

# Towards Sustainable Smart City and post COVID-19 recovery

A COVID-19 Recovery Action Plan for Informal  
Settlements in the ECE Region



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# Overview of the Project

## Post COVID-19 Recovery in Informal Settlements in the ECE Region



### BACKGROUND

- Particular vulnerability of residents in informal settlements to COVID-19
- UNECE long-standing experience on informal settlements, most recently introduced “Guidelines on the formalization of informal constructions” (2019)
- Case studies on informal settlements in South-Eastern Europe (“Formalizing the informal” – 2015)

### PROJECT RATIONALE

1. **Emergency response to COVID-19** / future pandemics – short term actions for informal settlements
2. **Integrate** informal constructions **into formal land markets** to provide clear **ownership** and **security of tenure** and through this enhance **economic security** of residents.
3. **Upgrade** and **connect** informal settlements/newly formalized settlements **with basic services and infrastructure** to safeguard residents against future pandemics.

# Overview of the Project

## Post COVID-19 Recovery in Informal Settlements in the ECE Region



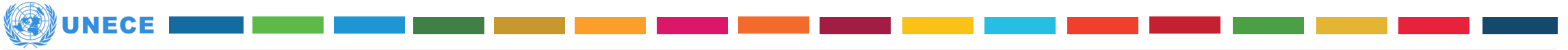
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### BENEFICIARY CITIES

Tirana (Albania), Podgorica (Montenegro), Skopje (North Macedonia) and Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan)

### KEY DELIVERABLES

1. City assessment reports and recommendations
2. COVID-19 Recovery Action Plan for Informal Settlements
3. Set of Policy Briefs (Water and Sanitation, Nature-Based Solutions, Urban Mobility, Innovative Financing, Energy)
4. Thematic workshops on policy areas covered by the Recovery Action Plan
5. Series of online lectures on the formalization process



## CITY ASSESSMENT REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Situation of informal settlement, formalization, etc.
- Challenges, gaps, needs
- Responses to COVID and impact of COVID on informal settlements
- Recommendations for cities
- Drafted by team of local consultants in the pilot cities
- Feed into preparation of Recovery Action Plan

# Draft COVID-19 Recovery Action Plan for Informal Settlements in the ECE Region

(ECE/HBP/2021/3), (ECE/HBP/2021/Inf.4)



## RATIONALE

### A Plan

- to address the specific challenges of COVID-19 within informal settlements while also addressing the achievement of the SDGs
- Targeted at national and local governments in the ECE region
- Providing a list of Goals, Targets, and Actions that can be advanced by governments, local authorities, residents, community leaders, NGOs, and other stakeholders to help
  - mitigate and/or prevent the COVID-19 pandemic spread
  - build back better to achieve greater resilience against future pandemic risks
  - Help to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with a particular focus on SDG 11

# COVID-19 Recovery Action Plan for Informal Settlements in the ECE Region



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Comprehensiveness**  
a comprehensive and integrative set of policies and behaviors that balance the dangers of a specific pandemic viral threat (COVID-19 in this instance), with the realities of our world.
- **Learning and flexibility**  
Policies should encourage and embrace best practices and emerging innovations. They should allow for flexibility in approaching various informal settlement challenges.
- **People-centered and human rights-based approach**  
A pandemic response that is interlinked with social policies that promote the well-being of society, respect, protect and fulfil human rights, support gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and help reduce social inequality.

# COVID-19 Recovery Action Plan for Informal Settlements in the ECE Region



## 9 POLICY AREAS

- 1 - Geospatial, land rights, tenure, resource allocation and justice
- 2 - Involvement of local communities and local action
- 3 - Basic data needs, telecommunication & information technology
- 4 - Physical infrastructure, water, sanitation and energy services
- 5 - Social and infrastructure services
- 6 - Stay at home recommendations, culture and vulnerable groups
- 7 - Food, basic consumption & distribution
- 8 - Environmental concerns, green spaces, recreation and social events
- 9 - Buildings, construction and land planning

## CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

- Data collection and management
- Communication and Promotional Plans
- Participation Plans
- Resource allocation and integration
- Economic benefits, local and political awareness and will
- Gender equality

# COVID-19 Recovery Action Plan for Informal Settlements in the ECE Region



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No specific time frames to allow for greater flexibility at the local level

General timing ideas are as follows

- 1. Emergency goals (emergency focused)**  
to be accomplished in less than 6 months
- 2. Short term goals (emergency related)**  
to be accomplished in less than 1 year
- 3. Intermediate term goals (blended resilience and emergency focus)**  
The greater complexity is expected to loosely require 6 to 18 months to accomplish
- 4. Long term goals (resilience focused)**  
The greater complexity and nature of the solutions are expected to loosely require more than 1 year to accomplish, often 1 to 5 years





## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Informal settlements are more vulnerable to pandemics
- Authorities must act to make informal settlements more resilient
- The Recovery Action Plan is designed to support initiatives to meet pandemic challenges
- The Guidelines on the formalization of informal constructions to support concrete positive action



## Online Implementation workshops

### Kickstarting the COVID-19 Recovery Action Plan for Informal Settlements in the UNECE Region –

- Western Balkans sub-regional online training workshop **10 November 2021** 14:00 – 16:30pm CEST
- CIS sub-regional online training workshop **12 November 2021** 9:30-12:00

Establishing a Moodle platform for resources to link the trainings and for continual learning.

1. City assessment reports and recommendations
2. Online lecture series on the Guidelines for the formalization of informal constructions
3. Policy Briefs Series of online lectures on the formalization process
4. [Guidelines on the Formalization of informal Constructions](#)
5. [Formalizing the Informal](#)

# Thank you!

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