

Name of Staff Member	United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat):	<i>Ms. Katja Schaefer</i> , Inter-regional Advisor, UN-Habitat Programme Division
Office	UN-Habitat, Programme Division	
Type of Mission	Site visit to Fergana Valley (19 – 20 Oct 19); UNCT Strategic Planning Retreat (21 – 22 Oct 19); bilateral meetings (23 Oct 19)	
Mission Area	Tashkent, Uzbekistan	
Mission Dates	19 – 13 Oct 2019	
Mission Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Field visit to Fergana Valley, most densely populated and industrialized region. - UNCT Strategic Planning Retreat: mainstreaming housing and urbanisation issues across CCA and UNSDCF in Uzbekistan. - Discussions with UNCT on Joint Programming Activities. - Discussions with Urban Agency and IFIs on UN-Habitat engagement in Uzbekistan urban sector as well as comparative advantage of UN. 	
Mission Highlights, outcomes and next steps	<p>Meetings and main discussion points</p> <p><u>DAY 1 +2: Saturday, 19 October and Sunday, 20 October 2019</u></p> <p>Field visit to Fergana valley, cities of Kokand, Rishtan, Fergana and Margilan and site visits to city, brownfield sites and planned city extensions as well as industrial areas to better understand current urbanization trends and challenges. While historic areas of the cities are generally well maintained, new city expansions are emerging with little evidence of planned principles. Moreover, large scale demolitions could be observed in Rishtan city with individualized attempts to reconstruct housing units along the main road, without showing much coherence. Areas further away from primary roads have not been rehabilitated with obvious limitations in access to basic urban services. Furthermore, large scale industrial areas (i.e. coal mining, power plants – both on fossil fuel as well as nuclear) next to residential areas are striking and question the quality of life of residents in the vicinity and the valley in general. In discussions with residents, the issue of development related displacement was raised (procedural challenges) and urban resilience.</p> <p><u>DAY 3 + 4: Monday, 21 October and Tuesday, 22 October 2019</u></p> <p>Uzbekistan UNCT Retreat (see also attached agenda and attendance list)</p> <p>Objectives: The UNCT Retreat's objectives are to confirm the core elements of UNCT integrated analysis of Uzbekistan country context, agree on preliminary draft UN Vision 2030 and associated preliminary strategic focus areas, as well as initial elements of UN comparative advantage. The retreat has also strengthened the UNCT collaboration in the effort to deliver on the ambition of the UNDS reform. Initial discussions took place regarding establishing an enhanced sense of teamwork across the UN family (among resident and non-resident Agencies, Funds & Programmes/ UN Secretariat Departments). The retreat ensured clarity and agreement on the way ahead among UN system partners on our collective commitment to delivering a high-quality, integrated country analysis and cooperation framework for 2021 - 2025.</p> <p>The specific retreat deliverables were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Validation of preliminary <i>Common Country Analysis</i> and identification of key integrated sets of issues of potential UN prioritization in the next 5-10 years. - Initial outline of UN comparative advantage – Analyze the UN development system's capacity, comparative advantage and relevance regarding the identified development contexts and emerging issues, and discuss lessons learned/opportunities for innovative solutions. - Formulate draft UN Vision 2030, articulating preliminary UNCT positioning and collective approaches for a Decade of Action for Agenda 2030, building on Country Analysis, referring to draft national development plan 2030 and national SDGs, as well as related international commitments. - Initial discussion on UN Strategic Priorities: collective reflections on substantive areas of work, analyzing common principles of action, and shaping our draft theory of change. - Agreement on next steps towards completing the UN Cooperation Framework. - Uzbekistan is Youth 2030 – rollout country. 	

	<p>Discussion with Mr. Abdoulaye Mar Dieye (UN ASG & Special Advisor to the Administrator) and Mr. Ben Slay (UNDP Senior Economist, RBEC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financing for sustainable development in Uzbekistan and how UNCT can engage based on its comparative advantage ("intangibles of development" versus "tangibles" supported by IFIs); UN to "co-offer" with government + IFIs as "tri-monial". Shift from finance for development to SDG finance, supported by national data. National resource mobilization for SDGs: ODA (catalyst and to be blended), FDI and remittances. Role of UNSDCF as finance planning tool. <p>Meeting with Ms. Ashita Mittal – Regional representative for Central Asia and Mr. Koen Marquering – International Programme Manager Criminal Justice Programme in Central Asia at UNODC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Debriefing on currently ongoing global discussion between UNODC and UN-Habitat with regard to safer cities work; and the possibility of piloting the safety governance tool in the city of Nukus in Uzbekistan. UN-Habitat's presence in Uzbekistan (and the Central Asian region) was much appreciated as the office in Tashkent covers several countries. Further discussions to be held on collaboration and possible joint programming in the region based on global discussions. In the 1st quarter of 2020, the urban safety governance tool will be implemented in Nukus city and a joint mission should be planned. <p>Meeting with Ms. Aidai Kurmanova – Head of Sub-regional Office for Central Asia at UN Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - International Fund for Saving Aral Sea (IFAS) – UN adopted resolution initiated by Turkmenistan @ 85th plenary meeting of UN General Assembly. Within frame of resolution, member states and relevant UN agencies and organizations will work to improve cooperation with IFAS. Main points of resolution is "proposal to consider possibility of designing Special UN Programme for Aral Sea basin". Established in 1992, IFAS aims to improve social, economic and ecological situation in basin of the Aral Sea. UN-Habitat could play important role in terms of territorial analysis and regional strategic planning. This is to be further discussed... - Debriefing on Caspian Sea Adaptation Fund proposal and the partnership UN-Habitat have had at global with UN Environment level in this regard. The UN Environment Almaty hub offers full support in further elaboration of the project proposal as well as reaching out to national partners in the region. <p>DAY 5: Wednesday, 23 October 2019</p> <p>Meeting with Mr. Fuad Pashayev – Representative a.i. and Mr. Sanjarbek Allayarov – Culture, Communication and Information Programme Officer at UNESCO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uzbekistan historic landscapes and link to territorial planning is weak and UN-Habitat's support much needed at regional and urban scale. Tourism is a vital economic asset and by destruction of urban heritage, this asset is dwindling... Hence, consideration of economic development through tourism should be high on the agenda; better planning of historic sites including management processes. Attendance at WUF would be a good moment to raise awareness on these issues. - Comparative advantage of UN is in the ability to mobilize regional partners, hence, a multi-partner programme along the silk road supporting the protection of environment, physical historic fabric and communities as an economic asset could be interesting, with a strong regional focus and local impact. This would also engage non-traditional donors and development partners, i.e. the Chinese. - UNECSO representative will change in November and UN-Habitat should have follow-up discussion with him on partnerships and joint programming then. <p>Meeting with Ms. Diyora Kabulova, UNDP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Debriefing on UNCT Strategic Retreat and discussion on follow-up engagement with World Bank and ADB. UNDP also supported the organization of the meeting with the Urban Agency and need follow-up. Due to the presence of a high-level mission, the meeting was kept brief. <p>Meeting with Mr. Mahir, Mr. Farhad Juraev, Mr. Diyor Ergashev, Urban Agency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Follow-up on many meetings that took place outside Uzbekistan in October 2019: (1) Tatiana Khabarova with Diyor Ergashev – Urban Agency @ 80th UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management in Geneva, Switzerland; Katja Schaefer with Djamshid Eshniyazov – Statistical Office @ SDG 11 Monitoring, Opportunities and Challenges and how City/Urban and Rural Definitions can be Harmonized in Delhi, India - Briefing on UN Strategic Retreat (Common Country Assessment; UN Sustainable Development Coordination Framework – leaving no one behind) where UN discusses prioritization of strategic
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	<p>interventions and support to national government in achieving SDGs. UN's role in piloting and upscaling of innovative interventions: NUP (mainstreaming climate change, environment, heritage, rural-urban migration, land privatization issues, youth, education system that prepares for urban challenge, etc.); urban legislative review to understand relevance of current legislation and potential gaps (new legislation has been introduced recently: land code, housing construction, planning, land privatization); urban economy; urban planning and design; local implementation processes (i.e. energy efficiency, housing + coordination of infrastructure, urban upgrading etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uzbekistan VNR is coming up; institutional arrangements to monitor and report SGD progress needed as well as relevant national data linking to National Strategic Plan 2030. - Role of IFIs (World Bank – 3 cities, ADB – 5 cities, EBRD, etc.) with Urban Agency as coordination body; capacity at Urban Agency level as well as local government required to take up this role. A platform mechanism is suggested. - UN-Habitat aims to place expert in Uzbekistan UNCT as well as to support national partners in addressing urbanization challenges (resource mobilization is vital). - Engagement of other UN Agencies in urban sector: Safer Cities initiative in Uzbekistan spearheaded by ITU with Smart cities focus, Safer Cities by UNODC in Nukus, living cultural landscapes by UNESCO, UNDP engagement; coordination by UN-Habitat within UN System-wide Strategy on Sustainable Urbanization. UNECE suggests doing an update on Urban Land and Housing Review. - UN-Habitat's engagement in support of the Urban Agency in Uzbekistan is suggested as follows: clarification on function of Urban Agency within institutional setup, and the definition of urbanization in Uzbekistan; collection and processing of data (methodology) to monitor and report on SDGs; urban regulations and legislative review; financing urban development (Islamic and green bonds); urban planning and how to develop a city in a sustainable manner; land management (i.e. Fergana Valley); resilient housing. Appreciation of UN-Habitat's global standard setting and convening role as well as approaches to sustainable urbanization. - UN-Habitat's Engagement with Moscow Higher School of Economics very interesting to the Urban Agency, and so is the engagement in the UN-Habitat CIS Strategy. A closer engagement of Uzbekistan has been requested. - WUF10 in Abu Dhabi in Feb 2020 and Urban Agency should consider attending; invitations have not been sent. However, if information is shared in time, ADB might consider funding the attendance of Urban Agency. <p>Meeting with Mr. Niels van Dijk, ADB Consultant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Debriefing on meeting with Urban Agency and discussion on coordination of urban actors. - Update on progress of ADB work in Uzbekistan and the NUP preparations as well as Urban Observatory; UN-Habitat's technical advice would be much needed, and it could be considered to position an UN-Habitat key expert within the ADB team that ensures quality and alignment with global processes. ADB sees UN-Habitat's added value in the urbanization discussions in Uzbekistan; especially regarding UN-Habitat's global standard setting and convening role as well as approaches to sustainable urbanization. Ensuring consistency with other NUP processes globally would be encouraged and the facilitation of peer-to-peer learning. Moreover, the capacity development element as well as upscaling of piloted practices to other local governments and regions would be appreciated within an overall urban strategy of development partners in Uzbekistan. Based on the experience of GWOPA, urban water management and provision of basic urban services would be an important technical advisory capacity UN-habitat could bring to the country based on the experience made in other contexts. Moreover, "master planning" for urban areas cannot be done by IFIs and would clearly be a niche for UN-Habitat's engagement. <p>Meeting with Ms. Guljakhon Amanova, Programme Officer UNHCHR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ICJ is implementing "Advancing civil society in promoting international standards on economic, social and cultural rights" (ACCESS) project since beginning of 2018. One of the components of the project is to organize expert discussions on various human rights standards in relation to economic, social and cultural (ESC) rights. Since the start of the project, ICJ organized 3 expert discussions in partnership with national and international partners on labour rights, non-discrimination and rights of people with disabilities. - Discussions on the findings/ recommendations from the ICJ last event and Yuksalish on housing rights in light of the currently ongoing "development related evictions" and civil unrest. On 2
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October 2019, to familiarize the practitioners and academia on adequate housing rights international standards and international law, the 4th expert discussions on housing rights was organized in partnership with Nationwide movement “Yuksalish” and the OHCHR office for Central Asia. This discussion was attended by representatives of the civil society, including experts and human rights defenders as well as members of the Parliament, the judiciary (sitting judges on civil cases), Tashkent city municipal administration, representatives of ministries, the National Centre for Human Rights, the Office of Ombudsperson, the Bar Association, relevant universities.

Informal communication with **Ms. Manjusha Rai**, Urban Consultant Worldbank

- It was earlier discussed that the World Bank and UN-Habitat could collaborate in preparation of “State of Uzbekistan Cities Report”; however, it was indicated that the World Bank might prefer to conduct this work “in house”.

Outcomes/ main takeaways

- Urbanization has not been mentioned per se in the strategic prioritization of the UNCT for the upcoming UN SDCF; however, the mainstreaming of territorial dimensions is vital and UN-Habitat has requested to write a briefing note as input to the CCA and share it with the respective consultant in charge of this exercise ASAP.
- Urban Agency sees clear advantage of UN-Habitat versus IFIs and suggests (even) to sign an MoU for future engagement that could also be used in the partner consultations for finalizing UNSDCF priorities. UN-Habitat’s presence in the country would be much appreciated/ needed.
- ADB sees clear advantage of UN-Habitat based on mandate and complementarity. Urban Agency needs to have better exposure to peers with similar challenges, hence attendance at WUF10 is encouraged and can also be financed by ADB.
- UNCT (and UNODC, UNESCO, WHO, UN Environment, UNHCR, IOM) in particular very interested in collaborating with UN-Habitat on joint programming in Uzbekistan. RC appreciates continuous engagement of UN-Habitat, even from remote.
- Follow-up discussions with UNODC, UNESCO and UN Environment most evident for discussion on tangible collaboration.
- World Bank is no longer active in seeking for collaboration with UN-Habitat (last two missions were difficult to engage with World Bank and no meeting time could be found). I believe the reason could be the fact that a former UN-Habitat colleague – Pablo Vaggione – is now the World Bank urban consultant who brings in UN-habitat approaches to the urban discussion, including State of Cities Report methodology.

Next steps and/or decision points

- Add contacts to CIS database.
- Follow-up with Urban Agency: share invitation to WUF10, draft outline for possible MoU and engagement of UN-Habitat in Uzbekistan, share contact details with RCO for inclusion in UNSDCF partner consultations.
- Draft UN-Habitat engagement strategy in Uzbekistan to be fed into CCA process; share with lead consultant.
- Follow-up with RC Office: support partner mapping, provide “urban evidence” for CCA.
- Follow-up with Worldbank: organize call with urban team in Washington and Team Leader in charge of Uzbekistan to explore areas of collaboration (explore Worldbank/ UN-Habitat initiative IFSUD can be expanded to Uzbekistan).
- Follow-up with ADB: share WUF10 invitation to counterparts with ADB for funding consideration.
- Follow-up with UNESCO once new head of office has arrived, and lead discussion on joint programming regarding urban development planning and inclusion of urban heritage landscapes.
- Follow-up with UNODC on Nukus pilot initiative in Uzbekistan based on global safer cities partnership discussions.
- Follow-up with UN Environment on Caspian Sea, Aral Lake and potential other regional initiatives.
- Follow-up with UN-Habitat Youth Unit on Uzbekistan being Youth 2030 roll-out country.

Attachments

- Agenda I Uzbekistan UNCT Retreat 21-22 October 2019, Tashkent; Facilitators: Robert Bernardo and Mona Folkesson
- UNCT Retreat I Attendance List
- Presentation I Common Country Analysis – Emerging Findings (Pradeep Sharma, Consultant)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation I UN in Uzbekistan: Capacities, Comparative Advantage, and Lessons Learnt - Summary I Take Away UNCT Uzbekistan Discussion on Comparative Advantages and Value Proposition - Presentation I SDG Finance in Uzbekistan and Central Asia (Ben Slay, UNDP) - Overview I UNSDCF Rollout Roadmap - Contacts I Tashkent, Uzbekistan have been uploaded to CIS contact database: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ywgPyi0u1bClrbA3imYn_ShfMnirCLT6zl7SkMwPtSE/edit?usp=sharing
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