



The New Urban Agenda

AUHF Fact Sheet No. 1

In October 2016, the Heads of State and Government, Ministers and representatives gathered at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), in Quito Ecuador, together with representatives of local government, civil society, the private sector, and other stakeholders, to adopt a New Urban Agenda. The implementation of the NUA contributes to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, including Goal 11 of making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. The Habitat meetings take place every 20 years, with World Urban Forum meetings every two years, in between. They bring together stakeholders from across the housing and urban development sectors, from the public, private and NGO sectors, and civil society, and specifically commit governments to pursue detailed measures towards the vision.

Two clauses focus specifically on housing finance:

46. We commit ourselves to promoting the role of affordable and sustainable housing and housing finance, including social habitat production, in economic development, and the contribution of the sector to stimulating productivity in other economic sectors, recognizing that housing enhances capital formation, income, employment generation and savings and can contribute to driving sustainable and inclusive economic transformation at the national, subnational and local levels.

140. We will support the development of appropriate and affordable housing finance products and encourage the participation of a diverse range of multilateral financial institutions, regional development banks and development finance institutions, cooperation agencies, private-sector lenders and investors, cooperatives, moneylenders and micro finance banks to invest in affordable and incremental housing in all its forms.



NUA Vision

11. We share a vision of cities for all, referring to the equal use and enjoyment of cities and human settlements, seeking to promote inclusivity and ensure that all inhabitants, of present and future generations, without discrimination of any kind, are able to inhabit and produce just, safe, healthy, accessible, affordable, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements to foster prosperity and quality of life for all. ...

12. We aim to achieve cities and human settlements where all persons are able to enjoy equal rights and opportunities, as well as their fundamental freedoms, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including full respect for international law. In this regard, the New Urban Agenda is grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, international human rights treaties, the Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome. ...

13. We envision cities and human settlements that:

- Fulfill their social function... with a view to progressively achieving the full realization of the right to adequate housing ...
- Are participatory, promote civic engagement, engender a sense of belonging and ownership among all their inhabitants ...
- Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls by ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal rights in all fields and in leadership at all levels of decision-making ...
- Meet the challenges and opportunities of present and future sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, leveraging urbanization for structural transformation, high productivity, value-added activities and resource efficiency, harnessing local economies and taking note of the contribution of the informal economy while supporting a sustainable transition to the formal economy;
- ... act as hubs and drivers for balanced, sustainable and integrated urban and territorial development at all levels;
- Promote age- and gender-responsive planning and investment for sustainable, safe and accessible urban mobility ...
- Adopt and implement disaster risk reduction and management...
- ... minimize environmental impact and change to sustainable consumption and production patterns.

Adapted from the New Urban Agenda. Emphasis added.



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The New Urban Agenda is framed as a collective vision and political commitment to promote and realize sustainable urban development, and to leverage the key role of cities and human settlements as drivers of sustainable development in an increasingly urbanized world. It offers housing sector players an opportunity to highlight the policy and regulatory issues that might act as impediments to the commitments made by their governments. As signatories to the NUA, African governments can be called upon to honour these commitments in their policies and practice, at national, provincial and local level. See <http://habitat3.org/the-new-urban-agenda/>

What does the NUA mean to AUHF members?

The AUHF Secretariat, and the African delegation to Habitat III played a significant role in securing the inclusion of these two clauses in the NUA. They are important because they highlight for government the need to engage with the private sector in meeting its housing and urban development commitments. In this, they open the door for AUHF members specifically, and the private sector in general, to engage with their respective governments towards policies and regulatory frameworks that support the growth of the affordable housing sector.

Paragraph 46 falls under the NUA's transformative commitments for sustainable urban development, and specifically the commitment to "sustainable and inclusive urban prosperity and opportunities for all".

Paragraph 140 is part of a series of clauses that focus on the means of implementation for the NUA.

AUHF members can use the two clauses as a basis from which to advocate for regulatory and policy support of their work, so that they can contribute as the NUA suggests. AUHF members should prepare annual reports to submit to their ministries on how they are addressing the issues promised in the NUA. This will help their governments report to international bodies, and will support a stronger public private relationship.

By explicitly addressing the role of private finance, the NUA steps beyond the traditional housing-delivery centric focus of government policy, to incorporate attention to wider market activity. This is new: housing and finance ministries do not often connect, even at policy level. AUHF members can also facilitate exchange in their countries between their housing and land ministries and departments, the regulator responsible for the financial sector, and the Central Bank.

For more information on the NUA, on UN Habitat, and how to engage at a national, regional or continental level, please contact the AUHF Secretariat:

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