Economic Commission for Europe
Committee on Housing and Land Management

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2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and
perspectives for its implementation in housing and urban development in the UNECE region

Promoting evidence-based policies for sustainable
housing and urban development for the implementation of the
2030 Sustainable Development Agenda

Note by the secretariat

Summary

The Committee, at its seventy-sixth session in December 2015 adopted a decision to develop a
system for monitoring the implementation of the 2030 Agenda with regards to Sustainable
Development Goal 11 on Cities and Human Settlements (SDG 11), and entrusted its Bureau to
develop a methodology therefor.

This document provides information on Committee’s activities which support countries’
efforts to develop evidence-based policies for housing and urban development and provide a
basis for the further work on the development of a system for follow-up and review of the
2030 Agenda with regards to urban related SDGs.

The Committee is invited to take note of the information.
I. Introduction

1. In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit adopted a new framework to guide development efforts between 2015 and 2030, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development” (the 2030 Agenda). The 2030 Agenda contains 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. The SDGs address, in an integrated manner, the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development, their interrelations, aspects related to peaceful societies and effective institutions, as well as means of implementation (finance, technology, capacity development etc.).

2. The SDGs include a number of housing and urban development related goals where the central one is Goal 11: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

3. At the Sustainable Development Summit, governments committed to engage in the systematic follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The follow-up and review will be based on regular, voluntary and inclusive country-led progress reviews at the national level feeding into reviews at the regional and global levels.

4. The UN Statistical Commission at its 47th Session adopted the global indicator framework for the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda. The UN High-level Political Forum (11 20 July 2016, New York) also discussed the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda. A coordinated UN-wide approach for the follow-up and review is therefore expected to be developed. The work of the Committee on promoting evidence-based national policies on housing and urban development will be aligned with the UN-wide approaches when those are elaborated and agreed.

5. The document provides information on the Committee’s activities aimed at strengthening capacity of the countries for evidence based policies.

II. UNECE activities on promoting evidence-based national policies on housing and urban development

6. Development of evidence-based national policies on housing and urban development is part of the Committee’s programme of work. It is implemented through activities which are described below.

7. 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

8. 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 (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.

9. In 2014, the Committee 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.

10. The Charter and the Strategy 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.

11. 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”.

12. 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 included data on housing and urban development in the UNECE region and “mini-country profiles” on housing and urban development for UNECE countries.

13. To further support the development of evidence based policies on housing and urban development in the region, the UNECE in cooperation with UN-Habitat initiated in 2016 a project, “Evidence-based policies for sustainable housing and urban development in selected countries with economies in transition”. The project is supported by funds from the United Nations Development Account 10th tranche. 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. This work is based on the above outlined UNECE approaches as well as on the approaches formulated in the UN-Habitat Global Housing Strategy and Global Network on Sustainable Housing.

14. 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


2 http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/sessions/docs2015/informal_notes/3bA_Mini_CPs_publication.pdf
building capacity on sustainable housing through the provision of advisory services, training materials, organization of workshops and online trainings.

15. The project among others will build on experiences and achievements of the UNDA 9th tranche project “Strengthening national capacities for sustainable housing and urban development in Armenia, Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Tajikistan. The UNDA 9th tranche 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.

16. 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 are based on relevant indicators and therefore promote evidence-based policies in housing, urban development and land management. The methodology to be elaborated will further incorporate relevant methodologies to be developed at the global UN level for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda.

17. The Committee is invited to take note of this information.