expected results. Extent to which activities have been implemented according to planned schedule and within the anticipated budget and allocation of resources. Degree of the implementation of planned activities within the planned timeframes.
Sustainability	The project documents, logical framework, monitoring documents, policy guidelines, financial reports, mission and workshops' reports, country and smart cities profiles, feedback from interviews.	Review/analysis of key documents related to the Project, individual interviews, focus groups session, questionnaire, analysis, synthesis, triangulation and cross-validation of views and information.	Level of likelihood that the beneficiary countries and stakeholders will continue, scale up, institutionalize their engagement in the similar activities and demonstrate ownership of the work accomplished by the Project. Extent to which the overall impact of the Project is still valid and can be replicated in the UNECE and other regions. Number of laws, regulations, policies related to the Project and of similar projects developed so far considering also gender and vulnerable groups aspects.
Coherence	The project documents, logical framework, monitoring documents, policy guidelines, financial reports, mission and workshops' reports, country and smart cities profiles, feedback from interviews.	Review/analysis of key documents related to the Project, individual interviews, focus groups session, questionnaire, analysis, synthesis, triangulation and cross-validation of views and information.	Level coherence in the collaboration with other entities of the UN system and other international organizations (UN HABITAT, UNDP). Degree of coherence in appropriate sequencing the activities to ensure the Project's greatest impact. The extent to which the outputs were consistent with and relevant to the overall impact and expected outcomes. Extent to which the COVID-19 related activities added in 2020 were coherent with the initial Project's design.

- Limitation factors**

The evaluation process was impacted by a series of limitation factors, as follows:

- The major constraint was the overall global political, economic and emergency situation due to the COVID-19 public health crisis. The COVID-19 was declared by the World Health Organization as a worldwide pandemic. The crisis management measures put in place by the beneficiary countries, as well as by the UN system prevented travels to/from the beneficiary countries and led to the changes in the execution of the planned Project's activities as well as of the evaluation process.
- Several of the interviewed stakeholders were involved only in some areas of the Project activities and were not in a position to provide a "comprehensive picture" of the Project's successes and failures.
- The originally planned in-depth in-person interviews with the key stakeholders could not be conducted due to personal distancing measures imposed by the COVID-19.
- The interviewed stakeholders had difficulty in providing sufficient information on policies, regulations, strategies and plans that were developed due to the Project impact.
- The capacity development workshops' outcomes were not consistently assessed and documented, that made the fair assessment of their impact on the Project's outcomes and its overall objective difficult.

V. Theory of Change

The evaluation of the Project's results looked also at how the Theory of Change (TOC) was applied by the Project. In consultation with the HLMU the TOC was constructed retrospectively describing the sequence of expected results through the UNECE interventions.

This chapter describes the TOC in general, and also how it was reflected in the Project under evaluation. Generally, the TOC shows a time-bound pathway from 'start' to 'end' by specifying the needed steps to achieve certain goals/objectives. Its main tool, the project log frame shows the results chain of the project by specifying sets of connected building blocks, referred to as inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact. The log frame clarifies the project logic underlying the development intervention.

The Project's TOC was designed to address the challenges/problems related to sustainable housing and urban development persisting in the recipient countries. Currently, there are many challenges of providing affordable, pertinent and decent housing in the countries with economies in transition. Owing to a lack of effective management and investment for housing stock maintenance and repairs, a large share of residential houses in these countries has deteriorated, affecting the quality of life of the residents and causing energy losses. Therefore, the recipient countries needed concerted actions to improve housing quality and living conditions. In the countries concerned, policy priorities include achieving effective housing management, investing in large-scale retrofitting, and developing housing financing mechanisms. Additional challenge is related to housing affordability, including the lack of affordable housing solutions for young people, vulnerable groups in the population coupled with limited access to credit for households. Important step in addressing the housing-related challenges is to ensure the availability of reliable data related to housing and use such a data for evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development. In general, the TOC articulates pathways for change, identifying the solution proposed for addressing the existing problems, by proposing the activities which can generate the outputs and outcomes resulting in pertinent solutions, which in turn result in achieving the overall objective/impact. These pathways leading to a desired change are demonstrated in the Project's Logical Framework (see Box 2), which was reviewed and updated during the evaluation process. It should be noted that at the time of the project planning, in 2015, the TOC approach to the planning of UNDA projects was not used as yet and TOC was not use in the planning of the project evaluation. This resulted in the minor shortcoming of the original log frame, including a definition and inclusion of the outputs for the purpose of this evaluation which uses TOC approach. This shortcoming was eliminated during the evaluation period.

Box 2: Logical framework of the Project as in the Project Document

<u>Intervention logic</u>	<u>Indicators</u>	<u>Means of verification</u>
Objective To strengthen national capacity to develop evidence-based policies to achieve inclusive and sustainable housing and urban development in four selected countries with transition economies in the UNECE region; and to support the realization of the achievement of SDG 11		
Expected Accomplishment/Outcome 1 Strengthened national capacity of beneficiary countries to collect data on housing, urban development and land administration	Indicator of Accomplishment 1.2 80% of trained beneficiaries confirm an increased capacity to collect data on housing, urban development and land administration.	The access to the survey of beneficiaries
	Indicator of Accomplishment 1.3 All project countries have established a government-led Steering Committees.	Reports on meetings of the Steering Committees
Activity A1.1 Conduct four advisory missions to discuss with the countries approaches and technical tools for the collection of data on housing, urban development and land administration relevant to sustainable development and human settlements in the four beneficiary countries. The advisory missions will also facilitate the establishment of government led intersectoral steering committees (i.e., with participation of senior officials representing different ministries, including of economic, environment, justice, etc.). The advisory missions will be conducted by UNECE and UN-Habitat staff. An advisory mission will consist of bilateral meetings with a partner government body (Ministry) representatives (preferably high-level officials) and with key stakeholders (depending on a country). The information collected during advisory missions will be used to identify the necessities and priorities in trainings in a country. The collected information will serve as a basis for developing a policy paper (A1.2). (Note: four sub-activities involved – 4 missions to 4 recipient countries)		
Activity A1.2 Develop a policy paper with the methodology for data collection on housing, urban development and land administration relevant to the post-2015 Agenda on cities and human settlements and country specific guidelines for the countries. The policy paper will be prepared by UN-Habitat consultants. This paper will provide international guidance on collecting the data and will serve as a reference for evaluating the quality of the statistics collected by the participating countries (IA 1.1) (Note: one sub-activity involved – Policy paper)		
Activity A1.3 Organize four (one per a beneficiary country) national validation workshops to elaborate the national guidelines for the data collection to monitor the implementation of policies on housing, urban development and land administration. After the workshops, these national guidelines will be further adopted as official governmental documents (such as orders by the ministers) by the respective responsible authorities in the four countries: Housing Agency of Albania, Ministry of Economy and Urban Development of Georgia, Agency for Construction and Architecture of Kyrgyzstan and Ministry of Regional Development of Ukraine. Workshops will be co-organized by participating agencies (UNECE and UN-Habitat) and national governments. Each workshop will be for approximately 60 participants, including national government representatives and key stakeholders. (Note: four sub-activities involved – 4 validation workshops in 4 recipient countries)		

<u>Intervention logic</u>	<u>Indicators</u>	<u>Means of verification</u>
Activity 1.4 Advisory missions to four countries to meet with the government officials and technical experts involved in the data collection to provide policy advice on the actual data collection and the implementation of the national guidelines for the data collection. The advisory missions will assist in the implementation of the adopted national guidelines for the data collection, including the development of the future steps needed to undertake for improving the process of data collection in each country, which will be later used for developing evidence-based policies. The Project will further support the beneficiary countries through no cost support from the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management, additional advisory services and capacity building funded from other sources, including extra-budgetary resources. The experience of the implementation of the UNDA 9th tranche project demonstrated the advisory missions, which include bilateral meetings with high-level government representatives and donor organizations are the most efficient tool for the project implementation. They allow promoting most effectively the political commitment by the governments to the developed measures, strategies and instruments (development of laws, concepts, other relevant activities). (Note: four sub-activities involved – 4 missions to 4 recipient countries)		
Expected Accomplishment/outcome 2 Strengthened national technical capacity of relevant government agencies in beneficiary countries in the UNECE region to develop evidence-based policies on housing, urban development and land administration	Indicator of Accomplishment 2.1 Two specific evidence-based policies (laws, regulations) on housing, urban development and land administration developed in each selected country.	The policy paper which describes the policies
Activity 2.1 Prepare training materials in English and Russian on the development of evidence based sustainable urban development policies. Training materials will be developed by UN-Habitat consultants and will include a concept paper, power point presentations and hand-outs to be distributed during trainings in each participating country. (Note: One sub-activity involved – preparation of training materials)		
Activity 2.2 Organize four (one per a beneficiary country) national training workshops to support the development of evidence-based sustainable housing and urban development policies. Workshops will be co-organised by participating agencies (UNECE and UN-Habitat) and national governments. Each workshop will be for approximately 60 participants, including national government representatives and key stakeholders. The workshops will focus on providing trainings using tailored training materials (A 2.1). The outcome of these workshops (in combination with A 2.3) will be the development of specific evidence-based policies (laws, regulations) on housing, urban development and land administration in each selected country (IA 2.1). (Note: four sub-activities involved – 4 training workshops in 4 recipient countries)		

<u>Intervention logic</u>	<u>Indicators</u>	<u>Means of verification</u>
<p>Activity 2.3 Advisory missions of UNECE and UN-Habitat staff to the countries to assist in further adoption of evidence-based policies on housing, urban development and land administration. The advisory missions will be undertaken with active engagement of the established Steering Committees and will include bilateral meetings with government officials and key stakeholders.</p> <p>The experience of the implementation of the UNDA 9th tranche project demonstrated the advisory missions, which include bilateral meetings with high-level government representatives and donor organisations are the most efficient tool for the project implementation. They allow to promoting most effectively the political commitment by the governments to the developed measures, strategies and instruments (development of laws, concepts, other relevant activities). (Note: four sub-activities involved – 4 advisory missions to 4 recipient countries)</p>		
<p>Activity 2.4</p> <p>Prepare the project report containing regional guidelines for the development of evidence-based policies. The project report will be in a form of an e-publication with best practices and lessons learned from the participating countries on developing evidence-based policies. This publication will benefit other UNECE member States and the countries beyond the UNECE region.</p> <p>The paper will be developed by the UN-Habitat consultants. (Note: One sub-activity involved – preparation of the project report)</p>		
<p>Activity 2.5</p> <p>Organize one regional meeting for UNECE member States to share lessons learned on the development of the methodology of the data collection and support to the related sustainable housing and urban development policies. The project report and the regional guidelines will be presented and discussed at this regional meeting with all interested UNECE member-States.</p> <p>This meeting will be organised in Geneva, Switzerland. It will consist of approximately 100 participants. The aim of the meeting will be to share countries experiences in participating in the project and developing evidence-based policies that could be beneficial to also non-participating countries, presented at the meeting. The meeting will also launch “a community of practice”, an informal platform of experts in the UNECE region on evidence based policies who will continue sharing and discussing together their practices and experiences beyond the project, for instance, regularly over email and regular thematic meetings and annually at the Committee on Housing and Land Management sessions. Establishment of such a platform will support moving the agenda forward also after the end of the project. (Note: One sub-activity involved – organization of one regional meeting for UNECE member States)</p>		
<p>Activity 2.6</p> <p>Organization of six capacity-development workshop to support implementation of the guidelines on evidence-based policies.</p> <p>2.6.1 Four additional workshops for beneficiary countries</p> <p>2.6.2 Two workshops for additional countries that requested support (Belarus, Kazakhstan)</p> <p>(Note: six sub-activities involved – 6 capacity development workshops in 6 recipient countries)</p>		

(**Note to box 2** : the notes made in bold, concerning 30 sub-activities, were added to the original log frame by the evaluator. The original log frame did not specify the Project's outputs. During the evaluation phase, following a consultation with the HLMU, an agreement was reached that as outputs should be considered:

Output 1: The Guidelines for evidence-based policies and decision making for sustainable housing and urban development
 Output 2: Trainings and training materials
 Output 3: A draft Project report)

VI. Findings

The findings' section is based on the reading, analysis and triangulating of all available documents and the feedback received from the Project's main stakeholders. The contributions from the stakeholders were received or in writing by responding to the evaluation questionnaire or during the internet-based interviews. Originally planned face-to-face interviews were not possible as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic protection measures. These activities generated sufficient information about the Project formulation and management process, its activities and accomplishments attained. The evaluation findings are organized under five headings, Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency and Sustainability. For each of the evaluation criteria a set of 4-5 specific questions was designed respecting the Project's background and the results expected from the evaluation. Descriptive assessment and analysis based on the feedback received from the contacted stakeholders and reviewed document was then categorized according to the qualification ratings for each individual question, as demonstrated in Table 2.

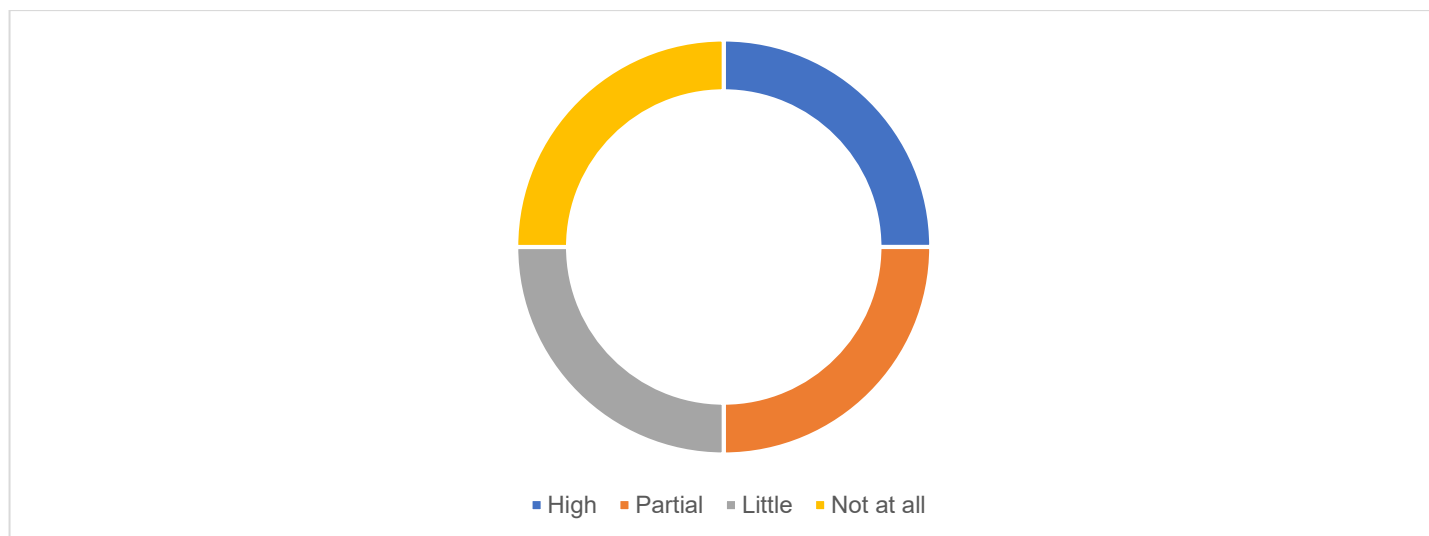
Table 2: Qualification ratings

Rating	Abbreviation
Highly (relevant, coherent, effective, efficient, sustainable)	H
Partially (relevant, coherent, effective, efficient, sustainable)	P
Little (relevant, coherent, effective, efficient, sustainable)	L
Not at all (relevant, coherent, effective, efficient, sustainable)	N

The responses to the evaluation questions were then organized in five big "silos" related to the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

As a following step a pie chart was designed and used to illustrate a proportion of responses against each of the specific evaluation ratings H, P, L, and N provided by the interviewed stakeholders for each of the five "silos" (Chart 1):

Chart 1: Evaluation ratings colors



RELEVANCE

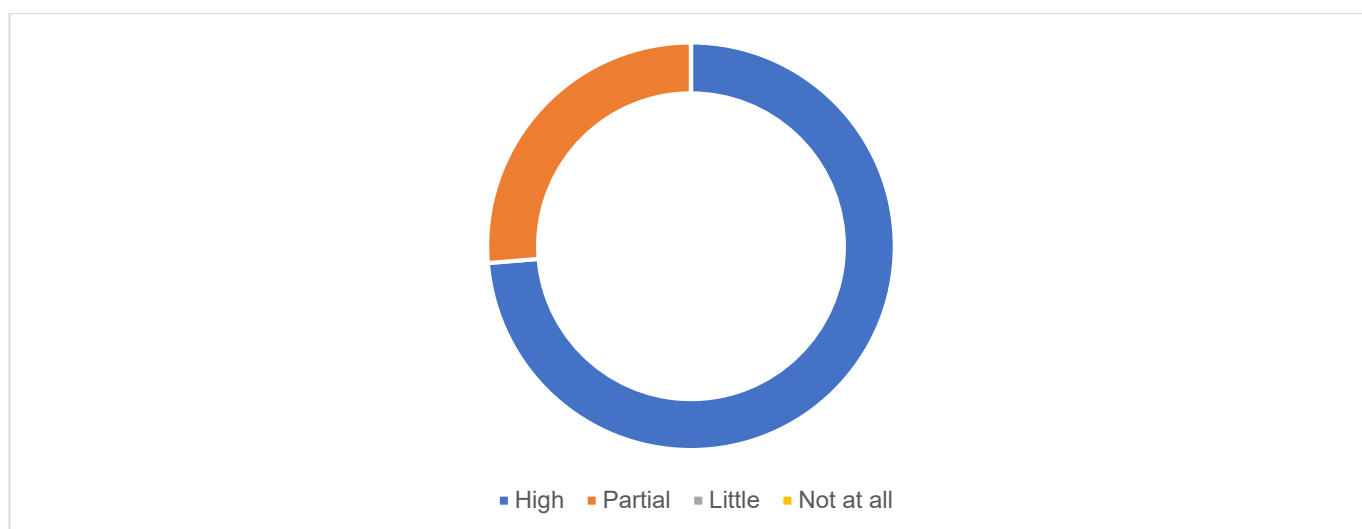
The relevance chapter analyses the opinions received from the key stakeholders in responding to the evaluation questions 1 to 5, which were determined in the Terms of Reference for this evaluation

For the purpose of this evaluation the relevance was assessed as the degree of the consistency of the Project to:

- The needs and priorities of the beneficiary countries, considering its interventions and design;
- The priorities and the program of work of the UNECE, including those related to achieving the SDG;
- The needs and priorities of the target groups including the most vulnerable groups, for instance for those requiring social or municipal housing etc.;
- Gender, rights-based and disability inclusion approaches in the design, implementation and results of activities;
- the activities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Analysis of the feedback received from the stakeholders complemented with the analysis of the main Project-related reports and documents, resulted in the conclusion that the Project's design and its activities were **highly relevant**. The structure of the opinions, which were received from the stakeholders in responding to the relevance-related questions is shown in the Chart 2.

Chart 2: Relevance



Note: Chart 2 reflects the structure of responses from the surveys and the interviews

Question 1: Relevance to the needs and priorities of beneficiary countries

The beneficiary countries designated ministries and/or authorities, which are mandated to ensure the fulfilment of their government responsibilities in the areas of sustainable housing and urban development. These countries faced serious challenges in providing “sustainable and adequate housing for all” and welcomed the UNECE support in this field.

Since the financial and economic crisis of 2008, countries across the UNECE region have been increasingly in need for affordable and sustainable housing and, experienced a reduced availability of funds to meet these needs. The 2008 crisis has made middle-income households in marked need for social housing. At least 100 million low- and middle-income people in the UNECE region are housing-cost overburdened: they spend more than 40% of their disposable income on accommodation. Considering the

limited housing supply and the sharp drop in new housing starts and completion since 2008, the ensuring of the quality of the existing stock and establishing energy efficiency standards for new stock are increasingly important.¹³

Apart from affordability, housing sector in the countries with economies in transition is challenged by decreasing standards of living. Due to the rapid and widespread privatization since 1989 the housing sector was not supported by the adequate measures to ensure communal management and the maintenance of buildings. Regularization of the management structure for multi-family housing blocks in the form of homeowner associations or professional management through a private company was not fully implemented. The poor management of the housing resulted in the downgrading of the housing infrastructure and lowering levels of energy efficiency.

On a city level, housing sector is affected by the absence of city planning based on principles of compact, resilient spatial development. As a result, municipal infrastructure is becoming rapidly outdated, informal settlements are growing, and the human settlements are prone to, and suffer from natural disasters such as floods and landslides.

Considering these multiple challenges, the Government representatives of all recipient countries expressed their interest in receiving the UNECE assistance in developing of evidence-based national policies for sustainable housing and urban development. To ensure a reliable and comprehensive picture of the UNECE countries needs in the housing and urban development sector, a survey exercise was carried out by UNECE. Relevance with national needs, priorities and policies was also ensured through a regular dialogue with and close collaboration with main stakeholders including national authorities as well as stakeholders at regional and city levels. The needs and priorities of the recipient countries were well reflected in the Project's design as well as by its interventions.

The analysis of key challenges/problems faced by the initial group of the Project's four recipient countries is analyzed in more details in the Table 3, which was included in the Project document/proposal.

Table 3: Recipient country analysis

Country	Status of affairs	Realistic outcomes
Albania	There is a lack of legislation that lays down government responsibilities in housing and urban development. The reform process in the country has emphasized decentralization and local autonomy. At the same time, the central government has shifted the conflict in housing and urban development to the local level. Non-governmental and international organizations are at the early stage of their development in the country and require support to become impactful stakeholders.	Identifying priorities for the evidence-based housing and urban development policies and promoting dialogue that would involve public authorities and representatives of stakeholders from private sector and civil society.
Georgia	Comprehensive urban planning has not been applied after the independence of Georgia. Legislation is sporadic and incomplete. New master plans for most cities of Georgia have not been elaborated or approved. A major part of the existing housing stock requires basic reconstruction of the main building structures. After privatization, new homeowners had no experience or resources to fulfil the obligations and responsibilities with regard to the management and maintenance of the building and its facilities, especially in multi-family housing units. This led to a severe neglect of management and maintenance, and to a further deterioration in the quality of the housing stock.	Assistance in elaborating methodology for collecting the data for the evidence-based policies to be applied for development of city plans based on principles of compactness, mixed use, resilience. Stimulation the policy coordination between various stakeholders at the national and subnational levels.

¹³ UNECE report "Social Housing in the UNECE Region: Models, Trends and Challenges", <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=40586>

Kyrgyzstan	The formation of informal settlements has been fueled by internal migration from Southern Kyrgyzstan to big cities. Bishkek's informal settlements make up one-fifth of the city's total population. Informal settlements are situated on land formerly used for agriculture. Houses in informal settlements are built using waste building material, and infrastructure is inadequate. Some local authorities cooperate with donor countries and organizations to provide at least some basic infrastructure. Nevertheless, informal settlements contribute to urban sprawl and inflate public expenses. Some alternative solutions to infrastructural projects have been suggested, including a long-term urban planning mechanism, which would consider the provision of affordable housing supported by funding from international organizations. Upgrading of dwellings in informal settlements represents another option.	Strengthen national capacity by providing benchmarking and best-practices in dealing with informal settlements and coordinating the work of international organizations in the respective area.
Ukraine	Ukraine legal and institutional frameworks and housing policies have to address challenges such as poor housing conditions, high percentage of housing stock requiring major repairs, and uneven housing availability. In Ukraine, there is confusion and an ambiguous environment in housing legislation. The structure of the executive bodies (implementing agencies) dealing with housing policy has been reorganized several times during the last 20 years. There are no official records of housing needs in the country; the analysis are based either on what is contained in the housing waiting list or on an investigation of housing conditions and allocations. The government is planning to launch a Unified State Register of Citizens Needing Improvement in their Housing Conditions. The register will serve as an important instrument to support national housing initiatives.	Assistance in improving regulatory and administrative frameworks, strengthening capacity for the development and implementation of the evidence-based housing and urban development policies.

The high relevance of the Project in responding to the needs and priorities of the beneficiary countries was also due to the fact that it was informed by the relevant analysis and specific conclusions and policy recommendations of the UNECE Country Profiles on the Housing Sector. These profiles were developed in all 6 countries receiving the Project support, concretely in 2002 in Albania, in 2007 in Georgia, in 2010 in Kyrgyzstan, in 2013 in Ukraine, in 2018 in Kazakhstan and in 2019 in Belarus. One of the interviewees stated: “we took from the Project’s activities/outputs what was relevant and needed to our country and in the end I think, the project design was relevant in addressing our needs”.

One interviewee thought that the future projects focusing on sustainable/smart housing and urban development should also include activities facilitating the comparison of the state-of-the-art in this field, between the countries with economies in transition and the more advanced countries.

Question 2: Consistency with the priorities and the programme of work of the UNECE, including those related to achieving the SDG

The Project was well aligned with the UNECE mandate as expressed in its strategic framework/biennial programme plans 2016-2017¹⁴ and 2018-2019¹⁵, as well as in the proposed programme budget for 2020¹⁶. Its outputs/outcomes made a pertinent contribution to the fulfilment of the UNECE responsibility for facilitating economic integration and cooperation among its member States and promoting sustainable development and economic prosperity in the UNECE region.

¹⁴ <https://undocs.org/en/A/69/6/Rev.1>

¹⁵ <https://undocs.org/en/A/71/6/Rev.1>

¹⁶ [https://undocs.org/a/74/6\(Sect.20\)](https://undocs.org/a/74/6(Sect.20))

The Project was implemented as an output of the UNECE Subprogramme 8 “Housing, land management and population”. The Project focus was consistent with the subprogramme 8 objective, to which this subprogramme contributes: “to advance decent, adequate, affordable, energy-efficient and healthy housing for all in liveable cities and human settlements, sustainable land management and evidence-based population and social cohesion policies.” Both outcomes of the Project:

- Strengthened national capacity of beneficiary countries to collect data on housing, urban development and land administration; and,
- Strengthened national technical capacity of relevant government agencies in beneficiary countries in the UNECE region to develop evidence-based policies on housing, urban development and land administration;

are well aligned with the Subprogramme 8 objective. The relevance of the Project activities, outputs and outcomes were regularly discussed during the annual sessions of the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management with a positive feedback from the Committee members.

The project yielded relevant contributions to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 11 “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” and more specifically to the following targets:

Target 11.1 “By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums”;

Target 11.7 “By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities”;

Target 11.a: “Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, per-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning”;

Target 11.b: “By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, a holistic disaster risk management at all levels”;

Target 11.c: “Support least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials”.

The implemented activities supported also achievements of the SDG 1, 7, 10 and 13.

High relevance of the Project activities in supporting the achievement of the SDG 11 was unanimously confirmed by the high-level political representatives at national and municipal level during the national workshop held in Tirana, Albania, 2-3 May 2019.¹⁷

This contribution is significant in the current context when not a single country was on track to complete the Sustainable Development Goals within the decade, given rising rates of inequality, food insecurity, and climate change. Thus, the SDG implementation require renewed support and financing as demonstrated by the Project.

The “UNECE Guidelines for the Preparation of UNECE Country Profiles on Housing, Urban Development and Land Management” were published in 2018. The document explains how the country profiles will review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and its SDGs and other related international commitments, such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the New Urban Agenda, the UN-Habitat Global Housing Strategy, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and the International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning. These guidelines have been endorsed by the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management at the Committee’s seventy- eighth session on 9 November 2017 and were considered to be a suitable supporting document in guiding the Project activities in relevant direction.

Question 3: Consistency with the needs and priorities of the target groups including the most vulnerable groups

¹⁷ Mission report Gulnara Roll, 31 April-4 May 2019, Tirana, Albania

The key target groups listed in the Project document include national housing authorities, local authorities, private sector (condominium management organizations and banks) and non-governmental organizations. The stakeholder analysis included in the Project document assessed their capacity assets, gaps, desired future outcomes and incentives.

The same document defined the focus of the Project in assisting national governments in the selected beneficiary countries by elaborating a policy paper and guidelines for the collection and analysis of the national data on housing and urban development, and, providing advice on the development of evidence-based policies. The Project document also stressed the need for promoting intersectoral cooperation and building capacity on sustainable housing through the provision of advisory services, training materials, organization of workshops and online trainings. This focus was consistent with the target groups needs and priorities.

It should be noted from the outset that the Project was focused on the methodological issues, including engagement with the authorities and academia at different levels, and not on the concrete engagement with the most vulnerable groups. The needs and priorities of the most vulnerable groups have not been neither assessed nor included in the Project's design. Vulnerable groups and people related to housing are defined in the UNECE key document, Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing¹⁸, as young people, senior citizens, large families with children and single parent families, victims of domestic violence, people with disabilities including mental illness, intellectual and/or physical disabilities, immigrants, refugees, Roma communities, and other minority groups. Nevertheless, the attention to the decent housing needs and solutions for the most vulnerable groups was paid during the implementation phase. E.g. during the advisory missions and capacity development workshops the challenges faced by the most vulnerable groups were discussed and potential solutions were identified. This focus was most evident in Kyrgyzstan (attention to the needs of migrants moving to the capital Bishkek), Ukraine (attention to the needs of internally displaced persons due to the conflict in Donbas region) and Albania (attention to the needs of Roma minorities and disabled persons). The needs and priorities of the most vulnerable groups were frequently discussed during the national workshops. The Guidelines on evidence-based policies and decision making for sustainable housing and urban development contains a section entitled "Migratory status". In this section of the Guidelines it's stressed that "Obtaining data on migration is key to addressing issues of urban development since access to adequate and affordable housing is often more difficult for migrants. This may be explained by both formal barriers (e.g. of a legal nature) and informal barriers (e.g. discrimination). Migrants, and refugees, as well as internally displaced persons (IDPs), face particular challenges when integrating in their new urban settings and are often forced to live in informal settlements."

Question 4: Relevance of gender, rights-based and disability inclusion approaches

Even though the issues related to gender, rights-based and disability inclusion approaches have not been explicitly mentioned in the Project document, they were addressed during the implementation of activities.

Consideration was given to the gender equality and empowerment of women through their important participation in the national and regional workshops (40 % at least), as appointed national focal points (50 %), and as recruited international experts supporting the Project (100%). In some beneficiary countries the absence of gender disaggregated data on environmental issues presented an important challenge for stronger integration of the gender and disability perspectives.

Gender, rights-based and disability inclusion approaches were addressed in detail by the "Guidelines on evidence-based policies and decision-making for sustainable housing and urban development"¹⁹, further the Guidelines. The proposed approaches informed several discussions that took place during the national and regional workshops. Likewise, the Guidelines underlines the importance of considering gender, disability and inclusion issues related e.g. to age, income or migratory status for evidence-based policies and decision-making for sustainable housing and urban development. The guidelines also encourage decision makers to embrace opportunities stemming from the "data revolution", while also ensuring that "no one is left behind", and underscores the importance of disaggregating data per gender, age, ethnicity, income, disability and migratory status. All these issues were often discussed during the capacity development workshops.

Key performance indicators for Smart Sustainable Cities, which were developed in the parallel with the Project include also gender income indicator, student ICT access, childcare availability and others related to the above-mentioned approaches.

Question 5: Relevance of activities organized in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Project management and its stakeholders reacted to new challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic promptly and adequately. The process of redressing several pending activities was simplified by the fact that the Project was at the time of the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in its "recapitulation" phase. UNECE issued "COVID-19 Project Amendment" paper

¹⁸ https://unece.org/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/EN_Geneva_UN_Charter_on_Sustainable_Housing.pdf

¹⁹ ECE/HBP/203

(Annex 4), that described the logistical challenges linked to the COVID-19 pandemic to be addressed, activities to solve the logistical problems and the required revisions in the budget. Several field missions had to be cancelled and pending capacity building activities had to be held virtually. In addition, the UNECE held a weekly or biweekly on-line-meetings with coordinators in pilot countries.

Importantly, in spite of the amendments of the activities' implementation approach, the Project clearly targeted its original overall objective, the planned outcomes and outcomes, with a conversion of a few activities from the face-to-face mode to the virtual status. Nevertheless, several interviewees from the beneficiary countries stressed that the face-to-face workshops, facilitating an intensive personal interaction and networking, provided, in general, more added value than the on-line events. On the other hand, the considerable frequency of the on-line teleconferences brought the stakeholders more often together.

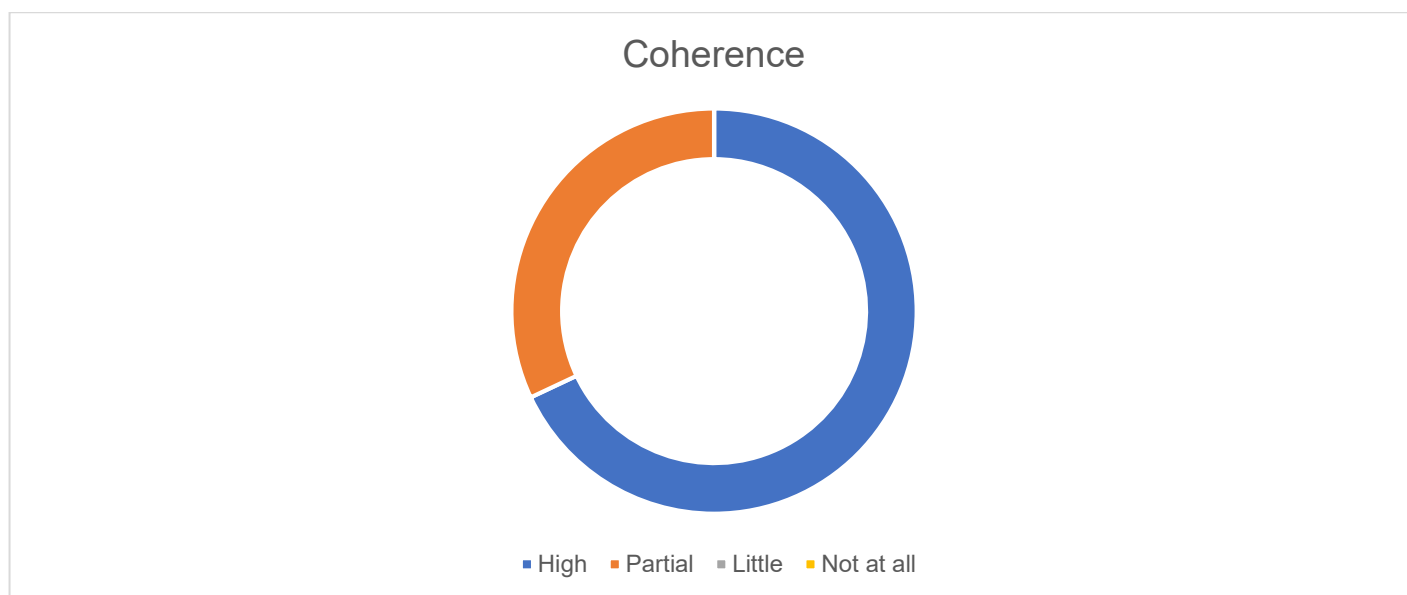
COHERENCE

The coherence of the Project design and of its activities was evaluated against the following criteria (evaluation questions 6 to 9):

- The degree of coherence in collaboration with other entities of the UN system and others;
- The level of pertinence in the implementation of activities in the required sequence;
- The degree of consistency of the outputs to the overall objective/impact and expected outcomes;
- The extent of coherence of the COVID-19 related activities added in April 2020 with the initial Project design.

Analysis of the feedback received from the stakeholders complemented with the analysis of the main Project-related reports and documents, resulted in the conclusion that the Project was implemented in a **highly coherent** manner. The structure of the opinions, which were received from the stakeholders in responding to the coherence-related questions is shown in the Chart 3.

Chart 3: Coherence



Question 6: The degree of coherence in collaboration with other entities of the UN system and others;

The Project was implemented by the Housing and Land Management Unit of the UNECE Forests, Land and Housing Division (UNECE as a lead agency); and the Housing Unit of the United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-HABITAT as an

implementing partner). The UNECE and UN-HABITAT are both major global players in developing and application of the international and supporting the national policies for smart and sustainable housing and urban development.

UNECE and UN-HABITAT are strategic partners on issues related to urban planning, housing and land management in the UNECE region, given their expertise and complementary mandates in these areas. UN-HABITAT is the United Nations agency for human settlements. It is mandated by the UN General Assembly²⁰ to promote socially and environmentally sustainable development of towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all.

The project was coherently aligned with the existing mandates and policies of the UNECE and the UN-HABITAT to establish evidence based policies and at the same time considering the Country Profiles on housing and land management, and, the organization of the monitoring of the implementation of the Strategy and the Charter and the Global Housing Strategy. Cooperation between the UNECE and the UN-HABITAT on the development of evidence-based policies on housing and urban development has been established already prior to the inception of the Project. This collaboration included activities on the development of approaches to monitoring of the housing and urban development policies through the UN-Habitat Global Housing Strategy and Global Network on Sustainable Housing and the joint support in the preparation of the Country Profiles.

Considering a strong “collaborative” approach with the UN-HABITAT and building on cooperation with ITU in the development of the Key Performance Indicators for Smart and Sustainable Cities (KPI4SSC) and UNEP, as an important player in the field of environment and energy-efficiency, was pertinent and coherent with the Project objective and expected outcomes.

As a matter of fact, the collaboration with the UN-HABITAT during the implementation phase did not meet the initial expectations since the organization went through a transition period and could commit only limited resources in supporting of the Project. The positive exception was the UN-Habitat Office in Moscow supporting many national workshops and preparation of reports. UNECE HLMU is partner of the UNEP Sustainable Infrastructure Partnership and UNEP colleagues were engaged closely in the consultations during the preparation of the outline of the Guidelines. UNECE HLMU is working closely with ITU on everyday basis being part of a joint ITU-UNECE-UN-Habitat secretariat of the United for Smart Sustainable Cities Initiative (U4SSC). Also, ITU was involved in the initial consultation when the Guidelines’ outline was developed. Moreover, the cooperation with ITU on the development of the UNECE/ITU Key performance indicators for smart sustainable cities was well reflected in the Guidelines. In addition, the project engaged in the consultations on the development of the Guidelines EU institutions, including the European Commission, Committee of the Regions; as well as stakeholder organizations, such as Housing Europe, International Union of Tenants, Habitat for Humanity. A separate consultation meeting with the EU institutions was organized on 13 December 2019 in Brussels.²¹

Given the very limited resources for personnel, 5% cap of the project funds, did not allow to engage more partners officially in the project. Despite that, discussion of approaches to evidence-based policies with ITU, UNEP and other organizations were held regularly on margins of the project. Among significant examples were the annual meetings of the United for Smart Sustainable Cities Initiative²²; the annual SDG11 Days²³; and other multiple bilateral events with UNEP and ITU, such as the World Urban Forums.

During the implementation period, the UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit maintained a continued dialogue with the UNECE Division of Statistics (data on housing and urban development are managed by the statistics authorities) and other UNECE entities. This collaboration was highly coherent since the identification and collection of pertinent data lies in the center of evidence-based policymaking for sustainable housing and urban development. Regular consultation with a wider group of UN agencies and international organizations and partnerships was organized by HLMU through organizing annual SDG11 Days on occasion of the World Habitat Day (First Monday of each October) where all international partners were invited to share experiences, especially on evidence-based policies and achieving SDG11²⁴. Moreover, regular discussion on evidence based policies for achieving SDG11 is organized through the U4SSC²⁵. The U4SSC is a UN initiative coordinated by ITU, UNECE and UN-Habitat, and supported by CBD, ECLAC, FAO, UNDP, UNECA, UNESCO, UNEP, UNEP-FI, UNFCCC, UNIDO, UNOP, UNU-EGOV, UN-Women and WMO to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 11: "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable".

²⁰ The main documents outlining the Un-Habitat mandate are the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, http://www.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/924_21239_The_Vancouver_Declaration.pdf; Habitat Agenda, http://www.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/1176_6455_The_Habitat_Agenda.pdf; Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements, http://www.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/2072_61331_ist-dec.pdf; and Resolution 56/206 http://www.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/2070_46506_gae.pdf

²¹ <https://unece.org/housing-and-land-management/events/evidence-based-policies-sustainable-housing-and-urban>

²² <https://unece.org/housing-and-land-management/events/annual-meeting-united-smart-sustainable-cities-initiative-u4ssc>

²³ <https://unece.org/housing-and-land-management/events/roundtable-focus-sdg-11> and <https://unece.org/housing-and-land-management/events/focus-sdg-11-supporting-city-actions-resilient-future>

²⁴ <https://unece.org/housing-and-land-management/events/roundtable-focus-sdg-11>

²⁵ <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/ssc/united/Pages/default.aspx>

It was also coherent that UNECE made a special effort to strengthen cooperation with the National Statistical Offices (NSO) in the recipient countries. NSOs play an essential role in producing key data for housing and urban policies using for instance, the Housing and Population Census. Similarly, the activities included collaboration with the pertinent national authorities, municipalities, non-governmental organizations and academia, as other important producers of data needed for evidence-based policies on sustainable housing and urban development. In this context, the Project was argued to be highly coherent in terms of being inclusive, particularly for its outreach to the municipalities with sensitivities around affordable and sustainable housing.

Useful cooperation was built with the UNDP country offices in the recipient countries, including the organizational and logistics aspects. Moreover, the outputs of the Project were potentially often considered as a trigger for the similar initiatives funded by UNDP. E.g. such a potential was explicitly recognized by the UNDP Office in Albania. HLMU always organized debriefings with UN Resident Coordinators' offices in the pilot countries and engaged relevant UN agencies in its national capacity building workshops, including UN Women, UNDP, others.

In addition, coordination was established with the UN ESCAP, the UNECE sister regional economic commission with whom regular coordination calls were organized and the capacity building workshop in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, were organized jointly.

The Project-related issues were regularly discussed during the annual sessions of the UNECE Committee for Housing and Land Management, which benefitted the Project by receiving the feedback concerning the Project activities from a long list of the member States, UN system agencies, other relevant international organizations and NGO. The Guidelines recommendations were endorsed by the Committee for the use by the Governments of UNECE countries²⁶.

The Project was also supported by the technical expertise and advice provided by the University of Geneva. This collaboration resulted in the development of the research report "Urban Data Cultures in Post-Socialist Countries: Challenges for Evidence-Based Policy towards Housing Sustainability" prepared by housing and urban development researchers from four European universities, and coordinated by the University of Geneva.

Last but not least, the Project provided useful inputs/ideas for the future sustainable housing and urban development projects and stimulated fresh fund-raising efforts of the international partners, mainly of the UN-HABITAT, which envisaged similar concepts for several of its new projects. UN Resident Coordinators' offices in the pilot countries were regularly briefed about the Project progress and feedback received was positive. E.g. in Albania, UNDP made a pledge to support similar activities from the UNDP budget.

Question 7: The level of coherence in the implementation of activities in the required sequence

The Theory of Change (described above) shows a time-bound pathway from 'start' to 'end' of the Project by specifying the steps needed to achieve desired outcomes and overall impact/goal. Its main tool, the project log frame, shows the results chain of the project by specifying sets of connected building blocks, referred to as activities/inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact. The logframe clarifies the Project's logic underlying the development intervention and its coherence in the implementation of activities in the required sequence.

The level of coherence in the implementation of activities in the required sequence was partially satisfactory. In the process of elaboration of the Policy Paper and the Guidelines (output 1) it was pertinent that the initial activities included the assessment of needs and fact-finding/advisory missions. However, a protracted process in the finalization of the Guidelines led to the situation when the national capacity development workshops focusing on the development and the implementation of policies on housing, urban development and land administration were held in the absence of the Guidelines, as a critical tool for presenting international experience and best practices in this field.

This was a shortcoming in achieving the high coherence in the implementation of activities in the required sequence. Finalization of the Guidelines at an earlier stage of the Project could boost the contribution of its activities in achieving the planned outcomes and the overall objective. Several interviewees felt that the capacity workshops were held too early when the practical cooperation arrangements and knowledge building roots were still weak.

To explain the context, there was an assumption during the planning phase of the project that the UN SDG indicators are prepared and adopted right after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in 2015. The Guidelines were planned to be developed after the global set of indicators would be available to support countries and cities in the transposition of the SDG global urban related indicators

²⁶ See para. 20 of https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2019/ECE_HBP_2019_2-ENG.pdf;

to the national and local levels. However, the global SDG indicators were adopted by the GA much later than expected because of the lengthy negotiations between the Member States on the draft GA resolution, in 2017. The set of the global indicators for the goals and targets became available in 2018. This was the reason of the delay of start of work on the Guidelines. Consequently, the Guidelines were developed and finalized in 2019. The Guidelines were available online in September 2019.²⁷

On a positive side, it was pertinent that a draft concept note “The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other global agreements in the UNECE Region – Implications to the work of the Committee”²⁸ was prepared by UNECE as a background note for the preparation of the policy paper with the methodology for data collection on housing, urban development and land administration policies and for review of implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development.

Question 8: The degree of consistency of the outputs to the overall objective/impact and expected outcomes

The logical framework provided a well-conceived and consistent framework for the operations of the UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit and its partners, as well as for their specific roles leading to development of evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development. The project three **outputs** “The Guidelines for evidence-based policy making”, “Development of trainings and training materials”, and the preparation of the “Final Project report” were aligned coherently with the Project objective/impact and expected outcomes. These outputs feed very well into the accomplishment of the overall objective/impact and expected outcomes. A regular and strong engagements of the Project partners during the sessions of the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management, and a good quality of the consultants supporting several activities resulted in a sound coherence of the outputs with the overall objective. However, several interviewees expressed a strong conviction that an achievement of the Project overall objective, and its real extent, cannot be realistically measured during a relatively short life span of the Project, but rather in a longer term.

All three outputs represent a coherent contribution to supporting the achievement of the SDG 11 linked to sustainable housing and urban development. This support is very much needed in the current context when the achievement of the SDGs becomes quite problematic, in general. Moreover, The SDG 11 can be reached only if the degree of their achievement is monitored and reviewed based on facts and figures, i.e. applying an evidence-based approach. The Guidelines for the evidence-based policies²⁹, developed by the Project provide a detailed guidance to how to develop the evidence-based approach facilitating the monitoring of the progress against the SDG 11 at national and local level.

The logical framework design included elements of strong and logical alignment among its all key components – from activities through outcomes to a final impact. It was highly pertinent that the framework contained also description of indicators, baseline information, milestones, targets and assumptions determining the potential success or failures.

Question 9: The extent of coherence of the COVID-19 related activities added in April 2020 with the initial Project design.

The project management has flexibly overcome the logistical challenges posed by the pandemic. COVID-19 related modifications introduced in April 2020 were fully coherent with the initial Project design. A modified implementation mode of activities had elements of a coherent alignment with the initially planned outputs, outcomes and the overall impact/objective of the Project. As already mentioned above, the process of redressing several pending activities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic was simplified by the fact that the Project was at the outbreak of the pandemic in its “recapitulation” phase. The substance of the modified activities was not intended to address the impact of COVID-19 for UNECE member states.

The Project amendment impacted the planned schedule for executing activity 2.6.-Organization of six capacity development workshops to support implementation of the Guidelines on evidence-based policies. This activity was partially implemented prior to a global pandemic by organization of two workshops, in Grodno, Belarus (December 2019) and, in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan (February 2020).

The workshop “Evidence-based policies to achieve Sustainable Development Goals: Promoting policy coherence for sustainable urban transformation in Ukraine”³⁰ was planned for 23 April 2020 but was moved to 2021. Instead of the workshop, the national counterparts requested not to organize an online event, instead a series of smaller online mini-workshops were organized with key stakeholders in Ukraine.

²⁷ https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/sessions/docs2019/Info_1_Guidelines_on_evidence-based_policies.pdf

²⁸ ECE/HBP/2017/Inf.1

²⁹ <https://www.unece.org/index.php?id=55093>

³⁰ <https://unece.org/housing-and-land-management/events/cancelled-workshop-evidence-based-policies-achieve-sustainable>

The following online workshops were organized:

- Online workshop in Nur Sultan on evidence-based policies for SDGs took place on 5 June 2020³¹
- Online workshop “National Housing Policy in Albania: Financing for affordable housing and the role of housing agencies”³², was organized on 18 June 2020, Tirana, Albania.
- Online workshop "Benchmarking in the context of KPIs for SSC evaluation"³³, took place on 2 July 2020, Grodno, Belarus.
- Final project regional workshop was organized during the 81st Committee session³⁴
- Georgian online roundtable was organized on 1 December 2020³⁵

HLMU organized dissemination of the project activities at various events, most importantly at the 10th World Urban Forum on 10 and 11 February 2020 in Abu Dhabi, at joint events with UN-Habitat, UNDP, ITU, other Regional Commissions³⁶. Especially the training event was also organized, Training on Innovative management of multi-apartment high rise housing: Localizing SDG7&11 and NUA through housing strategies³⁷.

In order to mitigate the delay in delivering the Project outcomes short-term measures were proposed in the COVID-19 Project Amendment as follows:

- Organize the workshops for Nur-Sultan (KZ), Tbilisi (GE), and Tirana (AL) online, instead of on-the ground as was planned originally;
- Translate the workshop materials to three local languages (Russian, Georgian and Albanian) to facilitate remote learning process.

The online workshop for Nur-Sultan was held in the form of 3 extensive online sessions in March 2020. An online mode was used for the workshop for Tirana in June 2020³⁸ and Tbilisi online event is scheduled for November 2020.

Workshop materials (Nur-Sultan and Tirana) were translated in Albanian and Russian. Georgian translation will be done when after a Tbilisi workshop planned for November.

As the medium-term measures it was proposed to organize:

- the regional workshop in Geneva on 8-9 October 2020 (in the context of the 81st Committee session) and;
- the sub-regional workshop in Kiev, Ukraine in October 2020 on the margins of the 2nd International Expo Congress “Business for Smart Cities”.

The regional workshop in Geneva was organized as part of the 81st Committee session under agenda items 4a, 4b and 5, on 7 October 2020³⁹.

The sub-regional workshop in Kiev was cancelled and moved to 2021⁴⁰. Instead at least three online meetings (in WebEx) were organized with key stakeholders for the projects in Ukraine. It's to be noted that this sub-regional event was proposed on the top of planned activities, following a growing demand from the authorities in Ukraine for an additional support.

The changes in implementation approach during the COVID-19 pandemic required additional funding for consultants, experts, editors and translators to adapt materials required for on-line workshops. These new requirements were addressed by the relocation of the budget lines originally planned for the travels of the UNECE staff to beneficiary countries and the costs related to the organization of the workshops in the recipient countries.

³¹ Reference not yet available in UNECE website

³² <https://unece.org/housing-and-land-management/events/online-workshop-national-housing-policy-albania-financing>

³³ <https://unece.org/housing-and-land-management/events/online-workshop-benchmarking-context-kpis-ssc-evaluation>

³⁴ <https://unece.org/housing/cudhlm81>, paras 26-34.

³⁵ Reference not yet available in UNECE website

³⁶ <https://unece.org/housing-and-land-management/events/unece-10th-session-world-urban-forum>.

³⁷ https://wuf.unhabitat.org/sites/default/files/2020-01/TE_8.pdf

³⁸ <https://www.unece.org/index.php?id=54613>

³⁹ https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/sessions/docs2020/Detailed_programme_81st_CUDHLM_session_ver_20201005_ENG.pdf

⁴⁰ <https://www.unece.org/housing-and-land-management/housingmeetings-and-events/sustainable-urban-development/cooperation-with-partners/2020/cancelled-workshop-evidence-based-policies-to-achieve-sustainable-development-goals-promoting-policy-coherence-for-sustainable-urban-transformation-in-ukraine/docs.html>

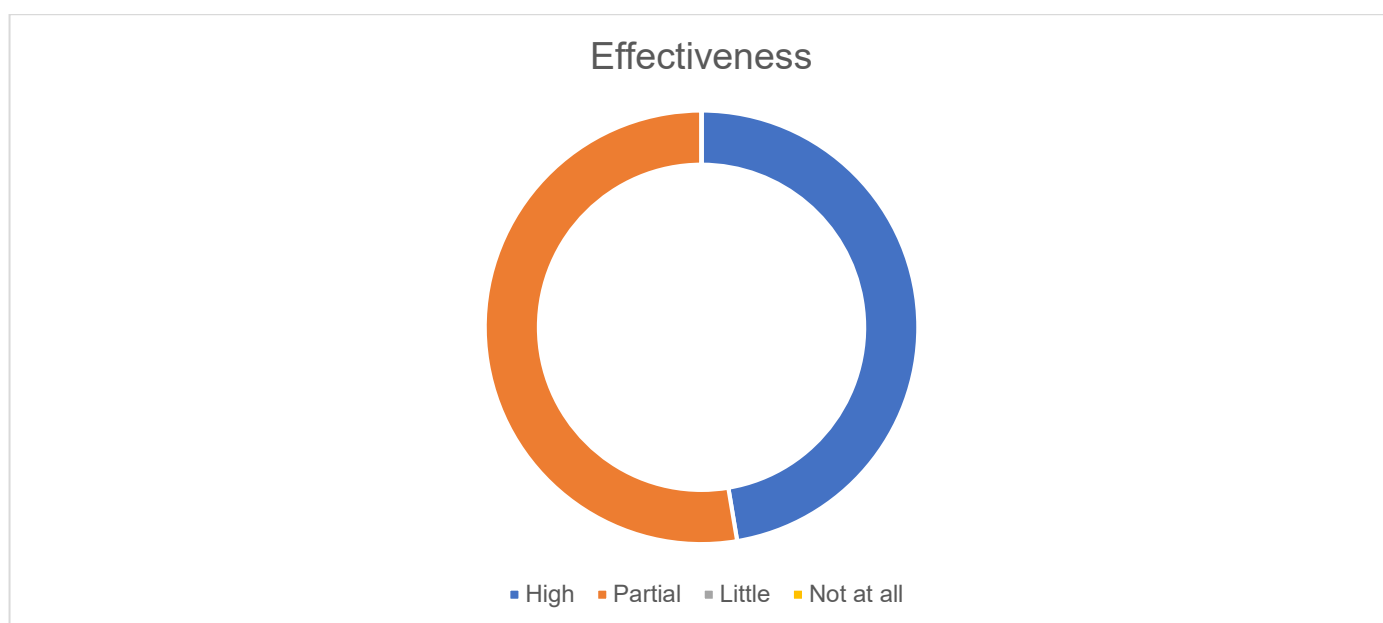
EFFECTIVENESS

Over the period under consideration, the evaluation of the effectiveness of the Project implementation was judged against the following criteria (evaluation questions 10 to 14):

- The extent to which the planned activities and outputs have been implemented as expected during the Project design;
- The degree of achievements with respect to the expected outcomes and the overall impact/objective;
- The level of effectiveness in addressing the challenges/obstacles during the implementation period.

Analysis of the feedback received from the stakeholders complemented with the analysis of the main Project-related reports and documents, resulted in the conclusion that effectiveness the Project's operations was **a partially satisfactory**. The structure of the opinions, which were received from the stakeholders in responding to the effectiveness-related questions is shown in the Chart 4.

Chart 4: Effectiveness



Question 10: The extent to which the planned activities and outputs have been implemented as expected during the Project design:

The Project annual progress reports 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 (except for 2020 for which a consolidated progress report was not completed) suggest that all activities and outputs were delivered as initially envisaged.

The starting point for assessing the extent to which the planned activities and outputs have been implemented was taking stock of the activities and related sub-activities implemented, as well as outputs actually delivered. The Project was supposed to deliver 10 activities, and 3 outputs. Activities included 30 sub-activities, almost all planned activities/sub-activities included in the Project design have been implemented with a few minor modifications in the nature of activities. The majority of modifications were caused by the implications related to the COVID-19 pandemic due to which several activities had to be implemented virtually. The modifications imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic are described in the section addressing the evaluation question 9.

In Albania and Georgia, the initially appointed ministries were dismantled and then there was 1-2 years when the government were changing their structures. New national focal points were appointed after the restructuring in the two countries so there was no continuity of the project discussion that started in 2016; it was interrupted. In Ukraine, Minister and his cabinet changed and communication to the Ministry weakened however the State Fund for Housing Construction of Ukraine took leadership and

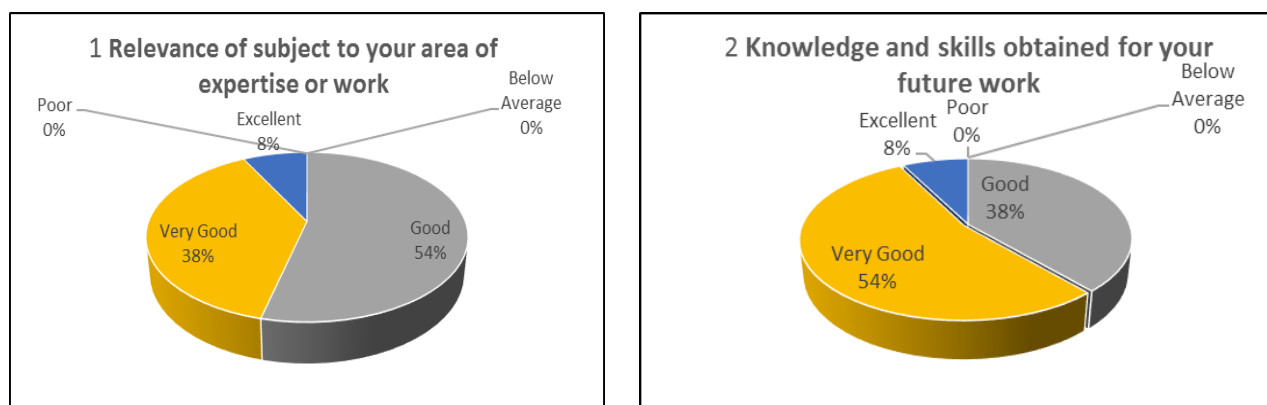
supported high political commitment of the Government to the project implementation. Due to the changes in the Albanian government structure and internal reforms, the national validation workshop (Activity 1.3) and advisory mission (Activity 1.4) in Albania were not undertaken. On a positive note, the Project delivered several activities that were not originally envisaged. These activities included the meeting of the Project coordinators from Kyrgyzstan, Georgia and Albania in September 2016 on margins of the 77th session of the Committee on Housing and Land Management. In 2017 cooperation with the main stakeholders in data collection, National Statistics Bureau and governments, was established. Focal points were nominated, key national stakeholders were identified /included in the project, and meetings were held with all the stakeholders during the missions. Preliminary information of the type of data available and mechanisms of its collection were discussed during the missions. On 10 November 2017, representatives of national authorities from the four countries attended the final workshop of the UNDA 9th tranche project workshop.⁴¹ Regular coordination meetings with the focal points took place on margins of the annual sessions of the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management during 2017-2019.

A couple of sub-activities have been merged, e.g. advisory mission to Georgia (Activity A1.1) was carried out back-to-back with the validation workshop in Georgia (Activity A1.3). Similarly. The advisory mission in Kazakhstan (Activity A2.3) was organized back-to-back with the workshop organized by the UNECE Statistical Division, entitled “High level workshop for the integration of environment related SDG indicators in Kazakhstan”.

It is to be noted that the main output, the Guidelines for evidence-based policies and decision-making for sustainable housing and urban development went intellectually and methodologically beyond the scope of the Project. In the future, this paper can effectively inform similar activities of the UN economic commissions in other regions as well as those carried out by the UN-HABITAT. As a confirmation, the interview held with the representative of the UN-HABITAT informed about the intention to use these Guidelines in other regions and projects.

Question 11: The degree of achievements with respect to the expected outcomes and the overall impact/objective;

A successful delivery of all planned activities and outputs resulted in a partial achievements of the expected outcomes and the overall objective/impact of the project, so far. This judgement reflects the prevailing feeling that the stakeholders expressed during the interview phase.



The Project’s activities included a long series of capacity development activities (workshops, training materials, guidelines) as a main vehicle to achieving the expected outcomes and the overall objective. While such a strategy was pertinent, it was not supported by an efficient monitoring/evaluation of the impact. The monitoring system failed to track sufficiently the contribution of the capacity development activities in reaching of the expected outcomes and the overall objective of the Project. This assessment is based on the fact that the impact of the workshops and application of the training and methodological tools on the recipient countries participants capacity development was not sufficiently measured. Good practice suggests that capacity development events should include robust evaluation segment (quiz, evaluation questionnaire, etc.) as tool for measuring the extent of their impact on the Project outcomes and its overall objective. The absence of appropriate evaluation of the capacity developments activities’ impact was judged as a shortcoming. This situation made the assessment of the achievements with respect to the expected outcomes and the overall objective quite challenging. Therefore, the overall scoring is predominantly based on the feedback received from the interviewed stakeholders. It would be most helpful if the future Projects with capacity development activities include a systematic assessment of the contribution of the capacity development events by using the tools similar to those outlined in the below charts:

⁴¹ <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=47552>

The evaluation did not find a tangible evidence of the immediate feedback received from the participants of the capacity development workshops as to whether these events were helpful and instrumental in bringing a change in the approaches concerning the development of evidence-based policies and decision-making. Two interviewees felt that the discussions during the workshops were not sufficiently focused, mainly due to their insufficient preparations and the absence of the final version of the Guidelines.

The overall feedback from the interviews held with the stakeholders from the recipient countries and the international stakeholders, during the evaluation process, indicated that the expected outcome and the overall objective of the Project were achieved partially. One of the interviewees felt that the project outcomes concerned rather the policy-related issues, with a limited attention to the practical application related issues.

The key methodological paper, “Guidelines to evidence-based policies and decision making for sustainable housing and urban development” was available in September 2019, closer towards the end of the Project, it was published online in 2019. The prevailing feeling among the stakeholders was that such critical paper should have been finalized at much earlier stages of the Project. This would strengthen the impact of the national workshops vis-à-vis the Project outcomes and overall objective. At the same time, it was felt that, the exchange of the good practices from different countries during the workshops contributed to the strengthening of the awareness about the importance of the knowledge to develop evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development.

The impact of the Guidelines as well as the evidence of substantive changes in the approaches to evidence-based policies and decision making for sustainable housing and urban development can be evaluated more fairly in the years to come, when a sufficient feedback will be available on how and why was this key policy paper reflected in the national policies, strategies and concrete activities. Experience shows that it takes time, before the content of studies, policy papers, guidelines and the conclusions of workshops translate into a measurable practical impact.

In several recipient countries (Kyrgyzstan, Georgia, Ukraine, Albania), the full achievements of the expected outcomes and the overall impact/objective was slowed down by the changes of the government structure.

Questions 12, 13, 14: The level of effectiveness in addressing the challenges/obstacles during the implementation period, including those related to COVID-19 pandemic

The Project faced during its implementation period several challenges/obstacles, as described below:

- Methodological challenges stemmed from the fact that in 2016 the city management and urban development community did not have a uniformed methodology for developing and implementing evidence-based housing and urban development policies.
- The complexity of the political and social environment in countries with economies in transition. Political challenge was characterized by significant political and economic changes occurring in Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan and Albania, and to a minor extent in Georgia.
- In the recipient countries, the policy development and review of its implementation, in general, continued on the sectoral level with far insufficient coordination between agencies responsible for the policy development and implementation, and the national statistical offices (institutional challenge).
- National government agencies of the recipient countries did not have sufficient capacity for the data analysis and collection, and application in the policy making, and, face at the same time an extremely difficult challenge to provide access to the population affordable decent housing (institutional challenge).
- In the recipient countries, the level of cooperation between the sectoral ministries and the national statistical offices and other data producing organization was insufficient (institutional challenge).
- In the recipient countries, the decentralization of responsibilities of housing and urban development to the local level is taking initial roots, however, the city governments, as a rule, are not equipped to collect, analyze and use in the policy making relevant data (institutional and political challenge).
- COVID-19 pandemic outbreak created an additional challenge for a smooth implementation of the Project planned operations.

- Lack of reliable data on housing conditions increase the risk of COVID-19 disease. The authorities of the recipient countries had serious difficulties in providing comprehensive data on housing conditions. The challenge was multiplied by existence of undocumented inhabitants, mainly in Kyrgyzstan.
- Language barriers prevented sufficient networking activities between the workshops' resource persons on one side and many of the participants in the capacity building workshops on the other side.
- Limited resources available in the recipient countries for addressing aspects of the evidence-based policies for housing and urban development delayed the intake of the Project outputs.

Given the nature and extent of the political and institutional challenges, as well as limited resources available for the Project implementation, and the limited duration of the Project, these challenges were overcome only partially. E.g. the institutional challenge was addressed by the decision to replace the originally envisaged steering committees in all recipient countries by the national SDG inter-agency commissions.

The UNECE management team reacted effectively and timely to the methodological challenges by dedicating much more time than originally planned to address methodological aspects related to sustainable housing and urban development. These aspects were intensively addressed during the advisory missions to recipient countries, capacity development workshops and development of methodological papers. However, the prevailing feeling among the stakeholders was that the key methodological tools such as the Guidelines on Evidence-Based Policies on Housing and Urban Development (published in 2019), and the Guidelines for the Preparation of UNECE Country Profiles on Housing, Urban Development and Land Management (published in 2018) should have been completed at an earlier stage.

The COVID-19 pandemic related challenges were addressed effectively and timely. The measures proposed in this context were outlined in the document "COVID-19 Project Amendment" (Annex 4).

Important lesson learned from the Project amendment in response to the COVID-19 pandemic was that the emergency situation can represent, in addition to multiple challenges, also the opportunity to explore new implementation and capacity development approaches and to increase awareness about the need to mitigate the impact of the potential future emergencies in urban settings. E.g., the limitations in deploying missions and/or holding the face-to-face workshops in the recipient countries triggered innovative ideas on how to replace these activities by the online tools and approaches. Even more importantly, a positive practical outcome was that the online sessions involving key Project stakeholders could be held more frequently (once a week). These circumstances increased networking and the frequency of communication among the stakeholders.

The internal lesson from Albania was that the pandemic impact on the well-being of the most vulnerable groups of population was not sufficiently assessed and that a limited data about the housing conditions increase the risk of coronavirus spreading. On the other hand, in Kyrgyzstan, the pandemic brought a renewed attention to the plight of the people living in the informal settlements in Bishkek (40% of the settlements) due to the migration to the capital city. Subsequently, this led to the decision to address this challenge in the framework of the future UNDA-funded project.

Another lesson was, that COVID-19 pandemic increased the awareness about the need for a careful consideration of the potential risks generated by crisis/emergencies in the preparation of the future projects. This new level of crisis risk awareness resulted in the formulation and funding of the new projects addressing the COVID-19 related challenges faced by the most vulnerable groups of the population, specifically in Kyrgyzstan and the Western Balkan (Albania, Macedonia).

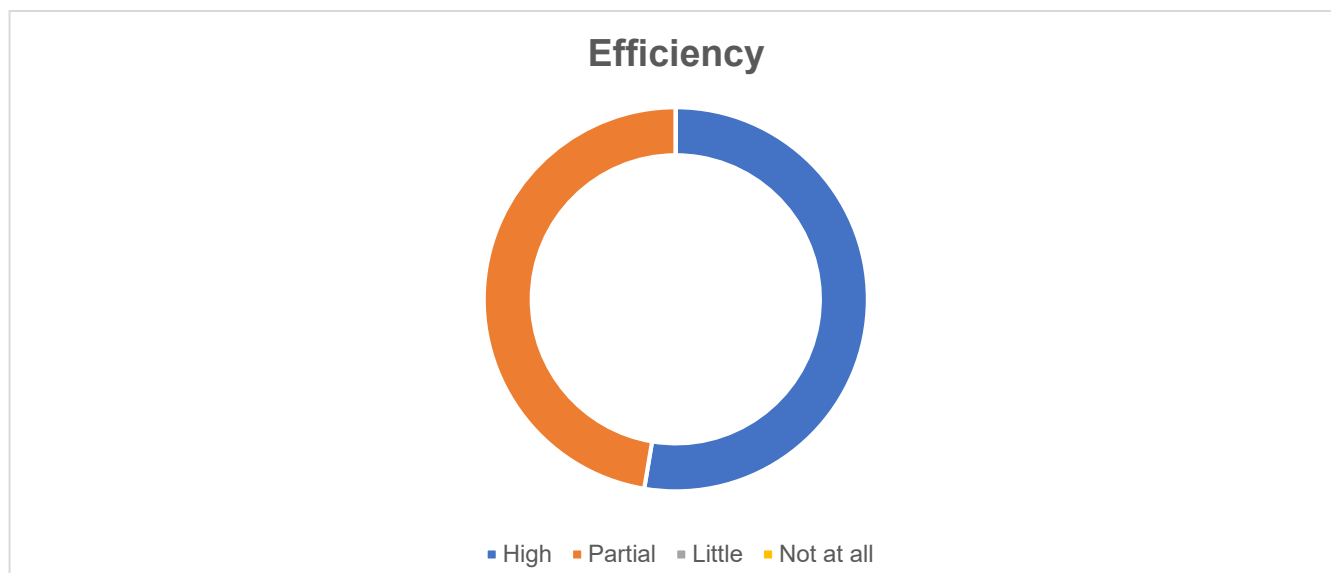
EFFICIENCY

In line with the evaluator's TOR, in assessing the efficiency of the Project implementation, the evaluation was looking for answers to the following questions (evaluation questions 15-18):

- Did the Project achieve its objectives within the anticipated budget and allocation of resources?
- How could the use of resources be improved? Would you propose any alternatives to achieve the same results?
- Were the human and financial resources allocated to the Project used efficiently and commensurate to the Project results?
- Were the activities implemented according to the planned timeframe?

The feedback received from the interviews with the stakeholders resulted in 10 votes for highly satisfactory efficiency in the implementation of the Project's activities against 9 votes for a partially satisfactory efficiency. This voting, triangulated with the analysis of the main Project-related reports and documents, resulted in the conclusion that the efficiency of the Project's operations was **partially satisfactory**. The structure of the opinions, which were received from the stakeholders in responding to the efficiency-related questions is shown in the Chart 5.

Chart 5: Efficiency



Questions 15, 16, 17, 18: The efficiency in achieving the Project objectives according to the planned timeframe, within the anticipated budget and resources and the efficient allocation of resources.

The project was financed from the UN Development Account in its 10th tranche. Its original budget was US\$ 499'000. The additional funding of US\$ 90'000 for the Activity 2.6. was mobilized in 2019.

The Project's implementation time was of four and half years (from June 2016 to the end of 2020) and the total funding of US\$ 589'000. For a comparison its predecessor funded from the UNDA in its 9th tranche had a budget of US\$533,000. UN DESA funded some 40 projects under the UNDA 10th tranche globally, with an average budget between US\$ 455'000 to 1'000'000. Thus, the Project under evaluation is one of the smallest ones in respect of its budget.

The Project was implemented in the framework of the UNECE subprogramme 8A "Housing and Land Management Subprogramme", which was managed by the Housing and Land Management Unit. The Subprogramme 8A's annual regular budget makes around US\$ 700'000 per year, which includes four regular budget positions. Calculating the Housing and Land Management Unit's approximate regular budget for four and halve years (June 2016-December 2020), the budget of the Project represented about 18.7 % of its regular budget during that period.

The evaluation may caution that, considering the absence of credible and comparable data, it was not feasible to assess and comment on relative cost and time efficiencies of the UNECE Project model compared to similar public and private initiatives. Moreover, it is not feasible to measure both resources invested and outputs produced in the same comparable metrics (E.g. money, man/day, etc.). This limitation in application of direct measures of efficiency resulted in application of indirect assessment of the Project efficiency in achieving its outcomes, outputs and the overall objective.

The prevailing opinion of the Project stakeholders confirmed that the UNECE Project management team was highly diligent in seeking out budgetary discipline and cost efficiencies. Its efforts resulted in a wise and adequate allocation of resources that

facilitated the achievement of the Project objectives within the anticipated budget. The overall assessment was that human and financial resources allocated to the Project were used efficiently and commensurate to the Project results.

Originally, the Project had the budget of USD 499,000. In April 2019, the budget was increased to USD 589,000, after receiving additional funds provided by DESA. This increase was approved following a strong interest expressed by the Governments of Belarus and Kazakhstan to join the Project. At the same time these two countries pledged their commitment to supporting the development of a new evidence-based policy at national or city level. This approach was deemed adequate by its potential to promote vertical cooperation of national and local authorities in urban development and sustainable housing. The fresh funds were allocated to conduct two training workshops on evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in Belarus and Kazakhstan, as well as four additional workshops in the remaining four beneficiary countries– Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, Albania and Georgia.

Following the decision about extending the number of the activities/sub-activities, and considering the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic, the project duration was extended until 31st of December 2020 to allow for a smooth and adequate implementation of the additional and modified (due to COVID-19) activities. The financial information about the Project budget and its use is shown in the following table:

TABLE 4: Financial information as of 31 January 2020

Description	A. Budget/Allotment (as per project document) (USD)	B. Revisions to allotments (if any) (USD) added residual funds	C. Explanations of revisions to allotments (USD)	D. Total Expenditure
Other staff costs - <i>General temporary assistance</i>	25,000	15,000	40,000	40,000
Consultants and experts	113,000	20,000	133,000	181,000
Travel of staff	92,500	0	92,500	92,500
Contractual services	167,500	24,000	191,500	191,500
General operating expenses	18,500	0	18,500	18,500
<i>Workshops / Study tours</i> (Grants and contributions)	30,000	31,000	61,000	61,000
Total	499,000	90,000	589,000	584,500

The Project activities were funded from the Development Account (DA), which is the section 35 of the regular budget managed by DESA. DA projects are designed to rely on existing staffing with the implementing entities to support the management of the project. Per DESA's guidelines, staff costs under the form of General Temporary Assistance (GTA) cannot exceed 5% of the overall project amount, reinforcing the reliance on existing staffing.

However, as reflected above, the resources available to the Project implementation from the UNECE regular budget were limited (30 % of time of one professional staff and 30 % of time of one general staff). The very small portion of the UNECE regular budget funds assigned to the Project implementation was judged as inadequate by the evaluator. Such a concern automatically leads to the question, whether it is feasible to run similar projects in a future in a sustainable manner, and at the same time respecting requirements related to the high standards of efficiency and effectiveness. In this regard, the cap of 5% of staff resources in the project budget appears as a limitation. Increasing staff resources on GTA contracts would also decrease the reliance on consultancies. It would finally help strengthening the unit by adding resources funded from various project streams.

A continued financial support by DESA to the UNECE activities focusing on the urban development and sustainable housing indicates that the UNECE HLMU delivers efficient and high-quality work.

In general, the Project was characterized by information -sharing with all key stakeholders during the advisory missions, national and regional workshops, the annual sessions of the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management, as well as during the online webinars. Nevertheless, a few stakeholders felt that the information-sharing and the communication follow up after the capacity development workshops should be improved and become more comprehensive and systematic.

From the continuity point of view, it was appropriate that the representatives of national authorities from the recipient countries participated in the UNDA 9th tranche workshops held in Geneva on 16 September 2016 and on 10 November 2017. This approach led to the exchange of experiences and boosted efficient linkages between 9th and 10th Tranches projects.

On Project efficiency in terms of timely and successful completion of activities and burn out rate (funds), UNECE allotted considerably amount of funds for consultancy and/or contractual services contracts. Considering limited availability of resources from the UNECE regular budget, this approach is justified since a lot of funds had to be dedicated to the translation services and the implementation of a long series of workshops. The management overhead of the UNECE looks realistic.

Originally, it was planned to establish separate project steering committees in each of the recipient countries. The original plan was scrapped. Instead, it was decided to ensure the coordination the recipient countries through the enhancing of cooperation with the national SDG interagency commissions/groups coordinating implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. These commissions were situated at the Parliaments or at Prime-Minister's offices of the countries. The reasons for this change of the plan were that, firstly, through the discussions with the governments it was found that the sectoral ministries responsible for urban development and housing remained rather sector oriented and did not have mandates or capacities to ensure the cross-sectoral cooperation. The second reason was that it was important to create synergies with existing structures rather than establish new ones. Several stakeholders pointed to a limited efficiency of the Project governance arrangement in the recipient countries since the frequency of intersectoral high level commissions/groups' meeting was very low and the focus concentrated on a policy issues rather than practical Project implementation challenges.

In the period 2016-2020, several of the activities were not implemented according to the planned timetables. Time overruns were noted in the implementation of several activities. E.g. advisory mission to Georgia falling in A1.1 was delayed until September 2017 and was carried out as back to back mission with the national validation workshops marked as A1.3. Moreover, activities A1.3 and A1.4 were implemented partially since the national validation workshop, as well as a follow-up advisory mission in Albania were not held and/or considerably delayed due to the change of government structure and internal reforms.

Similarly, the completion of the Guidelines for the collection and analysis of the national data on housing and urban development was considerably delayed, which limited the quality and the scope of discussions during the national workshops.

Another considerable delay happened in collection of a baseline information/data by the reviewed countries. The focus of activity A 2.3 was modified. Its original objective proposed in the Project document was: "Advisory missions of UNECE and UN-Habitat staff to the countries to assist in further adoption of evidence-based policies on housing, urban development and land administration". In 2017 it was refocused to: "At least two on-line trainings using training materials developed in activity A 2.1 organized by UNECE and UN-Habitat to provide support to the four countries." The completion of this activity was shifted from 2018 into 2019. The completion of activity 2.1 "Prepare training materials in English and Russian on the development of evidence based sustainable urban development policies" was considerably delayed. This situation led to the shift of activity A 2.2 "Organize four (one per a beneficiary country) national training workshops to support the development of evidence-based sustainable housing and urban development policies" from 2018 to 2019. The planned Project outputs were delivered in full.

The Project achieved its objectives within the anticipated budget and allocation of resources. Its human and financial resources were commensurate to the Project results.

Documents available for evaluation purposes, were not sufficient for a fair evaluation of the efficiency in using the available resources in the context of the training workshops. As a matter of fact, UNECE did not set up an evaluation system (evaluation summaries, quiz, etc.) in the workshops, which could facilitate an assessment of how efficiently the resources/inputs of the Project were converted into its expected outputs. This is a shortcoming. Several stakeholders felt that the Project did not explore realizing additional efficiency gains in terms of cost by taking advantage of online training opportunities during its initial three years. This approach was applied in the last year as the most appropriate alternative during the COVID-19 pandemic.

On a positive side, UNECE was proactive in seeking contributions in kind from other stakeholders to increase the project financing. Additional resources were mobilized from the recipient governments in providing workshop premises, assistance in logistics and information sharing, from the UNHABITAT in providing expert support and from the UNDP country offices in supporting preparation and implementation of national workshops.

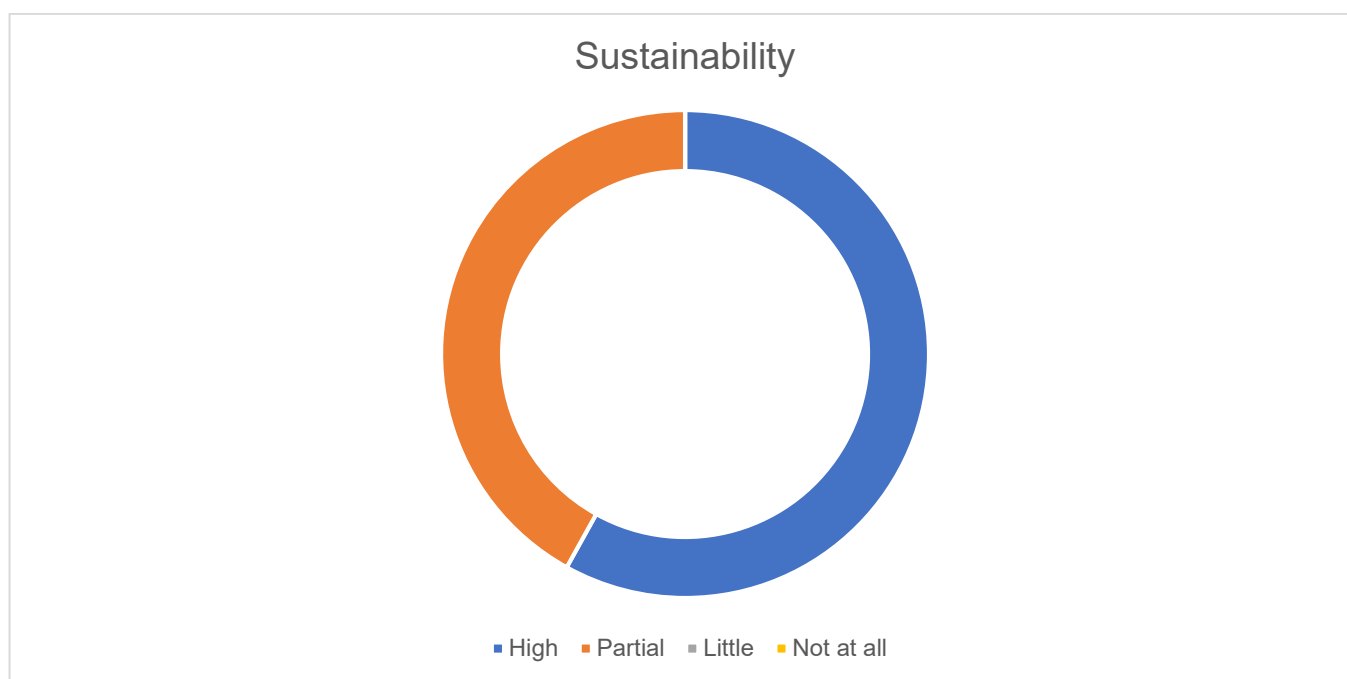
SUSTAINABILITY

The aspects related to the Project's impact on sustainability of its outcomes/outputs and its overall objective were evaluated against the following criteria (evaluation questions 19 to 23):

- The likelihood of the stakeholders' engagement to continue, be scaled up, replicated or institutionalized;
- The extent to which the partners and beneficiaries "own" the outcomes of the work;
- The extent to which the overall objective of the project is still valid, and, the extent to which the activities could be replicated in the UNECE region or in other regions;
- What laws, regulations, policies and projects have been developed so far based on the strengthening national capacities for the development of the evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development;
- The degree to which the Project helped to strengthen the application of gender mainstreaming principles and contributed to substantial and meaningful changes in the situation of the most vulnerable groups.

Analysis of the feedback received from the stakeholders complemented with the analysis of the main Project-related reports and documents, resulted in the conclusion that the sustainability of the Project's outputs and outcomes in recipient countries was a **highly satisfactory**. The structure of the opinions, which were received from the stakeholders in responding to the sustainability-related questions is shown in the Chart 6.

Chart 6: Sustainability



Evaluation of the situation at the end of the Project considering the evaluation questions 19, 20, 21, 22, 23:

The majority of the interviewed stakeholders agreed that during its lifetime the Project implementation was characterized by a high degree of sustainability. This was a result of various positive factors, such as organizational and management capacity, developing sustainable partnerships, adaptability to the recipient countries need and funding stability from UNDA resources. Concerning the future perspective of sustainability, it was important, that the implemented activities buttressed the levels of awareness of the importance of the evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development. This awareness went hand in hand with a growing understanding of this concept, and its practical application, and resulted in several initiatives for

scaling up and institutionalizing this approach. These trends indicate that stakeholders of the recipient countries own the outcomes of the Project.

E.g. the Republic of Kazakhstan has adopted several government programs targeted at housing construction and the increase of housing provision such as the “Affordable Housing — 2020”, the “2020 Program of Regional Development” - its priority is government support for affordable housing construction, and the Nurly Zher Housing Construction Program (approved on 31 December 2016).

Nurly Zher Housing Construction Program has seven goals:

- Increasing the affordability of mortgages
- Stimulation of housing construction by private developers
- Construction of credit housing through the contract saving system
- Creation of rental housing stock for the socially vulnerable population
- Development of individual housing construction
- Creation of commercial and rental housing stock
- Support of equity housing construction

The 2020 Program of Regional Development plans to reduce the share of apartment buildings in need of refurbishment from 27 per cent in 2015 to 21 per cent in 2019.

In Kazakhstan, improvement of energy efficiency became a national strategic priority. The political will of the country in the promotion of energy efficiency was expressed through the adoption of a number of strategic documents, namely the “Strategy of Transition of the Republic of Kazakhstan to a “Green” Economy”, Strategy-2050, and programs such as Nurly Zhol, 100 Steps of the Nation, Energy Saving-2020, and others.

In Kazakhstan, the Smart Cities Agenda is implemented in Astana aiming at improving the quality of life and to speed up the modernization of the infrastructure, including better housing and utility services, renewed utilities network in Astana, as well as to enhance its level of public safety. One key objective of the Astana Smart City Roadmap, which is in line with the national Programme of Progressive Industrial-Innovative Development, is to assist Astana authorities in the introduction of innovations that could create spillovers all over Kazakhstan and contribute to economic diversification.

The Project’s sustainability impact and the feeling of ownership was clearly demonstrated also in Albania during the national workshop “Achieving Sustainable Development Goals in Albania: The Contribution of SDG Indicators to Evidence-based Policy-making for Sustainable Housing and Urban Development at National and Local Levels” held in Tirana, 2-3 May 2019. A commitment for the continuation of efforts leading to strengthening evidence-based policy-making for sustainable housing and urban development was confirmed by the Minister and the Deputy Minister of Finance and Economy, the Mayor of Tirana, the General Director of the Prime Minister Office and other political leaders at national and municipal levels⁴².

The implemented activities, outputs and outcomes stimulated a growing interest of the countries from the UNECE region in receiving support in developing the Country and City Profiles of the Housing Sector, as confirmed by the UNECE. Another concrete evidence of this positive trend is the UNDA 12th tranche project “Smart Sustainable Cities for the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and New Urban Agenda in the UNECE Region”.⁴³ This new project supports the transition of beneficiary cities towards being smart and sustainable with a view to support countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 11 (SDG 11) and other urban related SDGs of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It will improve capacities of local and national government officials of five countries in the UNECE region to develop and implement sustainable urban policies focusing on:

- (i) evaluation of cities’ performance and
- (ii) capacity building activities to promote evidence-based policies and the vertical and horizontal coordination between different government agencies and with participation of cities’ inhabitants.

With regard to sustainability aspect linked to scaling up and continuation of engagement, it should be noted that four out of the five recipient countries of this project, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Georgia, have benefitted from the UNECE assistance in the framework of the UNDA 10th tranche Project.

⁴² Mission report Gulnara Roll, 31 April-4 May 2019, Tirana, Albania

⁴³ <http://www.unece.org/housing-and-land-management/projects/unda-12th-tranche.html>

Another evident sign of the Project impact in terms of sustainability is that the subject of the evidence-based policy development for sustainable housing and urban development to a more prominent status in the agendas of the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management. A constructive and pro-active participation of the housing and urban development sector's representatives in the annual sessions of the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management demonstrated that all recipient countries were engaged in the Project activities with a long term vision and owned the outcomes of the operations. The stakeholders' engagement will be further scaled up in the course of several new projects focusing on the smart sustainable cities, and the post-COVID economic recovery. It is realistically expected that the sustainability of the Project's outcomes and outputs will be buttressed further by the several UNDA Project funded from its 11th⁴⁴, 12th and 13th⁴⁵ tranches.

The continued relevance of the overall Project objective was broadly confirmed by the vast majority of the interviewed stakeholders. Another tangible prove of the Project overall objective sustainability is a recent proliferation of the new projects pursuing the same or very similar objective of development of evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development. E.g. the similar approach is applied by the "United for Smart Sustainable Cities Project", including 16 different agencies from the UNECE region and beyond. The approach is in the core of activities undertaken in the framework of many other initiatives such "Smart Sustainable Cities Profiles", "Volunteer National Reviews of Housing Sector" and others. The Project overall objective replicability in the UNECE region and beyond was stressed by many of the stakeholders during the interviews. E.g., during the interview with the UN HABITAT, it was mentioned that this agency was broadly applying the methodology and approach developed by the Project in the framework of several recently initiated projects in different regions, e.g. in several African countries.

On one aspect of sustainability, the evaluation's TOR also required to establish what laws, regulations and policies have been developed to date based on the strengthening national capacities for the development of the evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development. Since the regulation and legislative processes are characterized by complicated and protracted nature, it would not be realistic to expect that the adoption of a new laws, regulations and policies would occur within the lifespan of the Project. Positive signs have been noted in Albania, where the Ministry of Finance and Economy initiated a revision of the "Social Housing Strategy 2016-2025"⁴⁶ in order to underline the importance of the evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development and to secure more budgetary resources for the implementation of activities supporting the achievement of the SDG 11. During the National workshop held in Tirana in May 2019, the participants including the national authorities at senior level, proposed to re-establish the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing Centre of Excellence which could assist the national and local governments in the development of evidence-based policies in Albania. During the same workshop it was agreed to join forces (UNECE, UNHABITAT and UNDP) in the context of the UNDP Albania activities in assisting the Ministry of Finance and Economy in building capacity for the policy development.⁴⁷

The evidence of the growing interest in the improvement of the national legislative and regulatory documents was confirmed by the national stakeholders from all recipient countries. The majority of interviewees stressed that the sustainability of the Project's outcomes was buttressed significantly by the development of the "Guidelines for the Preparation of the UNECE Country Profiles on Housing, Urban Development and Land Management"⁴⁸, the UNECE Guidelines on Evidence-Based Policies and Decision Making for Sustainable Housing and Urban Development"⁴⁹, "Country Profiles" for Kazakhstan, 2018⁵⁰ and Belarus, 2019⁵¹, as well as "City Profiles" for Nur Sultan, Kazakhstan, 2019 and Voznesensk, Ukraine, 2019.

The sound degree of the sustainability of the Project's outcomes and its overall objective is also evident from the fact that its followers, UNDA's 11th tranche project "Strengthening Evidence-based and Participatory Housing Policies and Strategies"⁵², UNDA's 12th tranche project "Smart Sustainable Cities for the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda in the UNECE Region"⁵³, as well as, the Norwegian Project "Improved Sustainable Urban Development in 17 Norwegian

⁴⁴ <http://www.unece.org/housing-and-land-management/projects/unda-11th-tranche.html>

⁴⁵ <http://www.unece.org/housing-and-land-management/projects/unda-13th-tranche-project-on-building-economic-resilience-after-covid-19.html>

⁴⁶ <https://www.undp.org/content/dam/albania/docs/Social%20Housing%20Strategy%20English.pdf>

⁴⁷ Mission report Gulnara Roll, 31 April-4 May 2019, Tirana, Albania

⁴⁸ https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/sessions/docs2019/Info_1_Guidelines_on_evidence-based_policies.pdf

⁴⁹ https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2019/ECE_HBP_2019_2-ENG.pdf

⁵⁰ https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/CP_Kazakhstan_web.ENG.pdf

⁵¹ https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/CP_Belarus_2019.pdf

⁵² <http://www.unece.org/housing-and-land-management/projects/unda-11th-tranche.html>

⁵³ <https://www.unece.org/housing-and-land-management/projects/unda-12th-tranche.html>

Cities”⁵⁴ will be broadly applying the methodological approach developed in the framework of the UNDA’s 10th tranche Project. These ongoing and future projects can also take benefit from the training guides and materials, many of which have been developed in the framework of the UNDA’s 10th tranche Project⁵⁵.

Since the key Project output ““Guidelines to evidence-based policies and decision making for sustainable housing and urban development” was formally published in 2020, it is reasonable to say that the sustainability of the Project outcomes/objective will be most probably evident during the lifetime of the successors UNDA projects. This key output and the Project overall objective are still useful/valid and can be replicated in other countries of the UNECE region or in the other regions.

A long-term sustainability of the Project impact will very much depend also on the capacity available in the Housing and Land Management Unit for efficient employing of the online resources for a broad dissemination of relevant lessons learned, best practices, knowledge and expertise accumulated in the course of its implementation.

The Project contributed to strengthening the application of gender mainstreaming in a partial manner. This subject was not considered in the Project Document. Therefore, it was not considered as an issue of a major focus.

As already mentioned above, the gender, rights-based and disability inclusion approaches were addressed in detail by the “Guidelines on evidence-based policies and decision-making for sustainable housing and urban development”⁵⁶. The approaches proposed by the Guidelines informed several discussions that took place during the national and regional workshops, conducted by the Project. Likewise, the Guidelines underlines the importance of considering gender, disability and inclusion issues related e.g. to age, income or migratory status for evidence-based policies and decision-making for sustainable housing and urban development. The guidelines also encourage decision makers to embrace opportunities stemming from the “data revolution”, while also ensuring that “no one is left behind”, and underscores the importance of disaggregating data per gender, age, ethnicity, income, disability and migratory status. The good practices in addressing these issues were often discussed during the capacity development workshops. Documentary review and the interviews with the stakeholders from the pilot countries have not indicated any possible unanticipated effects of the interventions on human rights and gender equality.

Key performance indicators for Smart Sustainable Cities, which were developed in the parallel with the Project implementation include also gender income indicator, student ICT access, childcare availability and others related to the abovementioned approaches.

The main guarantee of the sustainability is that the project activities are part of the programme of work of the Intergovernmental Committee where the countries continue reporting and discussing the project results far beyond the end of the project. UNECE will continue implementing similar projects focusing on evidence based policies with national and local governments. The Intergovernmental Committee exists since 1947 and his work will continue in the future. This is the main factor of sustainability.

A future sustainability of the Project results will depend very much on the capacities of the recipient countries to gather effectively all data and information required for the evidence-based policy development in the housing and urban development sector, the enhanced political commitment and capacity building of people involved in this process. It is to be noted that limited national resources for sustainable housing and urban development in the recipient countries can constitute a slowing-down factor in achieving a significant level of sustainability and ownership of the outcomes of the work implemented in the Project.

The Project outputs contributed to the capacity building and awareness raising about the need for a more systematic and comprehensive consideration of gender mainstreaming principles and the special needs of the most vulnerable groups. The extent, to which this knowledge and awareness were reflected in a practical implementation of the sustainable housing and urban development actions, can, realistically, be assessed only in the years to come.

⁵⁴ <https://www.unece.org/housing-and-land-management/projects/norwegian-project.html>

⁵⁵ <https://www.unece.org/housing-and-land-management/training-materials.html>

⁵⁶ ECE/HBP/203

VII. Conclusions

Based on documents consulted, responses received to the questionnaire and in-depth interviews with UNECE staff and external stakeholders, the conclusions were drawn by the evaluator that are presented below.

1. The Project had a very ambitious delivery plan, including, initially, twenty-three different activities (advisory missions, workshops, policy papers development, preparation of training materials). In 2019, after receiving an additional funding, seven new activities were added. The implementation of the highly ambitious plan was managed and administered by limited number of the human resources available to this end in the HLMU.
2. The Project was highly relevant in responding to the needs and priorities of the beneficiary countries, consistent with the respective global and regional priorities, and well aligned with the programme work of the UNECE, as well as with the pertinent sustainable development goals. The high extent of the relevance and consistency was buttressed by the relevant information analysis and specific conclusions and policy recommendations available in the UNECE Country Profiles on the Housing Sector.
3. However, there were shortcomings in applying gender, rights-based and disability inclusion approaches in the design and with partial results in considering these issues during the implementation activities. The outputs generated by the Project were fully consistent with the overall objective/impact and expected outcomes. All planned outputs have been delivered.
4. Few minor shortcomings identified with regard to the efficiency and effectiveness of the implementation plan were linked to the constraints from DESA preventing the hiring of a dedicated project Manager, at least during key phases, as well as to the governmental changes in several recipient countries (Albania, Georgia, Ukraine).
5. The Project delivered several very positive outputs: the Guidelines on evidence-based policies and decision making for sustainable housing and urban development, trainings and training materials for facilitating the application of the Guidelines in the recipient countries. These outputs are highly relevant and pertinent also for the use in other UNECE region countries and beyond. The numerous capacity development activities were well suited for the achievement of the Project outcomes. However, the exact extent of the achievement of the outcomes is difficult to assess fairly at this junction. The current assessment is based on the feedback received from the stakeholders which in majority of cases indicated that the Project activities and outputs resulted in an important step forward in strengthening national capacities of beneficiary countries to collect pertinent data for and develop evidence-based policies housing, urban development and land administration.
6. Despite considerable efforts invested by UNECE in the context of the Project in order to assist the recipient countries to develop evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development, and to build partnerships addressing these issues, multiple challenges in this field remain.
7. The critical challenge is an insufficient capacity of the national and sub-national authorities to carry out collection and analysis of data in a comprehensive and timely manner, and insufficient coordination between and among data producers and data users in the process.
8. The level of coherence in the implementation of activities in the required sequence was slightly diminished by the delays in the process of finalization of the Guidelines for evidence-based policy and decision making.
9. Contributions of the Project capacity development activities for achieving the outcomes/overall objective was not systematically measured during the national workshops. The capacity development workshops' relevance, pertinence, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, as well as the overall impact were not formally evaluated and/or documented.
10. The logistical modifications related to pending activities as of April 2020 were highly coherent with the initial Project design. A modified implementation mode of the pending activities was aligned consistently with the planned outputs, outcomes and the overall impact/objective of the Project. The process of redressing logistics related to several pending activities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic was simplified by the fact that the Project was at the outbreak of the pandemic in its "recapitulation" phase. Modified approach was not related to mitigating the impact of COVID-19 in the pilot countries.
11. Important lesson learned from the Project amendment in response to the COVID-19 pandemic was that emergency situation can represent, in addition to multiple challenges, also opportunity to explore new

implementation and capacity development approaches and to increase awareness about the need to mitigate potential impact of the future emergencies.

12. The overall evaluation of the Project rated 3 evaluation criteria, relevance, coherence and sustainability, at a highly satisfactory rating, an 2 evaluation criteria, effectiveness and efficiency, at a partially satisfactory rating. The ratings at little satisfactory level, or not satisfactory level, were not considered as appropriate by any of the interviewed stakeholders.
13. In consultation with the HLMU a slight vagueness in the original log frame has been clarified and a revised log frame covered all critical building blocks supporting the TOC.
14. The impact of the workshops and application of the training and methodological tools on the recipient countries participants capacity development was not sufficiently measured.

VIII. Recommendations

1. UNECE to continue an intensive support to the UNECE region countries with economies in transition and regular dialogue with their national authorities, with pertinent sectoral responsibilities, to keep the momentum for maintaining their commitment to developing evidence-based policies in the sector.
2. In the future, systematically assess, monitor and document the usefulness and expected impact of the capacity development workshops by canvassing feedback from the participants through a well-tailored questionnaire, quiz approach application and internet-based tools as e.g. Survey Monkey. These assessments should include a space for qualitative comments and proposals by participants
3. Reinforce the staffing capacity of the HLMU to ensure the long-term sustainability and efficiency of the UNECE assistance in the implementation of evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in the UNECE region by mobilizing additional extrabudgetary and UNDA resources. Increasing staff resources above 5% in UNDA project would help to increase the efficiency and decrease the reliance on consultancies.
4. In the future projects, introduce more comprehensive project performance monitoring tool facilitating the assessment of the ongoing impact of the activities vis-a-vis the achievements of the project's expected outcomes and its overall objective.
5. Subject to availability of human and financial resources, create in UNECE a dedicated web-page for sharing the training materials, lessons learned, best practices examples in collection of data and developing evidence-based policies on housing, urban development and land management.
6. Ensure that aspects related to gender, rights-based and vulnerable groups inclusion approaches are fully considered in the design of the future projects, as well as during their implementation activities.

IX. Annexes

1. Annex 1: TOR for the evaluation of the Project
2. Annex 2: List of documents reviewed
3. Annex 3: Evaluation questionnaire
4. Annex 4: COVID-19 Project Amendment
5. Annex 5: List of the interviewed stakeholders
6. Annex 6: Project document

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in selected countries with economies in transition

I. Purpose

The primary purpose of the evaluation is to assess the extent to which the objectives of the UNDA 10th tranche project “Evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in selected countries with economies in transition” were achieved. The evaluation will assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

II. Scope

The evaluation will include the full project implementation during the period of June 2016-October 2020 in six pilot countries (Albania, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine). The universally recognized values and principles of human rights and gender equality need to be integrated at all stages of an evaluation, in compliance with the United Nations Evaluation Group’s revised gender-related norms and standards. Therefore, the evaluation will assess how gender considerations were included in the process and it will make recommendations on how gender can be included better in the process.

III. Background

The project is part of the 8A Subprogramme HLM Component Programmes of Work 2018-2019¹ and 2020². The core objective of the Subprogramme is to improve housing, urban and land governance, and promote the evidence-based formulation and implementation of sustainable housing, land, population and social cohesion policies in the region.

The project builds on the activities and outcomes of the UNDA 9th tranche project “Strengthening national capacities for sustainable housing in selected countries with economies in transition” implemented by UNECE and UN-Habitat in 2014-2017. The UNDA 9th tranche project was aimed to support developing the capacity of countries with economies in transition to develop policies for sustainable housing, urban development, and land management through the preparation of National Action Plans on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development. Implementation of that project showed the need in the evidence-based approach to developing and implementing national policies which became the focus of the project to be evaluated. Furthermore, the project supports the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda.

The overall goal of the project is to strengthen national capacities for the development of evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in the context of the

¹ <https://undocs.org/a/71/6/Rev.1> Please refer to Programme 17.

² [https://undocs.org/a/74/6\(Sect.20\)](https://undocs.org/a/74/6(Sect.20))

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in six selected countries: Albania, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine. The project is implemented jointly by UNECE and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), with UNECE as the lead agency. Originally the project was adopted for four countries, Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine; in 2019, the project received additional funding from the UNDA residual funds to add two countries to the project – Albania and Kazakhstan and to implement additional activities, including organization of six workshops in the six project beneficiary countries.

The project assists national governments in the selected beneficiary countries by elaborating a policy paper and guidelines for the collection and analysis of the national data on housing and urban development, providing advice on the development of evidence-based policies, promoting intersectoral cooperation, building capacity on sustainable housing through the provision of advisory services, preparation of training materials, organization of workshops and online trainings.

The national stakeholders of the project are governments, including representatives of housing and urban development (key stakeholders), energy, finance, and environmental authorities in the beneficiary countries. Local authorities, private sector, academia and civil society, are also involved in the project.

The main organizations involved in project implementation are UNECE (lead agency) and UN-Habitat (an implementing partner).

The objective of the project is pursued by achieving the following results:

- (EA1) Strengthened national capacity of beneficiary countries to collect data on housing, urban development and land administration
- (EA2) Strengthened national technical capacity of relevant government agencies in beneficiary countries in the UNECE region to develop evidence-based policies on housing, urban development and land administration

Both the objective and the expected accomplishments are achieved by the implementation of the following activities:

- (A1.1) Conducting four advisory missions to discuss with the countries approaches and technical tools for the collection of data on housing, urban development and land administration relevant to sustainable development and human settlements in the four beneficiary countries.
- (A1.2) Development of a policy paper with the methodology for data collection on housing, urban development and land administration relevant to the 2030 Agenda.
- (A1.3) Organization of four national validation workshops to elaborate the guidelines for the data collection needed to review the implementation of policies on housing, urban development and land administration.
- (A1.4) Advisory missions to four countries to meet with the government officials and technical experts involved in the data collection to provide policy advice on the actual data collection and the implementation of the national guidelines for the data collection.
- (A2.1) Preparation of training materials in English and Russian on the development of evidence based sustainable urban development policies.
- (A2.2) Organization of four national training workshops to support the development of

evidence-based sustainable housing and urban development policies.

- (A2.3) Advisory missions of UNECE and UN-Habitat staff to the countries to assist in further adoption of evidence-based policies on housing, urban development and land administration.
- (A2.4) Preparation of the project report containing regional guidelines for the development of evidence-based policies.
- (A2.5) Organization of one regional meeting for UNECE member States to share lessons learned on the development of the methodology of the data collection and support to the related sustainable housing and urban development policies. – will be organized on 3-4 October 2019 in Geneva.
- (A2.6) Organization of six capacity-development workshops to support implementation of the guidelines on evidence-based policies. This activity was added upon the receipt of the additional UNDA residual funds. It included four additional workshops for beneficiary countries (2.6.1) and two workshops for additional countries that requested support (2.6.2).

The budget of the project is total US\$ 589'000 (including the additional funds of the amount of US\$ 90'000 for the Activity 2.6). The project is financed from the UN Development Account in its 10th tranche.

IV. Issues

The evaluation will answer the following issues: Relevance; Coherence; Effectiveness; Efficiency and Sustainability.

Relevance:

1. To what extent did the Project respond to the priorities and needs of the beneficiary countries to develop evidence-based policies? Was the project design appropriate?
2. To what extent were the activities consistent with global and regional priorities and the programme of work of the UNECE? What value has UNECE's efforts added in this area? How relevant were the project activities in the way of achieving the SDGs?
3. How relevant was the project to the target groups' needs and priorities? Was there a focus on the most vulnerable?
4. Did the project apply gender, rights-based and disability inclusion approaches in the design, implementation and results of the activities?

Coherence:

5. How coherent was the collaboration with other entities in the UN system and other international organizations?
6. Were the activities implemented according to the planned timeframe?
7. Were the activities implemented in the required sequence needed to ensure the greatest impact of the project?
8. To what extent are the outputs consistent with and relevant to the overall objective and expected accomplishments?

Effectiveness:

9. Did the project achieve the results expected during the project design in terms of the planned activities, outcome, and impact?
10. To what extent were the expected accomplishments of the project achieved?
11. What were the challenges/ obstacles to achieving the activities objective and expected accomplishments?

Efficiency:

12. Did the project achieve its objectives within the anticipated budget and allocation of resources?
13. How could the use of resources be improved? Would you propose any alternatives to achieve the same results? If yes, which ones?
14. Were the human and financial resources allocated to the project used efficiently and commensurate the project results?

Sustainability:

15. How is the stakeholders' engagement likely to continue, be scaled up, replicated or institutionalized?
16. To what extent do the partners and beneficiaries 'own' the outcomes of the work?
17. To what extent are the objectives of the activity still valid? How can the activity be replicated in the UNECE region or in other regions?
18. What are the laws, regulations, policies or projects that have been developed so far based on the strengthening national capacities for the development of the evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development?
19. Has the project helped to strengthen the application of gender mainstreaming principles and contribute to substantial and meaningful changes in the situation of the most vulnerable groups?

V. Methodology

The evaluation will be conducted based on:

- A desk review of all relevant documents will be conducted in the first instance. The desk review will include: the project document and information on [project activities](#), developed Guidelines publication, including the policy paper, workshop agendas, reports of the national workshops. These documents will be provided by the Housing and Land Management Unit.
- In-depth in person and skype interviews will be conducted with (i) national coordinators of the project, representatives of national governments and relevant stakeholders in Albania, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine; (ii) representatives of national government authorities in member States and stakeholders to be identified by UNECE; and (iii) with partners involved in the project, UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit and UN-Habitat. (list of contacts and details to be provided by the project manager).
- The consultant will attend the final project meeting in Geneva on 8-9 October 2020 at margins of which would also hold some of the interviews with project participants and representatives of governments. This is where the Housing and Land Management Unit will organize meetings with the project leaders and stakeholders.

UNECE will provide all documentation, support and guidance to the evaluation consultant as needed throughout the timeline of the evaluation.

The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the ECE Evaluation Policy. A gender-responsive methodology, methods and tools, and data techniques are selected. The evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations reflect a gender analysis.

The evaluation report of maximum 15-20 pages will summarize findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation. An executive summary (max. 2 pages) will summarize the methodology of the evaluation, key findings, conclusions and recommendations.

VI. Evaluation schedule

- A. Preliminary research: June-August 2020;
- B. Data collection: June-October 2020;
- C. Data analysis: October-November 2020;
- D. Draft report: 30 October 2020;
- E. Final report: 30 November 2020

VII. Resources

An independent consultant will be engaged for a period of 40 days to conduct the evaluation.

Ms. Gulnara Roll, the Project Manager, will manage the evaluation in consultation with the Division Director Ms. Paola Deda. Housing and Land Management Unit team members and UN-Habitat experts, who were involved in the project, will be asked for inputs.

The Programme Management Unit (PMU) will provide guidance to the Project Manager and evaluator as needed on the evaluation design, methodology for the evaluation and quality assurance of the draft report.

VIII. Intended Use/Next Steps

Findings of this evaluation will be used when possible to:

- improve direct project's follow up actions, implementation of products by project beneficiaries and dissemination of the knowledge created through the project;
- assess the gaps and further needs of countries in the area of this project;
- formulate a tailored capacity building projects for the development of evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban;
- induce new project ideas, improving the planning and design of future capacity building activities and projects on housing and land management in the UNECE region;
- improve the establishment of evidence-based policies through the country profiles on housing and land management

The results of the evaluation will be reported to the CUDHLM.

Following the receipt of the final report, the project manager will develop a management response and action plan for addressing the recommendations made by the evaluator. The final evaluation report, the management response and the progress on implementation of recommendations will be available on the UNECE website.

IX. Criteria for evaluators

Evaluators should have:

- An advanced university degree or equivalent background in relevant disciplines
- Specialized training in areas such as evaluation, project management, social statistics,

advanced statistical research and analysis.

- Demonstrated relevant professional experience in design, management and conduct of evaluation processes with multiple stakeholders, survey design and implementation, project planning, monitoring and management, gender mainstreaming and human rights due diligence
- Demonstrated methodological knowledge of evaluations, including quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis for end-of-cycle project evaluations.
- Fluent in written and spoken English. Knowledge of another language (for example Russian) may be desirable depending on the countries included in the project (for the purpose of being able to seek inputs from national authorities in their native tongue).

Evaluators should declare any conflict of interest to UNECE before embarking on an evaluation project, and at any point where such conflict occurs.

**INDEPENDENT EVALUATION
OF THE UNDA 10th TRANCHE PROJECT "EVIDENCE-BASED POLICIES FOR
SUSTAINABLE HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN SELECTED
COUNTRIES WITH ECONOMIES IN TRANSITION" (further Project)**

Annex 2 : List of reviewed documents

1. The Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing,
http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/charter/Language_versions/ENG_Geneva_UN_Charter.pdf
2. Guidance for the Implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing, 2016,
http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/Charter_Guidance.pdf
3. Social Housing in the UNECE region: Executive Summary, 2016,
http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/Social_Housing_UNECE_Region_Executive_Summary.EN.pdf
4. CIS Cities: Towards Sustainable Future – The CIS Regional Report for HABITAT III, 2016,
http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/Habitat_CIS_cities_new.en.pdf
5. Terms of Reference for the Evaluation of the UNDA 10th Tranche Project “Evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in selected countries with economies in transition”, 2020
6. Geneva Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development, 2017,
http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/sessions/docs2017/ECE_HBP_2017_1_ENG_cover.pdf
7. Collection Methodology for Key Performance Indicators for Smart Sustainable Cities, 2017,
<http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/U4SSC-CollectionMethodologyforKPIfoSSC-2017.pdf>
8. Smart Sustainable City Profile. Goris, Armenia, 2017,
http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/SSC_Profile_Goris_advance.pdf
9. Smart Sustainable Cities Profile, VOZNESENSK, Ukraine, 2019,
http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/SSC_Profile_Voznesensk.ENG.pdf
10. Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management, Republic of Armenia, 2017,
<http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/cp.armenia.2017.pdf>
11. Country Profiles on the Housing Sector: Republic of Kazakhstan, 2018,
http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/CP_Kazakhstan_web.ENG.pdf
12. Country Profile on Housing and Land Management, Belarus, 2019,
http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/CP_Belarus_2019.pdf
13. Guidelines for the Development of a Smart Sustainable City Action Plan, 2018,
http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/Guidelines_for_SSC_City_Action_Plan.pdf
14. Guidelines for the Preparation of UNECE Country Profiles on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management, 2018,
http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/Guidelines_for_the_preparation_of_ECE_Country_Profiles.eng.pdf
15. Guidelines on evidence-based policies and decision making for sustainable housing and urban development, UNECE, 2020, [2020_Guidelines_on_evidence-based_policies.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/Guidelines_on_evidence-based_policies.pdf)
16. Project Document, 10th Tranche of the UNDA “Evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in selected countries with economies in transition”, 2016
17. COVID-19 Project Amendment, 1617W - “Evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in selected countries with economies in transition”, 2020
18. Draft Policy Paper “Evidence-based policies on housing and urban development in countries of the UNECE region – selected case studies”, 2020
19. Committee on Housing and Land Management: Draft Program of Work of the Housing and Land Management, 2016-2017,
https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2015/ECE_HBP_2015_7.en.pdf

20. Report of the Committee on Housing and Land Management on its 76th Session, 2015,
https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2015/ECE_HBP_184.en.pdf
21. Report of the Committee on Housing and Land Management on its Special Session, 2016,
https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2016/1_ECE_HBP_S_2016_3.en.pdf
22. Report of the Committee on Housing and Land Management on its 77th Session, 2016,
https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2016/ECE_HBP_188.en.pdf
23. Report of the Committee on Housing and Land Management on its 78th Session, 2017,
https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2018/ECE_HBP_190.eng.pdf
24. Report of the Committee on Housing and Land Management on its 79th Session, 2018,
https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2018/ECE_HBP_194.en.pdf
25. Report of the Committee on Housing and Land Management on its 80th Session, 2019,
https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2019/ECE_HBP_201-ENG.pdf
26. Draft Program of Work of the Housing and Land Management Component of the Housing, Land Management and Population subprogram for 2018-2019,
https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2017/ECE_HBP_2017_7.en.pdf
27. Draft Program of Work of the Housing and Land Management Component of the Housing, Land Management and Population subprogram for 2020,
https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2019/ECE_HBP_2019_8-ENG.pdf
28. From Key Performance Indicators for Smart Sustainable Cities to Voluntary Local Review, Note by the Bureau to the Committee, 2020
29. UNDA 9th tranche project “Strengthening national capacities for sustainable housing in selected countries with economies in transition”
<https://www.unece.org/housing/unda.html>
30. Strategy for Sustainable Housing and Land Management in the UNECE region for the period of 2014-2020, <http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/Publications/sust.hsng.strategy.pdf>
31. Geneva Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development,
http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/documents/2017/ECE_HBP_2017_1.en.pdf
32. UNECE Evaluation Policy,
https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/press/pr2014/UNECE_Evaluation_Policy_October_2014.pdf
33. Mission report Georgia/Armenia, D. CARRIERO, 2017
34. Mission report Ukraine, D. CARRIERO, Sept. 2017
35. Mission report Ukraine, D. CARRIERO, Dec. 2017
36. Mission report Ukraine, D. CARRIERO, 2018
37. Mission report Ukraine, 5 UNECE experts, 2018
38. Mission report, Kyrgyzstan, G.ROLL, 2016
39. Mission report, Albania, G.ROLL, 2019
40. Mission report Ukraine, G.ROLL, 2019
41. Mission report, Kyrgyzstan, G.ROLL, 2019
42. Mission report, Kyrgyzstan, G.ROLL, 2018
43. Mission report, Ukraine, G.ROLL, 2018
44. Mission report, Ukraine, G.ROLL, 2018
45. Mission report, Albania, A.KHARADJOVA, 2016
46. Project Annual Progress Report, 2016
47. Project Annual Progress Report, 2017
48. Project Annual Progress Report, 2018
49. Project Annual Progress Report, 2019
50. PowerPoint: The role of UNECE and the Key Performance Indicators for Smart and Sustainable Cities in improving smart and sustainable urban development
51. Challenges and Priorities in Housing and Urban Development in the UNECE Region – Short National Reports, 2015, UNECE

Annex 3: Evaluation questionnaire

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF THE UNDA 10th TRANCHE PROJECT” EVIDENCE-BASED POLICIES FOR SUSTAINABLE HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN SELECTED COUNTRIES WITH ECONOMIES IN TRANSITION”

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS (KII):

Prepared by Dusan ZUPKA, UNECE independent consultant and evaluator, in cooperation with the UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit

Note to the key informants:

This evaluation is carried out in relation to the project UNDA 10th tranche project “Evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in selected countries with economies in transition” (further Project) which is being implemented since 2016 until now in six pilot countries (Albania, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine). The project is coordinated by the UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit in Geneva.

The primary purpose of the evaluation is to assess the extent to which the objectives of the project were achieved.

This evaluation will assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the Project in supporting pilot countries in strengthening their national capacities to collect data on housing, urban development and land administration, as well as, in strengthening national technical capacity of relevant government agencies in beneficiary countries in the UNECE region to develop evidence-based policies on housing, urban development and land administration.

The data and information collected from the responses to this questionnaire during KIIs will be used to analyze and assess the full Project implementation during the period of June 2016-December 2020. The evaluation is commissioned by the UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit. The evaluation will also assess how gender considerations were included in the process and it will make recommendations on how gender can be included better in the future similar processes.

The implications of the COVID-19 pandemic will also be assessed on how it impacted the project activities. The analysis, findings, conclusions and recommendations based on information collected through KIIs will be presented in an independent evaluation report.

The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the UNECE Evaluation Policy. A desk review of all relevant documents has been carried out in the first instance, followed by in-depth in person and SKYPE- based KIIs.

The list of respondents to the questionnaire will be given in the Annex to the evaluation report, but the information provided by them will be treated as confidential.

Personal data and contact details of the respondent: 10/9/2020

Family name:

First name:

Full name of institution where you work:

Your present position:

Your e-mail: Your SKYPE address or WhatsApp:

Relevance

1. To what extent did the Project respond to the priorities and needs of the beneficiary countries to develop evidence-based housing and urban development policies? Was the Project design appropriate?

Highly.....

Partially.....

Little.....

Not relevant at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE IN WRITING:

2. To what extent were the activities consistent with the global and regional priorities and the program of work of the UNECE? What value has UNECE's efforts added in this area? How relevant were the Project activities in the way of achieving the SDGs?

Highly.....

Partially.....

Little.....

Not relevant at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE IN WRITING:

3. How relevant was the Project to the target groups' needs and priorities? Was there a focus on the most vulnerable groups (in relation to housing, for instance, for those requiring social or municipal housing etc.)?

Highly.....

Partially.....

Little.....

Not relevant at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE IN WRITING:

4. Did the Project apply gender, rights-based and disability inclusion approaches in the design, implementation and results of activities?

Highly.....

Partially.....

Little.....

Not relevant at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE IN WRITING:

5. How relevant were the activities organized in response to the Covid-19 pandemic?

Highly.....

Partially.....
Little.....
Not relevant at all.....
EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE IN WRITING:

Coherence

6. How coherent was the collaboration with other entities of the UN system and other international organizations (UN-Habitat, UNDP, other)?

Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE IN WRITING:

7. Were the activities implemented in the required sequence needed to ensure the greatest impact of the Project?

Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....

EXPLAIN IN WRITING:

8. To what extent are the outputs consistent with and relevant to the overall objective/impact and expected outcomes?

Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....

EXPLAIN IN WRITING:

9. How coherent with the initial Project design are the Covid-19 related activities added in April 2020?

Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....

EXPLAIN IN WRITING:

Effectiveness

10. Did the Project achieve the results expected during the project design in terms of planned activities and outputs?

Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE IN WRITING:

11. To what extent were the expected outcomes and overall impact/objective of the project achieved?
Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....
EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE IN WRITING:
12. What were the challenges/obstacles to achieving the activities, outputs, outcomes and overall impact? Were these challenges/obstacles addressed effectively?
Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....
EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE IN WRITING:
13. What were the specific challenges to the Covid-19 expected accomplishment and activities?
EXPLAIN IN WRITING:
14. What are the lessons learnt from the Covid-19 related activities? Could they be replicated?
EXPLAIN IN WRITING:
- Efficiency**
15. Did the Project achieve its objectives within the anticipated budget and allocation of resources?
Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....
EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE IN WRITING:
16. How could the use of resources be improved? Would you propose any alternatives to achieve the same results? If yes, which ones?
Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....
EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE IN WRITING:
17. Were the human and financial resources allocated to the Project used efficiently and commensurate to the Project results?
Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....
EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE IN WRITING:
18. Were the activities implemented according to the planned timeframe?

Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE IN WRITING:

Sustainability

19. How is the stakeholders' engagement likely to continue, be scaled up, replicated or institutionalized ?

Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE IN WRITING:

20. To what extent do the partners and beneficiaries "own" the outcomes of the work?

Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE IN WRITING:

21. To what extent is the overall impact/objective of the Project still valid? How can the activity be replicated in the UNECE region or in other regions?

Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE IN WRITING:

22. What are laws, regulations, policies and projects that have been developed so far based on the strengthening national capacities for the development of the evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development ?

EXPLAIN IN WRITING:

23. Has the Project helped to strengthen the application of gender mainstreaming principles and contribute to substantial and meaningful changes in the situation of the most vulnerable groups?

Highly.....
Partially.....
Little.....
Not at all.....

EXPLAIN YOUR CHOISE IN WRITING:

Annex 4: COVID-19 Project amendment – UNDA 10th Tranche

Project title and code	1617W. Evidence based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in selected countries with economies in transition SB-005546
Current approved closure date	31-10-2020
<p>Description of the COVID-19 issue/problem that the project intends to address</p> <p>Due to the pandemic of the COVID-19 announced worldwide, beneficiary countries of the project have closed the borders for incoming and outgoing travelers, as a quarantine measure to prevent spreading the virus in their countries. At the moment these measures are in place at least until the end of April 2020 and might be extended for a longer period.</p> <p>These measures impact the planned schedule for executing project activity 2.6. Organization of six Capacity-Development Workshops to support implementation of the guidelines on evidence-based policies.</p> <p>The activity was partially completed before the global force major has occurred, specifically:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Workshop in Grodno, Belarus was organized in December 2019 2. Workshop in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan was organized in February 2020. <p>The following planned workshops are now at risk of being postponed or cancelled:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Workshop in Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan, planned for April 2020 2. Workshop in Kiev, Ukraine planned for April 2020 3. Workshop in Tbilisi, Georgia, planned for May 2020 4. Workshop in Tirana, Albania, planned for June 2020 <p><i>Activities to be executed to address the problem(s):</i></p> <p>Short term</p> <p>In order to mitigate the delay of delivering the project outcomes we recommended to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organize the workshops for Nur-Sultan (KZ), Tbilisi (GE), and Tirana (AL) online, instead of on-the ground as was planned originally; 2. Translate the workshop materials to three local languages (Russian, Georgian and Albanian) to facilitate remote learning process. <p>Medium Term</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organize one regional workshop in Geneva on 8-9 October 2020; 2. Organize one sub-regional workshop in Kiev, Ukraine in October 2020 on the margins of the 2nd International expo Congress “Business for Smart Cities”. 	
<p>Budget for additional activities</p> <p>Additional funding will be required for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consultants, experts, editors and translators to adapt workshop materials and run the trainings in Geneva and in Kiev (~10,000 USD) - travel support for the regional and sub-regional workshops (~15,000 USD) <p>The funds will be relocated from the budget originally planned for travel of staff to beneficiary countries and other costs for organization of the workshops on the ground.</p>	

Required revisions in the budget

Budget lines to be reduced:

(115) Travel of Staff	- \$23,097.89
(015) Other Staff costs	- \$1,117.42
(125) Operating / Other costs	- \$448.94
(145) Grants and Contributions	- \$795.91
TOTAL	- \$ 25,460.16

to fund extra activities in the budget lines:

(105) Consultants Experts (including travel)	+ \$9,032.61
(120) Contractual Services	+ \$1,345.98
(160) Travels	+ \$15,081.57
TOTAL	+ \$25,460.16

Results/outcome expected of the execution of additional activities:

Expected Accomplishment 2 (EA2): **Strengthened national technical capacity of relevant government agencies in beneficiary countries in the UNECE region to develop evidence-based policies on housing, urban development and land administration** – is fulfilled on time and in full.

In addition to the planned outcome – the training materials will be available in three more languages (on top of English): Russian, Georgian and Albanian at no overall extra cost to the project.

Annex 5 : List of interviewed stakeholders

Ms. Agata Krause, Consultant, UNECE/HLMU, Main Project Consultant and author of the evidence-based Guidelines, Geneva, Switzerland

Mr. Matteo Tarantino, Lecturer, Senior Research Associate, University of Geneva, Geneva Switzerland, Project trainer and expert

Mr. Christophe Lalande, Leader, Housing Unit, UN-HABITAT, Nairobi, Project partner

Mr. Serhii Komnatniy, Head, State Fund for Support of Youth Housing Construction, Ukraine Government Project National Focal Point, Kiev, Ukraine

Mr. Maksat Amiraev, Head, Housing Department, State Agency of Architecture, Construction and Housing, and Communal Services under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

Ms. Nino Gventsadze, Head of Spatial Planning and Construction Policy Department, Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, Georgia Government Project National Focal Point, Tbilisi, Georgia

Ms. Alena Rakava, Advisor, Economy and Foreign Economy Activity Department, Ministry of Architecture and Construction, Belarus Government Project National Focal Point, Minsk, Belarus

Ms. Doris Andoni, Director, Housing Policy, Ministry of Finance and Economy, Albania Government Project National Focal Point, Tirana, Albania

Ms. Gulnara Roll, Secretary to the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management, UNECE/HLMU, Project Manager

Note: Regretfully, Kazakhstan National Project Focal Point, as well as another 2 stakeholders have not accepted invitation for an interview in spite of several reminders.

Annex 6: DRAFT PROJECT DOCUMENT
10th TRANCHE OF THE DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Title:	1617W. Evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in selected countries with economies in transition
Start date:	June 2016
End date:	December 2019
Budget:	US\$ 499, 000
Target Countries:	Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine
Executing Entity:	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)
Co-operating Agencies within the UN system:	United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

Brief description:

Limited access of the population to affordable, healthy and energy-efficient housing and inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities is framed by the insufficient capacity of national governments to develop and implement evidence-based housing and urban development policies.

The project aim is to strengthen national capacities for the development of evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in four selected countries: Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine.

The project will assist national governments in the selected beneficiary countries by elaborating a policy paper and guidelines for the collection and analysis of the national data on housing and urban development, providing advice on the development of evidence-based policies, promoting intersectoral cooperation and building capacity on sustainable housing through the provision of advisory services, training materials, organization of workshops and online trainings.

The project will support achieving Sustainable Development Goal 11 “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”

The project will build on the current efforts of the UNECE and UN-Habitat to establish evidence based policies through the country profiles on housing and land management, the organization of the monitoring of the implementation of the Strategy for Sustainable Housing and Land Management in the UNECE region for the period of 2014-2020 (ECE/HBP/2013/3), the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing, and the UN-Habitat Global Housing Strategy.

The national stakeholders of the project are governments, including representatives of housing and urban development (key stakeholders), energy, finance, and environmental authorities in the beneficiary countries. Local authorities, private sector, academia and civil society, will be also involved in the project.

The main organizations involved in project implementation are UNECE (lead agency) and UN-Habitat (an implementing partner).

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Context

The UNECE Committee for Housing and Land Management provides a neutral platform for governments and stakeholders for dialogue and exchange of experiences and best practices with a view to promoting “the sustainable development of human settlements in the UNECE region while fostering economic and social prosperity and supporting democratic governance”¹.

Development of evidence-based national policies on housing and urban development informed by rigorously established objective is part of the Committee’s programme of work.

The UNECE Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management are country based comprehensive studies which provide evidence on the national implementation of policies on housing and urban development. These studies were developed for all 18 countries with transition economies. They form the basis for the discussions of evidence-based policies on housing and urban development in the Committee

In October 2013, the Ministerial Meeting on Housing and Land Management adopted a Strategy for Sustainable Housing and Land Management in the UNECE region for the period of 2014-2020

¹ ECE Strategy for a Sustainable Quality of Life in Human Settlements in the 21st Century, UNECE, 2001
Available at: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=10993>

(ECE/HBP/2013/3). The strategy contains specific goals and objectives on housing, urban development and land management policies to be achieved by member States by 2020.

In 2014, the Committee also agreed on the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing, a comprehensive non-legally binding document, which contains specific principles and objectives for achieving sustainable housing and urban development in the UNECE region beyond the 2020. The Geneva UN Charter was endorsed at the Commission session in April 2015. These two documents establish clear framework for the further work of the Committee on the development of capacities for evidence-based policies on housing and urban development in the member States.

The Committee has initiated monitoring of the implementation of the Strategy for Sustainable Housing and Land Management in the UNECE Region for the period of 2014-2020. In order to benchmark and measure progress in the implementation of the Strategy what was organized during the 75th Committee session and a survey of member States on the implementation of the Strategy was conducted in 2014. The survey applied the methodology elaborated by the Committee Bureau and approved by the 74th session of the Committee (ECE/HPB/2013/9). The outcome of this survey is contained in the publication “Challenges and Priorities in Housing and Urban Development in the UNECE Region”.

In 2014, the Committee initiated the preparation of a regional report to monitor the implementation of national and subnational policies on housing and urban development. The report developed in close cooperation with UN-Habitat, includes data on housing and urban development in the UNECE region and “mini-country profiles” on housing and urban development for UNECE countries. The report will be presented as a regional report to the UN Global Conference on Housing and Urban Development (HABITAT III) which will take place in October 2015 in Quito, Ecuador. The report policy recommendations will provide an input to the New Urban Agenda to be adopted by the HABITAT III. In the future such a regional report for monitoring of policies will be prepared on regular basis.

Other cooperation between the UNECE on UN-Habitat on the development of evidence based policies on housing and urban development include activities on the development of approaches to monitoring of the housing and urban development policies through the UN-Habitat Global Housing Strategy and Global Network on Sustainable Housing. The UN-Habitat Moscow and Brussels offices are also involved in the provision of experts to the UNECE capacity building events on housing and urban development in the UNECE Region.

1.2 Mandates, comparative advantage and link to the Programme Budget

The implementing entities of the project are Housing and Land Management Unit of the UNECE Forests, Land and Housing Division (UNECE); and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT). UNECE and UN-HABITAT are strategic partners on issues related to urban planning, housing and land management in the UNECE region, given their expertise and complementary mandates in these areas.

Mandates

The UNECE has a mandate² to facilitate greater economic integration and cooperation among its fifty-six Member States. The Committee on Housing and Land Management (CHLM) is the only intergovernmental body addressing the housing challenges of the UNECE region. Since its establishment in 1947, the Committee has served as a forum for exchange of best practices and providing a platform for policy formulation and implementation on sustainable housing development, land administration and spatial planning.

UN-HABITAT is the United Nations agency for human settlements. It is mandated by the UN General Assembly³ to promote socially and environmentally sustainable development of towns and cities with the goal of providing adequate shelter for all.

² E/ECE/1434/Rev.1

³ The main documents outlining the Un-Habitat mandate are the Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements, http://www.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/924_21239_The_Vancouver_Declaration.pdf; Habitat Agenda, http://www.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/1176_6455_The_Habitat_Agenda.pdf; Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements,

Comparative advantages

The two project partners (UNECE and UN-Habitat) have complementing expertise in the field of housing and urban development.

UNECE will contribute its experience in developing housing, urban development and land management policies and with its expertise in management of housing stock, urban planning, energy efficiency, land management, real estate markets and smart cities at the national level. It will also draw on its regional network of representatives of housing, urban development and land management authorities. UNECE will lead the project.

UN-Habitat will contribute its expertise in developing methodologies for data collection and development of evidence-based policies in housing and urban development, building materials and participatory planning. UN-Habitat will be also directly engaged in cooperation at the subnational level with municipalities and academia in the region.

Link to the programme budget

The project will support the expected accomplishments: of the Subprogramme 8 “Housing, Land Management and Population” of the UNECE Strategic Framework for 2016 – 2017.

The project will support the following expected accomplishments of the UN-HABITAT Subprogramme 5 (Housing and slum upgrading): (a) Development and implementation of national housing, slum upgrading and prevention strategies and programmes integrating the Global Housing Strategy vision and principles; and (b) Implementation of national housing, slum upgrading and prevention strategies and programmes at city and community level.

2.3 Country demand and beneficiary countries

Representatives of the governments of Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, and Ukraine expressed their interest in receiving assistance in developing of evidence-based national policies through the proposed project.

The UNECE Country Profile on Housing and Land Management for **Kyrgyzstan** was launched at a workshop in Bishkek on 20 February 2012⁴. At the workshop, next steps for the implementation of the Country Profile policy recommendations were discussed; participants emphasized the importance of the development of an overall framework for monitoring of the implementation of the profile policy recommendations. At this workshop, the Agency of Construction and Architecture of Kyrgyzstan requested the UNECE assistance to the development of an action plan for sustainable housing and urban development based on the policy recommendation of the Country Profile and a framework for monitoring of the action plan implementation.

The Country Profile for **Ukraine** launch event took place on 15 May 2014 in Kyiv where the Ministry of Regional Development of Ukraine discussed the profile policy recommendations and requested the UNECE assistance to the development of an action plan for sustainable housing and urban development based on the policy recommendation of the Country Profile and a framework for monitoring of the action plan implementation.

The Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of **Georgia** and the UNECE organised a joint workshop on energy efficient and affordable housing on 19 September 2013 where discussed the Country Profile policy recommendations. Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development requested the UNECE assistance to the development of an action plan for sustainable housing and urban development based on the policy recommendation of the Country Profile and a framework for monitoring of the action plan implementation.

http://www.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/2072_61331_ist-dec.pdf; and Resolution 56/206
http://www.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/2070_46506_gae.pdf.

⁴ <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=28518#/>

Albanian Housing Agency co-organised with the UNECE a national workshop on affordable and energy efficient housing in Tirana on 7-8 July 2014⁵ to discuss measures the government needs to implement to promote sustainable housing sector. The workshop included an analysis of the implementation of the Country Profile on Housing and Land Management of Albania. Albanian Housing Agency requested the UNECE assistance to the development of an action plan for sustainable housing and urban development based on the policy recommendation of the Country Profile and a framework for monitoring of the action plan implementation.

Representatives of the governments of the four countries have re-confirmed their commitment to the participation in the project in their interventions at the 75th⁶ and 76th⁷ sessions of the Committee on Housing and Land Management.

The project activities will be implemented in above mentioned four beneficiary countries which were selected based on the following criteria:

1. The beneficiary countries are countries with economies in transition, which undergo reforms in their housing sectors. These are among the poorest countries in the region;
2. UNECE has already developed country profiles on housing and land management, which include comprehensive analysis of housing and urban development sector in these countries.⁸ The governments of these countries expressed their firm commitment to the implementation of the project activities and project recommendations for policy reforms;
3. The selected countries represent four different UNECE sub-regions – Eastern Europe (Ukraine), Caucasus (Georgia), South-Eastern Europe (Albania), and Central Asia (Kyrgyzstan). A wide geographical coverage will facilitate the transfer of knowledge and regional cooperation and contribute to the sustainability of the project;
4. These countries with transition economies have not yet benefited from other UNDA projects on housing and urban development.

2.4 Link to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The project will support achieving Sustainable Development Goal 11 –“Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” and more specifically the following targets:

Target 11.1: “By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums”;

Target 11.3: “By 2030, enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries”;

Target 11.4: “Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage”;

Target 11.5: “By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations”;

Target 11.6: “By 2030, reduce the adverse per capita environmental impact of cities, including by paying special attention to air quality and municipal and other waste management”;

⁵ <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=35997#/>

⁶ <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=35435#/>

⁷ <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=39359#/>

⁸ Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management: Ukraine, 2013, available at:

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=35105>

Country Profiles on the Housing Sector: Kyrgyzstan, 2010, available at:

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=11055>

Country Profiles on the Housing Sector: Georgia, 2007, available at: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=36294>

Country Profiles on the Housing Sector: Albania, 2002, available at: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=36274>

Target 11.7: “By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities”;

Target 11.a: “Support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning”;

Target 11.b: “By 2020, substantially increase the number of cities and human settlements adopting and implementing integrated policies and plans towards inclusion, resource efficiency, mitigation and adaptation to climate change, resilience to disasters, and develop and implement, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, holistic disaster risk management at all levels”;

Target 11.c: “Support least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials”.

3. ANALYSIS

3.1 Problem analysis

Since the financial and economic crisis of 2008, countries across the UNECE region have been increased in need for affordable housing and reduced availability of funds to meet these needs. The 2008 crisis has made middle-income households in marked need for social housing. At least 100 million low- and middle-income people in the UNECE region are housing-cost overburdened: they spend more than 40% of their disposable income on accommodation. Considering the limited housing supply and the sharp drop in new housing starts and completion since 2008, the ensuring of the quality of the existing stock and establishing energy efficiency standards for new stock are increasingly important.⁹ So far, governments from these countries have not been able to elaborate working financial mechanisms to support inhabitants in obtaining credits, which would allow them to afford housing.

Apart from affordability, housing sector in the region is challenged by decreasing standards of living. Due to the rapid and widespread privatization since 1989 the housing sector was not supported by the adequate measures to ensure communal management and the maintenance of buildings. Regularization of the management structure for multi-family housing blocks in the form of homeowner associations or professional management through a private company was not fully implemented. The poor management of the housing resulted in the downgrading of the housing infrastructure and lowering levels of energy efficiency.

On a city level, housing sector is affected by the absence of city planning based on principles of compact, resilient spatial development. As a result, municipal infrastructure is becoming rapidly outdated, informal settlements are growing, and the human settlements are prone to, and suffer from natural disasters such as floods and landslides.

Limited access of the population to affordable, healthy and energy-efficient housing and inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities is underlined by the insufficient capacity of national governments to develop and implement evidence-based housing and urban development policies.

Due to the history of the strictly sectoral management of economy in these countries and the history of central planning systems, the governments lack the expertise in developing evidence-based policies on housing and urban development. Since housing is a component of both social and economic policies, the importance of dialoguing housing issues in an interdisciplinary manner is a requirement for obtaining positive result in improving housing sector. However, in the selected countries the policy

⁹ UNECE report “Social Housing in the UNECE Region: Models, Trends and Challenges”, <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=40586>

coordination between various stakeholders at the national and subnational levels is not institutionalised.

Countries with economies in transition need assistance in developing their capacities for evidence based policies, including collection and analysis of data.

Development of these capacities is especially important in order to promote effective implementation of the post-2015 development agenda, which stresses the importance of strong monitoring and accountability systems, to ensure the long-term sustainability of the implementation of policies.

The project will support developing necessary capacities for addressing the above-mentioned challenges in housing and urban development.

The project will build on the experiences and achievements of the UNDA 9th tranche project “Strengthening national capacities for sustainable housing and urban development in countries with economies in transition”¹⁰, which supports sustainable housing in four selected countries with economies in transition (Armenia, Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Tajikistan). The project has elaborated a methodology of the development and adoption of national action plans for sustainable housing and urban development and gained experiences in assisting national governments in the formulation and implementation of relevant policies which support the implementation of national action plans. In the 10th tranche project, the methodology of the development of the national action plans will be further developed to ensure the countries’ national action plans reflect and promote evidence-based policies in housing, urban development and land management.

3.2 Country level problem analysis

Table 1 – Country analysis

Country	Status of affairs	Realistic outcomes
Albania	<p>There is a lack of legislation that lays down government responsibilities in housing and urban development.</p> <p>The reform process in the country has emphasized decentralisation and local autonomy. At the same time, the central government has shifted the conflict in housing and urban development to the local level. Non-governmental and international organisations are at the early stage of their development in the country and require support to become impactful stakeholders.</p>	<p>Identifying priorities for the evidence-based housing and urban development policies and promoting dialogue that would involve public authorities and representatives of stakeholders from private sector and civil society.</p>
Georgia	<p>Comprehensive urban planning has not been applied after the independence of Georgia. Legislation is sporadic and incomplete. New master plans for most cities of Georgia have not been elaborated or approved</p> <p>A major part of the existing housing stock requires basic reconstruction of the main building structures. After privatization, new homeowners had no experience or resources to fulfil the obligations and responsibilities with regard to the</p>	<p>Assistance in elaborating methodology for collecting the data for the evidence-based policies to be applied for development of city plans based on principles of compactness, mixed use, resilience.</p> <p>Stimulation the policy coordination between various stakeholders at the national and subnational levels.</p>

¹⁰ <http://www.unece.org/housing/unda.html>

	management and maintenance of the building and its facilities, especially in multi-family housing units. This led to a severe neglect of management and maintenance, and to a further deterioration in the quality of the housing stock.	
Kyrgyzstan	<p>The formation of informal settlements has been fuelled by internal migration from Southern Kyrgyzstan to big cities. Bishkek's informal settlements make up one-fifth of the city's total population. Novostroiki are situated on land formerly used for agriculture. Houses in novostroiki are built using waste building material, and infrastructure is inadequate. Some local authorities cooperate with donor countries and organizations to provide at least some basic infrastructure. Nevertheless, informal settlements contribute to urban sprawl and inflate public expenses. Some alternative solutions to infrastructural projects have been suggested, including a long-term urban planning mechanism, which would consider the provision of affordable housing supported by funding from international organizations. Upgrading of dwellings in novostroiki represents another option.</p>	Strengthen national capacity by providing benchmarking and best-practices in dealing with informal settlements and coordinating the work of international organisations in the respective area.
Ukraine	<p>Ukraine legal and institutional frameworks and housing policies have to address challenges such as poor housing conditions, high percentage of housing stock requiring major repairs, and uneven housing availability. In Ukraine, there is confusion and an ambiguous environment in housing legislation. The structure of the executive bodies (implementing agencies) dealing with housing policy has been reorganized several times during the last 20 years. There are no official records of housing needs in the country; the analysis are based either on what is contained in the housing waiting list or on an investigation of housing conditions and allocations. The government is planning to launch a Unified State Register of Citizens Needing Improvement in their Housing Conditions. The register will serve as an important instrument to support national housing initiatives.</p>	Assistance in improving regulatory and administrative frameworks, strengthening capacity for the development and implementation of the evidence-based housing and urban development policies.

3.3 Stakeholder analysis and capacity assessment

The competencies of the federal/national governments include formulating policies and legislation, establishing norms and standards and providing finance and subsidies for housing. National governments have shared responsibilities with regional and local governments as well as with the private sector for providing social or affordable housing, offering loans for housing purposes, setting urban regulations, approving urban plans, and investing in urban infrastructure.

Local governments are at the fore front of policy implementation. The management of the housing and urban planning issues is in the hands of local governments, who are responsible for the following: providing and managing urban infrastructure; managing public land for housing purposes, providing social housing and their management; managing the territory by setting sectoral urban regulations, approving urban plans and enforcing regulations; managing waiting lists for social housing; and delivering capacity-building programmes. Local governments also have shared roles with national governments primarily in providing subsidies for housing and with the private sector in condominium management.

Private sector has also a critical role in providing loans for housing and management services for condominiums. To a certain extent, it is also engaged in investments in urban infrastructure, water and sanitation, which shows a trend towards public-private partnerships, most probably implemented through concessions. In some countries, the private sector is also involved in the management of social housing. Non-for-profit organizations play an important role in providing management services for social housing or condominiums and in social housing and capacity-building.

Table 2 – Stakeholder Analysis

Non UN Stakeholder	Type and level of involvement in the project	Capacity assets	Capacity gaps	Desired future outcomes	Incentives
National housing authorities (Ministries and national agencies for housing (lead agencies in the project), finance, energy, environment , economic development)	Responsible for formulating policies and legislation, establishing norms and standards and providing subsidies for housing	The national authorities have mandates to develop and implement related policies.	There are no sufficient capacities for the development and implementation of housing policies. Weak or lack of the coordination between sectoral agencies	Strengthened capacities to the development of legal and institutional framework, strategic planning and intersectoral coordination	To benefit from benchmarking and international best-practices
Private sector: condominium management associations	Shared responsibilities with national and local governments for providing social or affordable	Practical experience in managing housing	If appropriate laws are not adopted by the national governments, it is difficult for the private sector to be involved in managing housing	With the improved legal and institutional framework at national level, the private sector will be involved more	To be involved into the implementation phase of the policies

	housing			effectively	
Private sector: banks	Shared responsibilities with national and local governments for offering loans for housing purposes, and investing in urban infrastructure	Knowledge of housing financial and institutional framework s, especially the areas needed to be improved. Availability of funds to participate in state subsidised mortgage schemes, etc.	Lack of government support in terms of providing the required framework/developing necessary policies	Provision of tailored services to the population in need of social or affordable housing	To be involved into the development and the implementation phases of the policies
Local authorities	Management of housing and urban planning; share roles with national governments in providing subsidies for housing and with the private sector in condominium management	Resources: local taxes, strong knowledge of the local housing situation and local stakeholders	Lack of budgets for support of housing projects; lack of capacity for providing input to national governments for the development of the legal and institutional frameworks for housing	Stronger cooperation with national authorities on the development and implementation of housing policies. Increased capacities for the policy development	To be more involved into the central decision-making process
Non-governmental organizations	Play a role in providing management services for social housing or condominiums and in providing social housing and capacity-building	Resources: close cooperation with owners of apartments, knowledge of local situation	Weak financial basis	Through more active cooperation with national authorities, which will be established within the project, higher potential for effective housing management	To increase the profile in the country, to establish a close cooperation with governmental representatives

4. PROJECT STRATEGY: OBJECTIVE, EXPECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS, INDICATORS, MAIN ACTIVITIES

4.1. Project Strategy

The project objective is to strengthen national capacities for the development of evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development of four selected countries: Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine. The project will assist national governments in the selected beneficiary countries by elaborating a policy paper and guidelines for the collection and analysis of the national data on housing and urban development, providing advice on the development of evidence-based policies, promoting intersectoral cooperation and building capacity on sustainable housing through the provision of advisory services, training materials, organization of workshops and online trainings.

The project will build on the current efforts of the UNECE and UN-Habitat to establish evidence based policies through the country profiles on housing and land management, the organization of the monitoring of the implementation of the Strategy and the Charter and the Global Housing Strategy. It will support the four countries in raising their capacity for regular work on evidence based policies (since country profiles are prepared approximately once in ten years).

The project will start with the assessment of needs of the countries through the organisation of four advisory missions (one in each country). Further a policy paper and guidelines for data collection will be prepared; these documents will be based on the SDG indicators, which will be officially adopted by the UN in March 2016, prior to the start of the project. The policy paper and the guidelines will be developed by also taking into account the UNECE/ITU Smart Sustainable Indicators¹¹ as adopted by the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management. The guidelines will be tailored to the needs of the countries as identified during the advisory missions.

The guidelines will be discussed at national validation workshops and finalised. The UNECE/UN-Habitat will then work with the governments to implement the guidelines on data collection and on the development of evidence based policies; this will be done through the organisation of advisory missions and over e-mail and telephone.

Training materials on the data collection and on the development of evidence-based policies will be prepared; one training per country will be organised. In addition, online trainings will be also held. This will allow including a wider group of stakeholders in the four selected countries as well as governments representatives and experts from other UNECE countries.

A draft project report with analysis of lessons learned, best practices and recommendations for the future will be prepared. It will be discussed at the final regional workshop and finalised after the discussion. Organisation of the regional workshop will also facilitate disseminating the information on the project and best practices to other countries in the UNECE Region.

Another important strategic area of this project is promoting intersectoral cooperation at the national level. At the beginning of the project, the governments will be requested to establish national intersectoral steering committees, which will consist of senior officials from different national ministries and agencies (housing, regional development, migration, social policy, finances, environment, etc.) as well as representatives of municipalities and NGOs. Lead partners (line ministries) or agencies for housing, will establish these steering committees. A minister or a deputy minister of the lead partners (ministry of housing) will chair the steering committees. The steering committees will be engaged regularly in the development of the policy documents and in the discussion of policy implementation.

¹¹ <http://www.unece.org/housing/smartcities.html>

4.2. Logical Framework

Table 3 – Logical Framework

<u>Intervention logic</u>	<u>Indicators</u>	<u>Means of verification</u>
Objective to strengthen national capacity to develop evidence-based policies to achieve inclusive and sustainable housing and urban development in four selected countries with transition economies in the UNECE region; and to support the realization of the achievement of SDG 11		
EA1 Strengthened national capacity of beneficiary countries to collect data on housing, urban development and land administration	IA 1.2 80% of trained beneficiaries confirm an increased capacity to collect data on housing, urban development and land administration.	The access to the survey of beneficiaries
	IA1.3 All project countries have established a government-led Steering Committees.	Reports on meetings of the Steering Committees
Main activity A1.1 Conduct four advisory missions to discuss with the countries approaches and technical tools for the collection of data on housing, urban development and land administration relevant to sustainable development and human settlements in the four beneficiary countries. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional: Kyrgyz, Georgian and Albanian representatives have attended the meeting of the project coordinators in Geneva in September 2016 Additional: On 10 November 2017, representatives of national authorities from the four countries attended the final workshop of the UNDA 9th tranche project workshop. Information is available in http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=47552 and? The advisory missions will also facilitate the establishment of government led intersectoral steering committees (i.e., with participation of senior officials representing different ministries, including of economic, environment, justice, etc.). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instead of establishing own Steering Committees for the project, the project will be linked to the SDG national interagency commissions established in each country The advisory missions will be conducted by UNECE and UN-Habitat staff. An advisory mission will consist of bilateral meetings with a partner government body (Ministry) representatives (preferably high-level officials) and with key stakeholders (depending on a country). The information collected during advisory missions will be used to identify the necessities and priorities in trainings in a country. The collected information will serve as a basis for developing a policy paper (A1.2).		
A1.2 Develop a policy paper with the methodology for data collection on housing, urban development and land administration relevant to the post-2015 Agenda on cities and human settlements and country specific guidelines for the countries. The policy paper will be prepared by UN-Habitat consultants. This paper will provide <u>international guidance</u> on collecting the data and will serve as a reference for evaluating the quality of the statistics collected by the participating countries (IA 1.1).		

<p>A1.3 Organize four (one per a beneficiary country) national validation workshops to elaborate the <u>national guidelines</u> for the data collection to monitor the implementation of policies on housing, urban development and land administration. After the workshops, these national guidelines will be further adopted as official governmental documents (such as orders by the ministers) by the respective responsible authorities in the four countries: Housing Agency of Albania, Ministry of Economy and Urban Development of Georgia, Agency for Construction and Architecture of Kyrgyzstan and Ministry of Regional Development of Ukraine. Workshops will be co-organised by participating agencies (UNECE and UN-Habitat) and national governments. Each workshop will be for approximately 60 participants, including national government representatives and key stakeholders.</p>		
<p>A1.4 Advisory missions to four countries to meet with the government officials and technical experts involved in the data collection to provide policy advice on the actual data collection and the implementation of the national guidelines for the data collection. The advisory missions will assist in the implementation of the adopted national guidelines for the data collection, including the development of the future steps needed to undertake for improving the process of data collection in each country, which will be later used for developing evidence-based policies. The Project will further support the beneficiary countries through no cost support from the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management, additional advisory services and capacity building funded from other sources, including extra-budgetary resources.</p> <p>The experience of the implementation of the UNDA 9th tranche project demonstrated the advisory missions, which include bilateral meetings with high-level government representatives and donor organisations are the most efficient tool for the project implementation. They allow promoting most effectively the political commitment by the governments to the developed measures, strategies and instruments (development of laws, concepts, other relevant activities).</p>		
<p>EA 2 Strengthened national technical capacity of relevant government agencies in beneficiary countries in the UNECE region to develop evidence-based policies on housing, urban development and land administration</p>	<p>IA 2.1 Two specific evidence-based policies (laws, regulations) on housing, urban development and land administration developed in each selected country.</p>	<p>The policy paper which describes the policies.</p>
<p>A 2.1 Prepare training materials in English and Russian on the development of evidence based sustainable urban development policies. Training materials will be developed by UN-Habitat consultants and will include a concept paper, power point presentations and hand-outs to be distributed during trainings in each participating country.</p>		
<p>A 2.2 Organize four (one per a beneficiary country) national training workshops to support the development of evidence-based sustainable housing and urban development policies. Workshops will be co-organised by participating agencies (UNECE and UN-Habitat) and national governments. Each workshop will be for approximately 60 participants, including national government representatives and key stakeholders. The workshops will focus on providing trainings using tailored training materials (A 2.1). The outcome of these workshops (in combination with A 2.3) will be the development of specific evidence-based policies (laws, regulations) on housing, urban development and land administration in each selected country (IA 2.1).</p>		

A 2.3

Advisory missions of UNECE and UN-Habitat staff to the countries to assist in further adoption of evidence-based policies on housing, urban development and land administration. The advisory missions will be undertaken with active engagement of the established Steering Committees and will include bilateral meetings with government officials and key stakeholders.

The experience of the implementation of the UNDA 9th tranche project demonstrated the advisory missions, which include bilateral meetings with high-level government representatives and donor organisations are the most efficient tool for the project implementation. They allow to promote most effectively the political commitment by the governments to the developed measures, strategies and instruments (development of laws, concepts, other relevant activities).

A 2.4

Prepare the project report containing regional guidelines for the development of evidence-based policies. The project report will be in a form of an e-publication with best practices and lessons learned from the participating countries on developing evidence-based policies. This publication will benefit other UNECE member States and the countries beyond the UNECE region. The paper will be developed by the UN-Habitat consultants.

A 2.5

Organize one regional meeting for UNECE member States to share lessons learned on the development of the methodology of the data collection and support to the related sustainable housing and urban development policies. The project report and the regional guidelines will be presented and discussed at this regional meeting with all interested UNECE member-States. This meeting will be organised in Geneva, Switzerland. It will consist of approximately 100 participants. The aim of the meeting will be to share countries experiences in participating in the project and developing evidence-based policies that could be beneficial to also non-participating countries, presented at the meeting. The meeting will also launch “a community of practice”, an informal platform of experts in the UNECE region on evidence-based policies who will continue sharing and discussing together their practices and experiences beyond the project, for instance, regularly over email and regular thematic meetings and annually at the Committee on Housing and Land Management sessions. Establishment of such a platform will support moving the agenda forward also after the end of the project.

4.3 Risk and mitigation actions

Table 4 – Risks and mitigation actions

Risks	Mitigating Actions
The governments are not committed to the data collection.	The risk will be mitigated by requesting the governments to explicitly state their interest to fulfil this activity.
The governments are not willing to engage in the interministerial coordination to develop the policies.	The risk will be mitigated by requesting governments to establish the interministerial project Steering Committees.
The slow implementation of activities due to the low capacity of national governments and local experts in some of the countries	The risk will be mitigated by a careful advance planning of activities in close cooperation with the governments and allocating sufficient time for implementation.

4.4 Sustainability

The project will support the ongoing work of the governments in accordance with the political priorities established by the governments. This will guarantee long-term sustainability of the project results.

The capacity of national governments, which will be developed within the project, will also be an important factor of the long-term sustainability of the project outcomes. The Project will further support the beneficiary countries through no cost support from the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management, additional advisory services and capacity building funded from other sources, including extra-budgetary resources.

5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

A questionnaire will be developed by a project manager to evaluate the impact, effectiveness and long-term sustainability of the project activities. The questionnaire will be circulated regularly, after each workshop in the beneficiary countries, to representatives of the governments and stakeholders who will attend the workshops. The project manager based on the questionnaire will prepare short reports therefore.

In addition, an external consultant will be hired to conduct external evaluation of the project. He or she will conduct telephone and Skype interviews with key project stakeholders, conduct desk research. Based on the information collected he or she will prepare the project evaluation report.

6. MANAGEMENT AND COORDINATION AGREEMENTS

Two agencies have complimenting thematic expertise. Both agencies are members of the Global Network for Sustainable Housing, which UN-Habitat initiated in 2011.

The UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit will lead the project. The project will be implemented in partnership with UN-Habitat and through partnerships in the region, drawing on the existing regional networks.¹²

The responsibilities of the UNECE will include coordination of activities with the governments on the topics related to UNECE expertise, organisation of workshops and provision of trainers for these workshops, support with the development of evidence based policies.

UN-Habitat will be responsible to elaborate the methodology for the policy paper and guidelines for the collection of data and development of evidence based policies as well as to provide trainers for the workshops.

¹² Relevant ministries responsible for housing and energy, Heads of delegation to the UNECE Housing and Land Management Committee, the UNECE network of experts on energy efficiency in buildings, EU Energy Community Secretariat, etc.

ANNEX 1: RESULT-BASED WORK PLAN AND BUDGET DETAILS

Table A1. – Results based work plan and budget

EA	Activity #	Timeframe by activity		Budget class and Code		Amount (USD)
		Year (Y1, Y2, Y3, Y4)	Quarter (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4)			
EA1	A1.1	2016,2017	2016: Q3, Q4 2017: Q1, Q2	Travel of Staff	115	\$ 20,000
				Consultants and experts	105	\$ 15,000
	A1.2	2017	Q3, Q4	Contractual Services	120	\$ 18,500
				General Operating expenses	125	\$ 8,500
				Consultants and experts	105	\$ 15,000
	A1.3	2017, 2018	2017: Q4 2018: Q1,Q2	General Temporary Assistance	015	\$ 10,000
				Consultants and experts	105	\$ 40,000
				Travel of Staff	115	\$ 20,000
				Contractual Services	120	\$ 48,000
	A1.4	2019	Q2, Q3	Travel of Staff	115	\$ 20,000
EA 2	A2.1	2017	Q3, Q4	Consultants and experts	105	\$ 15,000
				Contractual Services	120	\$ 20,000
	A2.2	2017, 2018	2017: Q3,Q4 2018: Q1,Q2	Consultants and experts	105	\$ 40,000
				Travel of Staff	115	\$ 20,000
				Contractual Services		\$ 48,000
				General Temporary Assistance	015	\$ 10,000
	A2.3	2018	Q3, Q4	Consultants and experts	105	\$10,000
				Travel of Staff	115	\$ 10,000
	A2.4	2019	Q1	Consultants	105	\$ 3,000

				and experts		
				Contractual Services	120	\$ 15,000
				General Operating expenses	125	\$ 10,000
	A2.5	2019	Q2	General Temporal Assistance	015	\$ 5,000
				Consultants and experts	105	\$ 17,500
				Contractual Services	105	\$ 18,000
				Travel of Staff	115	\$ 2,500
				Grants and Contributions (workshops)	145	\$ 30,000
	External Evaluation				105	\$ 10,000

ANNEX 2: DETAILED JUSTIFICATION BY CODE

General Temporary Assistance = US\$ 25,000 (5%)

Temporary assistance in the implementation of the project in support of activities A1.3., A2.2. and A.2.5 (5 work months x \$5,000 per work month). The support will be provided to the organization of the national workshops and the regional conference.

Consultants (provide separate breakdown by national/regional consultants and international consultants = US\$ 165,500 (33%))

(a) *International consultants fees = US\$ 113,000*

-International consultants at UNECE for the tasks of the substantive preparation of advisory missions in support of activity A.1.1 (3 months x \$5,000 per month), organisation of four validation workshops in support of activity A.1.3 (4 months x \$5,000 per month), organisation of four national training workshops in support of activity A.2.2 (4 months x \$5,000 per month), and regional conference in support of activity A.2.5 (3 months x \$5,000 per month) = \$70,000.

- International consultants at UN-Habitat for elaboration of a policy paper and guidelines for data collection in support of activity A1.2 (3 months x \$5,000 per month), development of training materials in support of activity A.2.1 (3 months x \$5,000 per month), and project report in support of activity A.2.4 (1 month x \$3,000 per month) = \$33,000

- In support of the evaluation of the project: Consultant to evaluate the project = \$10,000.

(b) *National / Regional consultants = US\$ 20,000*

- Four national consultants to support advisory missions, preparation of guidelines, organization of validation workshops, and organisation of national training workshops, in support of activities A1.3, A2.2 (4 consultants x 2 month x \$2,500 per month) = \$20,000

(c) *Consultants' travel = US\$ 32,500*

- (13 missions) by international consultants for the purpose of travelling to workshops in Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine in support of activities A1.3 (4 missions), A2.2 (4 missions), A2.3 (4 advisory missions) and A.2.5 regional conference in Geneva (1 mission). \$2,500 average mission cost x 13 missions = \$32,500

Contractual services = US\$ 167,500 (34%)

(a) A provision of \$18,500 is required for editing and translation Russian-English of the policy paper and guidelines in support of activity A.1.2: 2 contracts, \$9,250 cost of each.

(b) A provision of \$20,000 is required for editing, translation Russian-English training materials; preparation of promotional materials for training in support of activity A.2.1: 4 contracts, \$5,000 cost of each.

(c) A provision of \$15,000 is required for editing, translation Russian-English of the project report in support of activity A.2.4: 2 contracts, \$7,500 cost of each.

(d) A provision of 48,000 is required for the venue rental, catering, simultaneous interpretation and other operational costs related to the organization of the four national validation workshops in Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine in support of activity A.1.3. Duration of each workshop: 2 days; \$12,000 per workshop x 4 workshops = \$48,000.

(e) A provision of 48,000 is required for the venue rental, catering, simultaneous interpretation and other operational costs related to the organization of the four national training workshops in Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine in support of activity A.2.2. Duration of each workshop: 2 days; \$12,000 per workshop x 4 workshops = \$48,000.

- (f) A provision of 18,000 is required for the catering and miscellaneous costs related to the organization of the regional workshop in support of activity A.2.5. Duration of the workshop: 2 days. Conference room rent and interpretation is in-kind from the UNECE.

Travel of Staff = US\$ 92,500 (18%)

(a) UN Staff from the implementing entity

20 missions by one UNECE staff for the purpose of providing advisory services in Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, in support of activities A1.1 (4 missions), participating in the validation workshops in Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, in support of activities A1.3 (4 missions), travelling to advisory missions to Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine in support of activity A1.4 (4 missions), travelling to advisory missions to Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine in support of activity A2.3 (4 missions), travelling to training workshops in support of activity A2.2 (4 missions).

$(\$2,500 \text{ average mission cost}) \times (20 \text{ missions}) = \$50,000$

(b) Staff from other UN entities collaborating in project

17 missions by one UN-Habitat staff for the purpose of providing advisory services in Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine in support of activities A1.1 (4 missions), participating in the validation workshops in Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, in support of activities A1.3 (4 missions), travelling to advisory missions to Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine in support of activity A1.4 (4 missions), travelling to training workshops in support of activity A2.2 (4 missions) and to the regional conference in Geneva (1 mission) – activity 2.5.

$(\$2,500 \text{ average mission cost}) \times (17 \text{ missions}) = \$42,500$

General operating expenses = US\$ 18,500 (4%)

(a) Printing guidelines

In support of activities A1.2 = \$8,500.

(b) Publishing project report

In support of activities A2.4 = \$10,000.

Grants and Contributions = US\$ 30,000 (6%)

(a) One regional concluding workshop in Geneva, Switzerland for the UNECE region in support of activity A.2.5. Duration of the workshop: 2 days. Total 100 participants, out of which 80 cover their travel themselves and the project provides funds to travel of 12 participants, including tickets and DSA: $\$2,500 \text{ per participant} \times 12 \text{ participants} \times 1 \text{ workshop} = \$30,000$.