



Economic Commission for Europe**Committee on Sustainable Energy****Thirty-first session**

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Item 9 (a) of the provisional agenda

Technical assistance, regional outreach and collaboration activities:**Regional advisory services and collaboration activities****Report on regional advisory services in sustainable energy****Note by the secretariat****I. Introduction**

1. The regional advisory services in sustainable energy are provided in accordance with the Guidelines of the Regular Programme for Technical Cooperation (RPTC). The programme objective, in the context of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) region, is to support, through the transfer of knowledge and expertise, countries with economies in transition in their efforts to develop the capacity to achieve internationally agreed development goals and the outcomes of United Nations conferences and summits. There are 17 ECE member States¹ eligible to receive regional advisory services. In this context, technical cooperation is a core component of ECE's support to member States for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The regional advisory services complement and reinforce the regular and extrabudgetary programmes.

2. A description of operational activities under the regional advisory services is provided in the document "Report on regional advisory services in sustainable energy" (ECE/ENERGY/2018/9) presented to the Committee on Sustainable Energy at its twenty-seventh session in September 2017.

3. The regional advisory services are in line with the Draft programme of work of the sustainable energy subprogramme for 2022 (ECE/ENERGY/2021/1)² and support the work of the subsidiary bodies of the Committee on Sustainable Energy. The Regional Adviser works in close cooperation with colleagues in the Sustainable Energy Division, other ECE Divisions, other UN Regional Commissions, UN Resident Coordinator Offices (RCOs) in eligible ECE member States, organizations of the UN system, and international and national organizations in support of needs of countries eligible for technical cooperation activities based on demand expressed by countries.

¹ Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro, Republic of Moldova, Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan.

² <https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/Committee-on-Sustainable-Energy/events/356897/>



4. During the period under review (September 2021 - September 2022), technical assistance was provided to countries of South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Specifically, the Regional Adviser managed the following projects:

(a) United Nations Development Account (UNDA) project “Integrated energy and water resource management in support of sustainable development in South-East Europe and Central Asia,”³ in cooperation with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), in which ECE is the lead agency (completed in December 2021);

(b) UNDA project “Global Initiative towards post-COVID-19 resurgence of the micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) sector,”⁴ in which the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) are the lead agencies and ECE is one of the participating agencies (completed in June 2022);

(c) Extrabudgetary project “Enhancing national capacities to develop and implement energy efficiency standards for buildings in the ECE region”⁵ (completed in March 2022);

(d) UNDA project “Strengthening energy policies of Countries with Special Needs to build back better from COVID-19,” in which ESCAP is the lead agency and ECE is an implementing entity (started in January 2022);

(e) Joint Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Fund project “Green Finance Facility to improve air quality and combat climate change in North Macedonia,” in which the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Office in North Macedonia is the lead agency and ECE is one of the Participating UN Organizations (PUNO) (started in April 2022); the ECE portion of the project has the title “Improving national capacity on renewable energy (RE) and energy efficiency (EE) technologies for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and households in North Macedonia” (started in June 2022).

5. The provision of regional advisory services in the period under review continues to be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and by the consequences of the ongoing geopolitical crises in the ECE region. Advisory missions to countries and in-person capacity-building workshops are becoming possible, and several such activities were undertaken in the period under review. Innovative ways to provide regional advisory services that proved effective and efficient in the last two years continue to be used and explored further. Capacity-building workshops and training courses were organized mostly in a hybrid format and proved to be an effective way for knowledge sharing. Engaging consultants for studies requested by eligible countries was given priority.

II. Key regional advisory services (September 2021 - September 2022)

6. Outreach and engaging partners have been a focus of efforts of the Regional Adviser in the period under review. Internally at ECE, the Environment Division, the Forests, Land and Housing Division, the Sustainable Transport Division, and the Economic Cooperation and Trade Division were the main partners for joint activities. Externally, it was possible to leverage limited RPTC funds by working actively with and attracting in-kind and/or financial contributions from the following: ESCAP, ESCWA, UNDP, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UNEP Copenhagen Climate Centre (UNEP-CCC, former UNEP-Technical University of Denmark (DTU) Partnership), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), Passive House Institute (PHI), Institute for Energy Efficiency in Production (EEP),

³ <https://unece.org/integrated-energy-and-water-resource-management-project-0>

⁴ <https://unece.org/sustainable-energy/regional-advisory-services/un-development-account-project>

⁵ <https://unece.org/sustainable-energy/regional-advisory-services/about-project>

Green Building Alliance (GBA), Habitat for Humanity International, Governments of Albania, Armenia, Germany, Israel, and the Russian Federation.

A. Capacity-building activities

7. In the period under review, capacity-building activities were organized in conjunction with field projects and studies. This section of the report presents information on studies and related capacity-building activities.

8. The Regional Adviser managed the preparation of the report “Energy transition and post-COVID-19 socio-economic recovery: role of women and impact on them”,⁶ which was requested by the Governments of Albania, Belarus, and Ukraine. The study proposed priority actions that countries and companies can take to encourage the participation of women in the energy sector to drive a sustainable socioeconomic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The national case studies (Albania, Belarus, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, and Uzbekistan) provided analysis of the situation at the national level and concrete actions that governments can undertake to close the gap in gender disparity in the energy sector while achieving benefits not only for women but to the economy and society overall. Equal gender participation can help society leap to a future of technological advancement in the energy sector and make the transition to a sustainable energy system a reality.

9. The Regional Adviser managed the preparation of the report “Potential for improving energy efficiency in the refrigeration and air-conditioning sector of Uzbekistan”⁷ requested by the Government of Uzbekistan. The report includes a study on energy consumption in the refrigeration and air conditioning (RAC) sector, analyses energy efficiency in the sector, identifies technological options for improving energy efficiency and reducing carbon intensity in the RAC sector, and identifies successful business models to implement technological options to support improved energy efficiency and decarbonization of industry. The study was developed in cooperation with the UNDP Country Office in Uzbekistan. It provides policymakers in Uzbekistan with information on practical steps they can undertake to promote RAC energy efficiency and green technologies. The study supports Uzbekistan as it works to attain the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to achieve commitments under the Paris Agreement, and to identify innovative directions for a sustainable recovery from the current COVID-19 pandemic crisis and the creation of new job opportunities.

10. The Regional Adviser managed the preparation of the report “Potential for improving industrial energy efficiency in Kazakhstan and Ukraine” jointly with the programme officer in the Sustainable Energy Division responsible for the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency (GEEE). It was requested by the Governments of Kazakhstan and Ukraine. The study aims to help policymakers and other stakeholders in the target countries to improve industrial energy efficiency by exploring the energy intensity of industrial companies, analysing energy productivity in the industrial sector, identifying technological options for improving energy productivity and reducing carbon intensity in the industrial sector, identifying successful business models to implement technological options, and identifying policy options to support improved energy productivity and decarbonization of industry. At the time of preparation of this report, the study was in the finalization stage. The findings of the study will contribute to the work of GEEE and its Task Force on Industrial Energy Efficiency.

11. The Regional Adviser co-organized the Online Workshop on Sustainable Energy Policies and Implementation of National Sustainable Energy Action Plans (NSEAPs) on 17 November 2021 jointly with ESCAP. The workshop was attended by 53 participants, 18 of which were women, from the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, North Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, Türkiye, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan (ECE member States, RPTC programme

⁶ https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2022-01/Energy-Transition_Role-of-women-in-Post-COVID19.pdf

⁷ <https://unece.org/potential-improving-energy-efficiency-refrigeration-and-air-conditioning-sector-uzbekistan>

countries), Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Russian Federation, Spain, United Kingdom, and United States (ECE member States). The issues discussed included governmental support for the implementation of NSEAPs and other policies and strategies aimed at the transition to sustainable energy; involvement of various stakeholders in finding practical solutions to implement proposed measures; and attracting necessary financial and other resources (both domestic and international) for implementation.

12. The Regional Adviser co-organized the Renewable Energy Online Course⁸ jointly with the programme officer in the Sustainable Energy Division responsible for the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy, MASHAV - Israel's Agency for International Development Cooperation, and the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies. The course was conducted online over the period of 24 November - 14 December 2021 (nine sessions). 17 participants (10 of them women) from Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, North Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan successfully completed the course. It strengthened the capacity of government officials and mid-level professionals from the public and private sectors in developing renewable energy policies, selecting appropriate renewable energy technologies, transition to zero carbon electricity, and use of renewable technologies as a catalyst for regional and local development. In addition to lectures, discussions, and virtual tours of renewable energy facilities, course participants developed country-specific projects on the use of particular types of renewable energy most appropriate for local conditions.

13. The Regional Adviser co-organized the Conference “Unveiling Market Opportunities for Boosting Residential Energy Efficiency and Alleviating Energy Poverty”⁹ jointly with colleagues from the Sustainable Energy Division, Habitat for Humanity International, and UNDP Country Office in Armenia on 9-11 March 2022. The conference aimed to explore the key market drivers for scaling up investments in energy efficiency in multi-apartment buildings, which lead to alleviation of energy poverty through exchange of information and knowledge transfer from countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, share the expertise of homeowner associations supporting mechanisms, and bring important issues for discussion from policy perspectives to identify financial and technical solutions. ECE organized three workshops in the framework of the conference: Training workshop: Guidelines and Best Practices in Armenia for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in delivering energy efficient products and in providing renewable energy equipment; Workshop: Best practices to address the issues of energy efficiency in buildings and their implementation in the ECE member States; and Workshop: Outcomes of the project “Global Initiative towards post-COVID-19 resurgence of the MSME sector: Guidelines and Best Practices for MSMEs in delivering energy efficient products and in providing renewable energy equipment.”

B. Field projects

14. The Regional Adviser managed the UNDA project on “Integrated energy and water resource management in support of sustainable development in South-East Europe and Central Asia”¹⁰ in close cooperation with the programme officers responsible for the ECE Expert Group on Resource Management. The project was led by ECE and implemented in cooperation with ESCAP. The project was successfully completed in December 2021. The project had initially four beneficiary countries - Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Serbia - to which two others were added in 2021, Tajikistan and Ukraine. The project aimed to develop an integrated management and monitoring tool focused on interconnecting energy and water systems and helping to manage the impact of energy production on water systems. In the period under review, four studies analysing the supply of critical raw materials in beneficiary countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Serbia), options, and opportunities for integrated and sustainable food-water-energy resources management were developed. Policy recommendations for integrated

⁸ <https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/events/363401>

⁹ <https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/Regional-Advisory-Services/events/365074>

¹⁰ <https://unece.org/integrated-energy-and-water-resource-management-project-0>

energy, raw material and water resources management, applicable nationally, taking into account the particularities of each country, and recommendations regarding the transboundary aspects through the application of UNFC and UNRMS were developed for all six beneficiary countries. In addition, the following reports were prepared by international consultants: Guidelines, best practices and policy recommendations on integrated and sustainable food-water-energy resource management including the role of MSMEs, Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) investments, and environmental accounting, including a system for sustainability management, standardized reporting of resources, and policy and strategy for sustainable resource management in Eastern Europe, South-East Europe, and Central Asia; Impact of COVID-19 on critical raw material supplies needed for the healthcare sector and possible mitigation actions; State rights and responsibilities in the integrated management of natural resources in Eastern Europe, South-East Europe, and Central Asia; Guidelines on mine closure, remediation, land value capture, water management, and repurposing; and Information Dashboard for Resource Management. The Workshop on policy recommendations for food-water-energy resource management in Eastern and South-Eastern Europe and Central Asia held on 8 October 2021 was the final workshop of the project. The project was evaluated by an international evaluation consultant (report completed in May 2022), with a set of recommendations developed and accepted by ECE.

15. The Regional Adviser managed the energy-related component of the UNDA project “Global Initiative towards post-COVID-19 resurgence of the MSMEs sector”,¹¹ in which UNCTAD and ESCWA are the lead agencies and ECE is one of the participating agencies. The project is expected to be completed in June 2022. In the period under review, Updated Guidelines and best practices for MSMEs in delivering energy efficient products and in providing renewable energy equipment were developed. Customized Guidelines and best practices for MSMEs in delivering energy efficient products and in providing renewable energy equipment were developed for Albania, Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, and Republic of Moldova. In addition, Customized Guidelines and best practices for MSMEs to assure resiliency and progress towards a circular economy in sustainable resource management and critical raw material supply chain solutions were developed for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Serbia. Training workshops were organized for all these countries in the period December 2021- June 2022.

16. The Regional Adviser managed the extrabudgetary project “Enhancing national capacities to develop and implement energy efficiency standards for buildings in the ECE region”¹² in close cooperation with the programme officers responsible for the area of energy efficiency. The project was successfully completed in March 2022. In the period under review, Workshop on Regional and National Studies on a Gap Analysis between the Performance Objectives of the Framework Guidelines for Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings and Implementation of Current Building Energy Efficiency Standards was organized on 20 September 2021 in Geneva and online. National training seminars in Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, and Republic of Moldova (three focus ECE member States of the project) on high-performance energy efficiency standards in buildings were organized on 25-26 October 2021 in Yerevan and online, 29-30 November 2021 in Bishkek and online, and 20-21 January 2022 in Chisinau and online respectively. Workshop: Best practices to address the issues of energy efficiency in buildings and their implementation in the ECE member States conducted in Yerevan and online on 11 March 2022 served as the final workshop of the project. A Collaborative Environment for Experts on Energy Efficiency in Buildings in the ECE region has been maintained. Impact study on how member States could better use and implement best practices and guidelines developed by ECE activities in their national or/and/or sub-national measures to address the issues of energy efficiency in buildings has been developed.

17. The Regional Adviser is managing the UNDA project “Strengthening energy policies of Countries with Special Needs to build back better from COVID-19”, in which ESCAP is the lead agency and ECE is an implementing entity. The project aims to improve the capacity

¹¹ <https://unece.org/sustainable-energy/regional-advisory-services/un-development-account-project>

¹² <https://unece.org/sustainable-energy/regional-advisory-services/about-project>

of policymakers by supporting them to develop SDG 7 roadmaps which enable the delivery of both the sustainable energy transition and the economic recovery from COVID-19. It will do this by engaging stakeholders at the national level through consultation workshops in each participating country. The workshops will be used to explain the customized methodology used to develop the SDG 7 roadmaps and to identify the relevant national context and strategies relating to the SDG 7 targets, nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and COVID-19 recovery. At the time of preparing this report, the project was in the early stages of implementation (project duration is January 2022- June 2025).

18. The Regional Adviser is managing the Joint SDG Fund project “Green Finance Facility to improve air quality and combat climate change in North Macedonia”, in which United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Office in North Macedonia is the lead agency and ECE is one of the Participating UN Organizations (PUNO) (project duration is April 2022 – July 2026). The project will set up and operationalize Green Financing Facility (GFF), a new financial vehicle, that will provide access to affordable green financing for SMEs and marketable but underserved target groups of individuals/households for investments in renewable energy (RE) and energy efficiency (EE) solutions. The GFF-enabled accelerated adoption of RE and EE solutions will contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution and strengthen the local ecosystem for RE and EE green finance. ECE part of the project has the title “Improving national capacity on renewable energy (RE) and energy efficiency (EE) technologies for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and households in North Macedonia” (project duration is June 2022- March 2023). UNECE will be in charge of designing and implementing trainings that will be tailored to support the consultancy companies in using the updated list of eligible technologies to design RE and EE projects and monitor and verify the projects’ performance (planned vs. actual). ECE will revise and update the Green Economy Financing Facility (GEFF) Technology Selector Tool (a database of high-performing household equipment and materials that meet performance standards set by EBRD for the GEFF in North Macedonia) for the purposes of this project. At the time of preparation of this report, implementation of the project had not started yet.

C. Other technical assistance activities

19. The Regional Adviser managed the preparation of the study “Renewable energy – key actors and status of investments in selected ECE member states”¹³ jointly with the programme officer responsible for the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy. The study was requested by the Governments of Albania and Georgia. It informed on national targets, status, policies and programmes that support renewable energy investment in Albania, Georgia, Kazakhstan, and Serbia with a view to enabling cost-effective deployment of renewable energy within future energy systems. The study findings can be used not only in the target countries but also in neighbouring countries with similar issues. Findings and recommendations from the study have been used as major inputs for the Renewable Energy Hard Talks in Albania (6-7 July 2021), Georgia (12-13 October 2021), and Serbia (16-17 November 2021).

20. The Regional Adviser managed the preparation of the study “Energy transition and post-COVID-19 socio-economic recovery: role of women and impact on them”¹⁴ in cooperation with colleagues from the Sustainable Energy Division. The study was requested by the Governments of Albania, Belarus, and Ukraine and focused on the impact of the energy transition and post-COVID-19 socio-economic recovery on women and their role in these processes. It developed priority actions that countries and companies can take to encourage the participation of women in the energy sector to drive a sustainable socioeconomic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The national case studies (Albania, Belarus, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, and Uzbekistan) provided analysis of the situation at the national level and concrete actions that governments can undertake to close the gap in

¹³ <https://unece.org/sed/documents/2021/09/reports/rptc-study-renewable-energy-financing-and-investment-albania-1>

¹⁴ <https://unece.org/energy-transition-and-post-covid-19-socioeconomic-recovery-role-women-and-impact-them>

gender disparity in the energy sector while achieving benefits not only for women but to the economy and society overall. Equal gender participation can help society leap to a future of technological advancement in the energy sector and make the transition to a sustainable energy system a reality.

21. The Regional Adviser managed the preparation of the study “Potential for improving energy efficiency in the refrigeration and air-conditioning sector of Uzbekistan”¹⁵ requested by the Government of Uzbekistan. The study was developed in close cooperation with UNDP Uzbekistan. It explores energy consumption of the refrigeration and air conditioning (RAC) sector, analyses energy efficiency in the sector, identifies technological options for improving energy efficiency and reducing carbon intensity in the RAC sector, and identifies successful business models to implement technological options to support improved energy efficiency and decarbonization of industry. It provides policymakers in Uzbekistan with information on practical steps they can undertake to promote RAC energy efficiency and green technologies. The study supports Uzbekistan as it works to attain the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to achieve commitments under the Paris Agreement, and to identify innovative directions for a sustainable recovery from the current COVID-19 pandemic crisis and the creation of new job opportunities.

22. The Regional Adviser managed the preparation of the study “Potential for Improving Industrial Energy Efficiency in Kazakhstan and Ukraine” jointly with the programme officer responsible for the ECE Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency. The study was requested by the Governments of Kazakhstan and Ukraine. It explores energy intensity of industrial companies, analyses energy productivity in the industrial sector, identifies technological options for improving energy productivity and reducing carbon intensity in the industrial sector, identifies successful business models to implement technological options, and identifies policy options to support improved energy productivity and decarbonization of industry. At the time of preparation of this report, the study was in its finalization stage.

23. At the time of preparation of this report, requests were received from Albania to assess the geothermal energy potential in the country and from Tajikistan to conduct an in-depth analysis of the dynamics of coal demand in the country. The Regional Adviser will manage the requested studies to be funded by RPTC in close cooperation with Sustainable Energy Division colleagues.

24. In 2021, the Eleventh International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development (IFESD-11)¹⁶ was organized in a hybrid (in person and online) format over the period of September-November 2021 jointly by the United Nations Regional Commissions in partnership with UNEP, UNDP, and a range of international organizations. Over 20 workshops, seminars, policy discussions, roundtables, conferences, and other events were organized in the framework of IFESD-11. Preparations for the Twelfth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development (IFESD-12) have started. IFESD-12 is expected to take place in Armenia (pending final confirmation) tentatively in October 2022.

25. In the period under review, the Regional Adviser conducted advisory missions to Armenia (25-27 October 2021 in conjunction with the National training seminar on high-performance energy efficiency standards in buildings in Armenia), Uzbekistan (23-27 November 2021 in conjunction with participation in the International Conference “Prospects for the development of hydrogen energy, renewable energy sources and energy efficiency in the Republic of Uzbekistan”), Kyrgyzstan (27 November-1 December 2021 in conjunction with the National training seminar on high-performance energy efficiency standards in buildings in Kyrgyzstan and 9-11 February 2022 in conjunction with participation in the National Forum “Kyrgyzstan’s Transition to Sustainable Energy: Barriers and Solutions”), Albania (19-22 January 2022 in conjunction with the Training Workshop on Guidelines and best practices for MSMEs in Albania in delivering energy-efficient products and in providing renewable energy equipment), North Macedonia (30 March- 2 April 2022), and to Georgia (28 May-3 June 2022 in conjunction with the UN Country Team Georgia retreat). A request

¹⁵ <https://unece.org/potential-improving-energy-efficiency-refrigeration-and-air-conditioning-sector-uzbekistan>

¹⁶ <https://unece.org/info/Sustainable-Energy/events/18677>

for an advisory mission to Ukraine was received from the Government of Ukraine in January 2021 but the mission had to be postponed indefinitely. All advisory missions to the countries are demand-driven and conducted after receiving a request from a respective national government or UN Resident Coordinator in the country.

D. Future regional outreach, partnerships, fundraising and other activities

26. The Regional Adviser continues to be engaged in maintaining and expanding partnerships within the UN system and with international organizations. The Regional Adviser has been working on several capacity-building activities with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), ESCAP and ESCWA. The Regional Adviser has been working with colleagues from the Sustainable Energy Division and other Divisions, in particular the Environment Division, the Forests, Land and Housing Division, the Economic Cooperation and Trade Division, and the Sustainable Transport Division on developing project proposals for extrabudgetary, UNDA, and RPTC projects and implementing current activities. The Regional Adviser actively participates in the work of the ECE Working Group on Technical Cooperation (WGTC). The Regional Adviser has been assigned by the Executive Secretary to serve as the coordinator of ECE technical cooperation activities in three countries: Belarus, Georgia, and Kyrgyzstan. This activity is conducted in close cooperation with UN Regional Coordinator Offices (RCO) in the countries and the ECE Project Management Unit (PMU). The work of the Regional Adviser will continue to be based on demand from member States and in support of the Programme of Work of the Sustainable energy subprogramme. Assistance to countries to achieve progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and in particular of the targets of SDG7, remains the focus of the Regional Adviser's activities at the country and regional level, subject to availability of resources.

27. Following the approval of the outline of the project proposal "Improving the energy efficiency of the global building supply chain industry and its products to deliver high performance buildings" under a call for proposals by the International Climate Initiative (IKI) of the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) of Germany (IKI Thematic Selection Procedure 2019 (2.0)) in February 2021 and the kick-off meeting for the project on 25 May 2021, the Regional Adviser, jointly with colleagues from the Sustainable Energy Division, developed the proposal for the preparation phase of the project. All necessary documents and procedures from ECE have been completed at the time of preparation of this report. Due to internal restructuring of the IKI administration in Germany the final approval has been delayed. The expected start of the preparation phase of the project is the second half of 2022. Beneficiary countries of the planned project are Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. Participation of Kazakhstan in the project is being considered. Implementing partners include UNDP Country Offices in all beneficiary countries, ESCAP, UNEP, UNEP-CCC, GBA, PHI, and EEP.

28. The Regional Adviser responded to the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic by focusing on developing new field projects, adjusting existing projects to respond to COVID-19 challenges, organizing capacity-building activities online when possible, actively seeking information from the governments of RPTC-eligible countries on their needs in response to the COVID-19 crisis, and following up on those requests.

29. ECE participates in response to the multiple challenges created by the ongoing geopolitical crisis in the ECE region and consequences of the war. Under the 2022 proposal for field projects with a focus on Ukraine and the broader impact of the war in the ECE programme countries, the Regional Adviser participates in development and implementation of the RPTC project "UN4Kharkiv: Plan for the Integrated Rehabilitation of Settlements (Territories) in Ukraine with a pilot project in the City of Kharkiv." This project is led by the Regional Adviser on Housing and Land Management. Jointly with colleagues from the Sustainable Energy Division, the Regional Adviser participates in developing the RPTC project "Rebuilding the energy system in Ukraine under the carbon neutrality and just transition concepts" that will become part of a joint project with other ECE Divisions. The Regional Adviser, jointly with colleagues from the Sustainable Energy Division, participated

in developing the project proposals under the Call for Proposals – UN Joint SDG Fund Development Emergency Modality in response to the global crisis on food, energy and finance. The project proposals have been developed under the auspices of the UN Resident Coordinators in Georgia and in Ukraine. The project proposal for Georgia “Strengthening Georgia’s food and energy resilience” is developed jointly with UNDP (lead), FAO, and ILO. The project proposal for Ukraine “Addressing the compounded food and energy crisis in Ukraine through innovative technologies and adaptive agricultural practices” is developed jointly with FAO (lead) and UNEP. Both project proposals have been submitted to the UN Joint SDG Fund.
