

Report of the UNDA Workshop ‘Strengthening National Capacities for Sustainable Housing in Serbia’ held on 12-13th of November 2014, in Belgrade, Serbia

Summary: UNECE (lead agency) in partnership with UN-Habitat (implementing partner) initiated the Project „Strengthening National Capacities for Sustainable Housing in Serbia”. UNECE, UN-Habitat and the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure of the Republic of Serbia, organised the workshop held on 12-13th November in Belgrade, Serbia. This report provides an overview of the presentations, conclusions and the recommendations deriving from each of the 7 sessions. The report concludes by providing overall conclusions and recommendations for the future activities in line with the UNDA project aims and objectives.

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Acknowledgements: This report was prepared by Svetlana Ristić, Head of the Department for Housing and Architectural Policy, Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure of the Republic of Serbia and Orna Rosenfeld, Senior Housing Expert, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. It benefited from valuable contribution from Ana Rakovic, Adviser in the Belgrade University Faculty of Architecture. The first draft of the report written in Serbian has been made available to the participants of the UNDA workshop for comments and feedback. We are grateful for their input.

INTRODUCTION:

In 2014, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) launched the Project „Strengthening National Capacities for Sustainable Housing in countries with economies in transition“¹. This Project, known as UNDA Project, financed by the United Nations Development Account (UNDA), has been implementing from 2014 to 2017 in: Armenia, Serbia, Moldova and Tajikistan.

This work presents an important part of a wider regional programme with distinct aims and objectives. Notably, the UNDA project is underpinned by the results of the survey carried out by the UNECE Secretariat in 2012-2013². This work highlighted several key issues that need addressing in the countries with economies in transition such as: energy efficiency, lack of housing affordability, reduced access to credit (for home ownership), and decreasing housing quality due to limited maintenance among other concerns. It stressed the need for institutional change and capacity building as a vital precondition for advancing issues listed above.

This report presents the outcomes of the first UNDA workshop held on 12 and 13 of November, 2014. The UNDA Workshop held in Belgrade presents the first step in context sensitive development of the UNDA project in Serbia and the first step of its implementation. The key output of the UNDA projects are context-adopted National Action Plans that are deemed to be developed based on the results of Workshop series, establishment.

In line with the aims and objectives of the UNDA project the report provides the list of participants by their institution and sector, it provides short overview of each presentation, each section is followed by the conclusions and recommendations. The report concludes by providing overall conclusions of the workshop and recommendations for the next steps and activities.

¹ For more details about the UNDA projects please follow the link: <http://www.unece.org/housing-and-land-management/projects/national-capacities-for-sustainable-housing.html>

² ECE/HPB/2013/2

ATTENDANCE:

This section lists the Workshop participants who have contribute to the event by giving a presentation. The PowerPoint presentations were sent to the UNECE Secretarial after the event. The section classifies the presenters based on affiliation. This is deemed important as one of the key objectives of the UNDA workshop is creating new institutional links and strengthening existing ones. In addition to the presenters number of local institutions and representatives of civil society were present at the event this is noted in the concluding paragraph.

Representatives of UN agencies

UN Office Serbia

- Irena Vojácková-Sollorano, UN Resident Coordinator in the Republic of Serbia

UNECE:

- Virginia Cram-Martos, Officer-in-Charge, Forests, Land and Housing Division, UNECE
- Amie Figueiredo, Associate Economic Officer, UNECE
- Orna Rosenfeld, Senior Housing Expert, UNECE

UN-Habitat

- Paulius Kulikauskas, Inter-regional Advisor, UN-Habitat

UNISDR

- Luca Rossi, Programme Officer at UNISDR

UNHCR

- Miloš Teržan Programme Officer at UNHCR (Resident)

Representatives of ministries

Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure (MCTI)

- Zorana Mihajlović, Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure of the Republic of Serbia
- Radojko Obradović, Special Adviser
- Svetlana Ristić, Head of the Department for Housing and Architectural Policy
- Jasminka Pavlović, Head of Department for Energy Efficiency

Ministry of Interior

- Dragana Jakšić, Head of the Department for Housing Matters
- Živko Babović, Senior adviser, Sector for Emergency Management

Ministry of finance

- Irena Karišić Stanojević, Senior adviser, Sector of Legal Property Affairs

Representatives of republic agencies

Republic Agency for Spatial Planning

- Nevena Đurđević, Sector of Spatial Planning, study and analytical services.

Republic Housing Agency

- Maja Lakicević, Director of the Republic Housing Agency
- Igor Jakšić, Assistant Director of the Republic Housing Agency

Commissariat for Refugees and Migration

- Daniela Popović Rocco, Assistant Commissioner for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia

Representatives of municipal organisations

Belgrade Planning Institute

- Emil Dimitrov, Belgrade Planning Institute.

- Jelena Marinković, Belgrade Planning Institute

Belgrade City Administration, Secretarial for Legal Property Relations

- Goran Blagojević, Head of Department for Social Housing, Secretarial for Legal Property Relations of the Belgrade City Administration

Standing Conference of Town and Municipalities

- Klara Danilović, Committee on Urban Planning, Housing and Construction

Representatives of non-governmental bodies

Association of Housing Agencies

- Ratko Rogan, Director of the Novi Sad Housing Agency on behalf of Association of Housing Agencies

Ecumenical Humanitarian Organisation

- Robert Bu, Deputy Director

Urban Development Program

- Đorđe Mojović, Programme Director

Housing Centre

- Branislava Žarković, Director of the Housing Centre

Condominium Association

- Nina Malinovska, President

Representatives of academic institutions

University of Belgrade, Faculty of Architecture

- Milica Jovanović Popović, Professor, University of Belgrade, Faculty of Architecture
- Dušan Ignjatović, Assistant professor, University of Belgrade, Faculty of Architecture

National experts

- Vladimir Macura, National expert for urban planning and housing
- Zlata Vuksanović Macura, National expert for urban planning and housing
- Živorad Stanković, National expert for housing

International experts

- Lea Kronaveter (Israel), Senior Consultant, Israel Water Authority (formerly Research Director Peak Dynamics Ltd.), (Water management and supply in formal and informal settlements).
- Franc Props (Slovenia), General Manager, SPL. (Condominium management)

Representatives of international and pan-national organisations:

OSCE Mission in Serbia

- Boris Žerjav, National Project Officer, OSCE (Resident)

The Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia

- Elizabeta Sartoreli Project Officer, The Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Serbia (Resident)

Public participation at the event:

In addition to the presenters listed above, the UNDA Workshop was opened to wider audience. The invitations for presence (audience) were extended to a number of local institutions and civil society organisations in Serbia. Around 50 viewers were present at the event.

Opening session 12th of November 2014

Ms. Zorana Mihajlović, Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure of the Republic of Serbia opened the first UNDA Workshop 2014 in Serbia by extending thanks to the UN for support in organisation of thereof. She emphasised the importance of active participation of the Government of Serbia (notably MCTI) in the UNECE activities. She particularly stressed the importance of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing³. She expressed interest in expanding cooperation with the UNECE in the future in line with the Geneva UN Charter and the UNDA Project “Strengthening of Capacity for Sustainable Housing in Serbia”. She is particularly looking forward to fruitful collaboration on the UNDA project in the next three years. She expressed high expectations from the project especially in terms of contribution to the National Strategy for Sustainable Development.

Ms. Irena Vojácková-Sollorano, UN Resident Coordinator in the Republic of Serbia stressed that UN provides support to countries tackling challenging situations. In 2014 devastating floods affected Serbia and the UN helped provide expert assistance in delivery of humanitarian aid, identification and assessment of damages, as well as with other forms of support. Moving forward, Ms. Irena Vojácková-Sollorano, stressed the importance of the UNECE led workshop and implementation of the UNDA project 'Strengthening of the Capacity for Sustainable Housing in Serbia'. She pointed out the importance this work has in preparations for the Habitat III Conference 2016, and accomplishment of the Millennium Development Goals.

Ms. Virginia Cram-Martos director of the Economic Cooperation, Trade, and Land Management at the UNECE, presented the UNECE activities in the field of housing and land management and introduced the participants with the Geneva UN Charter for sustainable housing which has been agreed upon by the UNECE member states at the Committee's 75th session, held on 8-9 October 2014, in Geneva, Switzerland. This charter represents an important platform for international cooperation in the region. It is vital for advancing and implementing sustainable housing in the UNECE region. She outlined the current and future activities of the UNECE and welcomed the participants to the first UNDA Workshop in Serbia.

Ms. Orna Rosenfeld, commenced her presentation by stressing that housing is a complex good and a key infrastructure that enables urban and economic growth. In line with this statement Ms. Rosenfeld presented aims and objectives of the UNDA Workshop in Serbia (see Appendix 1). The aims and objectives were set based on the wider UNDA framework as well as given national context. She concluded her intervention by presenting the expected outcomes of the UNDA Workshop 2014 in Serbia.

³ The UN Economic Commission for Europe's (UNECE) Committee on Housing and Land Management (CHLM) has agreed on the text of a Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing. The Charter represents a political commitment by the 56 UNECE Member States to address a wide variety of environmental, health and social issues associated with housing, and provides guidelines and benchmarks for monitoring progress. It also supports policies and actions, and encourages international cooperation at all levels. The text was agreed during the Committee's 75th session, held on 8-9 October 2014, in Geneva, Switzerland.

Ms. Svetlana Ristić, presented recommendations laid out in “Country Profile on the Housing Sector: Serbia and Montenegro” prepared by the UNECE in 2006⁴. She focused on four important areas that this document addressed in regards to Serbian context: (1) advancing policy priorities, (2) institutional development and capacity building, (3) changes in the legal framework and (4) reforms of the housing finance system. She gave brief evaluation about progress made in implementation of these recommendations (the degree of fulfilment). She stressed that the recommendations outlined in UNECE document in 2006 will be reassessed based on the conclusions of the UNDA Workshop 2014, adjusted to the current situation and needs in the Republic of Serbia, as well as directives deriving from the strategic documents recently prepared and launched by the UNECE (eg. Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing).

Session 1 Housing Accessibility and Affordability after disasters

In 2014 devastating floods affected large part of Serbian territory and caused significant damage⁵ and loss. For this reason one of the key sessions of the UNDA Workshop 2014 was to overview the work undertaken in housing sector in this regard, highlight the issues that need further attention or development. The session provided a comprehensive review of the issues related to emergency response to recent floods, spatial analysis of the territory of Serbia in regards to the areas in risk of disasters, and disaster risk reduction in the future plans and policies.

A. Challenges of providing housing after disasters

Ms. Svetlana Ristic introduced the presenters. She invited the representatives of the Ministry of the Interior (Mr. Babović and Ms. Jaksić) to provide an overview of the emergency response to floods in 2014.

Mr. Živko Babović, provided an in-depth overview of roles and responsibilities of the Ministry of Interior in event of natural disasters. He provided details about emergency response to the natural disaster and post-disaster management in Republic of Serbia. He presented the legal and institutional framework underpinning the Ministry’s operation in these events. He explained the details of operation of this system in response to recent floods. In addition Mr. Babović presented examples of housing care/provision that were secured in response to the recent floods.

Ms. Dragana Jaksić presented the system of preventive protection against disaster in the Republic of Serbia, which is based on the assessment and disaster risk reduction, development of monitoring and emergency alert system and building resilience to disasters.

Mr. Luca Rossi showed that the issue of disaster risk reduction is a critical and expensive issue both in developed and developing counties and stressed while the number of natural disasters has not increased, urban development and expansion of settlements puts more people at risk of disasters. The destruction of industrial assets and private property results

⁴ UNECE country Profile on the Housing Sector: Serbia and Montenegro is available from: <http://www.unece.org/hlm/prgm/cph/countries/serbiaandmontenegro/welcome.html>

⁵ Background information: “In Serbia, the floods affected some 1.6 million people and resulted in 51 casualties, of which 23 were due to drowning. Around 32,000 people were evacuated from their homes. The majority of evacuees found accommodation with relatives, but some 5,000 required temporary shelters in camps established by the Government and the Serbian Red Cross. Health facilities, schools and agricultural lands were damaged. On 15 May the Government declared a state of emergency for its entire territory” ([Govt, 15 Jul 2014](#)).

in significant economic loss for the affected states. Mr. Rossi, quoted “The Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction” released in 2011, pointing increasing of the urbanisation risks. He explained post-2015 framework and priorities for action for disaster risk reduction. Mr. Rossi showed areas of collaboration between UNISDR and UNECE.

B. Urban development and Disaster risk reduction

Ms. Nevena Đurđević, from the Republic Agency for Spatial Planning explained the key principles and elements of spatial plans in Serbia which relate to disaster risk reduction and for preventive protection of the natural and built environment. She presented spatial analysis (GIS based) of the territory of the Republic of Serbia and the Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia. She focused on the elements of the plan related to natural disaster risk assessment. In addition she provided an in-depth analysis based on the Spatial Plan of the Municipality Obrenovac. This is an important case study because Obrenovac was the municipality that was most affected by 2014 floods.

Mr. Emil Dimitrov and Ms. Jelena Marinković from the Urban Planning Institute of Belgrade explained the role of urban plans as preventive instruments. They focused on the disaster risk reduction in case of potential disasters caused by human activity, in this case landfill sites⁶. They provided a comprehensive and detailed presentation of the urban plan and regulation for sanitation of the landfill Vinca. This is an especially relevant case study as the landfill Vinca is instable and may slide into the river Danube if not regulated.

Conclusions of the Session 1

Challenges:

1. The evidence shows that the number of disasters has not increased at the global level. However, the exposure of the population to disasters has augmented. This is primarily due to urban expansion and the increase of illegal⁷ construction and expansion of informal settlements;
2. Republic of Serbia possesses a system for risk reduction and emergency response to disasters. However, several areas have been identified as needing further development;
3. Spatial and urban planning is one of the key mechanisms for prevention and protection from natural disasters the presenters agreed;
4. It is particularly important to focus the efforts on the development of preventive measures, in order to identify potential risks, prevent human fatalities and reduce damage to property as well as minimize the economic loss caused by natural disasters.

Recommendations

Response to disaster risk reduction and make more resilience cities:

In order to improve the disasters risk reduction and emergency response system in the Republic of Serbia, it is necessary to strengthen the national capacity in this field, through:

1. Increasing knowledge and awareness of the decision makers about the importance of regulation and further development in the domain of disaster risk reduction.

⁶ Landfill - also known as a tip, dump, rubbish dump or dumping ground. It consist mainly of domestic waste.

⁷ Construction without official planning permission issued by an authorized agency or institution.

2. Increasing state budget spending for these purposes, primarily for improvement of technical and technological capacity and equipment.
3. Strengthening of relevant institutions and their organizational frameworks, including development of strategies for tackling new challenges and update/modernization of the legal framework as well as spatial and urban plans.
4. Increasing international cooperation in this field, exchange of knowledge (and experiences) and learning from good practices.

Response to prevention of the losses caused by natural disasters:

5. Prevention through spatial and urban planning includes: (1) identification and assessment of disaster risk to the population; (2) planning and undertaking the necessary measures reduce the risk of disasters to the population and property.
6. More work is necessary to improve and advance the following areas in order to actively contribute disaster risk reduction in Serbia: (1) spatial information systems that provide relevant information about the areas exposed to natural disasters. This includes establishing the geographical information systems and information exchange on global, inter-national, regional and local levels (eg. the use of satellite images, networking and exchange of data on international and regional level) for predict and monitor effect of disaster. In this regard the EU INSPIRE initiative is of vital importance for Serbia as well as adjustment of the national systems to its framework; and (2) early warning systems with necessary techniques and technologies improvement for monitoring risk of disasters.
7. One of key measure to prevent fatal economic loss (caused by disasters) on household level is increasing property insurance that covers property damage/loss due to natural disasters among other issues.

Session 2 Energy efficiency in housing and renewable energy technologies

Similarly to some other countries with economies in transition notably Eastern and Central Europe, the majority of the housing stock (63%) in the Republic of Serbia was built between 1946 and 1980. Significant share of the housing stock (83%) does not have sufficient thermal insulation. The housing share in the final energy consumption is extremely high (about 50%). This is because of the reduced economic activities (primarily industry), but also due to high intensity of energy consumption. For instance, inadequate energy usage (electricity), and low energy efficiency of the existing housing stock. Session 2. addressed the challenges that the sector faces but also presented comprehensive research projects, activities of MCTI including legislative change and training activities that have been carried out in the past 4 years.

A. International perspectives

Ms. Amie Figueiredo highlighted that housing sector has a significant impact on the environment. She emphasized the importance of raising energy efficiency in the housing sector as a way to reduce this impact. She outlined the numerous advantages that come as the result of improvement of energy efficiency in the housing sector but also pointed to the common barriers for doing so. In addition, Ms. Figueiredo presented the key activities of the UNECE Committee on Housing and Land Management in regards to energy efficiency in the housing sector.

B. National practices

Presentation of **Ms. Jasminka Pavlović** focused on measures that have been taken to improve energy efficiency in housing sector in Serbia, particularly measures related to

advancement of the legal framework and improvement of the national evidence base in this regard. In the past four years, the Ministry (MCTI) has carried out an extensive work in the area of energy efficiency. MCTI marks significant achievements in this sector such as amendment of the current Law on Planning and Construction⁸. Ms. Pavlović noted that changes of the Law on Planning and Construction included a proposal for establishing a revolving fund for energy efficiency, as a main financial instrument for improvement of energy efficiency in housing (and wider building stock). Furthermore, she listed several activities that are currently in operation: education about energy efficiency especially at the local level (local authorities) and requirement of the professional exams covering energy efficiency measures, energy efficiency licencing (so called 'energy passports'), and raising public awareness about the importance of energy efficiency and how to achieve it in the civil sector.

(Note: this work should be considered as a case study on energy efficiency UNECE publications and/or events).

Ms. Milica Jovanović Popović presented the project "National Typology of Housing Buildings in Serbia". This project has been implemented in 15 EU member states and in Serbia. Ms. Jovanović Popović outlined the methodology and research strategy used in the project. Furthermore, she presented the results of the analysis including strategy developed for classification of dwellings (housing) in Serbia. The housing stock was classified based the characteristic of energetic performance. She explained possibilities for practical application of the Project results, which are she considers to be a good starting point for taking appropriate and the most effective measures for improvement of energy efficiency in housing in Serbia (based on type). The project contains in depth analysis of construction methods including the level of thermal insulation based on each housing type. The project provided excellent results, it was supported by GIZ⁹ initially, but was stopped because of lack of research funds.

(Note: this work should be considered as a case study on energy efficiency UNECE publications and/or events).

Mr. Dušan Ignjatović presented the 'Energy Training' campaign 2014-2015. The activities were underpinned by the research on "National Typology of Housing Buildings in Serbia" (presented by Ms. Jovanović Popović) and was carried out through 11 workshops and local campaigns in the municipalities across Serbia. The campaign was designed to implement the recommendations deriving from the above research. One of the goals of the project was raising awareness among the representatives of relevant local authority departments (utility services) about the importance of energy efficiency in the housing sector. The participants of the workshops were trained to 'See Energy' (use infrared photos of individual buildings to identify energy leaks), 'Communicate Energy' (implement the energy performance

⁸ Law on Planning and Construction, Republic of Serbia ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 72/09, 81/09 - amended, 64/10-CC, 24/11, 121/12, 42/13-CC, 50/13-CC and 98/13- CC)

- Rulebook on Energy Efficiency of Buildings ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 61/11),
- Rulebook on Conditions, Content and Manner of Issuing Energy Performance Certificate of Buildings ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 69/12),
- Rulebook on Conditions, Programme and Manner of Passing the Professional Exam in the Field of Spatial and Urban Planning, Project Design and Execution of Works ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 4/10, 21/10 and 14/12)
- Rulebook on Conditions and Procedure of Issuing and Revoking License for Responsible Urban Planner, Designer, Contactor and Responsible Planner ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 116/04 and 69/06)

⁹ GIZ - Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH

certificates (presented by Ms. Pavlović in the first session), 'Discuss energy' (take part in debates in 30 municipalities in Serbia regarding the implementation of EE measures as defined by the sub-law regulations (2013)). In addition Mr. Ignjatović, explained the role of an 'energy consultant' on local level, that participates in creation of local strategic documents, preparation of municipal spatial and urban plans, define local energy indicators to support local decision making and monitoring process.

(Note: this work should be considered as a case study on energy efficiency UNECE publications and/or events).

Conclusions of the Session 2

Challenges:

1. The residential sector accounts for a large share of consumption of all resources, especially of energy consumption. Improvement of energy efficiency is high priority in majority of the UNECE member states. Serbia has taken important steps in this regard;

2. Considering the current situation in Serbia, improvement of the energy efficiency in residential sector is seen to have the capacity to significantly increase housing sustainability, increase employment and positively affect the local economy.

Recommendations

In the past four years significant results have been achieved in terms of new research, capacity building and adaptation of the legislation. However, there are several issues that must be addressed in order to implement these fully and ensure long term commitment to energy efficiency:

1. First of all it is necessary to provide structural preconditions for the promotion of energy efficiency in housing, as a specific segment of construction sector, which is also associated with the social aspects, legal framework for the effective implementation of the measures, implementation strategy, financial support to households and similar;

2. Funding presents one of the key challenges in advancing the good practices presented. Therefore, it is necessary to provide reliable sources of funding to support continuous implementation of measures to improve energy efficiency in Serbia, including: (1) continued research for development of energy efficiency in housing, (2) retrofitting of the existing housing stock including sustainable financial instruments to support households to maintain and improve the existing housing stock, new construction that meets higher energy efficiency standards; (3) development and restructuring of the sector of energy service providers; (4) improvement of institutional and organizational aspects such as raising awareness among the decision makers at local level about the importance of energy efficiency and how to achieve it.

3. Advancement of monitoring system for energy efficiency in buildings, further development of information systems (DMS) established by MCTI, are of great importance for the future improvement of energy efficiency of housing. These initiatives have a great potential and should be further supported.

4. The support of the European Union is seen as vital. It may include use of technical and financial support, participation in joint projects, learning from good practices and exchange of experiences. Therefore, this support should be maximized, which requires fulfill of necessary preconditions in order to continuing and intensifying of activities within this international cooperation.

Session 3 Role of State and public intervention in housing provision and other housing related support

Serbia is a country with economy in transition. Its current housing legislation and practice still include the aspects of both systems. The housing legislation and institutional framework supporting it are still in process of transition. This is especially challenging in regards to the housing sector that requires significant financial commitment and long term support at all levels of government. Since the 2000s Serbia has seen change of the agencies inherited from the pre-transition period as well as establishment of the new ones. This session invited the key agencies providing social housing and provided them a platform to present their current activities.

A. Role of State in the housing sector development

Presentation of **Ms. Svetlana Ristic** focused on the differences between the planned and market economy. She stressed that the Republic of Serbia is still in the transition between two and its housing laws still have characteristic of both systems. She explained how these characteristics reflected on: the Law on Housing, adopted in 1992 (when there were about 27% of public apartments); the Law on Maintenance of Residential Buildings (adopted in 1995 after privatization of public apartments); Law on the Basic Elements of the Property Rights (adopted in 1980 and amended in 1996, but which is still valid); and finally the Law on Social Housing adopted in 2009.

Mr. Paulius Kulikauskas informed the present about the activities of UN-Habitat and its role in the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development. He elaborated the proposed 'Goal 11': to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe resilient and sustainable. He explained the UN-Habitat methodology for rapid analyses of urban development necessary for developing of urban and housing policies.

Ms. Maja Lakićević presented the activities of the Republic Housing Agency in the domain of social housing. This work is underpinned by the Social Housing Programme. The programme is implemented in six cities in Serbia. The construction has been completed in Zrenjanin, Pancevo, Kraljevo and Cacak, while it is still in progress in Nis and Kikinda. Up to date the project provided 135 new housing units (7.937,46m² of built surface), out of these 49 apartments are planned to remain property of beneficiary municipalities. The municipalities are obliged to rent these under favorable conditions (affordable rent). She also outlined the Programme of Urban Regeneration of Residential Area in Kraljevo, municipality that was damaged by the earthquake in 2010. She stressed the importance of the further development in the area of social housing in Serbia including raising capacities of the local government development (staff, urban and architectural development).

B. Housing programmes supporting by the public sector and international donations

Ms. Danijela Popović Rocco presented the activities of the Commissariat for Refugees (Government of Serbia) in regards to housing provision for refugees. She explained different modalities of housing support for refugees, ranging from: granting building materials for construction, purchase of homes in rural areas, providing flats for rent, and social housing. She also spoke about the Regional Housing Programme for refugees.

Ms. Branislava Žarković presented the programme Social Housing in Supportive Environment. The programme was launched in 2003 in response to the needs of refugees and IDPs in Serbia. It has since evolved to cover the especially vulnerable populations (ei. individuals and households classified as homeless according to ETHOS) and Roma population. The programme consists of two key components: (1) housing provision and (2) creation of supportive environment through which vulnerable population can better integrate in the local community. This programme was founded by the Ministry for Social Affairs and the Commissariat for Refugees in 2003. It provided total of 1,014 housing units in 42 municipalities in Serbia as of 2014. The programme was one of the final runner-ups for the World Habitat Awards 2014/15 for its practical and innovative solutions in housing sector.

(Note: this work should be considered as a case study on social and supported housing in UNECE publications and/or events).

Mr. Ratko Rogan presented role of the Association of Housing Agencies in general and role of individual (local) housing agencies in particular in development of social housing sector in Serbia. He stressed the importance of the Social Housing Law in this regard. In line with this legislation the 'local housing agency' was envisaged as an institution for housing development and management of the public housing fund. The first housing agency was found in municipality of Kragujevac in November 2003. Currently there are 16 housing agencies of this type in Serbia. Mr. Rogan provided a chronological overview of the process of evolution of municipal housing agencies in regards to the transformation of the public housing fund. He informed the present about activities of the Housing Agency of Novi Sad and its current housing projects.

Mr. Goran Blagojević, presented the efforts of the Belgrade City Administration in provision of social and affordable housing. He said that the programme 1100 apartments in Belgrade planned for affordable housing provision across three tenures: home ownership, social housing and supported housing. Founded in 2003 the programme provided 2.244 housing units for sale (discounted price), 626 social housing units, 60 supported housing units. The programme housed 8273 individuals. He outlined the legal framework that underpins such development and pointed out the challenges the city faced in the process of implementation of the affordable and social housing project particularly regarding the housing allocation (because of legal framework for housing and its changes). Mr. Blagojević stressed that the city administration received total of 20.157 applications for this housing programme (totaling 55.117 individuals), indicating the increasing need for affordable and social housing provision in Belgrade.

Interventions from the floor:

Two interventions were received from the audience in response to the presentations in Session 3. Ms. Dragana Jaksić (Ministry of Interior) stressed that the housing affordability is decreasing for public sector workers (including army and police).

Intervention was received from Mr. Žarko Grubić, representative of the "Velegrad" tenants association. Mr. Grubić stressed the increased challenges that the elderly and aging population is facing in regards to housing affordability, including financial hardship to carry out needed maintenance and repair.

These interventions stressed that in Serbia, similarly to the rest of the UNECE region, the social housing need is not only increasing but it is diversifying.

Conclusions of the Session 3

Challenges

1. In the past 20 years, Serbia has accumulated valuable experience from international cooperation (including management of international donations and budget grants) in addressing the housing problems of refugees and internally displaced people. Organizational and institutional capacities and experience thus acquired should be built upon and used for developing long term finance and sustainable housing programs.

2. Serbia has a significant number of institutions (national and local level), in public and non-government sector that are engaged in different forms of housing support, but which don't act consistently within the legally defined social housing system. The basic institutional infrastructure for social housing policy implementation, in the broadest sense of the term, rests upon: (1) on the national level – the Republic Housing Agency, which needs to intensify its activities in the future; the National Corporation for Insurance of Housing Loans, which has so far mostly dealt with supporting households with higher incomes; and (2) on the local level – city and municipal housing agencies, as well as several non-government organization which act in the housing sector on non for profit base.

3. Serbia possesses a system of laws that regulates the national housing system. However, in addition there are number of laws and regulation that address specific groups of population in need. These laws are often not aligned with the general legislation or with other similar laws and regulations.

Recommendations

Institutional development:

1. Advancement of work of different institution for housing and they collaboration is of key importance for development of the social housing.

2. Local non-profit and non-government organizations with experience in implementation of the housing project for poor households should be included in the official social housing institutional framework in order to benefit from existing capacities and diversify providers and models of financing. It is also necessary to strengthen associations of local social housing providers, such as the Association of Housing Agencies.

3. Agencies dealing with social housing would benefit greatly from the exchange of the good practices and lessons from long standing organizations of the sort from abroad, as well as from the training and capacity building exercises in underpinned by good practices.

Legislation:

4. There is a need of review and alignment of the current legislation related to housing in general and social housing in particular. reassessment

5. Legal framework should be further developed and clarified in order to enable further diversification of this infrastructure through inclusion of local non-governmental organizations with experience in the social housing field.

6. There are housing laws that are obsolete and no longer respond to the current situation and they are often discriminatory, without clearly defined public interest. For this reason they need to be a subject of comprehensive review and redefinition along with fiscal reform (tax regulation) and ownership regulations (especially land and property registry).

7. Housing legislation and appropriate housing and tax regulations should be (re)defined after establishing new national housing policy.

8. Legislation regulating social care and housing issues should be further developed in order to provide comprehensive definition of homelessness in compliance with ETHOS typology and establish coherent system of housing support and following services.

Opening Session Day 13th of November 2014

Mr. Đorđe Mojić presented review of housing policy approaches from 1990 to nowadays, dividing it to four notable periods: the beginning of the 1990s, characterized by almost total privatization of the social housing stock and different social and economic difficulties in Serbia; 2000-2005 which was characterized by processes of democratization and decentralization; 2005-2010 beginning of housing reforms; and 2010 onwards characterized by the economic crises.

Session 4 Housing affordability

Lack of housing affordability presents one of the key challenges in Serbia. The period after the 2000 has been characterised by housing price increase that has been not proportional to the increase in the level of incomes. The cost of finance (ei. mortgages and loans) is significantly higher than in the EU member states even for insured mortgages. This makes the access to home ownership (through mortgage finance) unaffordable for most of the population in Serbia. According to estimates only 10% of the population can afford homes using mortgage finance. In social housing sector (and other affordable housing) the lack of funds presents one of the key challenges. This session addressed these issues from international and national perspectives.

A. International perspectives

Ms. Orna Rosenfeld presented the key findings of the UNECE Social Housing Study¹⁰. She highlighted that the housing need is increasing across the UNECE region and that the need for social housing has not been met. She pointed out that the majority of the UNECE countries are currently reassessing their housing policies and housing finance systems in order to adjust them to the realities of the post GFC housing market dynamics. In the followings she presented the key principles of housing affordability¹¹. She pointed out that the standard principles of housing affordability (that account that housing is affordable if the households do not need to spend more than 30% of their income on housing) seldom take into consideration the cost burden related to utility bills (that may require more than 25% of household income in countries in transition). This is especially critical in the countries that have carried out tariff reforms without wider consideration of housing affordability. Increased share of the utility bills and high cost of finance makes housing less affordable. In conclusion she provided a brief overview of key financial assistance mechanisms used for development of social housing (ei. capital grants, public loans, tax reductions, revolving funds, cross subsidies, protected circuits of savings etc.). She stressed that the key challenge for the countries with economies in transition are limited state funds and the high cost of finance.

¹⁰ The UNECE Social Housing Study will be available at the beginning of 2015. The Study was presented at the at the CHLM Committee's 75th session, held on 8-9 October 2014, in Geneva, Switzerland. For the main findings and of the UNECE Social Housing Study please follow:

http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/hlm/sessions/docs2014/75th_session/Unofficial_docs/informal.note.2.pdf

¹¹ In general terms, housing is considered affordable when the households spend no more than 30% of their disposable income on housing.

B. National practices

Mr. Živorad Stanković presented the draft of Regulation on Using the Funds for Social Housing, which necessary bylaw for full implementation of the Law on Social Housing adopted in 2009. This bylaw was developed by the expert group and supported by the Association of Housing Agencies. It regulates the basic conditions and criteria for using the housing funds; procedures for initiating, developing and implementing programmes and projects for social housing; basic type of beneficiaries for housing support; roles and responsibilities of key actors, etc. This said, Mr. Stanković stressed that the fund has limited reach considering the current housing need.

Ms. Svetlana Ristić presented the main aspects of the National Social Housing Strategy, as a strategic approach, its main principles and aims. She provided a detailed explanation about the forms of housing support, such as housing support in programmes for social protection, access to apartments for public rental housing, regulated private rental housing, construction of apartments for non-profit purchase, improving housing conditions, housing allowances, insurance and subsidies to mortgage loan and finally tax reliefs. She noted affordability as main challenge for social housing in Serbia.

Conclusions of the Session 4

Challenges:

1. Many countries are facing lack of affordable housing, particularly the countries with low purchasing power. It is also characteristic for the countries which have not coherent housing policy and clear identified housing priorities. Affordability in Serbia is extremely low, therefore housing right is one of the least accessible rights.
2. There is not a general method for social housing system organization which can be applied in Serbia. It depends on tradition and conditions for developing social housing in certain countries (for instance, role and importance of private and public providers of social housing services).
3. Infrastructure in Serbia is obsolete and marks high losses (eg. over 30% of loss from water systems, the main electricity supplier has been damaged in the recent floods) and for this reason it is expected that in the future this infrastructure will go through significant reconstruction.

Recommendations

1. Housing affordability can be increased significantly through non-profit housing programs and projects, as well as diversification of social housing providers and application of housing subsidies and other supportive housing measures for poor and vulnerable households, a long standing practice in European countries. The public sector support for housing should be harmonized (ei. rules of housing support) as well as adjusted to cover all potential users (not only selected groups) who cannot afford decent housing in the market.

Housing providers

2. There is a need for diversification and further support and development of non-profit housing organizations, which are regulated by the Social Housing Law. There is a need for providing good conditions for operation of non-profit housing providers. In this regard, establishment and implementation of unique operation standards, in regards to social

housing delivery (maintenance and management), control of service quality, is of vital importance.

3. Professional training, capacity building of housing providers' staff is of vital importance for individual organizations. In this regard the non-profit housing providers in Serbia would benefit greatly from international exchange with organizations with long standing experience from abroad as well as social housing federations that manage these on national level.

4. Clear definition of rights and obligations of providers as well as users social housing services is required as well.

Housing policy and legislation

5. MCTI has accumulated initial experience in the implementation of the Social Housing Law. It has been pointed out that there is a need for amendments of this Law, in order to precise the procedures of housing allocation, to increase diversification of social housing providers, and to increase transparency of non-profit housing organizations affairs and quality control of service delivery.

6. There is necessity to adopt the Regulation of Using the Funds for Social Housing and to complete the legal framework for social housing.

7. Legislation regulating different forms of public intervention in the field of housing should also be mutually correlated and harmonized in order to ensure coherence and availability of appropriate housing support for different needs and avoid spatial concentration of social problems

Housing finance

8. Further measures are needed in order to reduce the cost of finance, for housing in general and social housing in particular.

9. Long term commitment to social housing requires reliable funding sources from public budgets at all levels – central to local. The international experience shows that investment that is made available only for specific time periods (with breaks in investment) is more expensive and the abrupt pause in construction may lead to further economic loss. Therefore it is necessary to establish reliable source of cheap funds on central level for long term finance of the social housing programmes.

10. Long term commitment to the social housing sector can reduce the cost of finance. The establishment and strengthening of organizations that provide social housing is important in this regard. This is in order to make sure that the available funds are managed properly, that there are clear lines of accountability (for housing providers) in terms of the funding and investment dedicated to social housing.

11. It is necessary to take into consideration the financial sustainability of the entire system of social housing, individual projects (new development), and management and operation of the existing ones.

12. Financial viability of the projects is of key importance when considering long term development of the social housing.

13. The strong organizational structure is also important to ensure the staff capacity to assess the financial viability of development schemes during construction period and during the life of the building; this includes financial viability of management and maintenance in relate to rent collection and access to subsidies.

14. Housing affordability calculation that does not take into account the cost of utilities may cause unexpected problems in terms of burdening a household with housing costs, for both rent paying households and first time buyers.

15. It is necessary to establish unified policy support for the most endangered population categories especially for homeless persons. This includes system of subsidies for households that do not have enough funds to pay basic housing costs as well as increasing investment in providing the housing for the most vulnerable households and persons.

Session 5 Sustainable housing and low standard of living

Lack of housing affordability presents one of the key challenges in housing sector in Serbia. As noted the output of the non-profit housing providers is limited and more work needs to be done to increase its housing provision (see Session 4.). These will require long time planning and commitments. This session addressed the techniques that can be implemented by households themselves and require much shorter period of implementation and institutional commitment. This is especially relevant to the Serbian national context for two reasons. (1) Majority of the housing stock in Serbia are family homes¹², (2) large number of homes was built through self-building. The presenters at the session focused on the traditional materials and techniques that are significantly cheaper than the industrial ones and have outstanding energy performance.

A. Traditional building materials and techniques

Mr. Radojko Obradović, explained possibilities of using straw-bale as a construction material, which is almost cost free, renewable and has excellent energy performance. Straw-bale houses can be considered as passive houses, because they require very low energy consumption of 8 kWh/m² to keep warm. They provide excellent acoustic insulation. Walls of the straw-bale homes can act as bearing walls and therefore straw-bale is 'structural material'. Construction with this material is simple, affordable (only half of average construction price per square metre of housing, except the land) and environmentally friendly. Serbia has a large production of wheat that therefore large surplus of unused straw. Every year 7-8 million (m³) cubic meters of straw remain unused. According to Mr. Obradović, this is enough for construction of over 100.000 homes with surface of 100 (m²) meter square. Straw-bale houses have a long life, are healthy and safe for living, because plastered walls are resistant to fire.

Mr. Boris Žerjav, representative of the OSCE, showed activities of Project „European Support to Roma ” related to housing. The project is funded by the European Union while the OSCE provides technical support. The project is implemented by number of responsible ministries. The project focuses on Roma population and consists of several different components: access to basic rights and civil participation, labour market development, education, health, social protection, adequate housing and creation of employment. The main goal of the project is improvement of the living conditions in Roma settlements. The main outputs of the project (housing component) are envisaged to be: GIS mapping of substandard Roma settlements, urban plans for their regulation, project documentation supporting improvement of utility and development of adequate housing models. The plan will be implemented in 20 municipalities.

¹² Based on “National Typology of Housing Buildings in Serbia” presented in Session 2.

Robert Bu, presented the activities of the Ecumenical Humanitarian Organization (EHO) that relate to upgrading of substandard settlements. These activities focus on Roma and other vulnerable population in Serbia and are based on “Dweller-driven” approach. The project rests on the active participation of residents in regulation and upgrading of their settlement.

Main principles are: participation, flexibility, economic effectiveness and efficiency, comprehensive approach, cross sector cooperation and sustainability. The main implemented housing models are: sanitation upgrading of (av.2,000 €/house), strengthening the structure of the homes and sanitation upgrading (av.2,800 €/house) and construction of small homes “Core house ” (av.3,600 €/house). The EHO also published the Construction Manual for Upgrading of the Substandard Settlements. This is a manual provided to the residents directly. It helps train them to self-build or self-upgrade their homes.

(Note: this work (Robert Bu) should be considered as a case study on social and supported housing in UNECE publications and/or events).

Presentation of **Mr. Vladimir Macura and Ms. Zlata Vuksanović Macura** was about adobe as traditional construction. Construction with adobe is still live tradition in Serbia, particularly in Vojvodina. The technique of adobe building (and maintenance/repair) is passed from generation to generation in this region. When well maintained the adobe homes may last over 100 years in the region. The adobe construction is very cheap as it relies on the locally available material (“mud”) it provides good thermal insulation, it is green and eco-friendly. Therefore, according to Mr. Macura it is suitable for self-construction for poor and other households. Unfortunately adobe isn’t standardized in the law, which is one of main obstacle for it more intensive use.

B. Infrastructure for housing

Ms. Lea Kronaveter gave a presentation on water supply and sanitation as an important issue in achieving sustainable housing. Access to water is one of the key preconditions for sustainable housing. Affordability of drinking water is very important issue. It related directly to the efficiency of the public water supply system. The water losses in Serbia reach 46% according to Ms. Kronaveter, this loss is due to (1) obsolete infrastructure and physical loss of water (2) non-revenue water, water harvested ‘illegally’ in informal and illegal settlements. Informal and illegal settlements as well as partial property registry present obstacles in efficient and cost effective operation of the system apart from the physical issues related to piping. The improvements can be achieved through reducing non-revenue water, reducing energy costs, overall energy usage and utilizing alternative water sources, as well as providing solutions (agreed norms) for provision of non-revenue water (for informal settlements). In practice it means better control and management of water systems. This presentation also related to some on-situ household sanitation solutions. The potential infrastructure upgrade should be considered Vis a Vis housing cost burden to residents.

Conclusions of the Session 5

Challenges:

1. There are many still unused opportunities for application of locally available building materials that could contribute to building health and affordable houses, but the application

of these materials is not standardized. Also, the knowledge of traditional building techniques is being lost slowly, although it is still a living tradition in some areas.

Recommendations

Planning System

1. It is essential to improve and speed-up the process of legalization of illegally constructed buildings as well as informal settlements, through: spatial regulation of informal and illegal urban areas and settlements.

2. Increasing the responsiveness of the planning system in process of accessing planning applications (new housing) and granting planning permissions is of vital importance. In other words, the time of the planning application process on municipality level should be brought to examination and shortened. Timely response of the planning offices to the demand for building have the capacity to reduce the occurrence of illegal building (without planning permission).

Housing provision:

3. Provision of wide choice of housing options in terms of the housing tenure, housing type, housing provider (ei. Private developers, social housing providers, individual households) enabling varied techniques of building (emphasis on traditional) is key for achieving and maintaining sustainability of the housing sector.

4. This relates to both new construction, maintenance and regeneration of the existing stock. It includes improving infrastructure for substandard and rural settlements and improving homes of poor households.

5. In regards to above it is important to develop support mechanisms for organized self-construction of homes (especially for the most vulnerable), in accordance with the appropriate construction standards and compliance with building regulations. Encouraging of the development of limited profit and non-profit housing organizations and providers along with the private sector, is instrumental for this cause.

Traditional housing techniques:

6. Increasing the use of healthy, natural and locally available construction materials, which are environmental friendly is seen to be a great unused potential in Serbia. Supporting this type of building materials are affordable for majority of households and with a long tradition of self-building may bring significant results in the future.

7. In order to achieve the above, it is important to increase the public awareness about various housing solutions and make efforts to break prejudice about the use of unconventional building techniques and construction technologies.

8. It is essential to improve knowledge and good practice exchange in implementation of alternative housing projects in Serbia and beyond. This could be achieved through: workshops on traditional and freely available materials and alternative techniques for housing construction, including practical training, networking events of experts specializing in the theoretical and practical application of natural and freely available construction materials and building techniques.

9. In this regard it is essential to develop a legislative framework to regulate the usage of traditional and available construction materials and techniques.

10. Develop standards and a 'certification system' for traditional and available building materials, to ensure their reliable and wide application.

Session 6 Condominium management and maintenance

The share of condominium buildings in Serbia is relatively lower than in other countries with economies in transition (eg. EECA and SEE). However, the number of multi apartment buildings built in the period between 1946-1980 is still significant and requires legislation, organisational attention, maintenance and repair that were provided by public companies in the period before transition.

Ms. Klara Danilović presented activities of the Standing Conference of Town and Municipalities in the area of housing and urban development. She particularly stressed the activities related to developing a platform for reform of the management and maintenance of condominiums. This Platform provides assessment of the current situation in this sector, maps of existing initiatives, identifies problems and sets long term objectives. It proposes measures for changing legal framework, prepares proposals for institutional change and capacity building. Most importantly, it manages pilot projects and supports training of residents in order to introduce systemic changes.

Mr. Franc Props shared the experience of the Slovenian private company for maintenance of residential buildings. He stressed the importance of appropriate and reliable legal framework in condominium building maintenance and management. This is important for quality of service in this sector. Mr. Props outlined the process of planning and implementation of maintenance activities, starting from basic technical evidence of previous maintenance practices, analysis of the current conditions of the building. He stressed the role of planning activities (for the period of one to five years) and implementation of plans (which start from the adopting of plan by the owner association and implementation of adopted activities). The process requires continuous participation of apartment owners. It requires good administration and technical and technological improvement of company capacities, particularly in the area of information technology.

Ms. Nina Malinovska outlined the mission of the Club of Presidents (of the assembly of residential buildings), which established in 2012. She also presented the Club's current activities. She stressed that good management of condominium building essentially means good relationship between neighbours and successful families in these buildings. The activities of the Club mainly relate to promotion of this issue and aim to raise awareness about the importance of good governance in this sector. The presenter also showed on practical examples that leadership of the condominium buildings matters, and that 'good building presidents' achieve better results (especially related to problem solving). The members of this Club make an effort to participate in government activities and take part in local governance.

Conclusions of the Session 6

Challenges:

1. There is undeniable need for changes in the ways multi-apartment buildings (condominiums) management and maintenance is carried out in Serbia. The current practice results in a continuous physical decline of condominiums and drop of their real estate value.

Most importantly, it increases risks of injury, causes health problems and endangers security building surroundings.

2. Serbia is the only country in the SEE Region that has not legally defined form of ownership in condominium buildings and the rights and obligations arising from it.

Recommendations

Legislative framework

1. It is necessary for the Government to take a firm decision in this regard and promote reforms a part of comprehensive housing policy and in collaboration with ministries responsible for justice and housing.

2. Platform the Standing Conference of Town and Municipalities to reform management and maintenance of multi-apartment buildings, present an appropriate starting point and pattern that shows how this reform can be implemented.

3. Experiences from the countries in the region, primarily former Yugoslavian, can be of vital assistance in the implementation of reforms, given that in many countries, such as, for instance, Slovenia, there is a rich experience of over 20 years in this regard.

Organizational framework

4. The organization of civil society or/and owners of apartments, represent solid base for implementation of above listed reforms. Case studies mapping good practices in management of residential buildings, show the essential factors upon which successful management is based, including what is acceptable and enforceable in the national urban culture.

5. Key potential for achieving the needed reforms are the energy and enthusiasm of individuals, president/managers of multi-apartment building associations. They need to be supported and fully engaged in order to start reforms in the sector of management and maintenance of multi-apartment buildings, especially in terms of improving the legal and institutional framework.

Session 7 Activities of donor and international organizations

Serbia marks high presence of international organisations from the UN system and European Union. At the time of writing there are two key reasons for this: (1) preparations for joining the European Union; (2) floods 2014. This session provided a brief overview of the activities of the European Union and UNHCR. It should be mentioned that apart from these organisations UNDP, UNOPS, OSCE (above mentioned) play significant role in activities related to housing.

Ms. Elizabeta Sartoreli reported on the EU activities in housing sector in Serbia. She paid special attention to matters the financial support and assistance the EU is providing to Serbia for the removal of flood damage. She explained current activities related to monitoring projects for housing construction and renewal, which are implemented by the different organizations.

Mr. Miloš Teržan presented the activities of the UNHCR. UNHCR is the UN organization that is the most active in the implementation of different housing project for refugees in Serbia: Social Housing in Supportive Environment, Village-Houses, Partial Self-Help/distribution of

building materials and Housing Micro Loans. In the period of 1998-2004 the UNHCR support or provided 1,576 housing solutions. UNHCR has participated in the projects of Social Housing in Supportive Environment and built 294 housing units with different partners.

Conclusions of the Session 7

8. There is a large number of international organizations present in Serbia. There is a need for mapping their activities, coordination of their activities and funds for better results. UN ONE framework presents a good base for this coordination and steps are being made to coordinate the activities at the local level.

9. However, this mapping relates to all activities that receive level of some support (eg. via WHO, UNICEF, UNOPS, UNDP, etc). These activities should be examined in terms of housing support and related to the goals stated in the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing. It is important to understand which aspect of housing (ei. environmental protection, social inclusion, etc.) is addressed by the existing activities and to what extent. There are four advantages of the UNECE for doing so: (1) clear overview of housing related activities, (2) positioning and targeting UNECE resources effectively and for better results, (3) clear communication with the Government and local stakeholders including the ability to brand UNECEs distinct contribution (4) creating partnerships with relevant international organizations for higher impact and better results.

Session 8 Conclusion of the sessions with presenting the finalized statements and next steps

Ms. Ristić, Mr. Mojović and Ms. Rosenfeld proposed final conclusions of the UNDA Workshop and recommendations for the next steps.

It was agreed that these proposals will be distributed to all participants of the first UNDA Workshop in Serbia for comment. Based on their feedback final conclusions will be drafted and recommendations outlined (as deriving from the activities of the UNDA Workshop 2014).

(Note: the first draft of this report written in Serbian was distributed to the participants of the Workshop for comments and suggestions. The final document contains their input).

FINAL CONCLUSIONS OF THE UNDA WORKSHOP AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIVITIES:

The UNDA Worksop held in Belgrade on the 12 and 13 of November 2014, provided a valuable platform to overview wide range of current activities in the housing sector, identify current challenges, as well as key issues that the participants are interested in advancing. The first workshop provided an opportunity to overview wide scope of issues, activities and programs related to housing. The next section provides recommendations deriving from the Workshop:

The participants agree that there is a pressing need for further advancement and improvement of the housing sector in Serbia.

1. Housing policy in the Republic of Serbia is not coherent and clearly formulated, this reflects in the inconsistency of the legal framework for housing, fragmentation and

mismatch of various housing initiatives, overlapping of responsibilities and insufficient capacity of institutions to develop of the housing policy. The housing policy in Serbia should be updated to reflect current situation and social and economic changes that have occurred since the last reform.

2. There is an evident lack of capacity for the development of the housing sector in the Republic of Serbia and it is necessary to strengthen the existing capacities for the development and implementation of housing policies at the all levels

3. Housing prices are high and unaffordable for the majority of the population, while there are several reasons for lack of housing affordability it is important to highlight: incoherent housing policy and continuing difficult economic situation in the country, instruments and support for housing excluded households with low and middle incomes are undeveloped.

4. It is necessary to develop and promote housing sector towards greater sustainability, in particular in relation to to: improving energy efficiency in the residential sector, increasing preparedness and resilience of the housing sector to natural disasters (including the risk and influence of disasters); increasing housing affordability, increasing financial sustainability and transparency of housing programs and projects supported by the public sector; improvement of the existing housing stock (primarily through improving management and maintenance of the multi-apartment buildings); development of innovative approaches to addressing housing needs, to ensure healthy and affordable housing for all.

5. In order to achieve more effective use of existing capacity, it is necessary to promote cooperation between different institutions at the national and local levels that operate in housing sector; strengthen the role of the Association of Housing Agencies, which represents the link between institutions at the national and local levels, as well as intensify and encourage cooperation with other relevant actors dealing with issues relevant to the development of the housing sector, such as universities, business, professional and civic associations, banking sector, international organizations and similar;

6. In order to coordinate activities, it is necessary to formulate an appropriate document - Action Plan to Strengthen National Capacities for Sustainable Housing and establish appropriate body for coordination of activities at the national level – Steering Committee, for whose work will be entrusted the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure;

7. Priority activities within this coordinating body would be related to the improvement and harmonization of the legal framework in the field of housing; improving housing standards in the new and existing housing stock, as well as the cooperation and exchange of experiences regarding the implementation of housing programs and projects, and also for improving the instruments for housing finance.

Appendix 1. Aims and objectives of the UNDA workshop in Serbia

Aims and objectives of the UNDA workshop as presented at the opening session of the Workshop by UNECE Senior Housing Expert, Ms. Orna Rosenfeld on the 12th of November, 2014.

Workshop 1. Aims and Objectives:

- Follow up on UNECE Serbia & Montenegro country profile and action plan
- Provide a platform to overview of current housing initiatives in Serbia
- Identify current trends and challenges in the housing sector in Serbia
- Provide recommendations for future strategies with a goal to make housing policy and provision more sustainable and policy efforts integrated.
- Provide support by developing National Action Plan

Areas of focus I. Governance, Organisation and Support

- Role of the state in housing provision and housing related support
- Intervention of the state in the housing market and housing affordability
- Housing programmes supported by national agencies
- Housing programmes supported by international agencies and donors
- Coordination of efforts by national agencies and local stakeholders
- Integration of the efforts by national and international agencies

Areas of focus II. Emergent Technical Issues and Special Programmes

- Housing accessibility after disasters and disaster risk reduction
- Energy efficiency in housing and renewable energy
- Condominium housing management and maintenance
- Housing standards including: matters of quality and health, infrastructure accessibility, affordability of utilities, special services and self building.
- Housing provision for special groups (ei. Roma, Refugees)

Expected Outputs Workshop 1. :

- **Identification of key trends and challenges:** organisational, policy related and technical.
- **Establishing country priorities:** identification of priorities for housing and urban development in Serbia for the National Action Plan.
- **Identification of policy areas that require integration and intersectoral cooperation** in order to support and deliver sustainable housing and urban development in Serbia.
- **Establishment of the National Steering Committee**