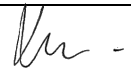
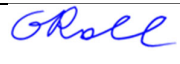
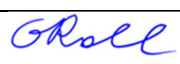


MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|------------|---|
| Evaluation Title: | Evaluation of UNECE Project E340 “Improved sustainable urban development in 17 Norwegian cities” | | |
| Period of Review: | 2019 - 2022 | | |
| Date of Evaluation Report: | 31/03/2023 | | |
| Approved by | Chief, a.i., PMU Nicolas Dath-Baron | Date | Signature |
| | | 13.07.2023 |  |
| Cleared by: | Director of Division (OIC) Paola Deda | 29/06/2023 |  |
| Prepared by: | Project Manager Gulnara Roll | 29/06/2023 |  |

Recommendation 1:

There is momentum to upscale Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) in the UNECE region and a growing community of practitioners that meet for exchanging experiences and ways of implementing the SDGs at grassroots / local levels. The City Resilience Training online course for the implementation of the VLRs, which currently only exists in English, is considered as one of the major, joint achievements of the project that has potential for a wide user community. The UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit should mobilize additional resources for translating it into more languages, and for ensuring accessibility to it by persons with special needs. The Subprogramme should also explore how to further deepen collaboration and linkages with UNDESA in promoting the VLR movement globally and ways to monitor how the VLRs are updated after pilot phases. This would ensure that the assessments continue to be relevant monitoring tools for the achievement of SDGs at local and national levels in the long term.

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

UNECE is already cooperating with UN DESA (as well as UN-Habitat and United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)) on a joint UNDA 14th tranche project on VLRs in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, which includes testing of monitoring tools in four cities in the UNECE region.

There is an intention to organize translation of the ‘City Resilience Training online course for the implementation of the VLRs’ into Russian, however it depends on availability of XB resources. The UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit will work to mobilize additional resources for translating the document in Russian and in other languages.

Responsibility: Ms. Gulnara Roll, Project Manager, HLMP

Timeline: 31 December 2024

Recommendation 2:

The Voluntary Local Review (VLR) project planning should routinely include capacity building on public financial management and budgeting at city level to ensure that VLRs inform local policymaking, operational strategies and budgets. This can be done through continued exposure of different partners to other's experiences and networking, and through supporting partners in identifying innovative sources of financing to leverage public financing with private funding sources. Along with data collection and using data in evidence-based policymaking, these are distinct working areas in which Norway could assume leadership and share knowledge with other countries. It is thus important that the UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit continues to capitalize on the expertise in Norway.

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

A proposal for capacity building activities was prepared for funding by the UN Regular Programme for Technical Cooperation but unfortunately it was not funded. The UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit will work to mobilize resources for capacity building on public financial management and budgeting at city level from other sources. Depending on availability resources, the capacity building activities will be implemented.

Responsibility: Ms. Gulnara Roll, Project Manager, HLMP

Timeline: 31 December 2024

Recommendation 3:

UNECE has an important role in following up on the achievements for the sustainability of the action even if there are no direct follow up projects for a given initiative. The UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit should ensure continued dialogue between the Urban Development, Housing and Land Management Unit and the project interlocutors and facilitate networking, which are crucial in ensuring that the partners continue to capitalize on each other's expertise in the UNECE region.

Management Response:

UNECE partially accepts the recommendation. The intensive dialogue is already taking place through the network of the governments and stakeholders engaged in activities of the Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management (CUDHLM), its Working Party on Land Administration (WPLA), the team of specialists Real Estate Market Advisory Group (REM), the UN Forum of Mayors and the network of the centres of excellence; there are ten centres of excellence in the network supporting implementation of the UNECE documents in the member States. To further strengthen this cooperation and expansion of the network, the UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit will work to mobilize additional resources for the networking.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

The UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit will develop a project proposal for dialogue and networking with stakeholders. Depending on availability resources, the capacity building activities will be implemented.

Responsibility: Ms. Gulnara Roll, Project Manager, HLMP

Timeline: 31 December 2024

Recommendation 4:

The UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit should pay more attention to project planning including needs and risk assessments, defining success indicators and the intended outcomes, which is key in ensuring value for money and that projects are owned by the beneficiaries. Defining the intended outcomes and impact at activity / work package level is also a way to ensure that the planned activities serve for long-term strategic purposes, that the project responds to the needs of the intended recipients and that no strategic diversions are needed during the implementation. Defining the theory of change allows monitoring of the project successes and the verification of results during and after the project.

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit is strengthening project planning and monitoring through the deployment and use of a new ERP (Umoja) solution ‘Integrated Planning, Management and Reporting’, which will allow better monitoring of project implementation and to take corrective measures in case of diversions from the project plan.

Responsibility: Ms. Gulnara Roll, Project Manager, HLMP

Timeline: 31 December 2023

Recommendation 5:

While synergy benefits should be sought to avoid duplication of efforts, it is important that project activities and their successes are traceable and verifiable against project plans and budgets. Future UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit plans and reports should link the project activities, the related expenditure, outputs and outcomes more clearly and they should differentiate core project activities, synergy benefits, and complementarities of the related action.

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit is strengthening project planning and monitoring through the deployment and use of a new ERP (Umoja) solution ‘Integrated Planning, Management and Reporting’, which will allow better monitoring of project implementation and to take corrective measures in case of diversions from the project plan.

Responsibility: Ms. Gulnara Roll, Project Manager, HLMP

Timeline: 31 December 2023

Recommendation 6:

Equality principles and rights-based programming should be a standard part of programming in the UN. While efforts were made to include objectives related to gender equality in the project design, they were not tailored to the context and hence were not implemented. Moreover, when the objective is to collect gender disaggregated data, it should be considered for what purpose the data is needed, how it will be used and how it is beneficiary in promoting gender equality among the beneficiaries and stakeholders. It is thus important that in future projects, UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit contextualizes objectives related to equality and equity, otherwise there is a risk that they remain tokenistic and irrelevant to the action.

Management Response:

UNECE accepts the recommendation.

Follow up actions and responsibilities:

UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit will make all efforts to work closely with the UNECE Senior Gender Adviser to ensure gender equality and the perspectives of vulnerable groups will be better mainstreamed in the Unit future projects. A unit wide gender action plan will be elaborated that will also guide relevant project activities .

Responsibility: Ms. Gulnara Roll, Project Manager, HLMP

Timeline: 31 December 2024