

Integrated National Housing Policies – summary of recommendations

This document summarizes the recommendations for Integrated National Housing Policies (INHPs).

INHPs are defined as deliberate policy frameworks that *intentionally and progressively* promote coherence within and across (a) policies internal to housing sector (b) broader national social, economic and environmental policies and (c) international rights and development goals, throughout the entire country. They achieve this through vertical, horizontal, spatial, and temporal integration, while encompassing diverse housing delivery models and all groups within society to achieve adequate housing for all.

5.1 Towards Integrated National Housing Policies

Adopt a systems approach to housing

Governments should progressively move towards Integrated National Housing Policies by adopting a systems approach that recognizes housing as part of a wider ecosystem comprising of actors and domains incl. institutions, markets, communities, levels of governance, land systems, infrastructure, finance, and construction materials and technologies.

Identify context-specific pathways and entry points based on policy priorities and diagnosis of urgent housing challenges, existing institutional arrangements and capacities

Governments should recognize that there is no single pathway towards policy integration, but that several context-appropriate entry points may help anchor, kickstart and strengthen the process. The process to arrive at the entry points and pathways should be evidence based; participatory and recurring - with consultations across stakeholders; transparent and promote trust, to ensure that the pathways and outcomes identified are fair and just.

5.2 Recognizing housing as a foundation for social, economic and environmental progress

Governments should recognise and use integrated housing policies as a vehicle to achieve sustainable development and contribute to relevant international commitments, including on housing rights, Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda. Governments should seek an appropriate balance between policies supplying housing and enabling housing investments with those aimed at enhancing socio-economic opportunities that allow people to access housing while safeguarding the environment and promoting housing's social and economic roles.

Position housing policy as a core component of social policy

Housing is both a social outcome and a foundational determinant of health, wellbeing, inclusion and human development. As social progress is shaped by the interaction of housing systems with social protection systems, access to public services, labour market participation, and wider social policies, Integrated National Housing Policies should align these.

Utilize housing's value as a productive economic asset

Investments in housing supports poverty reduction, growth, employment, entrepreneurship, productivity, labour mobility and prosperity. Integrated National Housing Policies should treat housing as productive economic infrastructure and align housing investment with wider economic development strategies.

Enhance resilience of housing in the face of climate change

Housing systems are significant consumers of land, materials, energy and infrastructure, while also being highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, environmental degradation and disaster risks. Addressing the climate crisis comprehensively is not possible without making housing more sustainable and reduce emissions, while enhancing housing's resilience.

5.3 Components of integration: horizontal, vertical, spatial, temporal

Integrate housing horizontally across policy domains and frameworks

Housing policies should be designed and assessed against the full range of dimensions that constitute adequate housing, recognizing that progress in one dimension should not come at the expense of another. Integrated National Housing Policies should be aligned with national development strategies, national urban policies, economic development frameworks climate and environmental strategies, social protection systems, infrastructure plans, and spatial planning instruments. It is important to ensure coherence across the full range of housing policy instruments, including legislation, regulations, institutions, strategies, plans, programmes and financing mechanisms.

Integrate housing vertically, by connecting housing management and delivery across levels of governments and to non-governmental stakeholders

Governments should integrate housing vertically by strengthening coordination, collaboration and accountability across all levels of government and with non-governmental stakeholders. Local and regional governments need to be fully integrated into the formulation, implementation and monitoring of Integrated National Housing Policies, ensuring that their responsibilities are met by adequate capacities and funding. Meaningful participation by civil society organizations, housing cooperatives, community groups, residents' associations and other housing stakeholders throughout the housing policy cycle is critical for integrated housing policy. It is important to invest in the institutional, technical and staff capacities required to implement integrated housing policies effectively.

Integrate housing spatially, by connecting housing to services, infrastructure, amenities and opportunities

Governments should integrate housing policy with urban planning and city development strategies in order to reduce segregation and promote proximity-based planning that increases access to services. Housing challenges often vary considerably within countries, particularly between metropolitan, urban, peri-urban and rural areas, and housing policy hence needs to integrate these varying challenges and opportunities in coherent frameworks.

Integrate housing temporally, by connecting housing across time, policy cycles and attuned to future need

Governments should integrate housing temporally by linking immediate housing needs with long-term planning and maintenance, implementation and adaptation processes. It is important to establish robust systems for collecting, managing and analysing data, to inform reliable housing diagnostics to assess housing needs, monitor progress, identify gaps and inform policy decisions. Integrated National Housing policies need to be responsive to anticipated long-term projections related to urbanization, ageing populations, climate change, migration, changing household structures and evolving housing needs. It is important to recognize that successful housing policy requires long-term commitment and sustained investment.

5.4 Inclusive integration

Governments should ensure that Integrated National Housing Policies respond to the needs, rights and aspirations of all individuals and groups within society, recognizing the diversity of housing needs across the full population spectrum.

Integrate policies to encompass the full spectrum of housing sectors and delivery models

No single housing or tenure model can adequately address the diverse housing needs found within and across countries. Integrated National Housing Policies should encompass the full continuum of tenure systems and delivery models, including public, private, formal, informal, rental, ownership, cooperative and community-led housing.

Engage strategically with the private sector

Neither government nor private sector can provide adequate housing alone. Integrated National Housing policies should therefore acknowledge the role of private sector actors in housing provision and maintenance, establishing appropriate incentives, strong regulations and partnerships that align private sector activity with housing policy objectives.

Reflect the realities of informality

Informal housing provision and informal livelihoods constitutes a significant component of countries worldwide, particularly in developing countries. Integrated National Housing Policies should support approaches that reflect the realities of informality, including incremental construction, incremental finance, in-situ settlement upgrading and tenure regularization, while progressively improving housing adequacy and living conditions.

Social components of Integrated Housing Policies

Social components are critical to enhancing the integration of housing policies. They should encompass three dimensions: (i) support to the housing habitat, including access to urban services, coexistence in new housing developments and condominium administration; (ii) intersectorality for development and social inclusion, through coordination with social and economic services in the field; and (iii) strengthening social capital by promoting the active participation and mobilization of residents.

Protect vulnerable communities from discrimination and displacement

Integrated National Housing policies should provide specific protections for vulnerable and marginalized populations, including protection against forced evictions, discrimination and housing insecurity. Particular attention should be given to addressing the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination faced by women and girls, children and youth, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, slum and informal-settlement dwellers, people experiencing homelessness, workers, smallholder farmers and fishers, refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons and migrants, regardless of migration status.