

Housing For All Campaign

Having an adequate home is now, more than ever, a matter of life and death. As COVID-19 continues to spread, people have been told to stay at home, but this simple measure is impossible for people who do not have adequate housing. At the same time, COVID-19 has reminded us that home is much more than just a roof. The Housing for All Campaign is meant to discuss the arising issues and to raise awareness on the contribution of adequate housing to better health and well-being, but also to dignity, safety and inclusion. The campaign is meant to promote successful actions and help generate alliances and initiatives that will help increase housing for all and the resilience of cities and communities.

Campaign Audience

- National governments: Ministries in charge of housing and urban development in order to reflect on housing gaps, policies and legislations.
- Local governments: City leaders and decision-makers to review housing development and priorities in light of the Covid-19 crisis.
- Civil society organizations: NGOs and grassroots organizations to propose solutions and engage in dialogues with decision-makers to address housing issues.
- Private sector organizations: construction and real estate companies to explore affordable housing solutions and business models in partnership with the other stakeholders.
- Financial institutions: to explore financial options to support housing projects and offer innovative schemes to individuals to increase supply.
- Urban practitioners: architects, planners, social workers to revisit current models in partnership with key stakeholders.
- General public: to raise awareness on the importance of housing for all and create a better understanding of the homeless and those living in inadequate housing.

Five weeks for #Housing4All

The five-week campaign will start on the World Habitat Day, 5 October 2020, focussing on the Housing for All: A Better Urban Future. Each week will be dedicated to five critical component of development that adequate housing contributes to.

Week 1 - Health: Adequate housing is a first line of defence against a number of health risks. It helps reduce the spread of diseases and enables people to follow sanitary protocols. Week 1 will focus on the importance of adequate housing to face the COVID-19 crisis.

Week 2 - Dignity: Having an adequate house is an essential condition for living in dignity. Accessibility of housing is key particularly, for people with disabilities, older persons or people with other cultural, social or health-related needs. Week 2 will also focus on the plight of homelessness during the *World Homelessness Day* celebrated on 10 October.

Week 3 - Safety: An adequate physical shelter protects people against multiple safety risks. With the increase of extreme weather events, housing for all contributes to building the resilience of communities and cities to climate change. Week 3 will also explore the links between housing and safety in the *40 Days Safer Cities Challenge* run by UN-Habitat.

Week 4 - Inclusion: The stability of a safe home is essential to ensure social and economic inclusion as part of a neighbourhood and community and to access jobs and livelihoods. Building better homes with people ensures that neighbourhoods are vibrant and integrated with diverse housing solutions and use which meet the needs



of everyone. Week 4 will also discuss the role of housing to *Valuing our Communities and Cities*, the theme of the World Cities Day celebrated on 31 October.

Week 5 - Well-being: Adequate housing provides the basis for belonging and the well-being of people enabling them to grow, engage, live, work and learn together. Community spaces and shared facilities for diverse population groups, needs and cultural activities must be considered when designing houses and settlements and planning for a better urban future.

Engagement

The campaign will engage the audience on social medias by releasing key messages, videos, stories illustrating solutions. A [Join](#) button will help engage external audiences to share initiatives that will be promoted on the campaign website and social medias.

Trailer and the Human Shelter Movie by Boris B. Bertram

During the five weeks, *The Human Shelter*, a documentary produced by acclaimed Danish film director Boris B. Bertram and Good Company Pictures, will be shared globally in six UN languages ([UN-Habitat YouTube Channel](#)). The film investigates the question of ‘what makes a home?’ and explores different people’s ways of creating their homes around the globe. Funded by IKEA, the documentary is a result of a two-year worldwide cinematographic expedition that allowed a deep exploration and generates provoking questions on the essence of housing around the world. The Film will be made available to the public online from 5 October to 6 November 2020 for free on UN-Habitat’s Youtube channel.

A [Press Kit](#) is available.

Toolkits

A communication toolkit will guide all those engaged in the campaign to promote the key messages and key solutions through multiples channels. The #Housing4All Toolkit is made available to the public in the six UN languages.

Key Messages

An estimated 1.8 billion people were already living in slums and informal settlements, inadequate housing or in homelessness in our cities worldwide before the pandemic began. Some 3 billion people lack basic hand-washing facilities. This means millions of people worldwide are more likely to experience poor health due to the absence of basic services and exposure to multiple socio-economic and environmental hazards.

Housing is not just a roof

Housing is the building block of people’s health, dignity, safety, well-being and inclusion. A house gives a sense of belonging for people to grow, engage, live, work and learn together.

Housing is a human right

Housing is a human right and a catalyst for most other fundamental rights. It is crucial to ensure the *Right to the City for All*. Inclusive, affordable and adequate housing is the key to the sustainable transformation of our cities and communities. Sustainable Development Goal 11 aims for resilient, inclusive, safe, diverse cities by 2030 and one of the targets is access to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services for all by 2030 and the upgrading of slums.

Housing and COVID-19

Structural inequalities have been highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic, showing how people from minorities, indigenous peoples and migrants are disproportionately affected by housing precarity, overcrowding and homelessness. COVID-19 has spread in areas where people lack adequate housing, and are faced with inequalities and poverty. Residents in these areas are also often not recognized by the authorities or protected and face the risk of being evicted and relocated, particularly in times of crisis. According to ILO, 55 per cent of the world's population – about 4 billion people – do not benefit from any form of social protection.

The COVID-19 crisis is showing how success comes from collaboration and is giving new momentum to the idea that ensuring housing rights for all is a shared responsibility.

The COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated the power of communities and people's ability to adapt and find local and innovative solutions. It has also shown that it is possible to quickly address housing emergencies as local and national governments provide temporary solutions including:

- Short term and emergency accommodation for people without secure housing through underutilized spaces and repurposing of buildings.
- Moratoriums on evictions due to rental and mortgage arrears or forced evictions of informal settlements and slums along with suspension of utility costs and surcharges for the duration of the pandemic.
- Access to buildings, land and open space for essential small businesses, food security, emergency health care and other vital functions needed while people stay at home.

While these steps are timely and important, they need to become sustainable long-term changes enshrined in policy and legislation. The pandemic has demonstrated the importance of a people-centred approach as housing is as vital for the character, shape and socio-economic vibrancy of cities as it is to public health outcomes.

Housing is a shared responsibility

Adequate housing for all will depend on strengthened and coordinated efforts including from national and local governments. Local authorities are key actors in ensuring that all citizens stay safe and protected. National governments are critical for supporting local decision-makers by empowering them to take preventative action and make effective decisions. Other partners include civil society organizations building partnerships with residents, private sector mobilizing resources for options including rentals, housing preservation and rehabilitation and the international community mobilizing support for housing.

People must be empowered and equipped to contribute to and shape the housing where they live. We need to facilitate the right framing and incentives for unlocking long-term political commitment, creativity, investment and local ownership for housing all in our future cities.

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