



Shelter Afrique Development Bank (ShafDB)

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Talking time: 5 mins

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I stand on existing protocols

It is a pleasure to address this distinguished gathering convened by UN-Habitat. Allow me, on behalf of Shelter Afrique Development Bank, the only pan-African multilateral development bank exclusively mandated to promote housing and urban development, to commend this Working Group for advancing the shared vision of *adequate housing for all*.

This dialogue comes at a defining moment. Across Africa and much of the developing world, the rapid pace of urbanization continues to outstrip the pace of housing delivery. The result is a widening deficit that now exceeds 53 million units across our continent, manifested in informal settlements, insecure tenure, and vulnerable urban livelihoods.

Yet, amid these challenges lies immense opportunity. Adequate housing is not merely a roof over one's head, it is an enabler of health, productivity, social stability, and inclusive economic growth.

A Development Finance Perspective

At Shelter Afrique Development Bank, we approach this challenge through the lens of development finance. Housing must be seen not as a social burden but as a catalyst for national development, an asset class that can mobilize capital, create jobs, and anchor urban resilience.

Under our **New Dawn Strategy**, we have committed to repositioning housing finance at the centre of Africa's development agenda. This strategy is anchored on three pillars:

1. **Affordable housing finance**,
2. **Urban infrastructure and regeneration**, and
3. **Sustainable construction ecosystems** that foster innovation and climate resilience.

We believe that through the right mix of public policy, blended finance, and private sector engagement, housing can transition from a persistent deficit to a driver of inclusive growth.

Our Commitments and Actions

To advance this transformation, Shelter Afrique Development Bank is actively:

1. **Convening high-level working groups** with DFIs, governments, and private investors to define a **roadmap for resource mobilization** and co-investment in housing and urban development.
2. **Expanding innovative financing instruments**, including **green bonds**, **social impact investments**, and **blended finance facilities**, to reduce perceived risk and attract private capital to affordable housing markets.
3. **Promoting scalable, low-carbon construction technologies** that align with both national adaptation strategies and global climate commitments.
4. **Supporting our member states** to establish enabling policy environments that incentivize private sector participation, streamline development approvals, and lower transaction costs.
5. **Strengthening global sustainability partnerships**—such as with the **Africa Adaptation Initiative** and **IFC EDGE**—to ensure that every home financed meets international standards for energy efficiency and environmental performance.

These actions reflect our conviction that adequate housing for all can only be achieved through integrated, cross-sectoral, and climate-conscious approaches.

A Call to Our Governments

I join our collective voice with other stakeholders, private sector and actors in the housing ecosystem to call upon African governments to take decisive steps to enable affordable and adequate housing investments.

First, governments to assist in **addressing the cost of capital**. High interest rates and fiscal constraints continue to undermine housing affordability. By fostering macroeconomic stability, deepening domestic capital markets, and leveraging guarantees, governments can make long-term, low-cost capital accessible for housing.

Second, we call for the **creation of local mechanisms to manage foreign exchange risk**. Currency volatility has become one of the most significant deterrents to international investment in affordable housing. Governments can mitigate this by establishing risk-sharing mechanisms or forex stabilization facilities that give comfort to investors and DFI's alike.

Third, governments should **invest in enabling urban infrastructure and land governance**. Adequate housing does not exist in isolation; it flourishes where land markets are functional, infrastructure is reliable, and public services are accessible.

Fourth, we urge governments to **streamline regulatory frameworks**. Efficient permitting, titling, and planning processes can dramatically reduce project timelines and costs.

Shared Responsibilities

In this spirit, we call upon all stakeholders to act in concert:

- **Governments** — to provide political leadership, allocate public resources, and create enabling regulatory environments that foster blended finance solutions.
- **Development Finance Institutions** — to scale up their commitments to the housing sector and innovate around instruments that reduce risk and mobilize private capital.
- **Private Sector Actors** — to recognize affordable housing as a viable and impactful asset class that can deliver both social and financial returns.
- **International Partners** — to align technical assistance and concessional resources with Africa's housing transformation agenda.

Conclusion

Excellencies, colleagues , the right to adequate housing is inseparable from the right to dignity, to opportunity, and to peace. Our collective task is to translate this right into reality.

Shelter Afrique Development Bank along with members of AUHF stand ready, as trusted African partners, to deepen collaboration with UN-Habitat, governments, DFIs, and the private sector. Together, we can build a future where every family has a safe and affordable home; where housing is green, inclusive, and resilient; and where our cities stand as engines of shared prosperity.

Thank you.