



Housing and the Sustainable Development Goals

The transformational
impact of housing



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Why housing matters to global development frameworks

Housing is an important component of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and an essential driver for achieving many of the Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs. Adequate and affordable housing leads to benefits in health, education and economic opportunities. The process of housing improvement is often a ladder out of poverty for families. These changes benefit the larger community, reducing inequality and building resilience against economic and natural disasters.

Actions toward adequate and affordable housing have multiple effects and support the implementation of other global development strategies, such as the New Urban Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the Paris Agreement.

With this guide, housing practitioners and development experts alike will learn about the transformational impact of housing in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Additionally, this can be a starting point for action, research and analysis for measuring housing impact through the SDGs' monitoring framework of targets and indicators.

Housing and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development embraces core principles, including universality (it applies to all countries and considers all people despite their status and location), interconnectedness and indivisibility (it needs to be implemented as a whole), inclusiveness (every contribution is valid), and multistakeholder partnerships (to support implementation).

The right to adequate housing as an important element of these core principles is embraced in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and has long been a priority for Habitat for Humanity and UN-HABITAT.

“Adequate housing means more than a roof over one’s head. It also means adequate privacy; adequate space; physical accessibility; adequate security; security of tenure; structural stability and durability; adequate lighting, heating and ventilation; adequate basic infrastructure, such as water-supply, sanitation and waste-management facilities; suitable environmental quality and health-related factors; and adequate and accessible location with regard to work and basic facilities: all of which should be available at an affordable cost” (UN-HABITAT, 2003).

Housing’s role in the SDGs

Existing research and analysis of the 17 SDGs with their 169 targets and more than 200 corresponding indicators show that:

- Housing contributes directly or indirectly to the implementation of most of the SDGs.
- Housing is a platform for household resilience and sustainability, driving Human Development Index¹ and Multidimensional Poverty Index² outcomes in health, education and standard of living, including indicators in nutrition; child mortality; school enrollment; energy; water; sanitation; and durable, healthy construction.
- Housing as a process can create a sense of place and dignity, building community cohesion as well as one’s social and financial network and assets.
- Adequate and affordable housing is a multiplier of community jobs and incomes and improves household financial stability, often providing opportunities for home-based industry.
- Housing is a prerequisite for inclusive, equitable, safe, resilient and sustainable cities.



How **HOUSING** supports the SDGs

INTEGRATED Part of goals



DIRECT contribution to goals



INDIRECT contribution to goals



Housing is an integral part of seven SDGs



Goal 1 – No poverty

- Adequate and affordable housing builds resilience and reduces vulnerability to economic, social, health and climate-related shocks and disasters.
- Equal access to land and housing, and the economic resources they generate, promotes sustainability.



Goal 3 – Good health and well-being

- Affordable, safe, stable, secure and resilient housing is an important factor in physical and mental health and well-being.



Goal 5 – Gender equality

- Equal access to housing and land rights, credit, mortgages, and rental housing protects women from discriminatory policies and practices and protects their rights in cases of violence.
- Strong land rights for housing for women have a catalytic effect, elevating the standard of living for entire communities.



Goal 6 – Clean water and sanitation

- Access to safe and affordable water and sanitation is a human right and vital component of healthy and adequate housing.



Goal 7 – Affordable and clean energy

- Energy poverty is a specific form of housing poverty, with social, environmental and health impacts on wider communities.

- Housing interventions addressing the availability of energy, habitability through quality improvement – including energy efficiency – and affordability are indispensable for ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, healthy and clean energy for all.



Goal 11 – Sustainable cities and communities

- Access to adequate housing is central to achieving inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities.
- Positioning housing at the center contributes toward building better settlements and cities because of the transformational impact of housing on social, economic and environmental outcomes.
- The dual approach of facilitating the upgrading of existing slum settlements and increasing access to adequate and affordable housing for low-income, vulnerable and marginalized households is important for achieving sustainable development. Improving housing affordability is a prerequisite of progress toward sustainable cities and communities.



Goal 13 – Climate action

- Sustainable housing construction practices reduce contributions to drivers of climate change. Building resilient homes and communities reduces risk, promotes preparedness, and improves the ability to cope with environmental shocks.

Housing is a direct contributor to six SDGs



Goal 8 – Decent work and economic growth

- The housing sector supports economic growth through job creation related to the construction industry and additional demand for materials and services.
- The housing sector has strong multiplier effects and as a percentage of GDP is often at least as important as other key sectors, such as manufacturing.
- Stable and adequate housing leads to better economic opportunities by providing space for home-based enterprises and allowing households additional time for productive activities.
- Slum and informal households are a major economic force. The informal sector is estimated to build approximately 70% of all urban housing in the developing world, making it the leading actor in the housing supply chain.



Goal 9 – Industry, innovation and infrastructure

- New technologies promote an affordable, market-based, resilient, energy-efficient and green housing approach.
- The lack of quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure in slums and informal settlements poses risks to residents of those settlements and the wider community.



Goal 10 – Reduced inequalities

- Inequalities in housing reflect inequalities in broader social and economic systems.
- Equitable access to housing helps communities overcome inequality.



Goal 12 – Responsible consumption and production

- Sustainable design and construction based on energy efficiency and the use of local, recycled and/or renewable materials reduce life-cycle costs, carbon footprints and environmental degradation.
- Recycling and reuse in the building sector can minimize extraction of raw materials and construction waste.



Goal 16 – Peace, justice and strong institutions

- Methods applied in interventions addressing slums, informal settlements and unaffordable housing can contribute to the overall improvement of urban planning and governance.
- Tenure security and informal settlement recognition promote the participation of vulnerable groups in decision-making.
- Slum upgrading may contribute to the reduction of violence and other criminal activities.



Goal 17 – Partnerships for the goals

- Enabling stakeholder engagement and participatory processes will assist in the development of housing and land policies.
- Inclusive people-public-private partnerships, through housing-focused initiatives, can ensure sustainable and resilient cities.

Housing is an indirect contributor to two SDGs




Goal 2 – Zero hunger

- Access to more affordable housing helps people avoid having to choose between housing and food costs.
- Tenure security and adequate housing can empower small-scale food production.



Goal 4 – Quality education

- Adequate living conditions enable access to education and better education outcomes.
- Training programs and capacity strengthening in housing increase knowledge concerning sustainable development in various ways, including disaster preparedness and responsible, quality construction.



Housing is a platform for household resilience and drives positive outcomes in households' health, education and standard of living.

Examples of the role of housing and the SDGs

The following case study summaries identify the relationship between housing and each of the thematic areas covered by the 17 SDGs. The summaries identify the intersectionality of each SDG with the housing ecosystem, and for SDGs directly influenced by housing, illustrate examples of successful interventions from around the world.

More detailed descriptions of these and other projects can be found in the reference links at the end of the booklet.



Goal: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Case for impact

The number of urban residents is currently nearly 4.4 billion, 56% of the global population. Projections for 2030 estimate a further increase in the number of slum dwellers to 1.2 billion, with the largest proportional increase occurring in Africa. Of the 169 targets across the 17 goals, Target 11.1, access to safe and affordable housing and upgrading slums, is one of five that has experienced a reversal – even prior to the impact of COVID-19 – from previous progress made since 2015.³ The global backtracking of this target is attributable to multiple factors, including a lack of prioritization of housing in development programs, a lack of recognition of the complexity of the housing ecosystem, lack of cooperation among key stakeholders, lack of progress in other SDGs, and shortcomings of data collection and reporting.

Access to adequate and affordable housing is an increasing challenge in most cities, as the supply of housing has not been able to keep up with the demand because of rapid urbanization, migration and natural population growth. The influx of people, coupled with rising land prices, the cost of construction materials, the impact of climate change, and the lack of adequate public-sector resources and capacity, has resulted in growing rates of informality, inequality and substandard housing. Increasingly, low-income households are excluded from networked infrastructure as local governments struggle to meet demand. In many cities, we are seeing the displacement of low-income vulnerable households from the centres of cities to their peripheries because of access and affordability issues. Governments cannot achieve sustainability without significantly transforming the way we plan, build and manage our urban areas. A shift is needed from traditional approaches designed to serve formal systems and markets to a thoughtful and integrated approach to urban and economic planning, financing, regulation, construction and governing cities.

Inclusive and sustainable urban development as envisaged in SDG 11 will be achieved only when adequate and affordable housing and secure land tenure are integrated into urban plans. As an instrument to achieve this, the Housing at the Centre approach promoted by UN-HABITAT calls for a shift in focus “from simply building houses to a holistic framework for housing development, orchestrated with urban planning practice and placing people and human rights at the forefront of urban sustainable development.”⁴ Such an approach also needs systemic reforms and long-term political and financial commitment from key actors. Multisector collaboration is essential to address the scale and complexity of the challenges and opportunities faced in urban areas. Solutions require common vision, joint action, and pooling of resources and capacity.

Housing and SDG 11 in practice

LIBERIA — Comprehensive Urban Housing Programming

The Cities Alliance Liberia Country Program, or LCP, which launched in 2016, is a comprehensive urban upgrading program focused on improving the lives of 400,000 slum dwellers in Monrovia while contributing to social and economic inclusion and creating a common development vision. As part of the program's steering committee, Habitat for Humanity International focused on facilitating improved access to adequate and affordable housing through a housing ecosystem approach. This involved working with a broad range of partners, including the YMCA, Slum Dwellers International, UN-HABITAT, the World Bank, Women in Informal Employment and Organizing, private-sector partners, and the government of Liberia.

The program included a wide range of interventions, including WASH, slum upgrading, disaster resilience, advocacy, policy development and market systems development. The LCP is an example of how a comprehensive urban housing program can scale its impact to reach more beneficiaries and have longer-lasting, sustainable outputs and outcomes that drive systemic change.

Housing is central to building better cities and urban areas. Habitat was able to ensure that the community, market and policy interventions contributed to improving the quality of life of slum dwellers and systemic enhancements to the housing policy and market environments making affordable housing a more achievable goal for all, as envisaged in Goal 11 of the SDGs.



Goal: End poverty in all its forms

Case for impact

By 2030, 1.2 billion people are expected to live in slums. Poor people disproportionately live in high-hazard zones, with no proper access to employment, transportation, schools and health care facilities. Land is foundational to adequate housing, yet approximately 1 billion people in cities around the world lack secure land rights. Insecure land tenure limits the creation of wealth, and the forced evictions that often result cause families to lose their assets and, in many cases, their livelihoods. A critical component to adequate housing is affordability, ensuring that families do not need to choose between housing and other necessities. Adequate housing reduces vulnerability to economic, social, health and climate-related shocks and disasters.

Housing and SDG 1 in practice

BANGLADESH — Comprehensive Strategy for Slum Upgrading

Since 2012, Habitat for Humanity Bangladesh has conducted slum upgrading projects and long-term development planning in 14 slum communities in Dhaka, benefiting 16,032 low-income families.

This work involved vulnerability assessments, community action planning, urban informal settlement mapping, water and sanitation infrastructure, housing repairs, and capacity building. Data collected by Habitat were made accessible to all stakeholders, including the government, which facilitated the inclusion of these communities in government budgets for providing services and in other programming and policy considerations.

The outcomes achieved include improved living and health conditions, increased resilience, and a reduction in the threat of evictions for slum dwellers. There have been systemic changes in government planning,

budgeting and service delivery for slum dwellers and improved income generation through livelihood activities. At a sector level, there has been better integration of partners and sectors through facilitated urban dialogues and integration of INGO programming at an urban slum level.





Goal: Good health and well-being

Case for impact

Physical and mental health and quality of life can be compromised by housing inadequacy and unaffordability. Housing concerns include structural stability, inner house quality and safety, financial burdens, tenure security, and neighbourhood environmental and social conditions.⁵ Changes to demographics and climate highlight the need for house enforcement and resilience. Inadequate housing concentrated in slums and informal settlements is often poorly constructed. Households in these settlements are especially vulnerable to respiratory infections and diseases related to water and sanitation, poor ventilation, overcrowding, indoor air pollution from cooking with biomass fuels, poor drainage, and exposure to dampness and mold.⁶ The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed the risks of inadequate housing in the prevention and handling of health crises. As Leilani Farha, former U.N. special rapporteur on the right to adequate housing, states, “Housing has become the front-line defence against the coronavirus. Home has rarely been more of a life-or-death situation.”

Housing and SDG 3 in practice

UNITED STATES — Health Begins with Home⁷

The Health Begins with Home initiative, launched in 2019,⁸ focuses on strengthening links between good health and a stable home. Through this program, the nonprofit organization Enterprise Community Partners addresses affordable housing needs in the United States, in collaboration with community development organizations, health systems, health insurers, housing developers, policymakers, public health associations, foundations and social impact investors. The Health Action Plan and the Aging-in-Place Design Guidelines⁹ are two examples that support owners and developers in addressing health through affordable housing.¹⁰



Goal: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Case for impact

According to UN Women, more than 50% of urban women and girls in developing countries live without access to clean water, improved sanitation, durable housing or a sufficient living area.¹¹ Women often lack security of tenure and equal rights to land and property as a result of inheritance laws, customs and traditions, making them dependent on male family members. In many developing countries, women spend more time supporting home-based activities. U.N. Guidelines for the Implementation of the Right to Adequate Housing emphasize gender equality in housing and land, among others, related to laws and regulation concerning inheritance; access to credit, mortgages and homeownership; and equal participation in decisions related to house design and construction.¹²

Housing and SDG 5 in practice

COCHABAMBA, BOLIVIA — Improving land rights for women and excluded families¹³

Nearly half of Bolivia's urban population lives in slums, and many people do not have secure land tenure. Households headed by women are particularly vulnerable. Women in Cochabamba accessed mapping technology and leadership training while advocating and sharing concerns on urban land and property entitlements with neighborhood leaders and holding awareness-raising activities in their own communities. The School of Women Leaders on Secure Tenure, established by Habitat for Humanity Bolivia, led to the creation of the Women's Network, which advocated successfully for a policy change mandating that the names of women be included in property documents.



Access to clean water and sanitation are integral to safe, healthy, adequate housing.



Goal: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

Case for impact

Clean water and access to sanitation are integral parts of safe and adequate housing. Around the world, 2.2 billion people live without safely managed drinking water, including 785 million people without basic drinking water, and 4.2 billion live without safely managed sanitation.¹⁴ Many people around the world rely on the public sector and development actors for delivery of these services, which are chronically underfunded. Lack of access to water and sanitation is among the greatest problems of rural, peri-urban and urban slum households; community schools; health care facilities; and public spaces. Addressing these problems requires solutions adjusted to the local social, economic, political, technological and physical environmental context. Sustainable interventions should be planned and implemented in dialogue with local communities, the private sector and governments to respond to their needs and opportunities. Sustainable water and sanitation services should be adequate, reliable, accessible and affordable for all.

Housing and SDG 6 in practice

INDIA — Sensitize to Sanitize coalition¹⁵

Habitat for Humanity India worked to improve the water supply and cleanliness of human settlements aligned with the federal government's national campaign Clean India Mission, along with private-sector corporate social responsibility initiatives. The Sensitize to Sanitize coalition, founded by Habitat for Humanity India, aims to improve community sanitation by increasing access to clean water, building sanitation units, and promoting behavioural change in co-operation with local communities and regional organizations, local and state governments, and private-sector initiatives. As of March 2019, the coalition of 21 partner organisations has enabled almost 53,600 families to have adequate access to safe water and has led over 26 million people to cease open defecation.



Goal: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

Case for impact

Energy poverty, the lack of a socially and materially necessitated level of energy services in the home,¹⁶ is a specific form of housing poverty. Contributing factors include lack of access to energy, high energy costs leading to unaffordable housing, and energy-inefficient housing. In developing countries, 20-40% of urban dwellers lack reliable access to electricity. This often forces them to rely on traditional biomass, which has health and environmental consequences. High energy prices contribute to housing unaffordability across regions, with the highest prevalence in Africa, where the majority of urban dwellers are considered energy poor.¹⁷ Rapid urbanization outpaces efforts for energy efficiency.¹⁸ Social and environmental problems related to energy-inefficient housing also appear in developed countries. Therefore, housing interventions improving the availability of reliable and clean energy, energy efficiency, and affordability are essential to combat energy poverty and to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

Housing and Goal 7 in practice

Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and North Macedonia — Residential Energy Efficiency for Low Income Households (REELIH)¹⁹

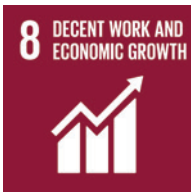
The REELIH project, led by Habitat for Humanity and financed by USAID, has been pioneering new ways to help communities overcome the legacy of poorly built, energy-inefficient multiapartment building stock while contributing to the creation of strong, stable and healthy communities and neighborhoods.

At the heart of REELIH's approach is creating an "ecosystem of stakeholders" in which renovations to common spaces are funded by appropriate loans and other sources fitting the needs of the low-

income households who use those spaces. This approach empowers local stakeholders to act through their local housing associations or representative bodies, mobilizing and motivating the communities to renovate, and therefore also opening the construction market.

The REELIH project has overall completed pilot retrofits on over 1,200 housing units, serving almost 4,000 residents and providing families up to 50% in energy savings. Results from these pilot projects further fuel advocacy activities to influence public policy and the energy efficiency sector. Based on positive demonstrations of impact, REELIH has achieved increased demand among homeowner associations to start renovation projects for energy saving. The environmental benefits of the renovation work on buildings are similarly crucial, since the residential buildings are among the most critical producers of CO2 emissions.





Goal: Decent work and economic growth

Case for impact

The construction industry represents 13% of global gross domestic product.²⁰ Green building supports economic growth by creating jobs, activating local value chains, involving local companies at all stages of the building process, and using sustainable technologies and local building materials.²¹

COVID-19 had severe consequences for the housing sector. UNEP-Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction cites that the sector lost about 10% of jobs and experienced 10-25% less activity than in 2019. The housing sector in many countries is roughly the same size as other key economic sectors, such as manufacturing. Stimulating the construction sector would contribute to economic recovery. According to estimations, for every million dollars invested in retrofits or building efficiency, between nine and 30 jobs can be created.²²

A “renovation wave for Europe,” which is a key element of the European Green Deal,²³ will stimulate the construction ecosystem by renovating 35 million inefficient buildings and creating 160,000 jobs. Its aims are both economic recovery and reaching climate goals (a reduction of 55% of emissions by 2030). Renovating buildings will increase demand for labor; support small and medium-sized enterprises; and contribute to healthier, greener, interconnected, accessible and resilient buildings.^{24,25}

The performance of national economies largely depends on urban economies. The urban informal sector accounts for one-third of countries' GDP and nearly 70% of total employment in emerging markets and developing economies, which is a major challenge for workers' rights. The improvement of housing is crucial for the physical and mental health needed for productive work, and a potential basis for small entrepreneurship. Tenure



security and land rights can incentivize residential investment by enabling savings and reducing the risk of eviction. Providing affordable housing near productive locations can influence economic growth.²⁶

Habitat for Humanity's Terwilliger Center for Innovation in Shelter formed the Way Forward coalition after the launch of the *Cornerstone of Recovery* report on housing's role in helping economies rebound after the pandemic. The coalition includes Habitat's Terwilliger Center, the World Bank and the French Development Agency, which will lead influence activities with ministries of finance and central banks. It also includes ministries of housing and mayors and development finance institutions to highlight housing's central role in economies and in the economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal is to demonstrate that governments can do more with less by implementing more equitable housing solutions.



Goal: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation

Case for impact

Infrastructure improvements have been unable to meet the demands of rapid urbanization. Communities in slums and informal settlements are especially prone to the lack of quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, which poses a threat to their residents and the wider community. Slums and informal settlements are a major economic force; they often house flourishing small-scale industries while lacking the conditions for inclusive and sustainable business operation and integration into value chains and markets because of a lack of infrastructure and financial services. Slum development programs provide an opportunity to upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries toward more sustainable operations. They also open the opportunity for innovation, which may benefit other segments of the population as well.

The implementation of community infrastructure creates a foundation for resilience, sustainability and basis for improving business and livelihood. Habitat for Humanity International worked with government, donors, the private sector and other stakeholders to improve living conditions of slum dwellers in Peace Island in Liberia. The slum upgrading project in Peace Island provided improved WASH and waste management services to over 30,000 people, which further created a window for investments from the government of Liberia to improve access to energy and a road network for the settlement. Other private groups are creating more business opportunities in the area, resulting in increased access to loans for housing, employment, and safe and green environmental practices.

Green, zero-emission or smart building is crucial for achieving sustainability in the construction industry and manufacturing. Designing and implementing green building through all the life-cycle phases will push innovation and new environmentally friendly technologies and practices.



Goal: Reduce inequality within and among countries

Case for impact

Housing inequalities transform into social inequalities through various means. Deficient housing provides inadequate physical settings for daily life, leading to detrimental effects on health, education achievements and employability, which in turn increase and exacerbate inequalities. Inadequate housing is often spatially concentrated, most notoriously in slums and informal settlements. Such forms of housing typically couple with unequal access to services such as health care and quality education, with lack of employment and income-generating opportunities, and with stigmatization of residents. The high costs of housing direct people toward environmentally and socially unsafe neighborhoods with low-quality houses, highlighting that housing affordability can affect quality of life.²⁷ Therefore, improvement of housing, especially in slums and informal settlements, is an important contribution to achieving SDG 10. Furthermore, mainstreaming foreign investment in the housing sector in developing countries can help reduce inequalities among regions and countries.



Goal: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Case for impact

The building industry, despite its economic contribution, is one of the largest consumers of natural resources. Construction materials²⁸ dominate resource consumption, accounting for up to 50% of all extracted material. Furthermore, the building sector is responsible for 39% of carbon emissions worldwide. The increase of industrialization in developing regions will lead to even bigger demand for resources.²⁹ Embracing a circular economy in the construction sector can preserve natural resources. Circular actions are crucial for recycling and reusing materials in construction, minimizing raw materials extraction, enabling disassembly by design, and reducing construction and demolition waste.³⁰ A circular economy can increase the longevity of the buildings and stabilize building prices.

The “renovation wave initiative,” part of the EU’s Green Deal, aims to optimize building life cycles by renovating and reusing building stocks, thus embracing circular economy principles.³¹ Green building can direct construction toward sustainability by promoting renewable materials (bamboo, wood, wool for insulation, etc.).³²

In the Negros Occidental Province of the Philippines, The Hilti Foundation has provided funding to Habitat for Humanity and Base-Bahay to produce 10,000 homes in five years using cement bamboo frame technology. Working with local government units and other community-based partners to provide land, infrastructure and financing, these homes will be resistant to natural disasters (earthquakes and typhoons) and will be affordable to families with very low incomes.





Goal: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Case for impact

In the past 20 years, disasters have affected 4.4 billion people, claimed 1.3 million lives, and caused US\$2.908 trillion in economic losses, disproportionately impacting vulnerable and marginalized communities and households living in inadequate housing solutions.³³ By 2030, 600 million poor urban residents will be exposed to climate change risks, according to U.N. estimates.³⁴ The altering of weather patterns associated with climate change underlines the importance of housing as protection from extreme weather. Informal settlements are usually in locations with high exposure to hazards and high vulnerability to disasters. Addressing climate change requires mitigation measures such as the reduction of carbon emissions in all industrial processes – including construction – and the use of clean energies. Low-carbon building that uses locally sourced, natural materials can reduce the impact of housing on climate change and build resilience.³⁵ At the same time, adaptation strategies to climate change are of utmost importance, as the impacts of weather patterns are already a grave threat for many vulnerable communities around the world. Through contextually appropriate partnerships with various sectors, the building of safe, adequate and resilient housing and human settlements can reduce disaster risk and contribute to the restoration of social, economic, natural and cultural environments after disasters.

Housing and Goal 13 in practice

JAMALPUR/MYMENSINGH, BANGLADESH — Housing adaptations in response to climate change³⁶

Habitat for Humanity Bangladesh has undertaken research of climate change-induced displacement in Bangladesh, with a special focus on the Jamalpur/Mymensingh districts. An important outcome of this project is the identification of climate-smart construction technologies, namely

construction materials and methodologies appropriate for tackling changing weather patterns in the area. The research informed a climate-smart house design prototype that provides protection against cyclones and flooding and supports efficient use of water and energy. The prototype includes a climate-adaptive material/building shell and green building technology that addresses the impacts of extreme temperatures and drought and provides for flood mitigation by using an elevated plinth foundation (severe floods affect the study area every four to five years). The design incorporates the use of ferrocement elements for the walls and roof instead of corrugated galvanized iron sheets that are less durable and create an uncomfortable, hot environment. Compressed stabilized earth blocks are used for the walls instead of burnt bricks, lessening the use of topsoil and organic fuel sources.



In 2016, Estella Garcia and her grandson moved into their Habitat home in Puerto Cortes, Honduras, having previously lived in a shack that frequently flooded.



Goal: Peace, justice and strong institutions

Case for impact

“Global crises are increasingly complex and multidimensional; interconnected across geographical and regional boundaries; cyclical; recurrent; and increasingly urban and protracted in nature. ... Social and spatial inequalities, unplanned growth, unequal access to land, affordable housing and basic services, and pressure on natural resources all contribute to an accumulation of disaster risk, instability and potential conflict” (UN-HABITAT Strategic Plan 2020-23). Civil disruption often uproots households as they seek safety, stability and economic opportunity for themselves and their families. According to the UNHCR, there are more than 65 million forced migrants, two-thirds of whom are internally displaced. Cities are increasingly the drivers of global sustainable development because of their socially and economically transformative roles and connections beyond their administrative boundaries. Cities are also most commonly the destinations of migrants and refugees. Implementing the SDGs requires local-level actions, but the process can be hindered by decentralization and insufficient financial and technical capacities. In addition, socioeconomic inequalities in cities pair with pronounced imbalances in access to political power and participation, making the development and institutionalization of participatory processes in urban governance crucial to achieving progress in SDG 16, among others.³⁷ Methods applied in slum upgrading and other interventions to improve access to inadequate housing, such as decentralized program design and implementation, multistakeholder collaboration, and community participation, are an important arena for the overall improvement of urban governance. The results of such programs may also reduce violence and other criminal activities, such as abuse, exploitation and trafficking.



Goal: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Case for impact

The means of implementing the SDGs, such as partnerships, financing, technology, capacity strengthening and data, are useful tools for addressing challenges in the housing sector.

Intentional international cooperation is critical to building a more secure future as countries recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. “Multistakeholder partnerships will be crucial to leverage the inter-linkages between the Sustainable Development Goals to enhance their effectiveness and impact and accelerate progress in achieving the goals” (U.N. statement on Sustainable Development Goals). Global and regional partnerships that focus on housing and basic needs of the poor, such as Cities Alliance, the Urban Housing Practitioners Hub, the Sanitation and Water for All Alliance and others, are composed of public- and private-sector actors, civil society organizations, academic institutions, and major institutional donors. These multisectoral networks facilitate the exchange of information, form implementing coalitions, and foster the spirit of innovation and replication needed to address global housing deficits at scale. More and more, equal partnerships are replacing donor-recipient relations.³⁸ The SDGs and the New Urban Agenda are part of EU priorities and commitments.³⁹



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