



SPECIAL SESSION

HOUSING AT THE CENTRE, AS A VECTOR FOR SOCIO-ECONOMIC INCLUSION

Key words

2030 Agenda; Comprehensive; Finance; Housing; Human Rights; Inclusiveness; New Urban Agenda; Regulations; Sustainable Development Goals

Objectives of the session

The objective of this session is to discuss the proposals for national and local governments to reposition housing at the centre of planned urbanization by operating a paradigm shift in the way we approach housing issues – from a building-only perspective to a more comprehensive view of housing as more than a roof and four walls.

For this end, the session aims at 1) discussing city experiences in mix-use and inclusionary zoning programmes, 2) better understanding the private sector approach to housing for low-income people, and 3) ensuring the integration of the people's concerns as well as their human rights.

Introduction of the topic

A fundamental shift is needed in housing policy and practice to achieve SDG11 and implement the New Urban Agenda. First, policies should put people and human rights at the centre aiming to improve access to adequate and affordable housing and improve living conditions in slums to generate cities and neighbourhoods where people live a decent life in dignity and peace. Addressing the housing needs of the poorest and most vulnerable, especially women, youth and those who live in slums, must be a priority in addition to tackling the affordability of housing which is currently aggravating poverty in urban areas worldwide.

Second, for housing to contribute to national socio-economic development, it has to be placed at the centre of national urban policies in consonance with strategies to fight poverty, improve health, education and employment. A housing sector that performs well contributes directly to the economy, job creation, income generation and poverty reduction. But this depends on how well it is integrated into and governed by effective institutions and regulatory frameworks. Having housing placed at the centre of national urban policies will place countries and cities in a better position to generate prosperity and opportunities for people.



Third, for housing to contribute to sustainable urbanization, it has to be at the centre of urban development and planning, orchestrated with the supply of land, infrastructure and finance. Around 25 per cent of cities is dedicated to residential areas. Regulating land markets, innovating finance and adjusting zoning and building codes as well as the design of housing to effectively use energy, land and natural resources are some of the greatest opportunities for cities to grow sustainable and resilient. Linking housing design to urban planning will bring cities closer to the realization of adequate and sustainable housing for all.

Guiding questions

Q1: How are you contributing to the paradigm shift to reposition housing at the centre?

Q2: What has been your experience with inclusionary zoning and how have you made it successful?

Q3: What are the key elements that will allow private actors to contribute to pro-poor housing solutions?

Q4: How can we measure the socio-economic impact of housing policies and how can it be maximized?