



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME
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FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

SDG11 Progress Report: the world is failing to provide adequate housing

New York/Nairobi (13 July 2023) – Housing has been recognized as a human right, and the provision of adequate housing is the first of the ten targets of SDG11 to ‘make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable’.

Today, however, around 2.8 billion people suffer from some kind of housing inadequacy. This is a significant obstacle to delivering all the Sustainable Development Goals. Without adequate, affordable, and accessible housing, many other areas of human development, such as poverty eradication, education, and climate change adaptation, cannot be achieved.

The second Synthesis Report on SDG11 makes clear that in 2023, the halfway point in implementing the SDGs, the world is facing a global housing failure.

In 2020, the absolute slum population passed 1 billion, 165 million more slum dwellers have emerged globally over the past two decades. A staggering 90 percent of them live in Africa or Asia. Although the proportion of people living in slums has declined since 2014, due to the overall population increase, the rate of decline is now slowing.

“The ability of most people in the world to live healthy, prosperous, and safe lives depends directly on the opportunities or barriers they face where they live,” said the Executive Director of UN-Habitat Maimunah Mohd Sharif at the launch of the SDG11 report. “The resolve within the 2030 agenda to *“free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want and to heal and secure our planet”* will be realized largely in cities and human settlements in today’s urban planet. We need to look at cities and their housing and other challenges.”

Housing and housing issues are a challenge across the globe. What was once viewed as a problem afflicting megacities in poor countries is now a global phenomenon seen even in the world’s highly developed regions. It is estimated that at least 318 million people across the globe are homeless.

The situation worsened during the pandemic. According to the UN-Habitat World Cities



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Report 2022 data, the Covid-19 pandemic and ongoing conflicts created a whole class of newly poor people. At least 163 million people fell into poverty in 2021 alone.

UN-Habitat estimates that 96,000 new affordable and accessible housing units are needed every day across the world to meet the adequate housing need by 2030.

Another area that affects the implementation of SDG11 is the lack of verifiable data. Of the 331 voluntary national reviews (VNRs) of the SDG agenda produced by countries since 2015, only 221 were able to report on Goal 11. National-level reporting has improved over the past years: almost 80 percent of all VNRs produced in the last two years covering Goal 11 indicators versus below 30 percent in 2016.

Against this backdrop, achieving SDG11 in seven years requires urgent, large-scale policy interventions and investments in sustainable urban development. At the second United Nations Habitat Assembly, which convened in Nairobi in June 2023, Member States called for urgent global action on housing.

A housing resolution, championed by Kenya and supported by Bahrain, France, Jordan, Egypt, Pakistan, and USA, was endorsed by 135 participating states. The resolution emphasized that proper data collection was a vital foundation for assessing the state of cities and devising policies to achieve SDG11. It also called for the setting up of a global open-ended intergovernmental policy group to look at affordable and adequate housing provisions.

In 2023, the UN conducts the second review of Sustainable Development Goals 6, 7, 9, 17, and Goal 11. The first synthesis report on SDG11 was presented at the High-level Political Forum in 2018. SDG11 has 10 targets, with 15 indicators.

About UN-Habitat

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme, UN-Habitat, is the entity responsible for sustainable urbanization. It has programmes in over 90 countries that support policymakers and communities to create socially and environmentally sustainable cities and towns. UN-Habitat promotes transformative change in cities through knowledge, policy advice, technical assistance, and collaborative action. For more information, visit unhabitat.org or follow us on Twitter @unhabitat.



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