



**Regenerating the City:
Adequate Housing for All**
— Fuzhou, China —

CONCEPT NOTE

Regenerating the City: Adequate Housing for All

DATE: 31 October – 2 November 2026

VENUE: Fuzhou Strait International Conference
and Exhibition Center, Fuzhou, China

Overview

World Cities Day, celebrated annually on 31 October, was designated by the United Nations to promote international cooperation in addressing the opportunities and challenges of rapid urbanization and to contribute to sustainable urban development worldwide. Since its inception in 2014, the Global Observance of World Cities Day has served as a premier international platform for dialogue, knowledge exchange and partnerships among governments, local authorities, international organizations, academia, the private sector and civil society.

The Global Observance of World Cities Day 2026 will be jointly organized by the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development of the People's Republic of China, the Fujian Provincial People's Government, and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), and hosted by Fuzhou Municipal People's Government in Fuzhou, China.

Today, up to 3.4 billion people lack access to adequate housing, secure tenure, basic services, or affordable living conditions. At the same time, cities are increasingly challenged by ageing neighborhoods, underutilized urban land, climate-related risks, and widening social inequalities. Urban regeneration presents a unique opportunity to address these interconnected challenges by improving existing urban areas while ensuring that no one is left behind.

Under the theme "Regenerating the City: Adequate Housing for All," the 2026 observance of World Cities Day will explore how urban regeneration can serve as a transformative pathway towards inclusive, resilient, sustainable and people-centered urban development and housing solution. As cities across the world face growing challenges related to housing affordability, ageing infrastructure, climate change, social inequality and economic transition, urban regeneration is increasingly recognized as a strategic approach to revitalize existing urban areas while improving living conditions and expanding access to adequate housing.

The event will also provide a platform to highlight progress and challenges faced in implementing the New Urban Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 11, and other global commitments on sustainable urban development, climate resilience and adequate housing.

The three-day programme will bring together representatives from national and local governments, United Nations agencies, international organizations, development partners, academic institutions, professional associations, private sector actors and community organizations. Through an Opening Ceremony, thematic forums, side events, exhibitions, and city tours, participants will exchange experiences, showcase innovative practices, promote partnerships and identify actionable solutions that leverage housing as a catalyst for inclusive and sustainable urban regeneration.

Background

Urban Regeneration is defined as a comprehensive, area-based and multi-agent process that improves the physical, environmental and socio-economic conditions of an urban area and links the generated benefits to the wider urban fabric of the city. Focus is primarily placed on underutilized or distressed areas, aiming to bring back their functionality and vibrancy. Regardless of the regional variations in the delivery of regeneration strategies all projects include focus on three key urban assets:

- Land
- Community
- Environment

Urban Regeneration for adequate housing addresses spatial inequalities using inclusive land use policies, regulatory frameworks and planning instruments. Together these tools promote culturally and socially diverse neighborhoods, socio-economic development and ensure transformative benefits local communities.

Regional trends indicate an increasing shift towards integrated, area-based urban regeneration approaches that combine affordable housing with improvements to public space, connectivity, infrastructure and climate resilience. While the emphasis differs across regions - from regenerating ageing neighbourhoods in Europe to upgrading informal settlements in Africa, and Latin America, revitalizing ageing urban districts and urban villages in Asia, to heritage-led regeneration and post-conflict reconstruction in the Arab States - the common objective is to create more inclusive, resilient and affordable urban communities.

Objectives

World Cities Day 2026 aims to **advance the global dialogue** and strengthen international cooperation on urban regeneration as a strategic pathway to deliver adequate housing and promote inclusive, compact, resilient and sustainable urban development.

The event will provide a platform to **showcase innovative policies, practices, technologies and financing approaches**, while facilitating knowledge exchange and peer learning among governments, local authorities, international organizations, academia, the private sector and communities.

It will also **foster partnerships, encourage collaboration** across sectors and levels of government, and inspire concrete commitments and collective action to scale up integrated urban regeneration initiatives that leverage housing as a catalyst for broader social, economic and environmental transformation, contributing to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Outcomes

Enhanced global consensus on the role of urban regeneration among policymakers, practitioners and stakeholders of the importance of urban regeneration as a key mechanism for delivering adequate housing, climate resilience, economic revitalization and sustainable urban transformation.

Dissemination of innovative solutions and good practices, and Greater visibility and recognition of successful regeneration initiatives and leadership in advancing innovative technologies, policy tools and implementation models from cities and organizations around the world.

Strengthened knowledge and evidence base through the exchange of data, research and practical experience which informs better policies, investment decisions and implementation strategies for housing-centric urban regeneration.

A collective call for action encouraging governments, cities, international organizations and stakeholders to scale up efforts towards housing-catalytic, inclusive and climate-resilient urban regeneration in support of the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda.