



CONCEPT NOTE

Special Event

Unlocking Housing Solutions through National Urban Policies

📅 23 October 2025 | ⌚ 12:30–13:30 | 📍 Conference Room 3, UNON, Nairobi

Background

Housing is a cornerstone of sustainable urban development, directly linked to resilience, equity, climate adaptation, and quality of life. Yet, 23% of the world's urban population still live in inadequate housing conditions (SDG 11 Synthesis Report, 2018). National Urban Policies (NUPs) offer a unique framework to align housing with national development priorities, improve affordability and adequacy, upgrade informal settlements, and integrate housing into broader urban planning and climate strategies.

In 2023, the **Open-ended Intergovernmental Expert Working Group on Adequate Housing for All (OEWG-H2)** was established pursuant to Resolution 2/7, adopted by the United Nations Habitat Assembly. The expert group is mandated to make recommendations on policies to accelerate universal access to safe, sustainable, adequate, and affordable housing. Its second session, taking place in 2025, will address the global housing crisis, with a focus on transforming informal settlements, improving access to land and basic services, and fostering partnerships for inclusive and lasting solutions.

The third edition of the **Global State of National Urban Policy 2024 (GSNUP3)**, developed by UN-Habitat and OECD, examines NUP implementation in 78 countries and highlights how housing is addressed across planning, legal, financial, and governance dimensions. The report underscores both progress and gaps in housing integration within NUPs, offering valuable lessons for policymakers worldwide. This special event provides a timely and complementary platform to inform the work of **OEWG-H2**, showcasing global evidence on housing as a priority in NUPs and highlighting findings on affordability, social housing, accessibility, and policy coherence. By doing so, it can directly support OEWG-H2 deliberations, offering concrete examples of how national policies can translate global commitments into action on the ground.

Key findings on housing from GSNUP3



Housing as a policy priority: 81% of NUPs give moderate to extensive attention to housing sustainability, 80% to adequate housing, and 77% to affordability strategies.



National housing policies: 82% of countries complement their NUPs with a standalone national housing policy or strategy addressing urban housing challenges.



Social housing and affordability: Two-thirds of NUPs cite a lack of social housing, while over half highlight high property prices as critical barriers to adequate and affordable housing.



Pressing urban housing challenges: Inadequate housing location and accessibility (31%), restrictive land-use and planning regulations (30%), and insufficient social housing (28%) emerged as the top obstacles.



Policy alignment: While 79% of the responding countries report no misalignment between NUPs and national housing policies, 21% still face challenges such as delayed investment in infrastructure and conflicting housing supply targets.



Institutional coordination: 40% of surveyed countries have established formal coordination mechanisms between leading NUP and housing ministries to ensure coherence in housing investment and implementation.

Objectives of the Event

- Highlight how NUPs are driving housing reform and delivery worldwide.
- Share insights from the GSNUP3 report, focusing on housing integration.
- Exchange country experiences, lessons, and innovations in housing through NUPs.
- Inspire Member States to strengthen housing dimensions in NUP development and implementation.

Format & Agenda (60 Minutes)		
Time	Segment	Speakers
5mins	Opening Remarks	Anacláudia ROSSBACH (USG) United Nations Under-Secretary-General Executive Director, UN-Habitat
10mins	Key Insights: Housing & NUPs from GSNUP3	Tadashi Matsumoto Head of Sustainable Urban Development Unit OECD
30mins	Country Reflections (3 countries, 10 mins each)	Senior government representatives
10mins	Discussion	UN-Habitat / OECD
5mins	Closing & Call to Action	

Call to Action

This special event will spotlight how Member States can leverage NUPs to accelerate progress on **SDG 11.1: ensuring access to adequate, safe, and affordable housing for all by 2030**. By sharing evidence, experiences, and innovations, the session aims to inspire practical steps for aligning housing strategies with national urban policies, strengthening policy coherence, and promoting inclusive, resilient, and sustainable housing solutions.



Click [here](#) to join the event