



Concept note

6 October 2020

17:45 - 19:00
(Surabaya time)

World Habitat Day – Roundtable 3

Housing at the centre of the COVID-19 Response

Introduction

At the peak of the COVID-19 emergency response, more than 3.9 billion people, or half of the world's population, were asked or ordered to stay at home by their governments to prevent the spread of the virus.

Having adequate housing has always been a matter of life and death. The COVID-19 crisis made it evident.

While emergency action has been taken by local and national governments in coordination with other stakeholders, the future inclusiveness and resiliency of cities will depend on how governments and other stakeholders position housing as a priority at the centre of the recovery.

The COVID-19 crisis has created a unique global momentum which has demonstrated that it is possible to provide housing for all, increasing the overall sustainability of the housing sector. The pandemic also presents opportunities to restructure how we design and implement policies, as well as decide on priorities for a future that will undoubtedly see more system shocks. Lessons can be learnt from this crisis to shape a new normal which will be prepared to respond in an agile way to future shocks and that is built around the idea that housing is at the cornerstone of people's wellbeing and cities' resilience.

The Roundtable

The roundtable will aim at reflecting on the lessons learnt through the emergency response to COVID-19 and to capitalize on achievements and tested solutions.

In particular, the roundtable will focus on:

- Presenting and advocating on key actions to promote housing for all;
- Promoting alliances and collaborative initiatives towards adequate, inclusive and sustainable housing for all to improve future resilience of cities and communities.

The event will gather partners from local and national governments, private sector, civil society and research and financial institutions to promote and work toward a new understanding of housing as a shared responsibility.

Partners will agree on a set of proposed principles and pledges that need to be met in the recovery phase to ensure that we build back better leaving no one behind.

Participants will be asked to share the main challenges and opportunities arising from the COVID-19 crisis in the housing sector. They will also be asked to highlight good practices that have emerged during the crisis, their long-term sustainability for implementation during the recovery phase, as well as their potential to be embedded in future efforts to ensure the right to adequate housing. Finally, discussion will be open about areas where further cooperation is still necessary to make housing inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable for all and which roles should be fulfilled by different actors.