

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### Evaluation of UNECE Forum of Mayors

#### I. Purpose

The primary purpose of this evaluation is to assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of UNECE Forum of Mayors for the period 2019-2022.

The results of the evaluation will be considered by the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management (CUDHLM) at its 83<sup>rd</sup> session and by EXCOM during 2022. Based on the results of the evaluation, EXCOM will agree on whether to extend the Forum of Mayors beyond 2022 as well as on the objectives, format and frequency of the Forum.

#### II. Scope

The evaluation will be guided by the objectives, indicators of achievement and means of verification established in the logical framework of the project documents. The evaluation will cover the full period of implementation from 2019 to March 2022.

The following events are included in the scope of the evaluation:

- Day of Cities, held on 8 April 2019, in the Palais de Nations in Geneva
- Forum of Mayors, held on 6 October 2020, in the Palais de Nations in Geneva
- Forum of Mayors to be held in March 2022, back-to-back with the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, as foreseen in EXCOM decision ECE/EX/2020/L.16

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 would make recommendations on how gender can be better included in the process.

#### III. Background

The objective of component (a) housing and land management of ECE subprogramme 8 was defined as follows for the biennium 2018-2019: "to improve housing, urban and land governance, and to promote the evidence-based formulation and implementation of sustainable housing [and] land (...) policies in the region"<sup>1</sup>. During the biennium, the activities of the subprogramme, under the umbrella of the Committee on Housing and Land Management<sup>2</sup>, were further aligned with the two central mandates of the decade: (a) Transforming our world:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://undocs.org/a/71/6/rev.1> ; Programme 17 Economic development in Europe, subprogramme 8 Housing, land management and population

<sup>2</sup> Renamed Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management, further to [ECOSOC resolution 2019/34](#) of 31 July 2019

the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development<sup>3</sup>, and (b) the New Urban Agenda<sup>4</sup>

Against these mandates, ECE Forests, Land and Housing Division (FLHD) prepared and organized a Day of Cities on 8 April 2019, one day before the beginning of the sixty-eighth Commission Session, which took place on 9 and 10 April 2019 under the overall theme of “Smart Sustainable Cities: Drivers for Sustainable Development”. The Day of Cities brought together over 400 registered participants, over 50 Mayors and deputy Mayors from 33 countries of the ECE region. The discussions highlighted that to meet the targets for urban-related SDGs, more opportunities and more direct engagement by local governments is needed at the international level and welcomed the Day of Cities as one such notable initiative.<sup>5</sup>

The possibility of establishing a Forum of Mayors was proposed by one delegation during the sixty-eighth Commission Session<sup>6</sup>, subsequently developed by the secretariat and agreed by the Committee on Housing and Land Management during its 80<sup>th</sup> session. The Committee also decided that the Forum of Mayors will be organized on the first day of the Committee session in 2020 and 2021 and will focus on a specific thematic issue related to sustainable urban development, housing and land management<sup>7</sup>.

The first Forum of Mayors, under the overall theme “City Action for a Resilient Future: Strengthening Local Government Preparedness and Response to Emergencies and the Impact of Disasters and Climate Change”, took place in Geneva on 6 October 2020. The Geneva Forum of Mayors brought over 40 mayors from 39 countries together to discuss challenges facing cities related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the climate crisis and its solutions that have at their fore front the SDGs. At the end of the Forum, the Mayors endorsed, by acclamation, the Geneva Declaration of Mayors<sup>8</sup>, an ambitious platform purporting to “place the SDGs at the centre of our recovery efforts and create new urban realities for the benefit of all”<sup>9</sup>

The bureau of the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management (CUDHLM) initially envisaged that the Forum of Mayors could be held in another country in 2021, before an assessment of the meeting format to be conducted in 2022<sup>10</sup>. However, no consensus could be found on the venue of the Forum of Mayors 2021, and the Committee decided to defer the decision to the ECE Executive Committee (EXCOM) at its 112<sup>th</sup> meeting<sup>11</sup>.

Following informal consultations<sup>12</sup>, ECE EXCOM decided that instead of holding the Forum of Mayors in 2021, it will be convened back-to-back with the Regional Forum on Sustainable

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<sup>3</sup> <https://undocs.org/A/res/70/1>

<sup>4</sup> <https://undocs.org/A/res/71/256>

<sup>5</sup> [ECE/HBP/200](#); paras 22 to 34

<sup>6</sup> [E/ECE/1488](#); para. 28

<sup>7</sup> [ECE/HBP/201](#); para. 35

<sup>8</sup> <https://forumofmayors.unece.org/declaration.html>

<sup>9</sup> [ECE/HBP/206](#); Annex II

<sup>10</sup> [ECE/HBP/205](#); paras 2 to 5

<sup>11</sup> [ECE/HBP/206](#); paras 22

<sup>12</sup> [Chair’s Conclusions](#) of 112th EXCOM; paras 8 to 15

Development (RFSD) in March 2022 in Geneva<sup>13</sup>. ECE EXCOM further decided that the Forum 2022 will be supported by the existing Steering Committee, but report both to the RFSD and to CUDHLM, as appropriate.

ECE EXCOM finally decided that the evaluation of the Forum will take place in 2022 and results will be considered by CUDHLM at its 83rd session and EXCOM during 2022.

#### **IV. Issues**

The evaluation criteria are relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact. The term “Fora” in this section encompasses the 2019 Days of Cities, the 2020 and 2022 Forum of Mayors.

##### Relevance:

1. How relevant have the Fora been to the Programme of Work of component (a) of subprogramme 8?
2. How relevant have been the Fora to reflect issues of particular interest to the region and enhance sub regional cooperation?
3. How relevant have the Fora been to the wider UN priorities, inter alia, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda and the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing?
4. To what extent have the Fora contributed to gender equality, disability inclusion and to an increased focus towards the most vulnerable?

##### Efficiency:

5. To what extent did the organization of the Fora support an efficient use of resources in ECE?
6. How efficient was the support provided by ECE regular budget funded staff to organize these events?

##### Effectiveness:

7. How effective were the successive formats to deliver agreed objectives? What were the final outputs delivered?
8. Have the Fora provided an effective platform for the participation of all relevant stakeholders, in particular Mayors and cities?
9. How effective was the support of the secretariat to organize the Fora?

##### Sustainability

10. Has the Forum evolved to take into account the lessons derived from previous Fora?
11. How sustainable is it for the Housing Unit to organize a recurrent Forum of Mayors, vis-à-vis the other deliverables included in its Programme of Work?

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<sup>13</sup> [ECE/EX/2020/L.16](#)

12. Which frequency appears the most sustainable for the Forum?

Coherence:

13. How coherent was the cross-collaboration between ECE subprogrammes during the Fora? What lessons can be learned?
14. How coherent were the collaboration and partnerships with UN system and other stakeholders?
15. Has the coherence (relevance, efficiency and effectiveness) of the Forum of Mayor been enhanced in 2022, following its affiliation with RFSD, in addition to CUDHLM? Would a direct link with the Commission be a coherent choice?
16. How coherent (relevance, efficiency and effectiveness) is the choice of Geneva to host the Forum of Mayors? Would it be coherent to envisage hosting by ECE member States outside of Geneva?

Impact:

17. How impactful have the Fora been in term of participation and visibility? What lessons can be learned?
18. How have the Fora contributed to more direct engagement of local governments on issues such as housing, urban and land governance at the regional and international levels?
19. Has the Forum of Mayors emerged as a broad and valued platform to engage Mayors and member States on practical discussions on sustainable urban development in the ECE region?

## **V. Methodology**

The evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the ECE Evaluation Policy<sup>14</sup> and in compliance with the United Nations Evaluation Group's revised gender-related norms and standards<sup>15</sup>.

To reinforce the impartiality of the evaluation, an Independent Evaluation Committee will oversee the evaluation process. The Committee will be comprised of three members:

- Chair of the Steering Committee of the Forum of Mayors
- Director, Forestry, Land and Housing Division (FLHD)
- Programme Officer in charge of evaluations, Programme Management Unit (PMU)

While the evaluation will be conducted by the PMU, the Independent Evaluation Committee will be involved in the following steps:

- Selection of the evaluator
- Approval of the Inception report, including proposed survey and interview questions
- Reception of the draft report

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<sup>14</sup> [UNECE Evaluation policy](#)

<sup>15</sup> [UNEG 2016 Norms and Standards for Evaluation](#)

- Clearance of the final report after quality insurance

The evaluation will be conducted based on:

1. A desk review of all relevant documents, as specified below;
2. An electronic survey to be developed by the consultant to assess the perspective of the stakeholders, as specified underneath. The consultant will manage the electronic platform; the survey shall be prepared in English.
3. Selected interviews with key stakeholders, as specified underneath; the interviews will take place remotely.

The document review will consider:

- i. Mandates and terms of reference of UNECE and relevant subsidiary bodies;
- ii. Relevant EXCOM and CUDHLM decisions, formal and informal documents;
- iii. All documents referred to in the footnotes of the background section;
- iv. All documents produced for the 2019 Days of Cities, the 2020 and 2022 Forum of Mayors;
- v. Other documents as relevant.

The survey and the interviews will target:

- i. Member States, through EXCOM delegations;
- ii. Mayors invited during the 2019 Days of Cities, the 2020 and 2022 Forum of Mayors;
- iii. Partner organizations as well as other stakeholders involved during the Fora;
- iv. ECE Management, and ECE staff involved in the Fora;
- v. Focal points from UN Secretariat entities.

UNECE will provide all support and guidance to the evaluation consultant as needed throughout the timeline of the evaluation. The above-mentioned documentation will be provided by the FLHD.

Interviews with selected internal and external stakeholders will be identified through discussions between the evaluation manager (PMU) and the evaluation consultant. Contacts of the stakeholders will be provided by the FLHD.

Data collection activities and protocols should be gender sensitive and evaluators should ensure equitable participation regardless of gender, status, and other social identities. The evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations should reflect a gender analysis.

The methodology should finally comply with the OIOS COVID-19 Response Evaluation Protocol<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.unevaluation.org/evaluation/reports/detail/15890>

## VI. Provisional Schedule for the Review<sup>17</sup>

Timeline	Action
23 April 2021	TOR approved by the Steering Committee
<i>Date in 2021 to be confirmed</i>	TOR approved by ECE EXCOM
<i>From EXCOM approval to selection of the evaluator</i>	Secretariat prepares background materials for the evaluation
31 December 2021	Evaluator selected by the Independent Evaluation Committee
1 February 2022	Contract signed. Evaluator starts the desk review
1 March 2022	Inception report cleared by Independent Evaluation Committee; electronic survey begins
4-5 April 2022	Evaluator attends Forum of Mayors 2022
April 2022	Evaluator conducts interviews
16 May 2022	Evaluator submits final draft report to the Independent Evaluation Committee
October 2022	Report is reviewed by CUDHLM
December 2022	Report is reviewed by EXCOM

## VII. Resources

An independent consultant will be engaged for a period of 40 days to conduct the evaluation, within a budget of US\$ \$10'000 (inclusive of all costs).

An expert consultant with experience in reviewing intergovernmental fora will conduct the evaluation under the management of the PMU. The P-4 Programme Officer in PMU will manage the consultant and coordinate requests for information from FHLD and other divisions as required.

The Housing and Land Management Section will provide to the evaluator the relevant project documents, contacts of stakeholders, and explanations as required in the course of the evaluation.

## VIII. Intended Use/Next Steps

The results of the evaluation will be considered by CUDHLM at its 83<sup>rd</sup> session and EXCOM during 2022. Based on the results of the evaluation, EXCOM will agree on whether to extend the Forum beyond 2022 as well as on the objectives, format and frequency of the Forum.

A management response to the evaluation will be prepared by UNECE. Progress on

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<sup>17</sup> Final timetable to be agreed following engagement of the evaluator. The contract of the evaluator ends after the submission of the final report.

implementation of relevant recommendations will be monitored by the PMU every six months until final closure of the recommendations. The final evaluation report, the management response and the progress on implementation of the recommendations will be available on the UNECE public website.

## **IX. Criteria for Evaluators**

Evaluators should have:

- An advanced university degree or equivalent background in evaluation
- Specialized training in areas such as evaluation, collaboration between private sector and UN entities, project management, gender analysis, human rights.
- Advanced skills in 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.
- Demonstrated methodological knowledge of evaluations, including quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis for end-of-cycle project evaluations.
- Demonstrated knowledge in the areas of urban development policies, urban planning and management, multilateralism and organization of international fora.
- Fluent in written and spoken English. Knowledge of another language (for example Russian or French) may be desirable 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.