UNECE/UN-Habitat Guidelines on evidence-based policies and decision-making on sustainable housing and urban development

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Aim and structure

Aim of the presentation is to discuss approaches to evidence-based policy-making as included in the 'UNECE/UN-Habitat Guidelines on evidence-based policies and decision-making on sustainable housing and urban development'.

Structure:

- INTRODUCTION
- CHAPTER 1. PRODUCING DATA FOR SUSTAINABLE HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT POLICIES
- CHAPTER 2. DEVELOPING EVIDENCE FOR SUSTAINABLE HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT POLICIES
- CHAPTER 3. INFORMING HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT POLICIES AND DECISION-MAKING
- SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.
- RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

- Countries in the UNECE region face diverse urban development challenges, incl. limited access to decent quality, affordable housing.

- The lack of reliable data and insufficient capacities to use it hider urban development.

- There are various measures to promote sustainable housing and urban development in the UNECE region however multiple challenges remain.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

- The "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Urban Development" plays important role in addressing these challenges:
  - The 2030 Agenda envisages a new, more rigorous approach to policy development and implementation insofar as it focuses on embracing opportunities stemming from 'data revolution' and ensures that 'no one is left behind'.
  - One of priority tasks under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is better standards for the production, management and use of data and evidence in policy process.

Aim and objectives of the guidelines

Aim to improve capacities of UNECE countries to develop, review and implement evidence-based policies on sustainable housing and urban development.

Objectives:

- to capture diversity of ongoing activities to improve evidence-based policy-making on sustainable housing and urban development in the UNECE region,

- to demonstrate application of various approaches to production/collection of data, development of evidence and decision-making in policy process,

- to present benefits of deploying evidence-based approach(es) to policy-making in order to improve the review and to reinforce the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the UNECE region.

Definitions

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- Evidence-based policy-making –'helps people make well-informed decisions about policies, programmes and projects by putting the best available evidence at the heart of policy development and implementation' (Davies 1999).

- Data: 'facts and figures which relay something specific, but which are not organized in any way and which provide no further information regarding patterns, context, etc' (Thierauf 1999).

- Essence of the 'evidence' is that it emerges as a result of data analysis and that it is used in relation to a particular policy option – it creates an argument for and/or against it.

Producing data for sustainable housing and urban development policies

- Focus: the role of data in evidence-based policy-making; how data can be produced/ collected and opportunities and risks associated processes.

- Mapping key data providers and mainstream sources of data (e.g. the Housing and Population Census and household surveys).

- 'Data revolution', the raise of 'big data', 'geospatial information', 'citizen data' and the role private sector in data development and management.

- Value of 'data collaboratives' (Urban Data Centres in Netherlands).

Developing evidence for sustainable housing and urban development policies

- Focus: How data becomes evidence & how to develop a relevant and high quality evidence.

- Development of evidence for housing and urban development and 'leaving no one (and nowhere) behind'.
  - Disaggregation of data and achieving a high level of data granularity, especially per gender, age, ethnicity, income, disability and migratory status, and at the city level.

- Aggregation of data and designing indicator set (e.g. international frameworks supporting development and monitoring/review of urban and housing policies; (ii) measuring progress towards SDGs at the local level)

Developing evidence for sustainable housing and urban development policies

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Key Performance Indicators for Smart and Sustainable Cities

- Developed jointly by UNECE and ITU in the context of the United for Smart Sustainable Cities initiative (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.

Collection Methodology for Key Performance Indicators for Smart Sustainable Cities

Informing housing and urban development policies and decision-making

- Focus: opportunities and challenges for better decision-making on sustainable housing and urban development.

- Overview of selected methods/methodologies and tools for policy appraisal (at various stages of evidence-based policy process).

- 'Bottom-lines' in evidence-based policy-making –'universal' character of housing, collaborative nature of evidence-based policy-making in contemporary democracies; and policy transfer.

Informing housing and urban development policy and decision-making

- Reduction of biases by using tools/approaches that tie data collection, production, development of evidence and decision-making.

- A comprehensive policy evaluation + 'going beyond' ex-post policy evaluation.

- Impact assessment (such as Strategic Environmental Impact assessment, Land Use-based Integrated Sustainability Assessment, and others).

- The role of 'in-advance' approaches, especially foresight, integrated sustainability assessment and regulatory impact assessments in structuring policy process and guiding decision-making.

4 sets of thematic recommendations

A. Ensure an integrated and coordinated approach to the review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

B. Support openness of the data collection.

C. Promote comprehensive and integrated approaches to the organization of data.

D. Reduce Bias.

Thank you!

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