Regional Dialogue on Adequate and Environmentally Sustainable Housing in the Asia-Pacific Region

Date & Time:
Thursday, 24 April 2025, 12:45-13:45 (1hr)

Mode of Meeting: In-person
Room: CR-4 (149 seats)
Expected Number of Participants: 50 - 100
Interpretation: No
Participants: Open to all interested participants

Organizer: Habitat for Humanity International

Background

Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI), in collaboration with Member State Thailand, the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), and the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR), is organizing this regional dialogue to provide a platform for diverse stakeholders to discuss challenges, needs, and priorities in achieving adequate and environmentally sustainable housing.

The Asia-Pacific region is home to more than 60 per cent of the world's population, with rapid urbanization driving an increasing demand for housing. However, many cities in the region face severe housing shortages, unaffordability, and informal settlement growth, particularly affecting low-income communities. Climate change poses additional risks, with extreme weather events, rising sea levels, urban heat, and environmental degradation disproportionately impacting informal settlements and vulnerable urban populations living conditions. Many low-income communities are particularly vulnerable due to insecure land tenure, lack of access to basic services, and limited housing finance options.

Building on the high-level political reaffirmation expected from the Special Session on Ensuring Adequate Housing for All, the consultation will offer a space to translate these commitments into operational frameworks and technical solutions.

Despite these challenges, innovative housing solutions, policy reforms, and community-led approaches have emerged across the region, demonstrating the potential for sustainable and inclusive housing models. **This dialogue seeks to build on these experiences and insights to raise awareness around the challenges, needs, and**

priorities related to inadequate housing across the region and inform regional policy discussions and recommendations.

South-South Knowledge Exchange will be a central focus, identifying existing platforms, knowledge gaps, and the role of peer-to-peer learning to accelerate the adoption of inclusive housing policies and community-led innovations. Strengthened partnerships between local governments, civil society, and multilateral institutions will be sought to facilitate regional cooperation.

Housing is a fundamental element of sustainable development, contributing to multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), and SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). However, the Asia-Pacific region faces mounting challenges related to housing affordability, informal settlements, rapid urbanization, and climate change impact on vulnerable communitites. This dialogue seeks to engage diverse perspectives, particularly those of communities, policymakers, urban practitioners, and housing rights advocates, to ensure housing policies and programs are responsive and inclusive.

This event aims to **inform regional discussions on housing policy** and ensure that key insights from diverse stakeholders are reflected in regional dialogues and initiatives. Additionally, the dialogue will explore opportunities to mobilize financing mechanisms to support community-driven housing initiatives and climate resilience efforts.

Objectives

The event seeks to:

1. **Understand Regional Housing Challenges:** Gather insights from diverse stakeholders on barriers to accessing adequate and environmentally sustainable housing, with special attention to informal settlements and vulnerable communities.
2. **Identify Needs and Priorities:** Explore key priorities that should be reflected in policies and discussions, including climate resilience, financing mechanisms, and community-led solutions.
3. **Build Collaborative Solutions:** Facilitate discussions on policy directions, innovative approaches, and community-driven solutions to improve housing outcomes.

4. **Inform Regional Housing Policy Dialogue:** Provide structured input to contribute to discussions on housing challenges and opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region.
5. **Explore Financing Pathways**: Identify opportunities to mobilize financial resources and partnerships to support community-based and local government housing solutions.

Tentative Programme : (60 minutes)

Time	Agenda Item	Speaker(s)
3 mins	**Opening Remarks**	Gregg McDonald, Habitat for Humanity
5 mins	**Understanding Housing Challenges in the Asia-Pacific Region**	Representative from UN-Habitat
5 mins	**Showcasing National Housing Policies: Strategies and Best Practices**	Representative from Thailand
5 mins	**Community Participation in Housing Solutions**	Lajana Manandhar, ACHR
37 mins	Dialogue with participants + mentimeter 5 questions – ask 2 participants to share experiences per questions	Gregg McDonald, Habitat for Humanity
5 mins	**Closing Remarks**	Curt Garrigan, UNESCAP

Expected Outcomes

- **Increased Awareness:** Strengthened understanding of the region's housing challenges and opportunities, particularly for informal settlements and vulnerable communities.
- **Stakeholder Commitments:** Engagement from diverse actors to contribute to shaping policy discussions.

- **Actionable Policy Inputs:** Concrete suggestions to inform regional housing discussions, reports, and recommendations.
- **Financing Pathways**: Identification of potential funding mechanisms and partnerships to support community-based housing initiatives and climate resilience efforts.
- **Operational Follow-Up**: Proposal for the establishment of a regional task force or working group to advance recommendations and coordinate financing partnerships.

Contact Information

For further inquiries, please contact:

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Description (for Commission Website Posting)

This regional dialogue will convene policymakers, urban practitioners, community representatives, and development partners to discuss challenges, needs, and priorities for adequate and environmentally sustainable housing in the Asia-Pacific region. Through participatory discussions, the event will generate actionable insights to **raise awareness of housing challenges and inform regional policy discussions and recommendations.**