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Expert Group Meeting on Affordable Housing and Social Protection Systems for All to Address Homelessness

(Nairobi, 22-24 May 2019)

Proceedings

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Foreword

Following the 57th session of the Commission for Social Development (2019),[1] the United Nations Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 2019/4 (see E/RES/2019/4), decided that the priority theme of the 58th session (2020) of the Commission would be "Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness". In this context and in preparation for the 58th session of the Commission, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in collaboration with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, organized a three-day Expert Group Meeting in Nairobi to review major drivers of homelessness, identify existing gaps and priority areas for intervention, and make specific policy recommendations to focus on homelessness in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This report collects and analyses the contribution of the experts who participated in the meeting. In doing so, it aims to deepen the understanding of the complex causes of homelessness, the challenges homeless people face and the effects of homelessness on individuals and societies. The report contains policy recommendations on effective housing and social protection policies emanating from the meeting.

1 The Commission for Social Development is one of the functional commissions established by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (res. 10 (II), 1946) to advise the Council on social policies of a general character and, in particular, on all matters in the social field not covered by the specialized intergovernmental agencies. Since the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995), the Commission has been the key United Nations body in charge of the follow-up and implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action. Since 2015, the Commission is also mandated to contribute to the follow-up to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, within its existing mandate. Further information available at https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/united-nations-commission-for-social-development-csocd-social-policy-and-development-division.html.

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Thanks also go to all the experts who made presentations at the meeting or submitted papers in advance of the meeting: Cecilia Andersson, David Ayuku, Christina Behrendt, Mira Bierbaum, Dame Louise Casey, Roberta Melega Cortizo, Debra Erb, Leilani Farha, Tegegne Gebre-Egziabher, Ashley Gromis, Saidou Hamani, Thierno-Habib Hann, Roseline Kihumba, Taina Meriluoto, Emeka Obioha, Ifeyinwa Ofong, Marissa Plouin, Jean Quinn, Jesus Salcedo, Valérie Schmitt, Ken Chamuva Shawa, Suzanne Speak, Kerstin Sommer and Fariha Tariq.

Special thanks go to the experts who agreed to have their papers included in this publication. Finally, thanks go to all the meeting's participants for their constructive contributions.

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Executive Summary

Participants to the Expert Group Meeting on Affordable Housing and Social Protection Systems for All to Address Homelessness discussed and provided policy recommendations on the following core thematic areas, with a view to strengthen the understanding of homelessness and the measures taken to solve the problem.

The various definitions of homelessness

A universally accepted legal definition for homelessness and homelessness-related conditions (for example, inadequate housing, temporary emergency accommodation, and hidden homelessness) does not exist. Rather, countries and local communities often define homelessness based on a motley assortment of social views and policy priorities. Among other drawbacks, the lack of a clear definition makes it difficult to compare the impact of policies against homelessness between countries.

The Expert Group recommended relevant policymakers and other stakeholders at the national and local levels devise and agree upon a definition of homelessness that is inclusive and politically sensitive; able to differentiate among degrees and types of homelessness; and that recognizes homelessness as a societal failure, instead of one that is individual.

Comparing statistics and methodology

The lack of an agreed definition of homelessness leads to significant complications in terms of the consistency of data and data collection methods, which makes it extremely difficult to obtain reliable estimates of the number of people experiencing homelessness within and across countries.

The Expert Group recommended:

- gathering aggregated and, to the extent possible, disaggregated data on specific key features of homelessness
- focusing on quantitative and qualitative evidence to avoid the risk of excluding those homeless who are not statistically "visibly"

Drivers of homelessness

The meeting examined various underlying causes of homelessness in developed and developing countries and identified the major structural drivers of homelessness as follows:

- Poverty
- High- and rising income inequality
- Limited or lack of access to quality education
- Limited or lack of access to land and property, credit and financing
- High un- and underemployment
- Proliferation of insecure and vulnerable jobs
- Lack of access to social protection
- Rural-urban migration
- Unplanned and rapid urbanization
- Evictions and forced eviction
- High cost of energy or health care
- Shortage of affordable housing
- Climate change and natural disasters
- Domestic violence and abuse
- Discrimination and social exclusion
- Privatization of public services
- Commodification of housing

The Expert Group recommended the following to tackle the drivers of homelessness:

- Devising or strengthening policy and regulatory frameworks to stifle the structural causes of homelessness at all levels (global, national and subnational) and across various sectors
- Promoting and implementing pro-poor and pro-employment macroeconomic policies
- Eliminating the practice of forced eviction
- Devising policies and normative frameworks on private sector actors

Vulnerable populations

Specific groups that are particularly vulnerable to falling into homelessness include: children, adolescents, youth, older persons, women, persons with disabilities, those displaced by climate change and natural disasters and by violent conflict.

The Expert Group discussed how homelessness affects these groups by analysing the confluence of social, economic, political, cultural, educational and psychological conditions within different countries and regions.

Affordability of housing

Lack of access to affordable housing is one of the major causes of homelessness in all countries. While determining housing affordability is complex, "the right to adequate housing" adopted by UN-Habitat considers that "affordability as costs associated with housing should not threaten or compromise the attainment and

satisfaction of other basic needs". UN-Habitat further defines the term as "the ratio of the average house price is no more than three times the annual household income", or "the ratio of monthly rent is less than 30 per cent of the monthly household income".

To devise comprehensive policies that facilitate access to affordable housing for all, the Expert Group examined existing policies and measures to improve access to affordable housing from both demand and supply sides.

Social protection systems and measures

Social protection systems, including floors, play a key role for the reduction of poverty and inequality; contribute to preventing homelessness; and facilitate access to adequate housing. Social protection refers to a set of policies designed to reduce and prevent poverty and vulnerability throughout people's life cycle, which contributes to preventing homelessness.

Universal social protection systems that are developed in accordance with life course approaches and human rights principles and the International Labour Organization (ILO) Standards on Social Security can contribute to preventing homelessness and facilitating access to adequate, safe and affordable housing. Currently, 45 per cent of the global population has access to at least one social protection benefit.

The Expert Group recommended, among others, to continue developing or strengthening social protection systems in line with ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) that points out the crucial role of these floors in "guaranteeing at least a basic level of income security and effective access to essential health care for ensuring life in dignity".[2]

Currently,

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2 ILO – International Labour Office. Social protection systems for all to prevent homelessness and facilitate access to adequate housing. (2019)

Introduction

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (article 11.1) recognizes, among others, the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. Yet millions of people worldwide are deprived from the full enjoyment of human rights.

The right to housing should be ensured to all persons irrespective of age, gender, income, social status, religious or other backgrounds. Additionally, this right must be read as referring to adequate housing, taking into account legal security of tenure; the availability of services, materials, facilities and infrastructure; affordability; habitability; accessibility; location; and cultural adequacy.[3] Failure to recognize the right to adequate housing may result in the violation of different fundamental rights including those to work, education, health and security.

The Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing, Leilani Farha, has stated that "homelessness is symptomatic of the failure to address growing inequalities in income, wealth and access to land and property [and] it occurs when housing is treated as a commodity rather than as a human right".

As population pressures increase owing to rapid urbanization, individuals, groups and communities living in vulnerable situations are increasingly susceptible to homelessness. According to Farha, some 150 million people worldwide are homeless.[4]

Target 1.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (also known as the Global Goals) aims to implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.

Delivering on target 1.3, in turn, facilitates the realization of target 11.1, that aims to provide access for all to adequate, safe, and affordable housing by 2030.

The New Urban Agenda recognizes how adequate and affordable housing can contribute to sustainable development and well-beings of all.

The future of sustainable urbanization and the success of strategies to end homelessness depend on how housing and social protection are positioned as a priority in public debates around sustainable development. When developing, formulating and implementing strategies, policies, and programmes to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Global Goals, special attentions must be given to the housing needs of the poorest, the most disadvantaged and vulnerable including children, women, youth, the elderly, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, those living with HIV/AIDS, internally displaced persons and migrants.

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The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (article 11.1) recognizes, among others, the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living, including adequate **food, clothing** and **housing**, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions.

3 CESCR General Comment No. 4: The Right to Adequate Housing (Art. 11 (1) of the Covenant), contained in E/1992/23

4 Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context. Guidelines for the Implementation of the Right to Adequate Housing. (2020)

Papers presented by the experts

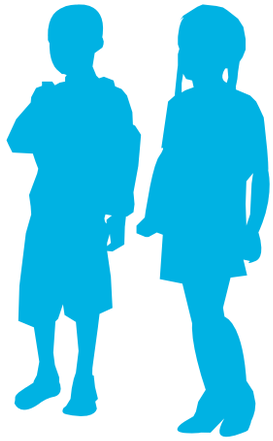
This section collects the papers submitted by the Expert who participated in the EGM. The documents were submitted by and circulated amongst the participants in order to frame the discussion within the EGM and address key crosscutting issues related to homelessness and homelessness prevention.

Policies to Assist Homeless, Orphaned and other Vulnerable Children and Youth

by David Ayuku, Professor of Clinical Psychology, School of Medicine, Moi University

As of 2017, 12.2 million children under age 18 had lost one or both parents due to acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) (Gayapersad et al 2019). Whereas the majority of orphans live with a surviving parent, grandparent, or other family member, it is projected that there are approximately 2.7 million children between the ages of 0 and 17 years in residential care globally and 286,000 in eastern and southern Africa (Monasch and Boerma 2004; Petrowski et al. 2017; UNICEF 2017; Gayapersad et al 2019). Numerous and multifaceted reasons affect the ability of families to care for their children, including extreme poverty, ethnic clashes, disasters and the complex impacts of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)/AIDS (Gayapersad et al 2019). The growing orphan and vulnerable children crisis have over overwhelmed many families to meet traditional care-taking expectation (Embleton et al. 2014). In Kenya, due to the lack of adequate support structures for family-based care, such as foster care, Charitable Care Institutions (CCIs) have become a source of substitute care (UNICEF Kenya and National Council for Children's Services 2014).

The ethnographic record and guidelines on alternative care (UNICEF and Republic of Kenya 2014) underscore the importance of family—especially consanguinity and descent—in caring for orphaned and vulnerable children (Gayapersad et al. 2019). There is, however, some evidence to suggest that the outcomes of children in CCIs in some places may be better, or at least not worse, than their counterparts living in kinship care (Atwoli et al. 2014; Braitstein et al. 2013; Embleton et al. 2014, 2017; Whetten et al. 2009, 2014). It is imperative to appreciate how and why this may be the case, given that, until more robust infrastructure and comprehensive services exist to support and protect orphaned and vulnerable children, institutions may remain a "necessary evil". Therefore, research is merited on whether and how alternative kinship structures may be produced and reproduced in CCIs, because the greater extent to which institutions are able to create family-like environments, the more likely children living there will thrive. Estimates of the number of children in alternative care vary significantly (Gayapersad 2019).



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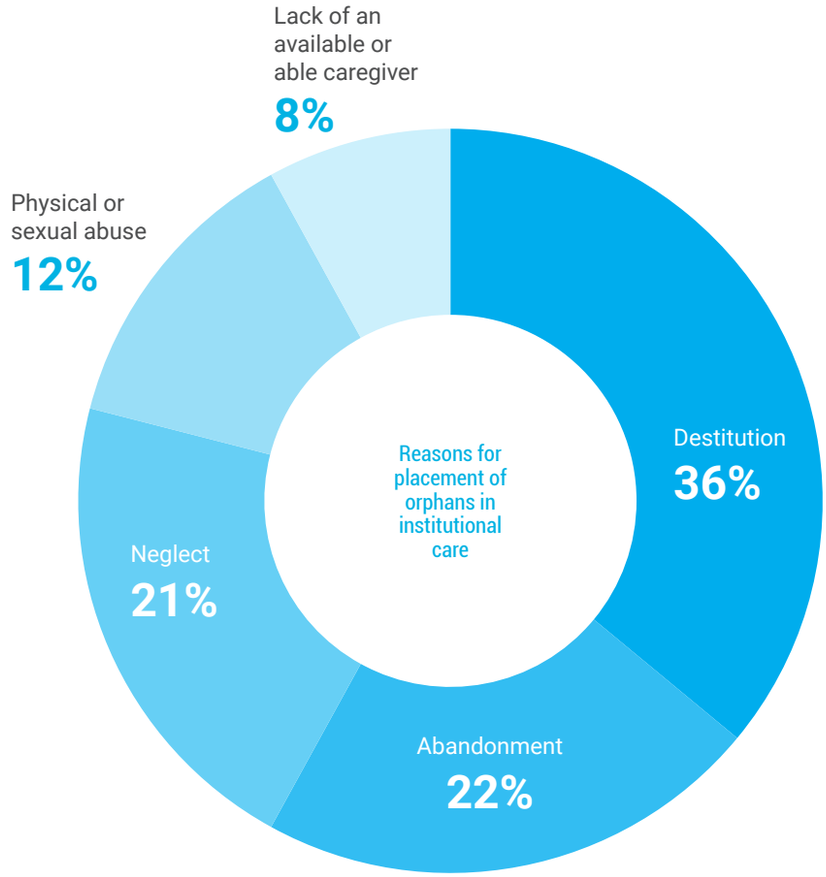
Research conducted in Uasin Gishu (UG), Kenya, in 2011 specified that, reasons for placement of orphans in institutional care were destitution (36 per cent), followed by abandonment (22 per cent), neglect (21 per cent), physical or sexual abuse



(8 per cent), and lack of an available or able caregiver (8 per cent) (Morantz et al. 2013). Many orphaned children become street-involved because of poverty, child abuse, (Morantz et al. 2013) and family conflict, ethnic clashes, the leading causes of street involvement globally (Embleton et al. 2016; Gayapersad et al 2019). Cheney and Rotabi (2014) argue that the proliferation of institutional care for orphans through the promotion of a discourse of orphan rescue has led to the growth of an "orphan industrial complex", which jeopardizes child protection (p. 2). These authors suggest that the broad definition of the term "orphan" by international organizations was promoted in an effort to draw developmental aid's attention to children orphaned by AIDS and that the aid industry's cultivation of the expression "orphans and vulnerable children" emphasized that orphanhood made children vulnerable (Gayapersad et al 2019). This viewpoint called for, among other things, external interventions of care (Abebe 2009).

The "social rupture thesis", which suggests that contemporary orphanhood has overwhelmed African societies' ability to care for their orphans, has also been epitomized by international organizations like the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) (Abebe 2009). Cheney (2017, p. 33) notes that African children in turn have been "constructed as victims in need of rescue", giving rise to "humanitarianism for children produced by NGOs' [non-governmental organizations'] appeal to Western donors to save the needy children of the global south". By building orphanages, "especially in poor communities, children are entrapped in these institutions, alienating them from their families and communities and stigmatizing them" (p. 160). It is widely recognized that institutionalization has adverse impacts on developmental outcomes and children's well-being (Berens and Nelson 2015; Miller et al. 2015; Smyke et al. 2007; Gayapersad et al 2019).

According to Berens and Nelson (2015), there is strong evidence of overwhelming developmental consequences for children institutionalized in early childhood. The "effects seem most pronounced when children have least access to individualized caregiving, and when deprivation coincides with early developmental sensitive periods" (p. 388). According to UNICEF, institutions across diverse settings tend to acquire common characteristics harmful to developing children. Among these are: depersonalization, or a lack of personal possessions, care relationships, or symbols of individuality; rigidity of routine, such that all life activities occur in repetitive, fixed daily timetables unresponsive to individual needs and preferences; block treatment, with most routine activities performed alongside many children; and social distance, or isolation from extra-institutional society (cited in Berens and Nelson 2015, p. 389) Berens and Nelson (2015) suggest that scientific evidence points to the urgent need for deinstitutionalization and the implementation of a policy-driven process aimed at the transformation of child protection services to focus on family- and community-level support (p. 395).

The alternative to the above is strengthening the capacity of households to care for orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC) within the community is key strategic response in addressing the OVC crisis. The Cash Transfers to Orphans and Vulnerable Children (CT-OVC) is government social support program which provides regular and predictable (unconditional) cash transfers to poor households taking care of orphans and vulnerable children. The main objectives of the social protection program are to support families to cope with vulnerability and encourage fostering and retention of OVC within their families and communities as well as to enhance their human capital development (Ayuku et al 2014). The Kenya CT-OVC program started in 2004 with the support from UNICEF and other development partners provided financial resources and technical assistance for the design and setting up of the system

implementation and scale-up process nationwide. Currently the government led CT-OVC program has expanded to 69 Counties, 151,243 households and around 750,000 OVC nationwide (Ayuku et al 2014). Included in the figures above 1800 households in Uasin Gishu (UG) County since the program was rolled out in the region in 2007. Enrolled households receive cash payment of KSH 1500. Social support program such as CT-OVC has proved to be effective means of alleviating poverty and facilitating the attainment of an adequate standard of living for people's health and well-being.

Emerging evidence confirms that CT-OVC is having a significant impact on children as measured by improved school attendance, future outlook on life, health visitations, household nutrition and therefore impacting the ability of household to uphold children's human rights. There has been a significant reduction of on farm child labour as a result of the cash transfer. However, we did find significand household food and economic insecurity in all participating households, with 23 per cent of all household reporting moderate food insecurity and only 2 per cent reporting being food secure (Ayuku et al 2014).

The effect of the cash transfers on the future outlook of children and adolescents is another new contribution to human development. We hypothesized that children in the CT households feel they will have more opportunities later in life because they feel supported by the government and not entirely dependent on their caregivers for support and opportunities. By staying with known relatives and other children, orphans may grow up in a more stable and secure environment favoring their psychological, intellectual, and social development. This group of youth who are benefiting from cash transfers will be the beneficiary of housing because there are in the community with their families and have opportunity to inherit land. However, the youth who has grown up in CCI has lost their lineage and inheritance of ancestral land, because of their long-term institutional care, lost connections to their family home and extended family.

Existing child-rights evidence-based poverty reduction strategies, such as the cash-transfer to orphaned and vulnerable children program (Bryant JH. 2009) urgently need to be extended to all impoverished households caring for the most vulnerable children and youth. Given that household poverty is a primary structural determinant of children and youths' street-involvement, alleviating poverty and improving the circumstances of households to adequately care for children will likely reduce the number of children and youth migrating to the streets. Furthermore, there is a need to develop and implement social welfare programs for children and youth already connected to the streets. Direct assistance to children and youth through the provision of safe places to live, food, and free and accessible medical care and education is fundamental to their right to special protection and assistance, and an adequate standard of living. The street youth are the most disadvantaged when it comes to social support and will be the least to benefit from housing because of their common characteristics of massive urban migration because of poverty, family discord and displacement from their land.

Community support for OVC, vulnerable Children, youth and their families is critical to protecting children from the worst effects of HIV and AIDS. External resources and technical assistance from external agencies are key but should complement, not replace, community action such has assisting OVC and vulnerable youth inherit land. The solution is not to reduce urgently needed external support for programming at community level. The answer is for governments and international partners to take deliberate steps to ensure that program models and resource flows match community needs and support the effective community-led responses already taking place. Critical to this outcome is more effective coordination among different stakeholders, informed by substantive community participation. Coordination requires a systematic approach at national level. National government is the appropriate authority to lead this process and establish ground rules for the interaction of external agencies with communities. Coordinating shared action between external agencies and communities is part of a broader process of stakeholder alignment to deliver better outcomes for OVC (Foster, 2008). In addition, political commitment is crucial because of governments' ability to use existing structures, resources and networking capabilities to scale up housing for homeless youth. For example, a useful contribution is to ensure that public sector workers – especially teachers, health care staff, social workers and development workers – are aware of the need to support community initiatives that respond to the needs of homeless OVC and vulnerable children and youth.

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Social Protection Systems for All to Prevent Homelessness and Facilitate Access to Adequate Housing

by Mira Bierbaum, Christina Behrendt and Valérie Schmitt, ILO Social Protection Department, International Labour Office

Introduction

Social protection systems, including floors, play a key role for the reduction of poverty and inequality and also contribute to preventing homelessness and facilitating access to adequate housing.[5]

Homelessness, broadly defined as "living in severely inadequate housing due to a lack of access to minimally adequate housing" (Busch-Geertsema et al., 2016, p. 125), is a global phenomenon. It affects people in both urban and rural areas, as well as in developed and developing countries. Causes are diverse and include unemployment and poverty, lack of affordable housing, migration, or ill-health. The Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing proposes a three-dimensional approach anchored in human rights:

- Recognizing that homelessness has both a material and social aspect: the lack of minimally adequate housing that would provide a secure place to establish a family of social relationships and participate in community life;
- Recognizing homelessness as a form of systemic discrimination and social exclusion; and
- Recognizing those who are homeless as right holders who are resilient in the struggle for survival and dignity, and as central agents of the social transformation necessary for the realization of the right to adequate housing (UN, 2015).

SDG target 11.1 commits to "ensur[ing] access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums". Despite the fact that the share of the urban population that lives in slums was halved between 1990 and 2014, the absolute number has actually increased as urban population growth is outpacing improvements in slum conditions (UN ECOSOC, 2018).

The implementation of national social protection systems, including floors, can accelerate progress towards preventing homelessness and achieving SDG target 11.1. SDG target 1.3 calls for the implementation of "nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors", which play a key role in reducing and preventing poverty and ensuring access to decent living and working conditions. The ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) highlights in particular the key role of nationally defined social protection floors in guaranteeing at least a basic level of income security and effective access to essential health care for ensuring life in dignity.

In preparation for the 58th session of the Commission for Social Development in February 2020, this note sketches out the role of social protection in achieving progress towards preventing homelessness, including by addressing some of its root causes, and promoting access to adequate, safe and affordable housing. In particular, the note highlights how universal social protection systems that are developed in accordance with human rights principles and ILO social security standards can contribute to preventing homelessness and facilitating access to adequate, safe and affordable housing.

Leaving no one behind: social protection in the 2030 Agenda

Social protection is the set of policies designed to reduce and prevent poverty and vulnerability throughout the life cycle, and to realize the human right to social security. Social protection includes cash and in-kind benefits for children and families, maternity, unemployment, employment injury, sickness, old-age, disability, survivors, as well as health protection. Typically, social protection systems are implemented through a mix of contributory schemes (social

5 ILO. 2019. 'Social Protection Systems for All to Prevent Homelessness and Facilitate Access to Adequate Housing'. Social Protection for All Issue Brief. Geneva: International Labour Office. https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/ShowRessource.action?id=55705 .

insurance) and tax-financed schemes (social assistance). Over the past years, many countries have achieved significant extension of social protection coverage. However, 55 percent of the world's population are not protected at all, and many more are inadequately protected (ILO, 2017a). Universal social protection has a central role in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (see Figure 1). Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 (End poverty in all its forms everywhere) sets, among others, the target to "implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and vulnerable" (SDG target 1.3).

Figure 1: Social protection systems and access to housing in the SDGs

In addition, universal social protection contributes to achieving other SDGs, in particular universal health coverage (target 3.8), gender equality (target 5.4), decent work and economic growth (target 8.5), reduced inequalities (target 10.4), and effective, accountable and transparent institutions (target 16.6). Social protection can also facilitate access to adequate sanitation (target 6.2) and contribute to ensuring access to adequate, safe and affordable housing (target 11.1).

Universal social protection systems, including floors, to prevent homelessness and facilitate access to adequate housing

Homelessness is a complex phenomenon that can be caused by multiple, sometimes overlapping reasons at the individual and structural level. Among the risk factors are poverty and unemployment, lack of affordable housing, ill-health, old age, domestic violence or relationship breakdowns. Many of these factors are addressed by well-designed and implemented social protection systems, and in particular social protection floors. In addition to addressing risk factors, social protection systems contribute to alleviating adverse consequences of homelessness and to facilitating access to adequate housing.

Preventing poverty

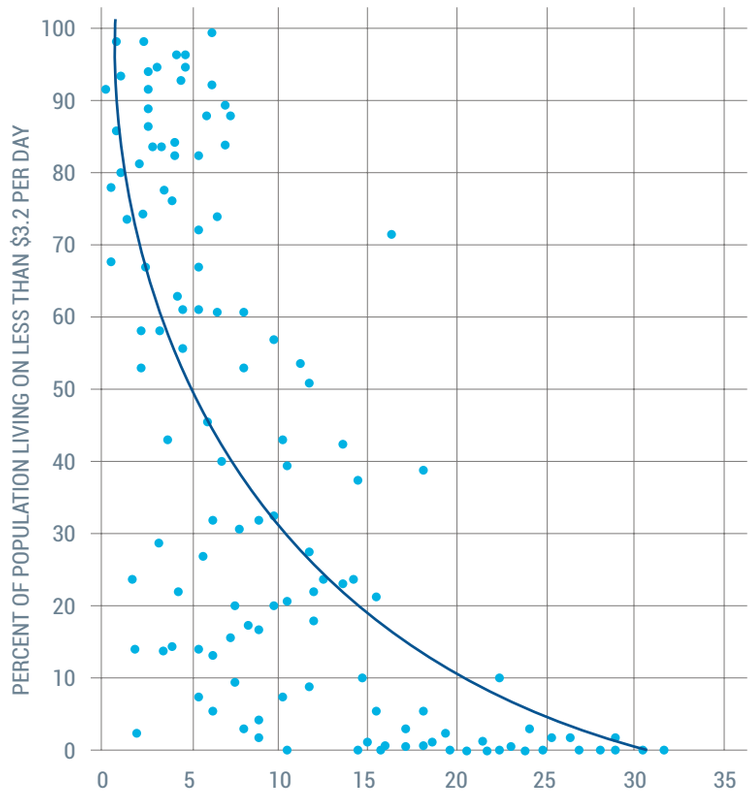
Social protection systems, including floors, are an important component of public policies to prevent poverty, by protecting people from adverse financial consequences of life cycle events such as unemployment, ill health, disability or maternity, and ensuring at least a basic level of income security throughout the life course, including for children and older persons (ILO 2017a, ILO and UNICEF, 2019). This is part of the basic social security guarantees that constitute a nationally-defined social protection floor, aimed at preventing or alleviating poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion.

In view of the important role of social protection for the prevention of poverty, it is not surprising that there is a negative association between countries' investment in social protection (including health) and the percentage of the population that is living on less than $3.2 per day (see Figure 2).

Social protection systems do not only alleviate poverty, but also promote decent employment and inclusive growth and are an integral part of decent work. They contribute to strengthening human capabilities, particularly in the transforming world of work, enhancing employability and the productivity of workers, facilitating job search, enhancing skills and labour market participation, and enable people to better navigate life and work transitions. These are important policies to prevent poverty, including working poverty, contribute to preventing homelessness and enabling access to adequate housing.

Moreover, effective access to essential health care is a critical component of social protection floors. Individuals should have access to a nationally defined set of goods and services that constitutes essential health care, including prevention and treatment for common diseases, special health-care needs and maternity care (ILO, 2019a). Social protection floors should

Figure 2: Social protection expenditure (including health, percentage of GDP) and percent of population living on less than $3.2 per day, latest available years



Source: World Social Protection Report 2017-2019 (ILO, 2017a) and PovcalNet (World Bank, 2019, data accessed in May 2019)

Note: Percent of population living on less than $3.2 per day in 2011 PPP. Data available for 141 countries. R2=0.528.

be designed in a way that ensures that persons in need of health care should not face hardship and an increased risk of poverty due to the financial consequences of accessing essential health care (Recommendation No. 202, para. 8a). Policies that ensure universal health coverage in line with these principles are indispensable in preventing health-related poverty, which often also manifests itself in poor housing and homelessness.

Preventing homelessness

In addition to reducing and preventing poverty in general, social protection systems, including floors, also have a specific role to play with regard to preventing homelessness and facilitating access to adequate housing.

Social protection systems directly address some of the risk factors for homelessness and inadequate housing, such as poverty (particularly through social assistance and housing benefits, unemployment (through unemployment protection and social assistance), ill-health (through health protection and long-term care), and old age (through old age pensions). More generally, the important role of social protection systems in guaranteeing at least a basic level of income security and effective access to health care is essential for preventing homelessness and inadequate housing.

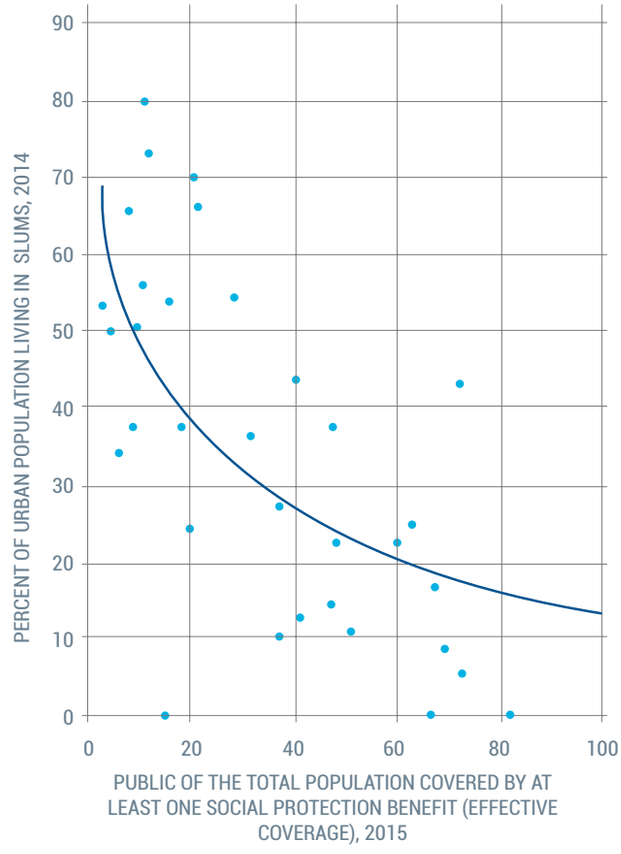
While internationally comparable data on different aspects of homelessness and inadequate housing are limited, SDG indicator 11.1.1 provides an important indication of the challenge to be met.

Countries with higher effective social protection coverage tend to perform better with regard to housing. Figure 3 below shows a negative correlation between SDG indicator 1.3.1, that is the share of the population that is covered by at least one social protection benefit (including sickness benefits, unemployment benefits, old-age benefits, employment injury benefits, family/child benefits and survivors' benefits) and SDG indicator 11.1.1, that is the share of the urban population that lives in slums, informal settlements, or inadequate housing.

How should social protection systems be designed to prevent homelessness and facilitate access to adequate housing?

The right to housing as part of the right to an adequate standard of living is, as the right to social security, recognized in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948) and in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966). The right to social security can contribute to the right to adequate housing by means of universal social protection systems that are designed and implemented in accordance with international human rights instruments and ILO social security standards, which are an integral part of the internationally agreed framework for the development of social protection systems (ILO, 2017b). In particular, ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) and the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102) are the cornerstones for developing universal social protection systems.

Figure 3: Effective social protection coverage (SDG indicator 1.3.1) and urban population living in slums (SDG indicator 11.1.1), 2014/2015



Source: ILO World Social Protection Report 2017-2019 (ILO, 2017a) and UN-Habitat (2019, data accessed in May 2019).

Note: SDG indicator 1.3.1: Population covered by at least one social protection benefit (effective coverage): Proportion of the population receiving at least one contributory or non-contributory cash benefit, or actively contributing to at least one social security scheme.
SDG indicator 11.1.1: Proportion of urban population living in slums: Includes also informal settlements or inadequate housing. Data available for 32 countries. R^2=0.555.

These standards can provide important guidance with regard to making social protection systems, including floors, more effective in preventing homelessness and facilitating access to adequate housing. While few ILO standards explicitly refer to housing and homelessness, it contains a number of important elements that should guide the implementation of policies at the national, regional and global level.

First, national social protection systems should guarantee a nationally-defined social protection floor that is at least a basic level of social security for all, throughout the life course, including effective access to essential health care and income security. Second, national social protection systems should be further strengthened by the progressive achievement of higher levels of protection to ensure adequate protection. According to this framework, universal social protection encompasses three key aspects:

- universal coverage in terms of persons protected;
- comprehensive protection in terms of risks covered;
- adequacy of protection.

In addition, given the complexity of the challenges of homelessness and inadequate housing, it is essential that social protection policies are embedded in a broader policy approach that also considers coordination with other social, economic and employment policies, and finds policy solutions that are adapted to each country's context.

Universal coverage

According to ILO Recommendation No. 202, nationally-defined social protection floors guarantee at least a basic level of social security for everyone throughout his or her life course, ensuring that all in need can effectively access social protection. These guarantees should cover at least all residents and all children, subject to other international obligations.

Social protection systems should promote the principles of social inclusion (including of persons in the informal economy) and respect for people's rights and dignity; and respect the principles of non-discrimination, gender equality and responsiveness to special needs. The latter points are also important in light of findings that the experience of homelessness may vary for different groups in the population, for example men and women (Johnson et al., 2018), but also persons with special needs such as living with a disability (ILO and IDA, 2019).

Universal social protection does not stop at a basic level of protection. Recommendation No. 202 also sets out that countries should progressively ensure higher levels of social security for as many people as possible and as soon as possible.

Adequacy of protection

Universal social protection needs to be adequate to achieve the expected policy outcomes. ILO social security standards provide a framework of internationally accepted minimum standards to social protection systems.

Nationally-defined social protection floors play a particularly important role in this respect, as they should prevent or at least alleviate poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion. They should guarantee access to a set of necessary goods and services that allow life in dignity (Recommendation No. 202, paras. 4 and 8). These necessary goods and services should respond to the need for adequate housing and basic services, which are reflected in the minimum core content of the human right to social security. This consists of a minimum essential level of benefits that enables individuals and families to "acquire at least essential health care, basic shelter and housing, water and sanitation, foodstuffs, and the most basic forms of education" (CESCR, 2008, para. 59a). These guarantees can be provided through different means, including benefits in cash and in kind, and through close coordination of social protection policies with other policies, such as labour market, employment and wage policies (see below). In fact, many countries take into account housing needs in the definition of their national social protection floor (ILO, 2019a).

In addition to providing guidance regarding adequate benefit levels, ILO social security standards also set out key principles for the design and delivery of social protection, such as the predictability of benefits, or non-discrimination, gender equality and responsiveness to special needs. This may include specific measures to ensure the effective access for marginalized or vulnerable categories of the population, including with regard to awareness-raising and information about benefit entitlements, decentralized structures to facilitate access to benefits and services and active outreach strategies.

Comprehensive protection

Universal social protection requires comprehensive protection in case of a broad set of social risks and contingencies. Such comprehensive protection should encompass in particular the core areas of social protection systems, including sickness benefits, unemployment benefits, old-age benefits, employment injury benefits, child or family benefits, maternity benefits, invalidity/disability benefits and survivor benefits. These are reflected in Convention No. 102 and in SDG targets 1.3 on social protection systems, including floors and 3.8 on universal health coverage. As causes of homelessness are diverse and may overlap, comprehensive protection ensures that multiple risks that different population groups may face over their life course are addressed in an integrated way.

Coordination and coherence with other social, economic and employment policies

Recommendation No. 202 calls on States to ensure coordination within social protection systems, and between social protection policies and other policy areas. Equally, the Commission on the

Status of Women emphasized the need for policy coherence in order to ensure that social protection systems, public services and infrastructure policies are complementary (UN, 2019).

Policies to address homelessness and affordable housing policies are case in point, as States often use multiple instruments and policies that share social policy objectives. In OECD countries, key services for homeless people include social housing provision, social protection, and specialist and emergency interventions (OECD, 2015). Needs for coordination exist for instance between unemployment or social assistance benefits, housing allowances, and employment programmes. This requires a coordinated approach among the responsible institutions to deliver adequate benefits and high-quality services.

It is essential to consider a coherent policy approach with labour market, employment, wage and broader macro-economic policies. For example, effective (minimum) wage policies play an important role in enabling people to afford adequate housing (ILO, 2019b). In some contexts, public employment programmes may also contribute to ensuring employment opportunities and facilitating access to adequate, safe and affordable housing. Comprehensive housing policies should include appropriate policies to ensure adequate, safe and affordable housing for workers, in line with the guidance provided by the ILO Workers' Housing Recommendation, 1961 (No. 115).

In addition, investment policies for housing should also take into account considerations regarding decent work, ensuring that rights at work including social protection are guaranteed to all workers involved in the construction and maintenance of housing. The Global Commission on the Future of Work (2019) also points to the need for strategic investment and infrastructure policies that can contribute to a human-centred agenda for the future of work.

No one-size-fits-all model

In view of the diversity of national experiences with regard to homelessness and inadequate housing, countries may choose for different policy approaches to tackle homelessness depending on the scope and magnitude of homelessness, or depending on the needs of people who are homeless (OECD, 2015).

Equally, there is no one-size-fits-all model to build social protection systems, as the focus is on the outcome rather than on the means. Recommendation No. 202 clearly specifies that social protection floors should be nationally defined, and that countries should consider "the most effective and efficient combination of benefits and schemes in the national context." Likewise, they should consider different methods to mobilize the necessary resources.

Promoting universal social protection

The international human rights framework, international social security standards and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development set out a clear internationally agreed framework for achieving universal social protection.

The Global Partnership for Universal Social Protection to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (USP2030) called on all countries to live up to their commitment to develop nationally owned social protection systems for all, including floors. It called upon countries and development partners to undertake the following five actions, to support the global commitment on universal social protection:

ACTION 1. Protection throughout life cycle: Establish universal social protection systems, including floors that provide adequate protection throughout the life cycle, combining social insurance, social assistance and other means, anchored in national strategies and legislation.

ACTION 2. Universal coverage: Provide universal access to social protection and ensure that social protection systems are rights-based, gender-sensitive and inclusive, leaving no one behind.

ACTION 3. National ownership: Develop social protection strategies and policies based on national priorities and circumstances in close cooperation with all relevant actors.

ACTION 4. Sustainable and equitable financing: Ensure the sustainability and fairness of social protection systems by prioritizing reliable and equitable forms of domestic financing, complemented by international cooperation and support where necessary.

ACTION 5. Participation and social dialogue: Strengthen governance of social protection systems through institutional leadership, multi-sector coordination and the participation of social partners and other relevant and representative organizations, to generate broad-based support and promote the effectiveness of services.

Many countries have already achieved significant progress with regard to achieving universal social protection for at least one area of their social protection system. This includes most high-income countries, as well as a growing number of middle- and low-income countries, including Argentina, Cabo Verde, China, Georgia, Lesotho, Mongolia, Namibia, Nepal, South Africa and Uruguay (see country briefs on www.usp2030.org and Ortiz et al., 2018).

However, more efforts are needed to expand coverage and ensure comprehensive and adequate social protection for all, to prevent homelessness and facilitate access to adequate, safe and affordable housing, including for marginalized and vulnerable groups. Such efforts of national and local governments are essential to "re-engage and recommit to their role of providing social protection and ensuring access to affordable housing for marginalized and vulnerable groups, reaffirming that housing is a human right rather than a commodity" (UN, 2015, p. 22).

Closer policy coordination between national social protection policies and other policies relevant to the provision of adequate, safe and affordable housing are necessary to ensure policy coordination and an effective allocation of resources, as to ensuring that no one is left behind.

Key points

- Social protection is the set of policies designed to reduce and prevent poverty and vulnerability throughout the life cycle, which contributes to preventing homelessness.
- Universal social protection has a key role in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and in particular SDG target 1.3 on "social protection systems and measures for all, including floors" and SDG target 11.1 on adequate, safe and affordable housing.
- Social protection systems for all address multiple, often interrelated and complex causes of homelessness by preventing poverty, contributing to health-related goals, gender equality, decent work, and reducing inequalities. Moreover, they are gender-sensitive and responsive to special needs, for instance for people with a disability.
- ILO standards are an integral part of the internationally agreed framework for the development of universal social protection systems.
    - Universal social protection encompasses three aspects:
    - Universal coverage in terms of persons protected;
    - Comprehensive protection in terms of risk covered; and
    - Adequacy of the protection provided.
- Well designed and implemented social protection systems ensure coordination with other policies that address homelessness outside the immediate area of social security, for example wage, employment and investment policies.

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State of Homelessness in Countries with Developed Economies

by Dame Louise Casey, Chair of the Advisory Committee, Institute of Global Homelessness

Introduction

Homelessness is a complex issue, with varied and sometimes conflicting definitions. It is an issue sitting at the intersection of public health, housing affordability, domestic violence, mental illness, substance misuse, urbanization, racial and gender discrimination, infrastructure, and unemployment. The interplay between these elements is expressed in a host of ways depending upon local context. Levels of homelessness rise and fall dependent on shifts in and changes to any one of the elements. But with the right mix of program interventions, well-coordinated local systems, and effective policy, we have seen that homelessness is an issue that can be successfully solved. In this paper, we recommend a framework for defining homelessness, explore the state of homelessness, its demographics, and its poor measurement in the thirty-nine countries with advanced economies as defined by the International Monetary Fund, and provide an overview of strategies that have successfully reduced homelessness.

A Framework for Defining Homelessness

In 2015, the Institute of Global Homelessness developed a Global Framework for Understanding Homelessness on a Global Scale. The Framework's aim is to define homelessness in a way that is meaningful across the world, resonating in both the Global South and the Global North.

The Framework considers three domains of home, in order to determine who may be understood as "lacking access to minimally adequate housing." The first domain is the "security domain" which includes having the legal title to occupy housing, the practical likelihood of eviction, the power to exclude others from the space, and the ability to meet rental or mortgage costs. The second domain is the "physical domain" which pertains to questions of quality like durability, protection from weather, provision of basic amenities, freedom from infestation and pollutants, plus the safety of one's self and possessions from external threats. The physical domain also pertains to the quantity of accommodation, i.e., the extent to which the dwelling is overcrowded. The final domain is the "social domain" and refers to opportunities to enjoy social relations as culturally appropriate, and the safety of one's self and possessions from other occupants. If any of these domains are violated, a person may be considered as "lacking access to minimally adequate housing."

Proceeding from this conceptual model, the Framework captures three broad categories of people who may be understood to be experiencing homelessness. These categories, further explained in a chart on the next page, are:

- People without accommodation
- People living in temporary or crisis accommodation
- People living in severely inadequate and insecure housing.

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People without accommodation	People living in temporary or crisis accommodation	People living in severely inadequate and insecure accommodation
1A People sleeping in the streets or in other open spaces (such as parks, railway embankments, under bridges, on pavement, on river banks, in forest, etc.)	**2A People stay in night shelters(where occupants have to renegotiate their accommodation nightly)**	3A People sharing with friends and relatives on a temporary basis
		3B People living under threat of violence
1B People sleeping in public roofed spaces or buildings not intended for human inhabitation (such as bus and railways stations, taxi ranks, derelict building public buildings, etc.)	**2B People living in homeless hostels and other types of temporary accommodation for homeless people (where occupants have a designated bed or room)**	3C People living in cheap hostels, bed and breakfast and similar
		3D People squatting in conventional housing
1C People sleeping in their cars, rickshaws, open fishing boats and other forms of transport	**2C Women and children living in refuges for those fleeing domestic violence**	3E People living in conventional housing that is unfit for human habitation
	2D People living in camps provided for 'internally displaced people' i.e., those who have fled their homes as a result of armed conflicts, natural or human-made disasters, human rights violations, development projects, etc, but have not crossed international borders	3F People living in trailers, caravans and tents
1D 'Pavement dwellers' individuals or households who live on the street in a regular spot, usually with some form of makeshift cover		3G people living in extremely overcrowded conditions
	2E People living in camps or reception centers/temporary accommodation for asylum seekers, refugees and other immigrants	3H People living in non-conventional buildings and temporary structures, including those living in slums/informal settlements

The types of "literal homelessness" found in categories 1A-2C are generally more prevalent across countries and continents than some of the other categories, which often apply to specific areas. Despite being at the most extreme end of the housing deprivation spectrum, these groups are often neglected in discussion at global and local levels. They are also not counted, measured or analysed in a consistent and transparent way. This inhibits action to tackle the issues.

Though classifications vary across countries, homelessness can generally be broken into long-term, more entrenched and shorter-term categories. United States researchers Randall Kuhn and Dennis Culhane identified three additional categories of homelessness:

- Chronic homelessness, which describes individuals whose experience is entrenched in the shelter system;
- Transitional homelessness, which describes individuals whose experience involves using the shelter system as a relatively brief stepping stone to find permanent housing; and
- Episodic homelessness, which describes individuals who cycle frequently in and out of homelessness over an extended period of time (Kuhn and Culhane 1998).
- In the United States, those experiencing long-term homelessness are the smallest group of users of homeless services but account for a disproportionate amount of service use and associated costs (Culhane and Metraux 2008). There are indications that this is broadly true outside the United States as well, for example in Europe and Canada.

Causes, Risk Factors, and Other Impacts

In any form, homelessness happens because people cannot access the housing and support that they need. This can be the result of economic and socio-structural factors, like shortage of affordable housing, extreme poverty, and discrimination; it can occur when systems of care and support fail; and it can occur in response to individual or relational factors, such as relationship violence or personal trauma (The Homeless Hub 2013). The immediate cause is often an exogenous shock, such as a health crisis, unexpected lack of employment, or abrupt housing loss due to eviction or domestic violence. But socio-structural factors make certain people especially vulnerable, and gaps in the social safety net and homelessness services systems can extend homelessness or make it more difficult to remain housed.

Housing Deficits and Affordability

As cities grow, the availability of affordable housing often does not keep pace. Beyond rent, affordability includes associated costs of living—utilities, energy costs, transportation costs or transit access. Housing prices tend to decrease further from central hubs of activity, but so does access. As people move further out, they may be faced with scarce public transit and food deserts that require additional transportation expenditures, such as car insurance,

parking, fuel, and registration. Even where developers are required to keep a percentage of new units affordable, wages often have not risen alongside cost of living.

In Australia, houses have increased in price by roughly 2.7 per cent per annum, while wages have increased only 1.9 per cent per annum (Yates 2008). Additionally, the advent of what Australia calls "infrastructure charges," (known as "impact fees," in the United States, "development charges," in Canada, and "planning gain/obligation," in the United Kingdom.) increase development costs to companies and have contributed to rising costs for the buyer/renter (Bryant and Eves 2014). A 2015 study from the Netherlands indicated that the lowest-income households were paying the highest percentage of their income to these associated housing expenditures (Haffner and Boumeester 2015). The National Low Income Housing Coalition reports that in nowhere in the United States can a person working full-time at the federal minimum wage afford a one-bedroom apartment at the Fair Market Rent (the 40th percentile of gross rents for standard units). These numbers were calculated using "Housing Wages," the hourly wage that a full-time worker must earn to afford a modest and safe rental home without spending more than 30 per cent of his or her income on rent and utility costs (National Low Income Housing Coalition 2016). In 2016, that number in the United States was $16.35 per hour for a one-bedroom or $20.30 per hour for a two-bedroom; the federal minimum wage is $7.25 per hour.

To put this in perspective, in 2019, the McKinsey Global Institute estimated that 330 million urban households "live in substandard housing or stretch to pay housing costs that exceed 30 percent of their income. This number could rise to 440 million households by 2025 if current trends are not reversed. The housing affordability gap is equivalent to $650 billion per year, or 1 percent of global GDP. In some of the least affordable cities, the gap exceeds 10 percent of local GDP." (Mischke 2019)

While it is vital to understand housing availability in terms of its affordability with regard to the relationship between rent and wages, it is also important to recognize availability in terms of accessibility. The often-complex nature of the private rental market can prove an insurmountable barrier to those dealing with mental or physical disability or illness, and can also exclude those who have become involved with the criminal justice system. In many places, individuals who have been released from prison have extremely limited access to the private rental market, leaving them few options other than either the street or a return to situations that may reinforce criminal behaviour.

An important additional element to housing accessibility is the ways it intersects with eviction in the private market. There are two ways in which evictions influence homelessness numbers: legal evictions, which can occur as a result of non-payment of rent, illegal activity, property damage, expiration of lease, and lease violation; and illegal or forced evictions, which often take the form of landlords changing locks, harassing tenants, and threatening violence if they do not move out. In these cases, the burden of proof, court time and lawyer fees can prohibit tenants taking legal action. People with access to other affordable options, emergency savings, or family members who can help during the transition may not experience homelessness. Though many individuals experiencing homelessness have also experienced eviction, and report eviction as the primary reason they are experiencing homelessness, individuals almost always exhaust other options before resorting to a night on the street (Gottesman 2007). This may mean sleeping in the houses of family members and friends before running out of options. Thus, not all evictions result in homelessness, and not all evicted persons end up on the street or in shelters.

Unemployment and underemployment

Employment barriers take many forms: lack of adequate jobs, a criminal record, illness, and inconsistent employment history. Moreover, the daily reality of homelessness is itself a barrier, as people living without reliable access to laundry, showers, space for adequate sleep, and requisite technology face difficulty submitting applications and completing successful interviews. This is to say nothing of the mental demands of housing insecurity, which make it more difficult to function successfully in the workplace (Poremski, Whitley and Latimer 2014).

For example, in Spain, 75.7 per cent of people experiencing homelessness in 2005 were unemployed, and 49.6 per cent of these were consistently searching for work while seeking stable housing (Fundación San Martín de Porres 2007). A 2007 study in Canada showed that low-income families forced to move to new communities seeking reemployment were at high risk for becoming homeless. That study concluded that housing and employment "are directly related, both having a direct impact on well-being of individuals, families, and entire communities" (Shier, Jones and Graham 2012).

It is important to note that in every region, many people experiencing homelessness work. Unable to find formal employment, many turn to the informal economy for income, particularly in developing contexts. This undeclared work can constitute up to 20 per cent of the national GDP of some southern and eastern European countries, as well as, 48 per cent of non-agricultural employment in North Africa, 51 per cent in Latin America, 65 per cent in Asia, and 72 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa. But these numbers can rise sharply when the agricultural economy is considered—in India, the informal economy can make up as much as 90 per cent of the GDP (Brusa 2007). The World Bank estimated

in 2007 that the informal economy makes up an average of 13.4 per cent of the GDP in high-income Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development countries (Schneider, Buehn and Montenegro 2010).

Substance misuse

wA 2008 study in Melbourne, Australia showed that 43 per cent of the sampled homeless population struggled with substance misuse; for one-third, these problems pre-dated their experience with homelessness. For the other two-thirds, they developed during their time on the street (Johnson and Chamberlain 2008). In the 2013 United States Point-in-Time Count of homelessness one in five people experiencing homelessness said they had a chronic substance use disorder. It is generally understood that this proportion is higher for people experiencing chronic homelessness. Another study, in Illinois, indicated that a "multi-directional model" best describes the interaction between substance misuse and homelessness, rather than a simple cause and effect (Johnson, et al. 1997).

A complicating element of this relationship is the interaction between substance misuse and social support: as the social circle and support network shrink in response to substance use, vulnerability to homelessness rises. Substance misuse plays a critical role in the breakdown of social bonds as well as institutional relationships, which in turn limits access to crisis housing (Vangeest and Johnson 2002). Additionally, substance use can render social and economic obligations such as employment more challenging, and act as a barrier to housing services with sobriety requirements (McAll, et al. 2013).

Other perspectives suggest that drugs and alcohol are a coping mechanism for life on the street. Youth seem to be particularly vulnerable to this coping strategy; studies in the United States have suggested that drug and alcohol use is 2 to 3 times more prevalent among youth experiencing homelessness, in comparison to their housed counterparts (Tyler and Melander 2013).

Mental illness

The difficulty of accessing consistent care and medicine, the prevalence of episode or cycle triggers, and the increased struggle of holding steady employment while enduring an episode all render individuals with mental illness especially vulnerable to chronic homelessness (World Health Organization 2009; Fazel, et al. 2008).

Mental illness can make pathways out of homelessness more difficult, as mental illness is widely stigmatized and can interfere with an individual's ability to navigate service systems. This is especially true when stigma leads individuals not to seek treatment (Rowe, et al. 2001). Common mental illnesses include depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and often posttraumatic stress disorder, seen often in the case of veterans and victims of domestic and sexual violence (Lincoln, Platcha-Elliot and Espejo 2009).

Part of the issue is the high rate of comorbidity within populations of individuals experiencing homelessness of mental illness with other debilitating problems, such as substance abuse, which frequently goes untreated. One study from the United States found that for individuals experiencing homelessness with both substance abuse disorders and serious mental illness, 80 per cent did not receive substance abuse services and 50 per cent did not receive mental health services, often rendering what treatment they did receive ineffective (Pearson and Linz 2011). Many programs require sobriety before accessing services, and the coupling of addiction with mental illness can complicate access to care for both.

People who struggle with substance abuse or mental illness are overrepresented in homeless populations, and these are risk factors for homelessness. However, most people with challenges around substance abuse and mental illness do not become homeless, so these factors alone cannot explain someone's homelessness. Access to housing and appropriate services can prevent and end homelessness for people with these challenges.

Health

Homelessness is deadly condition. Studies show that living on the streets contributes to rapid health deterioration, increased hospitalization, and, in some cases, death—a global study from the National Health Care for the Homeless Council determined that regardless of borders, cultures and geography, a chronically homeless individual is three to four times more likely to die than someone in the general population (O'Connell 2005). For vulnerable subgroups, such as street youth, people with mental illness, young women, and the elderly, that number is even higher. For example, the study revealed that young women living on the street have a chance of dying between five to thirty times higher than the housed population of the same ages.

Simply put, life on the streets makes the healthy become sick and the sick become sicker (Seiji 2016). Homelessness makes it difficult to manage chronic illness and adhere to treatment regimens; healthy, nutritional meals are few and far between; exercise and access to hygiene care are rare; exposure to harsh elements and violence are constant; and comorbidity of health issues is common. The adverse effect

of homelessness on both physical and mental health has been well documented. Homelessness has also been shown to trigger relapses in detrimental behaviour, such as substance use and abuse.

Violence

Violence and homelessness have a reciprocal relationship, particularly for women: most women living on the streets have experienced family, sexual or relationship violence at some point in their lives, and most will experience it again while living rough. Violence comes in many forms for people experiencing homelessness. In 2000, the leading cause of death among young men using homeless shelters in Toronto was homicide (Hwang 2000). People experiencing homelessness in Hungary report avoiding shelters due to lack of space and perceived danger of violence (Zakim 2014). The threat of sexual violence leads many women and youth to avoid shelters. The high percentage of individuals with untreated or undertreated mental illness and substance abuse can lead to instances of violence between people experiencing homelessness, rendering certain spaces and points of service undesirable.

Finally, family violence is one of the strongest predictors of future homelessness, and can hold a family in a cycle of impoverishment, unstable housing, and violence for generations (Jordan 2012; Swick 2008). A study of trauma history amongst people experiencing homelessness in Jacksonville, Florida revealed that most traumatic events had occurred during childhood and adolescence, and that these events were directly tied to the participants' instances of chronic homelessness (Christensen, et al. 2005).

Criminalization and law enforcement

Laws against begging and panhandling, loitering, vagrancy, and sleeping in public disproportionately affect people experiencing homelessness. There is growing evidence that criminalization of homelessness may not only fail to properly address homelessness, but likely exacerbates it. A 2016 report from the United States National Law Centre on Homelessness and Poverty (NLCHP) notes that: "Criminalization strategies not only cost cities millions in wasted resources, they also fail to address the root causes of homelessness. Arrests, incarceration, fines, and convictions prolong homelessness by creating new, sometimes nearly insurmountable barriers to obtaining employment and stable housing."

Typically, criminalization comes in the form of laws prohibiting what the NLCHP calls "unavoidable behaviours," such as sleeping in public. That same report noted that such sleeping bans have increased by 31 per cent in the United States since 2006, and some cities go even farther, prohibiting sitting and lying down at all in public. Bans prohibiting living in legally-parked vehicles have increased by 143 per cent in that same period.

In some countries, criminalizing measures are even more severe. In Hungary, with arguably Europe's most severe penalties, the 2013 Anti-Homelessness Law makes "habitually residing in public spaces, or storing one's belongings in such spaces, a crime punishable by imprisonment and/or fine" (Zakim 2014). This legislation was then written into a constitutional amendment which would force individuals who refuse to go to shelters to pay a fine, participate in public work programs, or face time in prison. The Human Rights Law Centre in Australia reported in 2014 that all Australian states and territories had laws in place that effectively criminalized homelessness (Human Rights Law Centre 2014).

But many government institutions have moved against criminalizing homelessness. In January 2014, the European Parliament adopted a Resolution on Homelessness as part of the Europe 2020 strategy, stressing: "homelessness is neither a crime nor a lifestyle choice" (European Parliament News 2014). In 2016, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, in its ranking of local applications for funding toward homelessness programs, awarded a small scoring bonus to applicants that "demonstrate their communities have implemented specific strategies that prevent criminalization of homelessness."

Still, law enforcement officers and direct service agencies face practical challenges balancing the rights of people experiencing homelessness, immediate health risks and progress toward permanent housing, and the rights of all city residents to access public space.

LGBT Youth

In the United States, the percentage of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) youth experiencing homelessness is at least three times greater than the percentage of LGBT youth in the general population. LGBT youth represent between 20 per cent and 40 per cent of the homeless youth population. This pattern is consistent across regions: the 2015 United Nations Human Rights Council's report on sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination and violence found that LGBT persons worldwide were at high risk for discrimination in access to housing due to familial rejection, discrimination by private landlords, and evictions from public housing. In a survey spanning 115 countries of 3,340 young men who had sex with men, 24 per cent had no stable housing (Arreola, et al. 2015).

A significant proportion of LGBT youth are homeless due to familial rejection; in the United States as many as 46 per cent of homeless LGBT youth ran away after rejection, and 43 per cent became homeless as a result of forced eviction from the home by their parents (Durso and Gates 2012). It can be difficult for transgender and genderqueer youth to access shelters, as many impose binary gender classifications, such as gender-segregated night shelters.

Complicating these factors are issues of substance use, mental illness, neglect, abuse, and turbulent family life. LGBT adolescents experiencing homelessness are more likely than their heterosexual, cisgender counterparts to have a major depressive episode, posttraumatic stress disorder, and suicidal ideation; they are also more likely than non-LGBT homeless youth to use cocaine, crack, or methamphetamines (Keuroghlian, Shtasel and Bassuk 2014).

Ethnicity and Race

As homelessness is often the result of a series of systemic failures, groups who are marginalized in mainstream systems are generally overrepresented within the homeless population. In the United States, this is reflected in the disproportionate number of Black individuals experiencing homelessness; in other contexts, the relevant local ethnic, social or racial minorities tend to be overrepresented among the homeless population. Across Europe, Roma populations have been shown to be more at-risk for homelessness than non-Roma groups (Manzoni 2014). In Canada, research indicates that urban Aboriginal Peoples are eight times more likely to experience homelessness than non-Aboriginal groups (Belanger, Awosoga and Weasel Head 2013). A United Kingdom-based study indicated that ethnic minority households are roughly three times more likely to be considered homeless than non-ethnic minority households (Netto 2006).

In other words, people who are the most affected by structural inequalities are also typically the most affected by homelessness (Whaley 2002). These groups often face multiple points of exclusion: discrimination in the housing market, prejudice and administrative barriers when trying to access services, and increased financial strain.

Elderly

Causes and consequences of homelessness among the elderly differ across cultural and political contexts, but broadly speaking, elderly people face limited housing options and income supports, lack of accessible community health services, and complications due to chronic illness or infirmity. Additionally, elderly people experiencing homelessness have higher mortality rates than their younger counterparts and are more prone to memory loss, which may make it more difficult to navigate complicated housing and service systems.

Elderly people experiencing homelessness can be split into two types: chronically homeless individuals who have aged into this category, and elderly individuals experiencing homelessness for the first time. Typically, newly-homeless elderly individuals have experienced a life shock of some kind, such as economic depression and health crises, loss of family members, or disintegration of family relationships (Donley 2010).

Family

The most typical configuration of families experiencing homelessness is a single mother with young children. Usually women are fleeing domestic or family violence, and are unable to find housing or steady employment. Alongside this repeated exposure to violence, many families are coping with trauma-related health conditions, broken social networks or support systems, and frequent evictions and housing instability (Brush, Gultekin and Grim 2016). Families are also often subject to "hidden homelessness," living in crowded conditions with relatives or, unsustainably, in motels.

Homelessness by the Numbers

A major challenge in addressing homelessness is the lack of consistent definitions and analogous data. National definitions of homelessness are frequently incompatible with one another. For example, in South Korea, homelessness is divided into "vagrants," and "rough sleepers." In Russia, legislature defines the term as people without fixed abode or place of stay; Greece simply refers to "insufficient accommodation" without defining what qualifies as insufficient; and Zimbabwe considers homeless anyone who does not own their own home in an approved residential area. Furthermore, in some countries, national censuses rely on one definition while states rely on another. An additional complication is the fluctuation in the consistency of data collection. Some countries conducting counts annually, while others count every ten years, while others never count. These varying practices contribute to the difficulty in achieving a clear understanding of the scope of homelessness across borders. There is no consistent global definition of homelessness and no consistent methods for measurement.

The chart below shows the paucity of the information and data available. Very few of these numbers are reliable, they are incomparable and inconsistent. They do give a flavour of the scope of homelessness across the countries identified for discussion in this paper.

Country	#People Experiencing Homelessness	Year	Ratio to Population
Australia	116,427	2016	0.49%
Austria	14,603	2014	0.17%
Belgium	Data not available		
Canada	35,000	2016	0.10%
Czech Republic	68,500	2015	0.65%
Denmark	6,138	2015	0.11%
Estonia	864	2011	0.06%
Finland	7112	2017	0.13%
France	141,500	2012	0.21%
Germany	430,000	2016	0.50%
Greece	20,000	2013	0.18%
Hong Kong	1,403	2014	0.02%
Iceland	761	2011	0.23%
Ireland	9,987	2019	0.21%
Israel	25,000	2019	0.29%
Italy	48,000	2014	0.08%
Japan	4,977	2018	0.00%
Latvia	2,342	2011	0.11%

These numbers, despite being the best available, are incomparable to one another, as they are a mix of methodologies, varying degrees of transparency, and are not taken from the same year. Numbers from 2011 have little bearing on what homelessness might look like in any given region now; yet in some places this is the most recent available data.

In 2017, the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA) reported an increase in homelessness across all European Union member states, excepting Finland, where homelessness continues to decline.

Overview of Global Strategies to Decrease Homelessness

As one example of success, Finland's national plan, known as PAAVO I & II, involved national and city governments, private financers, and non-profit organizations working together toward the goal of eradicating long-term homelessness. In the international report reviewing the success of the program, researchers noted that, "this success could not have been possible without a coordinated approach among the different sectors, each playing their respective roles" (Pleace, Culhane, Granfelt, & Knutagård, 2015). The report highlighted that the strategy hinged on multisector coordination and "real, achievable targets." An example of this kind of coordination is the evolution of PAAVO I's aim to replace shared shelters with permanent supportive housing units, based on principles of harm reduction and housing first. As the program progressed, a comprehensive network developed to balance the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders: state financing of housing and services, local governmental provisions of land use and site development, and a system of cooperative NGOs performing outreach and providing services.

Suggested frameworks to end homelessness vary across countries, but typically include the following elements: a well-coordinated system that plans for outcomes; a citywide strategy that weaves together prevention, emergency response, and housing and supports; and resources to support this work and to provide an adequate supply of safe, affordable accommodation. Harm reduction and housing first are effective approaches to help structure these frameworks, especially for people with complex service needs. These approaches should inform work across a system, guiding the overall role of shelters, outreach services and permanent housing interventions.

The housing first approach offers permanent, affordable housing as quickly as possible for individuals and families experiencing homelessness, then provides the supportive services and connections to the community-based supports people need to keep their housing and avoid returning to homelessness. People experiencing homelessness are faced with few to no treatment preconditions or barriers. The approach, originally developed in the late 1990s in the United States by Dr. Sam Tsemberis, is based on overwhelming evidence that all people experiencing homelessness can achieve stability in permanent housing if provided with the appropriate levels of services. Studies show that housing first approaches yield high housing retention rates, reduce the use of crisis services and institutions, and improve people's health and social outcomes (Bassuk, et al. 2014; McAll, et al. 2013; Medicine Hat Community Housing Society 2014).

Conclusion

Homelessness is not simple, but neither is it impossible to fix. Countries in developed economies know this to be possible. A common definition and then consistent measurement is the first major step, which can be accomplished in the short term. There is a clear need to support work at a global level to identify and activate effective strategies that work across contexts; to connect cities and give them a structure to apply effective strategies, learn, and adapt; and to restore a sense of urgency around homelessness as a crisis for individuals and the communities around them.

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National Survey on the Homeless Population in Brazil: Giving a Face to Homelessness and Formulating Strategies and Policies to Address Homelessness

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Background

From the massacre of the "Praça da Sé" to the National Survey on the Homeless Population

"On August 19, 2004 occurred a fact that will never be forgotten. An episode that became known as the Massacre of the "Praça da Sé", where seven homeless people were brutally murdered for no reason that would justify such cowardice. The news ran the country causing great social unrest, but that was it. What could be drawn from this tragedy is the positive visibility to the large number of people living on the streets to fend for themselves without any support or protection. The Massacre of the "Praça da Sé" will always be remembered with great sadness by all of us, homeless and former homeless people, and is a milestone in our struggle for rights (...)[6]"

The history of the National Survey on the Homeless Population is intrinsically linked to the fight for the rights of homeless people of big cities. After the huge media coverage of the massacre at the "Praça da Sé", the government turned its attention to this group, historically forgotten in Brazil. Until then, there were no federal public policies directed exclusively to this population, which was residually and precariously attended by some social policies[7]. Since 2004, there has been a confluence of actions directed to homeless people in Brazil:

- Creation of the National Homeless Movement (2004): this was the 1st time that the homeless population discussed their demands directly with the government and researchers, making the Movement a protagonist in the defence of rights for the homeless.
- First National Meeting of the Homeless (2005): strategies and recommendations for the formulation of public policies for this population were proposed. As a priority action, the Meeting highlighted the importance of studies to quantify and characterize the people on the streets, in order to guide the development and implementation of specific policies.
- First normative achievement for the homeless population (2005): Article 23 of the Organic Law of Social Assistance was amended to add the service of assistance to homeless people (Law 11.258/2005).
- Inter-Ministerial Working Group (2006): coordinated by the Ministry of Social Development and composed of representatives from six other ministries, the National Homeless Movement and other institutions related to the theme, the scope was the development of public policy proposals for the homeless population, with cross-sectoral actions in the areas of social assistance, health, education, labour, justice, among others.

The National Survey

The initiative for the National Survey on the Homeless Population was a result of the demands of social movements, identified in the First National Meeting on Homeless Population, and the discussions of the Inter-Ministerial Working Group. On more than one occasion, the National Homeless Movement´s representatives argued that a census survey would help to break the social invisibility of decades, thereby contributing to the recovery of a citizen condition, with access to basic health rights, education, social assistance, etc.

In this sense, the research was a collective construction, designed with the objective of quantifying and investigating the socioeconomic characteristics of

6 NATIONAL HOMELESS MOVEMENT, 2009, p. 17.

7 GONELLI; CHAGAS, 2009, p. 223.

homeless people, with the main focus on the formulation of public policies aimed at this population[8]. The target population of the research was composed of people over 18 years living in the streets[9].
The survey covered 71 Brazilian cities, including 23 capitals and other 48 cities with more than 300,000 citizens[10].
The research identified a contingent of 31,922 homeless adults in the studied municipalities, besides raising socioeconomic data of the respondents. Including the results of the counts carried out in all four capitals which were not involved in this research, we can say that in 2008 there was an amount of roughly 50 thousand homeless people[11] in Brazil.

The National Survey faced several challenges that required the development of specific strategies and methodologies. An initial problem was the lack of a fixed residence and the high mobility of this population within cities. Typically, the collection of census data is performed in domiciles, so the homeless were not included. How to collect data from a homeless population? Based on the previous experience of four cities administration that had done this population count, some criteria were defined for the location and identification of homeless people. Among the specificities of this identification, there was the need to conduct fieldwork in the evening, when generally these individuals are in the place they will remain for the night. The mobility of this population, including at night-time, requires that the information collection is done within the shortest possible time in order to minimize double counting. To facilitate the approach, the entire data collection process was performed with the participation of social movements and organizations working with the homeless population[12].

To define the methodology, workshops were held with researchers, social assistance managers, representatives of movements and associations connected to the cause. Finally, a pre-test of the data collection forms was applied in three capitals. The training of interviewers was done with the participation of representatives of the National Homeless Movement and other associations, which explained the habits, language, approach manners, codes of conduct and characteristics of this population. Another key activity was the mapping of places where the population would remain during the night, which had the support of representatives of movements and associations working with the homeless[13].

The research collected basic data of all interviewees and conducted a more detailed research of 10 per cent of the population[14] about the main reasons to live on the street, forms of income, time spent on the street, education, family ties, access to social programs, possession of documentation, health and hygiene conditions, among others.

The National Survey team was composed of 55 coordinators, 269 supervisors and 926 interviewers, totalling 1,250 professionals. 147 homeless or former homeless people and 86 professionals working with this population supported the fieldwork. In total, 1,483 people worked in the data collection activities. A broad effort was needed in order to locate the various places where this population lived, including sidewalks, squares, marquees, bridges, alleys, roads, ports, underground galleries, tunnels, abandoned buildings, among others. The active participation of homeless, former homeless people and social educators contributed to the proper approach of interviewees and this resulted in a small rate of refusal to answer the questionnaire (13 per cent).

8 Through a cooperation agreement between the Ministry of Social Development and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Secretariat for Evaluation and Information Management (SAGI) launched a public selection process for the preparation of the National Survey on the Homeless Population, which was performed between 2007 and 2008 by the Meta Institute.

9 Homeless population is a heterogeneous population group that has in common: the extreme poverty, broken or weakened family ties and the lack of regular conventional housing, and that uses public places and degraded areas as living space and livelihood, temporarily or permanently, as well as public hostel units for temporary overnight or as temporary housing (BRAZIL, 2009).

10 Brazilian capitals Sao Paulo, Belo Horizonte and Recife were not surveyed because they had recently conducted similar researches. Porto Alegre requested its exclusion from the research due to the fact that it was conducting a municipal study simultaneously to the research commissioned by the MDS

11 According to Sposati (2009, p. 210), "It was identified that the homeless population reached almost 50 thousand inhabitants. This amount could be achieved when adding 31,922 people located in the streets by the national census with 13,915 registered by the census in the four cities. You can extend the total of 45,837 to about 50,000 homeless people considering that, out of these four cities, São Paulo released records from 2003 (...) and the censuses of Recife and Belo Horizonte were from 2005."

12 VEIGA, 2009, p. 17.

13 SILVEIRA, 2009, p. 41.

14 The field survey was census (questionnaire with 19 questions) and sample (questionnaire with 62 questions). A sample of 10.4% of the universe was selected using systematic random sampling technique (BRAZIL, 2008).

Main results of the National Survey

- 82 per cent of homeless people are men.
- 31,922 homeless adults, which is equivalent to 0.061 per cent of the population of the municipalities surveyed.
- 53 per cent of the interviewees are between 25 and 44 years old[15].
- 67 per cent of people declared their skin colour as brown or black (this proportion is much higher among the homeless population than in the general population in Brazil 45 per cent – at the time of the survey).
- 76 per cent of interviewees have always lived in the city where they live now or in nearby municipalities, contradicting the myth that people on the street are from other states / regions.
- 71 per cent work and perform some sort of remunerated activity[16]. Only 16 per cent of interviewees asked for money as the primary means of survival (this also goes against the common perception that homeless people are composed exclusively of "beggars").
- 53 per cent earn between US$ 11 and US$ 45 per week[17].
- 2 per cent of interviewees said they were working with a formal contract.
- 25 per cent of homeless people do not have an identification document, making it difficult to obtain formal employment, access to government services and programs.
- Most do not have access to government programs: 89 per cent said they did not receive any benefit from the government. Among the received benefits, the following were highlighted: retirement (3 per cent), Bolsa Família Program (2 per cent) and the Continuous Welfare Benefit for the Elderly and Disabled (1 per cent).
- 64 per cent have not completed the 1st educational grade; 95 per cent were not studying at the time of the survey.

15 Only people with 18 years of age or more were interviewed.

16 Of these activities, we highlight: recyclable materials collector (27.5%), car washers (14.1%), construction workers (6.3%), cleaning (4.2%) and porter / stevedore (3.1%).

17 Reference: US dollar exchange rate in Brazil in January 2008.

Outcomes of the National Survey

The research created an objective and detailed picture of the homeless population in Brazil, contributing to the formulation of specific strategies and policies, more adherent to the reality experienced by this group. With access to more information about the social conditions, characteristics of these people, this research could help create strategies for reducing prejudice by society. Deconstructing the myth that homeless people are "people who come from far away, do nothing, are only asking for money" is a key step to give to these people the dignity and rights of Brazilian citizens.

After the research, several actions were promoted aimed at homeless people. In 2009, article 60 of Decree-Law 3.688/1941 was revoked, which considered begging a misdemeanour, subject to imprisonment of 15 days to 3 months[18]. Afterwards, Decree 7.053/2009 established the:

National Policy for the Homeless Population, which seeks to guarantee various rights to this segment, especially:

- Ensure broad, simplified and secure access to public health policies, education, social security, social assistance, housing, security, culture, sports, leisure, work and income;
- Provide access for homeless people to social security benefits, social assistance and income transfer programs;
- Implement specialized reference centres for assistance for homeless populations, under the Special Protection of the Unified Social Assistance System.

The results of the National Survey were also used to improve the Unified Registry for Social Programs, a strategic tool for mapping and identifying low-income families[19] living in Brazil. Besides the Bolsa Família Program, more than twenty social programs select beneficiaries on the basis of information contained in the Unified Registry[20]. In 2009, the Supplementary Form 2, exclusively directed to homeless people, was finalized for conducting interviews for the Unified Registry. The National Survey supported the elaboration of the questions of the Supplementary Form 2, as well as its use in the interviewees' training activities, with a specific class

18 Law 11.983/2009 revoked the Decree-Law above

19 Low-income families are those that survive on a monthly income of up to one half of a minimum wage per capita or on a total of three minimum wages per family.

20 In January 2019, there were more than 23 million low-income families in the Unified Registry, which corresponds to over 74 million people registered (around 35% of the total population of Brazil).

in order to explain the differentiated registration process and educate participants on this matter. Some examples of specific questions for homeless people in the Unified Registry:

Where do you usually sleep?
Street - How many times a week?
Public hostel - How many times a week?
Private house - How many times a week?
Others - How many times in the week?

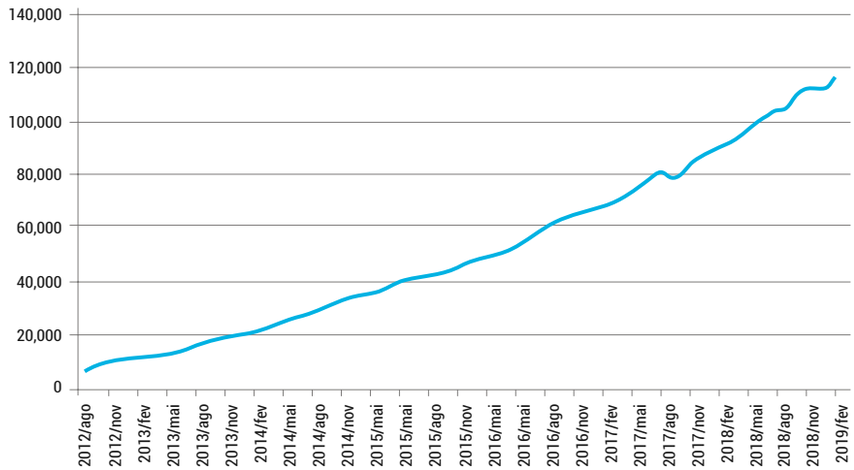
What are the main reasons for you to live in the street?
Loss of housing
Threat / violence
Problems with family
Alcoholism / drugs
Unemployment
Work
Health treatment
Preference / own option
Other

How long have you lived in the street?
Up to six months.
Between six months and a year.
Between one and two years.
Between two and five years.
Between five and ten years.
More than ten years.

What do you do to earn money?
Bricklayer
Car guard
Stevedore
Collector of recyclable material
General services / cleaning / other
Ask for money
Sales
Other
Did not respond

In the last seven years, the number of homeless families included in the Unified Registry has increased about sixteen times: from 7,368 families in August/2012 to 117,327 families in February/2019 (Graphic 1). It is important to highlight that 98 per cent of homeless families in the Unified Registry are single-person[21].

Homeless families in the Unified Registry – 2012 to 2019



Source: Social Information Matrix, SAGI.

After more than ten years, the results of the National Survey are reflected in the homeless people data in the Unified Registry[22]: 89 per cent are male, 87 per cent sleep on the streets or in Public Hostels, 67 per cent are brown or black. According to the Unified Registry, the main reasons to live on the street are: problems with family (27 per cent), unemployment (23 per cent), problems with alcohol or other drugs (19 per cent), loss of housing (13 per cent).

Bolsa Família Program is the largest conditional cash transfer program in Brazil, attending more than 14 million families in poverty and extreme poverty[23] in April/2019. The Brazilian Federal Government makes monthly transfers of financial resources to beneficiary families, which, in turn, fulfill commitments in the areas of health and education[24]. In the last seven years, the number of homeless families in the Bolsa Família Program has increased more than eighteen times: from 4,789 families in August/2012 to 89,485 families in February/2019 (Graphic 2). Nowadays, 76 per cent of the homeless people included in the Unified Registry receive benefits from the Bolsa Família Program[25].

21 The Unified Registry has as the basic unit of reference the family, being allowed the possibility of single-person households, that is, composed of only one person.

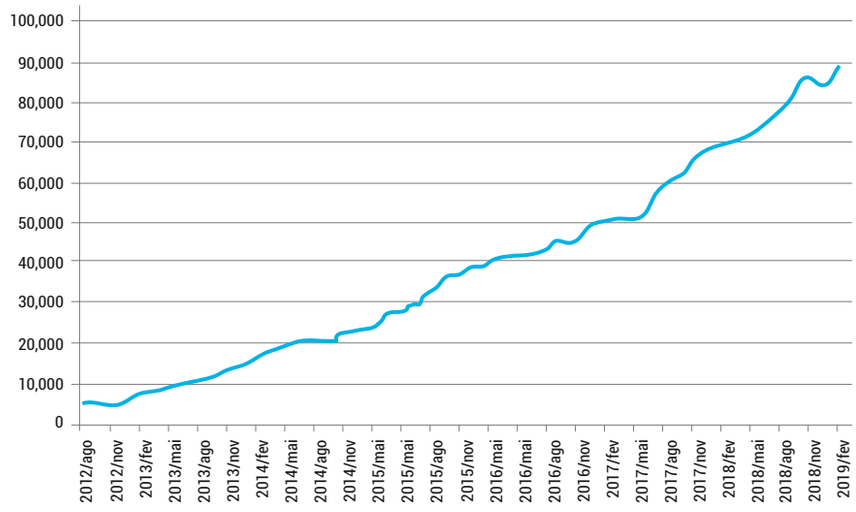
22 FRUTUOSO, 2018.

23 For Bolsa Família Program, the concepts are defined as follows: - Poverty: per capita income bellow circa US$ 44 - Extreme poverty: per capita income bellow circa US$ 22 (Reference: April/2019)

24 The commitments in the healthcare area are: - Vaccination, monitoring the growth of children under seven years of age - Women between 14 and 44 years old who are pregnant or nursing must undergo prenatal care and monitor the health of the baby In education: - Children and adolescents (aged 6 to 15 years): monthly minimum attendance of 85% - Students (aged 16 to 17 years): monthly minimum attendance of at least 75%

25 Some homeless people in the Unified Registry have too high income to receive benefits from the Bolsa Família Program.

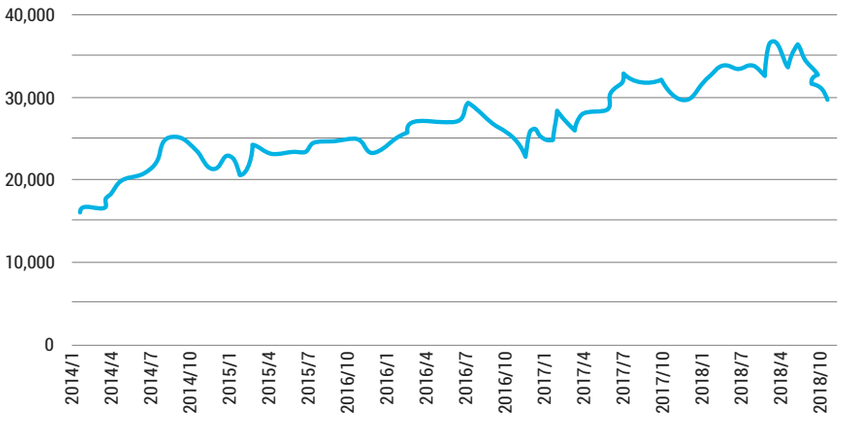
Homeless families in the Bolsa Família Program – 2012 to 2019



Source: Social Information Matrix, SAGI

Specialized Social Assistance services are provided for homeless people, such as social approach and hosting services. Between 2011 and 2017, the number of Specialized Centers for the Homeless Populations (Pop Centers) more than doubled: from 90 to 227 units. Since the registration of homeless families in the Unified Registry is done in conjunction with the Social Assistance area in the municipalities, it is possible to relate the expansion of Pop Centers to the higher number of registered families[26]: in the last four years, Pop Centers have included in the Unified Registry around one thousand families per month, on average. In December/2018, social service in Pop Centers attended almost 30 thousand homeless people (Graphic 3). Of these, 49 per cent were drug users, 29 per cent were migrants and 6 per cent had mental disorders.

Monthly service to homeless people in Pop Centres – 2014 to 2018



Source: Monthly Registry of Attendance of the Unified Social Assistance System.

Homeless population in Brazil also accesses the **Continuous Welfare Benefit for the Elderly and Disabled**, a benefit that ensures a monthly transfer of one minimum wage for people aged 65 or over, and for people of any age with disabilities who can prove that they have no means of supporting themselves or being supported by their families[27].

To be eligible for the benefit, it is not necessary for a person to have contributed to the Social Security system. According to the Unified Registry, in February 2019 there were almost seven thousand homeless people receiving the benefit.

In 2011, the Ministry of Health started the operation of the Street Health Post, in order to deal with different problems and health needs of the homeless population. The Street Health Posts are composed of professionals from various fields (doctors, psychologists, social workers, etc.). The activities of these teams are performed on-site, in an itinerant manner, including active searching and assistance to alcohol, crack and other drugs users. The most frequent health problems among the homeless population are:

- Chronic diseases
- Consumption and addiction of alcohol and drugs
- Oral health
- Tuberculosis
- AIDS
- High risk pregnancy
- Foot problems

The main causes of hospitalization are:

- Use of psychoactive substances (alcohol, crack and other drugs),
- Respiratory problems
- External causes (accidents and violence).

26 BRASIL, 2014.

27 In order to qualify for the benefit the applicant must prove that his or her monthly family income is under ¼ of the minimum wage

According to the Ministry of Health, 144 Street Health Posts are already operating in Brazil[28], and the homeless population can access the Brazilian National Health System without proof of residence, an old request of the Homeless Movement.

Final considerations

As the text has shown, the Survey has supported the development of the National Policy for the Homeless Population in Brazil, providing many inputs for public policies in the income transfer area, as well as in the social assistance and health areas: 144 Street Health Posts, 227 Pop Centers, 7 thousand homeless people in the Continuous Welfare Benefit for the Elderly and Disabled, 89 thousand in the Bolsa Família Program, 117 thousand in the Unified Registry. We know there is still much more to improve. Today, so that the massacre in “Praça da Sé” is not forgotten nor repeated, August 19th was established as the National Day of the Fight for the Homeless.

28 Reference: August/2017.

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The effects of rapid urbanization and rural to urban migration on affordable housing and homelessness in Ethiopia

by Tegegne Gebre-Egziabher, Addis Ababa University

Introduction

Housing is one of the fundamental human needs required for healthy living. It is a means of ensuring human dignity and is essential for health, privacy and personal space, security and protection. As a result, housing deprivation leads to deprivation of the basic condition of well-beingness and productivity (Wondimu, 2006). Social inequalities and poverty are closely associated with housing deprivation. The Sustainable Development Goals call upon member countries to "ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums [by 2030]". According to the estimate of the UN-Habitat, at least 2 billion more people will require housing in urban and rural areas in 2030 both due to population increase and existing housing deficits (Un Habitat, 2016). The UN also estimated that over 100 million homeless people and over 1 billion people worldwide are inadequately housed.

Inadequacy of housing is more pronounced in urban areas than in rural areas. This is due to the rapid growth of urban population which is beyond the capacities of urban centers to accommodate the housing demand. Though it is clear that urbanization if managed successfully, can lead to higher productivity, earnings, social services and a better quality of life, it can also lead to huge challenges and can result in the proliferation of slums, informal settlements, inadequate housing and extreme poverty, homelessness, unemployment etc if managed poorly.

Like any other developing country, Ethiopia is urbanizing as more and more people tend to live in urban areas. This is manifested in urban growth rate which is much higher than the rural and total population growth. In the process, the country faces huge challenges from urban poverty and housing deficits. This paper examines the effects of urbanization and rural urban migration on affordable housing and homelessness in Ethiopia. It also examines some of the interventions along these areas in order to ease the situation. The second part of the paper provides a brief overview of urbanization and housing in Ethiopia. The third section discusses the effects of urbanization on affordable housing and homelessness while section four examines some of the intervention areas to overcome lack of affordable housing and homelessness.

Urbanization, Housing and Homelessness in Ethiopia: An Overview

Urbanization

Ethiopia is largely an agrarian country with the bulk of its population residing in rural areas. Nearly 80 per cent of the total population is rural residents and only 20 per cent reside in urban areas in the year 2017. The country however has witnessed a rapid rate of urban growth which is increasing at a very high rate. The rates of urban growth during the periods 1984–94 and 1994–2007 were 4.43 per cent and 3.78 per cent, respectively. These urban growth rates are higher than the average for Africa (3.4 per cent) and the world (2 per cent). With this rate of growth, the urban population will more than double over the next twenty years and reach 42.4 million in 2037and the level of urbanization will reach 31.2 per cent in the same year (CSA, 2013). It even appears that there is a higher likelihood that the urbanization rate projected by the CSA can be exceeded due to numerous factors. Chief among this are sectoral target and GTP implementation. Sectoral plans which have significant impact for urban growth include infrastructure development, education development and industrial strategy. The World Bank (2015) puts the rate of urban growth in Ethiopia to be between 5.6 per cent to 5 per cent between the periods 2012—37. This predicts an urbanization level of 30 per cent by 2028 and over 42 million urban population by 2032.

The three drives of urbanization: natural increase, rural urban migration and reclassification are all at play in Ethiopia. The World Bank (2015) estimated that natural increase contributed for 35-42 per cent of urban growth between 2008 and 2017 and will continue contributing a little more than one-third up to 2037. Migration contributed 30-37 per cent between 2008 and 2017 and will continue contributing between 38-48 per cent up to 2037 (World Bank, 2015). The proportion of migrants in urban areas is high, about 44.4 per cent. In specific cities, it is even higher as in the case of

The urban growth rates in Ethiopia are higher than the average for Africa (3.4 per cent) and the world (2 per cent).

With this rate of growth, the urban population will more than double over the next twenty years and reach **42.4 million in 2037** and the level of urbanization will reach 31.2 per cent in the same year (CSA, 2013).

Semera-Logia (71.6 per cent), Assosa (68.1 per cent), Adama (59.2 per cent), Gambella (58.8 per cent), Bahir Dar (55.6 per cent), and Addis Ababa (47.6 per cent) (CSA 2008 cited in Tegegne and Edlam, 2019).

Rural urban migration is affected by the combined effects of a set of urban-pull and rural-push factors (Kebede, 1991). In comparison to rural areas, urban centers are centers of political and administrative authority and places of concentration of social and infrastructural services, in addition to imagined employment opportunities. These have invited mobility to urban centers and have contributed to urban growth. In this regard, a study by Feleke (2006) found that male migrants to Kolfe neighborhood in Addis Ababa mentioned that the presence of construction activities, demand for urban domestic workers, better pay for service work and the presence of social support to be the main pull factors that attracted them to involve in the step migration to Addis Ababa. Similarly, in-migrants to Shashemene town also mentioned that perception of employment in construction and service sectors to be the main pull factors. The rural-push factors include complex rural problems such as low agricultural productivity, small and fragmented land size, land degradation and food insecurity. In this regard, male in-migrants to Kolfe neighborhood from SNNPR, Tigray, Oromiya and Amhara regions mentioned rural poverty as their initial and main reason. The rural poverty is expressed in the forms of rural vulnerabilities, diminished land sizes, lack of rain, recurrent drought, absence of effective extension system, high population pressure, environmental degradation etc (Feleke, 2006).

Housing supply characteristics

Prior to 1975, housing supply was controlled by land owning elites and low income households had no option but only to rent housing. At that time, the government did not have any coherent approach to address the housing demand of low income households (UN Habitat, 2011). During 1975, the military government issued Proclamation no 47 which nationalized urban land and extra housing. The housing stock at the time was categorized into two typologies: Government-owned rental units, administered by the Agency for the Administration of Rental Houses, and Kebele Housing managed by Kebele Administration units (UN Habitat, 2011). The Proclamation resulted in reduction of rental price particularly for kebele houses occupied by low income households. The long run effect of very low rental price was the inability of the Central government to maintain and upgrade housing and the deterioration of housing quality. The Proclamation also resulted in disincentive for people to build houses for rent or other purposes. For instance in AA, between 1975 and 1995, only one-tenth of the projected dwellings were built because of "very low effective demand, rock-bottom national housing investment rates, and from regulatory constraints in the supply of land, credit, and building materials (UN Habitat, 2011). With rapid growth of urban population and rapid urbanization and deterioration of housing quality and disincentive to build housing, the demand for house rose and could not be met.

Since the ousting of the military government in 1991, the EPRDF government continued with the State ownership of land. The government introduced a leasehold system of urban land which conditioned the availability of housing. According to the last Census carried in 2007, private rental was the major means of obtaining residential accommodation in 26 of the 27 cities for which data is available, accounting for 11.2 per cent to 60.9 per cent of the housing units (CSA 2008). This is followed by owner occupancy. The housing quality in Ethiopian cities however is deplorable. The 2007 census revealed that the walls of 70.8 per cent of the housing units are wood plastered with mud; Almost all (93.5 per cent) of the houses have corrugated iron sheet roofing; and over 57.7 per cent of the existing housing units have earthen floors (CSA, 2008). The housing stock are thus substandard though current regulations promote the use of modern construction technologies such as the use of hollow concrete blocks, while they tacitly discourage previously widespread traditional housing construction technologies such as Chicka and bamboo construction (MuDHCO and ECSU, 2015). In addition houses in Ethiopia are over crowded. For instance it was revealed that in 27 major cities of the country, 44.9 per cent of the housing units are single roomed, the average number of persons per housing unit is 3.8 and over 44 per cent of the housing units are occupied by more than three persons (MuDHCO and ECSU, 2015).

There are different approaches of formal housing supply. These are the low income housing, condominium housing, housing savings program, housing construction for special function (Industrial parks, university staff, etc.), housing cooperatives, housing provision

by Real Estate (for high-income groups), housing provision by individuals, housing provision through public private partnership. The first four are provided with government support or coordination.

A typical feature of housing in Ethiopia is that informal housing is becoming an important component of housing provision in urban centers. This is occurring in many cities. For instance in Diredawa, in 2011, the city had 10,040 informally constructed houses, and the city administration embarked on a program of pro-active regularization, resulting in 7,000 houses being regularized. However, by 2014, the city still had more than 10,000 informal houses, because new informal settlements continued to emerge (World Bank, 2015).

Homelessness

There is no precise data regarding the size and magnitude of the homeless in Ethiopia. According to the Labor and Social Affairs Ministry, some 150,000 children live on the streets in Ethiopia (UN Office, 2008). However, aid agencies estimate that the problem may be far more serious, with nearly 600,000 street children country-wide and over 100,000 in Addis Ababa alone (Edwards, B et al, 2015). Youth, adult and elderly homeless are other types of homeless and are also in significant number raising the number of homeless in Ethiopia.

Previous studies in Homeless in Ethiopia focused on elaborating the socio economic background of the homeless in different cities. A study in Mekelle city, northern Ethiopia found out that among the homeless, children (<15 years of age) were 43.78 per cent, adults (15-59 age) were 45 per cent and the Old were 11.2 per cent (Mushir.2012). The study found out that 72 per cent of the homeless population was illiterate or barely educated and are mostly engaged in daily/casual labor (26 per cent), petty trade and animal herding (35 per cent) and hotels and restaurants (18 per cent). They live in rented house, slum, and along roads. The majority (57 per cent) came from nearby hinterland while the rest travelled longer distance. Poverty and unemployment in rural areas were the major push factors from rural areas.

Nathan and Fratkin (2018) studied street women and children in Hawassa city, southern Ethiopia, to find out street dependence and homelessness. Majority of the women in the study came from outside a 20 km radium from Hawassa city. The major reason for their homelessness and impoverishment among others were their husband's disability or death (48 percent), abandonment by their husband/partner (32 percent), violence from their husband or partner, or a husband's alcoholism (Nathan and Fratkin, 2018). Majority leave in homeless housing and some live on the streets. Regarding the street children, most (63 per cent) were born locally and others came from within 20kms. Inadequate support at home was the main reason for street life and the majority slept in the street shelter and shopkeepers awnings (Nathan and Fratkin, 2018).

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(Nathan and Fratkin, 2018).

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3.Effects of urbanization and migration on affordable housing and homelessness

Difficulty associated with land supply

The Ethiopian Government adopted a public lease-hold system to supply urban land for various uses. The leasehold proclamation was revised several times (proclamation No.80/1993; proclamation 272/ 2002 and the recent one proclamation of No.721/2011). Proclamation No.721/2011 states that "Land is the property of state and the peoples of Ethiopia" and "urban land can be used for private purpose via leasehold system for specified period of time".

In urban areas, government acts as sole supplier of land through two ways: direct allocation (allotment) and auction. It is usually the wealthiest who bid in the auction. But recent auctions indicate that there is a very high unmet effective demand. For instance, the World Bank (2015) indicated that number of bidders are usually in the order of 12–24 times higher than the number of plots for residential land and 3–7 times higher than available plots for commercial land. Similarly in Mekele city, the number of bidders in 2018 were 52689 and the number of plots provided were 934, a very huge gap between the two (Daniel, 2019). Such huge unmet effective demand has resulted in a very high bid price in all cities with a significant difference between the lease benchmark price and mean auction winning price. For instance in Mekelle city, the first grade land had a lease benchmark price of 1162 birr per m2 while it fetched 15776 birr per m2; a second grade land had a benchmark price of 976 but fetched 14895 birr per m2 and a third grade land has a benchmark price of 634 birr per m2 but fetched 8451 birr per m2 (Daniel, 2019). Recipients of land by allotment include government agencies (often with very generous allocations), social services and infrastructure providers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and religious organizations, but also condominiums (30 per cent of allotment land in Addis) and housing cooperatives, large and small industry, urban agriculture, and commercial properties, such as shopping centers or hotels. The land supply by allocation has not also been able to meet demand (World Bank, 2015). The land supply system thus is not able to deliver serviced land for residence, business and public uses and such shortages are exacerbated by rapid urban growth. It is a common understanding that housing becomes unaffordable when there is no enough land release or supply. The inadequacy of the formal land supply led to informal land supply which is characterized by peri-urban subdivisions. This is intensified by migration from rural areas and small cities and dislocation due to land clearance in the central part of the city and the escalating land price (Mulatu, 2018)

Increasing housing needs and demand

Housing demand arises from new household formation, replacement need and existing backlog. New households will be primarily influenced by population growth though other demographic and social factors also influence household formation. The World Bank estimated that urban households will triple and reach 9 million in 2028 from that of 3 million in 2007 (World Bank, 2015). This necessitates a total of 6 million houses between 2007-2028 or 290,000 houses per annum to keep up with the urban growth (World Bank, 2015). Similarly the Urban Sector Millennium Development Goals Needs Assessment (2004) predicted that to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015 requires a total of 2,250,831 units, which equates to a considerable 225,000 houses per annum.

The backlog, as the difference between the number of housing unit and the number of the existing household, is another source of demand. The 2007 census revealed that there were 2.9 million houses as compared to 3.03 million households depicting a backlog or housing deficit of 128.3 thousand housing unit (CSA,2008). A proxy demand for existing gap can be the number of persons registered for Kebele rental housing, condominium housing and residential plots. Accordingly, in 23 cities, for which data on number of people registered for houses is available, the total housing need was 1,235,543 for the years 2007/8-2013/14 (Ethiopian state of cities report). Of these, those with the highest number of people registered for houses were Addis Ababa (974,983), BahirDar (46,703) and Dire Dawa(37335). These cities are major centers in the country and hence attract lots of migrants that seek housing accommodation.

The poor quality of the existing kebele housing stock that is beyond repair is another source of demand. The existing housing stock in many cities is of very low quality and poorly maintained and as a result needs either replacement or significant upgrading. The prevalence of slum in urban areas is estimated to reach 70-80 per cent by the World Bank (WB, 2015) while the government puts it to be 60 per cent (MUDHCo, 2014). Slum areas are characterized by housing units that are dilapidated, overcrowded and substandard houses devoid of basic housing facilities and services and unsafe and unhealthy living condition. GTP II envisaged to construct 750 thousand new residential housing units in urban centres of the country by improving its quality and standard by 30 per cent (MoFED, 2015)

It should, however, be noted that housing need may not reflect effective housing demand though it can serve as proxy measure. Effective demand depends on ability and willingness to pay for housing and is affected by income and what households are prepared to pay (UN Habitat, 2011). It is true that the majority of the people cannot afford to have formal hosing and this implies that there is a great need for affordable housing (UN Habitat 2011).

Affordable housing however is constrained by several factors. Chief among them are lack of distinct and diversified housing finance and high housing standards. Access to housing loan is constrained by high interest rate, lack of collateral etc. The interest rate increased from 4.5 per cent for co-operatives and 7.5 per cent for individuals

to 16 per cent for both, severely reducing the opportunity for the low-income households to secure a home loan (UN Habitat, 2011). Furthermore the banking system requires collateral as a precondition for loan which is not easily obtained by low income people whose incomes are mainly obtained from the informal sector and lack capital. In terms of standard, the municipality puts regulation regarding the floor area ratio, type of building materials etc which appear to be unaffordable for common people. In Arba Minch for example 45 per cent of homeowners could not afford houses built to a minimum standard (World Bank, 2015).

Increasing urban poverty and urban destitute

The rapid pace of urbanization mainly fueled by rural urban migration is transferring poverty from rural to urban areas (Tegegne, 2011). Urban poverty thus concentrates in the cities and this is exacerbated by weak capacity of local governments to cope with the increasing poverty. Urban poverty in Ethiopia is reflected in the forms of beggary and prostitution, growing number of homeless and street children and increasing trends in youth and adult unemployment (Mehert, 2002).

The level of urban poverty in Ethiopia in the year 20151/16 was 15 per cent which is a significant decline from earlier periods (25.7 per cent in 2010/11 and 35.1 per cent in 2004/05). It appears that the government poverty reduction strategies may have impacted on such reductions. In particular, the MSE development program, has made a significant contribution to poverty reduction by creating employment opportunities for unemployed women and youths (MoUDCO and ECSU, 2015)

Despite this, it is the case that there are many places which have high levels of urban poverty. For instance, in AA, Addis Ketema, KolfeKeranyo, and Lideta sub cities have 25.1 per cent, 26.4 per cent and 30.7 per cent of poverty head count index respectively. Unemployment is higher in urban areas than in rural areas. In urban areas, about 16.9 per cent of the workforce was unemployed in 2016 (9.4 per cent male and 24.7 per cent female) (CSA, 2016). Furthermore, rural unemployment feeds into urban unemployment and exacerbates the problem. On top of unemployment, under employment caused by increased casualization of labor is also widespread in urban areas which leads to unstable income and increased vulnerability to poverty (Tegegne, 2011). Unemployment and lack of income leads to chronic urban poverty (Bikla, 2011).

The urban destitute are those groups of people who have special needs for finance, housing, health care, counseling and others and are considered as the most visible face of urban poverty (MoLSA, 2018). The Project Appraisal Document (PAD) for urban safety net program in Ethiopia specified three sub-groups of the Urban destitute: the poor that live on the street and comprise street children, the homeless, and beggars.

A recent study on the urban destitute in eleven cities in Ethiopia estimated that the urban destitute in these cities number 85,468 or 1.6 per cent of the total population of which 35,188 are homeless people (MoLSA, 2018). The same study revealed that the majority of the urban destitute (62.2 per cent) are migrants from rural areas with implication that rural poverty has driven these people to the cities (MoLSA, 2018). Migration to the city is almost the first activity different categories of the urban destitute did or is part of their life journey as they became a member of the urban destitute (see table 1). In the study, it was revealed that the two fundamental reasons for coming to the city are- inadequate income/poverty (61 per cent) and to earn better income (23 per cent). Other factors include death of parents/guardian (around14 per cent), domestic violence (9.2 per cent), eviction due to war/armed conflict (6.4 per cent) (MoLSA, 2018)

Major Actions taken by urban destitute that lead them to the streets/homeless or Life Journey

Categories of the Urban destitute	Major Actions taken by Urban destitute that lead them to the streets/ homeless or Life Journey
Street Children:	Migration, searching for job, engaging in small business/ street vendor, working in loading and unloading, being involved in begging or illicit activities.
Homeless Street dweller families	Migration to the city, engaging small business/street vendor, engaging in loading and unloading activities, start begging.
People living from begging:	First left parents' home, migrated to the city, come to the street, engaged in small business, engaged in any kind of work, involved in physical labor, and start begging.
People with disabilities especially mental illness:	Initially migrated to the respective cities and stayed for long years receiving medical treatments, which led them to begging for survival.
Destitute commercial sex Workers:	Migrated to the city, searched for better jobs and worked as waitress in cafes or local bars/restaurants.

Source MoLSA, 2018, p

In general the urban destitute are homeless and sleep on the streets or around churches and mosques at night. As per the MoLSA (2018) study, among the urban destitute respondents in eleven cities, 34.6 per cent sleep on the street, 20.3 per cent around churches or mosques, 18.1 per cent in plastic tent/ canvas and about 8 per cent in rented houses ('kesha'bet) where different people sleep in mass. The rest of the respondents mentioned various risky places such as market places, train/bus stop, car wash/ workshop.

Policy response to tackle problems of affordable housing and homelessness

The Integrated housing development program (IHDP)

The IHDP was initiated in 2005 by the Ministry of Works and Urban Development (MWUD) to solve low income housing challenges. The aim of the IHDP was to:

a) Increase housing supply for the low-income population;

b) Recognize existing urban slum areas and mitigate their expansion in the future;

c) Increase job opportunities for micro and small enterprises and unskilled laborers, which will in turn provide income for their families to afford their own housing; and

d) Improve wealth creation and wealth distribution for the nation

The IHDP addresses the issue of affordable housing by subsidizing condominium units. The subsidy includes free land for the construction of condominium buildings and covering the cost of basic infrastructure facilities such as roads, water and electricity (MUDCO and ECSU, 2015). The IHDP also uses easily adaptable construction techniques and materials that reduced the construction cost by 20-30 per cent. In 2014, the program's cost was estimated to be 3,142 Birr per square meter, only one-quarter of the cost of private development (WB, 2015). In so doing, the program aims at making broad based housing ownership affordable for the urban poor.

The housing typologies under this program are a) Low income housing (10/90) with a target group of those with monthly income of birr 1200 (nearly 40USD). Beneficiaries pay 10 per cent of the price of the house and 90 per cent is paid from bank loan b) Condominium Housing (20/80) with a target group of those in lower middle to middle income group. Beneficiaries save 20 per cent of the price in 5 years and 80 per cent is bank loan c) 40/60 Housing Program targeting upper middle income who are expected to pay 40 per cent of the price of the house in 5 years and 60 per cent is Bank long term loan. In all cases, the mortgage is to be liquidated within 15 to 20 years with an interest rate of 8.5 per cent. The bank would seize individual condominium units as collateral. The scheme has low unit price and flexible upfront payments for studio houses assuming that the poor will choose studio houses though this is not always the case. Construction finance for constructing the condominium is born by city/regional government who are allowed to sell bonds to CBE to raise the finance required to construct condominium houses. (MUDCO and ECSU, 2015).

UN Habitat (2011) describes the significance of IHDP by raising four points. Firs the IHDP is a large- scale approach to addressing the current housing deficit, the poor quality of the existing housing stock, and the future housing needs due to continued urbanization. Second the IHDP is pro-poor as it allows low- and middle-income households, who typically live in precarious housing situations to access improved housing and access housing and gain access to credit, through the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia. Third, the program encourages access to private homeownership and slum prevention. Previously the Ethiopian government strategy for low income housing was government rental houses but the IHDP promotes private home ownership and strives to reduce the emergence of slums. Fourth, the program emphasizes an integrated approach to housing and economic development in which housing construction is considered to be an opportunity to stimulate the economy, create employment, and improve the capacity of the construction and financial sectors.

In terms of its performance, the program is lauded for having a huge impact on the country, production of units at low cost that increased housing stock, and improved urban and housing development (UN Habitat,2011). For instance, in terms of increasing housing stock, condominium houses have been the major type of houses built by the government. In the first phase of IHDP, 244,436 units were completed, 170,000 of which were in Addis Ababa. The government also plans to build 50,000 units per year in Addis Ababa., which is projected to be more than enough to meet new housing demand, currently estimated at 20,000 per year, leaving 30,000 units per year to replace poor quality existing housing (WB, 2015)

The program however despite its aim to target low-income households, has remained to be unaffordable to the low-income households and the poorest of the poor segments especially women and single mothers. The program became unaffordable to the poor due to inability to afford the initial down-payment and monthly service payments. The poorest of the poor cannot afford the down payment due to low income and the monthly mortgage payment and the service charges for electricity, water etc. Moreover, some could not raise additional finance to complete the finishing work, while some households with large families could not readily take the studio units because of their small size (MuDCO and ECSU, 2015). As a result, low-income households who are allocated condominium units often use them to generate income by renting them out to higher-income households at market rates since they cannot afford the payments. Also, those household who pooled resources from family and friends

to pay the down payment cannot afford to stay and hence move out of the unit and rent it to middle income households who can afford the payment (WB, 2015).

The Urban Safety Net

Ethiopia has issued a national social protection policy in 2014 for the purpose of protecting the social and economic rights of citizens and preventing social disintegration and instability that could be generated from wide inequality (PAD,). The policy contains five focus areas as strategic directions. These are productive safety nets, livelihood and employment support, social insurance, access to health, education and other social services, and addressing violence, abuse and exploitation and providing legal protection and support. These focus areas are intended to address the needs of the poorest of the poor, the marginalized and the neglected members of society. These ensure inclusive development and facilitate the social transformation of all (EAS, 2018).

The Ministry of Urban Development and Housing (MUDHo) in 2015 has developed an Urban Food Security and Job Creation Strategy within the framework of the national social protection policy. The aim of the strategy is to reduce poverty and vulnerability among the urban poor living below the poverty line over a period of 10 years. One of the instruments for this is the Urban Productive Safety Project. The Urban Productive Safety net is a 10-year project to support over 4.7 million urban poor living in 972 cities and towns. The Project is implemented in phases with the first phase targeting 11 major cities i.e, Addis Ababa and one city from each region (Adama, Assayita, Asosa, Dessie, Dire Dawa, Gambella, Hawassa, Harari, Jijiga, and Mekele) and 604,000 beneficiaries (the poorest 12 percent and about 55 percent of people living below the poverty line in these 11 cities) with a gradual roll-out plan during a five-year period (PAD). The project has three main components: Safety Net Support; Livelihood Services; and Institutional Strengthening and Project Management. The safety net support program has further two components namely the conditional and the unconditional cash transfer programs comprising 84 and 16 per cent of project beneficiaries respectively. The conditional cash transfer relies heavily on the beneficiaries working on labor intensive public works while the unconditional cash transfer targets persons who for various reasons are unable to perform work

(the chronically ill, the elderly, people with disabilities, and the urban destitute who resort to begging or illicit activities). The program is undertaken through elaborate community and geographic targeting mechanisms. The conditional cash transfers which requires the conditions of engaging in public work programs is intended to raise the income of the urban households that could be used for housing and other livelihood necessities. The direct support beneficiaries in addition to receiving cash are also linked to free health, education and housing. The latter component however is limited (see table 2 for direct support beneficiaries in selected towns).

Direct Support Service

Town	Service type	Beneficiaries	Remark
Hawassa	Free health service	1718	
	Free education	993	For children of Direct service beneficiaries
	Body support and physioterarphy	152	
Dessie	Education and material provision	404	
	Health service	441	
	Provision of house	241	
Mekelle	Health service	689	
	House	13	
Assosa	Health service	310	

Source: Urban safety net program

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Conclusion

Rural urban migration is the major cause of urbanization in Ethiopia. Rural urban migration is also urbanizing poverty as it is transferring poverty from rural to urban areas. The poor in urban areas could not access formal housing due to low income and high standards and they resort to informal solutions in which housing is sought in sub optimal way in informal peri urban land subdivisions. The IHDP, which was meant to improve access to affordable housing, though it has achieved a significant result in increasing the housing stock has also turned out to be unaffordable to the poor households due its requirement for down payment and service charges.

The lack of affordable housing for the poor is one of the reasons for homelessness in urban Ethiopia. The majority of migrants who come from rural areas in search of work fall in the ranks of the urban destitute which include beggars, street children and homeless. The homeless could be street children, youth, adults or the old. They suffer from lack of shelter, services and high levels of unemployment. The Ethiopian government has launched an urban safety net program to address the needs of the urban destitute through both conditional transfer and public work programs and unconditional transfer and direct support for those unable to be part of the public work program. The main purpose is to raise income and ensure food security and livelihood. The homeless, though they come under the urban destitute, are not particularly targeted. There is however a need to target the homeless and address their needs. A study in Mekelle illustrated that the priorities of the homeless, among others, are to have cheap and easily accessible house, employment opportunity and access to health facility (Mushir, 2012). The government needs to revisit its IHDP program in order to make it more accessible for the poor segment of the society. This might imply removing down payments in the program or developing an alternative low cost, low income housing in which the private sector can participate to deliver such units. The principles of the right to the city and rights to house necessitate that residents have equal opportunity in accessing urban resources.

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Eviction: Intersection of Poverty, Inequality, and Housing

by Ashley Gromis, Postdoctoral Research Associate, Princeton University

Introduction

Eviction is a cause, not just a consequence, of poverty (Desmond 2016). Housing costs are rising for poor renting households in the United States (Desmond 2015), placing them at risk of eviction. Eviction has been linked to many negative economic, health, and housing outcomes. Despite this, we do not know how many households are threatened with eviction in the United States each year. This prevents us from assessing eviction prevalence and its effects on housing instability.

The Eviction Lab at Princeton University has collected, cleaned, standardized, and validated over 82 million individual-level court records in an effort to establish the first nationwide dataset of eviction cases filed in local courts across the United States. We used these records to estimate the number of eviction cases filed at the county level. This allows us to not only estimate the national prevalence of court-ordered eviction filings, but also compare eviction filing rates over time and across space.

We find that, on average, 3.6 million eviction cases are filed in the United States each year. Eviction cases are most concentrated in the South-eastern region of the country, an area rarely featured in discussions of access to affordable housing. This concentration likely reflects differences in state-level landlord-tenant legal policy, which shapes how frequently landlords file eviction cases in the courts.

These are the first comprehensive estimates of court-based eviction filings in the United States. In addition to increasing our understanding of the prevalence of eviction, this is the first comparative examination of eviction across large areas. This analysis reveals striking differences in eviction rates across states that are not visible in local studies of eviction. These differences have direct and tangible policy implications: Landlord-tenant code should be amended and standardized to reduce the frequency of filings and discrepancies in filing rates across states.

Eviction in the United States

An eviction occurs when a landlord forcibly expels a tenant from a residence. We do not know how frequently this occurs. There are no systematic efforts to compile official estimates of eviction by local or federal authorities. This lack of comprehensive data has long prevented a full assessment of the prevalence and impact of eviction in the United States (Hartman and Robinson 2003).

A few targeted research surveys have examined eviction prevalence in specific populations. The Michigan Recession and Recovery Survey found that 2.4 per cent of households in the Detroit metropolitan area experienced an eviction or housing foreclosure during a 12-month period at the height of the Great Recession (2007-2009).[29] The Milwaukee Area Renters Study showed that 13 per cent of Milwaukee renters experienced a forced move in the previous 2 years — a majority of those moves the result of an eviction (Desmond and Shollenberger 2015). Analyses from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study indicated that 14 per cent of children born in large cities in the United States in 1998-2000 were evicted between birth and age 15 (Lundberg and Donnelly 2019).

Differences in how eviction was measured in these targeted studies (e.g., sampling population, time frame, distinguishability from other types of forced displacement) prevent us from directly comparing these numbers or extrapolating estimates across time or space. Estimates of eviction are affected by how and to whom survey questions are asked (Desmond and Kimbro 2015). Furthermore, economically disadvantaged renters, the residentially unstable, and the homeless— populations that are at high risk for or are likely to have experienced eviction—are not well captured in standard survey research methodology (Desmond 2012; Tourangeau, Edwards, and Johnson 2014). This raises important concerns about the reliability of survey estimates and highlights the need for a consistent and comprehensive measure of eviction.

The lack of a comprehensive measure of eviction is particularly problematic given the range of negative consequences that have been associated with eviction. Experiencing an eviction is associated with poorer health outcomes, including increased risk of depression (Desmond and Kimbro 2015) and suicide (Fowler et al. 2014). Evictions also increase risk of job loss (Desmond and Gershenson 2016) and negatively impact credit scores (Greiner, Pattanayak, and

29 An eviction occurs when a landlord forces or coerces a tenant to leave a rental property. Alternatively, a housing foreclosure occurs when a bank or other financial lender reclaims a property after a homeowner fails to make payments on an outstanding mortgage or home loan. Our data does not include home foreclosures.

Hennessy 2013), both of which can have serious economic consequences for tenants. Eviction also increases material hardship, limiting tenants' ability to obtain basic necessities and access quality housing (Desmond and Kimbro 2015).

The effect of an eviction on housing lasts well beyond the initial displacement. Tenants who have experienced eviction are more likely to relocate to disadvantaged neighbourhoods (Desmond and Shollenberger 2015). Forced moves due to eviction displace tenants into lower quality housing, which encourages tenants to make subsequent moves, increasing residential instability (Desmond, Gershenson, and Kiviat 2015). An eviction record can disqualify tenants from federal housing assistance (including public housing and subsidized housing vouchers), limiting access to affordable housing (Greiner et al. 2013). Private landlords routinely reject tenants who have any record of previous evictions or landlord-tenant disputes (Kleysteuber 2006). Eviction and inability to pay rent precede homelessness (Burt 2001; Weitzman, Knickman, and Shinn 1990), in some cases for prolonged periods (Crane and Warnes 2000).

The concentration of eviction within particular communities contributes to the reproduction of residential inequality. Evictions have been consistently shown to disproportionally affect the economically disadvantaged, racial/ethnic minorities, and women (Bezdek 1992; Desmond 2012; Hartman and Robinson 2003; Philadelphia Eviction Task Force 2018). Experiencing an eviction further compounds economic and material disadvantage. In this way, eviction actively contributes to the reproduction of poverty (Desmond 2016). Without comprehensive measures of eviction, we cannot assess the full scope of forced displacement or its effects on housing inequality in the United States.

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Data collection and analysis

Formal eviction occurs when a landlord uses the courts to legally remove tenants from a property. To start this process, landlords file a legal suit in civil courts. The case provides information on the tenants located at the residence and the location of the disputed property. Not all cases that are filed end in the removal of tenants from the property. Some cases may be dismissed or resolved before a judgment is entered. Some households may receive multiple filings threatening eviction before finally being displaced (Garboden and Rosen 2019).

To create a comprehensive measurement of eviction prevalence, the Eviction Lab at Princeton University compiled, standardized, and validated over 81 million individual-level court records initiated between 2000 and 2016. This is the first national database of eviction cases in the United States. We requested records directly from state- and county-level court systems and purchased proprietary records from LexisNexis Risk Solutions and American Information Research Services, Inc., two companies that perform manual and electronic collection of court records. These records contain information on when the case was filed and tenants named in the case. These case records are not available from all court systems due to technological and legal barriers. For this reason, we also requested aggregated counts of eviction cases filed annually in counties across all 50 states and Washington D.C. (DC).[30] We collected 26,353 aggregate filing counts from roughly 2,000 counties across 43 states for all available years. To create consistent metrics of comparison, we cleaned and aggregated individual-level records to create case counts at the county level.

We first modelled the number of yearly eviction filings for all counties, which can be estimated without individual-level case records.[31] When we had reliable

30 County is typically the smallest areal unit for which states tabulate aggregated filings

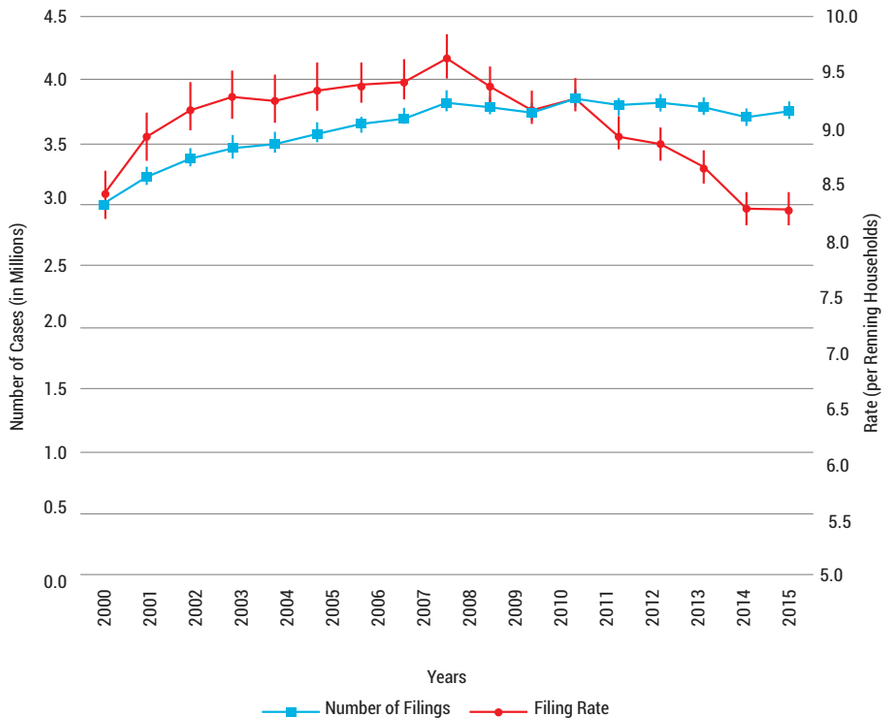
31 Filings can be estimated from either aggregated filing counts, which do not include case-specific information, or the individual-level case records.

court records data, we calculated the number of filings directly from the data. When reliable data was unavailable, we applied Bayesian hierarchical modelling to predict yearly, county-level eviction filings. These models allowed us to borrow information from other strata (e.g., years within the same county, counties within the same state) for county-years in which we lack good measurement. We modelled filing count as a function of county demographic and court characteristics and county-, state-, region-, and year-level variation. We provide full details of the data collection, standardization, and analytic strategy in the Eviction Lab Methodology Report (Desmond et al. 2018).

Eviction prevalence

Between 2000 and 2016, more than 61 million eviction cases were filed in the United States. This is an average of more than 3.6 million filings annually, representing approximately 9 eviction cases per 100 renter households nationwide. The number of filings increased by 25.9 per cent between 2000 and 2016, from 3,000,038 to 3,757,288 cases, annually (Figure 1). This seems like a significant increase in filings; however, the number of renter households increased by 27 per cent during this same period. The eviction filing rate (the ratio of filings to renter households) showed a modest curvilinear trend, increasing between 2000 and 2008 before returning to approximately 2000 levels in 2016. Renter populations are increasing in cities across the United States due to expanding rental housing markets and delaying of home ownership among young Americans (Maciag 2019). This increase in renting households, as well as demographic shifts in the renting population, may be responsible for simultaneous decrease in eviction rate as the number of eviction cases filed increases.

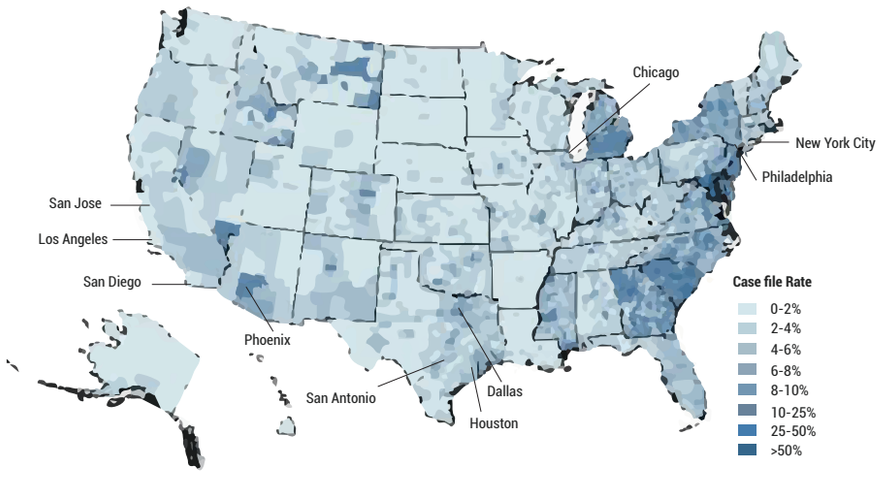
The number of filings and filing rate per renter households, 2000-2016



Note: Filing rate calculated as the number of filings divided by total renter households.

Concentrations of eviction filings are found all across the United States, including outside large cities, high cost of living areas, and high poverty areas (Figure 2). Case filing rates are highest in the Southeast region of the country, an area that rarely headlines in discussions of housing affordability and displacement. Concentrations of filings in the Southeast could reflect increased prevalence of eviction in African American communities, which have been identified as having greater risk of eviction (Desmond and Shollenberger 2015; Philadelphia Eviction Task Force 2018).

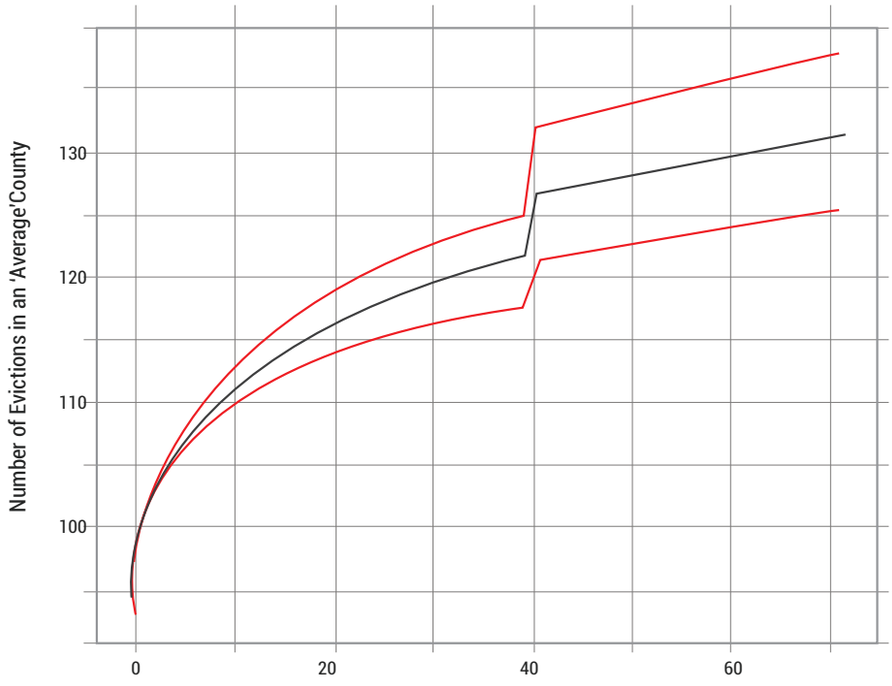
County-level eviction case filing rate, 2016



Several demographic characteristics are positively associated with the number of filings within a county, including African American population, number of renting households, household density, median income, and median rent. In particular, controlling for other demographic characteristics and county, state, regional, and yearly variation, the number of expected evictions increases as the African American population increases (Figure 3).

Note: All other model covariates are set to their overall population mean values and variation across counties, states, regions, and years are controlled for. This is akin to asking: If every other demographic or court measure included in the statistical model were the same for a county, how would an increase in the share of African American population affect the number of eviction filings? The spike at 40 per cent African American population represents a nonlinear increase in eviction case filings that occurs when counties become approximately majority African American.

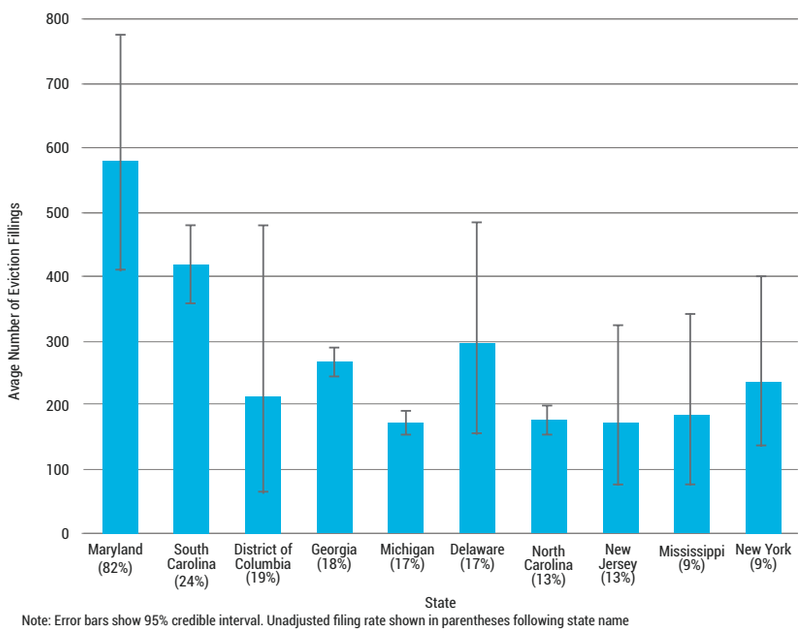
Predicted number of evictions by African American population



Note: Red Lines show 95% credible interval

If compositional differences in demographic population are sufficient to explain concentrations of filings across space, accounting for demographic characteristics should significantly decrease these disparities. Although significant, demographic differences are not sufficient to explain the uneven distribution in eviction filings across space. Adjusting the predicted filing rate in each state to hold all demographic and county characteristics constant at their overall population means does not eliminate disparities across states (Figure 4). We continue to observe high adjusted numbers of eviction cases for states with high unadjusted filing rates that do not account for demographic composition. These differences are stable from year to year, reflecting enduring disparities in eviction filings across states.

Estimated average number of evictions in demographically-identical counties



Note: Error bars show 95% credible interval. Unadjusted filing rate shown in parentheses following state name

Note: For space considerations, only the 10 states with the highest case filing rates are shown.

The disparities between eviction case prevalence across states likely reflect differences in landlord-tenant policy across states. In the United States, the core of landlord-tenant policy, which guides the filing and prosecution of eviction cases, is set at the state level (Hatch 2017). The seemingly impossibly high filing rate in Maryland (82 per cent) reflects the landlord-tenant legal code, which allows landlords to file for eviction immediately following non-payment; however, if the tenant pays the balance of the rent due, plus any late fees or court costs incurred, the complaint is considered satisfied and the tenant remains in the property (Hartman and Robinson 2003; Public Justice Centre 2015). This policy may incentivize landlords to repeatedly filing cases against the same household, likely with the intention of collecting past-due rent or using the threat of eviction to exercise control over tenants (Garboden and Rosen 2019).

Conclusion

These data provide the first nationally comprehensive estimates of the prevalence of court-based eviction lawsuits in the United States. Evictions are common in many areas across the country, but particularly in the Southeast, a region not regularly featured in discussions of affordable housing. While evictions are more common in counties with higher concentrations of African American population, demographics are not the most significant driver of differences in eviction rates across space. Stark differences in the frequency of eviction case filings across states suggest that state-level landlord-tenant code has a strong role in shaping eviction prevalence. This has direct and tractable policy implications: Landlord-tenant code should be amended and standardized to disincentive landlords from repeatedly filing cases against the same household, which may not represent actual or intended removals from rental properties. Landlord-tenant policy should provide a fair balance of legal power between landlords and tenants and should not burden tenants with unnecessary eviction records.

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Human Mobility in the Context of Climate Change, Natural Disasters, and Conflict

by Saidou Hamani, Regional Coordinator, Disasters and Conflicts Sub-programme, UNEP

What is human mobility in the context of climate change, natural disasters, and conflict?

Environmental change and environmental degradation - desertification, deforestation, land degradation, climate change and water scarcity - are fundamentally redrawing the map of the world. Environmental degradation affects where and how people are able to live. It drives human displacement and forced migration by threatening lives over the short term and making people's livelihoods untenable over the long term, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable. According to the World Bank[32] climate change will push tens of millions of people to migrate within their countries by 2050 in three regions - Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Latin America that together represent 55 percent of the developing world's population. Climate-driven "out-migration" will occur in areas where livelihood systems are increasingly compromised by climate change impacts. These "hotspots" are increasingly marginal areas and can include low-lying cities, coastlines vulnerable to sea level rise, and areas of high water and agriculture stress.

Climate change impacts will pose one of the greatest threats to people, ecosystems, and development goals over the coming decades (IPCC 2014). Climate change will intensify environmental degradation and natural hazards in many regions (UNEP 2016). In the next few decades, climate change impacts will work together with other stressors, such as pollution and overexploitation of resources, affecting a world population that is both urbanizing (UNDESA 2015) and growing rapidly (UNDESA 2017).

Climate change undermines human, national and global security by acting as a "threat multiplier". The increasing frequency and intensity of droughts, floods and storms exacerbate food and water insecurity. Together with seal-level rise, they increase competition for resources and drive displacement and migration. All this can lead to human insecurity.

In its presidential statement on 20 July 2011 (S/PRST/2011/15), the United Nations Security Council, feared "that possible adverse effects of climate change may, in the long run, aggravate certain existing threats to international peace and security." Rather than constituting a direct threat to peace and security, climate change predominantly acts as a multi-dimensional threat multiplier exacerbating conditions and factors that can heighten the risk of conflict, crime and violent extremism.

In the 2015 Paris Agreement, it is stressed that climate change "represents an urgent and potentially irreversible threat to human societies and the planet". According to the report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Africa is the continent that will be most affected by climate change although it contributes the least to it. With large swaths of desert, widespread poverty, and limited adaptive capacity, many regions in the African continent and their communities are particularly vulnerable.

While the effects of climate change may constitute a direct challenge to peace and security, conflict and violent extremism can also further worsen the environmental conditions of the affected areas. Not only does war disrupt social and economic life, it can also destroy vital agricultural infrastructure and know-how, cause pollution and degradation in land, forests, rivers and lakes, worsen the impact of drought and floods, and hasten desertification. War also tends to erode the ability of countries and communities to protect the environment and carry out activities to mitigate the effects of climate change.

When environmental change affects the drivers of human movements, it is referred to as environmental mobility or environmental movement (Foresight 2011). As established in the Cancun Adaptation Framework (UNFCCC 2010), these terms encompass the categories of migration, displacement, and planned relocation.

According to the global report on internal displacement (IDMC 2019) heightened vulnerability and exposure to sudden onset hazards resulted in 17.2 million new disaster displacements in 144 countries and territories. Storms,

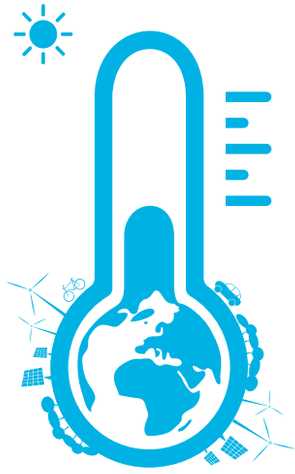
32 Groundswell: preparing for internal climate migration, World Bank, Washington DC, 2018

particularly tropical cyclones, and monsoon rains forced more people from their homes in the East Asia and Pacific region than anywhere else. The 3.8 million new displacements recorded in the Philippines were a reminder of the country's high exposure. The monsoon season took a heavy toll in South Asia, where 2.7 million new displacements were recorded in India alone.

Unfortunately, the global number of people displaced by slow onset disasters remains unknown. Drought conditions monitored in just nine countries - Afghanistan, Brazil, Burundi, Ethiopia, Iraq, Madagascar, Mongolia, Senegal and Somalia - were responsible for at least 760,000 new displacements during the year, a clear underestimate. High temperatures and low precipitation levels also contributed to unprecedented wildfires from the US to Greece to Australia, displacing hundreds of thousands of people, severely damaging property and preventing swift returns.

The East Asia and Pacific region accounted for most of the internal displacement associated with disasters recorded worldwide in 2018. Typhoons, monsoon rains and floods, earthquakes, tsunamis and volcanic eruptions triggered 9.3 million new displacements. The Philippines alone recorded 3.8 million new displacements associated with disasters, more than any other country worldwide.

The South American region is frequently affected by disasters and extreme events, as climate change is believed to affect the frequency and intensity of weather-related hazards (Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2017), causing floods, droughts and hailstorms. Climatic phenomena were responsible for 88 per cent of the disasters in the region in the past five decades (Pivetta, 2016). According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2014),



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during the past decades of the twentieth century, unusual extreme weather events have severely affected South America, and together with the socioeconomic characteristics of population and geographic features, contribute to the strengthening of the vulnerability of human systems to natural hazards.

The scale of human mobility triggered by rapid-onset natural hazards is largely determined by the location of homes in areas prone to their impacts, and people's underlying vulnerability to shocks and stresses that can make their homes uninhabitable disrupt or destroy their livelihoods and leave them with few safe and voluntary solutions to their predicament.

However, while vulnerability and low levels of resilience and capacity are currently key drivers of disaster displacement risk, exposure to hazards is likely to increase in the region in the foreseeable future. This is a result of — among other drivers — population growth and urbanization, environmental degradation and climate change. In order to mitigate displacement risk, it is imperative to intensify efforts to reduce people's vulnerability to hazards by addressing factors related to low levels of human development, which are also core drivers of displacement in other contexts. Failure to do so will heighten vulnerability and foster instability, increasing the risk of vicious cycles of displacement[33].

Climate change, in tandem with drivers of people's increasing exposure and vulnerability, is expected to heighten the risk of human mobility globally in the coming years and decades as extreme weather events become more frequent and intense[34].

Meanwhile, armed conflicts lead to further flows of people fleeing violence either within their countries (internal displacement) or across international borders (refugees). Analysis of civil wars over the past 70 years indicate that at least 40 per cent are linked to the contested control or use of natural resources such as land, water, minerals or oil[35].

It is now obvious, that environmental issues are one factor in human mobility. But what is different now is that the degree of environmental degradation and the wherewithal to move are combining to create a push and pull effect that is on a scale never seen before[36].

33 IDMC, Global Disaster Displacement Risk: A baseline for future work, October 2017, p.18

34 IPCC, Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report: Summary for Policymakers, pp.10-12,16

35 UNEP (2009) From Conflict to Peacebuilding: the role of natural resources and the environment, Geneva: UNEP. The author has updated the year.

36 Ionesco, D., Mokhnacheva, D. & Gemenne, F. (2017) "The Atlas of Environmental Migration", London: Earthscan

Understanding movement of populations caused by environmental degradation in Africa

Disasters triggered significant displacement elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa, forcing almost 2.6 million people to flee their homes due to drought, cyclones, and floods in 2018. Small-scale and frequent disasters go relatively unnoticed as conflict takes centre stage, but what these localized crises illustrate is that displacement is more about an endogenous problem of poverty and lack of development than the consequence of external threats posed by natural hazards. Sub-Saharan Africa's population and urbanisation rate are predicted to increase dramatically in the coming decades, putting more people at risk of disasters. If unaddressed, poverty, vulnerability and climate change will increase the risk of population movements. A combination of climate change and increasing exposure and vulnerability is expected to exacerbate this trend in the coming decades as extreme weather hazards become more frequent and intense[37].

But the picture is complicated. The most vulnerable groups often lack the means or connections to move, and may be trapped in place. Others, such as pastoralists, in the Sahel and the Horn of Africa regions, rely on seasonal migration as a livelihood strategy. Meanwhile, the planned relocation of populations in the face of a risk such as major land degradation can act as a release valve, reducing environmental pressures on fragile ecosystems but also, in effect, "exporting" their environmental footprint elsewhere.

It is also important to remember that displacement/migration itself can have environmental impacts, causing environmental degradation that can prolong the humanitarian emergency or worsening relationships with host communities. Rapid urbanization or poorly managed refugee camps and Internally Displaced People (IDPs) settlements can put pressure on scarce water, energy and food resources, lead to uncontrolled waste disposal, and put refugees and migrants in direct competition with local communities[38].

Tackling environmental migration globally

In many countries, the issue of irregular migration and forced displacement has rocketed up the political agenda, attracting attention from academics, policymakers and the development/ humanitarian community.

In November 2016, the Hugo Observatory on Environment, Migration and Climate at the University of Liege became the world's first academic entity dedicated to the topic of environmental migration[39]. This reflects an increasingly sophisticated understanding of environmental displacement as well as growing research and best practice in the fields of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction.

Meanwhile, migration and displacement issues have been increasingly reflected in the new international agreements concluded in 2015 that set out much of the development framework for the next 15 years. The Sustainable Development Goals, for example, include a commitment to facilitate "orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration" as part of Goal 10 to reduce inequality within and among countries[40].

The Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction, also finalized in 2015, creates a global framework for reducing disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health, aiming to substantially reduce the number of displaced people globally by 2030[41]. Finally, migration issues were formally integrated in the Paris Agreement on Climate Change with the creation of a Taskforce under the Warsaw Mechanism on Loss and Damage to develop recommendations for integrated approaches to prevent, minimize and address climate change displacement.

A number of initiatives directly seek to address aspects of environmental displacement itself. The Platform on Disaster Displacement is a state-led process that endeavours to forge consensus on the rights and protection needs of people displaced across borders in the context of disasters and climate change[42].The International Organization for Migration, meanwhile, has created a special division devoted to Migration, Environment and Climate Change that pushes for greater international cooperation in this field.

On 19 September 2016, the United Nations General Assembly convened a high-level meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants as a way to build international consensus to address the growing challenge of international migration and the increasing flow of refugees. The meeting adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants.

37 Africa Report on Internal Displacement, 2018

38 Recovery, reconstruction and the addressing of energy and shelter needs of displaced people demands natural resources. For example, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 36 million trees from the Virunga National Park were used to meet the cooking and shelter needs of refugees between 1994 and 1996.

39 For more information see: http://labos.ulg.ac.be/hugo/

40 Sustainable Development Goal 10, Target 7 "Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies (Accessed 7 April 2017: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg10)

41 UNISDR (2015) Reading the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2015-2030 (Accessed 7 April 2017: http://www.unisdr.org/files/46694_readingsendaiframeworkfordisasterri.pdf)

42 Formerly known as the Nansen Initiative: http://disasterdisplacement.org/

Beyond the usual worthy statements, which themselves reflected something of a high-water mark for the political prominence of migration and displacement, the declaration included two important annexes. The first was a framework for a comprehensive response framework for refugees. The second was a roadmap towards the achievement of a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which was adopted at an inter-governmental conference on international migration in Marrakech, Morocco in December 2018. The hope is that these frameworks will create a new, improved international response to irregular migration and refugee flows.

In Africa, governments have made a series of commitments on collecting and sharing data as part of efforts to prevent internal displacement and protect and assist Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), incorporating the principles of international law into national legislation and regional frameworks such as the Kampala Convention[43].

Dealing with environmental degradation and human mobility

Climate change, environmental degradation and mismanagement contribute to many of the political, economic and social drivers of conflicts. We need to better understand, and mitigate, those complex and inter-dependent factors. Ultimately, unless we can deal with long-term environmental vulnerability, huge numbers of people displaced every year could become the "new normal". Fundamentally, we have to find a way of doing more than just responding to recurring crises.

The environmental community has an important role to play in building awareness of the ecological drivers of conflicts and mobility; strengthening the capacity of communities and countries to withstand shocks and environmental change; and helping to plan the relocation of communities likely to be displaced by unavoidable environmental change.

Ultimately climate induced human mobility is not just a political challenge. We need to think of it as a development challenge and, critically, an environmental management challenge. The scale of possible future displacement under even moderate climate change scenarios means that environment, humanitarian and displacement-focused actors must work together to build people's resilience in a changing world.

Reliable data on population movements/human mobility is vital to ensure a timely and well-targeted operational and policy response. Evidence of the multiple causes of displacement and its impact on development priorities such as food security, education, health and the protection of vulnerable groups can inform more holistic action by governments and aid agencies.

Early warning systems and disaster risk reduction, preparedness and management systems also rely on credible data. Baseline information and consistent monitoring can build up an understanding of the needs and coping strategies of people in gradually deteriorating conditions such as those brought on by drought, which in turn can inform the development of prevention and preparedness plans. The identification of unusual or intensified migration patterns can serve as an indicator of the need for interventions at least to mitigate a crisis.

The next few years will be critical for the development of a more effective, compassionate and rights-based approach to human mobility. We need to work more proactively to reduce risks and avoid merely reactive responses.

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43 AU, African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, adopted 23 October 2009

The Right to Adequate Housing in Older Age

by Roseline Kihumba, International & Regional Policies Coordinator, HelpAge International

Introduction

Urban residents do not enjoy equal access to the benefits of living in a city as we are often excluded and marginalised - spatially, socially and economically - particularly in older age. We face discrimination based on our older age and other intersecting forms of discrimination based on our ethnicity, physical ability, gender and sexuality on a daily basis. The right to adequate housing is often denied to urban residents, particularly in older age.

Over 500 million older people globally live in cities - a number projected to increase to over 900 million by 2050[44] . The challenges we face as older urban residents are exacerbated by increasing incidence of climate and humanitarian emergencies impacting urban areas.

An opportunity exists now to ensure that our cities are appropriate for ageing urban populations and protect and promote our rights throughout our lives including into older age. This requires national and city level governments, decision makers and stakeholders to respond to ageing urban populations with inclusive and appropriate policies and initiatives.

This paper looks at the right to adequate housing in the context of ageing urban populations. Governments must be held accountable for commitments made in international frameworks including the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda. The World Health Organisation has made a number of recommendations with regards to adequate housing in older age. Examples from New Delhi and Zimbabwe look at some of the issues that older people face that can lead to housing insecurity and homelessness and the paper calls for further research to understand the housing challenges older people face. This paper also calls attention to the specific challenges around tenure insecurity due to poor inheritance rights and violence faced by older women, as well as the disaster risk of older people living in informal settlements.

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Despite some recognition and awareness of the challenges and issues facing older people in terms of housing, there continues to be a significant gap in knowledge and understanding. The complex causes behind insecure housing and the different experiences of older people, often based on intersecting identities and inequalities such as gender and income, mean more research and engagement with older people around housing issues is necessary.

Right to Adequate Housing

The right to adequate housing is a component of the broader right to an adequate standard of living and the right to non-discrimination. During a recent visit to South Korea, the UN Special Rapporteur on adequate housing drew specific attention to housing related issues often faced by older people[45]. The report stated that half of older persons live in relative poverty and in poor living conditions, especially when they do not own their own home.

It was highlighted that social security payments, particularly for women who generally receive lower pension entitlements, were not sufficient to meet average and increasing rental costs. The report also drew attention to the fact that older people constitute a significant proportion of people living in informal settlements. In addition to concerns about the quality of informal housing, it can mean they are more vulnerable to both the consequences of urban redevelopment projects as well as climate and natural disasters. As an

44 Urban and Rural Population by Age and Sex 1980-2015, http://esa.un.org/unpd/popdev/urpas/urpas2014.aspx (31 August 2016)

45 Human Rights Council, Visit to the Republic of Korea, https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session40/Documents/A_HRC_40_61_Add.1.docx

example of positive steps, the report highlights a social housing building programme that includes units specially designed and customised for older people.

HelpAge International highlights how older women commonly face two main threatens to their security of tenure. First, formal and customary laws often discriminate against women in their right to own property or inherit it. Secondly, older women are often victims of land grabs through violence and intimidation.

There are communities where women are not able to hold title to property. In others, women do not have the right to inherit their property upon the death of a spouse. As women generally live longer lives than men, this means many older women face complex and intimidating property disputes that jeopardise the security of their tenure. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women's General Recommendation No. 27 calls for states and parties to "repeal all legislation that discriminates against older widows in respect of property and inheritance and protect them from land grabbing"[46].

In many countries, older women face extrajudicial challenges to their security of tenure. Accusations of witchcraft are used as justification for property grabbing, violence and even murder. The Special Rapporteur on Extra Judicial Summary or Arbitrary Executions states that as many as a thousand, mainly elderly Tanzanian women are targeted and killed annually[47]. The number of older women made to leave their properties is thought to be much greater.

HelpAge International makes a number of recommendations to tackle the issue including calling for the eradication of discriminatory laws, criminalising property grabbing so it is not seen simply as a family issue and providing paralegal support.

International Frameworks

The Sustainable Development Goals very clearly call for inclusive urbanisation that ensures older people participate in planning and decision making, have access to safe, affordable and accessible public transportation and enjoy safe, inclusive and accessible green and public spaces. The New Urban Agenda coming out of the Habitat III conference in Quito, Ecuador similarly calls for a recognition that ageing urban populations must be responded to with, amongst other measures, public spaces designed for people, a reduction in air pollution. These international frameworks also include specific requirements in terms of adequate housing and non-discrimination in older age.

The Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda provide opportunities for national and city level governments and other stakeholders to make clear and firm commitments to creating inclusive cities that protect and promote our rights throughout our lives. Government policies and actions must be held accountable to these commitments and ambitions to help ensure all urban residents have access to affordable, safe and appropriate housing throughout their lives including into older age.

*The New Urban Agenda state: "*We commit to promote the development of integrated and age- and gender-responsive housing policies and approaches across all sectors, in particular employment, education, healthcare, and social integration sectors, and at all levels of government, which incorporate the provision of adequate, affordable, accessible, resource efficient, safe, resilient, well-connected, and well-located housing, with special attention to the proximity factor and the strengthening of the spatial relationship with the rest of the urban fabric and the surrounding functional areas."

The Sustainable Development Goals demand: "By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums".

In addition to these international frameworks, the World Health Organisation's Global Network of Age Friendly Cities and Communities brings together practitioners, decision makers and local governments to address the challenges facing older people in urban communities. Amongst a number of areas of focus, the following recommendations are made with regards to housing[48]:

- Affordable housing is available for all older people.
- A range of appropriate and affordable housing options is available for older people, including frail and disabled older people, in the local area.
- Older people are well-informed of the available housing options.
- Sufficient and affordable housing dedicated to older people provided in the local area.
- There is a range of appropriate services and appropriate amenities and activities in older people's housing facilities.
- Older people's housing is integrated in the surrounding community.
- Housing is made of appropriate materials and well-structured.
- Housing is appropriately equipped to meet environmental conditions (e.g. appropriate air conditioning or heating).
- Housing is adapted for older people, with even surfaces, passages wide enough for wheelchairs, and appropriately designed bathrooms, toilets and kitchens.
- Housing is modified for older people as needed.
- Housing modifications are affordable.

46 CEDAW, General recommendation No. 27 on older women and protection of their human rights, CEDAW/C/GC/27, 16 December 2010 para 52.

47 OHCHR, http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NEWSEVENTS/Pages/Witches21stCentury.aspx

48 World Health Organization, Global age-friendly cities: a guide, Geneva, World Health Organization, 2007

- Maintenance services are affordable for older people.
- Housing is not overcrowded.
- Older people are comfortable in their housing environment.
- Housing is not located in areas prone to natural disasters.
- Older people feel safe in the environment they live in.
- Financial assistance is provided for housing security measures.

Informal settlements and disaster risk

UN Habitat reports that humanitarian crises are increasingly affecting cities and urban environments[49]. Conflict is increasingly becoming urbanised, with cities acting as key strategic sites in confrontations between opposing regimes, ideologies and militias. In addition, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) warns that urban growth is taking place in locations prone to earthquakes, droughts and floods – risks that will continue to increase as climate change gathers pace[50].

Older women and men are at greater risk of exposure to disasters in urban areas, particularly when living in informal housing. Spatial factors in the physical built environment can increase the risks facing older people. These include informal and unplanned urban growth, insecure customary and informal land rights, poor quality housing, badly designed infrastructure, poor transport infrastructure and ineffective local governance[51].

Older people in urban areas are particularly vulnerable during times of crisis if they live alone, become separated from their families, or have physical disabilities. They may be cut off and excluded from service provision, suffer physical and psychological distress, and be less able to have any complex health and nutrition needs met[52].

A majority of displaced people also now live in urban areas. There is often a false assumption that urban refugees do not require the same assistance as those living in camps as they can find jobs, access services and fend for themselves. This assumption overlooks the unique challenges facing refugees and internally displaced persons living in cities, which are often exacerbated by having no legal status or residency rights. HelpAge research on the crisis in Syria found that some families chose to live in urban areas due to better employment opportunities and access to services, but they faced a greater financial burden in doing so because basic goods and accommodation were more expensive[53].

Homelessness in New Delhi

- HelpAge visited two homeless shelters in New Delhi, India to learn from on the ground programme experience about the challenges facing the most marginalised residents of the city.
- Observing and talking to shelter residents and staff revealed a number of social, economic and cultural reasons behind the high number of homeless people and the related health complications that make it difficult for them to get back on their feet.
- Many residents were homeless as a result of family disagreements, a sense of shame, a lack of livelihood opportunities and health conditions and injuries attained whilst living on the street.

With a population of 11 million, Delhi is the second largest city in India and attracts migrants from across the country looking for work and livelihood opportunities. However, for many, low pay and a lack of opportunities mean they struggle to survive. An estimated 150,000 residents are homeless with approximately 10,000 living on the plains alongside the Yamuna river. Many come from alienated and marginalised communities including Pakistani Hindus and Rohingya refugees. Fewer are in older age, simply because their life expectancy is greatly reduced when living on the streets, however there are also a number of older residents living in destitution and relying on shelters.

The HelpAge Global Network has over 100 member organisations active in communities across the world. Many implement projects and initiatives that support older people living in urban communities. This on the ground experience provides a unique opportunity to better understand the complex and varied issues and challenges that people face, as well as proving examples of best practice. Observing and interviewing staff and residents at the HelpAge India supported homeless shelters in Delhi provided an opportunity to better understand the challenges faced by older homeless people, as understood by those working closely with the issues on a day to day basis.

49 UN Habitat, 'Urban humanitarian crisis – UN Habitat in disaster and conflict contexts', http://mirror.unhabitat.org/pmss/ listItemDetails.aspx?publicationID=3192 (31 August 2016)

50 United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR), Annual report 2012, Geneva, UNISDR, 2013, www.unisdr.org/ we/inform/publications/33363 (8 September 2016)

51 Dodman D et al., Understanding the nature and scale of urban risk in low- and middle- income countries and its implications for humanitarian preparedness, planning and response, London, International Institute for Environment and Development, 2013

52 Ridout A, Older voices in humanitarian crises: calling for change, London, HelpAge International, 2016, www.helpage.org/ newsroom/latest-news/who-will-listen-to- the-older-voices-in-humanitarian-crises (8 September 2016)

53 HelpAge International/Handicap International, Hidden victims of the Syrian crisis: disabled, injured and older refugees, London, HelpAge International/Handicap International, 2014, www.helpage.org/ newsroom/latestnews/hidden-victims-new- research-on-older-disabled-and-injured- syrian-refugees (8 September 2016)

Speaking to the residents at the HelpAge India supported homeless shelter, many of the men felt a sense of shame because of their perceived failure to fulfil their responsibilities and would not return home without the respect gained from having earned money. Some find day labour work, but it's low paid and physically demanding, leading to further health issues. Some of the residents were victims of financial abuse, where their children had taken control of their money and assets, leaving them homeless and with few options. Some of the residents also experience alcohol dependence, particularly in winter when the weather can get cold at night.

At another centre, support workers explained how women who are homeless often require additional psychosocial support due to the level of trauma, often including physical and sexual violence, they have experienced living on the street. Women often have fewer livelihood opportunities than men and have responsibility for children.

Raghuveer Tiwari, aged 99, moved to Delhi from the state of Bihar in the 1980s following a family feud which means he has no contact with them. He is currently staying at the shelter and recovering from eye surgery.

Abbas Ali, aged 63, was hit by a public bus 2 years ago whilst crossing a road. After suffering an infection in his leg, doctors said that amputation was unnecessary however the health issues he faces are poorly understood and he still suffers from pain and numbness.

The centre also has a research programme to better understand and highlight the health burdens carried by homeless people as well as the main causes of preventable death, primarily health issues and the dangers from traffic of sleeping on the streets. The centre provides psychosocial support to deal with many unrecognised mental health issues and offers practical support to help residents claim entitlements.

A number of planned activities keep residents engaged and active, including reading competitions, memory games, festival celebrations. Most of the residents also walk to the nearby local park on a daily basis, one of the few times they leave the centre and see friends.

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Care home residents in Zimbabwe

Although African residential old people's homes are not the norm in Zimbabwe because of beliefs that older persons are cared for by their families and communities, institutions do exist where a small category of older persons, such as migrant workers who lost touch with their families, live in their older age.

The majority of residents at Melfort Old People's Home for example, are male, non-Zimbabweans and come from Malawi and Mozambique. They migrated when Zimbabwe was a major destination for regional employment in the mines, farms and as casual or domestic labourers. On retirement, the migrants never went back to their home countries because most have lost contact with families and communities. With little or no pensions or other forms of social protection, they are now destitute.

Another group of vulnerable and deprived older persons at the home are indigenous adults who were relocated by the Department of Social Welfare, as referrals from the police and concerned members of the public. Their stories vary from being indigent as a result of family disputes, to those too old and infirm to work and care for themselves. Some are childless or have been ostracised after being accused of witchcraft. Others have relatives who however discarded them because of the burden of supporting non-contributing family members. As a result, these older persons are institutionalised, having suffered additional traumas associated with destitution, societal disintegration, loneliness, neglect and separation from their countries, communities and families.

Conclusion

- The right to adequate housing is a key component of the rights to an adequate standard of living and non-discrimination. International frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda are explicit about the need to prioritise adequate housing in older age and governments must be held accountable to these commitments.
- Older people's access to entitlements needs to be strengthened, especially for migrants and homeless older people, to support older people to live in affordable and adequate housing.
- Research on the experiences of challenges around housing and homelessness in older age is scarce and a greater body of knowledge is required to develop appropriate evidence-based policies and programmes to address these issues.
- The causes of housing insecurity and homelessness in older age are complex and diverse but often include issues around poverty, inheritance rights, elder abuse, migration and health issues. Older age is not a homogenous experience and the diversity of issues required careful and holistic solutions.
- Measures required include the provision of social housing designed for older age, sufficient universal social security to cover the cost of housing, paralegal support for housing issues, well considered and designed properties that ensure accessibility throughout the life course, and the support and creation of communities of social connectedness around where older people live.

Addressing Homelessness Through Public Works Programmes in South Africa

by Emeka E. Obioha, Professor of Sociology, Walter Sisulu University

Introduction

There is no single acceptable definition of what constitutes homelessness because of fluidity and relativity of the concept. Its meaning and construction vary across countries and societies. United Nations (2004) provided a working conceptualisation of 'the homeless' as households or people without a shelter that would fall within the scope of living quarters. It varies from a situation where someone lives in open space, public space, on the street and other places that are not meant for human abode. For someone to be identified as being homeless, it means that such person does not have a permanent primary residence. He or she may be staying in a shelter that he/she has no right over, living on the streets, occupying a room in a motel, sleeping in a vehicle, or living in any other unstable or non-permanent situation. Considering the broad conceptualisation of homelessness, our interest in this discourse are those that are experiencing homelessness by default and not by choice. "The Homeless" by default connotes people who are in need of a 'home' but can neither afford, secure right, negotiate nor take possession of any by whatever means. This experience differs from when someone has the economic means or rights over a permanent primary residence but decides to live in different places where he does not have right of ownership. This includes, staying in a hotel room or squatting in a friend's home, where an accommodation is provided on a temporary basis.

As the definition of homelessness is not universally the same, it is therefore a relative concept. Relativists' conceptualization of homelessness implies understanding homelessness across situations, countries, societies and contexts or subjecting homelessness as a culturally defined phenomenon. For instance, according to Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (2018), the phenomenon is "the situation of an individual, family, or community without stable, safe, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it." Quite differently, Hanson-Easey et. al (2016) perceived homelessness from an Australian study as living in accommodation that is below the minimum standard or lacks secure tenure. They also provided three distinct categories of homelessness (primary homelessness, secondary homelessness, and tertiary homelessness) based on specific contexts and situations, in sync with earlier provision of United Nations (2009). Conceptualisation of homelessness based on developed country's context is denoted by two main elements, 'appropriate housing' and 'accommodation that is below minimum standard' may differ from what obtains in developing country like South Africa and others in Sub-Sahara Africa where the conceptualization may exclude definitive measurement of appropriateness and standard. In this region of the world, having a roof over head and right to such abode is sufficient to exclude homelessness, irrespective of quality and standard in most cases.

Homelessness as a social problem

Homelessness is not just a problem of a number of households. It is indeed a social problem because it has the tendency to affect the whole society in many and specific ways. Even though, the concerned households or persons are trapped in this circle by circumstances and not by their choice, the ripple effect is usually beyond specific households. This may be better understood from Craine (1997) hypothesis of an 'interconnected and cumulative ecology of disadvantage' where lack of legitimate opportunities determines job prospects and living conditions. The problem of homelessness is interconnected with other social ills, as the homeless sometimes engage in behaviours such as heavy drinking, which seem to make escape from homelessness more difficult (Haralambos, Holborn & Heald 2004: 274). Consequences of homelessness as observed by sociologists include but not limited to social, economic, political, cultural, educational, psychological spheres and deepening of poverty in the society.

Situational Analysis and Extent of the problem of homelessness in South Africa

The question is: What are the levels and trends of homelessness in South Africa – Nationally, Provincially? There is no doubt that homelessness would have risen recently in South Africa , in consonance with the current situation worldwide, where homelessness is estimated at 150 million with about 1.6 billion

people lacking in adequate housing. Currently, there is no comprehensive and official estimate about the extent of homelessness in South Africa. Despite the unavailability of an official statistics, there is no contestation that homeless people or homelessness exist in the country, which dates back to the period of apartheid regime, as reported in Olufemi (1998). Presently, in South Africa there is no national census conducted by Statistics South Africa on homeless people in the country (Speak, 2005), what exists is information on informal dwellings, which according to Statistics South Africa in General Household Survey 2013 is home to 13.6 per cent of South African population. Due to lack of officially produced and documented statistics, researchers rely on unofficial and voluntary studies by individuals and non-governmental organisations for the estimate of homeless persons in particular cities in the country.

Among other studies, Cross et al (2010) estimated the homeless population in South Africa to be in the range of 100 000 to 200 000 people who live on the streets, while a recent estimate by the Human Sciences Resource Centre, South Africa puts the figure at 200 000, which is a significant proportion of the nation's population of 53.5 million in 2015 (Rule-Groenewald et al., 2015). Across South Africa, the number of people living on the streets has continued to increase (Kok, Cross & Roux, 2010). According to Black (2017), comprehensive surveys taken in Limpopo, Gauteng and Mpumalanga revealed an increase from 0.02 per cent to 0.22 per cent in the population of the homeless, strictly living on the street between 1996 and 2001 (Kok et al., 2010). As at 2015, 0.2 per cent of the City of Cape Town population were conservatively estimated to be homeless (Bernardo, 2015).

Drivers of Homelessness in South Africa

Understanding "the homeless" in South Africa will lead towards the perspectives on its drivers or what make people homeless in the country. The current vulnerability to homelessness in the country is a function of a number of contexts and factors as follows:

- **Historical disadvantage:** Impact of apartheid legislations on households led to the emergence of a section of South Africa population, mainly of African origin referred to as previously disadvantaged persons. This category of people was at various points in time driven to homelessness through apartheid government mechanisms such as - forced removals, uprooting, legislated landlessness, denial of documentation etc. Apartheid promoted separate and discriminatory development that involves government legislation on where people could live according to racial classification. This system was implemented through forceful removal or relocation of population groups from one location to another. Pirie & Hart (1985:387) averred that the "system forced black families to live in what was referred to as 'homelands' or satellite townships, while permits were issued to the families' adults to work in the cities, in mines and on farms." In this process, ancestral and original homes of indigenous black population were demolished and made desolate, while tracks of lands were forcefully taken away by the apartheid government to establish 'white only' settlements, cities, mines and farmlands. The consequence of the above was homelessness and landlessness for the affected black population. The Black population were also denied vital documentation, such as South African Identity document which was the primary instrument in accessing government created benefits and social protection services like social grants and housing. Much of these culminated to the high rate of homelessness at the dawn of democracy in 1994 and to the present overflowing state of homelessness in South Africa.

- **Migration:** Migration of different nature in South Africa has been a potent factor that drives homelessness. When a household leaves its usual place of residence under a desperate situation and relocates to somewhere else, such household runs a risk of being homeless either temporarily or for a long time. Internal migration, mainly rural to urban settlements accounts for much of homelessness in South African Cities, thereby creating 'urban homelessness.' This phenomenon witnessed a spike in 1994 (new democratic dispensation) and has continued until the present time. There is continuous influx of people from previously economically disadvantaged provinces to major economically advantaged provinces (Gauteng and Western Cape), in search of better service delivery and living conditions, including jobs. Besides the internal migration, immigration of people from other countries into South African cities also adds to the already overstretched cities, leading to housing shortages and squalor. As the population of the cities stretch beyond what they can contain both in private and public sector housing provisioning, a huge number of households and individuals who are unable to afford a 'standard' living place or roof over their head take alternative living abodes, such as shacks (makeshift houses) that are not descriptively 'homes.' Irrespective of whether they have houses in the rural areas in the case of internal migration or in their countries of origin in terms of external immigrants, their current context in the cities defines them as homeless households or individuals.

- **Unemployment and low wages**: Historically, unemployment in South African has never been at an unacceptable rate, both during and after apartheid regimes. In the present democratic dispensation, unemployment has remained high at about 27.1 per cent, 29.4 per cent in January and October 2019, especially among youth, black population and women when compared to other social categories. Even where greater number of South African labour force is employed, low wage has been a major problem that leads to unsustainability of families and households. Each and a combination of the above scenarios create unsustainable living conditions where households or individuals are unable to afford 'proper' living places. In situations where the government agency conducts a Means Test to determine households that qualify for 'public houses' some of the low earning families commonly referred to as "the missing middle" are usually left out of the distribution benefits.

- **Social exclusion and cultural rights**: Like some other countries in the continent and globally, South Africa is challenged with social problem of social exclusion. This is a condition where a society is not mutually and equally accommodating to all people that belongs to it, irrespective of their social categorization (gender, race, etc). Quite a number of South Africans are socially excluded from certain benefits. For example, the mentally challenged are to a large extent excluded from public house distributions, which keeps them perpetually homeless. In some communities, cultural rights to inherit homes or houses and land exclude certain sections of the society, mainly women, widows and the culturally defined 'unfit' individuals like adopted children and even the LGBTQ. This makes vulnerability to homelessness among these social groups to be far greater than what obtains in the groups that have rights to inherit homes, houses or farms without questioning.

- **Loss of parents or household bread winner**: Children losing their parents at a stage where they cannot take care of their household affairs, including possessions tend to push them to being vulnerable to homelessness or remaining without a home or 'house' as they cannot maintain the one passed on to them by their parents. There is quite a number of double orphans in South Africa who are homeless and live on the streets because of loss of parents and or household bread winner.

- **Home desertion and abandonment**: The estimate of home desertion or the proportion of homeless people who willingly deserted or abandoned their homes in South Africa are not known. Some family or household members desert home for a number of reasons that range from personal to social in nature. In South Africa, there are both adults and children who remain homeless after deserting or abandoning their homes.

- **Lack of proper identification document**: Possession of proper identification is a necessary step to solving problems and getting attention in terms of securing benefits from the state. There are some individuals who claim to be South Africans but do not have proper identification document to back up their claims. In a modern state like South Africa, the inability to produce an identity document as at when needed or requested leaves one out of all benefits that are due to every citizen. South Africa has a standard bar-coded identity document that is issued to all citizens and permanent residents in the country. This document is required in almost every transaction one intends to have with the state, its agencies and other non-state agencies like financial institutions, private schools, private hospitals etc. During the apartheid regime, African population groups were denied this document. The after effect of this practice created a huge backlog of people born in South Africa who do not have identity cards, immediately at the dawn of democracy in 1994 and up till the present, to some extent. As in most other transactions, a household may not be able to access public or private housing if it wants to purchase or benefit from the government housing schemes for the purpose of having a 'home' without South African barcoded identity document.

Extent of Housing Need in South Africa

Understanding the drivers of homelessness or what factors push homelessness in South Africa equally sheds light on characteristics of vulnerable individuals, households and groups. It also narrowly points to people who do not live in places that they own or have right over and the need for proper shelter (houses). Housing need in South Africa is a constitutional right, as enshrined in the Constitution of the Country, translated from the South African Freedom Charter, but the extent of this need appears to be on the steady rise due to one or more of the drivers already explained in the previous section of this paper. For Moroke (2009:7) in narrating what constitutes housing needs alludes that "Housing need is defined as a combination of people who are homeless; or people occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsanitary housing conditions; or people who would need to move on medical or welfare grounds." This definition covers care and support needs and other social needs; or people who have a need to move to a locality where failure to do so will cause hardships to themselves or others (Bilson, 2007:4). It is therefore residual and represents the number of households without financial means to make a demand for housing effective in the market (Allmendinger & Chapman, 2000:96).

The South African National Department of Housing (NDoH), further emphasised that "housing development needs highlight the existing gaps regarding inadequate houses, the number of houses and the number of people in need of a house" (NDoH, 2005). To distinguish clearly between need and demand, the NDoH (2005) calculates housing need by means of a compilation of the existing housing stock (this includes different types of existing houses, as well as inadequate housing) and estimated

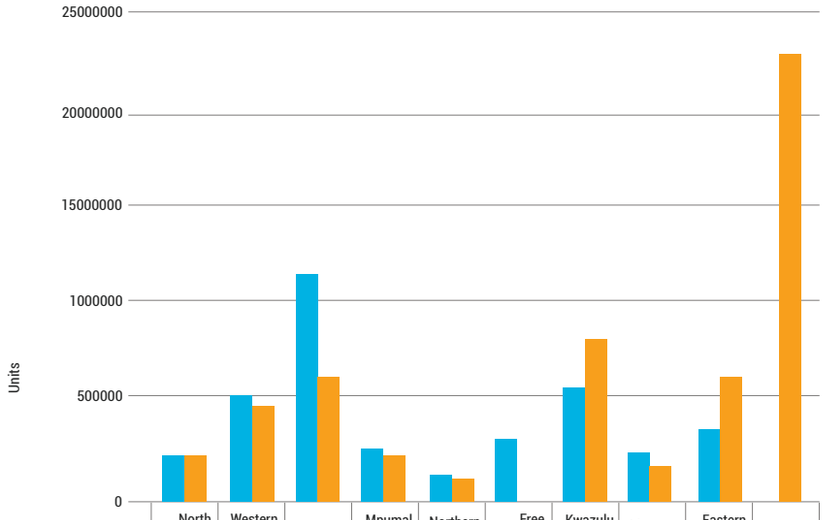
future trends, including the projected population growth, migration to urban areas and the household size (Moroke, 2009). In 1994, the emergent South African democratic government inherited a practice where housing was delivered through a fragmented system of race and ethnicity-based administrations into separate racial localities. It was evident that the new government was going to grapple with a huge problem of housing needs and backlogs.

At the assumption of governance in 1994, the housing backlog in South Africa was estimated to be at 1.2 million houses (South African Government News Agency, 2014), while the 1996 census, two years after further showed that 1.5 million households lived in informal houses in urban areas. Statistics South Africa (2017) General Household Survey revealed that 2.2 million households live in makeshift structures referred to as informal settlement (shacks or shanties). More recently in 2018, there was an estimate of 2.1 million (Gerber, 2018) to 2.3 million housing backlogs in South Africa, which means an annual growth of 178 000 units due to population growth, migration and other factors. This claim can be substantiated from the estimate in Figure 1, which indicates that Gauteng has the highest number of houses delivered, followed by Western Cape and Kwazulu-Natal Provinces, yet these provinces are among top four provinces with high housing backlog and needs in South Africa.

The frequent house demand protest in South Africa attest to the enormous pressure that housing need exerts on the system. Most of these protests are concentrated in metropolitan municipality areas, cities and other important population concentration hubs like mining towns. It may be inaccurate to estimate the number of housing, including land related protests in South Africa in the past two decades. Needless to say, general observation has shown that housing related protests are on the rise and has become four or five times more likely to erupt when compared with other issues related protests in South Africa.

The revelation on the current housing problem in South Africa is not a recent discovery. The South African democratic government has vested lots of efforts and resources towards addressing this huge problem. However, it is evident from various statistics that quite a number of homeless households are left behind, unaddressed. Official and unofficial estimates are usually based on certain categories of people that have indicated their need for housing, while such estimates exclude the most vulnerable homeless people in the society, such as the street kids, the mentally challenged and others that lack the capacity to engage in a contract. This arouses the curiosity as to – what happens to this category of homeless? It will be interesting to investigate how the government is addressing the housing need of this missing segment of the homeless population. However, the South African government has addressed and is continuously addressing homelessness through various channels.

RDP Housing dwellings and Backlogs 2016 by Province



	North West	Western Cape	Gauteng	Mpumalanga	Northern Cape	Free State	Kwazulu Natal	Limpopo	Eastern Cape	National
RDP Houses 2016	261693	571997	1227729	241801	105541	289414	559302	260976	386802	
RDP Houses Backlog 2016	237000	526000	600000	170000	52000	-	716079	157420	600000	2300000

Provinces

Government Agencies and Public Works Intervention in Addressing Homelessness in South Africa

Sociologically, house or 'home' is one of the three most important needs of every human. It is regarded as the second need after food on a broader sense, when all living beings, human and non-human are considered. This therefore elevates house as a necessity and public good, which requires government attention at all levels. In South Africa, there are selected government agencies and departments that are constitutionally involved in public works, but the public agency on the frontline is the National Department of Human Settlements (NDHS). Its responsibility includes provision of adequate and affordable housing and ensuring that all South Africans live in 'proper' houses with basic amenities. Human Settlement department is organised in the three respective tiers of government (national, provincial and municipal) in the country. Therefore, addressing the housing needs is not a sole responsibility of the national government. Beside the Department of Human Settlement, other government departments and agencies are involved in the housing delivery.

From a broader perspective, addressing homelessness is more than providing affordable or free housing as it is the case in the Republic of South Africa, even though access to housing is one of the most potent means in dealing with homelessness. While physical houses undergo various channels before they reach the needy, the horrific bottlenecks in these channels and processes include possession of proper identity document, birth certificate etc. Therefore, addressing homelessness should begin with addressing the root obstacles that negatively affect the process of housing delivery at different levels of government.

The main question that needs to be addressed is, what is being done since 1994 in addressing the social problem of homelessness in South Africa? As homelessness is a problem that permeates all levels of the community, various governments at different levels and structures are equally involved in addressing it. However, their level of involvement and seriousness, which is obviously beyond the scope of this paper may be a function of how they perceive homelessness. Atwater et al. found that "three out of four South African metropolitan municipalities viewed homelessness primarily as a social dependency issue, responding with social interventions. At the same time, homeless South Africans indicated that the most important thing the municipality could assist them with was employment and well-located affordable housing" (Atwater, et al 2003: 69).

Social protection support services interventions in facilitating access to homes

One important step established by South African government in addressing homelessness or need for houses in the country is through social protection related agencies. At the dawn of democracy in 1994, the new South African government began with issuing South African national identity document to deserving citizens who had been denied this vital document by the apartheid regime, which hampered their access to social benefits, including housing from the government in the previous decades. This was done through the intervention of the Home Affairs Department. Up till the present time, there is still backlog of South African citizens who are yet to secure proper identity documents, as the Home Affairs Department continuously work towards ensuring that all citizens are documented. Lack of the identity document makes it impossible for anyone who claims to be South African to receive government provided houses.

In conjunction with the Home Affairs Department, some categories of "homeless" (underage orphans, mentally challenged) are provided shelter "home" by the Social Development Department, due to their inability or lack of legal capacity to enter into contract or make an application for a personal house, which may involve some attestations and affidavits. While foster homes, orphanages, motherless babies' homes are provided to children, adults and some street kids are housed in various categories of designated place of safety. Although it is beyond the scope of this papers, more detailed investigation on the extent and efficacy of these programmes and interventions by the Home Affairs Department and Social Development Department in providing adequate shelter or "homes" to these categories of homeless citizens without legal capacity may provide answers to questions that have not yet been sufficiently addressed in the country and in many other developing and developed countries.

Legislations, policies, and programmes to address the forces of homelessness

There are a number of legislations and policies that are set towards addressing homelessness in South Africa. These include:

- Republic of South Africa Constitution 1996: Section 26 of the constitution stipulates that 'everyone has the right to adequate housing; the state must take reasonable legislative and other measures within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of this right.'
- Housing Act 1997: This Act provides for the facilitation of a sustainable housing development process and lays down the roles, responsibilities and functions of the different spheres of government.
- The National Norms and Standards: This policy stipulates the minimum standard for a 'proper' house in South Africa. It stipulates that each house must have at least 40m² of floor space, two bedrooms, a separate bathroom with a toilet, a shower and hand basin, and a combined living area and kitchen.
- PIE Act (1998) The Prevention of Illegal Eviction from and Unlawful Occupation of Land Act (PIE) is an act of the Parliament of South Africa which came into effect on 5 June, 1998, and which sets out to prevent arbitrary evictions.
- Rental Housing Act, 1999 (Act No. 50 of 1999) as amended in The Rental Housing Amendment Act 35 of 2014. This Act regulates the relationship between landlords and tenants and it provides for dispute resolution by the Rental Housing Tribunal. It was brought about to protect the rights of the landlord and the tenants alike. As it stands, tenants in the residential property sphere have rights in terms of the Rental Housing Act, the common law, and the Consumer Protection Act.
- The social Housing Act (2008). This Act was meant to establish and promote a sustainable social housing environment; to define the functions of national, provincial and local governments in respect of social housing; to provide for the establishment of the Social Housing Regulatory Authority in order to regulate all social housing institutions obtaining or having obtained public funds; to allow for the undertaking of approved projects by other delivery agents with the benefit of public money; to give statutory recognition

to social housing institutions; and to provide for matters connected therewith.

- 1994 Housing White Paper on Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). This provided a framework for housing development target of building 1million state funded houses, within the first 5 years at a target of 338 000 units per year.
- 2004 Breaking New Ground: This initiative outlines a comprehensive plan for the development of sustainable human settlements. Policy shift from quantity to quality and emphasised on the process of housing delivery, i.e. the planning, engagement and the long-term sustainability of the housing environment. Key objective-to eradicate all informal settlements.
- National Development Plan (NDP): In its Outcome 8 (sustainable human settlements and improved quality of household life. NDP's vision of transforming human settlements and the spatial economy to create more functionally integrated, balanced and vibrant urban settlements by 2030.
- Land expropriation without Compensation Bill 2018 (under way). This policy is about getting some land for re-distribution to the landless, dispossessed and dislocated during the apartheid regime. It aims at resettlement, redress of past injustices in relation to land.

Department of Human Settlement interventions in providing free and affordable housing: Establishment and Maintenance of Housing Entities

An important step taken by the South African government from 1994 to date was the establishment of various bodies called 'housing entities' which are under the Department of Human Settlement (Table 1). These entities exist as the implementing agencies of the department. In other words, they function based on the mandate given to them by the law and tasks assigned to them by the Department of Human Settlement

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from time to time. They are collectively the legalised role players in ensuring that the South African vision of addressing homelessness through provision of free and affordable housing especially to the poor is realised. Their sustainability is mainly through financial assistance and grant provided by National Department of Human Settlement (NDHS). In the 2018/2019 (up to Dec 2018) financial period, a total of R1.3 Billion (R1 317 030 000) was disbursed to various entities by the department, which shows the extent of both regulatory and financial commitment of the national Department of Human Settlement in addressing homelessness. Besides the housing entities that are directly involved in the delivery of home opportunities to households, there are two agencies, National Housing Needs Register (NHNR) and National Upgrading Support Programme (NUSP) that facilitate and support the sustainability of the housing project.

National Housing Needs Register (NHNR)

In order to deal with the inefficiencies, duplications and inconsistencies in the housing delivery in South Africa, a National Housing Needs Register (NHNR) was established to serve as a central database that offers the opportunity for households to register their need for adequate shelter by providing information about their current living conditions, household composition and to indicate the type of housing assistance they need from government. Through this system, households are also able to update their information to ensure that their details are relevant to their current situation. Records of households that have registered their need on other systems' waiting lists are received from provincial human settlement departments and municipalities. The NHNR has the functionality that ensures the allocation of housing opportunities created through various programmes contained in the National Housing Code is done in a fair, transparent and auditable manner. This is done by selecting households from relevant geographical areas based on the agreed criteria, such as age, preference, employment and income status.

National Upgrading Support Programme (NUSP)

Through the NUSP, the Department of Human Settlement (DHS) aims, amongst others, to promote incremental upgrading and strengthen capacity of government and professional practitioners to implement community-based upgrading. The NUSP was expected to provide project level technical support to 119 municipalities over the medium term for planning the upgrading of informal settlements in the year 2018/2019.

Housing Entities under Deprtment of Human Settlement

Entity	Functions	Grant from NDHS 2018/19
National Home Builders Registration Council (NHBRC)	• Provides warranty protection to consumers against defects in new homes. • Regulates the home building industry • Provides training and capacity building to promote compliance with technical standards	NHBRC does not receive financial assistance form the NDHS
Community Schemes Ombud Service	• Provides a dispute-resolution services for community schemes • Monitors and controls the quality of all governance documentation relating to sectional title schemes: and • Takes custody of preserves and provides public access to scheme governance documentation	R29.4 million
Estate Agency Affairs Board	• Regulates, maintains and promotes the conduct of estate agents • Issues certificates from the Estate Agents Fidelity Fund • Prescribes the standards of education and training foe estate agents • Investigate complaints lodged against estate agents, and • Manages and controls the estate Agents Fidelity Fund.	Nil. Does not receive financial assistance from the NDHS
House Development Agency	• Identify, acquires, holds, develops and releases state-owned and private owed land for residential and community purposes and project • Manages housing developments for the creation of sustainable human settlements.	R210.67 million
National Housing Finance Corporation (NHFC)	• Broadens and deepens access to affordable housing finance for low to middle income households by facilitating private sector lending for housing purposes.	R 100 Million
National Urban Reconstruction and Housing Agency (NURCHA)	• Provides bridging finance to contractors building low to middle income housing, infrastructure and community facilities.	Nil.
Rural Housing Loan Fund (RHLF)	• Facilities access to housing credit to low income rural households by proving wholesale finance through a network of retail intermediaries and commun9ity-based organization.	R50 million
Rural Housing Regulatory Authority (SHRA)	• Regulates the social housing sector, and ensures a sector, and ensures a sustainable and regulated flow of investment into the social housing sector. • Providing capital grant to accredited social housing institutions.	R926.96 million

Source: Underlying information from www.gov.za

Formal Housing Delivery Methods and Mechanisms

Due to housing need differences in the country, the National Department of Human Settlement and other related agencies, including the provinces and municipalities are mandated to follow the established formal housing delivery methods. There are formal and informal housing delivery methods and mechanisms designed by the department. However, the scope of this paper is limited to the formal mechanisms and methods (Table 2). These twelve methods with different funding mechanisms and targeted tenure options and solutions are meant to fit different categories of the poor citizens in need of assistance to own a house "home."

In all the methods, a Means Test is conducted to ascertain whether the household qualifies or not. In this regard, they are clustered into three main categories. The first is for subsidized income group (households with R0 – R3500 per month). Houses delivered to this group of households are either free of charge (e.g. Reconstruction and Development Programme houses) or on highly subsidized rental, in the case of public hostels and rent to own for household houses of minimum of 40m2. The second category is Gap Income Group for households that earn between R3, 501 – R10, 000 per month. There is also free housing delivery in this category. The mechanisms involved in this housing ownership assistance is through provision of financial assistance to enable the households own a home through either rent – to- own or purchase at a highly subsidized less than market price. It is meant for low- and middle-income earners to cushion the gap between the market prices and what households can afford as it is the case with Gap: Inclusionary scheme. The government also designed the third method purely to assist households that earn a total income of R10, 000 and above per month to access private market houses that are not built in the public housing schemes, but mainly in the suburbs or other private locations.

Depending on the method and mechanism of delivery, households' expectations are met based on the options and solutions targeted by specific methods of delivery. However, the expected general outcome is for

households to have full ownership of houses, either in full or sectional title specification in terms of tenure option, even though there remain rental options for public hostels. The type of response also ranges from delivery of brand-new homes, upgrading or regeneration of existing structures.

Recent developments in the housing delivery include the establishment of Government Employees Housing Scheme (GEHS) in 2015/2016. The scheme is intended to assist public service officials on salary levels 1 to 10 with collateral for access to home loans and home ownership. It was mainly established to address the exclusion of the 'missing middle' in the economy, which means households in the monthly bracket of R3 500 and R15 000, who continue to remain underserviced and excluded from accessing home loans in spite of their regular income and relatively secure employment.

Similar to other government subsidized public goods and benefits, housing delivery in South Africa has been fraught with a number of issues. This ranges from quality of delivery, corruption, security of tenure, availability of land and other irregularities which are not within the scope of this paper to provide further detail. However, they are issues that are being addressed and being dealt with by the government on regular basis. For instance, the Means Test, which is the standard procedure to determine households that qualify for the RDP houses may be circumvented and manipulated by desperate households who earn over and above the threshold. However, the importance, purpose and function of the designed delivery methods and mechanisms in ensuring that affordable houses are provided to South African households cannot be undermined.

Formal Housing Delivery Methods, Funding Mechanisms and Tenure Options attached

Formal Housing Delivery Method	Funding Mechanism	Tenure Options/ Type of Response/ Solution
Subsidised Income Group (RO - R3S00 - per household per month)		
"'RDP" Housing Delivery-National	Subsidy provided by National government for the construction of housing units (top structure).	Full ownership New house on owned stand
Backyard Rental Programme (Gauteng Only)	The Affordable Rental Accommodation Grant is given to qualify landlords to repair and rebuild backyard accommodation	Rental Informal and backyard solution
Upgrading of informal Settlements (UISP) - National	Municipalities will assume role of developer and will Identify informal settlements to be upgraded and apply to the Provincial Housing Department for funding. Subsidies given to individuals.	Full ownership Informal and backyard solution
People's Housing Process - National	A support organization must be established that then approaches the Provincial I Regional office to make a project application on behalf of applicants. Access is then provided to subsidies as well as other support measures.	Full ownership New house on owned stand
Community Residential Units (CRU) - National	Development or refurbishment of public housing stock including hostels CRU progamme provides a subsidy for the total capital costs of project preparation and development of public property and a once-off maintenance grant after 5 years.	Rental I sectional title I full ownership. Upgrading I Regeneration
Enhanced Extended Discount Benefit Scheme - National	This scheme promotes home ownership among tenants of publicly-owned rental housing (municipal and provincial). Facilitated by Consolidation subsidy - transfer of long-term state funded housing. Purchasers can receive a discount on the selling price of the property.	Rent-to-buy
Integrated Residential Developrnent Programme (IRDP) - National	The IRDP enables the development of well-located, socially diverse projects that provide a mix of Income groups and land uses	Rental I sectional title I full ownership. Upgrading I Regeneration
Urban Settlement Development Grant (USDG)	Developed as an Instrument to address linkage between public housing and economic growth to simultaneously contribute to Human Settlements.	
Gap Income Group R3,501 - R10,000 - per household per month		
Social Housing Institutions (SHIs) - National	The subsidy is paid to approved Institutions to provide subsidised housing on deed of sale, rental or rent-to-buy option, on condition beneficiaries may not be compelled to pay the full purchase price and to take transfer within the first four years of receiving subsidy.	Rental I sectional title I full ownership. Upgrading I Regeneration
Financed Linked individual Subsidy Programme (FUSP)-National	In order for those within the gap market to acquire existing properties or to buy a serviced site. The Financed Linked individual Subsidy Programme (FLISP) applies to people who earn R 3 501 and R 1 000 per month.	Full ownership

Gap: Indusionary Housing	Inclusionary housing projects Include both affordable housing and accommodation for middle Income households. This Is usually done by regulating protects done by private developers to provide a percentage of affordable units benefiting households earning below R10 000 per month.	
Private Market R10 000 + (per household per month)		
Developer Implementation, Market Driven; private Sector.	Bonded; Privately funded Usually provided for people earning between R7, 500 and R40. 000 per month.	Rental/ sectional tittle/ upgrading

Housing opportunities provided 1994 - 2019

The government of South Africa through the National Department of human Settlement has continuously delivered a range of housing opportunities to the needy and homeless South African citizens from the year 1994 to 2019 (Table 3)[54] .A total of about 4.8 million housing opportunities have been delivered, out of which were over 3.3 million housing units, 1.1million serviced sites completed and 369 330 Enhanced Extended Discount Benefit Scheme (EEDBS). Within these years, the NDHS has delivered an average of 45 000 serviced sites, 130 533 houses built and 14 773 EEDBS per annum.

Total Housing Opportunities (serviced sites, houses/units and EEDBS) Provided 1994 – 2018

YEAR	SERVICED SITES COMPLETED	HOUSES/UNITS Built	TOTAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES
1994/95	-	82060	82060
1995/96	-	40974	40974
1996/97	-	129 193	129 193
1997/98	-	209 000	209000
1998/99	12756	235635	248 391
1999/2000	-	161572	161 572
2000/01	19711	170 932	190 643
2001/02	-	143 281	143281
2002/03	82 286	131784	214 070
2003/04	42 842	150 773	193615
2004/05	87 284	148 253	235537
2005/06	109 666	134 023	243 689
2006/07	117845	153374	27 1 219
2007/08	82 298	146 465	228 763
2008/09	68469	160 403	228 872
2009/10	64 362	161854	226 216
2010/11	63 546	121879	185425
2011/12	58 587	120 610	179 197
2012/13	45698	115 079	160 777
2013/14	48 193	105936	154 129
2014/15	49 345	94566	143911
2015/16	52 349	99904	152253
2016/17	56886	89186	146072
2017/18	50309	86006	136315
2018/19 (Apr Dec 2018)	28 827	58394	87221

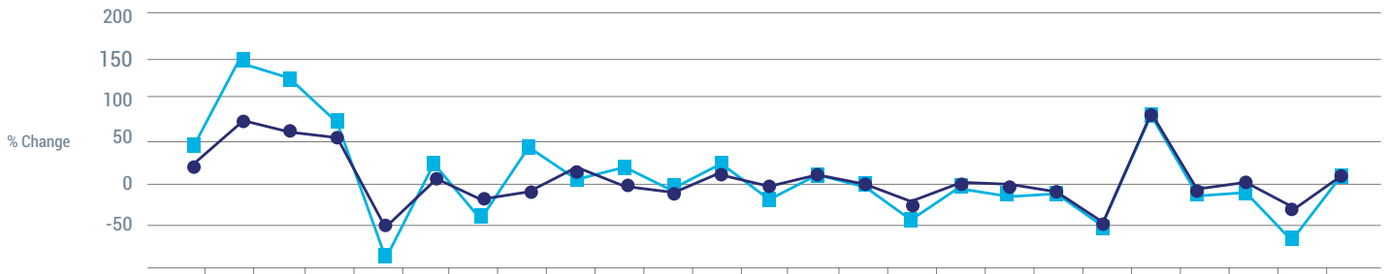
54 2018/19 figures are for 9 months only (April to Dec 2018) and are preliminary.

TOTAL Sites & Houses	1141259	3 263 331	4 404 590
Average per year	45 650	130533	176184
1994 to 2018	EEDBS•		369 330
Average per year	-	-	14773
Total Housing Opportunities(Serviced Sites Houses/ Units & EEDBS)			**4773920**

Source: underlying data from www.africacheck.com

This effort has been implemented based on the government's conception of social protection for the homeless citizens which began in 1994 as Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) under the then President Nelson Mandela. The programme had a high ambition and target to deliver over 1 million Houses in the first five years of inception. Until the present time, the provision of houses and homes for the homeless and the needy has been implemented and set as priority target under succeeding programmes, Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) and more recently, National Development Plan (NDP) that came after the RDP. Various delivery methods and mechanisms had been applied consistently in meeting this important government objective. Having delivered about 3.3 million houses to households on the average of 3.3 persons per household in South Africa, the government through its agencies has made homes available to an estimate of over 6 million people. Even though the optimal target of providing homes to all deserving South African citizens has not yet been met, a giant stride has been made.

Further analysis of housing units and service sites delivery based on annual growth percentage change (Figure, 2) indicates 1996/1997 and 2015/2016 as the peak years when the highest housing opportunities (service sites and houses combined) were delivered, while 1999/2000 and 2018/2019 were the bleak years (based on the current data of 2019 up to December 2018). Similar trend was also observed in the actual housing units that were delivered, which may be explained by a number of variables, including economic conditions (GDP etc), limited budget for the sector at a particular period, corruption, politicking and regime change. However, irrespective of the negative growths observed in some years, there has been an average of 4.6 per cent and 4.7 per cent annual positive growth for housing opportunities and housing units respectively.



	1995/1996	1996/1997	1997/1998	1998/1999	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019 (Dec)	Average
Opportunities	22,343	73,626	61,773	18,847	-34,95	17,993	-24,84	49,406	-9,555	21,652	3,461	11,297	-15,65	0,04776	-1,16	-18,03	-3,359	-10,28	-4,135	-6,63	5,7966	-4,06	-6,68	-36,02	4,6203
Units	22,343	73,626	61,773	55,806	-50,38	5,7931	-16,18	-8,024	14,409	-1,671	-9,598	14,439	-4,505	9,5163	0,9046	-24,7	-1,041	-4,589	-7,945	-46,48	76,216	-10,73	-3,566	-32.1	4,7215

Years

Commitments and Sustainability Achievements towards Public Housing

Financial Commitments

In its bid to deliver homes to the homeless, the NDHS as the frontline public works department in South Africa put in place viable commitments and strategies to sustain the project. This has been demonstrated through the department's financial commitment and the place of Human Settlements annual expenditure, viz-a-viz other government sectors in the country. For instance, for the financial year 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 compared, the department vested more expenditure in 2017/2018 (Figure 3). More money was spent on Housing Development Finance and Programme Support in the two years than in any other programme. But considering the expenditure growth pattern (Figure 4), an annual growth of 9 per cent was observed in the total expenditure.

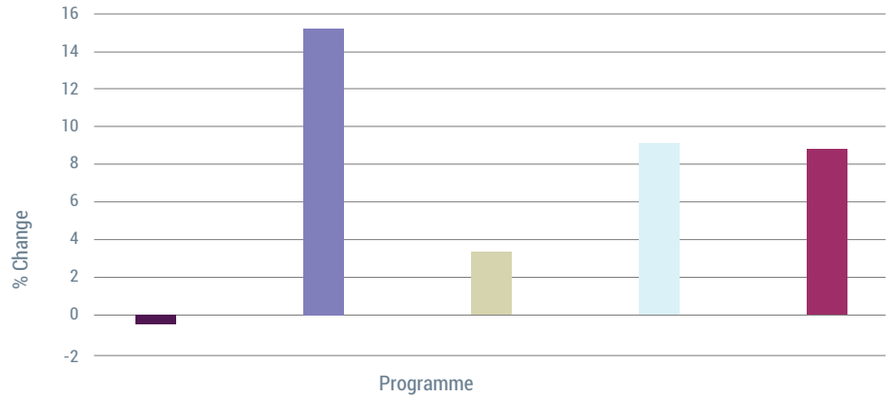
Financial Commitment 2016-2018

	2016/2017	2017/2018
Admin	420827	419775
Policy, Strategy and Planning	86600	99854
Delivery Support	151742	156547
Housing Development Support	29927992	32694309

Surprisingly, more growth was observed in the expenditure on policy, strategy and planning, followed by Housing Development Finance, when compared with other programmes, while Administration expectedly had the least. Considering the year to year change, substantial expenditure was made on Housing development based on the revelation on nominal amount of money spent and percentage change over the year.

Similarly, the government commitment can also be gleaned from the expenditure pattern in 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 financial years (Table 4). Overall, Department of Human Settlement (NDHS) received and spent fourth largest amount of money in both financial years. More importantly, NDHS was also the fourth department (at about 9 per cent) in order of expenditure growth, based on percentage change of amount spent in 2017/2018, when compared with the preceding year 2016/2017.

Growth % change in programme Expenditure 2016/2017-2018/2018



Administration	-0.266573532
Human Settlement Policy, Strategy And Planning	15,30484988
Programme Delivery Support	3,166559028
Housing Development Finance	9,243242915
Total Avarage	9,099398373

Table 4: Government Expenditure 2016/2017 – 2017/2018

Department	2016/17	2017/18	%Change
Basic Education	226.6	24.3	7,2
Economic Affair	201.7	215	6,6
Defence, public order and safety	190	198.7	4,6
Human Settlement and Municipal Infrastructure	179.8	195.8	8,9
Health	170.9	187.5	9,7
Social Protection	164.9	18.0	9,1
General Public Service	70	70.7	1
Higher Education and Training	69	77.5	12,3
Agriculture, rural development and land reform	26	26.5	1,9

Source: Underlying data from www.psam.org.za

Planning, Partnerships and Technical Capacity Sustainability Trajectories

The National Department of Human Settlement (NDHS) addresses the provision of homes to the homeless and people in need of homes in the country through strategic planning, partnerships and capacity building. Through these, the sustainability of the project to provide houses to needy citizens can be assured. The actual achievements of the department in selected aspects within the four financial years 2014/2015 – 2017/2018 attest to what the relevant public work department is doing in realizing the dream of affordable housing to South Africans (Table 5). The department achieved substantially in all the four aspects measured, having driven the distribution of an average of about 4000 Hectares of land, 64588 title deeds, 180 youth bursary programmes supported and training of 602 settlement skills related practitioners in the four-year period.

Planning, Partnerships and Technical Capacity Building 2014/2015 – 2017/2018

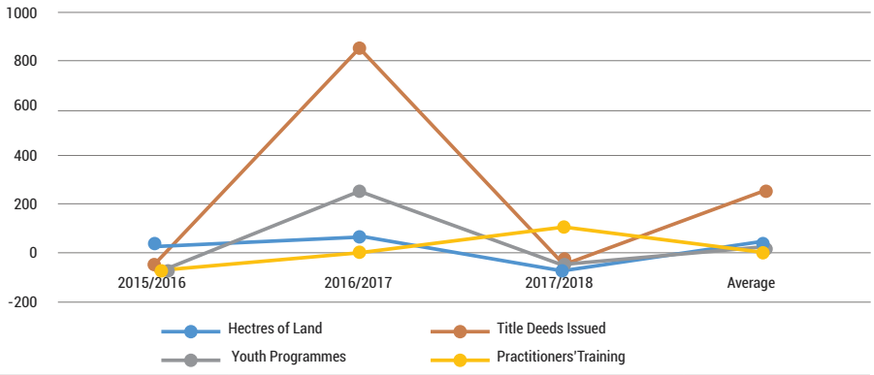
Programme performance indicator	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Average
Number of hectares of well-located land acquired and released for new developments	2,635.1	3,589.1	6,250.385	3,329.446	3,951,0075
Number of pre-and post-1994 tittle deeds issued	26,279	14,266	135,878	81,929	64,588
Number of youth support through the Bursary Programme	300	70	249	101	180
Number of practitioners trained in human settlements skills development programmes	803	350	400	855	602

Source: Underlying data from www.gov.za

On the average within the last four years (Figure 5), all the target areas experienced positive growth, especially the number of title deeds issued which witnessed about 256 per cent. The focus on title deeds can be connected to the desire of the government to ensure that those that have received houses or serviced sites also secure their right of ownership on these properties.

The increase in the title deed and number of hectares of land secured and released to various households in the country is further driven by the recent government policy on Land Expropriation without Compensation. This policy replaces the previous implementation of "willing seller willing buyer" arrangement where the government purchases land from 'land rich' white farmers who own huge tracks of farmland for further distribution to homeless and home needy African households. The authenticity of this practice was questioned and variously flawed on the ground that the land being purchased by the government on behalf of the homeless African households were the same land that were taken from them by force or from where they were displaced from during many years of colonialism and lastly, the apartheid policy in South Africa, which ended in 1994.

Percentage Change in Planning, Partneship and Capacity Building 2015/2016 – 2017/2018



	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	Average Growth %
Hectares of Land	36,2	74,1	-46,7	21,2
Tittle Deeds Issued	-45,7	852,4	-39,7	255,6
Youth Programmes	-76,6	255,7	-59,4	29,8
Practitioner's	-56,4	14,2	113,7	23,8

Conclusion

The Republic of South Africa government has addressed the social problem of homelessness from various directions, mainly through legislations, policies which are further sustained by commitments and partnerships. Considering the implementation of this noble project, the South African government through its frontline public works agency, the Department of Human Settlement has delivered housing opportunities and units to a huge number of households and population that is equivalent to that of some medium size countries. The basis for this social provisioning is enshrined in the 1996 constitution, which makes provision of housing to the homeless the responsibility of the government. In this regard, most houses were (are) built and delivered to the homeless and people in need of homes by the government free-of-charge through Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) and other succeeding programmes, which puts South African government priority in addressing homelessness in the country as one of the most generous in the world. Even though, further analysis has revealed consistent positive growth in the housing delivery through legislated methods and mechanisms in the country, the housing programme is faced with some challenges that are material and human in nature. Addressing homelessness still remains one of the priority programmes of South African government through its public works agencies. Even though giant strides have been made over the years in delivering over 3.3 million housing units and 4.8 Million housing opportunities, many more houses are yet to be built as the population increases more rapidly than the supply. There seems to be a vicious, unending cycle of housing need in the country, which need to be addressed substantially.

Policy Recommendations

Against the observations on the present homelessness situation in South Africa, the following recommendations are made:

- The government should sustain and intensify issuance of national identity document, birth certificates and other civic registrations to ensure that no citizen is excluded from social benefits 2) Housing benefits right should be extended to the previously excluded population, such as the orphaned children at their age of 18 years
- The responsible government agency should implement shelter rights for all citizens, including the mentally challenged
- The National Housing Needs Register should be designed to accommodate housing succession information. This will entail a follow up on houses whose originally allotted owners are deceased to officially hand such houses over to next family member in succession and register them as such.
- Implementation of complete ban on sale or purchase RDP (freely acquired houses) and other types of houses.
- Implementation of greater access to housing through compulsory employment policy on housing, as currently done with Medical Aid and pension benefits. Employers must provide houses for employees through rent-to-own etc.
- Extension of public housing to semi-rural areas to arrest the influx into urban areas to obtain houses.
- Similarly, economic diversification and strengthening of rural economies should be made a priority in order to create jobs in the rural areas and limit rural urban migration.
- Besides, economic development in the country should be made more evenly distributed across provinces, municipalities and local authority areas. This will lead to more even distribution of economically active population, including those in housing need, which is perceived as more severe in some cities and provinces than in others.
- The government should apply the appropriate legislation to expropriate more land for the purpose of redistribution to the landless and building houses for the homeless.

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Policies to Reduce Homelessness among Women and Female-Headed Households

by Ifeyinwa Ofong, National Coordinator, WorldWIDE Network Nigeria &
Board Member Habitat International Coalition

Introduction

This paper will attempt to build on the objectives of this expert group meeting, which includes, a review of major drivers of homelessness, identifying the existing gaps and priority areas for interventions, as well as making specific policy recommendations on effective housing and social protection policies to address homelessness in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Homelessness as already been defined, means people who do not have a place to call home. The word "homelessness" also includes people who sleep in warming centres, homeless shelters, or in abandoned buildings, parking garages, or other places not meant for humans to live in.

As already been said in other presentations, there are different reasons why people become homeless in the first place, so also are the challenges and effects of homelessness on individuals and societies.

Similarly, there have been some discussions on some of the systemic barriers that perpetuate inequalities and social exclusion of women, other vulnerable groups like the elderly, people with disabilities and others who live in the margins of society in the context of the 2030 Agenda.

Therefore, this paper, in line with the stated objectives will attempt to highlight the following issues from the civil society perspective:

- The drivers of homelessness among women and female headed households and the challenges faced by them.
- How we can ensure that women and female headed households have access to affordable housing.
- Policies and measures to reduce homelessness among women and female-headed Households

Background

The Sustainable Development Goals is about leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest first. Incidentally the group that has been left behind is the homeless persons. There is no agreed language on homelessness in any official United Nations document or resolutions that can inspire global and national policy. A few documents talk about adequate housing for all and housing as a human right.

For instance, article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948 states that:

"Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment…."

Generally speaking, homeless persons are criminalized. People tend to make moral accusations on them. They are sometimes seen as criminals, prostitutes and do not have access to social services, no fixed address and are invincible so to speak. They are the most abandoned group in the society. How can the Sustainable Development Goals be achieved without them? We do not know how many they are, and no concrete policy on how to address them.

While homelessness is a global issue, the bulk of homeless persons may be found in sub- Saharan Africa and Asia, given the level of poverty, unemployment, inequalities and challenges to social inclusion existing in these regions. One major concern is that a good proportion of these homeless persons are women and female headed households.

Women become homeless because they do not have a home, and not because they are lazy or useless or not responsible. The systems and institutions have failed them hence they are homeless. Many live-in shelters, shanty settlements and slums. There are many treaties and conventions our governments have signed on to. A good example is the International Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 1979; which was adopted by UN General Assembly resolution 34/180 on the 18th of December 1979, entered into force on the 3rd of September 1981, and ratified by about 163 countries.

Article 14 (2)(h) of CEDAW states that: **"State parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas in order to ensure on a basis of equality of men and women, that they participate in and benefit from rural development and in particular, shall ensure to such women ..(h) enjoy adequate living conditions, particularly in relation to housing, sanitation, electricity and water supply, transportation and communication.**

Similarly, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes housing as a human right. The United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights have said that human right to adequate housing consists of seven elements which include security of tenure, affordability and habitability among other elements. Homeless persons do not have access to housing or shelter that meets any of these criteria.

Again, the SDGs, indicator 11.1 states that "By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade the slums. This means that homeless persons are entitled to a safe and affordable housing, including women of course.

Therefore, in proposing policies and measures to reduce homelessness among women and female headed households, we need to review the following:

Drivers of homelessness among women and female headed households

Women as slum dwellers: These are women living in inadequate and overcrowded places. About 1.2 billion people are said to live in slums. As a result of urbanization, women form a sizable proportion of those who migrate from rural areas to urban areas in search of a better life. No sooner than later, do the women realize that the patriarchal culture prevailing in the rural areas exists in the urban areas, making conditions and services hostile to them. Due to lack or limited educational qualifications, many women are not able to secure high paying jobs in urban areas. They are then confronted with drudgery, poverty and lack of adequate housing. They end up in slums and shanty settlements from where they are often evicted without notice by town or municipal planners and administrators. The women become homeless, even though they bear the burden of raising their children. They do not have security of tenure, they are open to hunger, no hygienic toilet facilities, vulnerable to crime and violence and no good source of income.

Women as refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP): A case in point is that of Syria, Venezuela, Nigeria, DRC, and so on. About 70 million persons are displaced due to war, conflict and extremism. In these cases, women live in open tents and camps, without adequate facilities. Some women often leave the tents and camps for the streets, due to the unbearable conditions, such as lack of sleeping spaces, hunger and neglects meted to them and their children by some of the authorities and others. Some women have been raped and sexually abused my soldiers and men who were supposed to protect and help them. An example of such case in point was the story, which was reported by Daily Sun newspaper on the 18th of July 2010 that Liberian women were searching for soldiers, who fathered over 250,000 children during the Liberian crisis. The soldiers served in the ECOWAS monitoring group peace keeping force during Liberia's war. Many of the women became homeless due to the war.

Women and forced evictions: The problem of homelessness is a problem of forced evictions, lack of housing and ownership of land. In most of the world's poorest areas, more than half of the households are headed by women. Traditionally, in many African communities, women lack access to land and property ownership, credit facilities and finance for affordable housing. Of particular mention are the women who separated or divorced from their husbands. They are often sent out with only few clothes, as the husbands tend to keep the house and other properties. Similarly, widows particularly those without male children are evicted by their in- laws who dispossessed them of their homes and lands. Other evictions are those carried out by government authorities which also result to homelessness among many women. Homelessness and landlessness increase women's vulnerability to physical violence. Many of these women lack knowledge of human and legal rights.

Violence against women: At least one out of every three women has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime. Violence against women is a major obstacle to women attaining equality, development and peace. In order to escape the violence in their homes, some women become homeless. They run to safe spaces, such as shelters, women's centres or 6 transition homes, to find refuge, because their homes or communities are unsafe. In these spaces, homeless women and their children who have had violence perpetrated upon them find refuge and compassion. The Global Network of Women's Shelters was founded in 2008, to unite and strengthen these safe spaces and women's shelter globally to make a change and end violence against women.

This group of homeless women is often not accounted for when homeless people are discussed, yet there are many of them spread across the world living in temporary shelters run by civil society and faith-based organizations. The critical work of women's shelters and shelter networks in helping homeless women and their children fleeing violence can be seen in the case of about 53,230 women and 34,794 children who sought refuge and were helped in such shelters in 46 countries on one day in 2014-2015. GNWS has such women shelters in Africa, America (North, Central and South America), Asia, Europe, Oceania, Middle East and North Africa.

What can we do to ensure that women and female headed households have access to affordable housing?

We need to carryout measurements on homelessness. The governments need the political will to start collecting data on homeless persons, who they are, how many are they, their specific needs and the main drivers of homelessness, particularly in women and female headed households. There may be country / regional specifics and peculiarities that may emerge from this exercise.

Civil Society Organizations can assist the governments to measure and collect data on homeless persons. We should also note that problems and challenges affect men and women differently. Therefore, we need disaggregated data. We also need to speak up that the New Urban Agenda needs to tackle homelessness before green cities.

A number of conventions and protocols state that housing is a human right. We need to clarify the specific housing rights obligations by our governments. We should use existing housing rights provisions as a basis for more advocacy and applying pressure on governments to ensure that these rights are protected and enforced. In addition, efforts should be made to create more awareness among communities, women groups and civil society organizations, on the conventions and provisions on housing rights, and invoking these provisions in legal courts in support of housing rights for homeless persons especially for women and female headed households.

Countries should be encouraged to build affordable and adequate low- income housing units for women and female headed households. We should advocate for financing to be available for women to end homelessness. We realize that shelter is expensive, however it must be provided for all.

The United Nations and its relevant commissions and agencies should focus on homelessness among women in its priority theme. There should be a special task force or Working Committee at the United Nations level on homelessness, and among women in particular.

It is comforting to note that the priority theme for 58th session for the Commission for Social Development is Affordable Housing and Social Protection Systems for all to address homelessness. This priority theme should be addressed with the mindset that Housing is a human right.

In addressing the Sustainable Development Goal 10: to reduce inequalities should be made to emphasize homelessness, inequalities and poverty, with women being the central focus. The United Nations should also take it upon itself to set up units or charge already existing ones, to help measure the number and categories of homeless persons in various regions. Implementation of Resolutions and policies reached on homelessness should be monitored and evaluated periodically. Offenders should be named and shamed.

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Policies and measures to reduce homelessness among women and female headed households

Every measure and policy should aim at preventing, assessing, measuring and systemically ending homelessness among women and female headed households.

Social housing: The National Social Protection Policy of Nigeria, states that there should be "Decent and affordable housing for the homeless, the monetary poor, and families living in overcrowded and unhealthy conditions". This policy objective is to improve access to housing for extreme poor and people living in poor housing conditions. To prevent homelessness among women, countries and their governments must have social protection policies on the provision of adequate and affordable housing for low-income persons. There must be the political will on the part of the government to implement and enforce this policy in order to provide adequate shelter for all. Such deliberate measures if taken will ensure that women and female headed households have access to adequate and affordable housing which will definitely reduce homelessness.

Access to land and secure tenure: Promulgating or reforming pro-poor and women friendly land use act can reduce homelessness, as well as make inhabitants of slums and informal settlements to obtain security of tenure and regularize their status. There should be enforceable policies such that will give all women equal property rights, rights to inheritance, affordable housing and including the property rights of widows. This is in line with SDGs 5.1: End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere. Similarly, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences said in:

5.a: Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

5.c: Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

In addition, the already existing policies and agreements against forced evictions should be enforced and make to work, as this will reduce homelessness.

Economic empowerment policies: Sound economic empowerment policies to reduce poverty among women and increase their earning power should be pursued by the government. In addition, well-funded employment and community programs to help women to become independent should be encouraged. There should also be equal wages for men and women carrying out similar roles. Social protection policies and programmes aimed at supporting female headed households to cater for their family and provide adequate housing should be implemented and enforced.

Participation and representation of women in decision making: There should be a policy towards reshaping legal and institutional frameworks and governance systems. In many countries, particularly in Africa, we have less than 35 per cent of women participating in decision making and leadership positions, even when such provisions have been made in the constitution. When women are excluded or not well represented in processes that determine their welfare, such processes produce decisions and actions that do not favour women. A case in point is the incoming 9th Senate in Nigeria, where out of the 109 elected senators, only 7 are women. We are all aware of the importance of the work of the Senate in democracy and governance of any country, and yet women represent less than 7 per cent of the incoming senate in Nigeria.

We need to strongly address these inequalities and other factors that are challenging the inclusion of women in governance and other aspects of our society. This is the time to end discrimination of women in decision making and leadership positions. This may call for updating outdated laws, properly implementing progressive laws and domestication of conventions and protocols already signed unto by governments. To reduce homeless among women and female headed households, we need such policies that will take all these issues and factors into consideration.

Finally, we need policies and partnerships on continuous data gathering / measurement of homeless persons, to ascertain, those exiting and those coming into homelessness, as well as identifying emerging issues which may affect already implementing programmes.

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Affordable Housing and Homelessness: Challenges across the OECD

by Marissa Plouin, Housing Policy Analyst, OECD Directorate for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs

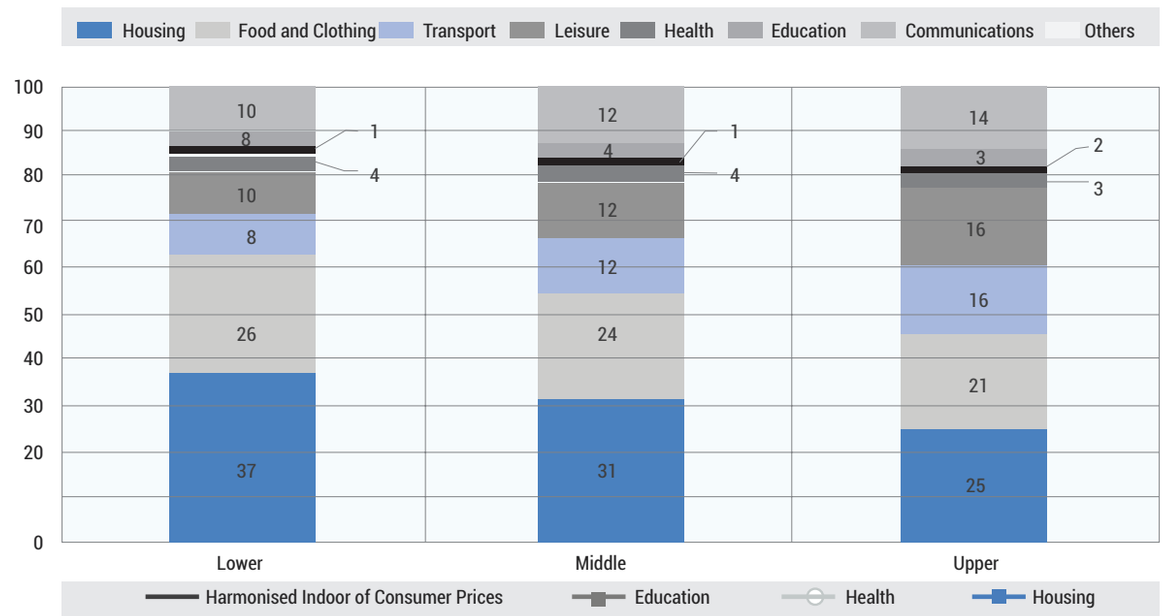
Affordable housing across the OECD

Housing trends vary considerably across OECD countries, in terms of tenure, affordability and quality, representing diverse historical contexts, household preferences and policy priorities. Common among many OECD countries, however, is that housing affordability tends to be a significant challenge for renters and low-income households (OECD, forthcoming). Affordable housing is also a top concern among middle-income households, and especially younger cohorts, who face rising housing costs and struggle to become homeowners (OECD, 2019[1]). Housing quality remains a concern for many households with children, notably with respect to overcrowding (OECD, forthcoming). Homelessness and housing exclusion remain persistent policy challenges, and in a third of OECD countries, homelessness has increased in recent years.

In many countries, housing costs are high and have increased in recent years. Housing is the single-largest household expenditure on average and has become less affordable across the OECD. Across the OECD, households spend the largest share of their budget on housing, relative to all other household budget items; this holds true for low-, middle- and high-income households (Figure 1). Although there are considerable differences within countries, house prices have increased three times faster than household median income over the last two decades and have risen faster than overall inflation (Figure 2) (OECD, 2019[1]).

Housing is the largest spending item of all households

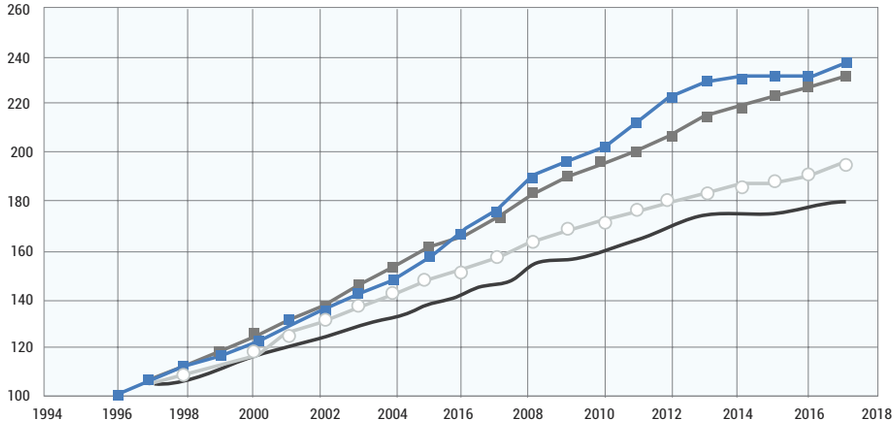
Items as shares of household budgets by income class, OECD average, 2016 or latest year available



Note: OECD average includes the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom. Source: OECD (2019), *Under Pressure: The Squeezed Middle Class*. Estimates based on microdata from the Eurostat Household Budget Surveys (EU HBS) 2010 and tabulations from the EU HBS 2015 for European countries, except France (Enquête Budget de Famille 2011), Spain (Encuesta de Presupuestos Familiares 2015) and the United Kingdom (Food and Living Conditions Survey 2014). Estimates draw on Pesquisa de Orçamentos Familiares 2009 for Brazil, VIII Encuesta de Presupuestos Familiares 2017 for Chile, Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares 2016 for Mexico, Income and Expenditure Survey 2011 for South Africa, and Consumer Expenditure Surveys 2016 for the United States.

Housing prices increased faster than overall inflation since 1996

Average evolution of nominal prices, OECD average.

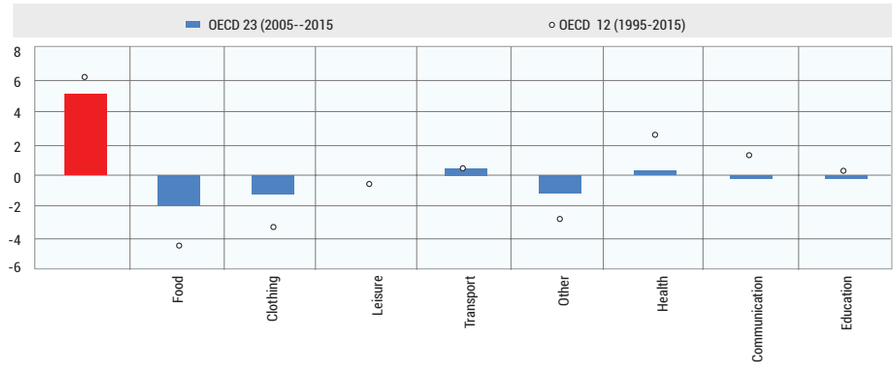


Challenges in affording homeownership for middle-income households

Middle-income households – especially younger cohorts – face rising housing costs and are finding it increasingly difficult to become homeowners. Housing has been the main driver of rising middle-class expenditure, increasing more than any other expenditure item in middle-income household budgets between 1995 and 2015 (Figure 3). Increased spending on housing, coupled with the rising costs of other core consumption goods, such as health and education, has led to a growing debt burden of middle-class households. As a result, it is becoming increasingly unrealistic for many young people to access homeownership. In many countries, younger generations are far less likely to purchase a property than their parents (OECD, 2019[1]). In some countries, the challenge is especially striking: For instance, in the United Kingdom, home ownership rates among youth have dropped overall, and most significantly for those in the middle-income bracket: 65 per cent of middle-income youth were homeowners in 1995-96, compared to just 27 per cent two decades later (Cribb, Hood and Hoyle, 2018).

Middle-income household spending has increased

Percentage point changes in shares by item of household budgets, OECD average, 1995-2015 and 2005-2015.



Note: OECD average includes Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom. *Source*: Data from OECD.stat, Harmonised Indices of Consumer Prices (HICPs) by COICOP divisions, cited in (OECD, 2019[1]).

Note: OECD 23 unweighted average refers to the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Chile, Czech Republic, Germany, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Latvia, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States. OECD 12 unweighted average refers to the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Chile, Finland, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and the United States. Data for Chile in 2005

refer to 2010. Source: (OECD, 2019[1]) Estimates based on microdata from the Eurostat Household Budget Surveys (EU HBS) 2010 and tabulations from the EU HBS 2015, 2005 and 1999 and 1994 for European countries except Spain (Encuesta de Presupuestos Familiares 2015) and the United Kingdom (Food and Living Conditions Survey 2014). Estimates draw on Pesquisa de Orçamentos Familiares for Brazil, Encuesta de Presupuestos Familiares for Chile, Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares for Mexico, Income and Expenditure Survey for South Africa, and Consumer Expenditure Surveys for United States.

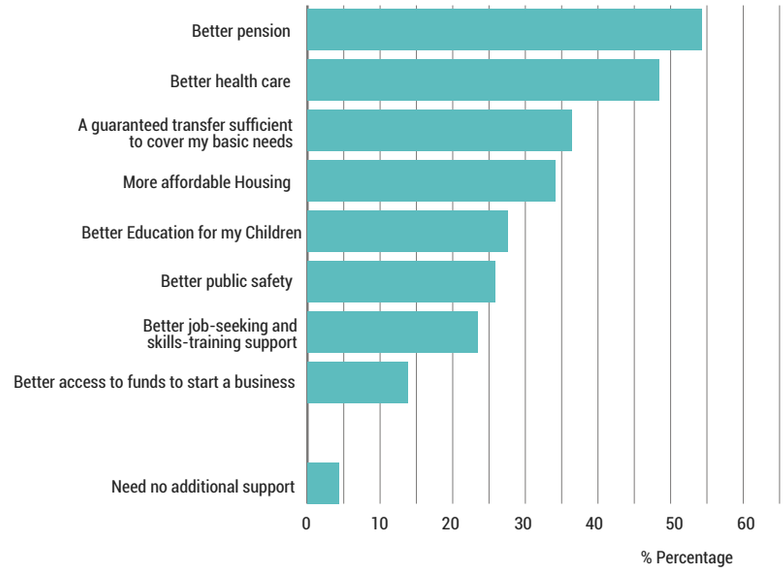
Housing as a priority across OECD countries

Affordable housing is a top policy concern of both governments and citizens across the OECD: 25 countries responding to the 2019 OECD Questionnaire on Affordable and Social Housing (QuASH) identified affordable housing as a key policy objective (OECD, 2019 [2]). Further, in the 2018 OECD *Risks That Matter* survey, which asked over 22,000 people in 21 OECD countries in 2018 about their social and economic risks[55], adequate housing was among the top five concerns of all people surveyed (Figure 4). Younger people rate concerns about affordable housing even higher: on average, around a third of respondents aged 20 to 34 reported that securing or maintaining adequate housing was among their top three short-term concerns, with the share peaking at 40 per cent among 25 to 29-year olds (Figure 5) (OECD, 2019[3]). Only one-third of all respondents reported that they had access to good quality public housing services.

55 The survey, conducted for the first time in two waves in the spring and autumn of 2018, draws on a representative sample of 22 000 people aged 18 to 70 years old in 21 OECD countries: Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia and the United States. Respondents are asked about their social and economic concerns, how well they think government responds to their needs and expectations, and what policies they would like to see in the future.

Affordable housing is a top concern of citizens

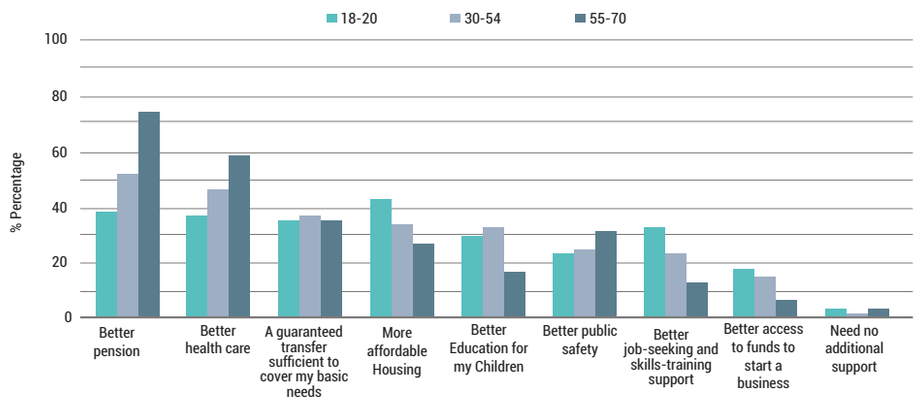
Percentage of respondents to the 2018 OECD Risks That Matter survey identifying each support as one of the top-three supports they'd need most from government to make them and their family feel more economically secure, unweighted cross-country average, 2018.



Note: Respondents were asked what supports they would need most from government to make them and their family feel more economically secure. They could choose from a list of nine supports, and had the option of selecting zero, one, two or three supports. Source: OECD Secretariat estimates based on (OECD, 2019[3]).

Younger generations are especially concerned about affordable housing.

Share of respondents to OECD Risks That Matter Survey identifying each support as one of the top-three supports they would need most from government to make them and their family "feel more economically secure," by age group, unweighted cross-country average.

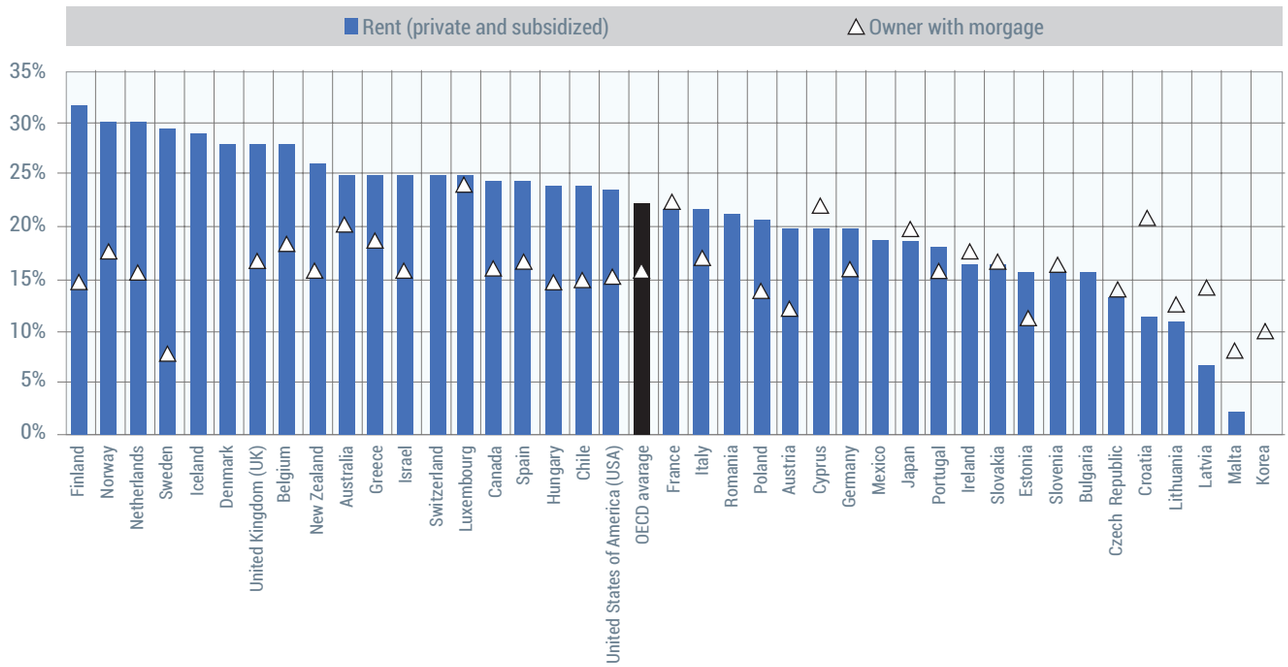


Note: Respondents were asked what supports they would need most from government to make them and their family feel more economically secure. They could choose from a list of nine supports, and had the option of selecting zero, one, two or three supports. Supports are ranked according to the overall percentage of respondents choosing each as one of their top three. Source: (OECD, 2019[3]).

Renters and low-income households face a significant housing burden. On average, renters spend a bigger share of their disposable income on housing costs, relative to owners with a mortgage. In 2018, renters – including those in the private rental market and those in subsidised rental housing – spent 22.3% of their disposable income on housing costs, compared to 15.6 per cent among owners with a mortgage (Figure 6) (OECD, 2019 [2]2019). In some countries, the spending difference between renters and owners with a mortgage is especially large: in Sweden, renters spent on average 29 per cent of their disposable income on housing relative to 8 per cent among owners with a mortgage in 2018, as well as Norway (30 per cent vs. 18 per cent), Finland (32 per cent vs. 15 per cent), the Netherlands (30 per cent vs. 15 per cent) and the United Kingdom (28 per cent vs. 16 per cent).

Figure 6. Households' housing cost burden (mortgage and rent cost) as a share of disposable income, 2018 or latest year available

Median of the mortgage burden (principal repayment and interest payments) or rent burden (private market and subsidised rent) as a share of disposable income, in percent.



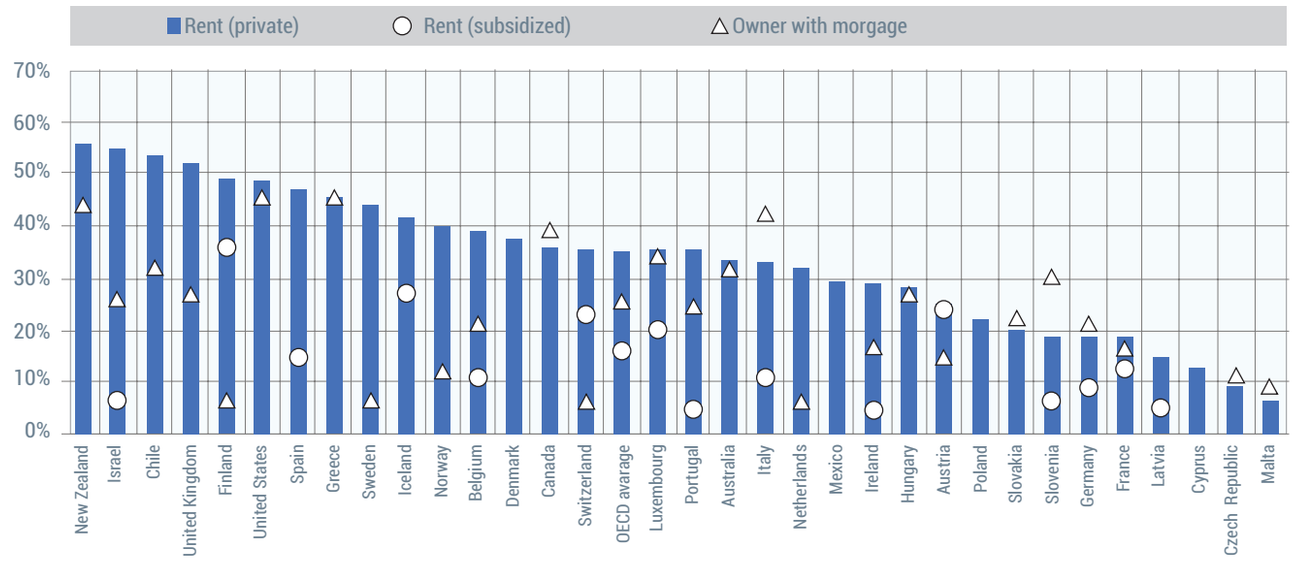
Note: 1. In Chile, Mexico, Korea and the United States gross income instead of disposable income is used due to data limitations. No data on mortgage principal repayments available for Denmark due to data limitations. 2. Results only shown if category composed of at least 100 observations. 3. The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law. a) Note by Turkey: The information in this document with reference to "Cyprus" relates to the southern part of the Island. There is no single authority representing both Turkish and Greek Cypriot people on the Island. Turkey recognises the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

(TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution is found within the context of the United Nations, Turkey shall preserve its position concerning the "Cyprus issue". b) Note by all the European Union Member States of the OECD and the European Union: The Republic of Cyprus is recognised by all members of the United Nations with the exception of Turkey. The information in this document relates to the area under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus. *Source:* OECD Affordable Housing Database, 2019, www.oecd.org/social/affordablehousing-database.htm. OECD calculations based on European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU SILC) survey 2018 except for Ireland, Malta, and the United Kingdom (2017), Iceland and Switzerland (2016) and the Slovak Republic (2015); the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics Survey (HILDA) for Australia (2017); the Canada Income Survey (CIS) for Canada (2016); Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional (CASEN) for Chile (2017); calculations from the Bank of Israel for Israel (2017); the Korean Housing Survey (2012); Japan Household Panel Study (JHPS) for Japan (2016); Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares (ENIGH) for Mexico (2014); Household Expenditure Survey (HES, Stats NZ) for New Zealand (2017); American Community Survey (ACS) for the United States (2016).

While many households struggle to afford housing, low-income dwellers are particularly overburdened by housing costs[56]. In seventeen OECD countries, more than a third of low-income households in private rental dwellings spent over 40% of their disposable income on housing in 2018. The same was true for low-income owners in seven OECD countries (Figure 7). In Greece and the United States, low income dwellers, regardless of tenure, face a large housing cost burden: in both countries, at least two out of five low-income dwellers spent over 40% of disposable income on rent or a mortgage in 2018 (OECD, 2019 [2]).

Low-income dwellers face a significant housing cost burden.

Share of population in the bottom quintile of the income distribution spending more than 40 per cent of disposable income on mortgage and rent, by tenure, in percent, 2018 or latest year.



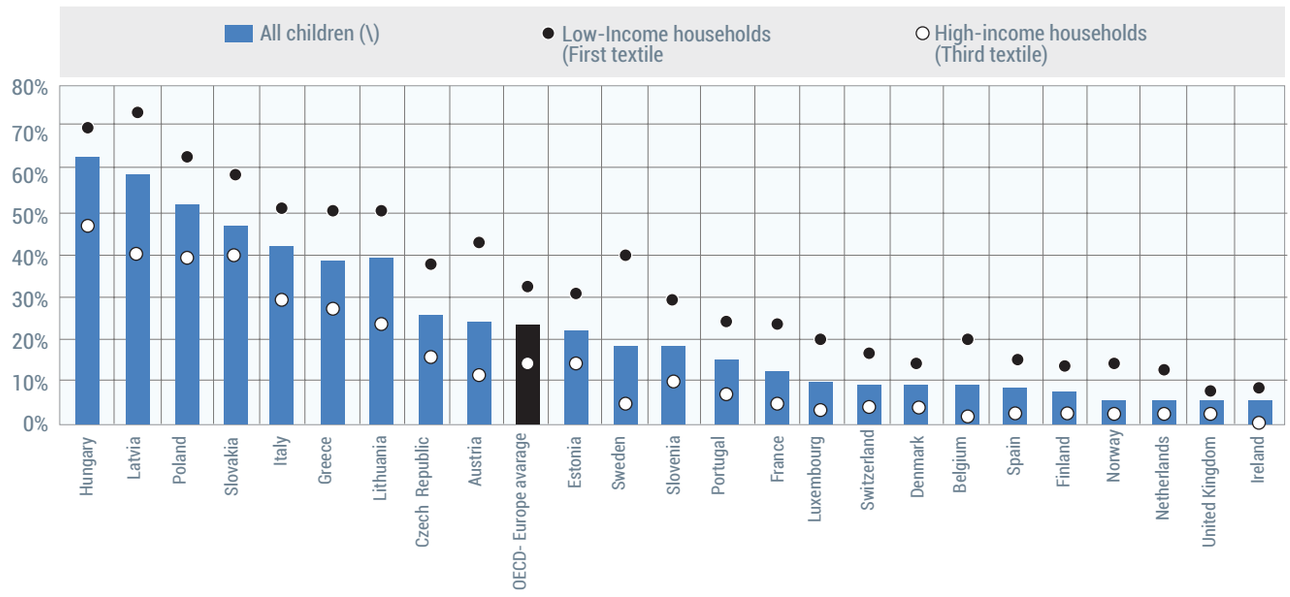
56 The housing cost overburden rate is defined as the share of households spending more than 40% of their disposable income on housing costs. Housing costs can refer to: (1) a narrow definition based on rent and mortgage costs (principal repayment and mortgage interest); or (2), a wider definition that also includes costs of mandatory services and charges, regular maintenance and repair, taxes and utilities, also referred to as "total housing costs."

Note: 1. In Chile, Mexico, Korea and the United States gross income instead of disposable income is used due to data limitations. No data on mortgage principal repayments available for Denmark due to data limitations. 2. Results only shown if category composed of at least 100 observations. 3. The statistical data for Israel are supplied by and under the responsibility of the relevant Israeli authorities. The use of such data by the OECD is without prejudice to the status of the Golan Heights, East Jerusalem and Israeli settlements in the West Bank under the terms of international law. a) Note by Turkey: The information in this document with reference to "Cyprus" relates to the southern part of the Island. There is no single authority representing both Turkish and Greek Cypriot people on the Island. Turkey recognises the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution is found within the context of the United Nations, Turkey shall preserve its position concerning the "Cyprus issue". b) Note by all the European Union Member States of the OECD and the European Union: The Republic of Cyprus is recognised by all members of the United Nations with the exception of Turkey. The information in this document relates to the area under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus. Source: OECD Affordable Housing Database, 2019, www.oecd.org/social/affordablehousing-database.htm. OECD calculations based on European Union Statistice on Income and Living Conditions (EU SILC) survey 2018 except for Ireland, Malta, and the United Kingdom (2017), Iceland and Switzerland (2016) and the Slovak Republic (2015); the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics Survey (HILDA) for Australia (2017); the Canada Income Survey (CIS) for Canada (2016); Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional (CASEN) for Chile (2017); calculations from the Bank of Israel for Israel (2017); the Korean Housing Survey (2012); Japan Household Panel Study (JHPS) for Japan (2016); Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares (ENIGH) for Mexico (2014); Household Expenditure Survey (HES, Stats NZ) for New Zealand (2017); American Community Survey (ACS) for the United States (2016).

Households with children are more likely to live in overcrowded housing. Children are particularly exposed to poor housing quality. On average, more than 1 in five children between 0-17 live in an overcrowded household in European OECD countries, with considerable variation across countries (Figure 8). Over half of all children live in overcrowded households in Hungary, Latvia and Poland, compared to less than 8 per cent in Ireland, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Norway and Finland. In all countries for which data are available, children in low-income households are much more likely than those in high-income households to face overcrowded conditions.

Figure 8. Children are particularly exposed to poor housing quality

Share of children (aged 0-17) living in overcrowded households in European OECD countries, by income group, percentages, 2017



Note: 1. No information for Australia, Chile, Germany, Israel, Japan, Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Turkey and United States due to data limitations. 2. Data for Switzerland refer to 2016.Source: OECD Secretariat calculations based on the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) survey, see OECD Child Well-Being Data Portal under www.oecd.org/els/family/child-well-being/data, OECD, 2019 [4].

Homelessness and housing instability

Homelessness and housing instability remain persistent policy challenges. Homelessness affects a relatively small share of the population in OECD countries, but the absolute number of homeless people can be significant. According to the latest national statistics, there are roughly 1.9 million homeless people across 35 countries for which data are available, representing less than 1 per cent of the total population in each country – but this figure is likely an underestimate (OECD, 2019[2], OECD, 2020). The rates of people experiencing housing instability are much higher, ranging from 2 per cent to 25 per cent of the population (OECD, 2015). One study of housing precariousness in Europe – measured across four dimensions of security, affordability, quality and access to services – estimated that half of the population in the European Union experience at least one dimension of housing precariousness, whilst nearly 3 per cent (more than 15 million people) experience three or more dimensions (Clair et al., 2019).

Cross-country comparison of data on homelessness is difficult, because of pertinent definitional and measurement issues (Box 1). As a result, official statistics often fail to capture the full extent of homelessness. For example, such statistics leave out the "hidden homeless". While there is no formal definition, the hidden homeless may include:

- People who are not in contact with any administrative support services, and are thus not registered in any service database;
- people who may not be eligible for support services, or may not be considered a priority case to access limited public support services; and/or
- people living in unsustainable or inadequate shelter (e.g. in their car, with friends or family).

For instance, the London Assembly estimated that around one in ten people in London experienced "hidden homelessness" in a given year, and that one in five 16 to 25-year olds "couch surfed" in 2014 – roughly half of them for over a month (London Assembly Housing Committee, 2017). Some groups may be more likely to experience hidden homelessness, such as women (Fabian,2016), youth, LGTBI, victims of domestic abuse, asylum seekers, or people living in rural areas and smaller communities.

BOX 1

Cross-country comparison of homelessness is a challenge

Comparing homeless estimates across countries is difficult, as countries do not define or count the homeless population in the same way. There is no internationally agreed definition of homelessness. Even within countries, different definitions of homelessness may co-exist.

Definitional differences drive some of the variation in the reported incidence of homelessness across countries; these differences hamper international comparison and an understanding of the differences in homelessness rates and risks across countries. For instance, several countries that adopt a broader definition of homelessness report a higher incidence of homelessness, like Australia (0.48% of the population in 2016) and New Zealand (0.94% in 2013), relative to countries with a narrower definition, such as Chile (0.07%), Portugal (0.04%) or Japan (0.00%). However, definitional differences do not fully explain the variation in homelessness rates across countries: several countries with a broad definition of homelessness report among the lowest incidences of homelessness, such as Norway (0.07% in 2016), Poland (0.08% in 2019), Finland (0.10% in 2018) and Denmark (0.11% in 2019).

Beyond definitional differences, there are a number of challenges in the scope and methods of data collection that might affect measuring the full extent of homelessness. For instance, the type of housing solution of someone experiencing homelessness – whether it is a shelter or emergency accommodation service, temporary lodging with family or friends, or living out of a car or on the street – will be better reflected in some data collection methods than others:

- *Administrative data* (such as registries from shelters and local authorities) can be an effective means to assess the number of individuals using homeless services, and may better capture the flows of people who transition in and out of homelessness over a given period; these estimates tend to be much larger than point-in-time estimates. However, these data only paint a partial picture of homelessness, as they leave out people who are not in contact with such services (such as unsheltered homeless individuals or those who otherwise do not seek out support).
- *Point-in-time estimates* (such as the street counts), depending on how such estimates are conducted, may be more effective in reaching homeless people who do not seek out formal support, and provide an estimate of the stock of the homeless population on a given night. However, such estimates fail to capture those who may be transitionally or temporarily homeless in a given jurisdiction; they thus represent an underestimate of the full extent of people who have experienced homelessness over a given period.
- *General population and census data* provide additional information about some segments of the homeless population, but such data are not collected on an annual basis.

Incomplete geographic coverage and limited frequency and consistency of data collection represent additional methodological challenges. Efforts have been made through the OECD Questionnaire on Social and Affordable Housing to collect information on the number of homeless persons over several years. Nevertheless, it was not possible to collect data for the same years for all countries as the timing of homelessness counts is not harmonised across countries. Further, in some cases, changes to the definition and/or methodology underlying data collection does not allow for reliable comparison over time. Some countries do not have a regular system of data collection on homelessness in place, and rely on information from one-off surveys without reference to one another.

For more information, refer to the OECD Affordable Housing Database, Indicator HC 3.1, www.oecd.org/social/affordable-housing-database/housing-conditions/.

In one-third of OECD countries, the homeless rate has increased in recent years, while it has declined or remained stable in a quarter of OECD countries (OECD, 2019 [2]). In many OECD countries, homelessness is concentrated in big cities. For instance, Dublin accounted for around 66 per cent of the national homeless population in Ireland in 2019, even though it only represents about a quarter of the country's total population (OECD, 2019 [2]). National trends in homelessness can also mask different developments across regions and cities within a country. For instance, a number of large metro areas have seen their homeless populations swell, even as national averages record more modest changes.

Homeless populations are heterogeneous, and increasingly diverse.

First, it is important to distinguish between the chronically and transitionally homeless, as they have very different support needs. Chronically homeless people, who represent the minority of the homeless population, have high support needs and may benefit from intensive integrated

housing and services (OECD, 2015)[57]. Transitionally homeless people have lower support needs; their homelessness tends to be short-term and may result from a loss of job, loss of affordable housing, transition from institutional or social care, or a relationship breakdown (OECD, 2015). Second, some groups, such as single adult men, indigenous populations, and people leaving institutional care (such as prisons, mental hospitals, foster care, or the military), tend to be overrepresented among the homeless, though this can vary by country. In many countries, the composition of the homeless population has become increasingly diverse, with countries reporting a rise in homelessness amongst, inter alia, families with children, youth and seniors (OECD, 2020).

Policy responses and areas of inquiry

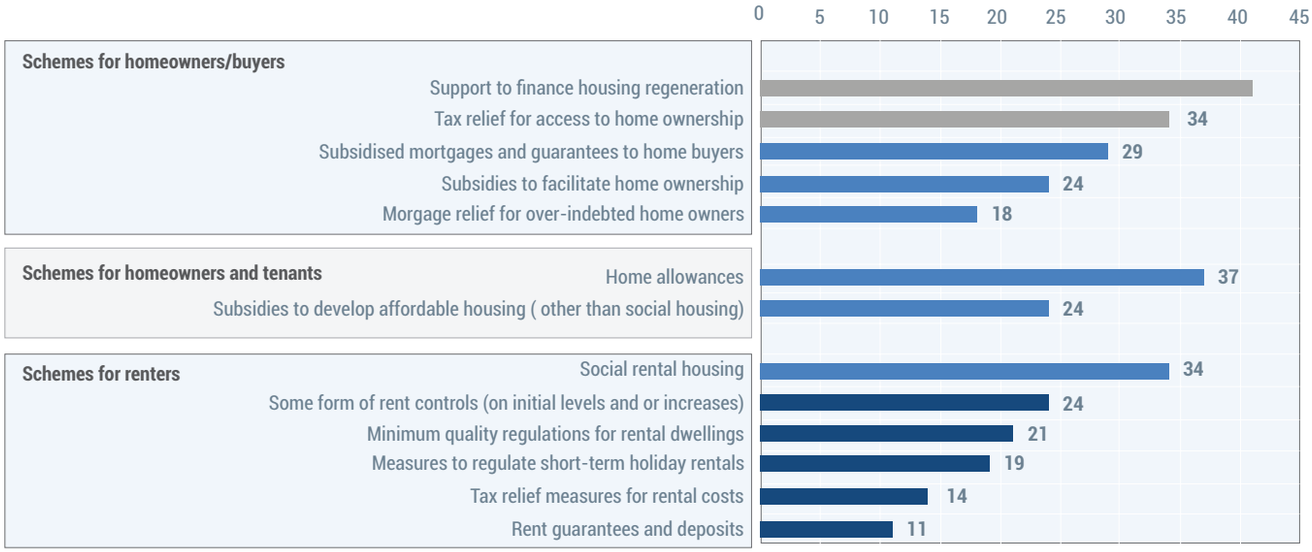
Countries employ a mix of housing policy instruments that target homeowners, tenants or both (Figure 9). According to the 2019 OECD QuASH, support for home ownership, housing allowances (also known as housing benefits or vouchers) and social housing are the most widespread types of housing policy measures, which are each reported in over 30 countries. Most countries offer a wide range of support

57 People experiencing more than one of the following are more likely to be chronically homeless: problematic drug and alcohol use; severe mental illness; a history of low-level criminality and imprisonment; a history of institutional care.

for prospective and existing homeowners, which may take the form of grants, tax relief and other financial assistance. These may target and/or prioritise specific groups, such as households with children, youth and first-time homebuyers. Additional support is provided by some governments to housing developers to facilitate the construction of affordable housing units.

Most OECD countries offer housing allowances, social housing and financial support for homeownership

Overview of housing policy instruments: number of reporting countries adopting each policy type

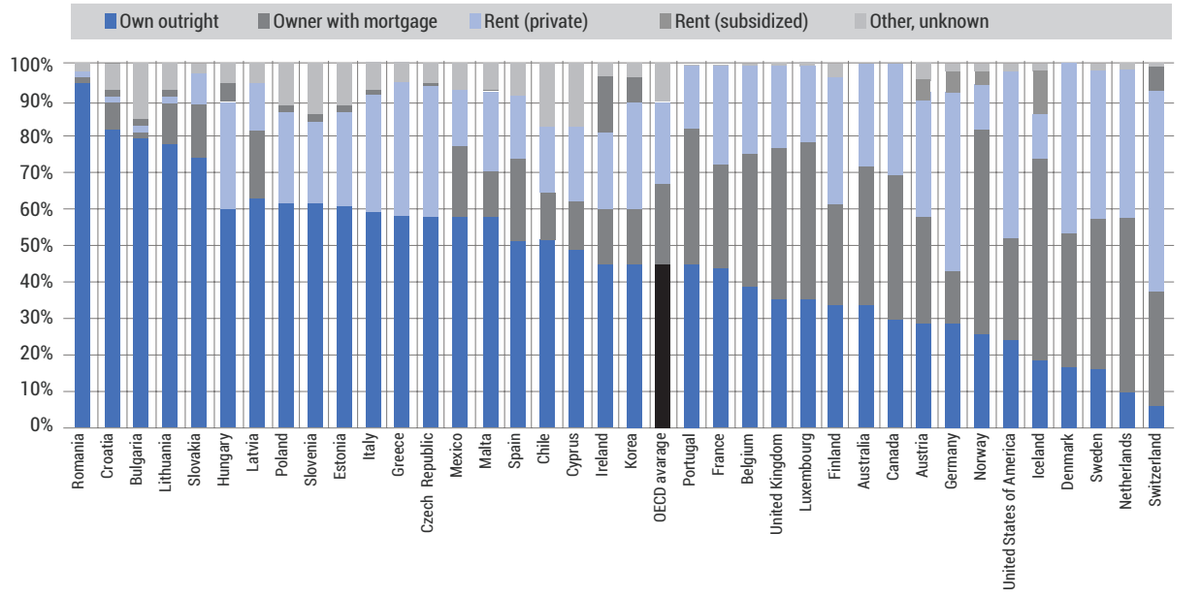


Note: 1. The list of policy types refers to those surveyed through the 2019 and 2016 Questionnaire on Affordable and Social Housing (QuASH), which gathered information from up to 49 countries; not all countries responded to all sections of the QuASH. 2. Limited information was provided for Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Hungary, Korea, Romania, Slovenia, South Africa and Turkey. Source: OECD Questionnaire on Social and Affordable Housing, 2019 and 2016.

Public support for housing tends to be skewed towards homeowners (Salvi del Pero et al., 2016). This policy preference towards home ownership is likely to have contributed in part to the dominance of owner-occupied housing in the vast majority of OECD countries: on average, in 2018 nearly 70 per cent of households across the OECD either owned their dwelling outright or with a mortgage, compared to 28 per cent of households who rented a dwelling, either in the private rental market or as subsidised rental housing) (Figure 10). While more research is needed, some of the most prevalent and costly housing policy measures in OECD countries may actually impede housing affordability. This is particularly the case for homeownership support that is not means-tested (such as tax relief for the purchase of a home or favourable taxation of residential property), as such support creates disincentives to invest in rental housing and puts pressure on housing prices (Salvi del Pero et al., 2016).

In most OECD countries, owning a home is much more common than renting

Share of households in different tenure types, in percent, 2018 or latest year available.



Note: Tenants renting at subsidised rent are lumped together with tenants renting at private rent in Australia, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Mexico, the Netherlands and the United States, and are not capturing the full extent of coverage in Sweden due to data limitations. . Source: OECD Affordable Housing Database (http://oe.cd/ahd), Indicator HM1.3. OECD calculations based on European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU SILC) survey 2018 except for Ireland, the Slovak Republic, and the United Kingdom (2017), and Iceland (2016); the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics Survey (HILDA) for Australia (2017); the Canada Income Survey (CIS) for Canada (2016); Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional (CASEN) for Chile (2017); the Korean Housing Survey (2017); Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares (ENIGH) for Mexico (2016); American Community Survey (ACS) for the United States (2016).

Policy directions to make housing more affordable

There is no "one-size-fits-all" solution to improve housing affordability across countries, as policy decisions should adapt to the specific country context and affordability objectives. Country-specific considerations should be based on inter alia an assessment of the current housing stock (quantity and quality); housing affordability levels (by income level, by age, by region, etc.); tenure arrangements; demographic projections; social housing stock (status/conditions, inhabitants, investments, etc.); and policy objectives and priorities regarding affordable housing, housing exclusion, and, ideally, social welfare more broadly.

As part of its Horizontal Project on Housing, the OECD will explore a number of issues to support policy makers in making housing more affordable. The following key questions provide a guide of preliminary areas of inquiry:

- **What might be the broader benefits of pursuing greater tenancy neutrality** (namely in countries with a high rate of homeownership), and what policies can make the private rental market more affordable?
- **How can governments best diversify affordable housing solutions**, in terms of tenure, dwelling types and living arrangements?
- **How can policy makers be most effective in making housing more affordable**? Example of policy interventions include:
  - Incentivising construction overall, including affordable and social housing
  - Direct housing construction
  - Reforms to housing taxation
  - Means-tested housing allowances and other financial support to households
  - Targeted housing support (e.g. young people, families with children, first-time homebuyers, households in financial distress...)
  - Reforms to rental regulations or reducing local barriers to affordable housing development (e.g. reforms to planning processes, building and zoning regulations...)
- **How can countries strengthen their governance** to better coordinate and exploit the synergies between housing policies and other relevant domains across the economy (e.g. social welfare, transport, health, education, environment, land use...) and across levels of government?

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OECD (2019), OECD Child Well-Being Data Portal, www.oecd.org/els/family/child-well-being/data [4]

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The Impact of Personal and Family Circumstances on Homelessness

by Jean Quinn, Executive Director, UNANIMA International

Introduction

Family homelessness is unfortunately a growing phenomenon around the world. Homelessness is often considered embarrassing, a taboo subject, and governments tend to understate the problem. In 1962 Thomas Kuhn wrote The Structure of Scientific Revolution.[58] In it he defined and popularized the concept of "paradigm shift". Kuhn argues that scientific advancement is not evolutionary, but a series of "peaceful interludes punctuated by intellectually violent revolutions" one conceptual world view is replaced by another". We believe what is now called for is a paradigm shift in how we perceive the problems of poverty and homelessness and that it is time for a revolution on the subject. We need urgently a paradigm shift away from the many abusive attitudes and beliefs that circulate around homelessness. We need to start this dialogue by viewing and treating homelessness as what it is: a human and civil rights issue.

Obtaining an accurate picture of homelessness globally is challenging for several reasons:

- What is most problematic is the variations in definitions. Homelessness can vary from simply the absence of adequate living accommodation to a lack of permanent residence that provides roots, security, identity and emotional well- being.
- The absence of an internationally agreed definition of homelessness hampers meaningful comparisons
- Definitions vary across countries because homelessness is culturally defined based on concepts such as adequate housing and security of tenure
- Many Governments lack the resources and commitment to measure homelessness to measure the complexity of the issue
- Homelessness is considered embarrassing and so Governments understate the problem
- Some parents, especially Women may not wish to be labelled as homeless for fear of losing their children

Statistics

Measuring homelessness is costly and often subject to producing skewed figures and data; Cities may under-count or under-state due to embarrassment or ineffectively obtain reliable numbers due to the transient lifestyle people experiencing homelessness face. Furthermore, individuals may avoid officials due to shame and fear of arrest. Such factors contribute to difficulties obtaining accurate numbers around the number of individuals or families experiencing homelessness in many countries, especially in developing countries[59]. In Russia for example, the most recent census reports 34,000 homeless households, however political figure Sergey Mironov suggests that there may be as many as 5 million people experiencing homelessness in the Russian Federation.[60] Manila, the capital of the Philippines, is reported to have the largest homeless population of any city in the world, estimates of the homeless population vary from several million to tens of thousands.[61] In the world's billion-plus populations, China and India reported numbers of 3 million and 1.77 million homeless respectively.[62]

Family homelessness is a growing social problem affecting families around the world. It is understood and manifests itself in diverse economic, social, cultural and even linguistic contexts globally and affects both the Global North and the Global South. In the USA it is estimated there are almost 60,000 families with children homeless on any given night, this means that 7.4 out of every 10,000 families are experiencing

58 Kuhn, T. (1962)

59 National Coalition for the Homeless (2009)

60 Goble (2017)

61 Laccino, L. (2010)

62 Chamie, J. (2018)

homelessness.[63] Canada, one of the most affluent countries in the world, is also seeing child and family homelessness continue to become a serious and growing issue. More than 37 per cent of Canadian households are having difficulty maintaining housing, more and more families are relying on Emergency accommodation.[64] In South Africa the issue of homelessness has stemmed largely from the apartheid period. Growing unemployment, consistent lack of affordable housing, poor social cohesion, and economic and social policies are among the identified factors contributing to the issue. While no official number exists, it is estimated that the South African homeless population is approximately 200,000.[65] Combined data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's Specialist Homeless Services suggests that on any given night in 2016 there were 116,427 people homeless in Australia, this number has continued to rise.[66] While there is very little Australian research exploring mother's views on their homeless experiences, it is known that domestic violence is a significant contributory factor most commonly associated with family homelessness.[67]

There is a growing trend across many European Countries of an increase in family homelessness. FEANSTA - European Network of National Organizations Working with the Homeless's (2017) study showed that homelessness once the preserve of single individuals now sees a growing percentage of families. This study also showed that in 2017 an emerging presence in the homeless population is found in Slovenia, Slovakia, and Greece. Data from France indicates a rather high proportion of families among homeless people. A total of 81,000 homeless adults were accompanied by 31,000 children. Homeless families made up 29 per cent of all homeless people (12 per cent single parents and 17 per cent couple with children). However, it should be noted that this data included both migrant populations who were homeless and those who can access emergency accommodation, therefore experience among French Citizens may be significantly lower.[68] Ireland has also seen an unprecedented growth of family homelessness since 2014 and a growing incidence of children in emergency settings, particularly in the Dublin region. During March 2017, 815 of the 1069 families in emergency accommodation, 76 per cent were residing in commercial hotels due to capacity limitations in homeless emergency accommodation.[69] In some European countries, family homelessness is now consistently above 20 per cent of the total homeless population.[70]

Causes of homelessness

The causes of homelessness across the globe are multifaceted and often specific to the social, economic, environmental and geographic context of a population. However, some contributing factors consistently stand out, including:

- Shortage of affordable housing
- Privatization of civic services
- Investment speculation in housing
- Unplanned and rapid urbanization
- People losing their homes and lands to Highways and Industries
- Poverty
- Unemployment
- Family breakdown
- Lack of services and access to facilities for those experiencing mental illness, alcoholism/ substance abuse
- Displacement caused by conflicts and natural disasters
- Domestic Violence
- Lack of Social Protection systems including floors

Domestic violence

Domestic violence is a global issue reaching across national boundaries as well as socio-economic, racial, cultural and class distinctions. It is a widespread and deeply ingrained issue that has serious implications on women's health and well-being.[71] Domestic Violence is widely ignored and poorly understood. It is also a leading cause of homelessness for women and children. When Women are caught in this situation and need to leave their homes, they not only suffer the physical and psychological consequences of losing their homes, their support systems are taken from them as well. This, in turn often has negative ramifications across various sectors of the social system and consequently affects the development of a nation.[72]

63 National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2018)

64 Raising the Roof. (2015)

65 Rule-Groenewald, C. (2018)

66 https://www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au (2019)

67 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2018)

68 Duée, M. and Yaouancq, F. (2019)

69 Homelessdublin.ie. (2018)

70 FEANTSA The European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (2017)

71 Kaur, R. and Garg, S. (2008)

72 Macias, C. (2015)

Mental health

Many individuals, specifically women worldwide who are homeless suffer significantly with mental health issues. Their characteristics vary from country to country, as do their reasons for homelessness. Homelessness amplifies poor mental health.[73] The stress and/ or Trauma associated with experiencing homelessness can create anxiety, fear, depression, sleeplessness and substance misuse. The needs of people experiencing mental illness are similar to those without mental illnesses: safety, adequate housing, medical care, food and support, all of which become harder to access when experiencing homelessness.[74]

Alcohol and drug use

Homeless women are more likely to use alcohol and drugs than other women.[75] They are coping with highly stressful situations – such as family conflicts, dysfunctions, financial situations, lack of housing and support and care of children in stressful situations. Drugs and alcohol are often turned to and used as a means of coping during such times. This creates further issues as mental health and addictions interfere with a family's ability to build a stable life for women and children.

Lack of social protection systems including floors

The capacity of individuals, especially women to form and actively maintain an autonomous household has been shown to be directly dependent on their family status, economic status and the extent to which they are able to access social protection systems to support their housing and financial needs.[76] Social policies, specifically social protection systems including floors, not only play a significant role in the stability and vulnerability of the individual and the family but also play a major role in the composition of the homeless population in any given nation.[77] Access to appropriate Social Protection Systems with floors in the form of health care, social supports, including housing and income security, unemployment, sickness, invalidity, work injuries, maternity or loss of a main income have the ability to ensure Homelessness does not occur. Lack of such systems and policies leaves individuals and families subject to vulnerability when adversities that cause homelessness occur.

Displacement through natural disaster and conflict

Displacement and Homelessness are common outcomes of Natural Disaster and Conflict. While the modalities in which the loss of the home occurs in these situations may vary the human experiences of those displaced by natural disasters and conflicts are very similar. Loss of family members, family separation, loss of possessions, and the experience of trauma and depression are all commonly associated with these types of displacement.[78] In both conflicts and natural disasters, vulnerable groups suffer more, individuals experiencing homelessness or made homeless by such events are no exception to this. Rather they are often further disadvantaged by unequal access to assistance; discrimination in aid provision; enforced relocation; sexual and gender-based violence; loss of documentation; recruitment of children into fighting forces; unsafe or involuntary return or resettlement; and issues of property restitution.[79]

Homelessness and the family

Those experiencing Family Homelessness (Women and their children) are one of society's most disadvantaged and at- risk populations. Family Homelessness was once viewed as episodic and situational, it has become chronic. Housing is essential to ending homelessness, but alone it is not sufficient. It is well established in international human rights law and its interpretation; that housing is not just a physical structure of a roof and walls. Families need more basic supports beyond decent affordable housing to thrive. Food, education, employment, child care, transport, health/ mental health care, trauma informed care, and child care services are among the significant support services needed to break the cycle of Homelessness. The impact of Homelessness on mothers is profound. Many experience anger, self-blame, sadness, fear and hopelessness.

73 Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (2019)

74 Institute of Medicine and Committee on Health Care for Homeless People (1988)

75 Wenzel, S., Green, H., Tucker, J., Golinelli, D., Kennedy, D., Ryan, G. and Zhou, A. (2009)

76 Haney, Pollard and Johnson (2013)

77 Baptista, I (2010)

78 Ferris, E. (2008)

79 IASC operational guidelines on the protection of persons in situations of natural disasters. (2011)

Furthermore, Mothers experiencing homelessness often have significant histories of domestic violence.[80] For them, the experience of becoming homeless is another stressor amidst an already complicated traumatic experience.

"When you're going through homelessness, you're putting your hand out….it's all one hurdle after another …it's constant ticking boxes, it's mental torture, to the point where I couldn't get up and do what they were asking me to do without a drug in my system…. you're constantly looking over your shoulder, you're constantly feeling under threat. I think my mindset back then was cut it off, do yourself in before the system does you in, that type of thing. That's the mentality I was walking around with. I was 23 when I tried to end it all, I'm 29 now and when I look at it, I've come a long way."

- Sarah, 29

Children also experience high rates of acute health problems while homeless. The Homelessness experience bombards a child with stressful and traumatic experiences which has profound effects on their development and ability to learn.[81] Violence also plays a significant role in the lives of those experiencing homelessness. While affecting all adversely such events often have lasting effects on children. Children who witness violence are more likely than those who have not to exhibit frequent aggressive and anti- social behaviour, increased fearfulness, higher levels of depression and have a greater acceptance of violence as a means of resolving conflict.[82] Furthermore, given that the scale of family homelessness is a new phenomenon, the impact of trauma on families (women and children) who are experiencing homelessness has not yet been quantified. This begs the question; Are these the experiences we want children to live with?

"You want to voice the truth, what's actually going on with everything but you're sometimes afraid and your voice is gone"

- Amanda, 18

Family homelessness and trauma

Homelessness is a devastating experience that can significantly impact the health and well -being of the individual and the family, especially women and children. Often families experiencing homelessness have experienced ongoing trauma in the form of childhood abuse and neglect, domestic violence and community violence, in addition to the trauma associated with the loss of a home. Traumatic experiences impact how children and women think, feel, behave, and relate to others, and trauma that goes unrecognised and unaddressed can have potentially devastating implications for development across the lifespan.

Within Homeless services settings, a lack of awareness of trauma increases the risk of causing additional harm. The call now within these services is to adopt a holistic trauma-informed care as good practice. Services that are competent in trauma informed care lead to substantially better outcomes for women and children. The ground-breaking work of Peter Cockersell (2018) titled "Social Exclusion, Compound Trauma and Recovery" outlines that "Compound Trauma describes a situation in which a person experiences a sequence of traumatic events usually beginning in infancy or childhood. (Cookersell P, 2018 p17). Maguire N. (2009), in a wide-ranging study highlights the prevalence of the experience of trauma in childhood in the lives of people experiencing homelessness. Williamson (2018) outlines the impact a service can make when it works from a trauma sensitive model or one that seeks to create a Psychologically Informed Environment. Williamson (2018) also outlines that a Psychologically Informed Environment recognises the experience that people have been through before and while being homeless. Services that are competent in trauma informed care lead to substantially better outcomes for service users, especially women and children.

Homelessness and "adequate housing"

Although the term "Homelessness" is sparse throughout the vast number of Declarations, Agreements, Agendas and other documents produced by the United Nations, it continues to be identified as an emerging and growing issue globally. While in its most basic form often homeless refers to a lack of shelter, this, in conjunction with the implications of having no formal shelter is undeniably a Human Rights issue. Special Rapporteur on adequate housing, Leilani Farha, suggests "the right to adequate housing should be viewed as the right to live somewhere in peace, with security and dignity. Such adequacy should include security of tenure, availability of services, materials, infrastructure and facilities, affordability, habitability, accessibility, location and cultural adequacy." If adequate housing is to be achieved, then homelessness should not be occurring. The term "adequate housing" is one that can be found throughout a number of UN documents.

80 Family and Youth Services Bureau | ACF. (2016)

81 Cleaver, Unell, and Aldgate, (2011)

82 National Research Council, Institute of Medicine, Youth Board on Children, Joseph, J. and Feit, M. (2014)

The term adequate housing is present in a number of UN documents, including:

- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015)
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)
- Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements (1996)

At the Housing and Sustainable Development Conference (Habitat III) in Quito (2016), UN Members committed to ending homelessness and progressively recognising the right to adequate housing through their commitment to the New Urban Agenda (2016). Although the language used is not as strong as some of the above, this document includes perhaps the most notable mention of homelessness. Specifically, the sentence stating the following:

"We will take positive measures to improve the living conditions of homeless people with a view of facilitating their full participation in society and prevent and eliminate homelessness"

Could families be the key to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals?

The "family"[83] is the fundamental social unit of all modern societies.[84] They are the base from which we learn to communicate, empathise, compromise and adapt within vital social structures. The importance of the family is reflected in many national public policies, these policies play an important role in national efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Former UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, in 2010 stated "the very achievement of development goals depends on how well families are empowered to contribute to the achievement of those goals. Therefore, policies focusing on improving the well–being of families are certain to benefit development". Given the realities and understanding of how families contribute to social progress they are key to finding the most effective route to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Despite this, global data on families is lacking. Prompted by Ban Ki-moon's call on governments and relevant stakeholders to support data collection and research on family issues and the impact of public policy on families, data on families has slowly increased since 2014. Affirmative action by non-government organisations and UN agencies to this call for investment in families, specifically through oriented policy and programme design, implementation and evaluation has led to significant research and outcomes on families and their interaction with development. Examples of this include a team of policy experts including Dominic Richardson, UNICEF Innocenti Education Officer, and their compiled synthesis report titled "Key Findings on Families, Family Policy and the Sustainable Development Goals" to analyse how these policies are being used to meet the Sustainable Development Goals.

Combating the issue of family homelessness is integral in achieving the 2030 agenda. Progress in achieving the eradication of omelessness underpins and can hinder the success and achievement of various goals and their indicators. Goal 11, Goal 1 and Goal 16 each have targets that can be directly associated with homelessness. Perhaps the most direct reference to ending homelessness is target 11.1. This was confirmed in the 2015 Summary of the Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate Housing Ms Leilani Farha who proposed a bold international initiative to end homelessness in keeping with target 11.1 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as this commits to ensuring access for all to adequate housing. Equally target 1.3 could provide economic security for individuals and families over the life cycle especially when encountering the risk of homelessness.

Families experiencing homelessness remain among the most vulnerable of populations whose situation is often exacerbated by their distinct lack of access to public services and support. Their experience is inherently intertwined with a number of cross cutting issues and specific indicators identified by the 2030 agenda. With no formal address these individuals and their family often struggle to obtain even the most basic of services, satisfy their needs, and obtain their rights or fully participate in society. The struggle to obtain food (Goal 2), attend or access educational institutions (Goal 4) and access healthcare (Goal 3) and limited access social protection is often associated with the homeless experience. These instances continue to add to the feeling of marginalisation experienced by these individuals during an already difficult situation. In UNHabitat's Factsheet on The Right to Adequate Housing it was highlighted that poverty is a common denominator in the experience of homelessness. Often directly associated with lack of social security systems, unemployment, disaster and conflicts families experiencing homelessness are made even more vulnerable.[85] Such situations further exacerbate a widening gap in inequalities, having the reverse effect of what Goal 10 sets out to achieve. Family Homelessness poses a threat to the achievement of all 17 goals which are inherently intertwined. Such findings and interlinkages further demonstrate the need for a paradigm shift surrounding homelessness causality and poverty.

83 Here the family is defined by "an intimate domestic group of people related to one another by bonds of blood, sexual mating, or legal ties."

84 Bennett, W. (2012)

85 Moya, E., Chavez-Baray, S., Loweree, J., Mattera, B. and Martinez, N. (2017)

Article 21 of the Declaration of Human Rights (1948) explicitly states everyone has the right to adequate housing. Furthermore, this set of rights were given a new impetus towards implementation within the SDG's in the commitment to implement social protection systems and measures for all, including floors and elaborated in ILO Recommendation 202. As well as denying this basic Human Right homelessness, or a lack of adequate shelter, actively promotes social exclusion and the enjoyment of basic Human Rights. Furthermore, without proof of residency, homeless persons and families often face adversities in obtaining or are excluded completely from the ability to vote, access to health care or the enjoyment or social services.[86] This also has the potential to impede the obtaining of rights set out in Articles 12, 17, 21, 22, 23.

When focusing on family homeless the Convention on the Right of the Child (1989) must also be considered. Lack of adequate housing forced evictions and homelessness often cultivates a profound negative impact on a child's life. Due to their specific needs, such events frequently lead to stunted growth and development in all cases. It creates a barrier to the enjoyment of various Human Rights including health, education and personal security. Therefore, when family homelessness occurs Articles 9, 16, 19, 20, 24, 26, 27, 39 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) are subject to being breached. In its State of the World's Children 2005 report, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) found that over one in every three children in the developing world does not live in adequate housing. Given the pervasiveness and the impact of family homelessness and lack of adequate housing on children, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child has, rightly since stressed the universal character of the right to adequate housing putting emphasis on the fact that this should apply to every child without distinction or restriction of any kind.[87]

Solutions to family homelessness

The issue of family homelessness and providing effective solutions are critically important to UNANIMA International. For this reason, we make the following recommendations:

- We encourage Member States to fully recognise the commitments they have made to date through the 2030 Agenda, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Convention on the Right of the Child among other United Nations Documents and actively work to achieve them.
- We encourage Member States to address the nature of family homelessness i.e. specifically policies that meet the unique needs of women and children, through gender sensitive policies and resource allocation.
- We encourage Member States to implement housing led initiatives
- We encourage Member States to provide adequate housing with support services for families to address the trauma of homelessness in an effort to break the cycle of generational homelessness
- We encourage Member States to expand local government support for the development of affordable family –sized housing
- We encourage Member States to implement social protection policies and programs, specifically ones that ensure access to housing and support systems. Such policies and programs enable women, children and the family to break the poverty cycle/ reduce inequalities.
- We encourage Member States to push for government policies that finance, promote and invest in civil society and private sector partnerships with organisations who are currently servicing the needs of the homeless population.
- We encourage Member States to make policy changes to secure flexible funding for implementation of recommendations
- We encourage Member States to actively collect disaggregated data on Homelessness, specifically in relation to Family homelessness, women and children

Family homelessness policies

Globally a number of nations have implemented a range of policies to combat family homelessness. While policies and programs to address family homelessness come in a variety of forms the following policies are among the most common and have seen successful outcomes across the globe.

Family and gender sensitive social protection policies and programs

While sound social protection policies have contributed significantly to reducing Family Homelessness globally, it is shown that family and gender sensitive social protection policies and programs are directly associated with the effectiveness of policies designed to reduce Family Homelessness. Among many studies, including Batista's 2010 study on women and homelessness, it was found that social spending on families is directly proportional to the economic status of the household, especially those led by women, and the number of families experiencing homeless. An example of this can be seen when comparing the situation of family homelessness in Europe

86 Farha, L. (2015).

87 UN Habitat. (2018)

and the United States of America. It was found that while the situation in Europe of women experiencing family homelessness may be more fragile than that of men, this fact is counter- balanced by more amenities', which are less available in the US. This finding is linked to the fact that the United States devotes a significantly smaller share of social spending to families, compared to that of western Europe. This is depicted in the economic situation of the two region's female lead households.[88]

Low income, public and federal housing assistance

Globally low income, public and federal housing assistance programs have become established as one of the most successful housing-based solutions to reduce homelessness. While federal housing programs are nation specific, they allow housing to be attainable to individuals and families at risk or experiencing homelessness. Studies show that low income, public housing and federal housing assistance is highly successful at reducing family homelessness and in ensuring that families remain together, stably housed and out of the shelter system.[89] Successful examples of such programs include the Netherlands, who offer direct financial assistance to all qualified renters; Brazil whose housing authority commits to buying finished units or finding renters for them, reducing developer risk and financing cost; the United States who have implemented a voucher system and India who implemented the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) Scheme in 2015. This is an initiative provided by the Government of India which aims at providing affordable housing to the urban poor.[90]

Permanent supportive housing

Initially pioneered in New York City in the 1980s, permanent supportive housing has proven to be a successful and cost-effective solution to addressing homelessness. The supportive housing model combines affordable housing assistance and support services for individuals and families living with mental or physical illness, or those who require other supports to maintain a home. While such housing initiatives are often run by civil society and the private sector, investments in such initiatives have proven to successfully reduce homelessness, specifically family homelessness in various nations. As well as addressing homelessness, trauma informed care models often used in conjunction with supportive housing contribute to significantly reducing resources needed to maintain emergency health, accommodation and institutional care services. They also significantly decrease the risk of children entering the welfare system.[91] Examples of such successes can be seen through Sophia Housing in Dublin, Ireland, and the Non-Violence Centre for Women, Victoria, Australia.

Housing First policy

The Housing First principle has been implemented in various cities, regions and nations across the globe as a way of combating homelessness. This policy works on the basis that the issue of homelessness can be eliminated through shelters and emergency accommodations being replaced by immediate housing options and supported rental housing. While it may not sufficiently address the entirety of issues that arise through family homelessness the Housing first initiative has seen success in numerous places globally. One such example of this is Finland, the only EU country in which homelessness continues to decrease despite the economic recession and social pressures. In 2015, homelessness decreased for the first time to fewer than 7,000 people, this success had been widely attributed to the implementation of a nation-wide Housing First policy.[92]

Good news stories and good practices

Sophia Housing is a supported housing NGO based across Ireland, which has successfully been providing support and housing for the most vulnerable in Irish Society for over twenty Years. Most recently Sophia Housing was recognised for its good practices in the manual for European Homeless and Mental Health Service Providers –Dignity and Well-Being: Practical Approaches to Working with Homeless People with Mental Health Problems. Sophia Housing provides accommodation as well as services that provide holistic support to families, couples and individuals. Their innovative projects have been created with the support of other Civil Society organizations and the Irish Government, with the understanding that women and children's needs when emerging from the trauma of homelessness are multiple and complex. Their service model is one of supporting people into homes of their own as quickly as possible, as this is believed to be the most satisfactory approach in the short term and the most enduring. Sophia's approach is service efficient and has proven to be cost effective over time. Their evidence-based approaches can contribute immensely to addressing family homelessness.

In India, the Kerala Government's Mission LIFE (livelihood inclusion and financial empowerment) has recently launched

88 Baptista, I (2010)

89 Coalition for the Homeless, 2019

90 McKinsey Global Institute (2014)

91 Rice, D., Dohler, E., Katch, H. and Bailey, P. (2016)

92 Ministry of the Environment, 2016

a flag-ship program to provide shelter and security to the homeless in the region. Under the initiative, the state will be providing shelter to approximately 430, 000 homeless families. The program focuses on four major areas: Affordable housing, improving public infrastructure, strengthening agriculture, and improving management of natural resources and has been successful in creating public private partnerships in the process.[93] With the first phase of the project completed, many families have already been housed in newly built housing complexes containing units with decent living space and amenities such as: waste management, health services and power back-up. With great success so far, the second phase of the program will provide homeless families who have land financial assistance. It is hoped that within two years Kerala will have provided house for all homeless families eliminating homelessness in the region.[94]

Research on family homelessness

UNANIMA International in collaboration with Sophia Housing Ireland/ Europe and New York University (NYU) will seek to address the emergent phenomenon of Family Homelessness and its associated Trauma. Our particular interest lies in providing a voice to Women and Children experiencing Homelessness. While Family Homelessness is a global issue faced by many nations, no global definition has been agreed upon. In the context of this project, the working definition of family homelessness is:

Families who do not have consistent residency or the support needed to maintain a residency of their own who live episodically, temporarily or chronically in temporary housing, including shelters, locations not intended for human habitat or settlements.

We will seek to adopt a holistic approach in researching the structural causes and factors of family homelessness as well as the frequently associated compound trauma experienced by the affected adults and children. Through a multifaceted approach we will also explore family homelessness and trauma caused by displacement affecting migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons, taking into account the distinct legal framework upon which those groups are governed. This research will include some quantitative data by providing statistical data from governments and civil societies, taking into account the absence of definition and the subsequent discrepancies and peripheral nature of the data. As this research seeks to address the emergent phenomenon from a human rights perspective, it was established that conducting qualitative research would be best suited to put forth the human experience of those families. The research has been designed to contain questions and the conduct of semi-structured interviews of small sample size populations across several countries, namely USA/Canada, Europe, Australia, Asia, and Kenya.

By studying the root causes, the experiences and the outcomes through a range of different perspectives, this research has the potential to provide detailed and informative outcomes and recommendations appropriate at the regional and international level. Exploring the challenges, good practices and wider issues surrounding Family Homelessness, this research will play an important role in documenting the trauma faced by families who experience homelessness. Such outcomes will inform service providers and policy makers such as National Government Departments to set good standards. It also has the potential to provide the resources for creating trauma informed models of support and effective services for homeless families. It is hoped that these outcomes will contribute to a paradigm shift in how we perceive the issues of Homelessness and Poverty that is so badly needed, and promote a dialogue where Homelessness is finally viewed as a Human Rights issue.

93 Express (2019)

94 Nidheesh, M. (2019)

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The Impacts of Structural Changes, un-under-employment, stagnant or falling wages and less secure jobs on homelessness

by Ken Chamuva Shawa, Senior Economist, ILO Regional Office for Africa, Abidjan

Introduction

This short brief has been prepared at the invitation of the Division for Inclusive Social Development of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) in support of an expert group meeting on "Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness". According to UNDESA, the objective of the expert meeting is to "review the key drivers of homelessness, identify existing gaps and priority areas for interventions, and make specific policy recommendations on effective housing and social protection policies to address homelessness in the context of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development". The meeting supports the preparations for the 58th session of the Commission for Social Development.

This brief seeks to examine the likely impacts of the dynamics of the labour market on homelessness. It largely bases its analysis on Africa. Such being the case caution is hereby given on data challenges in Africa regarding homelessness and other closely related indicators to homelessness. In fact, apart from the Republic of South Africa where a great deal of empirical work has been undertaken, studies form other countries are almost non-existent.

The rest of the brief is organised as follows: section II discusses the concept of Homelessness; section III presents the characteristics of African labour markets; section IV discusses the labour market-homelessness linkages. Section V provides policy suggestions while Conclusions form section VI.

The Concept of Homelessness

Largely due to attempts to project different purposes, ideologies, values or even political agenda (Olufemi, 2002; Tipple & Speak, 2005), defining homelessness is not necessarily an easy task. Homelessness tends to encompass multiple issues ranging from political, economic to social prodigies.

First, according to the UNHRC (2015) the term homelessness is usually associated with "where individuals live or sleep", the physical place. In this case the homeless tend to be those that can easily be seen in the streets, those that are in make-shift shelters, those that are in prisons, *inter alia*.

It has been argued, however, that understanding homelessness based on location, misaligns the understanding of who the real "homeless" are. To this effect UNHRC (2015) provides an important example that relates a gender dimension , with men and boy on the streets on one hand, and women (with children), on the other, who opt to stay with family or friends mainly in fear of the difficulties of street life including violence, and child and women abuse. Because they are not in the streets, society may not regard them as homeless. Using geography alone as a criterion would therefore miss this group of the homeless.

Secondly, homelessness has been seen in light of "what is not there" or "what is lacking". Regarding this, homelessness gets defined at two levels, according to the Statistics Division of the UNDESA. The first level, known as "primary homelessness" includes "persons living without a shelter or living quarter" while "secondary homelessness" refers to persons with no place of usual residence.

Additionally, when physical shelter is the criterion, no account of loss of social connection — the feeling of "belonging nowhere"— experienced by homeless persons is considered. Attempts have been made to refer to "the rupture of family or social connections" in the definitions of homelessness that should also generally include more qualitative aspects of social exclusion linked to homelessness (UN- HRC, 2015). In line with this (Caplow et al., 1968) and Glasser (1994) emphasised that "homelessness is also a condition of 'detachment from society, characterised by the absence or attenuation of the affiliative bonds that link settled persons to a network of interconnected social structures"

Further, according to UNHRC (2015), the Institute of Global Homelessness has proposed yet another definition whose key characteristic is "being global". To them homelessness is seen as "lacking access to minimally adequate housing". Perhaps related to the global definition, in countries such as Bangladesh, homelessness is assessed on the basis of whether a household has a regularized plot of land as well a roof overhead.

It is clear from the foregoing that depending on the definition of homelessness considered, different perceptions, interventions, and even policy options, abound. To demonstrate this, UNHRC (2015) reports that In

Japan, when homelessness was defined in terms of those living on the street, available data suggested declining numbers as a result of shelter programmes. However, when defined as "lacking access to minimally adequate housing", data showed increasing numbers of the homeless. This means that policy makers need to align interventions to a wide rather than narrow concept of homelessness.

Are African Labour Markets Strong in the Face of Homelessness?

In general Africa does not register high unemployment numbers (Table 1). For the period between 2018 and the projected 2020, the unemployment rate is stuck at only 6.8 percent. Acute disparities, though, exist between Northern Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa with Northern Africa registering twice as high rates as those of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Despite the low unemployment rate values, taken in numbers, unemployment has been rising in Africa with projected increase from 33 million in 2018 to 34.5 million in 2020. Additionally, employment growth has receded and labour productivity has remained the lowest in the world, averaging on 1.1 percent in 2019 (Table1).

The statistics on unemployment could easily mislead one to think that African labour markets are functioning properly. However, the labour force in Africa cannot afford not to be employed implying the readiness to enter into poor jobs, mostly in the informal economy, just to meet their basic needs (ILO, 2019).

Unemployment, and Labour productivity

	Unemployment Rate			Unemployment (Millions)		
	2018	2019	2020	2018	2019	2020
Africa	6.8	6.8	6.8	33.0	34.0	34.5
NA	11.8	11.8	11.7	8.8	9.0	9.2
SSA	5.9	5.9	5.9	24.2	25.0	25.9
	Employment Growth			**Labour Productivity Growth**		
Africa	3.0	2.9	2.9	0.9	1.1	1.4
NA	2.0	1.9	1.8	2.2	2.3	2.5
SSA	3.1	3.1	3.1	0.6	0.9	1.2

Source: ILO (2019), World Economic Social Outlook, Trends: Geneva

"……..Informality is the norm rather than the exception…"

With pressure to meet basic needs, the labour force easily engages in informal employment unfortunately informality most invariably means insecurity, poor wages, and absence of social protection. This is particularly present in activities such as those of own-account work and contributing family work, which accounts for 68 per cent of total employment in Africa.

Indeed the share of informal employment and its components in total employment ranges from 40.2 percent in Southern Africa, 67.3 percent in North Africa, to over 90 percent in Central Africa, Eastern Africa and Western Africa (Table, 2). Subsequently, mainly driven by SSA, the share of informal employment and its components in total employment is as high as 85.8 percent in Africa.

A similar trend obtains when the share of non-agricultural informal employment and its components in non-agricultural employment is considered. Southern Africa (36.1 percent) still has the lowest rate compared to North Africa (56.3 percent), Western Africa (87.0 percent), Central Africa (78.8 percent) and Eastern Africa (76.6 percent).

Share of Informal Employment in Total Employment

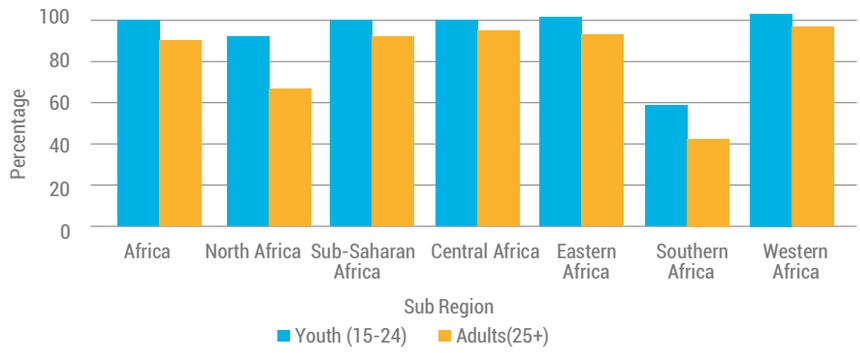
Category	Africa	North Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	Central Africa	Eastern Africa	Southern Africa	Western Africa
Share of informal employment and its components in total employment	85.8	67.3	89.2	91.0	91.6	40.2	92.4
Share of non-agricultural informal employment and its components in non-agricultural employment	71.9	56.3	76.8	78.8	76.6	36.1	87.0

Source: ILO (2018) Women and men in the informal economy: A Statistical Picture, Geneva

"……The Youth Bear the Most Burden of Informality…"

When informal employment is considered by age groups (Fig 1), unlike adults (25+), young women and men (15-24) are more likely to be in informal employment. In a nutshell informal employment is the main source of employment for African youth (94.9 percent). When compared between sub regions, youth informal employment accounts for as high as 97.9 percent in in Western Africa, 96.7 percent in Eastern Africa, 95.1 percent in Central Africa.

Informal employment rate by age

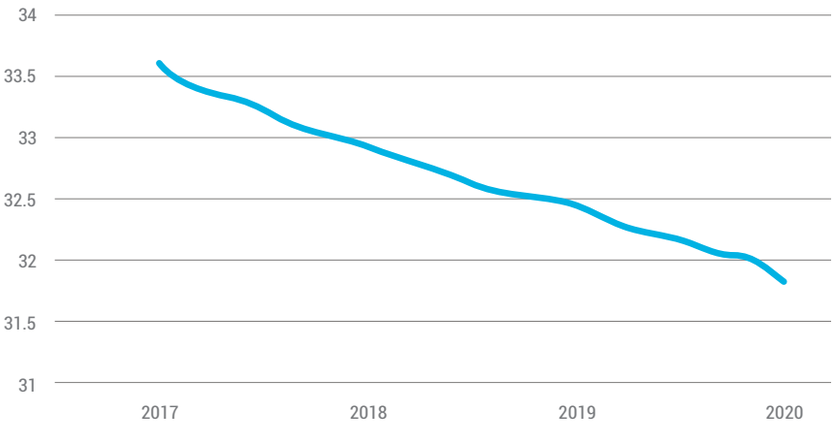


Source: ILO (2018) Women and men in the informal economy: A Statistical Picture, Geneva

"……With wages low, high informality, extreme working poverty is widening……."

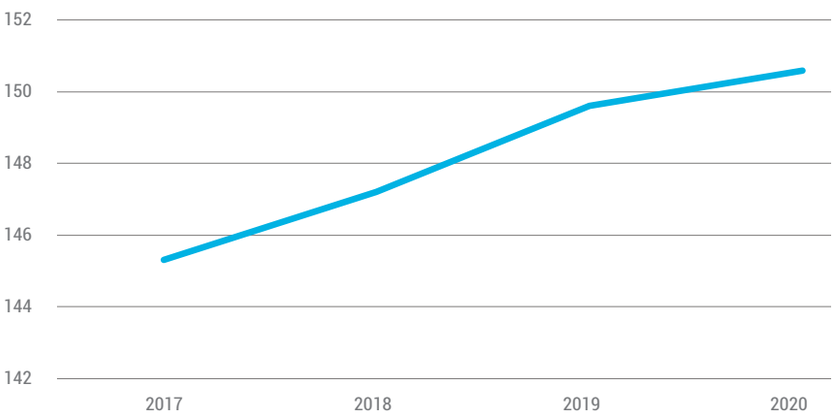
While it remains one of the highest in the world, at above 30 percent, the extreme working poverty rate declined between 2017 and 2018 and this is projected to continue to 2020 (Fig, 2). However, when taken in absolute sense, the numbers of workers in extreme poverty in Africa have been on the rise, despite the reduction in the poverty rates (Fig.3). The number is projected to reach over 150 million in 2020.

Extreme Working Poverty Rate (Percentage)



Source: ILO (2019), World Economic Social Outlook, Trends: Geneva

Extreme Working Poverty (Millions)



Source: ILO (2019), World Economic Social Outlook, Trends: Geneva

What are the likely labour market-homelessness linkages in Africa?

With wages not growing and the number of working poor on the rise, informality pervasive, (with the high numbers of the youth taking up informal jobs), it can be inferred that there can only be an enhancing effect on homelessness in Africa. The failure of structural transformation has also meant that formal jobs will be difficult to come by.

Being in unemployment or informal economy in Africa, means poor incomes and other decent work deficits such lack of social protection, poor working conditions, and poor rights at work. This means that the individual cannot afford to pay for his housing (the physical definition) and is like to fend for alternative solutions including staying in the streets. A number of studies such as that of Calvo et al. 2018, established strong correlation between unemployment and homelessness.

Job-losses or job insecurities have compounding effects on homelessness. Knowing that children of the homeless are also homeless, Deborah et al (2017) found that experiencing homelessness for the first time as children, affects their employment status later. For women, this relationship is largely explained by the lower educational attainment. Like homeless adults, homeless children often experience mental and physical health problems, victimization, and abuse, inter alia and they often struggle to access adequate health care and keep up with their school work (see Wildeman 2014 for a review).

There is evidence that the economic and social costs of adolescent and adult homelessness are substantial and persistent (Zuvekas and Hill 2000). The costs of childhood homelessness are likely to be even greater given that key investments during children's formative years are disrupted (see Molnar et al. 1990; Duncan et al. 2010; Miller 2011).

According to Phelan & Link (1999) homelessness has long-term consequences as it often leads to deterioration of basic health, loss of self-confidence, dignity and self-respect, and drug and alcohol abuse. This in turn leads to discrimination, stigmatization and social exclusion and once stigmatized, their needs are further neglected and inequality and discrimination further entrenched. (UN-HRC, 2015).

"….But not just the dynamics in the labour market matter……."

It is noteworthy that homelessness is due to many factors and not just unemployment or underemployment or the dynamics in the labour market. A number of authors who have documented the reasons why women, men and children become homeless (Olufemi, 1998, 1999, 2000; Aliber et al., 2004; Rizzini & Lusk, 1995; Olufemi & Olufemi, 2003; Pinzon-Rondon et al., 2008) have reported a mixture of drivers.

Burns (1992) argues that the source of homelessness is a syndrome that includes job losses, cutbacks in social funding and family instability. Homelessness is caused by the interplay between individual circumstances and broader systemic factors. It is understood that homelessness is linked to individual dynamics such as psychosocial disabilities, unexpected job loss, addictions or complex choices to become street–connected, and that a major cause of homelessness is the failure of governments to respond to unique individual circumstances with compassion and respect for individual dignity (UN- HRC, 2015).

Several social and economic factors have 'aggravated' the risk of homelessness: poverty, non-affordability of rent, unemployment, family disintegration, physical abuse, lack of skills, partial education or none, and violence have been known as the drivers of homelessness (Olufemi, 2002:460). Aliber et al., (2004) reported the work of Krige (1962) and Davenport and Hunt (1974) in South Africa which showed that homelessness can be traced to the displacement caused by the competing demands for labour and land from both agriculture and mining, and by the early years of industrialisation and later the industrial manufacturing boom.

Further, the social causes have been found to include divorce, domestic violence, ill-health, disability and substance abuse. As in many other countries of the world (see Wolch & Dear, 1993; Vissing, 1996; McCreary Centre Society, 2001). Furthermore, homelessness as is the case in South Africa is also a result of rural–urban migration to escape poverty (Olufemi, 2000, 2002; Aliber et al., 2004). Poverty and homelessness are intrinsically connected (Daly, 1996; Olufemi, 2000, 2002; Tipple & Speak, 2005).

Strategies to Address Homelessness induced by the Dynamics in the Labour Market

A number of strategies can be useful to tackle the issue of homelessness from the economic and labour market side.

Social protection

Deliberate efforts must be made to support the extension of social extension to all. For example, The ILO is championing the Social Protection Floor, a global social policy approach to ensure universal access to at least the following guarantees:

- Access to essential health care, including maternity care;
- Basic income security for children (eg. family allowances);
- Basic income security for persons in active age who are unable to work (eg. social protection benefits for persons with disabilities, unemployed, maternity);
- Basic income security for older persons (eg. pensions).

Promote and implement pro-employment labour policies

Active Labour Market Policies

Active labour market policies (ALMP) are government programmes that intervene in the labour markets to help the unemployed find work. Participation to these is contingent upon participation in training and work programmes. They include training, public works programmes, enterprise creation and employment subsidies. These programmes tend to target special vulnerable groups such as youth, women, long-term unemployed, the elderly, the disabled, *inter alia*.

Passive Labour Market Policies

Passive labour markets are not contingent upon participation in training and work programmes, although job search is usually included. The provide income replacement during periods of unemployment or job search. These programmes range from unemployment insurance, unemployment assistance to early retirement.

Setting and Implementing Minimum Wages

While a number of countries have successfully set minimum wages, there are high rates of non-compliance. This ha negative consequences not only for workers and their families, whose rights are violated, but also for the compliant employers, as it gives non-compliant enterprises an illegitimate cost advantage. Compliance can be enforced through such initiatives as awareness raising, capacity building targeting workers' and employers' representatives, sanctions, *inter alia*.

Supporting the Transition from informality to formality

Countries must support the implementation of ILO's Recommendation 204 which provides guidance regarding

(a) facilitating the transition of workers and economic units from the informal to the formal economy, while respecting workers' fundamental rights and ensuring opportunities for income security, livelihoods and entrepreneurship;

(b) promoting the creation, preservation and sustainability of enterprises and decent jobs in the formal economy and the coherence of macroeconomic, employment, social protection and other social policies; and

(c) preventing the informalization of formal economy jobs.

Pro-employment macroeconomic policies

Fiscal Policies: These should generally be more expansionary, more focussed on public investment in order to expand opportunities and more reliant on the mobilization of domestic revenue. There should be emphasis on the supply side such as on expanding productive capacity.

Exchange Rate Policies: A managed, instead of a laissez-faire regime would be useful for countries in Africa. Focus should be on containing external shock (terms of trade or capital outflow shocks and maintaining a competitive exchange rate.

Monetary Policies: These should aim to support fiscal expansion and export promotion and provide adequate liquidity to growing economies. Further, they should foster moderate but positive real rates of interest for private and public investment.

Conclusion

The paper has attempted to examine the link between the dynamics of the labour markets and homelessness. The paper has spelt out the different characteristics of labour markets in Africa and examined the likely effects on homelessness. Policy strategies have been suggested to curb homelessness.

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The State of Homelessness in Developing Countries

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Introduction and context

This paper discusses the state of homelessness in countries referred to as 'developing countries', or collectively as the 'developing world' or the 'Global South'. There are no really reliable statistics for homelessness in the developing world. However, the UN's own estimates, and national counts where they exist, suggest the number has increased in the last two decades. The vast majority of the 1.1 billion people estimated to be homeless by the UN (including inadequately housed and street sleepers) live in developing countries. Given the on-going impact of climate change, war/civil unrest, and global economic uncertainty, it is likely that numbers will continue to increase.

The developing world is not homogenous. The diverse socio-cultural, economic, political and environmental contexts of each country exert a strong influence on the drivers and experiences of homelessness, the characteristics of homeless people and the policies and interventions to address homelessness. This paper seeks to highlight this. What follows draws on 20 years of on-going, empirical research, including several hundred detailed interviews with homeless people, across 12 countries since 2000 (see for example Tipple and Speak 2009; Speak 2016)

In the developing world homelessness plays out along a continuum, running, broadly, as follows:

- 'Rough sleeping', - literally lying down on the street, under a bridge or in a public place to sleep at night - temporary, seasonal short or long term[95].
- Pavement dwelling, whereby a regular 'pitch' is used over a longer period of time and some very rudimentary shelter of card, cloth or plastic is erected – short to medium term
- Squatting in the same derelict building on a regular basis – short to medium term.
- Living in abjectly poor, often dangerous, dwelling (including boats and other floating platforms), without security or services and which fails all tests of adequacy – long term or permanent
- Living in refugee camps without the foreseeable possibility of returning home -long term or permanent

Importantly, the categories above are interrelated, as people flow, or are pushed, from one category to the other and back again. Thus, they cannot be understood, or addressed, in isolation of each other, yet each requires a range of different solutions.

Homelessness, in the form of rough sleeping, pavement dwelling and squatting, can be temporary and cyclical, as in the case of rural households from the Alto Plano in Bolivia who travel to the cities every summer to trade and live on the streets, before returning to their rural homes. It can also be a longer term, even a permanent, state, as in Indian cities, where families live and raise children on the streets.

This form of homelessness is the most visible and the most acute but probably not the greatest in proportion in developing countries.

Homelessness in the form of abjectly inadequate, generally informal housing, often referred to as 'slums'[96] tends to be much longer term. There was a decline in the percentage of the urban population of developing countries living in slums between 2000 and 2014, from 39 per cent to 30 per cent. Nevertheless, absolute numbers continue to grow (UN 2015). Much of this housing remains so extremely precarious, and without the most basic of services or security, as to make its occupants little better off than those on the streets or squatting.

People in this category are often evicted and cast into living on the streets and those on the streets move 'up' into slum settlements. For that reason, this paper considers that people in all categories above should be considered as homelessness, but recognises the greater immediate plight of many street sleepers.

95 Length of time defined by interviewees, on average: short term = days or several months; medium term = less than 5 years; Long term = more than 5 years.

96 The word 'slum' is often considered pejorative. It is used here to refer to housing in which lacks access to one or more of the following: improved water source, improved sanitation facilities, sufficient living area, durability or security of tenure.

A review of policy highlighted that official definitions of homelessness, used for enumeration and intervention purposes around the world, are generally based on 1 of three criteria: location (e.g. on the street, under bridges, in derelict buildings, in precarious location); insecurity of tenure or (e.g. lacking secure title; no fixed place of residence, floating people); quality of housing, shelter or services (e.g. without sanitation or water, lacking adequate protection from the elements, in dangerous condition or precarious location). Some countries also class anyone who does not actually own a dwelling as homeless for the purpose of allocating state housing.

However, despite wide spread acknowledgement of the relevance of inadequate shelter in the consideration of homelessness, when it comes to enumeration and intervention, many countries focus attention only on those in categories 1- 3 above. Enumeration is of this group is fraught with difficulty and produces poor statistics. This is because it misses the many who are either not found or deliberately not counted. It also includes many who are not actually homeless but, like the Alto-Plano migrant traders, have a home and consider sleeping on the street as part of a normal temporary economic activity. Enumeration of the inadequately housed is equally difficult, because it requires detailed exploration of housing quality and tenure over time, which is a much bigger task.

Drivers of homelessness

The drivers of homelessness are mainly structural rather than a result of an individual's agency. While the drivers of homelessness in developed countries can be linked strongly with unemployment, fractured family relationships and the diminution of the welfare system, drivers in the developing world are more complex and diverse.

Economic drivers

Probably the main driver in the developing world is poverty, especially a failure of rural livelihoods and lack of rural services and opportunities, coupled with the opportunities offered by booming urban development. Poverty pushes many people to leave their rural homes, initially temporarily, to seek better economic and social opportunities in cities and towns and send remittances home. It is important to stress that migration itself is not a driver of homelessness, many people migrate but do not become homeless and many homeless people have not migrated. Migration should be considered as part of the process of becoming homeless. The economic failure of rural, or urban, livelihoods derives from many complex roots. For example, climate change is destroying homes and terrain or making centuries old farming methods unsustainable, especially across sub Saharan Africa, where movement between different locations, as a livelihood strategy, has long been common (Brockhaus and Locatelli 2013).

Intensification of farming in some countries sees smallholders driven off their land or bought out for derisory sums of money. This is the case of smallholders in the Sundarbans area of Bangladesh, where intensification of shrimp farming now virtually dominates the land use and has led to the forced migration of thousands of smallholders (Speak 2018). Economic growth and urban expansion also lead to loss of home and livelihood. For example, in India, the development of Gurgaon satellite city, near Delhi, saw some larger landholders sell for reasonable sums of money. Their landless workers lost their jobs and, like smallholders who sold for little, had no option but to leave to seek work in the city.

To support failing rural livelihoods a migration process often begins with a lone, working aged male seeking temporary work in the city to support the rural household. However, poor wages mean that he cannot afford shelter if he is to send remittances home, so he sleeps on the street. Others join him to assist and eventually the balance tips such that it is more economically viable for the women and children to follow (Speak, 2011; Tipple and Speak, 2009; Kothari, 2003). Mosse et al. (2002) noted that, in western India, the poorer the family, the greater is the number of people from it who migrate, leaving fewer to maintain a rural living. With no suitable accommodation for them, entire households end up on the streets, or, if they are lucky, in slum settlement.

Even where an adequate rural livelihood can be maintained, the focus of many Governments on urban development means that rural services, especially schools and clinics, are far behind those of even poorer areas in the city. This too drives people to migrate in search of better opportunities for their children.

Loss of home or displacement

Some developing countries are more badly hit by environmental disasters and the effects of climate change than others, causing the mass destruction of homes and loss of life. At the time of writing, Cyclone Fani affected more than 2.5 million people across Bangladesh and southern India, it is estimated that hundreds of thousands of people lost their homes in this one event. Over 1.5 million were left homeless after the 2004 Tsunami which hit Indonesia, many remain so today.

While governments and aid agencies rally at times of crisis, those in inadequate housing may slip through the emergency relief net. For example, in Peru, the Government's post disaster relief is only available to those who lose a formally built home which they owned. The many thousands whose informally built dwellings are destroyed can get no support.

Within informal, slum settlements, fire is a much-feared danger. It spreads quickly, kills many and, because of the density of informal settlements, destroys the homes of many more (Arup 2018). Turok (2015) reports that approximately 1000 homes were lost in a single settlement fire in Masiphumelele, Cape Town with 4000 people left without shelter. They not only lost their shelter but also the resources, money and many hours of labour they had put into building it.

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In many parts of the world, war and civil conflict are destroying both cities and rural communities and rendering people homeless and workless. Kothari (2015) notes that UNHCR estimates that globally there are nearly sixty million people displaced as a result of war, persecution, and other factors. Almost six million Colombians have been violently displaced as a result of conflict (CODHES, 2014), resulting in around 5 per cent of the population being on the streets and nearly 30 per cent of all families in Colombia in inadequate housing (Ministry of Housing estimates from 2013). In Nigeria, the actions of Boko Haram terrorists have led to the around 650,000 Nigerians fleeing their homes and becoming displaced internally, with a further 70,000 now living as refugees in neighbouring countries (UNHCR, 2014). Homelessness born of displacement frequently lasts for generations. Many of those on the streets or in the informal settlements around Lima arrived in the city fleeing the Shining Path in the 1980s and still fear to return to their rural homes almost 40 years later. In Iraq, the war of 2003 has resulted in millions of people migrating to different cities for safety, where they have settled in makeshift shelter for years.

Eviction

Many of those who end up in the city eventually find their way into an informal settlement. Formal urban development and economic growth increasingly requires the removal of these settlements, regardless of their condition or longevity. The process often involves sudden, sometimes violent eviction of settlers who lose their shelter, belongings and livelihoods. This is exemplified by the recent destruction of the informal settlement of Kathputli, in Delhi, India. Many hundreds of artisans and performers, who earned their living performing around the city, were evicted. Their decades old community, which was built around shared performance areas, was devastated. They were promised new homes to rent in high-rise apartments, which they did not want and could not afford.

Evictions sometimes see the removal of informal settlers to purpose built ‘relocation colonies’ which are almost always many kilometres away from livelihood opportunities (Speak, 2012; Patel, Sliuzas and Mathur, 2015). Again, in Delhi, the Municipality destroyed several slums near the city centre and moved people 16 kilometres to the relocation colony of Bhalaswa, North East Delhi. They were leased a plot of land for 10 years but given no housing or services at all. Subsequently the Municipality has built many thousands of very small apartments, some only 18 square meters, in 3 and 5 story blocks. These are ostensibly for other slum dwellers in the city. The apartments were completed in 2018 having been under construction for almost 10 years, but to-date, not a single one is occupied.

These evictions not only disrupt communities and livelihoods but, ironically, increases street sleeping as people cannot afford to travel into the city for work so return to living on the streets. They also remove potential communities and shelter for those trying to move off the streets.

Social drivers

A wave of social and demographic change has swept the developing world in recent years. Foster (2000) presented evidence that family support networks were beginning to change and, in some cases, fracture entirely, affecting the housing security of more vulnerable people. This change, coupled with the

lack of formal welfare and support systems is particularly problematic for some people and underpins much of the increase in street sleeping and its increasing longevity.

Many countries in the developing world are experiencing significant aged populations for the first time and have not yet developed systems of care (Schroder-Butterfill and Marianti 2006). Older people's homelessness is exacerbated by the reduction in the role of the extended family to support those in need. For example, in India, which now has the second largest aged population in the world, rapid economic development has given rise to a newly mobile and affluent middle class of younger people. As they migrate to the cities or to other countries for work, they are less able or willing to care for their older relatives (Speak 2011). The increase in women working outside the home, coupled with an increase in nuclear families, also erodes the support which once protected older people from homelessness.

Divorce, separation and abandonment of women are increasing around the world, resulting in increased female homelessness and female headed households, which are the poorest. War is making many women into widows whilst the tradition of men marrying their brother's widow (Levirate marriage) is diminishing. In many cases can be detrimental to the woman and her children and women refuse to accept it. However, in some countries, particularly in the Middle East and many parts of Asia, the importance of the performance of respectability, and the greater seclusion of women, make it virtually impossible for a woman to establish an independent home without a male supporter. Nevertheless, in other countries, especially those in Latin America, and in Sub-Saharan Africa, it is much easier for a lone woman to establish an independent home, and to work, if she can find work. Latin America also has a very strong tradition of community support organisations which provide help.

These social changes are not sudden but have been developing over several generations. Despite this, governments have not developed adequate health and social welfare systems in the developing world to cope with the needs of vulnerable people.

Political and legal drivers

Homelessness is highly politicised in both the developed and developing worlds. The institutional and regulatory frameworks established by governments to control access to land and to provide housing can help or hinder the urban poor in their quest for secure housing (Simbizi, Bennett and Zevenbergen 2014). In the developing world, the current failure of many governments to develop pro-poor development frameworks means that the poor have unequal access to land for housing (Bredenoord, van Lindert and Smets 2014). This is problematic in itself but also offers ample opportunity for politicians to make promises of land, housing, tenure, services or settlement upgrading, in exchange for votes. These promises are frequently broken. Even more overtly, homelessness can result from evictions, as a conscious way to ensure votes from more affluent communities, or to control political opposition.

Women, and their children, are made more vulnerable to homelessness owing to a failure of many governments to enforce human rights, and land and property rights, for women (Speak, 2005). This remains problematic in some African countries, while Latin American countries are generally better at supporting women's land rights, and developing innovative tenure systems, to protect women.

Legislation can effectively criminalise homelessness by making it illegal to live in the city without proof of citizenship or without a dwelling to return to at night. In Indonesia, all people above the age of seventeen should possess an identity card called the Kartu Tanda Penduduk (KTP) issued by their respective local authority. Without the card one may be sent to prison. However, in order to acquire a KTP a person has to have an officially recognised address. In other countries, specific legislation criminalises street sleeping. This is the case in India, where the Bombay Prevention of Begging Act is used as a tool to imprison those sleeping on the streets. This legal Act is often used to remove street sleepers prior to international events, such as the / commonwealth Games (Dupont 2013).

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Failure of housing provision and unaffordability

Underpinning all of the above drivers of homelessness is a complete failure of the formal private housing delivery system, which priorities middle- and upper-income housing. In the face of rapid urbanisation in most of the developing world, governments appear unable to plan for the increase in low income urban populations. This includes failure to provide, or facilitate the provision of, very low-cost housing for the millions of low-income households in both urban and rural areas. Although mass housing for low income households is being built, it is almost always too expensive for the poorest, located away from income earning activities and lacking good, affordable transport links. In many cases it lies empty for years or is 'raided' by higher income groups who can afford a car or public transport.

Mexico has many examples of such housing which is unoccupied for a range of reasons, including the cost, lack credit for extremely low-income households, lack of transport and infrastructure and the environment of violent crime associated with drug cartels. Similarly, in Angola, government policy produced mass low-income housing which was too expensive and too remote for the lowest income households. Angola has subsequently introduced a programme of assisted self-help house building, for the lowest income groups. However, it too is failing to meet its targets because it is poorly promoted, offers sites in disadvantage locations and is, ultimately, still too expensive, as its finance criteria are set too high.

These are not isolated event in the developing world. Generally, it seems that low income housing is being built at the wrong price, in the wrong places, to the wrong design and for the wrong reasons and too often ends up occupied by the wrong groups, or not at all. The author's observations, from interviews with senior officers in planning and housing authorities in several countries, is that many have no idea where the 'affordability level' lies in their own countries and fail to recognise poverty levels.

In some countries, that 'affordability level' amongst the inadequately housed and street sleepers seems impossibly low. Many are struggling to maintain an adequate standard of living even with no housing costs. In India, Bangladesh and South Africa, for example, very little housing is produced at a cost they could afford to rent. Finance for housing construction and ownership is, more often than not, unavailable to those on low incomes. Even when people feel that can repay a loan, as it requires regular repayments and stable, formal employment. This is one of the problems with the Angolan 'Assisted Self Help' programme, discussed above.

Nevertheless, in some other countries the 'affordability level' is higher, and it is not so much poverty but the sheer lack of housing which drives people into inadequate dwellings and informality. For example, in Peru many (but certainly not all) of those who invade the desert and establish informal settlements are far from the poorest in society. Many can afford to rent small dwellings formally, if they existed in the right location for work. They can also access, and afford, housing credit and build, if land is available. In Bogota, Colombia, the consolidation of some informal settlements, and their upgrading into vibrant quasi-formal neighbourhoods, almost entirely by the settlers themselves demonstrates power and determination of people to provide and improve their housing.

The key point is that if constructed appropriately, in the right central locations and available at the right price and tenures, housing can be a solution for many in abjectly inadequate housing. The difficulty seems to be location, cost and constraints on finance. This can only be overcome by a radical rethink of how we prioritise central urban land.

However, for those sleeping on the street, or squatting, urban housing-based solutions do not work. Street sleepers in most developing countries need flexible, temporary and virtually free accommodation, so that they can move around the city for work. With the exception of a few emergency night shelters, no such accommodation is included in urban housing policies. Some street sleepers need, more than anything, a way to return to a secure rural home and livelihood, which suggest a shift in focus to rural housing and development.

Characteristics of homeless people in the developing world

The socio-cultural context of a country strongly influences the characteristics of homeless, which differ between countries and between the categorise of homelessness. The characteristics of homeless people in the developing world also differ from those in the developed countries. Nevertheless, there are some generalisation we can make.

Gender

Most enumerations of homelessness in the developing world indicate a predominance of men. However, this may not be true everywhere as enumerations use narrow definitions, based on street sleeping or pavement dwelling. By this definition women will be undercounted. This is because the cultural context greatly influences the 'visibility' of female homelessness. In some cultures, women on the streets face increased danger from abuse, kidnapping and trafficking (Pomodoro, 2001). Therefore, they hide or stay with friends and family. (Edgar 2001; Bimal and Syed 2000). In devoutly Islamic countries, the cultural unacceptability of women living on the streets means that women and girls are far less likely to be found there, either living alone or as part of homeless households. In Bangladesh, for example, over 75 per cent of identified homeless people are male (BBS, 1999). Similarly, in Egypt, women and girls remain greatly dependent on their families for accommodation in the face of homelessness (Sayed, 2000).

Conversely, in Latin America, women form a more equal proportion of those counted as living on the street. Similarly, in Ghana and in South Africa, it is common for young women to go to the cities to work in order to earn money to buy household goods to make them more eligible for marriage. While there, they often live on the streets, often in groups,

to save money. Both Anerfi (1996) and Korboe (1996) noted a very even gender split amongst younger homeless people in Ghana, with girls constituting about 49 percent of the homeless population. Olufemi (1997) estimates that, in Johannesburg, South Africa, four out of ten street homeless people are women.

If we accept a broader definition of homelessness, including those in abjectly inadequate housing, the gender characteristics of homeless people change. Estimates suggest that female-headed households constitute 70 per cent of the world's homeless population including those in inadequate housing. In a UN study (Kothari, 2005), female-headed households, particularly single mothers living in poverty, were identified as being one of the groups most likely to be homelessness in several countries, including Nicaragua, Argentina, Costa Rica, Peru.

Age

The majority of the 'street homeless' population in developing countries falls within the adult age range, between18 and 59 years old. For example, Olufemi, (1997) estimated that 73 per cent of street homeless people in Johannesburg were aged between 20 and 39 years and 87 per cent are aged between 20 and 49 years. A study of homeless people in Delhi, in 2001 indicated that 80 per cent of homeless people were in the age group 19-58 years (Aashray Adhikar Abhiyan, 2001). However, as discussed earlier, some countries are experiencing increased numbers of older homeless people and it is likely that the age profile will change considerably over time.

Child homelessness is also increasing and, in many countries, it is certainly quite common to find households with children living on the streets. This household 'street homelessness' can sometimes be very long term, leading to generations of children being born and raised on the streets. This is particularly true in some parts of Asia. Nevertheless, in other cases, for example Peru and Bolivia, family 'street homelessness' is often a more temporary situation, linked with cyclical economic migration. Households migrate from the rural high Andes to live and work on the streets during summer returning to their village homes after a few months trading (Tipple and Speak 2009).

As war and HIV/AIDS produces increasing numbers of orphans the phenomenon of 'street children' appears to be increasing. The term 'street children' includes 'children on the street' who can be found working on and roaming the streets without supervision by day. It also includes the more vulnerable group of 'children of the street', who live and sleep on the street, or in stations and abandoned buildings estranged from their families and without support.

Estimates of the number of homeless children in households or street children in developing countries are exceptionally elusive. Nevertheless, a broad picture can be pieced together based on individual countries. According to UN sources there are up to 150 million street children, across both categories, globally.

Poverty and economic activity

It is a common misconception that homeless people are the visibly destitute beggars – the very poorest in society. This is not necessarily true within developing countries for either rough sleepers or those in inadequate housing. Despite the fact that loss of livelihood is a driver of homelessness, in most developing countries, most homeless people, across all groups, work. Thus, the broad profile of homeless people contains a greater diversity of economic activity and financial standing than it does in developed countries. Homeless people in the developing world generally have very low levels of education, with inadequately housed being slightly better educated than street sleepers (Tipple and Speak 2009). Thus, they also have slightly better jobs and higher incomes.

However, there are strong differences between countries. In South Africa, where formal sector employment was dominant until the mid-1990s, Olufemi (1997) noted that 96 per cent of street sleepers were unemployed prior to becoming homeless and 79 per cent were unemployed after becoming homeless. Conversely, studies of street sleepers and pavement dwellers in Delhi note that the majority in urban centres are informally employed, mainly engaged in occupations such as handcart or cycle rickshaw pulling, driving, waiting on tables, cooking and construction work (Jagannathan and Halder, 1990; Dupont, 1998; Aashray Adhikar Abhiyan, 2001). In Peru, inadequately housed informal settlers around Lima are often educated to secondary level and have noticeably higher levels of employment.

96%

of street sleepers were unemployed prior to becoming homeless and **79 per cent** were unemployed after becoming homeless.

This difference emphasises the importance of informal economic activity for the homeless as the vast majority of working homeless people in both categories are employed is in the informal sector. Their work is low paid, often temporary, insecure, unskilled and, importantly it does not require the rigid framework of a formal residence, address or bank account which is frequently required for employment in

industrialised countries. Thus, it is easier for the homeless of both categories to obtain informal work on a daily basis. Indeed, in many cities, there is a place at which people looking for daily labouring work assemble, waiting to be hired. Even skilled workers with specialist tools may gather there awaiting daily work.

Experiences of homelessness

Experiences of homelessness are influenced by the legal and political context of a country, which influences treatment by the police and other authorities. In Peru, for example, the authorities are relatively sympathetic to the plight of informal settlers in inadequate housing. However, they do not easily suffer street sleepers, especially children of the street, who are moved on and sometimes beaten. In all countries, women and girls on the streets are especially vulnerable to rape, kidnap, and trafficking.

Everywhere, homeless people, especially street sleepers, are perceived as criminals and pick-pockets. In truth they are far more likely to be the victims of crime, especially violent crime, than the perpetrators.

Homeless people experience very with poor health, suffering particularly from respiratory illnesses, malaria, anaemia, gastro-intestinal problems and injuries. Even basic health care can be beyond their means, such that, for this group, working long hours with poor food even a small injury or illness can escalate to something more severe. Ironically, the hygiene, health and safety problems associated with night shelters deter many from using them.

Within the developing world the prevalence of mental health problems, substance abuse or alcoholism amongst homeless people, of all categories, differs from country to country. For example, the author's observations and interviews in Medellin, Colombia (Speak, 2015) noted that street sleepers were more generally destitute, very often drug dependent and begging, than in other countries she has visited. In the case of women, engagement in prostitution was clearly evident. Such activity is seldom the cause of homelessness but rather a result of it. Nevertheless, it colours the public perception, which is reflected in media and in the derogatory language used to refer to homeless people. This sometimes spills over into violence against them.

Interventions and policies

In the developing world, policies and intervention to address homelessness in all categories are largely proving ineffective in reducing numbers. There are two main reasons for this. First the sheer scale of homelessness is so immense that the resources it demands are outside the scope of many governments. One reason why enumeration tend to focus on street sleeping, ignoring the greater number in abjectly inadequate housing, is because it will produce a lower number to be provided for.

The second reason why interventions fail is because they are focused on the provision of formal housing, which demonstrates a lack of understanding of homeless people's needs and priorities. In the developing world, the immediate priority of most homeless people is not housing but income generation. Housing, even shelter, is secondary to this.

Where housing can be the focus is for those in abjectly inadequate housing and for this group there is now ample evidence that in-situ upgrading of poor quality, informal housing works better than relocation. Nevertheless, relocation remains the main approach and ostensibly low-cost housing-based solutions are being developed around the world for the millions of inadequately housed. However, many fail, and are left empty or are 'raided' by higher income groups, simply because to live there would make the low income household, for which they are intended, even poorer. This is because they are almost always in peripheral locations, with poor infrastructure and transport and require the household to give up their existing, generally free, informal housing and move into housing requiring rent, utility charges and transport costs. These housing schemes very often make it impossible to work, such that even those who could afford to, and are willing to, pay a small rent, would not be able to if they accepted the housing.

Night shelters for street sleepers are also almost always peripherally located. While they are essential for many, especially women, children or the elderly, they are counterproductive to income generation, the very reason many others have left their home to live on the streets in the first place.

For street children, interventions are generally provided by NGOs with good intentions. However, they can run the risk of failure because they prioritise housing, repatriation and education. The solutions which work best are those which do not force housing or repatriation children but rather act to support children gradually until they regain trust of adults.

For all groups, the prioritising of healthcare, food, and help to become economically stable is of greatest benefit. In most countries the author identified significant NGOs, religious or community groups who supported the homeless, particularly street sleepers, in these ways. Many have developed extremely good practice, in terms of offering vital food, health care and shelter, without being judgmental.

Summary

Homelessness in the developing world is diverse and complex. The drivers of homelessness often lie in either the failure of rural or urban livelihoods, failure of social support or political action and inaction. Whilst inadequate housing can be addressed, to a degree, by a focus on housing provision, it will require a radical rethink of how we prioritise urban and rural land, and an understanding that housing is more than simply shelter. Housing must not make occupants worse off or add to the stress of impoverished lives.

Street sleeping can be a manifestation of abject destitution and lack of any support for an individual's problems. However, it is often driven by economic need. Importantly, for many, street sleeping is temporary or cyclical and part of an economic strategy.

To stem the flow of migration, or to mitigate its effects, the focus must be on rural and urban employment for the low skilled, in addition to the provision of truly affordable housing and realistically accessible housing finance. This will require a better understanding of what the poor can afford and a re-evaluation of the importance of informal economic activity.

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Appraisal of National Housing Policy – A case of Pakistan

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Abstract

Housing backlog, being a global commonality, is the biggest outcome of continued urbanization. Land, infrastructure, finance, administrative bodies, real estate markets and most importantly role of government are most significant factors in this regard, and the tool through which the Governments intervene is usually known as housing guideline or housing policy. Through a critical study of housing policies of many countries, this paper emphasizes the importance of a concrete housing policy and will develop the basis on which housing guidelines can be worked out. In case of Pakistan, National Housing Policy 2001 is analysed. The factors that hindered the proper implementation are also highlighted. This paper attempts to put forward some recommendations that can be a part of Pakistan's housing policy. Hence, this research tries to shape up the housing guidelines in order to make housing more affordable.

Introduction

Housing is a multi-faceted term usually defined as a shelter for the human beings, however it can be defined in numerous ways depending upon the perspective of the analysis. As defined by Oxford Dictionary, "house" is a building for human abode and "housing" is for dwelling houses mutually. United Nation, however, has different take on the definition of housing, under its view; housing is not only a shelter but also a mean to create communities [i]. Moreover, according to UN definition, housing should play two roles, the interior should provide space where a household having people of different age, sex and occupation can live comfortably. On the other hand, the exterior should provide grounds for the healthy meeting and fruitful interaction of different households living in community [ii]. In the world, housing conditions remained fairly satisfactory until the rapid urbanization and massive migration towards urban areas took place, resulting in exponential growth of cities, which led to increased demand for housing against the minimal supply causing land scarcity and augmented land values [iii]. Above stated scenario compelled the people to live in dwellings, which were either too small or in very bad condition. It is estimated that 25 per cent to 33 per cent urban dwellers of the developing countries are living in poverty and cannot afford adequate housing and it is the need of the hour to adopt some social and economic strategies to make a nice housing affordable for masses [iv].

The effect of this urbanization has been greater in developing countries. This is where the planners, the architects and the policymaker possess a key role to play, all of them, together, have been putting forward some integrated and practical recommendations to control the constantly worsening situation of housing sector. These guidelines are usually known as Housing Policy and every country develops its own housing policy in accordance with the urban context and the needs of urban poor [v]. Development and implementation of the housing policy has been practiced widely throughout the world. However only a few countries considered the low-income groups of society in true spirit while devising the policy. Likewise, Pakistan also developed its first National Housing Policy in 2001 but the implementation and success of this policy is still debatable [vi]. This paper aims to deliberate the housing policy in a detailed manner ranging from the definition of the housing policy to the importance and impacts of the housing policy. It also tries to study the housing policy in the context of Pakistan and evaluate the performance of the National Housing Policy of Pakistan by comparing it with the housing policies of some other countries. Later on, it discusses on what should be the constituents of the National Housing Policy of Pakistan and eventually it puts forward the recommendations, so that it would influence affordability of urban poor towards attaining adequate housing.

Problem statement

Like stated earlier, housing can be defined as the shelter provided to households which combine together to form a community. Likewise, policy can be defined as a certain course or action plan chosen by an individual or a group in order to form a set of alternatives, in accordance with the present scenario, as a base for making decision for the present and future [vii]. Thus, Housing Policy can be defined briefly as a course adopted by government in order to achieve certain objectives such as improvement of housing stock or elimination of homelessness [viii]. More comprehensively, it may be defined as policy shaped by the government outlining the vision, goals and particular details of how government will work in coming years to provide a diverse stock of affordable housing meeting the present and future needs. It also comprises the details of financial support, where needed, and impartial criteria for picking eligible stakeholders

to work within the particular situation [ix]. As evident from the above stated definitions, formation of a concrete housing policy is one inevitable step that needs to be taken if a government aspires to improve the housing conditions in the country. A good housing policy orients the scattered efforts of government towards a pre-determined target and ensures optimum output. Land supply, infrastructure, housing norms, rural housing, urban poor, slums and squatters, housing finance, role of government, private sector and community, management of housing stock, disadvantaged groups and fiscal and legal framework are the most important elements which must be considered while developing a housing policy [x]. A policy can affect masses only if above-mentioned factors are considered in true sense.

Overview of existing housing policies

Since World War II, different kinds of housing policies have been employed and practiced throughout the world, all those policies can be categorized into four basic types: policies related to demand and supply and policies promoting home ownership and rental housing. Table 1 shows some characteristic of policies developed throughout the world in four major types [iii].

Outline of housing policies based on four dimensions

Dimension	Owned Housing	Rental Housing
Demand Side	• Cash reimbursements for housing • Subsidies for housing sector • Drop in interest rate of mortgage plans • Mortgage interest subtraction from income tax -Improved quality standards • Property levy on housing procurements • Regulations in loan-to-value and debt-to-income ratios • Constraint of new purchases	• Fixed volume cash grants • Rental grants • Rent records • Housing receipts • Slum deterrence • Controlling the rents
Supply Side	• Municipal housing • Subsidies to contractors • Raising quality standards	• Public housing • Subsidy to suppliers • Slum upgrading

Source: Asian Development Bank Institute

Housing policy of England

To start with, England is a country where political system as well as the fiscal sector, both are highly centralized, so the housing sector is also administrated by central institutes. Housing sector, along with the finance sector and the department of works, addresses the housing matters. To materialize the policies, government also invites the housing developers, building contractors, housing associations, mortgage lenders and landlords to come forward and collaborate with the government institutions. Additionally, planning regulations, grant funding and loan programs are the interventions that government makes as per demand [xi]. But in all these policies, the government focused on increasing the home ownership by enhancing the purchasing power of the community, unfortunately the supply did not increase accordingly. This resulted in increased demand against the shortage of units and led to affordability crisis. After realizing the core flaw, the government now aims to deliver 1 Million units in five years (2015-2020). Through this program the government wants to ensure not only the increased ownership but also increased housing supply. If delivered within time, these 1 Million units will be a great addition to the housing stock of country and will be affordable for homeless to get a house.

Phases of housing policy of england

1919-1970s	1980-2010	2013	2015-2020
Social Housing	Right to buy	Help to buy	Increased supply
Provision of decent housing to army recruits. After WWII 0.8M units built to replace those destroyed during war.	Idea was to increase ownership, social tenants allowed to buy social rented houses.	Different programs launched to enhance buying power of people to stimulate housing demand.	Production of IM houses in 5 years to ensure the increased supply and affordable prices.

Housing policy of the United States

In United States of America, after food and medical expenses, housing is the third largest consumer expenditure. According to the housing act of 1949, congress announced its goal to provide decent and affordable housing to every American family. To achieve this goal, central authorities has helped in funding of building and restoration of over 5 million housing units for low income families and provide rental vouchers to almost 2 million more households but the country's housing issues remains the same [xii]. The housing policies of USA are usually outlined as per following objectives:

- Ensuring a minimal quality of housing.
- Increase in housing supply, encouraging construction and maintaining existing housing.
- Stabilizing rents and asset prices.
- Reducing crowding.
- Encouraging homeownership.
- Fostering community development.

Public housing program originated in 1937 resulted in increased job opportunities and slum clearance as it has ability to meet the state's need for low cost housing. The housing division of public works announced 58 projects containing more than 25000 dwelling units [xiii]. Since the program started, an increase in housing production was recorded after 1980, and peak production of 1.4 Million units was recorded in 1994, by 2012 it had declined by 18 per cent with the loss of more than 25000 housing units. Only 9 per cent of all public housing of 2012 was built after 1989.On the other hand 44 per cent of all public housing had been built before 1970.In 2012, 3,095 housing authorities owned and operate public housing in the United States [xii].

Housing policy of Pakistan

Unlike many other countries, authorities of Pakistan took almost 55 years in publishing its housing policy which was proposed in year 2001. Till then Pakistan has not put forward any new or revised policy in 16 years. There is a general opinion in Pakistan that, though housing is basic need of citizens, the government is not effectively managing the issues related to housing sector. The magnitude of housing shortfall is on high increase rate in comparison to growth of population [xiv]. The configuration of country's housing stock based on index of 'average number of persons per room' clarifies a loud rise in the percentage of housing units with a steady surge in the average number of persons per room on state and regional scale [xv]. As per the results of census 1998, there are total 19.3 Million housing units in country, among them, 32.3 per cent are located in urban areas and 67.7 per cent of houses fall in category of rural housing. The results of census pointed out housing backlog of 4.3 million units. The country needs addition of 300,000 housing units per year, however, owing to less housing production, housing shortfall is increasing by 270,000 every year [xvi]. As per 2017 census, the existing housing stock of country consists of 19,211,738 units. Currently, there is housing backlog of 9 Million units and an annual shortfall of 270,000 housing units. By 2050, Pakistan will be the fifth most populated country with its current growth rate [xvii].

67.7%

of houses fall in category of rural housing

Pakistan

The National Housing Policy 2001

Currently, Pakistan holds National Housing Policy (NHP) 2001, which focuses on basic requirements of producing a constructive environment in order to stimulate and expedite housing sector. The policy intends to back the new ideas and their implementation in order to guarantee liveable and acceptable housing for all its citizens [xviii]. This policy aims to recognize chunks of land, be it state land or private land, in rural and urban areas to develop it for housing purposes. Therefore, the routine holdup laws in the procurements practice will be removed and amended in order to minimize litigation [xix]. The main proposals are:

- Land record correction and up-to-date information system shall be developed using digital, remote sensing methods, GIS mapping, satellite imageries, etc.
- House financing organizations shall be encouraged to stimulate savings and start micro-financing for low-income people using community organization like NGOs and CBOs.
- Subsidized loans will be provided for development and construction of rural housing as well [xix].

The key accomplishments of National Housing Policy 2001 were regularization of Katchi Abadis, provisions for low incoming housing, development of new towns and regularization of housing taxes. On 29th March 2008, a special program started for housing sector which aimed to construct one million housing units annually to deliver housing facility to the public. The policy, however, was deferred to be reviewed in 2015, which was not held up until today [xx]. Housing policy proposed in 2001 focuses on aspects such as katchi abadis, urban regeneration and slum up-gradation and puts forward a set of policy actions referring to planning rules, regulatory authorities and resettlement plans. However, there are a number of factors which led to ineffective and unproductive execution of the measures advised by the said housing policy [xx].

The main obstacle which hampered the just implementation of housing policy are:

- The low-income group was not even able to afford the cheapest housing unit built by any public or private developer.
- Failure to collect revenue is another main hurdle.
- Gap between supply and demand curves is constantly increasing.
- The housing programs lacked community participation and delivered units turned out to be not only expensive but against the needs and desires of the people.
- Due to high maintenance and other costs of housing, the owners fulfil their need by selling homes.

Owing to the above-mentioned factors and due to improper implementation of this housing policy, it was unable to deliver up to the expectations and the housing conditions in country got worse with passage of time.

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Recommendations

Housing policy of Pakistan 2001, contrary to the expectations, failed to cope the housing issues of country and it resulted in increased homelessness and housing backlog. Even after the failure of said policy, the government or the housing ministry has not developed any new guidelines for the housing sector. Currently, the housing policy of Pakistan needs to be redevised on immediate basis and following alterations are proposed to be incorporated in the existing housing policy:

Increased supply
Nothing beats the supply. In order to improve the housing conditions, the basic and most imperative measure is the escalation of the housing supply. The government and housing authorities need to increase the annual production of housing units to cut short the gap between demand and supply.

Direct government role
Supply of housing must increase, having said that, the government should drive the housing sector itself. Instead of just facilitating the builders and private sector, the government must play a direct role and should get in the driving seat. This way the government authorities can ensure transparent and clear housing transactions.

Increased ownership
Along with the increased supply, the government should focus to increase the demand ability of housing, among the citizens. Government should introduce opportunities such as mortgage programs, equity loans and shared ownership to ensure maximum people are able to get hold of a housing unit.

Increased land supply
Housing authorities should utilize more land situated on the peripheries of the urban areas for development of new urban neighbourhoods. However, government should prefer non-agricultural and barren land, especially those underutilized land chunks within the cities, for such activities.

New sub-urban towns
In addition to use more land for development, the authorities should try to develop new cities and towns in sub-urban land located between cities. These new towns, having affordable land prices will house more households and this practice will reduce the pressure on the existing urban areas.

Mixed use and increased density
In development of new towns and cities, focus must be laid on to vertical expansion and horizontal sprawl must be discouraged. Mixed-use development must be ensured in these new neighbourhoods. These measures will result in increased density, so more households can be accommodated using less horizontal space.

Planning rules
Planning rules and regulations set by the development authorities need to be revisited, building byelaws should encourage such spaces which are liveable. Open areas must be restricted to a reasonable limit and commercial style of construction adopted by developers and builders must be discouraged. Planning and design must be on human scale. Pedestrian's oriented development should be encouraged whereas extra wide roads and boulevards must be discouraged.

Tax relaxation on housing
Government should revise the taxation system for real estate and housing. On small houses, the government should reduce the tax rate to the possible extent and also provide subsidy on building material for such houses. For large houses, villas and commercial projects the government should levy comparatively higher tax rate. Earning from these projects should be used to subsidize small-scale projects. Moreover, heavy taxes should be imposed on multiple selling and purchasing of houses to discourage the business aspect in real estate.

Upgradation of existing housing
Along with development of new neighbourhoods, the ministry of housing should also upgrade existing housing stock, such as slums, squatters and katchi abadis. In this way, government can produce more liveable housing units by utilizing less funds.

Incremental housing and micro finance
Government should also facilitate the incremental housing and start the microfinance programs for low income groups who cannot afford to borrow bigger loans from banks and other corporate sources. Through these micro loans the low-income group can construct and improve their housing conditions in increments.

Rental housing
Government should also start to subsidize the rental housing and instead of supporting home owners only the government should also develop policies to support and help the tenants. Social housing program of England is a good example in this parameter.

Implementation and monitoring
Above all the government needs to have a cell which makes sure unbiased, non-political and timely implementation of policies set by ministry. This cell should also be responsible for eradicating the corruption and discrepancies in the housing sector. This cell should also monitor and evaluate the performance of housing policy and should advise steps for future.

Discourage speculations and investors
Government needs to eliminate the aspect of business and investment and should ensure that housing is a basic need. Heavy taxes should be levied on continuous selling of the plots. Immediate possession of plots should be ensured instead of filing system. Delivery of constructed houses instead of plots can also be helpful in discouraging the speculations.

Conclusions

There is a dire need to redo the housing policy of Pakistan on the above-mentioned parameters and the revised policy must be implemented in a neutral way keeping aside all political, regional and cultural differences. This true implementation of this policy can go a long way in ensuring adequate and cheap housing for all the sectors of the society. Through strict monitoring and periodic assessments the government can easily shape up the policies in future as per the conditions and the needs of its people.

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Core findings and recommendations

Addressing the drivers of homelessness such as inequality, un- and underemployment, discrimination, social exclusion and lack of access to social protection, poverty, lack of affordable housing, forced evictions, displacement and the commodification or financialization of housing requires a multidisciplinary approach that incorporates a social perspective and acknowledges the crucial role played by housing in realizing other fundamental rights. The outcomes of the Expert Group Meeting suggest that only the concerted efforts of policymakers, government authorities and homelessness services can uproot causes of homelessness.

Current policy and intervention to eradicate homelessness is proving largely ineffective due to the sheer scale of the phenomenon and the lack of adequate resources. The following findings draw on the discussions of participants at the meeting on addressing policy gaps on homelessness in developed and developing countries.

The 2030 Agenda, human rights instruments, and legal frameworks

The Expert Group Meeting encourages all stakeholders to fulfil their commitments to leave no one behind and reach the farthest behind first in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Preventing homelessness and dealing with it when it occurs requires a comprehensive strategy, capitalizing on synergies between various SDGs and efforts toward their realization.

The meeting encourages all stakeholders to hold States accountable in recognizing the rights and entitlements contained in the International human rights legal frameworks, such as the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Right of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The meeting also encourages stakeholders to implement these conventions as well as accelerating the development, adoption and implementation of international legal framework for older persons, in order to prevent homelessness, and protect and support those experiencing the anomaly.

Definitions of homelessness and adequate housing

Currently, there is no universally agreed definition of homelessness, including different categories of the condition (for example, people living in severely inadequate housing, in temporary emergency accommodation, and those living with friends and relatives). Rather, countries and local communities often define homelessness based on diverse social views and policy priorities. Among other drawbacks, the lack of a common definition makes it difficult to collect data that are comparable across countries.

The tendency of governments to exclude those living in severely inadequate housing conditions from the homeless population further hinders efforts to tackle homelessness. Even though they are included in the definition, there is a general reluctance to collect robust data on the inadequately housed, which casts doubt on the relevance of existing data and resulting statistics.

For these reasons, a shared definition or description of homelessness, including people living in severely inadequate accommodation without security of tenure and access to basic services is critical to make tangible progress in preventing and attending to homelessness when it occurs.

The right to adequate standard of living, including housing is recognized and enshrined within broader international human rights norms. By incorporating more than just the physical availability of housing, the right encompasses many social factors that relate to the ability of people to live free from harm and discrimination.

While there are many national policies and programmes that build low-cost housing, they are simply not affordable for those living in the poorest communities due to high purchase costs, inadequate financing, the lack of regular and formal employment, the lack of payment flexibility, and high interest rates. In other cases, affordable housing solutions are only offered in peripheral areas of the city, requiring additional costs for transport and utility charges. National strategies to tackle homelessness must go beyond providing housing; they must attend to the basic socioeconomic needs of the groups most at risk.

Expert Group recommendations

In order to agree on a comprehensive and inclusive definition of homelessness, the Expert Group recommends the following:

1. **Devising and agreeing on a definition of homelessness that is:**

- **Inclusive**: the definition should look at the social, physical, and security domain to ensure that no one is left behind. It should capture everyone, including: people living in temporary or crisis accommodation; people living in severely inadequate and insecure accommodation; and people who lack access to affordable housing.

- **Politically sensitive:** the definition should differentiate among degrees and types of homelessness, given that no form of homelessness is acceptable. The definition should account for the differences in the socioeconomic context of countries to tackle, holistically, any potential manifestation of homelessness.

- **Shaped around homelessness as a societal failure**: homelessness should be viewed as a societal rather than an individual flaw. As a human rights issue, homelessness sits at the intersection of public health, housing affordability, domestic violence, mental illness, substance misuse, climate change and natural disasters, urbanization, racial and gender discrimination and unemployment. More so, it reflects the structural inequality and discrimination toward those who are denied their rights to adequate housing.

To account for the above-mentioned features, the Expert Group proposed the following definition:

"Homelessness is a condition where a person or household lacks habitable space with security of tenure, rights and ability to enjoy social relations, including safety. Homelessness is a manifestation of extreme poverty and a failure of multiple systems and human rights."

2. **Considering the inclusion of the following categories of people in the definition of homelessness:**

- People living on the streets or other open spaces (for example, people sleeping in their cars and "pavement dwellers")

- People living in temporary or crisis accommodations (for example, night shelters, hostels and other types of temporary accommodation, refuges for those fleeing domestic violence, camps provided for internally displaced persons, camps or reception centres and temporary accommodation for asylum seekers)

- People living in severely inadequate and insecure accommodation (for example, extremely overcrowded conditions, unconventional buildings and temporary structures, including slums and informal settlements)

- People lacking access to affordable housing (for example, people sharing with friends and relatives on a temporary basis, people living in cheap hotels, bed and breakfasts)

3. **Elaborating efficient data collection methodologies to strengthen the evidence base of national policies on homelessness. Such methodologies should at a minimum:**

- regularly measure street homelessness through point-in-time counts or real-time data, where available

- provide for the collection of disaggregated data on homelessness (for example, by gender, age race, disability and other relevant characteristics), specifically in relation to vulnerable groups and key aspects of homelessness. This includes descriptions of the specific needs and main drivers of homelessness. To do so, it is fundamental to build the capacity of relevant institutions and revise existing methodologies to collect, analyse, and utilize data

- accounts for quantitative and qualitative evidence (for example, oral testimony, photographs, or videos) to avoid the risk of excluding those who are not statistically visible

4. **In coordination with other national efforts to combat poverty, inequalities, discrimination and social exclusion, devising a national housing policy that:**

   - provides clear definitions of "housing" and related terms (for example, "adequate housing" and "affordable housing") and incorporates the social dimension of housing. This entails accounting for factors separate from the simple availability of a house. For example, the factors that enable people to lead a safe and decent life

   - adopts a human-rights based approach to housing as enshrined in relevant international and regional human rights treaties and conventions[97]

Drivers of homelessness

From a human rights perspective, homelessness reflects the State's failure to protect and fulfil many fundamental rights. This perspective holds that homelessness threatens the health and life of the most marginalized people globally and, therefore, requires urgent global response that focuses on its drivers and structural causes of homelessness.

The structural factors that drive homelessness include the following:

- Poverty
- High- and rising income inequality
- Limited or lack of access to quality education
- Limited or lack of access to land and property, credit and financing
- High un- and underemployment
- Proliferation of insecure and vulnerable jobs
- Lack of access to social protection
- Rural-urban migration
- Unplanned and rapid urbanization
- Evictions and forced eviction
- High cost of energy or health care
- Shortage of affordable housing
- Climate change and natural disasters
- Domestic violence and abuse
- Discrimination and social exclusion
- Privatization of public services
- Commodification of housing

Social factors such as personal and family circumstances play an equally important role. This includes, among others, family breakdowns, domestic violence and other abuses, mental health and well-being, alcoholism or substance abuse, sudden job loss, serious illness or disability, and high out-of-pocket health costs.

Poverty heavily contributes to homelessness. National poverty reduction strategies have often left homeless populations behind as they are often unaccounted for in national statistics due to lack of identity documentation or other administrative flaws. About 4 billion people, or 55 per cent of the world's population, do not have any social protection cash benefit.[98]

The effects of urbanization on affordable housing and homelessness are significant. Rapid urbanization fuelled by rural-urban migration, if managed poorly, intensifies housing demand, exacerbates land shortage, and intensifies informal land supply. This leads to the proliferation of slums, informal settlements, inadequate housing, extreme poverty, homelessness and unemployment. According to the United Nations, 68 per cent of the world population is projected to live in urban areas by 2050, compared with 55 per cent in 2018. Moreover, the pace of urbanization is expected to accelerate in future, mainly propelled by rural-urban migration.

97 These include the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the Convention on the Right of the Child; the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women; the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and any other human right treaties to which the State is a party.

98 ILO, World Social Protection Report 2017-19: Universal social protection to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (Geneva, ILO, 2017). http://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/ShowWiki.action?id=594

BOX 2

The impacts of rapid urbanization and rural to urban migration on affordable housing and homelessness: Drawing lessons from Ethiopia's experience[99]

The proportion of rural migrants in major urban cities in Ethiopia is already significantly high (44.4 per cent on average). The main pull factors are a booming urban economy, including large construction activities, demand for urban domestic workers, better pay for service work and the presence of social support. In contrast, rural poverty is a major push factor, manifested in rural vulnerabilities (for example, exposure to geographic, political, social, gender and age marginalization), diminished land sizes, recurrent drought, absence of effective extension systems, high population pressure and environmental degradation.

While there are no precise data regarding the size and magnitude of the homeless population, some estimates put the number of street children at 150,000 to 600,000 (63 per cent of whom are born locally or within 20 kilometres and a significant number of youths, adult and elderly homeless, with the majority living in rental shacks, slums, along roads or under shop awnings.

The Ethiopian Government nationalized urban land and extra housing in 1975 and the housing stock was converted into Government-owned rental units. In 1991, to meet the rising demand for housing, the Government introduced a leasehold system of urban land, which conditioned the availability of housing. However, formal housing was mainly unaffordable for low-income households.

The current Ethiopian housing framework falls within the broader Integrated Housing Development Programme, a Government-led initiative that aims to provide affordable housing for low- and middle-income people. This programme, launched in Ethiopia in 2005, aims to meet the specific needs of the growing urban poor: lack of housing finance, high housing standards, high interest rate or lack of collateral, which severely reduced their ability to secure a home loan. However, the programme can be strengthened to make housing more accessible for poor households by removing down payments; developing an alternative low-cost, low-income housing; revisiting housing standards; improving housing finance for the poor; or by providing land and infrastructure for low-income housing.

In addition, the Urban Safety Net programme was introduced to support over 4.7 million urban poor living in 972 cities and towns. The programme reached 604,000 beneficiaries receiving conditional cash transfer based on labour intensive public works (84 per cent), or unconditional cash transfer. In addition, beneficiaries received free health, education and housing.

Evictions

The Expert Group Meeting focuses on different types of evictions. While the American case (in Box 2 below) focuses on the landlord-tenant relationships (or legal evictions), other types of evictions are based on the forced expulsion from property owned, de jure or de facto, within formal or informal settings (expropriation) or from State land. The prevention of forced evictions is at the core of UN-Habitat's work. The measure is also on the agenda of several other international governmental and non-governmental organizations. Intergovernmental organizations play a crucial role in conducting constructive dialogues with States by providing technical aid or up-to-date data on forced evictions.

The immediate and short-term effects of evictions are usually followed by equally dire medium- and long-term consequences on people, including higher residential instability; relocation to disadvantaged neighbourhoods; limited access to federal housing assistance; and higher vulnerability to homelessness and poverty. Stark differences in the frequency of eviction case filings and the number of filings resulting in eviction suggest that State-level landlord-tenant code has a strong role in shaping eviction prevalence.

99 See the expert paper "The effects of rapid urbanization and rural to urban migration on affordable housing and homelessness in Ethiopia", by Tegegne Gebre-Egziabher, Addis Ababa University, at page 50 above.

BOX 3

Eviction: intersection of poverty, inequality and housing[100]

In the United States, eviction usually refers to the forced expulsion of a tenant from a rented property. However, other reasons for forced moves also include home foreclosures, condemnation of property and natural disasters. No official statistics currently exist to measure eviction in the United States due to the lack of monitoring by local or national governments and the difficulty of capturing evicted households consistently in survey research.

A study conducted by the Eviction Lab at Princeton University, New Jersey, circumvents the complex data gathering process by examining public court records of civil lawsuits and accounting for the methodological bias that not every case filed necessarily leads to eviction. The study shows that underserved populations are more prone to eviction.

Data on legal eviction proceedings in the United States was collected from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. There were 82,935,981 individual-level court records and 26,353 aggregated county-year filing counts from 2000 to 2016. Eviction is a common threat to renting households. The number of filings nationally increased by 25 per cent from 2000 to 2016. Eviction filings are found all across the United States, including outside of large metropolitan areas, with case filing rates (measured as the number of filings per renter households) highest in the Southeast region.

The states with higher filing rates are more likely to have repeated filing cases, which creates long histories of eviction records for tenants, potentially limiting their ability to secure future rental housing. Several demographic characteristics are positively associated with the number of filings. For example, the number of evictions filings are higher in counties with greater shares of African-American population. Demographics are not the most significant driver of differences in eviction rates; however, state-level landlord-tenant codes have a strong role in shaping eviction prevalence.

100 See expert paper "Eviction: Intersection of Poverty, Inequality, and Housing", by Ashley Gromis, Postdoctoral Research Associate, Princeton University, at page 65 above.

The impact of the commodification or financialization of housing on affordable housing and homelessness

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing recognizes that homelessness is a human rights issue and reflects a State's failure to promote, protect and fulfil the right to adequate housing. It implies a pattern of systematic inequality and discrimination that, when taken to the extreme, leads to the criminalization of homeless people.

SDG 11, target 1 aims to achieve adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services for all. To do so, it is crucial that national frameworks on housing be informed and guided by a human rights-based approach. This process is at the core of the mandates of UN-Habitat and the United Nations Special Rapporteur. Both promote, among others, a shift from a commodity-based to a human rights-driven approach to housing.

The commodification or financialization of housing is a phenomenon taking place globally. According to the Special Rapporteur, commodification refers to the "structural changes in housing and financial markets and global investment whereby housing is treated as a commodity, a means of accumulating wealth and often as security for financial instruments that are traded and sold on global markets ".[101] This process leads to an increase in the cost of housing that is not reciprocated by a parallel increase in income. As a result, many families and individuals are pushed out of the housing market as rent increases due to gentrification and rezoning.

Investors capitalize on underdeveloped properties that are purchased, renovated and ultimately resold on the real estate market for an increased value without any consideration for the low-income and marginalized groups who cannot afford them. This phenomenon is particularly relevant in the Global South where land grabbing is a major issue for communities that are deprived of affordable land and shelter.

The increased reliance of governments on the private real estate market and the parallel dismantlement of social housing programmes, rise of housing costs, and wage stagnation, has created such conditions that the middle class is no longer able to afford houses in major cities.

Many countries offer tax incentives and other benefits to attract foreign capital. For instance, real estate investment trusts allow anyone to become a real estate shareholder and receive a return on their investment (that is to say dividends) with favourable taxation schemes.

101 Human Rights Council. Report on the financialization of housing from the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context. (2017)

The commodification or financialization of housing is not necessarily an unjust process since real estate development can also create affordable housing solutions for low-income people. Inclusive housing regulations could, for example, allocate a set percentage of real estate development plans to affordable housing solutions. Housing regulations could additionally set caps on mortgage rates for low-income households.

Financial markets and corporations have become key players in the housing sector around the world. In turn, human rights-informed government interventions must balance the interests at play and place access to adequate housing for all at the centre of any housing discourse.

BOX 4

Socioeconomic factors related to homelessness: a case of Brazil[102]

In 2001, Brazil passed a housing and land tenure reorganization law (the "City Statute") that aimed to deliver housing for low-income households through housing and land tenure regularization programmes. The success of the reform prompted change worldwide, creating the momentum for other national development programmes in Cote d'Ivoire Ghana, Kenya and Lesotho.

Between 2007 and 2008, the Brazilian Ministry of Social Development conducted a National Survey on the Homeless Population with the aim to investigate and gather data on the socioeconomic profile of homeless people.

The survey was part of a broader set of actions and initiatives on homelessness that took place in the aftermath of the murders of seven homeless people at Praça da Sé (a public space in the industrial city of Sao Paulo in August 2004. The large media coverage that followed the murders compelled the Brazilian government to turn its attention to the homeless. Other initiatives included the creation of the National Homeless Movement (2004), the first National Meeting of the Homeless (2005), the expansion of the Organic Law of Social Assistance to cover homeless people (2005), and the creation of the Intermenstrual Working Group to develop public policies for the homeless population (2006).

The survey targeted the adult population (over 18 years-old) living in the streets. For the scope of the survey, the term "homeless persons" referred to individuals lacking regular conventional housing and those who used public and degraded areas as living space and shelter (temporarily or permanently), including public hostel units for temporary overnight stays. One of the survey challenges was the high mobility of the homeless population within large cities. Experts needed to organize quick data gatherings in the evening to minimize double counting. At its end, the survey covered 71 Brazilian cities, including 23 state capitals and 48 other cities with populations greater than 300,000. The national survey team included 55 coordinators, 269 supervisors, and 926 interviewers. Almost 1,500 people collected data for three months between October 2007 and January 2008 with the help of social movements and organizations working with the homeless population.

The survey found that there were 31,922 homeless adults (0.06 per cent of the total population), of whom 82 per cent were men, 53 per cent were between 25 and 44 years old, and 67 per cent were people of colour (who make up only 45 per cent of the general population). Sixty-four per cent of them had not completed the first educational grade, and 71 per cent worked and performed remunerated activities (such as recycling materials (28 per cent), car washing (14 per cent), construction work (6 per cent) and cleaning (4 per cent)). Fifty-three per cent of them earned between USD 11 and USD 45 per week, 2 per cent had a formal work contract, and 16 per cent made a living by asking for money. Moreover, 76 per cent always lived in the same city, contradicting the myth that there were homeless people from other states or regions of the country. In regard to Government benefits, 25 per cent did not have identification documents, preventing them from obtaining formal work and accessing social services. Eighty-nine per cent did not receive any Government benefits.

The survey reduced public prejudice towards the homeless population, a key step in giving them the dignity and rights afforded Brazilians. More importantly, the survey allowed Brazil to create a National Policy for the Homeless Population. This policy provided access for homeless people to social security benefits, social assistance, and income transfer programmes, and established specialized social assistance centres for the homeless population. In addition, the survey improved the Unified Registry for Social Programmes, a strategic tool for mapping and identifying Brazil's low-income families.

102 See expert paper "National Survey on the Homeless Population in Brazil: Giving a Face to Homelessness and Formulating Strategies and Policies to Address Homelessness", by Roberta Cortizo, Senior Policy Analyst at the Ministry of Citizenship (Brazil), at page 41 above.

Expert Group recommendations[103]

In order to tackle the drivers of homelessness, the Expert Group recommends the following:

1 Devising or strengthening policy and regulatory frameworks to erase the structural causes of homelessness at all levels (global, national and subnational) and across various sectors. Such frameworks should:

- clearly define goals, targets and timelines
- combat and legally prohibit discrimination, stigma and negative stereotyping of homeless people, including by third parties
- ensure access to legal and other remedies for violations of rights, including for the failure of States to take positive measures to address homelessness

2. Promoting and implementing pro-poor and pro-employment macroeconomic policies. Economic diversification and strengthening of rural economies must made a priority in order to create jobs in rural areas. More so, economic development should be more evenly distributed across provinces, municipalities and local authority areas. This will lead to a more even distribution of economically engaged populations, including those in need of housing, which is perceived as more severe in some cities and provinces than in others.

3. Eliminating the practice of forced eviction in order to achieve permanent, affordable housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness and prevent them from being forced back into homelessness. This should be done by:

- amending and standardizing landlord-tenant codes to disincentive landlords from repeatedly filing cases against the same household, or using the threat of eviction to exercise control over tenants
- ensuring that policy and normative frameworks regulating landlord-tenant relationships provide a fair balance of legal power between landlords and tenants, disencumber tenants from unnecessary eviction records, and devise mechanisms to ensure a fair and just use of records for tenant screening
- engaging with grassroot and local non-governmental organizations, as well as country offices of international organizations, in order to provide a detailed narrative on, and build a strong coalition against, forced eviction

4. Devising policies and normative frameworks on private sector actors that:

- properly regulate investments in real estate markets and provide safeguards against unbearable hikes in housing costs caused by the financialization of housing
- account for the dominant role played by financial markets and corporations in the housing sector around the world
- balance the interests at play and put the people at the centre of the discussion on housing by shifting from a commodity-based to a human rights-based approach

103 While poverty, social exclusion and lack of access to social protection constitute drivers of homelessness, recommendations to tackle them are provided in the dedicated section "Social protection and other social policies and protection to address homelessness" below.

Vulnerable groups

The impact of personal and family circumstances on homelessness

Homelessness is a global problem that is understood and manifests itself in different economic, social, cultural and linguistic contexts. It affects the Global North and South. Family homelessness in particular is a growing social problem affecting and weighing on individuals around the world.

Among drivers of homelessness, domestic violence is a global issue reaching across national boundaries and socioeconomic, racial, cultural and class distinctions. It is a widespread and deeply ingrained issue that has serious implications on women's health and well-being. Domestic violence is widely ignored and poorly understood. It is also a leading cause of homelessness for women and children. In some regions, the physical and psychological consequences of losing a home are exacerbated by the subsequent withdrawal of social protection schemes.

The lack of social protection is in this context a driver and a consequence of homelessness. It plays a significant role in the stability and vulnerability of individuals and families, and in the composition of the homeless population in any given nation.

Those experiencing family homelessness (mostly women and children) are some of society's most disadvantaged and at-risk populations. Once viewed as episodic and situational, family homelessness has become chronic. Families require basic support systems, including appropriate social protection schemes and decent affordable housing, to thrive and break the cycle of homelessness. Lack of awareness of and expertise on homelessness-related traumas within homeless aid facilities increases the risk of causing additional harm.

Women and children make up a large proportion of the homeless population. In some instances, the lack of adequate education bars rural-urban migrant women from securing well-paying jobs. These women are often forced into slums and other unstable housing solutions, where they face the constant danger of being evicted. Homeless women supporting children face even greater obstacles in accessing adequate food and health care, and are more likely to be subject to crime or sexual assault.

Women often become homeless as a result of lack of land ownership. Similarly, widows without male children are often challenged by customary laws that do not allow them to retain land ownership or get access to credit and finance.

Families experiencing homelessness are subject to additional challenges in the form of childhood abuse, domestic and community violence, in addition to the trauma associated with the loss of a home. These experiences often impact on the behavioural patterns of children, and if unrecognized and unattended could have potentially devastating implications for their development.

Experiencing homelessness for the first time as a child is a determining factor for individual status, income and a chance of moving out of poverty later in life. In a cascade effect, childhood homelessness imparts even more serious impacts due to its correlation with poor nutrition, health, and education standards during children's formative years. Additional long-term challenges include the deterioration of basic health; loss of self-confidence, dignity and self-respect; and drug and alcohol abuse.

Orphaned children witness even more dire consequences. There are numerous variables influencing the ability of families to care for their children. The Expert Group Meeting recommended broadening the scope and reach of poverty reduction strategies such as cash transfers (CT) programmes to include families fostering orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC). This would help poor households provide support to OVC within families and communities. The UNICEF-sponsored CT-OVC family financial assistance programme that was started in Kenya in 2004 has proven that cash transfers encourage school attendance, improve nutrition and health, and reduce the number of homeless children and child labourers.

Homelessness among older persons

According to HelpAge International, an NGO leader in older people rights advocacy, more than 500 million older people live in cities globally; a figure projected to increase to more than 900 million by 2050. The right to adequate housing must be also tackled in the context of this ageing urban population. Housing remains a key component of the right to an adequate standard of living and to non-discrimination of older persons.

There is a significant gap in understanding the complexity around housing insecurity of older persons. This group is highly vulnerable to homelessness due to poverty, lack of any form of social protection (including pension), lack of inheritance rights, elder abuse and health issues. For example, most countries in Africa lack universal pension schemes. Older homeless persons often experience several other cascade effects, including mental health deterioration and recurring violence.

Older people also make up a significant proportion of people living in informal settlements. The challenges faced by older urban residents are exacerbated by the increasing incidence of climate and humanitarian emergencies impacting urban areas. Some of the measures taken to deal with these issues (for example, the establishment of care centres) are being spearheaded by civil society organizations and the public sector.

During the meeting, experts presented country-specific data on older homeless people. For instance, in New Delhi, nearly 150,000 residents (out of 11 million) are homeless, with more than 10,000 people living on the plains alongside the Yamuna River. Many of these people come from alienated and marginalized communities.

In some African countries, residential homes for older people are not the norm since families and communities usually care for the elderly. In Zimbabwe, however, a small group of older persons (often migrant workers from different nationalities and ethnic groups) live in such institutions.

Older persons, especially homeless older people, must have the means and access to affordable and adequate housing, and the necessary legal protection to make their voices heard.

Human mobility in the context of climate change, natural disasters and conflict

In 2018, heightened vulnerability and exposure to disasters and hazards resulted in the displacement of 17.2 million people.[104] Though the specific reasons behind these displacements vary, climate change is increasingly becoming a key factor. In the last 70 years, nearly 40 per cent of conflicts related to the contested control or use of natural resources, such as land, water, minerals and oil. In 2018, more than 2.5 million people in Africa south of the Sahara Desert fled their homes due to drought, cyclones, and floods. From 1998 to 2017, disaster-hit countries reported direct economic losses of USD 2.9 trillion, of which climate-related disasters accounted for USD 2.2 trillion. Global agendas that are related to these issues include the following:

- The Hugo Observatory on Environment, Migration, and Climate Change, which conducts research on the link between human mobility and environmental degradation
- The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, which provides a global framework for reducing the risk of disasters
- and Paris Agreement on Climate Change, which includes the Warsaw Mechanism on Loss and Damage
- The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which identifies the slow onset of environmental degradation, natural disasters and climate change in driving migration flows
- The Platform on Disaster Displacement, which aims to forge consensus on the rights and protection needs of people displaced in the context of disasters and climate change

It is clear that nation states and other duty-bearers have the responsibility to overcome the human mobility challenges created by climate change, conflict, and natural disasters—especially as they relate to homelessness.

Expert Group recommendations

In order to protect vulnerable groups from the causes and consequences of homelessness, the group recommends:

1. Fully recognizing the commitments made in the 2030 Agenda, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Convention on the Right of the Child, and actively working towards achieving them.
2. Addressing the nature of family homelessness through policies that meet the unique needs of women and children.
3. Collecting disaggregated data on homelessness, specifically in relation to family homelessness, women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.
4. Providing adequate housing with support services for families to address the trauma of homelessness in an effort to break the cycle of generational homelessness.
5. Expanding local government support for the development of affordable family-sized housing.
6. Implementing gender-sensitive and non-discriminatory social protection systems, including floors, and policies and programmes to ensure access to adequate housing.
7. Promoting government policies that finance, promote and invest in civil society and private sector partnerships with organizations that are currently servicing the needs of the homeless population.

8. Enforcing the rights of female-headed households enshrined in international and regional human rights instruments, and advocating for gender equality in housing finance regulations and practices. Gender equality should also be mainstreamed across the issues of access to land and security of tenure in order to fulfil women rights to inheritance, housing and property. The role of women in preventing, addressing and avoiding homelessness should be emphasized, as women are the key to breaking intergenerational transmission of poverty and homelessness.

9. Fulfilling commitments made in international frameworks, including the SDGs, the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, the New Urban Agenda, and the World Health Organization recommendations regarding adequate housing in older age and work toward the adoption of an international legal framework for the protection of the rights of older persons

10. Devising cross-cutting national policies on homelessness and issues pertinent to older persons that address the specific needs of these vulnerable groups, including adequate location, cultural adequacy, accessible design and architecture, adequate universal social security to cover the cost of housing, and the creation of socially connected communities

11. Addressing peoples' vulnerabilities to climate change, natural disasters and enhancing their resilience by the following:

    - Raising awareness on climate change risks and trends
    - Providing tools and knowledge to local governments and communities to improve forecasting, early warning systems, identification and assessment of natural hazard risks and to develop disaster preparedness plans
    - Strengthening international cooperation to close existing gaps that hinder effective responses, such as poor institutional capacity, high level of poverty, poor data and limited modelling of climate change impacts at the local scale
    - Adopting data sharing protocols that give governments the tools they need to protect vulnerable groups against climate change and prevent the poorest from being evicted and becoming homeless

12. Mobilize domestic resources and international cooperation to secure funding for the implementation of recommendations

Policies and measures to ensure access to affordable housing for all

Inclusiveness and affordability in housing policies

The growing urgency to provide adequate housing to millions of households and the need to do so in ways that guarantee a sustainable future for cities, and to curb the growth of substandard housing and homelessness, makes the case for a paradigm shift in housing policy and practice. The United Nations refers to this as the "Housing at the Centre" approach. It aims to reposition housing as a priority in the public debate around urbanization, integrated within the framework of national urban policies and urban planning. Housing at the Centre, therefore, re-establishes the important role of housing in development, stimulating the economy, reducing poverty and promoting inclusion in cities. As such, it will position housing issues on the international development agenda. Housing at the Centre departs from an understanding of housing as simply "a roof and four walls", to encompass the right to live somewhere in security, peace and dignity. It not only considers the socio-developmental dimension of housing, but places people and human rights at the forefront of urban sustainable development.

Housing at the Centre becomes imperative given emerging forms of urbanism that transform cities into places of exclusivity, rather than opportunity. Cities, especially in the developing world, are growing fragmented, unequal and dysfunctional, with the current models of housing production and consumption at the core of these processes.

When developing sustainable housing policies that tackle homelessness, governments must consider multiple elements, including land regulations and policies across the rural-urban continuum, housing supply in these contexts; housing finance and the interests of private sector actors; and regulatory frameworks affecting disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. Among these elements, inclusiveness and affordability are central for effective housing policies to tackle homelessness.

UN-Habitat's work, alongside the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda, puts housing at the centre of sustainable development. This approach looks to change the actual housing situation by placing people and human rights at the centre of urban sustainable development. Affordability is pivotal in realizing this goal. UN-Habitat considers this condition is met when "the ratio of the average house price is no more than 3 times the annual household income", or "the ratio of monthly rent is less than 30 per cent of the monthly household income".

Findings from the United Nations Global Sample of Cities show that a large percentage of persons across all types of urban centres are unable to afford homes or even the cost of rental housing. In low-income countries, for example, households need to save the equivalent of nearly eight times their annual household income to be able to afford the price of a standard house in their town or city. If they rent, households often have to commit more than 25 per cent of their monthly income to rent payments.

The affordability issue is widespread. In Latin America, high house price-to-income ratios and inaccessible housing finance tools compel households to resort to informal solutions without the benefits of planning and safety regulations. Currently in Mexico, rent-to-income ratio is 60 per cent, while the average house in Mexico City sells for USD 83,900 and average household income is only USD 13,800. In many parts of Africa south of the Sahara, less than 10 per cent of households can afford a mortgage for even the cheapest newly built house. In fact, African households in this region face 55 per cent higher housing costs relative to their per capita GDP than in other regions. In many European countries, families, especially youth, are severely cost-burdened and have much less to spend on other necessities such as food, health, transport and clothing. In extreme circumstances, households are forced to leave their accommodation because of the inability to pay.

Placing housing at the centre means ensuring communities and cities promote sustainable and inclusive housing measures that boost socioeconomic development. The concept of inclusiveness refers to the "promotion of growth with equity, within communities where everyone, regardless of their economic means, gender, race, ethnicity or religion, is enabled and empowered to fully participate in the social, economic and political opportunities that cities have to offer".[105]

Inclusive cities are achieved by mainstreaming the right to adequate housing and other human rights in urban development, including housing and slum upgrading, to ensure social integration.

To achieve this goal, protecting and fulfilling the right to adequate housing requires the full enjoyment of many other socioeconomic rights, including: the right to be free from arbitrary destruction and demolition of one's home; the right to choose one's residence; protection against forced evictions;[106] and security of tenure, housing, land and property restitution.

Urbanization and access to housing offer a unique opportunity for inclusive and sustainable development. What is often lacking is an integrated vision of housing within the framework of national urban policies and development. Very few governments have planned for urbanization in advance (for example, instituting policies to guide the growth of cities and territorial transformations, or guaranteeing the inputs needed for the provision of housing, land and infrastructure). In order to achieve inclusive policies that take into account households that are at risk of becoming homeless, as well as the difficulties of abandoning the state of being homeless, governments have to intervene directly and ensure housing options are affordable, accessible and provided for diverse groups and needs.

In essence, this means integrating housing policy into urban development policies and orchestrated in coordination with economic and social policies: namely safety nets, social protection, and welfare-related policies. Only then can housing make a substantial and prolonged contribution to socioeconomic development of the most vulnerable, such as the homelessness.

Likewise, following the Housing at the Centre approach, inclusive and affordable housing policies can only work if they are cohesive with sustainable land, infrastructure, finance and local economic development strategies. Consequently, the way in which such policies can be implemented and governed should be orchestrated with local governments and their planning and management departments. This can spur development with a focus on spatial inclusion and access to opportunities for persons of low income and those in vulnerable situations: for instance, ensuring that housing solutions are related to safe and adequate access to transport, basic services, education and health facilities. Also, ensuring that housing-related strategies include the upgrading of informal

105 UN-Habitat. Global Housing Strategy Framework Document.

106 UN Habitat defines forced eviction as the "permanent or temporary removal against their will of individuals, families and/or communities from the homes and/or land which they occupy, without the provision of, and access to, appropriate forms of legal or other protection"

settlements, inner city regeneration, promoting mixed-use and inclusionary zoning; accessibility and cultural adequacy for groups in vulnerable situations; all of which should be seen as a condition for inclusion of vulnerable groups, such as the homeless, into the overall urban development process.

Moreover, inclusive and affordable housing policies should be grounded on strong legislation, geared specifically to maximize affordability of housing and spatial inclusion, through the creation and enhancement of urban and building codes that promote the aforementioned principles. Likewise, legal mechanisms should be in place to protect people against forced evictions, guarantee security of tenure, and to protect people at risk of becoming homeless.

The productive and economic benefits of sustainable housing implementation cannot be undervalued and should be translated into a central element of macroeconomic policy. Urbanization spurs the construction of more houses with multiplier effects contributing to generate jobs, wealth and growth. In developed and developing countries alike, the housing and building sectors account for significant proportions of the national economy and constitute a key component of economic development and diversification. Concurrently, greater consideration of housing in urban development, to the extent that it results in diversity, mixed use and business opportunities, will also contribute to the prosperous growth of cities.

Control of public spaces and homelessness

The planning and the regulatory framework of public spaces are crucial factors for ensuring affordable housing and improving the conditions faced by homeless people and other urban dwellers. Indicators 11.7.1 for SDG 11 define public space as the "share of the built-up area of cities that is open space for public use for all". Investing in public spaces increases social cohesion, cultural interaction, mobility and transport efficiency, safety, health outcomes, well-being, environment and quality of life.

Public spaces also tackle inequalities, since people from any class, gender, age or ethnic distinction can enjoy these facilities. Public spaces may act as homes for poor and marginalized communities, assist in decriminalizing homelessness, contribute to curbing police brutality and facilitate community engagement. Measures to achieve more inclusive public spaces include adopting more approaches that place pedestrians at the heart of urban planning and development.

BOX 5

How private sector can help governments meet critical need for affordable housing in Africa[107]

The private sector plays a key role in promoting affordable housing and providing housing solutions in Africa. The African real estate market lacks long-term and stable financing solutions, privileging informal financing models in their place. The private sector can contribute to affordable housing in supply (land, materials and construction) and demand (increasing access to housing finance) by creating an affordable housing finance ecosystem. Given the lack of housing units in global markets, this measure presents a huge economic opportunity for the private sector.

By providing affordable housing, rather than luxury housing units, the private sector can tap into an unused market. Africa south of the Sahara, for example, accounts for more than 3.4 million units that represent a potential market of over USD 60 billion, according to the International Finance Corporation of the World Bank Group. Private sector actors must also invest in green and social bonds, energy efficiency, green buildings as well as environmentally and socially sustainable projects. Among these, employee housing schemes, for example, can improve the quality of life and overall morale of employees, while delivering affordable housing solutions.

107 See presentation "How can the private sector to deliver affordable housing" delivered by Thierno-Habib Hann, Senior Housing Finance Regional Lead, International Finance Corporation, available at https://www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2019/06/IFC-How-can-the-Private-sector-contribute-to-Affordable-Housing.pdf.

BOX 6

Policies to promote affordable housing in OECD countries: gaps, challenges and lessons learned[108]

Based on the data collected since 2014 from 50 country surveys, a study by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development found that:

1) Housing trends vary considerably.

2) Housing costs are high and have increased in recent years in many countries.

3) Housing is the single-largest expenditure on average and has become less affordable in recent years. Middle-income households, especially younger cohorts, face rising housing costs and find it increasingly difficult to become homeowners.

Affordable housing has become a top policy concern for governments and citizens. In many countries, renters are spending a bigger share of their disposable income on housing costs than homeowners with a mortgage. Low-income households are particularly burdened by housing costs. In 17 OECD countries, more than one third of low-income households in private rental dwellings spent more than 40 per cent of their disposable income on housing in 2018. The same was true for low-income owners in seven OECD countries. Housing quality deficiencies particularly affect children: more than 1 in 5 children under 17 years old live in overcrowded households in European OECD countries.

There are roughly 1.9 million homeless people across 35 countries for which data are available, representing less than 1 per cent of the total population in each country – but this figure is likely an underestimate. The homeless rate has increased in a third of countries in recent years and declined or remained stable in one quarter of countries. However, the rate of people experiencing housing instability is much higher, ranging from 2 to 25 per cent of the population. The lack of common definitions and data collection methods on homelessness, however, places methodological limits on cross-country comparisons. These constraints make it difficult to capture the full extent of homelessness.

The homeless population across OECD countries is heterogeneous and increasingly diverse. The chronically and transitionally homeless require different types of support. Moreover, the number of homeless children, youth and seniors has been rising in some countries.[109]

The OCED is working with countries to make housing more affordable and to tackle homelessness. The policy response in these countries tends to be skewed towards homeownership (subsidies, tax relief, etc.). Meanwhile, the most common types of housing support for low-income households is through housing allowances and social housing. In response to these findings, the OECD is exploring several areas for further inquiry to help countries make housing more affordable: incentivizing the supply of affordable and social housing, pursuing greater tenancy neutrality, reforming housing taxation, improving the targeting of housing support, reforming rental regulations, and reducing local barriers to affordable housing development.

BOX 7

Affordable housing policies in Pakistan: challenges and lessons learned[110]

Public housing in Pakistan is often found along the urban periphery, where there is limited access to social services. For this reason, 70 per cent of people adopt an incremental housing approach to construction, whereby they occupy a lot and expand it gradually to suit their needs. However, people living in these ad hoc homes face unhygienic conditions, improper ventilation, improper plumbing, wasted materials and lack of open space. To solve this, the Government has presented an incremental housing appraisal that aims to finance affordable new housing. The challenges will be immense: a huge housing backlog (8 million units), a fast-growing population, failure to collect revenue as low-income groups cannot afford the cheapest housing units, and outdated policies (the first housing policy in 2001 is based on the 1998 housing census).

For the Pakistan case, the Expert Group Meeting brought forward the following good housing policies and measures:

Increasing the supply of developed land (particularly in the peripheries of urban areas)

- Strengthening homeownership
- Promoting a direct government role
- Revising housing fiscal schemes

109 Hidden homelessness refers to those individuals who reside or live temporarily with others (usually friends or relatives) without any housing stability. This set is often left out from official statistics on homelessness.

110 See expert paper, "Appraisal of National Housing Policy – A case of Pakistan" by Fariha Tariq, head of department, University of Management and Technology, Department of City and Regional Planning, Lahore, at page 162 above.

- Amending planning rules
- Exploring vertical housing expansion solutions
- Upgrading existing housing
- Promoting microfinance for incremental housing construction while discouraging speculations

Expert Group recommendations

In order to ensure access to affordable housing for all to tackle homelessness, the Expert Group recommends:

1. Considering a wider range of tenures (for example, rent to buy, co-ownership) and flexible payment systems to accommodate insecure income and transition between tenures.
2. Supporting the upgrade and self-provision of secure and affordable housing by ensuring the availability of affordable land in appropriate locations for individuals and co-operatives.
3. Considering institutional arrangements that encourage "pro-poor" and human scale regulatory frameworks, which support homeless people by reducing administrative costs and streamlining procedures.
4. Developing financial systems for low-income households (for example, flexible low-rate housing finance) that allows them to establish credit worthiness.
5. Constantly maintaining and upgrading existing housing stocks.
6. Creating focal points, units, teams, or task forces within governments, particularly from developing countries, to ensure unbiased, non-political and timely implementation of policies set by the relevant ministry and housing bodies.
7. Defining tangible and concrete actions together with clear duties, mandates and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in the implementation of these recommendations.
8. Investing in public spaces and promoting participation in community forums to voice grievances and safely serve vulnerable groups.

Social protection and other policies to end homelessness

Social protection systems and measures, including floors, are essential for ensuring that no one is left behind. They are fundamental for preventing and reducing poverty across the life cycle of the most vulnerable social groups, including women, children, youth, the elderly, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and families living in extreme poverty. For this reason, they interconnect with several SDGs (mainly 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11 and 16).

Universal social protection encompasses three key aspects: universal coverage in terms of who is protected; comprehensive protection in terms of the risks covered; and the adequacy of protection.[111]

Data shows that the percentage of the population living on less than USD 3.20 per day is lower in countries where public social protection expenditure (including health care) as a percentage of GDP is higher.[112] Likewise, the percentage of the

111 ILO. 2019. 'Universal Social Protection: Key Concepts and International Framework'. Social Protection for All Issue Brief. Geneva: International Labour Office. https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/RessourcePDF.action?id=55517.

112 International Labour Office. Social Protection Systems for All to Prevent Homelessness and Facilitate Access to Adequate Housing. (2019)

urban population living in slums is lower in countries where the percentage of the total population that is covered by at least one social protection benefit is higher. This data suggests that universal social protection systems are capable of removing homelessness and facilitating access to adequate housing.

Social security and adequate housing are considered human rights, yet more than 4 billion people are not covered by any social protection benefit, and 23 per cent of the world's urban population live in slums. Coverage gaps are usually associated with underinvestment in social protection. In addition, austerity measures, such as fiscal consolidation cuts, have forced some countries to reduce social protection expenditure and curtail social protection benefits and services, thereby putting vulnerable populations at-risk.

BOX 8

Finland's Housing First policy: designing and implementing with vulnerable persons[113]

In recent years, Finland has been the only country in Europe where homelessness has decreased owing to its "Housing First" policy. In 2018, there were 5,482 homeless people in Finland, of whom 1,162 suffered long term in this condition. Since most homeless people (65 per cent) sleep in the homes of friends or relatives, there are almost no rough sleepers on the nation's streets.

Housing First is the result of a profound paradigm shift in Finland's homelessness policy, which has led to lease-based housing being codified as a right. Moving from a staircase model to "the right to your own door" model, Finland has converted shelters to supported housing units, provided individually tailored support services for housing, increased the supply of affordable rental housing, and provided preventive measures such as tenant advisory services.

The Housing First policy's success is attributed to: i) strong commitment by the Government and the Ministry of Environment; ii) a collaborative effort, which required strong cooperation between a variety of actors across sectors and levels; and iii) official (and financial) commitments from municipalities to adopt the new principle and reorganize their services accordingly.

BOX 9

Addressing homelessness through public works programmes in South Africa[114]

Ending homelessness is a priority of the Government of South Africa. The Government has implemented legislative and policy reforms through the Department of Human Settlement, the nation's frontline public works agency, delivering housing opportunities and units to a large number of households.

That said, the housing programme faces unattended challenges. Despite the delivery of 3.3 million housing units and 4.8 million housing opportunities, the Government needs to build more housing to account for a growing population.

In the case of South Africa, the Expert Group brought forward the following measures and policies:

1. Support and expansion of civic documentation issuance, such as national identity documents and birth certificates.
2. Extend housing benefit rights to previously excluded populations.
3. Implement shelter rights for all citizens, including people with disabilities, in accordance with the 1996 Constitution,
4. Expand the National Housing Needs Register to accommodate housing succession information. This requires following up on households with deceased owners and officially handing over such houses to next of kin.
5. Implement a complete ban on the sale or purchase of RDP (freely acquired houses) and other types of freely provided or subsidized houses.
6. Improve access to housing through policies like Medical Aid, pension benefits, compulsory housing allowance and rent-to-own clauses in employment contracts that allow for accommodation benefits for employees.
7. Extend public housing to semi-rural areas to limit rural-urban migration.

113 See expert paper, "The Impact of Personal and Family Circumstances on Homelessness" by Jean Quinn, executive director, UNANIMA International, at page 123 above.

114 See expert paper, "Addressing Homelessness Through Public Works Programmes in South Africa" by Emeka E. Obioha, professor of sociology, Walter Sisulu University, at page 84.

8. Diversify rural economies for job creation in order to curb urban influx.
9. Evenly distribute economic development across provinces, municipalities and local authority areas, irrespective of economic advantages or disadvantages.
10. Adjust legislative and regulatory frameworks on expropriation of land to allow for land redistribution to landless and homeless populations.

Expert Group recommendations

In order to ensure social protection systems for all to end homelessness, the experts identified the following measures:

- Establishing or strengthening social protection systems, including floors, in line with ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202) that points out the crucial role of social protection floors in "guaranteeing at least a basic level of income security and effective access to essential health care for ensuring life in dignity".[115]
- Ensuring decent working conditions for all, including for those in the informal sector, as low-skill, low-wage work, without social protection often leads to homelessness.
- Embedding social protection initiatives and measures in a broader national policy response that coordinates other social, economic and employment policies.
- Ensuring the issuance of national identity documents, including birth certificates and other civic registrations, so that no citizen is excluded from social benefits or protection.

115 ILO – International Labour Office. Social protection systems for all to prevent homelessness and facilitate access to adequate housing. (2019)

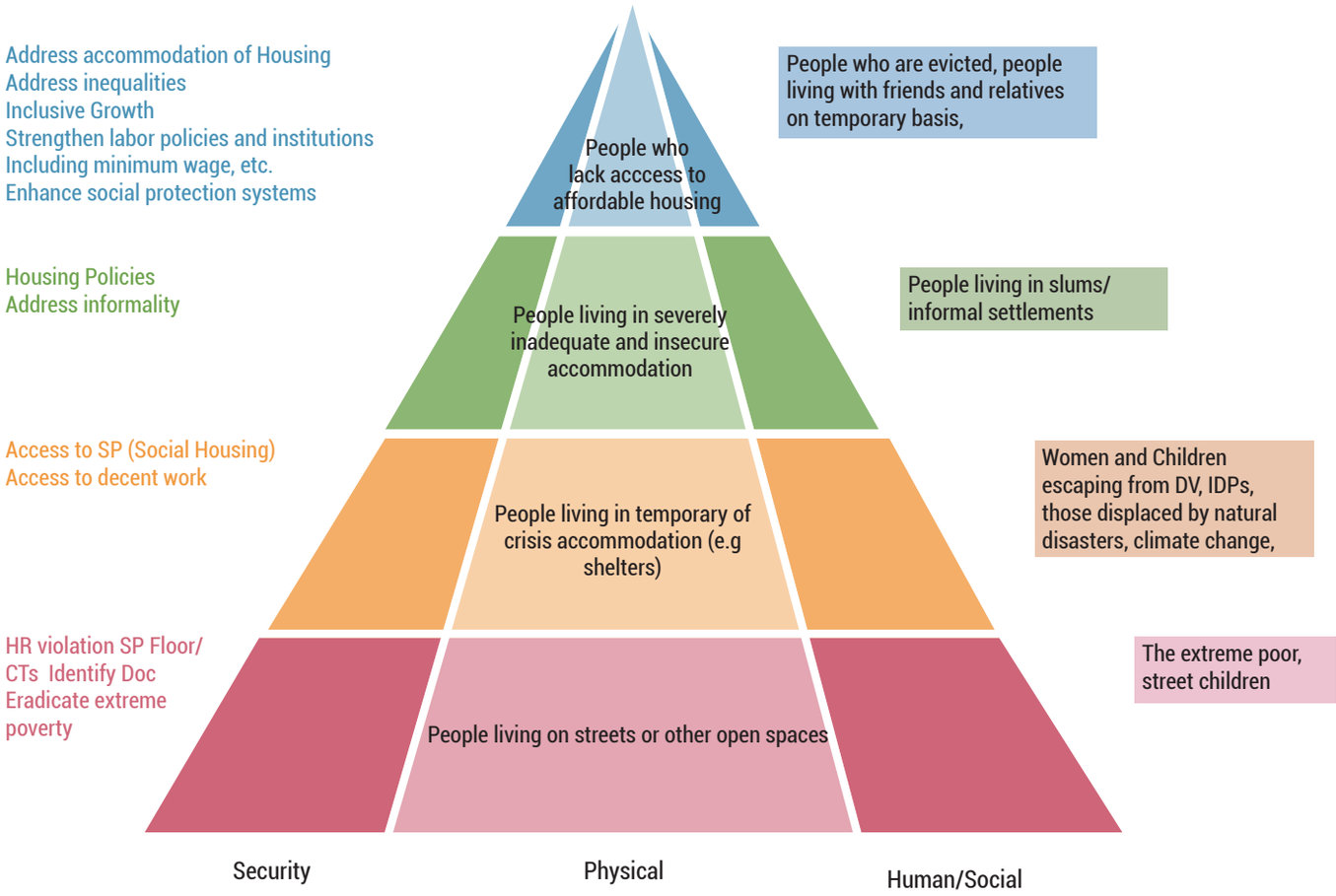
Conclusions

Overcoming the structural causes of homelessness is critical for policymakers, government authorities and homelessness services. Persons who are homeless experience distinct structural level challenges in accessing social services, social protection and employment, which can affect their vulnerability.

Concrete strategies and interventions are needed to eliminate structural homelessness challenges. These measures include recognizing the right to adequate housing; equal access to opportunities, public services and social protection systems; eliminating discriminatory laws and protecting human rights; and developing specialized, targeted services for particular subgroups of the homeless population.

The figure below depicts the different levels of homelessness and categories of people to be considered, as well as types of policy interventions and the domains needed. The most extreme form of homelessness sits at the bottom, indicating the significantly large need for the domain to be tackled.

Stamping out homelessness is crucial for the successful realization of the fundamental human right to an adequate standard of living and several other economic, social and cultural rights enshrined in customary and treaty-based human rights law. Similarly, ending homelessness is a precondition to the achievement of SDG 11 and its target 11.1: "by 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums".



Afternote

The presentations and papers of the experts submitted to the meeting, and recommendations of the meeting contributed to the preparation of the background document to the 58th session of the Commission for Social Development – the Secretary-General's report on "Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness" (E/CN.5/2020/3).[116]

The Commission (58th session, New York, 10–19 February 2020) adopted the first United Nations draft resolution on the issue of "homelessness" at its closing session on 19 February 2020, which has been submitted to the United Nations Economic and Social Council for consideration and adoption[117].

Based on this submission, the Economic and Social Council adopted Resolution E/RES/2020/7 on "Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness" on the 23rd of June 2020[118].

The resolution reflects the key issues related to homelessness. It contains policy recommendations to prevent and solve homelessness through affordable housing and social protection policies, in the context of overall realization of human rights and the full implementation of and accelerated action to fulfil the vision and Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

116 Secretary-General's report on "Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness" (E/CN.5/2020/3) https://undocs.org/E/CN.5/2020/3.

117 Draft resolution submitted by the Chair of the 58th session of the Commission for Social Development, Gbolié Desiré Wulfran Ipo (Côte d'Ivoire), on the basis of informal consultations to the Economic and Social Council. Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness (E/CN.5/2020/L.5) https://undocs.org/E/CN.5/2020/L.5.

118 UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), UN Economic and Social Council Resolution 2020 (VII): Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness, 23 June 2020, E/RES/2020 (VII), available at: https://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/RES/2020/7 [accessed 4 August 2020].

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