

## Terms of Reference

### **Evaluation of the UNDA 9<sup>th</sup> tranche project “Strengthening national capacities for sustainable housing in selected countries with economies in transition”**

#### **I. Purpose**

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the UNDA 9 Tranche project “Strengthening national capacities for sustainable housing in selected countries with economies in transition”. The results of the evaluation will support improvement of the future technical cooperation provided under the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management (CHLM) to lower and upper middle-income countries in the preparation and implementation of National Action Plans on Housing and Urban Development. The results of evaluation will support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda and specifically SDGs 9, 11, 12 and 13.

#### **II. Scope**

The evaluation will include the full project implementation in 2014-2017 in all four pilot countries (Armenia, Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Tajikistan). The evaluation will review the development of four national action plans and their implementation in the beneficiary countries as the key deliverable of the project. The evaluation will assess to what extent the objective, expected accomplishments and indicators of achievements established in the logical framework were achieved.

#### **III. Background**

Countries in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) region, especially those with economies in transition, are faced with several challenges in developing sustainable housing. These challenges were identified through the survey in housing and land management conducted by UNECE. Countries with economies in transition have seen a growing degradation and deterioration of their housing stock. Due to a lack of effective management and investments in maintenance and repairs, a large share of the region’s residential housing stock has deteriorated, causing energy losses and affecting the quality of life of the residents. According to the results of the above-mentioned survey, the inefficient use of energy is the main challenge in the housing sector. Other challenges include lack of affordable housing for low-income households; general decreased housing affordability because of the economic crisis and unemployment; limited access to affordable housing of adequate quality in the market; and reduced access to credit for households because of the financial crisis. This difficult situation in the housing sector in the countries with transition economies is not improving because of the lack of expertise of the governments in strategic planning of housing and urban development; and weak policy coordination between stakeholders at national and subnational levels. The market alone cannot address these challenges if government policies developed through a dialogue and in partnership with all key stakeholders does not support it.

This project was developed to address the above-mentioned challenges by assisting national governments in selected countries to develop and partially implement National Action Plans for Sustainable Housing; and to build capacity on sustainable housing through the provision of advisory services and the organization of workshops.

The objective of the UNDA 9th tranche project “Strengthening national capacities for sustainable housing in selected countries with economies in transition” is to strengthen national capacities for sustainable housing in selected countries with economies in transition to support the realization of Rio+20 commitments and the achievement of MDG 7. The project promotes sustainable housing in four selected countries with economies in transition (Armenia, Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Tajikistan) by assisting

their national governments in the development and partial implementation of National Action Plans for Sustainable Housing; and capacities building activities.<sup>25</sup>

#### IV. Issues

The evaluation will answer the following questions:

##### *Relevance*

1. How relevant was the project to the needs and priorities of the beneficiary countries?
2. Have the beneficiary Governments refer to the National Action Plans in improving their legislation, institutional framework, policies and projects on housing and urban development?
3. Do Governments rate the developed National Action Plans as useful in promoting inter-ministerial cooperation?
4. Are there any issues or topics that are not currently being addressed by the National Action Plans/but it would be useful to address?

##### *Effectiveness*

5. To what extent were the expected accomplishments of the project achieved?
6. What were the challenges/ obstacles to achieving the project objective and expected accomplishments?

##### *Efficiency*

7. Were the available resources appropriate to the scale of the project and the needs identified by the beneficiary countries?
8. Were the human and financial resources allocated to the project used efficiently and commensurate the project results?

##### *Sustainability*

9. What are the laws, regulations, policies or projects that have been developed so far based on the National Action Plans (effectiveness, relevance and sustainability)?

#### V. Methodology

The evaluator will develop the methodology, which will include a variety of data sources:

- A desk review of all relevant documents will be conducted in the first instance. The desk review will include: Project document and information on [project activities](#), National Action Plans developed for the four pilot countries (will be provided by the Housing and Land Management Unit), Policy with best practices of preparation of National Action Plans, Guidelines for the preparation of National Action Plans on Housing and Land Management developed within the project (will be provided by the Housing and Land Management Unit).
- In-depth telephone and in person interviews will be conducted with (1) national coordinators of the project, representatives of national governments and relevant stakeholders in Armenia, Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Tajikistan; (2) representatives of national government authorities in member States and stakeholders to be identified by UNECE; and (3) with partners involved in the project, UNECE Housing and Land Management Unit and UN-Habitat.
- Survey of project participants and other key stakeholders.

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<sup>25</sup> Please see information on the project at <http://www.unece.org/housing/unda.html>

The consultant will attend the final project meeting in Geneva on 8 and 10 November 2017 at margins of which would also hold some of the interviews with project participants and representatives of governments.

## **VI. Evaluation Schedule**

1. Desk review of all documents provided by UNECE to the evaluator (30 October 2017) ,
2. Delivery of inception report including design of survey(15 November 2017)
3. Feedback on inception report by the project manager (20 November 2017)
4. Launching the survey (20 November 2017)
5. Conducting in-person and telephone interviews (20 November – 10 December 2017)
6. Analysis of collected information (10 -31 December 2017)
7. Draft report (10 January 2018)
8. Comments back to the evaluator after review by the project manager and the PMU (12 January 2018)
9. Final report (31 January 2018).

## **VII. Resources**

An independent consultant will be engaged for a period of 40 days to conduct the evaluation, within a budget of USD\$10,000. Ms. Gulnara Roll, the project manager, will manage the evaluation in consultation with the Division Director Ms. Ivonne Higuero. 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 and quality assurance.

## **VIII. Intended Use/Next Steps**

The Unit will review the results of the evaluation and report the results to the CHLM. The results will be used in improving a methodology to the development of National Action Plans. The evaluation will be consistent with the UNECE Evaluation Policy. Following the receipt of the final report, the project manager will develop a management response and action plan for addressing the recommendation made by the evaluator. The final evaluation report and the management response will be made publicly available on the UNECE website.

## **IX. Criteria for Evaluators**

Evaluators should have:

- An advanced university degree in economics or 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, and project planning, monitoring and management.
- 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 and Russian.

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