The role of UNECE and the Key Performance Indicators for Smart and Sustainable Cities in improving smart and sustainable urban development

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Structure of the guidelines

- About UNECE and the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management
- The role of UNECE in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and SDG11 and relevant activities
- The Key Performance Indicators for Smart and Sustainable Cities (KPI4SSC)
- The UNECE approaches to the KPI evaluation including project examples
- Summary and conclusions.
About UNECE

- United Nations Economic Commission for Europe – one of five regional commissions of the UN
  - A multilateral platform dedicated to fostering economic integration and cooperation and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the region
  - Associates governments from 56 countries.
- The UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management
  - Established in 1947 focusing on affordable housing, land and urban development.
The role of UNECE in the context of SDG11

To improve the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda, especially with regard to:
- production, management and use of data for policy and decision-making
- improving policy coherence across all levels
- Improving inter-sectoral, horizontal and vertical cooperation.

One of priority tasks under the 2030 Agenda is to develop better standards for the production, management and use of data and evidence in the policy process.

SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.
Example of activities

- Providing technical assistance to governments and municipalities, especially to countries with economies in transition (e.g. urban development and housing policies and projects)
- Organize peer learning activities (e.g. the CUDHLM annual sessions, SDG11 Day, the Day of Cities, the Forum of Mayors, 7 October 2020)
- Developing thematic publications (e.g. country profiles, city profiles)
- Developing methodologies, **standards**, guidelines (e.g. the **Key Performance Indicators for Smart and Sustainable Cities**; guidelines to evidence-based policies).
The Key Performance Indicators for Smart and Sustainable Cities (KPI4SSC)

- Developed jointly by UNECE and ITU in the context of the United for Smart Sustainable Cities initiative associating 16 UN agencies
- A baseline analysis that allows assessing “smartness” and “sustainability” of cities and tracking progress towards SDGs
- 91 indicators divided in 3 areas: “Economy”, “Environment”, “Society” and Culture”/cross-cutting theme “ICTs”
- Available free of charge; used by over 100 cities worldwide
- KPIs review planned for 2020.
Technical assistance project 1

- UNDA 10th tranche project: “Improving evidence-based policies on housing and urban development in countries with economies in transition” (Ukraine, Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Bulgaria)

- Primary end users: ministries

- Approach to the KPI4SSC: a background for a discussion on improving measuring progress towards SDGs at all levels, improving policy design, improving coordination and collaboration between data producers, analysts and users at all levels, data handling/management reforms

- Activities e.g.: capacity building workshops bringing together ministries National Statistical Offices, and city governments, on improving evidence-based policy-making; the production of guidelines to evidence-based policies.
Technical assistance project 2

- UNDA 12th tranche project: “Smart Sustainable Cities for the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda in the UNECE Region: (Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro, Serbia)”.
- End users: cities
- Approach to the KPI4SSC: the evaluation of “smartness” and “sustainability” of cities supplemented with a set of recommendations on improving policy-making and developing sustainable infrastructure projects.
- Activities e.g.: development of Smart Sustainable City profiles, capacity-building workshops on (i) measuring progress towards SDGs using the KPI4SSC; (ii) innovative financing mechanisms bringing together municipalities, ministries, businesses and others.
UNECE implements the KPI4SSC in a “holistic”, comprehensive manner, in technical assistance projects that aim to improve the capacities of countries and cities to deliver the 2030 Agenda and to better measure SDG.

It builds on already existing processes to accelerate progress towards the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

When implementing the KPI4SSC, we swear by to

- Be transparent about the limits of sustainability assessment frameworks
- Respect and capture the diversity of ongoing efforts in countries and cities
- Feed into key ongoing and planned activities
- Be neutral and bring ALL relevant stakeholders to the table
- Build on local knowledge and expertise; and cross-sectoral networks and relationships to scale-up development efforts.
The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires attributing new roles to cities in a multilateral context (where the national governments have long been seen as the key actors).
- UNECE works more and more at the global/national/local interface!

Standarization and the development of Information and Telecommunication Technologies are the driving forces for smart and sustainable urban development.
- They play important role in guiding progress towards realization of the 2030 Agenda. However, for them to be impactful, they need to be adequately contextualized!

Only contextualisation of standards allows generating comprehensive policy responses that are able to successfully accelerate progress towards the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
Thank you!

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