



Urban crisis response

Every crisis has a human face.

A family forced to flee their home.

A child studying in a refugee camp.

A community living without water or electricity.

Today, crises are unfolding in our cities. Conflict, instability, and climate change are pushing millions into displacement. In 2024, a record 123 million people were forced from their homes – most of them seeking safety in cities that are already under strain.

At the same time, nearly 3 billion people suffer from inadequate housing, and more than 1.1 billion live in informal settlements and slums.

But crisis does not have to mean despair.

At UN-Habitat, we have seen communities rise again when housing, land, and basic services are prioritized. In Iraq, displaced families have regained homes and stability. In Somalia, improved access to land has brought hope to the marginalized. In Lebanon, inclusive upgrading has turned divided neighbourhoods into united communities.

These stories remind us that rebuilding homes is about more than bricks and mortar. It is about dignity. It is about hope.

On this World Habitat Day, I call on all of us – governments, partners, and communities – to act with urgency.

Let us put housing at the heart of crisis response globally.

Let us invest in cities as places of safety, opportunity, and resilience for all.

In May 2026, at the World Urban Forum in Baku, we will come together under the theme Housing the world: Safe and resilient cities and communities. Let us bring solutions. Let us drive action.

Because when we rebuild homes, we rebuild hope.