Agenda Item 3: State of efforts to progressively realize adequate housing for all

Adequate Housing

- Enshrined in international frameworks like the UDHR and ICESCR.

- Central to education, health, dignity, and inclusion.

- A cornerstone for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Tenure security

Basic Services

Affordability

Habitability

Accessibility

Location

Cultural adequacy

Sustainability

Scale of the challenge

Global Overview:
- 1.6–3 billion people lack adequate housing.
- 1.2 billion people live in informal settlements or slums.
- 330 million people face absolute homelessness.

Regional trends:

Sub-Saharan Africa:
- Over 60% of urban households live in slum conditions.
- Slum population doubled between 2000 and 2022 (133M to 266M).

Asia and Pacific:
- Rapid urbanisation outpaces infrastructure development.
- High levels of overcrowding and inadequate basic services.

Latin America and the Caribbean:
- Some progress in reducing slum populations, but inequalities persist.

Middle East and North Africa:
- Displacement and conflict worsen housing deficits, with millions living in informal housing or camps.

Europe and North America:
- Significant housing stock requires retrofitting and renovation to meet climate targets and improve energy efficiency.
- Affordability: high housing costs, particularly in urban centers, have led to rising homelessness.
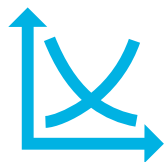
Key trends and challenges

Rapid urbanisation outpacing planning

- 2.2 billion people more in urban setting by 2050

- 90% of growth in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia

- Sprawling cities lead to fragmentation, inefficient land use, and informal settlements

Decline in public investment

- Public housing investment as a share of GDP has halved in some regions and remained low in all

- Shift from supply-side to demand-side subsidies has eroded social housing stock

Overremphasis on market-driven solutions and unit supply

- Private markets fail to meet the needs of low-income households

- Housing reduced to a supply issue, overlooking informal stock and sustainability.

Key trends and challenges

Interplay of crises (climate change, conflict and displacement)

- 75 million people are internally displaced globally

- Climate change and slow-onset disasters strain housing systems

Systemic inequalities

- Marginalised groups face intersecting barriers to accessing housing.

- Lack of robust legal protections and redress mechanisms exacerbates exclusion

Governance and data gaps

- Gaps in data collection (disaggregation, local data, qualitative evidence)

- Local governments tasked with housing strategies often lack resources or mandates

Priorities

- Refocus on housing as a common good and its social function

- Integrated planning for housing, infrastructure, and climate resilience

- Diversified housing types and delivery model to address different needs

- Diversified financing models including land-based instruments, property tax reforms

- Reinforce non-market housing models: public, cooperative, community-led initiatives

- Targeted interventions to address systemic inequalities

Possible areas for further research and in-depth analysis

- Mapping domestic housing interventions

- Understanding barriers to scale community-led housing initiatives

- Balancing public and private sector roles

- Examining governance mechanisms and multilevel collaboration: mapping arrangements, analysing preconditions for success, and transferable best practices