

Resolution 24/3: Inclusive National and Local Housing Strategies to achieve the Global Housing Strategy Paradigm Shift

Note on Rationale

Background

The UN-Habitat Global Housing Strategy is a collaborative global movement towards adequate housing for all and improving access to housing in general and the living conditions of slum dwellers in particular. Its main objective is to assist member States in working towards the realization of the right to adequate housing.

To achieve the goal of adequate housing for all, the backbone of the Strategy will rely 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 social integration and aiming for the elimination of the urban divide.

One of the main objectives of the Strategy is for member States to develop national housing strategies. A national housing strategy, as a pillar of national urban policy, comprises agreed sets of activities formalized in Strategy documents and their updates. It guides policies, planning and programming of investment, management and maintenance activities in the areas of housing, slum upgrading and slum prevention. These need to be formulated with the full participation of all relevant stakeholders. Housing strategies, at national and city levels, are inseparable from land-use strategies, infrastructure strategies, including mobility and local economic development strategies, all integrated in the broad, participatory and inclusive urban planning and management process within a supportive legal and regulatory framework.

The expected outcomes of the UN-Habitat Global Housing Strategy through a paradigm shift in thinking and practice in housing policy will (re)position housing within the global contemporary debate on economically viable, environmentally and culturally sustainable and socially inclusive cities and towns. Furthermore, the Strategy will bring about several critical outcomes, such as: an assurance that housing is integrated with other urban uses; a contribution to the global discourse on and definition of the post-Millennium Development Goals agenda and the sustainable development goals; a redefined role for Governments beyond enablement to reassuming a leadership role in encouraging pro-poor performance of the markets, facilitating and supporting the demand capabilities of the economically weakest sectors of the society; the promotion of systemic reforms to enable wider access to adequate housing with a variety of housing solutions matching effective demands; strengthened linkages between housing and other parts of the economy and consequent economic development, employment generation and poverty reduction; decentralization of housing production and empowerment of different actors and modalities of housing development; increased use of sustainable building and neighbourhood designs and technologies towards more cost-effective, flexible and energy-efficient solutions. Most importantly, the Strategy will have a significant and measurable impact in terms of improving housing and the living conditions of a large proportion of the population aiming at poverty reduction.

Requirements for implementation of the GHS

Currently the GHS is managed by the Housing and Slum Upgrading Branch with the limited capacity of its core team supported by interns. Through building a partnership with competent international housing and slum upgrading actors, together the partnership will address more and more of the demand.

As demand builds up, however, there is a need to increase the response capacity as well as to coordinate partners. This will require additional staff and consultants. This is currently being addressed by the development of a series of proposals. To date, the Branch has succeeded in having a proposal shortlisted for the 9th tranche of the Development Account managed by UN-DESA. The proposal will provide about \$650,000 that will support the development of Housing Strategies in 6 least developed countries in Africa, Asia/Pacific and Latin America/Caribbean regions.

Additional support through funding and/or additional personnel including JPOs or volunteers would enhance the team and empower it to better implement the GHS.