



25th SESSION OF THE
GOVERNING COUNCIL
17 - 23 APRIL 2015 ♦ NAIROBI

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

Global Housing Strategy: Re-positioning Housing at The Centre of the new Urban Agenda

25 Session of Governing Council

Tuesday, 21 April 2015

Venue: Conference Room 14 Time: 6:00 pm – 6:45 pm Nairobi, Kenya

Summary

Since 2013, UN-Habitat is implementing the Global Housing Strategy (GHS)¹, a collaborative global movement towards adequate housing for all. The GHS is based on the principle of inclusive cities as the foundation for sustainable urban development. Inclusive cities are achieved by mainstreaming human rights in urban development, including housing and slum upgrading, to ensure opportunities for all, social integration and cohesion. The GHS envisions a national housing strategy at the centre of national urban development and advocates for the integration of housing policies into broader social, economic and environmental policies as well as urban policies. Policies and programmes need to be geared around the strategic need of increasing the supply of affordable housing for all at the centre especially for the most poor and vulnerable groups. This is a central requirement of GHS: only with strong political will, sound guidelines and adequate regulations will countries and cities be able to provide adequate alternatives at the scale needed, reduce slum growth and ensure sustainable, inclusive and pro-poor urban development.

Under the framework of the GHS UN-Habitat aims to support member States to formulate and implement national housing policies, strategies and programmes for the promotion of access to adequate, sustainable and inclusive housing. UN-Habitat has been working with countries to establish guidelines, policies, planning and programming of investment, management and monitoring activities in the areas of housing, slum upgrading and slum prevention.

This Side Event is a milestone in the implementation of the GHS, which UN-Habitat is currently undertaking at the country level. The event will gather GHS pilot countries to share experiences amongst themselves as well as with countries which have made significant steps towards diagnosing their national housing situation and developing national guidelines towards achieving adequate housing for all.

With this event UN-Habitat wants to strengthen the understanding of the GHS framework and commitment of GHS pilot countries to developing a long-term vision and a policy framework for housing sector development at the national level.

Objective of the Side Event

The main objective of the Side Event is to increase political interest and commitment of partner countries to addressing their housing challenges and repositioning housing at the centre of national and urban development policies. Specific objectives include:

¹ Endorsed by Resolution 24/9 at the 24th Session of UN-Habitat Governing Council.

- a. Increased political interest and commitment to addressing the challenges of housing more holistically linked to economic development, employment generation and poverty reduction policies, and through promoting sustainable and affordable housing alternatives.
- b. Increased awareness of the encompassing framework of the GHS and commitment towards repositioning "Housing at the Centre" of national and city development strategies as well as the key role of housing in the New Urban Agenda for the 21st century.

The event will enable Member States to exchange knowledge and share experience towards achieving adequate housing for all within the framework of the GHS. Countries will share experiences on assessing housing needs, developing national housing policies and implementing policies. The Side Event will also provide an opportunity to inform Member States on the implementation and achievements of UN-Habitat with the GHS, including strategic partnerships, knowledge production, capacity building and advocacy.

Structure

The Side Event will include presentations of countries which have made significant steps towards promoting adequate housing for all; including completing the diagnosis of their national housing situation, developing national strategies, policies and programs towards the prioritization of housing in the urban development policy. Countries will highlight; (a) how collaboration with UN-Habitat has impacted the country in promoting adequate housing for all; and (b) what are the main remaining challenges and what is expected from further collaboration with UN-Habitat in the framework of the GHS.

The plenary discussions and contribution participants - independent experts, academic, and representatives from civil society organizations - will contribute to width of information for the Habitat III debate which supports Sub-theme Two of the GC25.

Provisional Agenda:

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| 5 Min | Introduction and welcome message – UN-Habitat | Raf Tuts, Coordinator HSUP Branch |
| 5 Min | GHS framework - UN-Habitat | Christophe Lalande, Leader Housing Unit |
| 20 Min | Countries sharing experiences | Country one: Ghana Country two: Lesotho |
| 20 Min | Plenary discussion with GHS Countries Challenges to be addressed and ways forward for collaboration with UN-Habitat | ALL PARTICIPANTS |

Participants:

The event will be co-organized by UN-Habitat and GHS countries namely Ghana, Mozambique, Nepal, Uganda, Zambia, Lesotho, Haiti, Guyana and El Salvador. Participants will include representatives from member states attending the GC25 as well as independent experts, academic, and representatives from civil society organizations and NGOs.

Language:

Presentations will be in English.

Contacts:

For all matters pertaining to this Side Event, please contact the Housing Unit, Housing and Slum Upgrading Branch UN-HABITAT project team Christophe Lalande (Christophe.Lalande@unhabitat.org), and Fernanda Lonardoní (Fernanda.Lonardoní@unhabitat.org), Kamba Ankunda (Kamba.Ankunda@unhabitat.org)