



# HOUSING AT THE CENTRE

IN 2016

ANNUAL OVERVIEW  
OF ACTIVITIES

**UN HABITAT**  
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

# CONTENTS

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<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Housing at the Centre - 2016 Summary.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>1. The Global Housing Strategy.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Advisory Services.....	6
Advocacy and Events.....	8
Publications .....	11
<b>2. Affordability in Focus .....</b>	<b>12</b>
Major Projects.....	12
Advocacy and Events.....	13
Research.....	14
<b>3. Cities Without Discrimination .....</b>	<b>15</b>
Major Projects.....	15
Advisory services .....	16
Capacity Building.....	16
Advocacy and Events.....	17
Publications .....	18
<b>4. Greener Housing for Greener Cities .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Major Projects.....	20
Advocacy and Events .....	22
Capacity Building.....	23
Publications .....	23
<b>5. Looking Ahead: 2017 and Beyond .....</b>	<b>24</b>

# INTRODUCTION

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## Christophe Lalande, Housing Unit Team Leader

The clock is ticking. In the coming decades, with rapid urbanization and population growth, countries will be facing a major challenge: ensuring that the additional 3 billion city dwellers that the world is expecting by 2030 have access to adequate housing. This translates into a demand for 96,000 new affordable and accessible housing units every day. This challenge will be particularly massive in African and Asian countries where 90 per cent of the world's population growth is expected to take place.

Our homes define who we are and who we can become, from our education and job opportunities, to our health, our safety and our security. Yet, Governments have rarely prioritized it in their policies and their planning, often leaving housing supply in the hands of markets and private interests. With, on average, more than half of the land cover in cities used for housing, world leaders have a colossal transformational opportunity in their hands to change lives and solve some of the major challenges related to urbanization overall, from poverty and inequality reduction to environmental sustainability.

The United Nations, and UN-Habitat in particular, have long been voicing the importance of housing for sustainable urban development. More than 20 years ago in Istanbul, through [the Habitat Agenda](#), Member States committed to “promote the full and progressive realization of the right to adequate housing as provided for in international instruments.”

In 2008, one of the world's worst economic crises of the last decades had housing at its epicentre, entrenched in a combination of financing and ownership models that stressed speculation over social welfare. Currently – in low-, middle-, and high-income nations alike – the housing gap is enormous and, in many countries, the stock of vacant houses continues to increase even when millions of people are left homeless. Housing prices remain a major hurdle that many families cannot overcome and that forces them to resort to inadequate solutions such as slums and informal settlements, where access to basic services and socio-economic opportunities are low or non-existent.

In 2010, UN-Habitat initiated the Global Housing Strategy to 2025, aiming to support National Governments achieve their adequate housing delivery objectives through the development of in-depth and tailored National Housing Profiles, Policies and related Implementation Strategies, in line with the imperatives of the right to adequate housing included in the right to an adequate standard of living.

The recent adoption of the 2030 Agenda further acknowledged the importance of housing, particularly through Sustainable Development Goal 11 Target 1: “By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.” This led UN-Habitat to the endorsement of the ‘[Housing at the Centre](#)’ approach at the end of 2015, a call for a culture-shift in the way we think, regulate, plan, and build our cities, placing adequate homes – and thereby the people who live in them – at the core of urban decision-making and action. This call was heavily echoed and relayed in the [New Urban Agenda](#) adopted by Member States in Quito this past October.

This report highlights some of the work that has been performed by UN-Habitat in the past year to progressively and strategically reposition housing at the centre of city development across the world, by the Programme's Housing Unit but also by other Units and Branches as well as country and regional offices.

Starting with a quick summary of the year, this report proceeds to detail the work done through events, publications, advocacy, capacity building, and other key activities in the various portfolios that UN-Habitat has been covering in order to make adequate housing a reality for all: national housing policy, housing finance, housing rights, green housing, and public advocacy for the centrality of housing.



# 2016 SUMMARY

## IMPLEMENTING AGENDA 2030

**SDG 11: "Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable"**



Target 1: "ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums."

Target C: "Support least developed countries, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient buildings utilizing local materials."

**In 2016, UN-Habitat has:**

- led the work and discussion on **indicator definition** for SDG 11.1
- led the work and discussion on the **methodology for monitoring** the implementation of SDG 11.1
- led the work and discussion on the **metadata** for SDG 11.C

## UN-HABITAT HOUSING PROGRAMMATIC HIGHLIGHTS

- 14** **National Housing Profiles, Policies and related Strategies** were produced, initiated or revised.
- 43** National or municipal Governments received **advisory services and/or technical support**.
- 4** **human rights mainstreaming pilot projects** were launched.
- 10** **housing-related publications** were issued on a variety of topics.
- 31** **events** were organized on: housing policy, finance, sustainability and housing rights.

## THE HABITAT III CONFERENCE



**102** **events** out of 555 directly covered issues of Housing and its centrality for the implementation of the NUA.

**16** **events** were co-organized by UN-Habitat's Housing Unit, on various topics: housing rights, housing finance, green building...

## THE NEW URBAN AGENDA

**53** **NUA articles** directly refer to housing and slum upgrading and prevention imperatives (policies, finance, inclusivity, planning...)

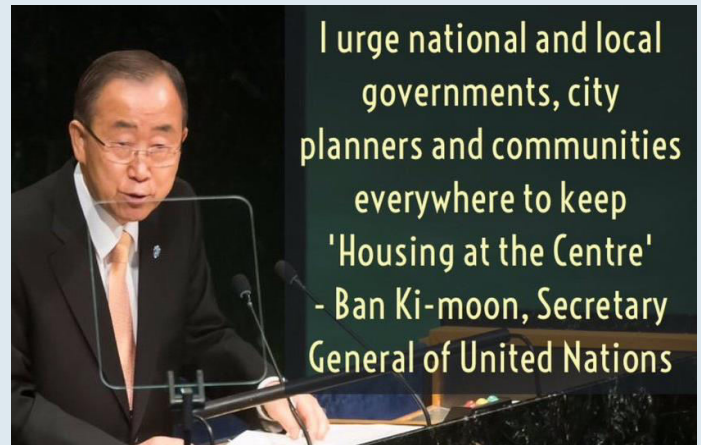
**The NUA's first principle and commitment:**

*"Leave no one behind, by ending poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including the eradication of extreme poverty, by ensuring equal rights and opportunities... and providing equal access for all to basic services as well as adequate and affordable housing."*



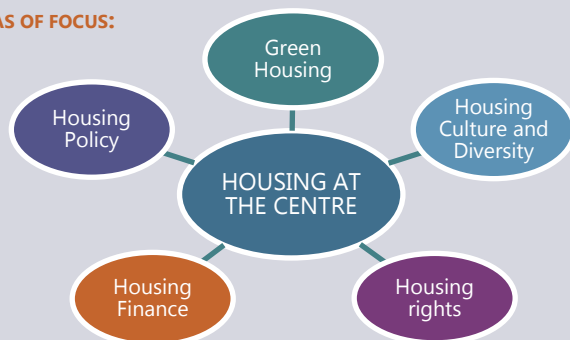
# WORLD HABITAT DAY, 3 OCTOBER 2016: HOUSING AT THE CENTRE

## Public Advocacy Campaign and Messaging

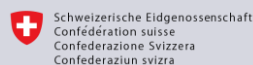


## UN-HABITAT'S HOUSING UNIT

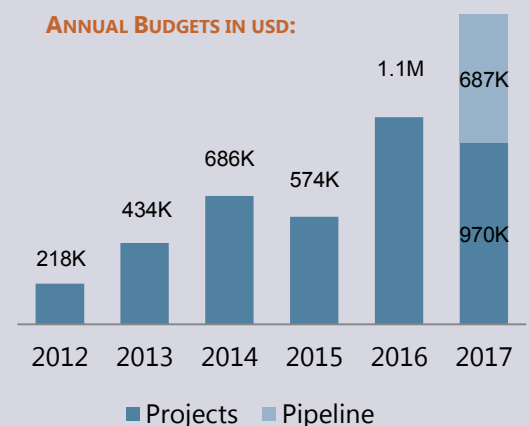
### AREAS OF FOCUS:



### MAIN DONORS:



### ANNUAL BUDGETS IN USD:





# 1. THE GLOBAL HOUSING STRATEGY

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**For over a decade, long before the New Urban Agenda called for the “development of integrated housing policies” (paragraph 32), UN-Habitat has been supporting Governments who understood the centrality of housing in sustainable urban development. To date, through the Global Housing Strategy, over 30 National Housing Profiles and evidence-based Housing Policies and Strategies have been developed by UN-Habitat, ensuring that housing is repositioned at the centre, one country at a time.**

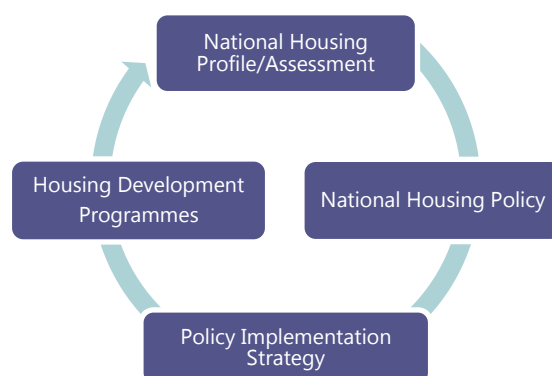
## ADVISORY SERVICES

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UN-Habitat provides policy advice and technical assistance for countries to formulate and implement policies for the supply of adequate, affordable and sustainable housing, the prevention of new slums, and the improvement of living conditions in existing slums and other informal settlements.

The Global Housing Strategy (GHS) – which is aligned with Agenda 2030 and the New Urban Agenda – promotes a twin-track approach, with preventive and curative streams.

The recommended methodology of the GHS cycle is the following:





In 2016, 14 National Housing Profiles, Policies and Implementation Strategies were produced, initiated or updated. In addition, **advisory services were provided to 43 National or municipal Governments.**

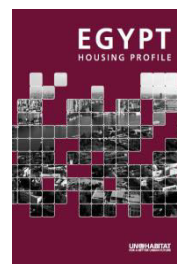
#### ▪ National Housing Profiles

Housing sector profiles are the first step to developing evidence-based and effective Housing policies. Their function is to map out of variety of key aspects: historical and economic contexts, general urban and demographic data, policy and legal frameworks in place, housing sector players, housing stock and gaps, land supply, building materials, housing market dynamics, cross-cutting issues. Increasingly, Governments are seeing the Profile as a critical tool to ultimately meet their housing targets. In 2016, five national housing sector assessments or profiles were produced.

**The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan**, in particular its Ministry of Urban Development and Housing, championed the Global Housing Strategy principles and was particularly pro-active in improving the housing landscape in the country. Not only was a National Housing Profile developed, it also included an initial policy framework and summary implementation strategy.

**The Republic of Angola** also requested UN-Habitat's expertise in developing a housing assessment in support of the formulation of the National Urban Territorial Policy. The document provides a socio-economic panorama, an overview of the policy and institutional frameworks, an analysis of the National Housing and Urban Programme, as well as key information on the housing finance and infrastructure landscape.

The 2014 amended Egyptian Constitution refers to the right to adequate housing in Article 78. It is in the view of drafting an implementation strategy that **the Arab Republic of Egypt** reached out to UN-Habitat to develop an up-to-date Housing Profile. The document, published in 2016, is the result of a strong collaboration between UN-Habitat's Housing Unit, the Regional Office for Arab States, and the Egyptian Ministry of Housing, Utilities, and Urban Commodities.



**The Co-operative Republic of Guyana** also requested a National Housing Profile. The effort was led by UN-Habitat's Housing Unit in partnership with the Central Housing and Planning Authority, responsible for housing and town planning in the country and UNDP. The document laid the groundwork for an upcoming National Housing Policy and an Implementation Strategy.

Finally, **the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka** also joined the GHS with the development of a rapid assessment of the housing sector in the country meant to inform the updating of the National Housing Policy.

#### ▪ National Housing Policies

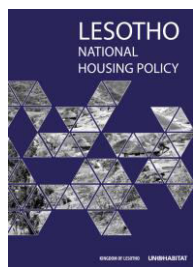
Housing Policies are the core of the GHS and, if developed in an integrated manner with other urban development policies with a strong focus on inclusivity and affordability, they can be the engine to achieving sustainable urbanization and realizing the right to adequate housing for all. In 2016, UN-Habitat was asked to directly work on various National Housing Policy documents.

*“Having realised how successful UN-Habitat has been in supporting other African countries such as Malawi, Ghana, Zambia and Liberia in developing Housing Profiles, we approached [them] to develop the Lesotho Housing Profile.*

*We further approached UNDP... and I am delighted that today we form a tripartite which radiates how significant housing is to all of us. I wish to impress to all key stakeholders involved to continue our concerted efforts to make the review of the National Housing Policy and the development of a strategy an equal success.”*

Hon. Dr. Pontso 'Matumelo Sekatle  
Minister of Local Government and Chieftainship, Government of Lesotho

**The Kingdom of Lesotho**, through the Ministry of Local Government and Chieftainship responsible for housing, was the first to request UN-Habitat's



services to develop an updated National Housing Policy this year. The document, based on Lesotho's Constitution and informed by evidence collected in the UN-Habitat-issued National Housing Profile, published in 2014.

In addition, UN-Habitat was also asked to support **the Republic of Zambia** and **the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka** through a review and a revamping of their existing National Housing Policies.

#### ▪ **National Housing Policy Implementation Strategies**

A housing policy requires a detailed strategy for implementation that outlines the key actors for each policy objective, capacity-building processes, partnership requirements (for example with the construction sector, NGOs or financial institutions), institutional shifts, and any other steps necessary to achieving the goals stated in the policy. Once again, 2016 marked a milestone in that Governments approached UN-Habitat for support in developing Housing Policy Implementation Strategies.

**The Kingdom of Lesotho** spearheaded the movement by requesting UN-Habitat's technical expertise on this as the Policy was finalized. The country is now ready and equipped to move to the last phase of the GHS cycle: housing development programmes towards the realization of the right to adequate housing for all.

#### ▪ **Community Development Workshops**

A total of ten workshops were conducted in 2016 in relation to Global Housing Strategy milestones:

- **Afghanistan:** two Housing Profile workshops with the Kabul municipality and the Deputy Ministry of Municipalities ; and two workshops on housing for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees.
- **Zambia:** a Housing Policy workshop with the Lusaka City Council.

- **Jordan:** a Housing Finance Stakeholder workshop with the Greater Amman municipality.

- **Sri Lanka:** three Housing Policy and Strategy workshops.

- **Myanmar:** a Housing Policy workshop.

## ADVOCACY AND EVENTS

### ▪ **'Housing at the Centre'... at the centre of the Habitat III Conference**

In preparation for the Habitat III Conference, UN-Habitat led the Task Team for the drafting of **Issue Paper 20 on Housing**, with contributions from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNOPS, the World Health Organization, and UN Women.



In Quito, Ecuador, the **Special Session on 'Issue Paper 20: Housing'** took place on 17 October and was planned by UN-Habitat, in particular the Housing Unit, with support from the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNOPS, the World Health Organization, and UN Women.

**Around 500 people attended** the event which was moderated by Dr. Geoffrey Payne, independent economist and housing expert, and benefited from a wide variety of speakers, including:

- H.E. Emmanuelle Cosse, Minister of Housing and Habitat, Republic of France;
- H.E. Sadet Naderi, Minister of Urban Development and Housing, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan;
- Ms. Leilani Farha, Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing;
- Mr. Loic Chiquier, World Bank;
- Dr. Fernanda Lonardonì, UN-Habitat;
- Ms. Jane Katz, Habitat for Humanity International;
- Mr. Clément Bélizaire, Housing and Public Building Construction Unit, Republic of Haiti.





Habitat III Housing Special Session . Left: Dr. Geoffrey Payne; Centre: H. E. Sadat Naderi; Right: H.E. Emmanuelle Cosse.  
(Credit: Habitat III Secretariat 17 October 2016, Quito, Ecuador)

On 19 October, the **side event titled ‘Housing at the Centre of Sustainable Development’** took place in the One UN Pavilion. The planning was led by UN-Habitat’s Housing Unit, with the support of UNDP colleagues. With **over 250 attendees**, the event started with opening remarks from **UN-Habitat’s Executive Director, Dr. Joan Clos**, followed by a presentation on the challenges of achieving housing affordability worldwide (see chapter 2) by **Dr. Shlomo Angel**.

A panel discussion ensued with a variety of speakers:

- H.E. Lindiwe Sisulu, South Africa, Minister of Human Settlements
- Mr. Joao Whitaker, Housing Secretary of Sao Paulo;
- Mr. Charlie Ayco, Managing Director and CEO of Habitat for Humanity Philippines;
- Ms. Janice Perlman, Senior Housing Expert;
- Mr. Johan J.H. Beth, Advisor to H.E. the Minister, Ministry of Housing, Bahrain;
- Ms. Lana Winayanti, Senior Housing Advisor, Ministry of Public Works and Housing, Indonesia;
- Ms. Theresa Tufuor, Deputy Director, Ministry of Water Resources Works and Housing, Ghana.



On 17 October, UN-Habitat also had an opportunity to showcase the **National Housing Profiles Series in an Urban Library event**. More than **50 people attended**, and an in-depth discussion took place on the GHS process, emphasizing the importance of producing detailed assessments for effective housing policies.

**INVITATION** UN-HABITAT FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

Join us for an informal presentation and discussion on

**THE NATIONAL HOUSING PROFILES SERIES**

Monday 17 October, 10:00 - 10:45 am, Urban Library, Quito, Ecuador

National Housing Profiles are crucial diagnostics tool for the development of effective national housing policies and implementation strategies. UN-Habitat will present its experience in supporting more than 16 countries develop these in-depth housing sector assessments.

UN-Habitat co-organized and participated in nine additional core, side and networking events throughout the duration of the Habitat III Conference. However, given that these were more thematically and/or geographically targeted – focusing on migration, affordability, green building tools... – they are presented directly in the related thematic chapters of this report.

#### ▪ **49<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Habitat et Francophonie network**

In the Reunion Island, on 30 May 2016, UN-Habitat participated in the **49th meeting of the Habitat et Francophonie network**. UN-Habitat’s Housing Unit Team Leader, Christophe Lalande, was invited to present.

### ■ Québec's 10<sup>th</sup> 'Rendez-vous de l'habitation'

The Société d'Habitation du Québec also invited UN-Habitat's Housing Unit Team Leader as the keynote speaker for their 10<sup>th</sup> annual meeting on housing, which took place on 14 November 2016. An overview and analysis of the world's challenges and opportunities related to housing were presented.

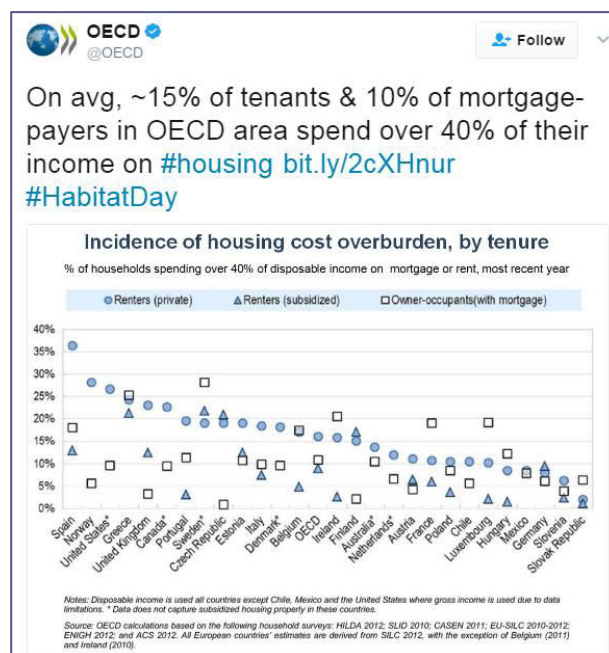


Christophe Lalande at the 10<sup>th</sup> annual meeting on housing by the Société d'habitation du Québec.  
(Credit: Société d'habitation du Québec)

### ■ World Habitat Day Social Media campaign

In the lead-up to Habitat III, and marking World Habitat Day's 2016 'Housing at the Centre,' UN-Habitat led and ran a seven-day social media advocacy campaign to **raise awareness on the universality and the various dimensions of housing** and how an integrated approach to housing delivery can bring many solutions to the problems posed by rapid urbanization today. The campaign shared key figures and key recommendations for housing practitioners.

It was **translated in all six UN official languages**, and picked up in many other languages such as Bahasa, Hungarian, German and Italian. The





messages were shared on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram with different key messages for each day on health, transport, location, cultural adequacy, affordability, and social mix. **The hashtag #HousingAtCentre was used over 1,200 times** in the course of the month of October.

UN-Habitat's 'Housing At The Centre' social media messages were "retweeted" or "liked" or otherwise echoed by a variety of key stakeholders including the UN Secretary-General, the SDG Fund, UNFCCC, UN Women, UN-Environment, UNDP, the President of ECOSOC, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Africa Renewal magazine, ECHO, the OECD, the French Development Agency (AFD), and many others.

### ▪ World Habitat Day high level statements

UN-Habitat provided key messages to the **UN Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon**, to ensure that the 'Housing at the Centre' approach would be relayed at the highest level.

*The full statement that ensued is available online. A highlight: "Approximately a quarter of urban dwellers live in slums or informal settlements. The unplanned rapid expansion of towns and cities means an increasing number of poor and vulnerable people are living in precarious conditions, without adequate living space or access to basic services, such as water, sanitation, electricity and health care. They are often isolated from opportunities for decent work and vulnerable to forced evictions and homelessness. Providing access to adequate housing for all is high among the priorities of the New Urban Agenda."*

*On this World Habitat Day, I urge national and local governments, city planners and communities everywhere to keep "Housing at the Centre". Guaranteeing dignity and opportunity for all depends on people having access to affordable and adequate housing."*

Additionally, **UN-Habitat's Executive Director, Dr. Joan Clos**, also [recorded a video message](#) calling for all urban decision-makers to reposition housing at the centre of their policies and practices.

### ▪ High-level mission and event in Chad

For World Habitat Day, during **a mission in Chad**, Dr. Clos met the Secretary General at the Ministry of Land Management, Urbanism and Habitat for

Chad, Mr. Abel Walendom, and the UN Resident Coordinator, Mr. Stephen Tull.



## PUBLICATIONS

The general interest and relevance of the normative tools developed and issued by UN-Habitat on housing can be measured by the more than **52,000 downloads of housing-related publications** on [unhabitat.org](http://unhabitat.org) in 2016 alone.

### ▪ 'Housing at the Centre' position paper



In March 2016, UN-Habitat published the '[Housing at the Centre](#)' position paper, which has to date been downloaded from the [unhabitat.org](http://unhabitat.org) website close to 2,000 times. The paper lays out the various principles that national

and municipal Governments are recommended to adopt in order to realize the right to adequate and affordable housing for all, and address the current and increasing housing gap in cities.

### ▪ Op-Ed: 'Good urbanization, an investment and way of life'

An opinion column was published by UN-Habitat's Executive Director, Dr. Joan Clos, on World Habitat Day, [in the Japan Times](#).

An extract: *"We urge urban decision-makers to remember that adequate housing is a universal human right, and it means much more than four walls and a roof. We must globally commit political will and public intervention and adequate investment to ensure housing at the center of good urbanization, and improve the living conditions of over a billion slum-dwellers and urban poor."*





## 2. AFFORDABILITY IN FOCUS

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**With people in cities increasingly unable to afford owning a home or even the cost of rent, it is crucial that we refocus our attention at the global, national, and municipal level on finding creative solutions to make housing more financially accessible. The affordability crisis is affecting lower- and higher-income countries alike, and that is why UN-Habitat has been urging and advising housing practitioners across the world on how to shape housing finance policies that are inclusive and flexible, and that target specifically low-income groups and persons in vulnerable situations.**

### MAJOR PROJECTS

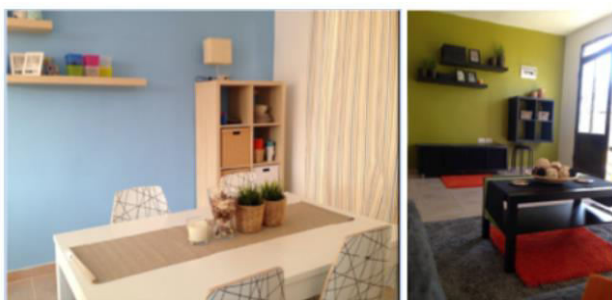
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#### ▪ The 'Jordan Affordable Project' (JAH) programme

With the influx of Syrian refugees into Jordan, housing rents have skyrocketed in the country to unprecedented levels and has become unaffordable for low-income Jordanian families. In response to this challenge, the Jordanian Government and UN-Habitat have launched the 'Jordan Affordable Housing' (JAH) programme to **enable the scaled delivery of affordable houses to lower- and middle-income Jordanians** interested in making an incremental property investment with the help of finance from local

banks. The programme provides unsubsidized small-sized housing units of 65 to 130 m<sup>2</sup>, predominantly funded by the private sector. In addition to addressing the acute shortage of affordable housing and creating new jobs, the programme aims to improve the flexibility of housing markets, stabilize housing rent, realize the right to adequate housing for all, and **protect vulnerable groups from unlawful forced evictions.**

An evaluation of the first phase of the programme, which started in 2014 and ended in September 2016, was conducted this past November, clearly identifying some key achievements by UN-Habitat so far. To name a few: there is manifest buy-in and support from banking institutions and the



Demonstration unit in Ramtha, Jordan, for the Jordan Affordable Housing programme. (Credit: UN-Habitat)

construction sector; analytic maps of affordable land within cities and in their immediate surroundings were produced, five different banks were linked to development projects; a competition was organized with the Jordanian Association of Engineers to raise awareness on the importance of affordability and incremental housing as a solution.

The upcoming phases of the programme will focus on addressing the major challenges remaining and finding ways to increase participation of particularly vulnerable Jordanian and Syrian families.

## ADVOCACY AND EVENTS

### ▪ Global Expert Group Meeting: 'Financing National Housing Policies'

On 10 and 11 May 2016, in partnership with the

Madrid City Council, UN-Habitat gathered experts from developing and developed countries to assess conditions, exchange best practices and chart the path forward to overcome policy implementation bottlenecks related to financing affordable housing. In particular, the event offered the opportunity to inquire and redefine the role of national and local public financing to enhance and rebuild the capacity of the State to be responsive to the housing needs of the poorest majority and the most vulnerable urban dwellers. The event was sponsored by the Barcelona City Council, and the Andalusian International Cooperation for Development Agency.

A total of **36 experts from 19 different countries**, representing national and municipal Governments, UN agencies, NGOs, development finance institutions, and academic institutions attended the Madrid meeting to exchange and learn from their unique perspectives. The two-day event was divided in **four thematic sessions**: optimizing taxation to finance housing policies and programmes, debt issuance to finance housing policies, bolstering governments' non-tax mechanisms to finance housing, alternative approaches to financing housing policies.

### ▪ Habitat III: inclusive housing finance at the centre

The affordability issue was fully inserted and covered in UN-Habitat's major housing-related contributions to the Habitat III International Conference.

During the **Housing Special Session** on 19 October 2016, for example, UN-Habitat ensured that a strong focus was placed on housing



Expert group meeting on 'Financing Housing Policies' organized by UN-Habitat in Madrid in May 2016. (Credit: UN-Habitat)

affordability for lower-income groups with interventions from: H.E. Emanuelle Cosse, Housing Minister of France, who was asked to present the country's Solidarity and Urban Renewal law for social housing and social mix; Loic Chiquier, World Bank Group Chief Technical Specialist on Finance and Markets, who discussed affordability solutions from a development finance institution point of view; and Jane Katz, Director of International Affairs and Programs at Habitat for Humanity International, was invited to present on the NGO's focus on housing affordability for low- and very low-income families across the world.

The 19 October **side event titled 'Housing at the Centre of Sustainable Development'**, organized by UN-Habitat's Housing Unit in partnership with UNDP, started with a presentation by Dr. Shlomo Angel on recent findings regarding housing affordability in the world from a study co-developed by UN-Habitat titled the 'Atlas of Urban Expansion' (see below).

Additionally, UN-Habitat co-designed, co-organized and participated in panels of **five side and networking events** on housing affordability led by partners:

1. 'Rental Sector in the Developing World: Lessons Learned and Best Practices in Promoting Affordable Housing', organized by Community Housing Limited on 18 October;
2. 'Place Matters: affordable housing should be at the centre of cities', by Sao Paulo's Housing Department on 18 October;

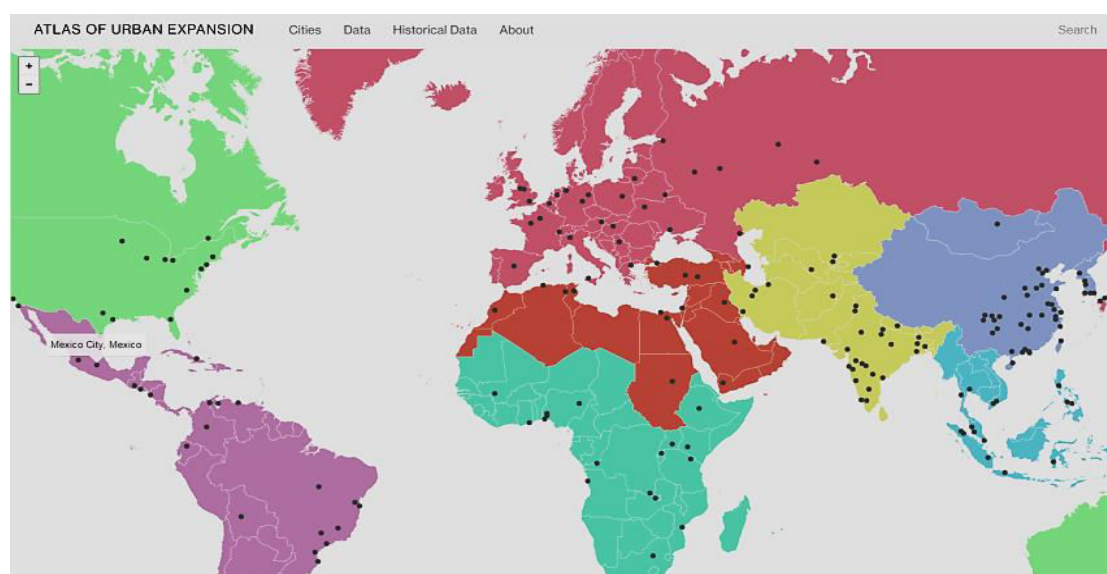
3. 'Housing Market Dynamics in Africa', planned by the African Development Bank on 19 October;
4. 'Bridging the Affordability Gap: Inclusive Housing Finance in the New Urban Agenda', by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation on 19 October
5. 'Affordable and Adequate Housing: National Policies and International Coalition in support of Sustainable Development Goals', by the Albanian Ministry Of Urban Development And National Housing Agency, on 17 October.

## RESEARCH

### ▪ The 'Atlas of Urban Expansion'

During the Habitat III Conference, UN-Habitat co-launched the e-platform Atlas of Urban Expansion ([atlasofurbanexpansion.org](http://atlasofurbanexpansion.org)), a multi-phase research effort to monitor the quantitative and qualitative aspects of global urban expansion, in partnership with the NYU Urban Expansion Program.

The study has a strong focus on the transformation of the housing sector and its physical impact on land, as well as a **thorough analysis on housing affordability**.



Screenshot of the e-platform 'Atlas of Urban Expansion' co-launched by UN-Habitat in 2016.  
(Credit: NYU Marron Institute of Urban Management and the Stern School of Business)





### 3. CITIES WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION

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**As part of the UN family, UN-Habitat is mandated to respect, promote, and protect human rights in all of its activities. This human rights-mainstreaming duty is underpinned by values contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular the right to an adequate standard of living for all, which includes the right to adequate housing. Defined by international legal instruments as much more than four walls and a roof, it implies standards regarding location, accessibility, basic services, affordability, tenure security, habitability, and cultural adequacy.**

#### MAJOR PROJECTS

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##### ▪ Human Rights Mainstreaming Pilot Projects

The Human Rights Mainstreaming Coordination Team invited UN-Habitat colleagues to submit human rights mainstreaming project proposals for additional funding. Successful project proposals were to be funded through the human rights mainstreaming window of the UN-Habitat Programme Cooperation Agreement with Sweden.

Project proposals were to be formulated within the context of the UN-Habitat 2014-19 Strategic Plan, UN-Habitat's three-pronged approach to

sustainable urban development, the New Urban Agenda, and Agenda 2030, in particular SDG 11.1.

Out of the 11 proposals received, the following four were chosen for funding:

1. Human Rights for Hebron, State of Palestine;
2. Integration of the Human Rights-Based Approach in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) governance to enhance sub-national capacity in Cambodia;
3. The Implications of Universal Access to public transportation for Vulnerable groups in Nairobi, Kenya;
4. Mainstreaming Human Rights for Youth Leaders at the One Stop Youth Centre, Mogadishu, Somalia.

All four are underway and will be fully implemented in 2017. In the Cambodia project, the first output was finalized in December 2016: a workshop was conducted in the Svay Rieng province with participants from sub-national level institutions. The main objective of the workshop was to present and review the results of :A/ the capacity and needs assessment for the WASH sector, in target cities that was conducted at sub-national levels in February 2016 and B/ the sustainability check of the Mekong Regional WASH Initiative conducted in January 2016. Guidelines for a human rights-based approach to WASH were drafted in a participatory manner targeted at sub-national government institutions

#### ▪ The 'Mediterranean City-to-City Migration' project

UN-Habitat is a key partner in the Mediterranean City-to-City Migration (MC2CM) project, which aims at developing **improved policies and governance at city level for migrants** in European and Mediterranean cities. The municipalities of Amman, Beirut, Lisbon, Lyon, Madrid, Tangier, Turin, Tunis, and Vienna are the project's city partners.

Project activities of the MC2CM are grouped in three components: A/ a dialogue component which facilitates the exchange of experiences and policy options among the cities through seven expert group meetings, B/ a research component which takes stock of the migration situation in the partner cities and will support the knowledge-based work of the project, and C/ the implementation of pilot projects that will support partner South Mediterranean cities in taking concrete actions towards improved migration governance.

Three expert group meetings that have taken place in 2016, covering a variety of key themes:

1. Social Cohesion, Interreligious and Inter-cultural Dialogue (Lisbon, July 2016);
2. Employment and Entrepreneurship (Madrid, November 2016);
3. The Enjoyment of Human Rights and Access to Basic Services (Tangiers, November 2016),

Another four meetings are to take place in 2017, leading to the publication of seven City Migration Profiles and the implementation of the various pilot projects.

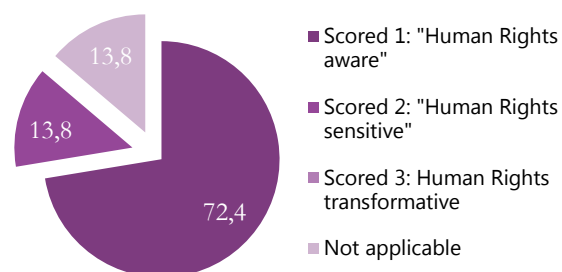
The MC2CM project, funded by the European Union and co-funded by the Swiss Development Cooperation, is implemented by a consortium led by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) in partnership with the United Cities and Local Governments Network (UCLG) and UN-Habitat, with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as an associate partner.

## ADVISORY SERVICES

In 2016, UN-Habitat provided advisory services on human rights mainstreaming for 124 documents, including 58 project documents and 66 concept notes to ensure that every UN-Habitat project is in line with the human rights-based approach to development.

For every project document, the UN-Habitat-developed Human Rights Marker is used to assign a "grade": 1 for projects that are "human rights aware", 2 for projects that are "human rights sensitive", and 3 for those that are "human rights transformative".

Percentages of Project Documents Scores on Human Rights Markers after Incorporating feedback from Advisory Services:



## CAPACITY BUILDING

#### ▪ Trainings

A cross-cutting training package was developed, covering issues of gender, youth, and human rights in general.

Over the course of 2016, **five trainings were delivered to UN-Habitat staff** members in Maputo (Mozambique) in April, Amman (Jordan) in May, Cairo (Egypt) in June, and Beirut (Lebanon) in December.

## ▪ Internal Knowledge Management

In 2016, nine new **Housing Rights and Human Rights briefs** were produced to provide project designers succinct overviews of human settlements-related human rights within specific countries: Afghanistan, Algeria, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Sao Tome e Principe, and Syria. Another 18 previously produced briefs were updated.

Three **Briefing Notes** were produced highlighting key aspects of sustainable development: Housing Affordability and Financial Inclusion, the Sustainable Development Agenda, and the Right to Adequate Housing.

Additionally, to improve internal communication, UN-Habitat's human rights mainstreaming team organized a total of four **Brown Bag Lunches** with special guests on the following topics:

- the 2030 Agenda, with Dr. Eduardo López Moreno, UN-Habitat;
- screening of the documentary titled 'Ecūmenopolis: city without limits';
- the role of the media in enabling access to human rights in cities, with Mr. Nzau Musau, Senior Political Reporter at the The Standard media group in Kenya;
- the Continuum of Land Rights approach with Robert Lewis-Lettington, Jean du Plessis, Lowie Rosales-Kawasaki and John Gitau, from UN-Habitat.

The team also held periodic UN-Habitat **Human Rights Focal Points coordination meetings** and developed an **intranet webpage for cross-cutting issues**, including Human Rights mainstreaming, to ensure easy access and effective distribution of guidance materials and other relevant documents to all UN-Habitat staff.

## ADVOCACY AND EVENTS

### ▪ Habitat III: spotlight on the right to adequate housing

In preparation for the Habitat III Conference, UN-Habitat attended the April 2016 Thematic Meeting in Pretoria on Informal Settlements. A presentation was delivered on the **'Role of UN-Habitat in the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Housing'**, particularly through slum upgrading initiatives.

Throughout the Habitat III conference, a strong emphasis was placed on the right to adequate housing by the UN-Habitat Housing Unit, particularly through a strong collaboration with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on **'Issue Paper 1: The Right to the City and Cities for all'** and for **'Issue Paper 20: Housing'**.

The collaboration continued for the planning of the Habitat III Housing Special Session on 17 October 2016 where the Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing, Ms. Leilani Farha, was invited to present.

UN-Habitat's Housing Unit Team Leader, Christophe Lalande, was also invited to be part of a panel in a side event organized by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), titled **'The multidimensional reality of migration in cities'**, in which he stressed the importance of cities adopting a human rights-based approach to address migration, its challenges and its opportunities.



Cross-Cutting Training for UN-Habitat Lebanon (Credit: UN-Habitat)



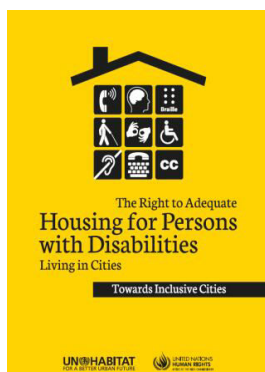


Housing Special Session, Habitat III Conference. On the panel: Dr. Fernanda Lonardoni, Housing Specialist for UN-Habitat (right); Ms. Leilani Farha, Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing (centre); and Dr. Geoffrey Payne, Housing expert (left). (Credit: Habitat III Secretariat, 17 October 2016, Quito, Ecuador)

## PUBLICATIONS

### ▪ ‘The Right to Adequate Housing for Persons with Disabilities Living in Cities’

Persons with disabilities continue to be over-represented in the poorest quintile of the population. In cities, they face additional challenges due to discriminatory laws and policies, environmental barriers, and lack of support services that would enable them to enjoy their right to adequate housing on an equal basis with others.



This study reviews the literature on the meaning and impact of the right to adequate housing for persons with disabilities in cities.

### ▪ ‘Harnessing the Power of Indigenous Cultures for Better Cities’

The reality cannot be ignored: to date, many countries – such as Mexico – have one third of their indigenous people living in urban areas. In many other countries – such as Canada and Chile – the number surpasses one in two. For the 2016 International Day of the World’s Indigenous

Peoples, UN-Habitat drew attention to the importance of taking action to address the many challenges and opportunities that urbanization represents for indigenous communities.

### ▪ ‘Our common responsibility to improve the city experience for persons with disabilities’

More than one billion people across the planet experience a disability, 80 per cent of whom live in a developing country.

Accessibility is one of the seven requirements that define adequate housing as described in international legal instruments. Yet, persons with disabilities (PWDs) continue to face daily challenges largely caused by stigmatization, discriminatory laws and policies, environmental barriers, and insufficient access to support services that impede their enjoyment of human rights.

For the 2016 International Day of Persons with Disabilities, UN-Habitat focused on the plight of PWDs regarding their housing rights.

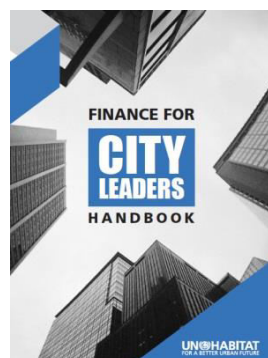
### ▪ ‘More than four walls and a roof: adequate housing, a human right that can unlock many others’

In commemoration of Human Rights Day, UN-Habitat advocated for the right to adequate housing for all and drew attention to the many violations of this fundamental right that continue

to take place routinely across the world: unlawful forced evictions, discrimination, lack of affordability, inadequate provision of basic services, to name a few.

The article explains how adequate Housing is an entry door to the enjoyment of many other fundamental rights and why Governments must therefore reposition housing at the centre of their decision-making to ensure that their people enjoy the right to live in a secure home in peace and dignity.

#### ▪ Chapter 14 of the 'Finance for City Leaders Handbook'



In collaboration with UN-Habitat's Gender Equality and Youth Units, the Human Rights Mainstreaming team drafted a chapter for a UN-Habitat publication titled 'Finance for City Leaders Handbook'. The human rights section in the chapter focuses on the importance of city leaders applying a human rights-based approach to municipal finance, to ensure better revenue and expenditure patterns, reaching everyone in the city, including those in vulnerable situations.



## 4. GREENER HOUSING FOR GREENER CITIES

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The building sector is estimated to consume 40 per cent of the world's energy and materials. Residential buildings alone account for 19 per cent of global total final energy consumption. On a business-as-usual trajectory, energy demand from the building sector is expected to rise by 50 per cent by 2050. UN-Habitat's focus on the environmental sustainability of housing, in line with the Paris Agreement, aims to harness the greenhouse gas emissions reduction potential of the building sector – considered the largest of all sectors. This is a mitigation opportunity we must harness.

### MAJOR PROJECTS

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#### ▪ The Global Network for Sustainable Housing



**GNSH**

In 2016, UN-Habitat continued its community convener role on green practices in the housing sector, in particular through the [Global Network for Sustainable Housing](#) (GNSH).

To date, the GNSH has grown to 14 key international partners, including NGOs, learning

and research institutions, globally recognized independent experts as well as UN entities: [Dr. Steve Burroughs](#), [CRAterre](#), the [EcoSur](#) network, [Habitat for Humanity International](#), the [International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies](#), the [International Labour Organization](#), the [International Network for Bamboo and Rattan](#), [Matthias Nohn](#), [Slum Dwellers International](#), [Oxford Brookes University](#), the [UN Economic Commission for Europe](#), the [University of Cambridge](#), and the [VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland](#).





Social housing in India. (Credit: MaS-SHIP)

Through the partnership, GNSH members share lessons learnt, and develop strategies to promote affordable sustainable housing practices in developing and transitional countries and cities in contexts of slum upgrading, post-disaster reconstruction, mass social housing, and urban renewal. GNSH encourages the use of local and traditional building materials and vernacular architecture, as well as integrated neighbourhood design and urban planning.

#### ▪ The Sustainable Housing Design tool SHERPA

Conceived as a “guide to sustainable housing” and supported by the [10-Year Framework Programme \(10YFP\)](#), the [SHERPA tool](#) is the result of a strong GNSH collaboration, in particular between UN-Habitat, CRAterre, the VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland and the University of Cambridge. It aims to provide a pre-implementation evaluation of housing projects in developing countries.

In 2016, the Government of Kenya, through its slum-upgrading programme KENSUP, agreed to co-develop, test and apply SHERPA. So did various entities across the world: [Yaam Solidarité](#), a Burkina Faso-based housing cooperative; [Architecture sans Frontières Nepal](#), which provides

post-disaster assistance to 10 earthquake-affected districts; and Sofonic, a Nicaragua-based housing NGO.

#### ▪ The Mainstreaming Sustainable Social Housing in India Project (MaS-SHIP)

UN-Habitat partnered with [Oxford Brookes University](#), [Development Alternatives](#), [The Energy and Resources Institute](#) to develop ways in which India’s planned and currently implemented mass social housing schemes can be used to pioneer more sustainable approaches. The total housing shortage in Indian cities is currently estimated to stand at 18.78 million units.

The project, funded by the 10YFP, and named [MaS-SHIP](#), seeks to promote sustainability in terms of environmental performance, affordability and social inclusion as an integrated part of social housing in India. The first output of the project was finalized in 2016 with an in-depth background study containing key findings and lessons learnt.

The project is expected to run through 2018 focusing on the development of a Design Support Tool (DST) for practitioners laying down the fundamentals and methodology for best practices in achieving sustainability in housing development projects.



Various publications are planned including technical reports synthesizing primary and secondary data, as well as several policy and practice briefings for national and subnational policy-makers and practitioners.

## ADVOCACY AND EVENTS

### ▪ The EcoMaterials 5 Conference

Just a week before Habitat III, a landmark meeting took place in Riobamba city in Ecuador. The [EcoMaterials 5 Conference](#), was co-organized by UN-Habitat with the GNSH, and ran from the 12 to the 14 October 2016. Over 150 housing practitioners from industry, research, international organisations and civil society gathered to present their perspectives on construction, maintenance and upkeep of habitat focusing on developing countries. Among other things, UN-Habitat presented the Sustainable Housing Design tool SHERPA through a panel discussion.

### ▪ Habitat III Bamboo House installation

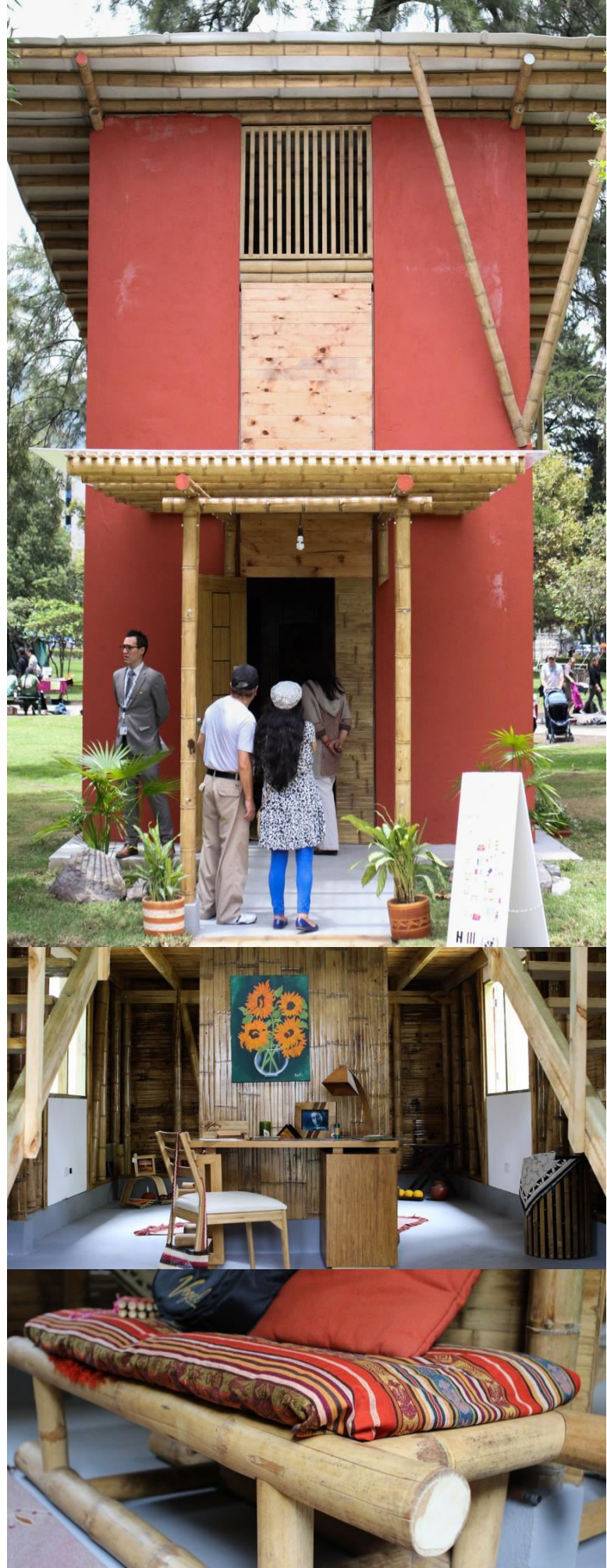
With the financial support of UN-Habitat and the 10 Year Framework of Programmes (10YFP), the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR) built a demonstration structure showcasing the merits of bamboo construction as part of the Habitat III Village exhibition. The installation attracted thousands of visitors and raised awareness on the potential of bamboo construction.

### ▪ Habitat III: the importance of building green

In Quito, Ecuador, during the Habitat III Conference, UN-Habitat co-organized and presented in four events, directly focused on environmentally sustainable housing design and construction.

The first event, titled **‘SHERPA Methodology for sustainable housing project’** took place on 19 October 2016 and was co-organized with CRAterre and presented the path from the tool’s beta version to public dissemination.

On the same day, the second event, co-planned with the Government of Finland, was titled **‘Sustainable Housing for All: Global Partners, Local Solutions’**. It highlighted UN-Habitat’s leading role in sustainable housing provision



Bamboo house installation at the Habitat III Village.  
(Credit: Habitat III Secretariat, Ecuador, October 2016)



through the SHERPA tool with participants from Kenya, Burkina Faso and Nepal presenting their respective contexts.

The third event, **'Building Information Modelling (BIM) as a tool for capacity building for sustainable housing upgrading in informal settlements'**, also took place on 19 October, examined the limits and merits of the BIM framework.

The fourth and final event co-organized by UN-Habitat on housing environmental sustainability took place on 20 October 2016 and was titled **'Bamboo housing for sustainable, resilient urban development and post-disaster recovery.'** It focused on the benefits of using bamboo in housing construction, making use both of its excellent seismic properties and low environmental impact.

## CAPACITY BUILDING

### ■ Training of Practitioners: the Sustainable Housing Design Tool SHERPA

Through the 10YFP-funded SHERPA project, teams from UN-Habitat, CRAterre, KENSUP (Kenya), Yaam Solidarité (Burkina Faso), and Architecture sans Frontières Nepal, participated in a three-day training of practitioners from 9 to 11 October 2016 in Riobamba, Ecuador.

Each team produced a report on the envisioned housing project design before using SHERPA, followed by a discussion on housing sustainability in general. The outcomes of the discussion along with a first testing phase of SHERPA v1.0 directly informed the development of the tool.



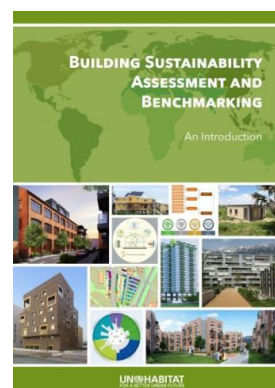
SHERPA training of practitioners in Riobamba, Ecuador.  
(Credit: CRAterre, October 2016)

## PUBLICATIONS

### ■ Building Sustainability Assessment and Benchmarking

Over the past 30 years, the number, scope and complexity of tools developed to **assess the environmental impact of buildings** has increased dramatically.

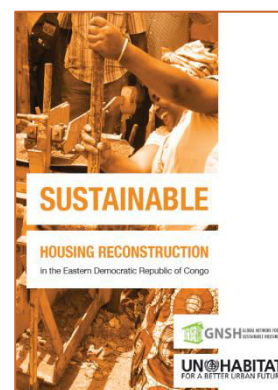
In this publication, UN-Habitat examines closely the emergence of **building sustainability assessment and benchmarking** as a global phenomenon as well as some of the political and practical challenges in order to understand their possible role in realizing objectives of the 'New Urban Agenda' and the policies to be influenced by it.



The study – merely an introduction to the subject – presents the different scopes and methodologies of 13 different tools that are global, national, commercial, or open-source initiatives.

### ■ Sustainable Housing Reconstruction in Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo

Given that the prolonged conflict of Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo has now reached a more stable phase, UN-Habitat recommends initiating the permanent reconstruction phase and moving away from emergency shelter in the area.



This report recommends launching a reconstruction process that reflects the local political, socio-cultural and physical context of the area and makes use of sustainable local building materials, generating employment opportunities and local economic development through participatory processes and capacity-building of community members.





# 5. LOOKING AHEAD: 2017 AND BEYOND

**In 2017, UN-Habitat will continue to promote the ‘Housing at the Centre’ approach as a cornerstone for achieving the SDGs, for implementing the New Urban Agenda, for fulfilling our commitments to the Paris Agreement and for making the right to adequate housing a reality for all. This chapter provides some highlights of the activities planned to meet these global targets.**

## PROJECTS

- **Continued implementation of the Global Housing Strategy**

In 2017, UN-Habitat will be producing a National Housing Profile for Lebanon, working with Afghanistan, Angola and Myanmar on their National Housing Policy documents, and drafting a Policy Implementation Strategy for Afghanistan and Bahrain as well. UN-Habitat is also starting to work with the UN Economic Commissions for Europe in Albania, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine, and other countries have expressed interest in collaborating with UN-Habitat on such products.

- **Roll-out of the SHERPA tool for sustainable housing design**

UN-Habitat will be developing the web and smartphone platform for the Sustainable Housing Design tool Sherpa and will be supporting the Government of Kenya, the Burkina Faso-based housing cooperative Yaam Solidarité, the NGO Architecture Sans Frontières Nepal, and the Nicaragua-based housing NGO Sofonic as they test and apply the tool in 2017.

- **Key Urban Interventions Through Sustainable Social Housing (KUISHI)**

KUISHI aims to introduce sustainable building and construction practices into social housing programmes in three countries in Africa: Ethiopia, Lesotho and the eThekweni municipality in South Africa. This will be achieved through data gathering, the development of recommendations, the amendment of regulations and other initiatives.

- **Continuation and Implementations of the four Human Rights Mainstreaming Pilot Projects**

In 2017, UN-Habitat will implement phase 2 of the Cambodia project on the integration of the Human Rights-Based Approach in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). Additionally, implementation will commence on the Youth Leaders project in Mogadishu, the Access and Mobility project in Nairobi, and Human Rights barometer project in Hebron (see page 15 of this report).

- **Addressing protracted displacement of IDPs in Mogadishu**

Through a partnership with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and UNDP, together with longstanding partners CESVI, SWDC and SIDO, this project will aim to facilitate the gradual resolution of the protracted displacement of IDPs in Mogadishu, notably by enhancing local integration capacity, through strengthened governance and an urban strategy.

- **Rental Subsidy Scheme Pilot for forcibly evicted IDPs in Mogadishu**

This pilot project for rental subsidies will seek for creative solutions to the violation of housing, land and property rights of the displaced by forced evictions. It will attain this by creating a system of incentives for displaced families and landlords aimed at supporting security of housing and occupancy for a period that is long enough to create and sustain successful livelihood strategies.

- **'Mediterranean City-to-City Migration': additional expert group meetings and launch of pilot projects**

In addition to the three peer-to-peer meetings on migration in the Mediterranean that took place in 2016 (see page 16 of this report), another three are planned for 2017 on Refugees, Housing and Planning, and Inter-institutional coordination. Additionally, various pilot projects will support the Southern Mediterranean participating cities in taking first steps of concrete action towards improved migration governance at city level.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

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- **The Human Rights-Based Approach to Housing and Slum Upgrading**

The objective of The Human Rights-Based Approach to Housing and Slum Upgrading Handbook is to build the capacity of and provide practical assistance to those who want to enhance their understanding of the methodology and added value of the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) in housing and slum upgrading policies, programmes, projects and other types of interventions.

- **Informal Settlements: Alternative Solutions to Slum Demolition and Forced Eviction of Local Communities - Case Study from Africa, Asia, Central and South America**

With the main goal to offer to mayors and city administrators a practical reference tool in cases where the relocation of communities has been considered unavoidable as a policy option, the research focuses on strategies of intervention adopted by national and international actors with particular regards to situations

where legitimate national interest plans and urban development projects have been implemented with the full respect and protection of human rights with case studies from Africa, Asia, Central and South America.

- **Breaking the Cycle of Homelessness: Understanding and Addressing both the Lack of and Inadequacy of Housing with a Human Rights-Based Lens**

This report will ultimately provide a set of actions that states can take in order to break this the cycle of homelessness, namely with the acknowledgment that homelessness is a problem that pertains all countries and their governments irrespective of their development state. It will emphasize that homelessness has to be analysed with human rights lens; and in line with the national and local sustainable development agendas.

- **UN-Habitat guide to field staff on how to handle forced evictions in the field**

This “Guide” will draw upon already existing literature on the right to adequate housing and forced evictions and thus describe for the benefit of UN-Habitat field staff various strategies and resources that can be deployed in situations where field staff are faced with forced evictions.

- **International Guidelines for Urban and Territorial Planning Handbook**

UN-Habitat will shortly be publishing the handbook on Urban and Territorial Planning with a focus on housing planning and design best practices.

## **ADVOCACY AND EVENTS**

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- **UN-Habitat’s 26<sup>th</sup> Governing Council, Dialogue on Housing and side events**

From 8 to 12 May 2017, UN-Habitat’s 26<sup>th</sup> Governing Council will host a dialogue titled ‘Towards inclusive, sustainable and adequate housing for a better future.’ Additionally, several side events will be organized, focusing on various topics including: tools to make the right to adequate housing a reality for all, and housing best practices from several countries including Morocco, Germany, Ethiopia and Singapore.

- **Collaboration with Shelter Afrique on the 5000 for 5000 Competition**

UN-Habitat will be continuing its collaboration with the development finance institution Shelter Afrique through a competition for rewarding housing designers who will design a house that costs less than USD 5000 to build. The second phase of this project will entail the actual construction of 5000 units of the winning design.

- **Collaboration with the Building and Social Housing Foundation (BSHF) on the Habitat Awards**

Each year two awards are given by BSHF, with the support of UN-Habitat, projects that provide practical, innovative solutions to current housing needs, with a particular focus on decent, affordable housing. The awards are to be presented during UN-Habitat’s 26<sup>th</sup> Governing Council.



**Produced by:** UN-Habitat's Housing Unit

**Team leader:** Christophe Lalande

**Contact:** Christophe.Lalande@unhabitat.org

**Team members who contributed to the report:**

Tessy Aura, Human Rights in Housing

Christopher Feather, Housing Finance

Yasmina Guerda, Public Advocacy

Gregor Herda, Housing Environmental Sustainability

Fernanda Lonardoni, Housing Policy

Jesus Salcedo, Housing Policy

David Thomas, Cross-cutting Issues

**For more information:** [www.unhabitat.org](http://www.unhabitat.org)

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