

NHSMUN50

National High School Model United Nations



UN-HABITAT
UPDATE PAPER



Secretary-General
Dennis Zhang

Director-General
Christian Hernandez

Chiefs of Staff
Rekha Marcus
Therese Salomone

Conference Services
Agustina Chiaromonte
Passaggino
Scarlett Royal

Delegate Experience
Hajar Ahjum-Mathee
Amy Zeng

Global Partnerships
Safa Elzanfali
Nastasja Vásquez

Under-Secretaries-General

Vikram Arora
Jordan Baker
Parthav Easwar
Shanaya Harjai
Zainab Iftikhar
Lauren Jackson
Hemani Marfatia
Nicole Pilliod
Anya Prasad
Joseph Rojek
Amira Samih
Zaheer Sooliman
Terry Wang
Ellie White

Delegates,

Welcome to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme Committee (UN-Habitat) at NHSMUN 2024! My name is Brock Lichthardt, and I will be one of your Assistant Directors for Session I. I am excited to meet you this March, and I cannot wait to see what each of you will share in this great space.

I am a first-year student at Columbia University in New York City, studying financial economics. Much of my research specializes in capital markets and European economic issues. At Columbia, I am involved with our Undergraduate Admission Recruitment Committee, and I serve as a Junior Editor for our Political Review. I also participate in our golf and skiing groups, and I am a part of Greek life.

Outside of the academic world, you can find me traveling internationally, looking for new places to grab coffee with my friends in Manhattan, or heading to some concerts of some of my favorite country or rap artists. Let me know if you need any recommendations while in the city; I would be happy to point you to some of my favorite places!

Originally from the East Coast, I moved to California when I was a teenager. During my time in high school, I participated in Model UN all four years, eventually serving as Secretary-General of our program as a senior. I helped organize our two annual conferences and other program operations, ensuring that we facilitated an excellent experience for all delegates. Beyond my time as Secretary-General and chairing several conferences, I also competed on a national level. In fact, I attended NHSMUN 2022 as a delegate!

At NHSMUN, I hope to bring the same high standard to our committee. In this Update Paper, you will find some of the most significant issues facing the committee—from women's safety in urban spaces to affordable housing—which many across the international community continue to experience today. I encourage you to reflect on this information and to explore these multifaceted issues on a deeper level. It is my hope that you challenge yourself to develop innovative, nuanced approaches to these topics within the mandate of the UN-Habitat Committee.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to myself or another member of the dais. I am looking forward to observing as you engage in meaningful, substantive debate this March!

Regards,

Brock Lichthardt
UN-Habitat Assistant Director
Session I



Secretary-General
Dennis Zhang

Director-General
Christian Hernandez

Chiefs of Staff
Rekha Marcus
Therese Salomone

Conference Services
Agustina Chiaromonte
Passaggino
Scarlett Royal

Delegate Experience
Hajar Ahjum-Mathee
Amy Zeng

Global Partnerships
Safa Elzanfali
Nastasja Vásquez

Under-Secretaries-General

Vikram Arora
Jordan Baker
Parthav Easwar
Shanaya Harjai
Zainab Iftikhar
Lauren Jackson
Hemani Marfatia
Nicole Pilliod
Anya Prasad
Joseph Rojek
Amira Samih
Zaheer Sooliman
Terry Wang
Ellie White

Hello Delegates!

My name is Olivia Pham, and I am one of your Assistant Directors in the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) for Session 1 of NHSMUN 2024! I cannot wait to welcome you all to our committee and to see you engage in debate over some of the most pressing issues facing our world.

I am currently double majoring in political science and NGOs & social change at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles. Outside of classes, I am a member of my university's foreign affairs society: Delta Phi Epsilon. I also write for my university's international affairs publication: Glimpse from the Globe. I am also on my university's Model United Nations team. I have loved continuing to compete at the collegiate level in Model United Nations. If you have any questions for me about college, USC, collegiate Model UN, or anything else, feel free to reach out!

When I am not at school, doing NHSMUN, or participating in extracurriculars, I enjoy several hobbies. I am always looking for a new television show or movie, so if anyone has any recommendations, please let me know! I also love listening to jazz music in my free time!

I have participated in Model UN since my freshman year of high school. I was the Chief of Staff for my school's program during my senior year. I also attended NHSMUN as a delegate during my junior year of high school. I had such a great experience as a delegate at NHSMUN and decided that I wanted to join staff in college. I hope that you all will have similarly fulfilling experiences at NHSMUN 2024 (and maybe even decide to apply for staff one day too!).

My co-Assistant Directors and I wrote this Update Paper to inform all of you about recent developments to our two topics: "Planning Urban Spaces for Women's Safety" and "Increasing Access to Affordable Housing." Staying updated on new developments to these topics will help you all come up with solutions in committee that reflect the current status of these issues. I also encourage you to continue to research these topics on your own leading up to the conference. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to me or any member of the dais. We are all more than happy to help you!

Best of luck as you continue to prepare for NHSMUN 2024! I cannot wait to see you all in March!

Best,

Olivia Pham
UN-Habitat Assistant Director
Session I



Secretary-General
Dennis Zhang

Director-General
Christian Hernandez

Chiefs of Staff
Rekha Marcus
Therese Salomone

Conference Services
Agustina Chiaromonte
Passaggino
Scarlett Royal

Delegate Experience
Hajar Ahjum-Matheh
Amy Zeng

Global Partnerships
Safa Elzanfali
Nastasja Vásquez

Under-Secretaries-General

Vikram Arora
Jordan Baker
Parthav Easwar
Shanaya Harjai
Zainab Iftikhar
Lauren Jackson
Hemani Marfatia
Nicole Pilliod
Anya Prasad
Joseph Rojek
Amira Samih
Zaheer Sooliman
Terry Wang
Ellie White

Dear Delegates,

I am so excited to welcome you all to UN-Habitat this year! My name is Edward Hagerman, and I will be your Assistant Director for Session II of UN-Habitat of NHSMUN 2024. This is my first year as a NHSMUN staff member and also my first year attending the conference. As a high school delegate, I attended conferences hosted at the University of Toronto through 2020-2023.

I was born and raised in Etobicoke, Ontario, with almost all my family in Ontario or spread around Canada. I'm a first year student at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, studying integrated science and aiming to concentrate in nuclear physics. Outside of university, I am an enormous baseball fan. I have been watching the MLB's best team from birth, the Toronto Blue Jays! Outside of watching my team occasionally embarrass itself in the postseason, I spend a lot of my time reading and working in baseball as an umpire. My glasses may reinforce that stereotype of blind umpires, but generally I am no worse than some of the guys umpiring in the show. I love to read, especially classical literature and history. One of my favorite novels, funnily enough neither classical literature nor history, is *Organs of Sense* by Adam Ehrlich Sachs. I believe that it is a chronically underappreciated book. My favorite author is Dostoyevsky. For those of you interested in an engaging but dense read, *The Idiot* and *Karamazov Brothers* are must reads!

I've been involved with Model UN since ninth grade and have never enjoyed an extracurricular activity so thoroughly before. The opportunity to meet like-minded people and engage with them in debate on interesting topics and issues is something I continue to enjoy. Model UN has given so much to me, helping me improve my confidence, public speaking, and knowledge of the world around us.

I cannot wait to see all of you find your own unique solutions to the topics at hand. I know there is a lot to be discussed, and I am excited to see how each of you individually and as blocs navigate these issues. If you have any questions as we move closer to the conference, do not hesitate to contact me. I will see you all at the conference in March.

Best,

Edward Hagerman
UN-Habitat Assistant Director
Session II



Secretary-General
Dennis Zhang

Director-General
Christian Hernandez

Chiefs of Staff
Rekha Marcus
Therese Salomone

Conference Services
Agustina Chiaromonte
Passaggino
Scarlett Royal

Delegate Experience
Hajar Ahjum-Mathee
Amy Zeng

Global Partnerships
Safa Elzanfali
Nastasja Vásquez

Under-Secretaries-General
Vikram Arora
Jordan Baker
Parthav Easwar
Shanaya Harjai
Zainab Iftikhar
Lauren Jackson
Hemani Marfatia
Nicole Pilliod
Anya Prasad
Joseph Rojek
Amira Samih
Zaheer Sooliman
Terry Wang
Ellie White

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, aka UN-Habitat! My name is Marwa Medjahed, and I will be one of your Assistant Directors for Session II of NHSMUN. I am very excited, as this will be my second time at NHSMUN but my first time staffing! I had the pleasure of participating as the delegate of France in the United Nations Conference on Trade in 2022. NHSMUN was an unforgettable experience for me during high school, and I hope that it will be the same for you! I am happy to assist with any questions regarding NHSMUN or Model United Nations in general, so please do not hesitate to contact me!

I am from Houston, Texas, but my family is from Algeria. Fun fact: I am a dual citizen! Currently, I am a first-year student studying international affairs with a concentration in security policy at George Washington University in Washington, DC. I love exploring the city in my free time and taking advantage of all the cool things and opportunities DC has to offer! MUN has had an impact on my life and exploring my passions regarding International Affairs. My dream career post-graduation is becoming a Foreign Service Officer at the U.S. Department of State. I love learning languages, and my goal is to become fluent in as many languages as possible. Currently, I speak Arabic and English fluently, but I want to improve my French and Russian.

When I'm not doing school, I love to explore museums, read, and travel! I would have to say my favorite museums include the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum in DC and the iconic Metropolitan Museum of Art in NYC.

Whether this is your first MUN conference or your fifth, I want to ensure that NHSMUN is an incredible conference experience that will be unforgettable. The process can seem intimidating, but that is what me and the other dais members are here for! From the position paper process to the in-person debates, MUN conferences always feel very fulfilling in the end. Choosing inclusive and safe urban spaces for women and affordable housing as our committee's focuses underscores our commitment to addressing some of the most critical issues facing communities across the globe. I am excited to witness the diverse perspectives and unique approaches that each delegate will bring to the table. The collective brainstorming, expertise, and commitment to finding practical solutions will be the driving force behind the success of this committee's efforts.

I look forward to engaging with each of you during the committee sessions and witnessing the innovative solutions that will undoubtedly emerge from your collective efforts. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. I look forward to this conference and meeting all of you in March!

Best,

Marwa Medjahed
UN-Habitat Assistant Director
Session II





UN-HABITAT
NHSMUN 2024



TOPIC A: PLANNING URBAN SPACES FOR WOMEN'S SAFETY

Photo Credit: Gugerell



Introduction

Today, many women may live in unsafe and insecure urban environments. These may include roads and walkways without lights, unmonitored restrooms, and more. Sometimes, when seeking safer environments, women are denied housing ownership or property rights. This makes it more difficult to escape abusive relationships or have equal access to housing.¹ Legislative process and the building of houses should take into consideration the need for support services for women. Support services advocate on behalf of people to promote their care and assistance. This ensures that women are in an environment where they feel independent and empowered to seek assistance if and when needed.

In recent months, women's ability to access safe housing has been impacted by the rise of smart technology. Smart technology can be defined as the combination of computers into already existing technology.² In short, these devices connect automatically with others. This allows their users to access and use them remotely.³ Technology has continued to play a large role in the rise of domestic abuse around the world. Over 97 percent of domestic violence victims report experiencing harm as a result of having some type of technology. This can range from stalking, tracking, or threats.⁴ Technology has become more popular in homes and public spaces. As a result, delegates must address how to best regulate it and protect women.

An increase in public facilities that help women are also needed to promote equality. These may include childcare sites, community spaces, public bathrooms, or parks. In particular, enforcing safe access to public bathrooms should be a priority for delegates. Over 30 percent of women do not have access to safe toilets, which provide privacy and sanitation.⁵ In urban communities, women who lack access to a toilet within their own house are also more vulnerable to sexual assault.⁶ This occurs when traveling between their home and public restrooms.⁷ In many developing countries, women continue

to lack access to safe sanitation.⁸ Overall, delegates in UN-Habitat must plan urban spaces that take into account the rise of new technologies and provide necessary facilities for women.

Regulating Smart Technology

While smart technology has the ability to help, its expansion has harmful effects on women's safety and security across the globe. Many use smart technology for daily tasks such as reminders, music streaming, or controlling home products. Some examples of items that may use smart technology are lights, blinds, or thermostats. However, smart technology is most popular when it is used in the form of security devices, speakers, and virtual assistants.⁹ Many people praise the use of technology in urban planning and in homes. The use of smart technology in homes has several benefits. These include improving efficiency and comfort for many across the globe.¹⁰ Some have also claimed that the integration of technology into our everyday lives is essential for the future.

Outside of use in homes, smart technology has also been used in urban development and planning. In 2020, UN-Habitat adopted the People-Centered Smart Cities Flagship

1 "Why equal housing for women will continue to be a 'tough road,'" *MSNBC*, August 1, 2019, <https://www.msnbc.com/know-your-value/why-equal-housing-women-will-continue-be-tough-road-n1038266>.

2 "What is 'Smart' Technology?" Williams Office for Information Technology, accessed January 10, 2024, <https://oit.williams.edu/ats-posts/what-is-smart-technology/>.

3 Williams Office for Information Technology, "What is 'Smart' Technology?"

4 "Technology Abuse and What to Do," Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence, accessed December 22, 2023, <https://mscfv.org/technologyabuse>.

5 "Women and girls bear brunt of water and sanitation crisis – new UNICEF-WHO report," UNICEF, July 6, 2023, <https://www.unicef.org/wca/press-releases/women-and-girls-bear-brunt-water-and-sanitation-crisis-new-unicef-who-report>.

6 Ayush Hazare and Jyoti Jain Tholiya, "Women in Slums, Risking Their Safety to Access and Usage of Basic Sanitation Facilities-A Literature Review," *Qeios*, September 2023, <https://www.qeios.com/read/XFBJ7K>.

7 Hazare and Tholiya, "Women In Slum Risking Their Safety To Access And Usage Of Basic Water And Sanitation Facilities."

8 UNICEF, "Women and girls bear the brunt of water and sanitation crisis – new UNICEF-WHO report."

9 "5 Types of Smart Technologies You Must Have in Your Home," *Power On Solar*, February 15, 2019, <https://www.poweronsolar.com/5-types-of-smart-technologies-your-must-have-in-your-home/>.

10 "The Growing Trend of Smart Home," *Craving Tech*, August 11, 2023, <https://www.cravingtech.com/the-growing-trend-of-smart-home.html>.

Program.¹¹ The program works to provide technical support to best help national and local governments.¹² Since 2020, the project has helped many governments solve issues related to city planning. These include an increase of regulation for new technology, helping minority groups, and creating new international frameworks.¹³ In recent months, UN-Habitat has expanded on the project. They have begun to develop international guidelines on the creation and maintenance of smart cities.¹⁴ According to the committee, these guidelines help to act as a non-binding guide for the development of national and local smart city policies, plans, and strategies.¹⁵ Overall, the program represents a determined effort to help bridge the divide between minority groups, like women, and local and state government. This is especially helpful when considering the role of technology in urban planning.¹⁶

Recently, smart cities have grown in popularity. Smart cities are different from normal cities due to how AI and technology are used to help improve public services. These may include public transportation and access to the internet.¹⁷ Smart cities often partner with private companies, which allows them to track important data. This may include traffic or the weather. The information that is gathered is then used to create the best utilities, public services, transportation, waste management, and energy programs for citizens.¹⁸ One example of a smart city is Oslo, Norway. Oslo has implemented new technology and management systems to monitor and regulate carbon emissions across the city.¹⁹ This includes “smart bins,” which use sensors to manage waste collection.²⁰

Smart cities also take into account women’s safety. For

11 “People Centered-Smart Cities,” UN-Habitat, accessed December 22, 2023, <https://unhabitat.org/programme/people-centred-smart-cities>.

12 “The People-Centered Smart Cities Flagship Programme,” UN-Habitat, accessed January 10, 2024, <https://unhabitat.org/programme/people-centred-smart-cities>.

13 “International guidelines on people-centered smart cities,” UN-Habitat, accessed January 10, 2024, <https://unhabitat.org/international-guidelines-on-people-centred-smart-cities>.

14 UN-Habitat, “The People-Centered Smart Cities Flagship Programme.”

15 UN-Habitat, “International guidelines on people-centered smart cities.”

16 “UN-Habitat Launches the People-Centered Smart Cities Playbooks,” Cities for Digital Rights, accessed December 30, 2023, <https://citiesfordigitalrights.org/un-habitat-launches-people-centered-smart-cities-playbooks>.

17 Roger Gonzalez, “Transforming Cities in Latin America: The Dream of Smart Cities Comes True,” *CIOReview*, accessed December 30, 2023, <https://smartcity.cioreview.com/cxinsight/transforming-cities-in-latin-america-the-dream-of-smart-cities-comes-true-nid-38067-cid-134.html>.

18 Liam Stannard, “Anatomy of a Smart City,” *BigRentz*, January 27, 2023, <https://www.bigrentz.com/blog/anatomy-of-a-smart-city>.

19 Raf Chomsky, “Top 10 Most Sustainable Smart Cities in the World,” *Sustainable Review*, September 14, 2023, <https://sustainablereview.com/top-10-most-sustainable-smart-cities-in-the-world/>.

20 Chomsky, “Top 10 Most Sustainable Smart Cities in the World.”



The NSTC Cyber Security & Smart Technology R&D Building is one of the many facilities that exists in an effort to help alleviate the harms of smart technology on victims of domestic violence as a product of the smart market and its products

Credit: Solomon203

example, the city of São Paulo, Brazil, has taken several key steps towards equality in urban planning.²¹ In particular, the city of São Paulo worked to improve equality in public transport through the “Smart Mobility Program.” Beginning in 2019, the city partnered with the World Bank to create a five-year plan to improve São Paulo’s transportation systems. The city reached out to people who face barriers to opportunities around the city. This included women, the elderly, or the physically disabled.²² They then used that data to make several improvements to the city’s infrastructure over a five-year period.²³ As of 2023, São Paulo has implemented monitoring systems for buses, emphasized gender and minority inclusion for all public transport systems, and expanded school transport routes.²⁴ The Smart Mobility Program is just one example of how delegates can use smart technology to help improve the daily lives of women in cities and urban centers.

While smart cities offer many benefits, organizations such as the World Economic Forum (WEF) have recognized the need for increased regulation. This is particularly relevant when discussing how smart technology may help or harm women’s safety. According to the WEF, there is no precedent for the existence of smart cities and their features. Governments need to establish a framework to ensure all citizens have equal access to safety and privacy.²⁵ Many people across the world also fear new and unfamiliar technology. This results in lowering trust in governments and large-scale corporations.²⁶ This is largely due to the rise of smart technology and devices in the home.

In recent months, many states have also begun to recognize

21 Carlos Lamas, “São Paulo: In a ‘smart city’, no one gets left behind,” *World Bank Blogs*, November 21, 2023, <https://blogs.worldbank.org/transport/sao-paulo-smart-city-no-one-gets-left-behind>.

22 Lamas, “São Paulo: In a ‘smart city’, no one gets left behind.”

23 Lamas, “São Paulo: In a ‘smart city’, no one gets left behind.”

24 Lamas, “São Paulo: In a ‘smart city’, no one gets left behind.”

25 “Governing Smart Cities: Use Cases for Urban Transformation,” World Economic Forum, November 7, 2023, <https://www.weforum.org/publications/governing-smart-cities-use-cases-for-urban-transformation/>.

26 Lydia Bamford. “Business Challenges in Smart Cities: Navigating Technologies and Building Trust.” *Planning, Building & Construction Today*, November 30, 2023, <https://www.pbctoday.co.uk/news/digital-construction-news/smart-cities-business-challenges/135253/>.

27 “Connected Technology: MPs Call on Government to Tackle Growing Problem of Tech-Enabled Domestic Abuse - Committees - UK Parliament,” UK Parliament, August 7, 2023, <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/378/culture-media-and-sport-committee/news/196867/connected-technology-mps-call-on-government-to-tackle-growing-problem-of-techenabled-domestic-abuse/>.

28 Sebastian Klovig Skelton, “MPs Warn about Growing Prevalence of Tech-Enabled Domestic Abuse | Computer Weekly,” *Computer Weekly.Com*, August 8, 2023, <https://www.computerweekly.com/news/366547406/MPs-warn-about-growing-prevalence-of-tech-enabled-domestic-abuse>.

29 Kaitlin Balasaygun, “The biggest risks of using Bluetooth trackers like Apple AirTag, Tile,” *CNBC*, January 14, 2023, <https://www.cnbc.com/2023/01/14/the-biggest-security-pros-and-cons-of-using-bluetooth-gps-trackers.html>.

30 “Technology abuse clinics for survivors of intimate partner violence,” *Enigma*, January 24, 2023, <https://www.usenix.org/conference/enigma2023/presentation/ramjit>.

31 Anna Eshoo, “Reps. Eshoo, Lesko Introduce Bill to Combat Tech-Enabled Domestic Violence | Congresswoman,” November 2, 2023, <http://eshoo.house.gov/media/press-releases/rep-eshoo-lesko-introduce-bill-combat-tech-enabled-domestic-violence>.

32 Eshoo, “Reps. Eshoo, Lesko Introduce Bill to Combat Tech-Enabled Domestic Violence.”

the impact that smart devices may have on domestic abuse. In August 2023, the United Kingdom’s Culture, Media and Sport Committee released a report on home smart devices.²⁷ These included smart speakers, virtual assistants, and fitness trackers. The committee claimed that the software and technical features of many of these devices are vulnerable to manipulation by perpetrators.²⁸ GPS and audio-visual data can allow perpetrators to track and monitor victims without their consent or knowledge.²⁹ This poses a significant risk to women and children suffering domestic violence. Overall, this limits women’s ability to feel safe and independent.

Many governments have begun to consider the illegal use of personal smart devices in planning urban spaces. In November 2023, the United States Congress introduced the Tech Safety for Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking Acts. These three acts covered the expansion of tech-enabled abuse clinics. Tech abuse clinics are public spaces that offer free services to victims of tech abuse.³⁰ Clinics like these provide support to victims of domestic abuse. This is done through the positive utilization of technology.³¹ Many abusers can digitally threaten, stalk, and inflict violence on their victims. Because of this, urban planners must consider how to establish public support systems in urban areas. Members of the US government are also introducing educational programs and policies that aim to reduce gender based violence. This is along with the creation of clinics.³² While smart devices and smart cities have many benefits, they still play a role in domestic violence. This is especially true with the rise in technological globalization over

the past decade. The absence of regulation in the industry, failure to address privacy concerns, lack of support systems for victims, and threats to data security pose a clear risk to many women who could face technology-enabled abuse.

Overall, states should look into existing smart cities, as well as potential ways to regulate smart technology. This can help create more inclusive urban spaces for women. It is also important to emphasize that women face unique challenges in cities.³³ Many women, for example, report feeling unsafe on public transportation. To improve this, delegates are encouraged to look into potential solutions using technology. These may be as simple as increased lighting or increased signage.³⁴ It is necessary to create and implement education, prevention policies, and technological regulation. This will help ensure a future where technology can safely exit without compromising the security and daily activity of women across the globe.

Ensuring Safety and Sanitation in Public Spaces

Ensuring that all women have safe and proper restrooms is an essential aspect of urban planning. For this reason, governments should focus on women's unique experiences in cities when developing sanitation areas and restrooms.³⁵ Restrooms or other similar facilities help women to address their health, hygiene, and safety concerns. Public restrooms should be equipped with necessary products for women. This may include creating private nursing rooms or providing safe menstrual hygiene management (MHM) spaces. Improving sanitation efforts is also one way to combat sexual violence.

Women should be consulted during the creation of bathrooms

33 "Women in the Gender-Inclusive Smart City," BeeSmart City, July 2023, <https://www.beesmart.city/en/strategy/women-in-the-gender-inclusive-smart-city>.

34 "Urban planning has long ignored women's experiences. Here are 5 ways we can make our cities safer," The Conversation, November 16, 2023, <https://theconversation.com/urban-planning-has-long-ignored-womens-experiences-here-are-5-ways-we-can-make-our-cities-safer-216531>.

35 "Designing Safer Cities for Women and Girls: How to Make Town Planning More Inclusive," LinkedIn, October 12, 2023, <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/designing-safer-cities-women-girls-how-make-town-more-my>.

36 LinkedIn, "Designing Safer Cities for Women and Girls: How to Make Town Planning More Inclusive."

37 LinkedIn, "Designing Safer Cities for Women and Girls: How to Make Town Planning More Inclusive."

38 "Restroom Security," American Restroom Association (ARA), accessed January 11, 2024, <https://americanrestroom.org/restroom-security/>.

39 American Restroom Association, "Restroom Security."

40 American Restroom Association, "Restroom Security."

41 Rebecca Martin, "Creating a nurturing environment: The value of a mother's room in the workplace," *Building Design and Construction*, August 1, 2023, <https://www.bdcnetwork.com/blog/creating-nurturing-environment-value-mothers-room-workplace>.

42 Martin, "Creating a nurturing environment: The value of a mother's room in the workplace."

43 Alison Roller, "Breastfeeding at Work: How HR Can Go above and beyond for Nursing Workers," *HRMornning*, August 16, 2023, <https://www.hrmorning.com/articles/breastfeeding-at-work/>.

or other similar spaces. This ensures that women's and girls' needs and ideas are incorporated in the design process. This is particularly important in increasing the safety and accessibility of public spaces.³⁶ Potential changes to bathrooms that could improve women's safety include adding more lighting, adding full-height partitions between toilets for privacy, and creating occupancy indicators in public restrooms. Additionally, providing amenities such as nursing rooms in public buildings and parks can help ensure women have access to the sanitation resources they need in urban spaces.³⁷

The American Restroom Association (ARA) has advocated for several changes to public restrooms.³⁸ ARA has recommended changing the placement of mirrors in order to provide a line of sight from the entrance to the back of the restroom.³⁹ This placement allows individuals to quickly see the space, and notice if there are others present in the bathroom. This helps prevent inappropriate behavior and aids women in emergencies. The ARA has stated how changes like these help contribute to a general feeling of comfort and security for all users. Thoughtful design elements are essential in preventing assaults in public restrooms and ensuring a secure environment.⁴⁰ This approach is an example of how considering women's specific needs can lead to safer and more inclusive public spaces.

Private nursing spaces serve as sanctuaries for mothers and people who breastfeed in cities and busy areas.⁴¹ This is crucial in cities where mothers may otherwise face the discomfort of nursing in public, along with potential harassment or social stigma.⁴² Furthermore, women's participation in workplaces is impacted by a lack of restrooms that accommodate nursing parents.⁴³ Without private and comfortable spaces to pump

breast milk, breastfeeding employees often face difficulties in managing their work responsibilities alongside their need to breastfeed.⁴⁴

By offering spaces dedicated to breastfeeding, urban planners acknowledge and cater to the specific needs of nursing mothers. This helps to foster an inclusive urban environment. From a public health perspective, private nursing spaces are very important. The World Health Organization (WHO) has stated that they strongly advocate for exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of a baby's life. WHO cites its role in providing essential nutrients and antibodies to babies.⁴⁵ Access to private spaces for nursing parents helps contribute significantly to the health and well-being of both mothers and children.

For example, in Brazil, companies with programs that help support nursing mothers have seen a significant positive outcome for employees and employers.⁴⁶ These include a higher average retention rate of 94 percent compared to the national average of 59 percent. Employers also saved money, since there was a decreased number of absences and lower health care costs.⁴⁷ However, despite the large number of benefits that come from providing support for nursing mothers, only a small number of women who work at large companies have access to support in their workplace. This shows that there is a need for more widespread implementation of such facilities.⁴⁸ Having support programs for nursing parents, or having private lactation rooms, are crucial steps urban planners and governments can take to better support women.

44 Anushree Modak et al., "The Psychological Benefits of Breastfeeding: Fostering Maternal Well-Being and Child Development," *Cureus* 15, no. 10 (October 9, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.7759/cureus.46730>.

45 "Breastfeeding," World Health Organization, accessed December 30, 2023, https://www.who.int/health-topics/breastfeeding#tab=tab_1.

46 Carolina Belomo De Souza, Sonia Isoyama Venancio, and Regina Paula Guimarães Vieira Cavalcante da Silva, "Breastfeeding Support Rooms and Their Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals: A Qualitative Study," *Frontiers in Public Health* 9 (December 23, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2021.732061>.

47 Belomo De Souza, et al., "Breastfeeding Support Rooms and Their Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals: A Qualitative Study."

48 "What Employers Need to Know," Office on Women's Health, May 23, 2023, <https://www.womenshealth.gov/supporting-nursing-moms-work/what-law-says-about-breastfeeding-and-work/what-employers-need-know>.

49 "MHD Day | Global," 2023, MenstrualHygieneDay.org, <https://menstrualhygieneday.org/>.

50 Madeeha Malik et al., "Experiences, Awareness, Perceptions and Attitudes of Women and Girls towards Menstrual Hygiene Management and Safe Menstrual Products in Pakistan," *Frontiers in Public Health* 11 (September 7, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2023.1242169>.

51 David Clatworthy and Tom Ogello, "Women Lack Access to Private Toilets around the World," Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health, September 7, 2018, <https://www.publichealth.columbia.edu/news/women-lack-access-private-toilets-around-world>.

52 Andrea Lopez-Tomas, "Women in Lebanon Find Ways To Tackle Their Own Period Poverty," *The Medialine*, March 2, 2023, <https://themedialine.org/people/women/women-in-lebanon-find-ways-to-tackle-their-own-period-poverty/>.

53 Andrea Lopez-Tomas, "Women in Lebanon Find Ways To Tackle Their Own Period Poverty."

54 Tanya Mahendru, "Bleeding for Change: Tackling Period Poverty and Empowering Women Worldwide," *The Intersectional Feminist*, December 11, 2023, <https://www.theifmag.com/bleeding-for-change>.

55 Kripalini Patel et al., "A Systematic Review of Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) during Humanitarian Crises And/or Emergencies in Low- and Middle-Income Countries," *Frontiers in Public Health* 10 (September 28, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2022.1018092>.

56 Patel et al., "A Systematic Review of Menstrual Hygiene Management."

UN-Habitat has also worked to promote sustainable urban development around the world. This includes meeting the basic needs of all urban residents, which includes women and girls. The previously mentioned menstrual hygiene management (MHM) is an essential part of achieving this goal.⁴⁹ Providing safe MHM facilities, including access to clean water, sanitary products, and private spaces is not just about health and hygiene—it is also a fundamental issue of gender equality.⁵⁰ Including MHM facilities in urban spaces empowers women and girls to fully participate in all aspects of urban life, including education, employment, and social activities.

There is a need for private, safe locations for MHM, especially in challenging environments like urban slums and refugee camps.⁵¹ For example, a report done on the Shatila refugee camp in Beirut found that 76 percent of women have trouble finding menstrual products.⁵² As a result, women have used shirts, socks, or newspapers as alternatives.⁵³ Globally, there have been efforts to address these needs in various ways. For example, in countries like Scotland and New Zealand, steps have been taken to provide free menstrual products in public places, including schools and universities, aiming to combat period poverty and ensure that menstrual hygiene is not a barrier to education or daily activities.⁵⁴

In many communities, the lack of private and safe sanitation facilities forces girls to seek secluded places to manage their menstruation.⁵⁵ This situation can expose them to risks of physical or sexual assault.⁵⁶ Proper MHM facilities within



Taipei Songshan Airport's breastfeeding and nursing rooms, created to provide a comfortable, private space for mothers to breastfeed or pump milk, reflecting the global trend of making public spaces more inclusive for parenting needs

Credit: Yuriy kosygin

schools and communities ensure that girls have a safe space to take care of their hygiene needs, reducing their vulnerability to attacks.⁵⁷ Additionally, the absence of MHM facilities often leads to high absenteeism among girls during their menstrual periods.⁵⁸ Frequent absences can result in girls falling behind in their studies, leading to dropout from school.⁵⁹ Education is a powerful tool for empowering girls and women, making them less susceptible to exploitation and violence. By ensuring that girls can attend school regularly, even during their menstrual cycle, MHM facilities play a vital role in keeping girls in the protective environment of education.

In urban slums and refugee camps, bathrooms and other sanitation areas are not ideal. In the Bakassi refugee camp in Nigeria, efforts by organizations have led to some improvements. These include building latrines and hand-

washing stations as well as educating about hygiene.⁶⁰ Still, some challenges, such as overcrowding, lack of resources, or maintaining these facilities persist.⁶¹ The situation is made worse in slums. This is due to high population densities, poor infrastructure, and lack of access to basic services. The spread of disease has also contributed to especially poor conditions for women and girls.⁶² Sanitation-related violence has also been reported.⁶³ In Nairobi, violence is influenced by a variety of factors. This could range from individuals' age to their education. The privacy and state of sanitation facilities is also a factor.⁶⁴ Thus, creating safe and private sanitation facilities to prevent violence against women will help achieve Sustainable Development Goal 6.2, which aims for equitable sanitation and hygiene for all by 2030.⁶⁵

Safe and clean toilets must be accessible to all to ensure privacy

57 Jason Brooks, "If You Care about Ending Violence against Women and Girls, Care about Toilets - World," *ReliefWeb*, December 18, 2023, <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/if-you-care-about-ending-violence-against-women-and-girls-care-about-toilets>.

58 Andrew Sentoogo Ssemata et al., "Understanding the Social and Physical Menstrual Health Environment of Secondary Schools in Uganda: A Qualitative Methods Study," *PLOS Global Public Health* 3, no. 11 (November 29, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pgph.0002665>.

59 Andrew Sentoogo Ssemata et al., "Understanding the Social and Physical Menstrual Health Environment."

60 "Making refugee camp toilets safer for women and girls; new challenge launched to crowdsource improvements in safety, lighting, and maintenance of latrines for a share of US\$30,000 award," *Rescue.org*, June 14, 2023, <https://www.rescue.org/announcement/making-refugee-camp-toilets-safer-women-and-girls-new-challenge-launched-crowdsource>.

61 Mahendra et al., "Seven Transformations for More Equitable and Sustainable Cities."

62 Mahendra et al., "Seven Transformations for More Equitable and Sustainable Cities."

63 Samantha C Winter, Laura Johnson, and Millicent Ningoma Dzombo, "Sanitation-Related Violence against Women in Informal Settlements in Kenya: A Quantitative Analysis," *Frontiers in Public Health* 11 (September 29, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2023.1191101>.

64 Winter, Johnson, and Ningoma Dzombo, "Sanitation-Related Violence against Women in Informal Settlements in Kenya: A Quantitative Analysis."

65 Winter, Johnson, and Ningoma Dzombo, "Sanitation-Related Violence against Women in Informal Settlements in Kenya: A Quantitative Analysis."

and safety, particularly for women and girls. This is crucial in reducing health risks for all individuals.⁶⁶ Improving sanitation infrastructure is key to better public health outcomes and enhancing the safety and well-being of women and girls in urban settings.⁶⁷ Inclusive urban planning takes into account the needs of all community members. This includes women and girls, which is essential for creating equitable and safe cities. The International Water Association (IWA) Initiative is advocating for the construction of safe and clean toilets.⁶⁸ Poor sanitation in urban areas can also lead to a range of public health issues, many of which disproportionately affect women. These may include urinary tract infections and complications related to menstrual hygiene.⁶⁹

Conclusion

Changes to urban spaces in recent months represent the growth of technology and the need to protect women. As previously mentioned, women face unique challenges in cities. These could range from gender-based violence, to a loss of privacy. Emerging threats, such as those posed by smart technology and unsafe public restrooms, are only two examples of the rapidly changing urban landscape.

Regulation of smart technology in cities is needed to protect women. Additionally, the rise of smart cities shows that new technology must be considered in urban planning. Technology, while important, does pose a risk to all citizens. Urban planners and policymakers must therefore develop comprehensive regulations that address these risks. These ensure that the benefits of smart technology do not come at the expense of women's safety. Delegates should also consider adopting a gender-sensitive approach in urban planning. This is vital to ensure women's safety and sanitation needs in public spaces. Effective urban design should go beyond basic amenities to include well-equipped women's restrooms. One key feature to consider include private nursing areas and facilities. Finally, improving sanitation in these restrooms is not just a matter of cleanliness—it is a crucial step towards creating an inclusive

environment that keeps women safe from sexual violence.

Delegates must consider both the rise of smart technology as well as access to safe and sanitary bathrooms for women. This must be done in order to create safe urban spaces. It is also essential in planning urban spaces that are both inclusive and respectful of the needs of women. As cities grow and change, the intersection of technology, safety, and public health must be utilized to protect and empower women.

66 "Toilets & Latrines," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, October 28, 2022, <https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/global/sanitation/toilets.html>.

67 "Sanitation," World Health Organization, March 21, 2023, <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/sanitation>.

68 Ulrike Kelm, "International Water Association," International Water Association, accessed January 11, 2024, <https://iwa-network.org/>.

69 Karan Babbar, S. Swathysree, and Kranthi Nanduri, "Navigating through Menstrual Health Experiences of Educated Urban Individuals Who Menstruate during the COVID-19 Lockdown: A Study from India," *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, (December 4, 2023): 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2023.2287723>.



UN-HABITAT
NHSMUN 2024



PELA MORADIA DIGNA
E GASTA DE



TOPIC B:

INCREASING ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Introduction

People across the world face many challenges when looking for safe and affordable housing. These challenges are more than just inflation or unemployment, and, in recent months, have changed. Recent urban development trends and policy shifts have created a more complex process for accessing affordable housing. As a result, governments have changed their affordable housing policies. Climate change and the environment have also created challenges for potential homeowners.

One specific issue gaining attention recently is the need for housing that is safe for the environment. With the increased threats of climate change, there is a growing recognition that housing initiatives must be more eco-friendly. The increasing occurrence of natural disasters—often triggered by climate change—has increased the number of displaced people around the world. In this context, displacement refers to the forced movement of people from their homes or communities. An estimated 32 million individuals were displaced within their own countries by climate change disasters such as floods and fires.¹ Without taking serious action soon, the number of people that are displaced is expected to rise to 200 million annually by 2050.² It is vital that housing projects include both sustainable construction materials as well as energy-efficient designs. Using renewable energy sources in construction is another way to create homes that are more sustainable and easier to afford. In order to create more affordable housing for citizens, countries must make a constant commitment to creating a more sustainable future.

Cities are growing much faster and are undergoing numerous changes, as urban planners and policymakers work to accommodate growing populations. For example, to address the housing crisis in Hong Kong, the government has invested USD 1.3 billion in a housing project for 2024.³ As the demand for housing becomes more than the supply, this increases real estate costs. This growth is due to increased competition and heightened inequality for home buyers. Members of minority groups are also excluded from housing due to these rising costs. Poor planning and a lack of regulation has also shed

light on economic inequality in many states and communities. Thus, when working to create affordable housing, it is important to make sure growth is sustainable and healthy for the environment. If rapid urban development is not carefully managed, it can result in significantly worse problems for all countries.

Delegates are encouraged to look into how housing policy is impacted by recent real-world events. In recent months, affordable housing has been impacted by both climate change and policy shifts. Delegates must also focus on collaborating with others on creating solutions for the global community to ensure all people can have a safe and affordable future.

Environmentally Safe and Affordable Housing

In recent months, there have been discussions about how sustainable housing can be used to address the housing crisis. Housing that is friendly to the environment can take on many forms. These include promoting clean air, enhancing the efficient use of energy, and tackling climate change.⁴ In order to take on these problems, housing must be more affordable. Additionally, governments must implement infrastructure that is friendlier to the climate. Delegates must consider that environmentally sustainable housing is a large component of finding solutions to increase accessibility to affordable housing.⁵

Housing that does not help the environment contributes to climate change and poor public health. This fact is especially important when considering that people with low incomes

1 “Climate change and displacement: the myths and the facts,” UNHCR, accessed January 10, 2023, <https://www.unhcr.org/us/news/stories/climate-change-and-displacement-myths-and-facts>.

2 “Natural disasters, storms and droughts: The top climate emergencies for refugees in 2023,” *USA for UNHCR*, December 21, 2023, <https://www.unrefugees.org/news/natural-disasters-storms-and-droughts-the-top-climate-emergencies-for-refugees-in-2023/>.

3 Clare Jim and Kirsten Donovan, “New World and China Resources to build \$1.3 bln Hong Kong housing development,” *Reuters*, December 27, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/business/new-world-china-resources-build-13-bln-hong-kong-housing-development-2023-12-27/>.

4 Andrew Biro, “Sustainable Housing: Examples & Trends in 2023,” *GB&D*, November 9, 2023, <https://gbdmagazine.com/sustainable-housing/>.

5 “HUD’s Climate Action Plan,” US Department of Housing and Urban Development, accessed January 13, 2024, <https://www.hud.gov/climate>.

and people of color are disproportionately impacted by the effects of climate change.⁶ Poor housing, including overcrowding, a lack of outdoor spaces, or lead in soil or paint, can impact citizens' health.⁷ If waste is not managed correctly when houses are created, it can lead to air and water pollution. Both air and water pollution pose major risks to the world's ecosystems. Being exposed to either can also make a person more vulnerable to disease. Some other health risks for citizens may include respiratory or waterborne illnesses, as well as sanitation-related infections.⁸

Both local and national governments should make sure that all citizens are able to afford "green" housing options. Doing so is incredibly important and mitigates the impacts of climate change. Houses that are not sustainable often contribute to climate change through carbon emissions.⁹ Carbon emissions can also increase due to inefficient building designs. This can look like reliance on non-renewable energy sources or poor insulation within a house's walls. Urban planners also warn against a reliance on non-renewable energy sources. According to the World Green Building Council, around 40 percent of global carbon emissions can be traced back to the construction of homes and the resources that buildings have used.¹⁰ When creating new and affordable homes, urban planners should consider both public health and the environment. For example, a potential solution is to repair or update already existing buildings or office spaces. This is done to create more housing options for citizens.¹¹ This reduces carbon emissions and also creates housing for citizens.

In 2023, natural disasters and similar events led to thousands

being displaced around the world. Some examples of natural disasters included an earthquake in Morocco, wildfires in Maui, and floods in Libya. The Morocco earthquake led to over two thousand deaths and displaced half a million people.¹² Maui's wildfires in August 2023 can be attributed to the regional drought that led to deadly wildfires and caused many survivors to lose their homes.¹³ Hawaii has been facing housing problems due to high costs and housing shortages. With the loss of temporary spaces from the fires, Maui residents who are unable to return to their homes due to damage from the fires have nowhere to go.¹⁴

In addition, the habitability, or the ability to live in an area, of states has been impacted by gradual impacts of climate change. These may include rising sea levels and desertification. The melting of polar ice caps and glaciers contributes to rising sea levels. This directly endangers low-lying coastal areas and islands. Coastal communities face the immediate risks of floods, coastal erosion, and saltwater intrusion into freshwater sources. All of these factors cause homes to become uninhabitable, as many cities are within close proximity of coastal areas. It is estimated that around 37 percent of the world's population lives within 100 km of a coast.¹⁵

At the same time, land is damaged by a variety of other climate factors. This may include desertification, which is driven by climate change. Desertification expands arid and semi-arid areas and leads to the degradation of soil quality and lower agricultural productivity. When desertification occurs, plants and other vegetation in drylands decrease or eventually disappear. This results in the expansion of arid or

6 Samantha Fu, "How Cities Can Tackle Both the Affordable Housing and Climate Crises," Housing Matters, November 2, 2022, <https://housingmatters.urban.org/articles/how-cities-can-tackle-both-affordable-housing-and-climate-crises>.

7 Arya Rao and Shira Hornstein, "How the twin crises of climate change and poor public housing are harming people's health," *STAT*, August 29, 2023, <https://www.statnews.com/2023/08/29/climate-change-public-housing-health-consequences/>.

8 "Environment, Climate Change and Health," World Health Organization (WHO), accessed January 13, 2024, <https://www.who.int/teams/environment-climate-change-and-health/healthy-urban-environments/urban-planning/health-risks>.

9 David Carlin, "40% Of Emissions Come From Real Estate; Here's How The Sector Can Decarbonize," *Forbes*, April 5, 2022, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidcarlin/2022/04/05/40-of-emissions-come-from-real-estate-heres-how-the-sector-can-decarbonize/?sh=173e57f963b7>.

10 Tony Mariotti, "Green Building Statistics (2024)," Ruby Home Luxury Real Estate, September 11, 2023, <https://www.rubyhome.com/blog/green-building-stats/>.

11 Fu, "How Cities Can Tackle Both the Affordable Housing and Climate Crises."

12 "Morocco Earthquake September 2023 Situation Report," ReliefWeb, September 15, 2023, <https://reliefweb.int/report/morocco/morocco-earthquake-september-2023-situation-report-15092023>.

13 Ashley R. Williams, Henrik Pettersson, Renée Rigdon, Clint Alwahab, Marco Chacón and Amy O'Kruk, "Everything was on fire: The hours that brought Lahaina to ruins," *CNN*, August 18, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/interactive/2023/08/hawaii-wildfires-timeline-maui-lahaina-dg/index.html>.

14 Michael Tsai, "Schatz urges permanent authorization of disaster recovery program," *Spectrum News*, December 13, 2023, <https://spectrumlocalnews.com/hi/hawaii/news/2023/12/12/schatz-urges-permanent-authorization-of-disaster-recovery-program>.

15 "Coastal Zone Management," UN Environment Programme, accessed January 13, 2024, <https://www.unep.org/topics/ocean-seas-and-coasts/regional-seas-programme/coastal-zone-management>.

semi-arid lands. The most extensive land degradation occurs in Eastern and Central Asia. Land degradation, and its effects, impacts a minimum of 20 percent of the overall land area in these states.¹⁶ Other regions around the world, including Sub-Saharan Africa, Western and Southern Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean, also have above average rates of land degradation.¹⁷ This forces many to migrate from rural areas, as their livelihoods become unsustainable with decreased access to vital resources such as water. In turn, urban areas struggle to provide adequate housing for all and face increasing pressures. This leads to the formation of informal settlements with poor conditions.

In the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre’s (IDMC) 2023 report, they found that 8.7 million people were displaced in the last year due to natural disasters.¹⁸ Experts guess that this number will rise in the future. Balakrishnan Rajagopal, an expert with the United Nations stated that, “The world is grappling with a situation where more and more people are

unable to afford their housing costs. Millions lack the financial means to access safe, secure, and habitable housing.”¹⁹ It is clear that there is a strong connection between land degradation, rural displacement, and urban housing. These three issues represent an urgent global problem that requires immediate attention. In creating affordable housing that is safe for the environment, states can create a greener future.

In 2023, creating more housing that is healthy for the environment has become much more popular. One trend is the adoption of biophilic designs, which involve combining natural elements such as indoor gardens and large windows with living spaces.²⁰ Biophilic design is an important step forward in creating more sustainable and affordable homes. It encourages a sense of connection to nature and creates a greater appreciation for the environment.²¹ Another key benefit is the support of biodiversity. This is done through the inclusion of green spaces, living walls, and rooftop gardens, which provide habitats for local species.²²

16 “At Least 100 Million Hectares of Healthy Land Now Lost Each Year,” UNCCD, accessed January 13, 2024, <https://www.unccd.int/news-stories/press-releases/least-100-million-hectares-healthy-land-now-lost-each-year>.

17 “At Least 100 Million Hectares of Healthy Land Now Lost Each Year,” UNCCD, accessed January 13, 2024, <https://www.unccd.int/news-stories/press-releases/least-100-million-hectares-healthy-land-now-lost-each-year>.

18 *Global Report on Internal Displacement* (Geneva: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2023), <https://www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2023/>.

19 “UN expert urges action to end global affordable housing crisis,” UNHCR, October 20, 2023, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/10/un-expert-urges-action-end-global-affordable-housing-crisis>.

20 “Transform Your Living Space with Biophilic Home Design,” Constructive Voices, November 10, 2023, <https://constructive-voices.com/biophilic-home-design-2/>.

21 Constructive Voices, “Transform Your Living Space with Biophilic Home Design.”

22 Omri Schwartz, “What is Nature Centric Biophilic Interior Design?” Nazmiyal Collection, August 18, 2023, <https://nazmiyalantiquerugs.com>.

An urban slum located in Tanzania

Credit: Rasheedhrasheed



Biophilic designs can also contribute to improved indoor air quality. This is because these designs incorporate indoor plants that filter pollutants and increase oxygen levels. These designs' strong focus on natural lighting and air flow also improves the lives of homeowners and reduces energy consumption.²³ The positive impacts of biophilic design can be increased even more by following rigorous building standards. These designs have been implemented in major cities in China, Indonesia, Australia, Sweden, and the United States.²⁴ Many are committed to encouraging biophilic designs on a large scale to improve accessibility through green policy.

Another major trend in home building is net-zero energy homes.²⁵ This type of home produces the same amount of energy that is consumed throughout the year, resulting in a net-zero carbon footprint. Many states have come closer to adopting net-zero energy goals through progress in solar panel innovations or energy-conserving appliances. This has also made them more accessible and cost-effective.²⁶ Many homeowners are now working to adopt new green technology. These can range from rooftop solar panels, energy storage solutions, and energy-efficient air circulation systems. In some instances, extra energy can be sold back to the energy grid. This makes net-zero homes both good for the environment and a good financial decision.²⁷

Implementing housing that is affordable and friendly to the environment faces a few challenges, despite its benefits. One is the initial cost of adding in sustainable methods and materials.²⁸ The cost of new technology is much higher than traditional construction methods.²⁹ A high fiscal barrier often creates a challenge for both developers and those who want

to purchase homes. This also restricts the affordability of a home.³⁰ A lack of understanding of the long-term advantages of eco-friendly housing also discourages widespread adoption. Overcoming old practices and convincing citizens to embrace new approaches requires education and outreach to communities. Frameworks for regulation and building codes may also need adjustments to accommodate and promote eco-friendly construction.³¹ Furthermore, ensuring the durability and reliability of green technologies over time is essential to building trust among individuals. Collaborative efforts between government bodies, industry leaders, and communities are needed to address these challenges and create a supportive environment for the successful implementation of affordable, environmentally friendly housing initiatives.

Recent Urban Development and Changes in Policy

Over the past year, there has been a shift in government attitudes in urban planning. These changing priorities could have serious consequences for the housing markets within their communities and neighboring communities. Delegates must work to understand the immediate and long-term implications of these policy priorities and how they will affect affordable housing access.

Due to greater percentages of developed countries' populations living in urban spaces, their housing prices have soared, creating an affordable housing crisis. This can be seen in recent trends in the United States, with year-end reports stating that only 15.5 percent of homes for sale were affordable for a typical US household.³² For many governments, the answer to the crisis has often been a combination of two tools. The

com/blog/what-is-nature-centric-biophilic-interior-design/.

23 Schwartz, "What is Nature Centric Biophilic Interior Design?"

24 "Green Biophilic Buildings Take Over Major Cities in The World," Thursd, December 27, 2023, <https://thursd.com/articles/green-biophilic-buildings-take-over-major-cities-in-the-world>.

25 "Aim for Zero - Zero Energy and Zero Energy Ready Homes," US Department of Energy, accessed January 13, 2024, <https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/aim-zero-zero-energy-and-zero-energy-ready-homes>.

26 US Department of Energy, "Aim for Zero - Zero Energy and Zero Energy Ready Homes."

27 "Net Zero Homes and Beyond Exploring Success Stories," UtilitiesOne, November 6, 2023, <https://utilitiesone.com/net-zero-homes-and-beyond-exploring-success-stories>.

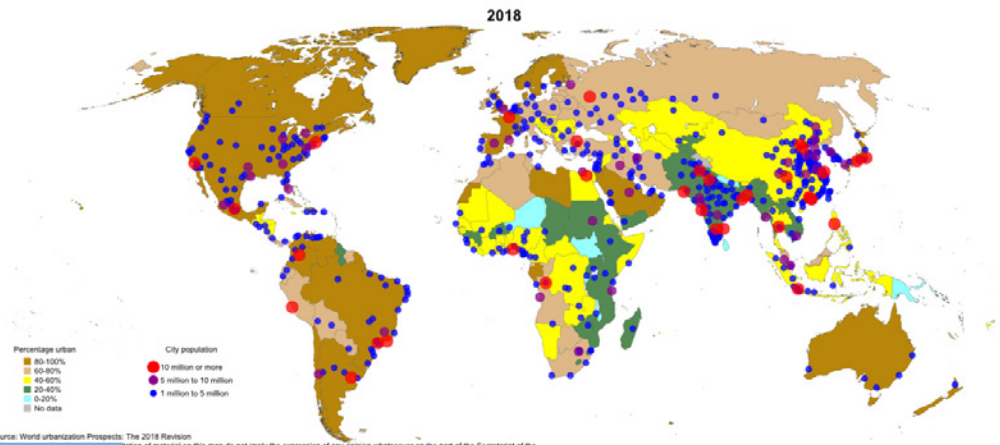
28 Ashish Pandey, "Are green buildings expensive alternatives to traditional structures?" *The Economic Times*, August 2, 2023, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/small-biz/sustainability/are-green-buildings-expensive-alternatives-to-traditional-structures/articleshow/102340836.cms>.

29 Pandey, "Are green buildings expensive alternatives to traditional structures?"

30 Jenny Schuetz, "Who's to blame for high housing costs? It's more complicated than you think," Brookings Institute, January 17, 2020, <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/whos-to-blame-for-high-housing-costs-its-more-complicated-than-you-think/>.

31 "Green building codes and regulations Paving the way for sustainable construction," UtilitiesOne, October 17, 2023, <https://utilitiesone.com/green-building-codes-and-regulations-paving-the-way-for-sustainable-construction>.

32 Jennifer, Ludden, "Most Homes for Sale in 2023 Were Not Affordable for a Typical U.S. Household," NPR, December 24, 2023, <https://www.npr.org/2023/12/24/1221480443/most-homes-for-sale-in-2023-were-not-affordable-for-a-typical-u-s-household>.



Map displaying the levels of urbanization across the globe within each nation, with large urban areas highlighted with dots to reveal areas of heightened urbanization

Credit: Nicxjo

first approach uses government intervention to expand state-run housing and implement rent control. Rent control creates caps on a maximum rent value, and the government decides when it can be increased. Many opponents of these plans warn that tight regulations actually worsen the housing markets within communities and that over regulation is a threat to the affordable housing supply.³³ They propose that governments should instead deregulate markets. This involves removing laws which restrict how landlords can operate their rentals. These opponents of rent control claim that deregulation allows corporations to allocate resources to various housing sectors for more efficient planning.³⁴

Many opponents of deregulation exist as well, citing the inequalities of a free market and the danger it poses to marginalized groups. There are also economic costs to an unchecked market system. A recent study by University College in London found that by increasing spending on social housing, the UK government could save upwards of

33 Joseph Gyourko and Raven Molloy, “Regulation and Housing Supply,” *NBER*, October 2014, https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w20536/w20536.pdf.

34 Kenneth P. Green, Josef Filipowicz, Steve Lafleur, and Ian Herzog, “The Impact of Land-Use Regulation on Housing Supply in Canada,” *Fraser Institute*, July 2016, <https://www.fraserinstitute.org/sites/default/files/impact-of-land-use-regulation-on-housing-supply-in-canada.pdf>.

35 “Building More Social and Affordable Housing Could Save the UK Government £1.5 Billion a Year,” *UCL News*, October 4, 2023, <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/2023/oct/building-more-social-and-affordable-housing-could-save-uk-government-ps15-billion-year>.

36 “Achieving Housing Affordability by the Next Decade,” Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, October 3, 2023, <https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/blog/2023/achieving-housing-affordability-next-decade>.

37 Agence France-Presse, “France Extends 0% Interest Rate Loans for Low-Income Households,” *Euronews*, October 18, 2023, <https://www.euronews.com/business/2023/10/18/housing-crisis-france-extends-0-interest-rate-loans-for-low-income-households>.

GBP 1.5 billion each year through reduced social costs from homelessness.³⁵ Thus, governments are moving towards a two-pronged approach, attempting to balance capital forces and intervention to protect those who are marginalized.³⁶

These policies also allow governments to support renters and first-time homebuyers. In the 1980s and 1990s, many countries at all levels of government closed or sold off their social housing stock, resulting in a significant reduction of available social housing. This trend has played out quite poorly for many European countries, as they historically have retained larger supplies of social housing. With increased urbanization and general population growth, this supply is proving to be wholly inadequate to the challenges of today. In response to this, many governments have changed their policies to expand social housing supply and combat their affordability concerns.³⁷

An example of this shift in attitude can be seen in the Tory political party in the United Kingdom. Over the past decade,

they have worked to reduce the government's spending and support towards social housing, leading to a significant reduction in social housing supply across the country. However, as they now face a rapidly escalating cost of living, expansion of the affordable housing supply via social housing schemes is being reconsidered, with promises of significant investment in the coming years.³⁸ These challenges are not unique to the United Kingdom, and countries across the world are attempting to build their way out of an increasingly serious housing crisis.

The lack of social housing supply to deal with an increasing population remains a concern for countries experiencing mass urbanization, which is a rapid increase in the number of people living in urban areas. This can be seen across Africa. Africa is experiencing an enormous population boom and is set to reach 2.5 billion people by 2050, nearly doubling its current population.³⁹ However, this enormous population boom risks a crisis within their housing markets, with demand outpacing supply exponentially. This could result in runaway housing costs, especially in countries with scarcity of land such as Egypt. As the population increases, so does the demand for housing. However, the number of currently available homes is not sufficient to meet this demand. This then leads to an increase in the price of housing.

Population density and lack of available land is a particularly difficult problem for Egypt, as 95 percent of its population lives within 20 kilometers of the Nile Delta. This is because the desert environment, which makes up the majority of the country's land, is not suitable for housing.⁴⁰ These challenges become even more difficult in the face of population growth and modernization during the 21st century. This rapid population growth has led to an increase in slums, or densely populated areas with low-quality housing. The ever-increasing cost of living causes many citizens to face the

looming prospect of poverty, especially as the cost of housing seems to perpetually rise. As a result, many turn to these informal housing arrangements simply to continue to live within the cities with opportunities for work and economic advancement.⁴¹

The issues of increasing cost and expansion of slums is highlighted by the states of Egypt and Nigeria. The Egyptian government has aimed to create new cities across the country to alleviate this population pressure. Notably, the "New Administrative Capital" is a plan to develop a purpose-built city that will become the country's capital. It also aims to rapidly expand the number of homes available by building in currently unpopulated areas.⁴² This plan aims to build new cities out in the desert to alleviate the housing strain within the country; however, critics raise concerns about the plan. They claim that the government's plans do not account for marginalized groups who are suffering from the housing crisis and instead serve to profit the already well-off upper classes of the country.⁴³

The plan also comes at a time when the Egyptian government is actively dismantling many of its slums for the sake of modernization. However, this has resulted in the displacement of thousands of poorer Egyptians who have no alternatives.⁴⁴ They concluded that the current plans of the Egyptian government have been a failure and have not done well to alleviate the crisis the country's population growth has created. As it stands in 2023, the country faces a housing shortage of up to three million housing units.⁴⁵

This is contrasted by the efforts of the Nigerian government on the opposite side of the continent. While it does not have the same problem as Egypt, Nigeria has still seen incredible growth within the last 40 years. This has led to the creation of slums and an increasing lack of affordable housing for many Nigerian families. The government has attempted to

38 Michael Grove, "Long-Term Plan for Housing: Secretary of State's Speech," *GOV.UK*, July 24, 2023, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/long-term-plan-for-housing-secretary-of-states-speech>.

39 "African Century," IMF, September 2023, <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/fandd/issues/2023/09/PT-african-century>.

40 "Egypt," CIA World Factbook, accessed January 13, 2024, <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/egypt/>.

41 "Urban Development," World Bank, accessed January 13, 2024, <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/urbandevelopment/overview>.

42 Mariam Aref Mahmoud, "Housing Crisis by Design: Egypt's Politics of Respectability," *The Avery Review*, accessed January 13, 2024, <https://averyreview.com/issues/62/housing-crisis-by-design>.

43 Mahmoud, "Housing Crisis by Design."

44 Elsheshtawy Yasser, "Egypt's New Administrative Capital Is Another Desert Folly," *DAWN*, June 30, 2023, <https://dawnmena.org/egypts-new-administrative-capital-is-another-desert-folly/>.

45 Lalaine C. Delmendo, "Investment Analysis of Egyptian Real Estate Market," *Global Property Guide*, April 25, 2023, <https://www.globalpropertyguide.com/middle-east/egypt>.

fight back against this shift. Overall, the efforts of the past decades have focused on improving the quality of housing. They have also supported initiatives that will increase the Nigerian economy's capacity for new home construction to sustain population growth. These efforts focus on improving the structural integrity of new homes and increasing access to necessities such as water and electricity.⁴⁶

The government has also created a new initiative called the "Renewed Hope Cities." This program aims to create government-controlled housing for low-income Nigerian citizens. Recently, the government made a pledge of 34,500 units. Additionally, Nigeria has decided to reform the National Housing Fund and Federal Housing Authority. This allows them to better coordinate resources to alleviate the housing crisis, with a goal to build 550,000 new units per year.⁴⁷ The project was 100,000 units short of its goal as of September 2023; however, the outlook for the future is promising.⁴⁸ This policy of public-private partnership has proved successful in alleviating the housing pressures within the country. It also serves as a model for how countries experiencing rapid population growth can resolve their housing shortages.

Changes in government priorities are the result of an ever-growing urban population which needs to be accommodated. Past decades have seen increased emphasis on the private sector stepping in to alleviate housing pressures and provide what has been a growing share of the housing market. However, there has been pushback on this model. A significant shift in opinion has culminated in the increase of government interventions this past year. However, intervention and regulation still require careful consideration.

The world is slowly approaching a model of public-private partnerships. These strive to protect marginalized groups while still utilizing the efficiency and speed of private actors in growing the housing supply. Growing this relationship and retaining space for those of lower-income backgrounds will be critical as the world becomes increasingly urbanized in the coming decades.

Conclusion

To respond to the changing needs of citizens, governments should revisit their goals for creating affordable homes. As a result of climate change, there is a need to develop and plan cities to be more sustainable. In addition, designing communities to be more environmentally friendly mitigates the impacts of pollution. As climate change continues to be a growing concern, efforts should be made to create both affordable and sustainable homes.

Governments are also becoming more involved in creating affordable housing. This is largely in response to how expensive housing has recently become. As housing has become unaffordable for the majority of the population, governments have revisited housing projects to increase the supply of affordable housing. Providing affordable housing should be a priority.

Delegates should also think about how to promote housing that is both green and affordable. There are a variety of solutions that may be adopted. Whether it is adopting solar panels or directing urban planners to rehabilitate old buildings or homes, delegates are encouraged to use this paper as a guide throughout the committee.

46 Ibitoye Oyewole Amos, "Housing Policy in Nigeria: An Overview," *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*, April 2015, https://www.aijcrnet.com/journals/Vol_5_No_2_April_2015/8.pdf.

47 Sunday Ochogwu, "FG Hints on Building New Homes to End Housing Deficit in Nigeria," *Daily Post Nigeria*, October 23, 2023, <https://dailypost.ng/2023/10/23/fg-hints-on-building-new-homes-to-end-housing-deficit-in-nigeria/>.

48 Dayo Ayeyemi, "How to Address Housing Challenges in Nigeria —Experts," *Zanyia*, September 12, 2023, <https://www.zawya.com/en/world/africa/how-to-address-housing-challenges-in-nigeria-experts-m5zc565t>.

Works Cited

Topic A

UN-Sources

UNICEF. “Women and girls bear brunt of water and sanitation crisis – new UNICEF-WHO report.” July 6, 2023. <https://www.unicef.org/wca/press-releases/women-and-girls-bear-brunt-water-and-sanitation-crisis-new-unicef-who-report>.

UN-Habitat. “People Centered-Smart Cities.” Accessed December 22, 2023. <https://unhabitat.org/programme/people-centred-smart-cities>.

UN-Habitat. “International guidelines on people-centered smart cities.” Accessed January 10, 2024. <https://unhabitat.org/international-guidelines-on-people-centred-smart-cities>.

World Health Organization. “Breastfeeding.” Accessed December 30, 2023. https://www.who.int/health-topics/breastfeeding#tab=tab_1.

World Health Organization. “Sanitation.” March 21, 2023. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/sanitation>.

Non-UN Sources

“5 Types of Smart Technologies You Must Have in Your Home.” *Power On Solar*. February 15, 2019. <https://www.poweronsolar.com/5-types-of-smart-technologies-your-must-have-in-your-home/>.

American Restroom Association (ARA). “Restroom Security.” Accessed January 11, 2024. <https://americanrestroom.org/restroom-security/>.

Babbar, Karan, S. Swathysree, and Kranthi Nanduri. “Navigating through Menstrual Health Experiences of Educated Urban Individuals Who Menstruate during the COVID-19 Lockdown: A Study from India.” *Culture, Health & Sexuality* (December 4, 2023): 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2023.2287723>.

Balasygun, Kaitlin. “The biggest risks of using Bluetooth trackers like Apple AirTag, Tile.” *CNBC*. January 14, 2023. <https://www.cnn.com/2023/01/14/the-biggest-security-pros-and-cons-of-using-bluetooth-gps-trackers.html>.

Bamford, Lydia. “Business Challenges in Smart Cities: Navigating Technologies and Building Trust.” *Planning, Building & Construction Today*. November 30, 2023. <https://www.pbctoday.co.uk/news/digital-construction-news/smart-cities-business-challenges/135253/>.

BeeSmart City. “Women in the Gender-Inclusive Smart City.” July 2023. <https://www.beesmart.city/en/strategy/women-in-the-gender-inclusive-smart-city>.

“Breastfeeding Support Rooms and Their Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals: A Qualitative Study.” *Frontiers in Public Health* 9 (December 23, 2021). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2021.732061>.

Brooks, Jason. “If You Care about Ending Violence against Women and Girls, Care about Toilets - World.” *ReliefWeb*. December 18, 2023. <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/if-you-care-about-ending-violence-against-women-and-girls-care-about-toilets>.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. “Toilets & Latrines.” October 28, 2022. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/global/sanitation/toilets.html>.

Chomsky, Raf. “Top 10 Most Sustainable Smart Cities in the World.” *Sustainable Review*. September 14, 2023. <https://sustainablereview.com/top-10-most-sustainable-smart-cities-in-the-world/>.

Cities for Digital Rights. “UN-Habitat Launches the People-Centered Smart Cities Playbooks.” Accessed December 30, 2023. <https://citiesfordigitalrights.org/un-habitat-launches-people-centered-smart-cities-playbooks>.

Clatworthy, David, and Tom Ogello. “Women Lack Access to Private Toilets around the World.” Columbia University Mailman

- School of Public Health. September 7, 2018. <https://www.publichealth.columbia.edu/news/women-lack-access-private-toilets-around-world>.
- De Souza, Carolina Belomo, Sonia Isoyama Venancio, and Regina Paula Guimarães Vieira Cavalcante da Silva, Eshoo, Anna. “Reps. Eshoo, Lesko Introduce Bill to Combat Tech-Enabled Domestic Violence.” November 2, 2023. <http://eshoo.house.gov/media/press-releases/reps-eshoo-lesko-introduce-bill-combat-tech-enabled-domestic-violence>.
- Enigma. “Technology abuse clinics for survivors of intimate partner violence.” January 24, 2023. <https://www.usenix.org/conference/enigma2023/presentation/ramjit>.
- Gonzalez, Roger. “Transforming Cities in Latin America: The Dream of Smart Cities Comes True.” *CIOReview*. Accessed December 30, 2023. <https://smartcity.cioreview.com/cxoinsight/transforming-cities-in-latin-america-the-dream-of-smart-cities-comes-true-nid-38067-cid-134.html>.
- Hazare, Ayush, and Jyoti Jain Tholiya. “Women in Slums, Risking Their Safety to Access and Usage of Basic Sanitation Facilities-A Literature Review.” *Qeios*. September 2023. <https://www.qeios.com/read/XFBJ7K>.
- Kelm, Ulrike. “International Water Association.” International Water Association. Accessed January 11, 2024. <https://iwa-network.org/>.
- Klovig Skelton, Sebastian. “MPs Warn about Growing Prevalence of Tech-Enabled Domestic Abuse | Computer Weekly.” *ComputerWeekly.Com*. August 8, 2023. <https://www.computerweekly.com/news/366547406/MPs-warn-about-growing-prevalence-of-tech-enabled-domestic-abuse>.
- Lamas, Carlos. “São Paulo: In a ‘smart city’, no one gets left behind.” *World Bank Blogs*. November 21, 2023. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/transport/sao-paulo-smart-city-no-one-gets-left-behind>.
- LinkedIn. “Designing Safer Cities for Women and Girls: How to Make Town Planning More Inclusive.” October 12, 2023. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/designing-safer-cities-women-girls-how-make-town-more-my>.
- Lopez-Tomas, Andrea. “Women in Lebanon Find Ways To Tackle Their Own Period Poverty.” *The Medialine*. March 2, 2023. <https://themedialine.org/people/women/women-in-lebanon-find-ways-to-tackle-their-own-period-poverty/>.
- Mahendru, Tanya. “Bleeding for Change: Tackling Period Poverty and Empowering Women Worldwide.” *The Intersectional Feminist*. December 11, 2023. <https://www.theifmag.com/bleeding-for-change>.
- Malik, Madeeha et al. “Experiences, Awareness, Perceptions and Attitudes of Women and Girls towards Menstrual Hygiene Management and Safe Menstrual Products in Pakistan.” *Frontiers in Public Health* 11 (September 7, 2023). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2023.1242169>.
- Martin, Rebecca. “Creating a nurturing environment: The value of a mother’s room in the workplace.” *Building Design and Construction*. August 1, 2023. <https://www.bdcnetwork.com/blog/creating-nurturing-environment-value-mothers-room-workplace>.
- Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence. “Technology Abuse and What to Do.” Accessed December 22, 2023. <https://mscfv.org/technologyabuse>.
- Modak, Anushree et al. “The Psychological Benefits of Breastfeeding: Fostering Maternal Well-Being and Child Development.” *Cureus* 15, no. 10 (October 9, 2023). <https://doi.org/10.7759/cureus.46730>.
- Office on Women’s Health. “What Employers Need to Know.” May 23, 2023. <https://www.womenshealth.gov/supporting-nursing-moms-work/what-law-says-about-breastfeeding-and-work/what-employers-need-know>.
- Patel, Kripalini et al. “A Systematic Review of Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) during Humanitarian Crises And/or Emergencies in Low- and Middle-Income Countries.” *Frontiers in Public Health* 10 (September 28, 2022). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2022.1018092>.
- Rescue.org. “Making refugee camp toilets safer for women and girls; new challenge launched to crowdsource improvements in safety, lighting, and maintenance of latrines for a share of US\$30,000 award.” June 14, 2023. <https://www.rescue.org/>

- announcement/making-refugee-camp-toilets-safer-women-and-girls-new-challenge-launched-crowdsourc.
- Roller, Alison. “Breastfeeding at Work: How HR Can Go above and beyond for Nursing Workers.” *HRMorning*. August 16, 2023. <https://www.hrmorning.com/articles/breastfeeding-at-work/>.
- Sentoogo Ssemata, Andrew et al. “Understanding the Social and Physical Menstrual Health Environment of Secondary Schools in Uganda: A Qualitative Methods Study.” *PLOS Global Public Health* 3, no. 11 (November 29, 2023). <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pgph.0002665>.
- Stannard, Liam. “Anatomy of a Smart City.” *BigRentz*. January 27, 2023. <https://www.bigrentz.com/blog/anatomy-of-a-smart-city>.
- The Conversation. “Urban planning has long ignored women’s experiences. Here are 5 ways we can make our cities safer.” November 16, 2023. <https://theconversation.com/urban-planning-has-long-ignored-womens-experiences-here-are-5-ways-we-can-make-our-cities-safer-216531>.
- “The Growing Trend of Smart Home.” *Craving Tech*. August 11, 2023. <https://www.cravingtech.com/the-growing-trend-of-smart-home.html>.
- UK Parliament. “Connected Technology: MPs Call on Government to Tackle Growing Problem of Tech-Enabled Domestic Abuse - Committees.” August 7, 2023. <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/378/culture-media-and-sport-committee/news/196867/connected-technology-mps-call-on-government-to-tackle-growing-problem-of-techenabled-domestic-abuse/>.
- Williams Office for Information Technology. “What is ‘Smart’ Technology?” Accessed January 10, 2024. <https://oit.williams.edu/ats-posts/what-is-smart-technology/>.
- “Why equal housing for women will continue to be a ‘tough road,’” *MSNBC*. August 1, 2019. <https://www.msnbc.com/know-your-value/why-equal-housing-women-will-continue-be-tough-road-n1038266>.
- Winter, Samantha C, Laura Johnson, and Millicent Ningoma Dzombo. “Sanitation-Related Violence against Women in Informal Settlements in Kenya: A Quantitative Analysis.” *Frontiers in Public Health* 11 (September 29, 2023). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2023.1191101>.
- World Economic Forum. “Governing Smart Cities: Use Cases for Urban Transformation.” November 7, 2023. <https://www.weforum.org/publications/governing-smart-cities-use-cases-for-urban-transformation>.

Topic B

UN Sources

- IMF. “African Century.” September 2023. <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/fandd/issues/2023/09/PT-african-century>.
- UNCCD. “At Least 100 Million Hectares of Healthy Land Now Lost Each Year.” Accessed January 13, 2024. <https://www.unccd.int/news-stories/press-releases/least-100-million-hectares-healthy-land-now-lost-each-year>.
- UN Environment Programme. “Coastal Zone Management.” Accessed January 13, 2024. <https://www.unep.org/topics/ocean-seas-and-coasts/regional-seas-programme/coastal-zone-management>.
- UNHCR. “Climate change and displacement: the myths and the facts.” Accessed January 10, 2023. <https://www.unhcr.org/us/news/stories/climate-change-and-displacement-myths-and-facts>.
- UNHCR. “UN expert urges action to end global affordable housing crisis.” October 20, 2023. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/10/un-expert-urges-action-end-global-affordable-housing-crisis>.
- World Bank. “Urban Development.” Accessed January 13, 2024. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/urbandevelopment/overview>.
- World Health Organization. “Environment, Climate Change and Health.” Accessed February 1, 2024. <https://www.who.int/teams/environment-climate-change-and-health/healthy-urban-environments/urban-planning/health-risks>.

Non-UN Sources

- Agence France-Presse. “France Extends 0% Interest Rate Loans for Low-Income Households.” *Euronews*. October 18, 2023. <https://www.euronews.com/business/2023/10/18/housing-crisis-france-extends-0-interest-rate-loans-for-low-income-households>.
- Ayeyemi, Dayo. “How to Address Housing Challenges in Nigeria —Experts.” *Zawya*. September 12, 2023. <https://www.zawya.com/en/world/africa/how-to-address-housing-challenges-in-nigeria-experts-m5zc565t>.
- Biro, Andrew. “Sustainable Housing: Examples & Trends in 2023.” *GB&D*. November 9, 2023. <https://gbdmagazine.com/sustainable-housing/>.
- “Building More Social and Affordable Housing Could Save UK Government £1.5 Billion a Year.” *UCL News*. October 4, 2023. <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/2023/oct/building-more-social-and-affordable-housing-could-save-uk-government-ps15-billion-year>.
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. “Achieving Housing Affordability by the Next Decade.” October 3, 2023. <https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/blog/2023/achieving-housing-affordability-next-decade>.
- Carlin, David. “40% Of Emissions Come From Real Estate; Here’s How The Sector Can Decarbonize.” *Forbes*. April 5, 2022. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidcarlin/2022/04/05/40-of-emissions-come-from-real-estate-heres-how-the-sector-can-decarbonize/?sh=173e57f963b7>.
- CIA World Factbook. “Egypt.” Accessed January 13, 2024. <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/egypt/>.
- Constructive Voices. “Transform Your Living Space with Biophilic Home Design.” November 10, 2023. <https://constructive-voices.com/biophilic-home-design-2/>.
- Donovan, Jim, Clare Donovan, and Kirsten Donovan. “New World and China Resources to build \$1.3 bln Hong Kong housing development.” *Reuters*. December 27, 2023. <https://www.reuters.com/business/new-world-china-resources-build-13-bln-hong-kong-housing-development-2023-12-27/>.
- Fu, Samantha. “How Cities Can Tackle Both the Affordable Housing and Climate Crises.” *Housing Matters*. November 2, 2022. <https://housingmatters.urban.org/articles/how-cities-can-tackle-both-affordable-housing-and-climate-crises>.
- Global Report on Internal Displacement*. Geneva: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2023. <https://www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2023/>.
- Green, Kenneth P., Josef Filipowicz, Steve Lafleur, and Ian Herzog. “The Impact of Land-Use Regulation on Housing Supply in Canada.” Fraser Institute. July 2016. <https://www.fraserinstitute.org/sites/default/files/impact-of-land-use-regulation-on-housing-supply-in-canada.pdf>.
- Grove, Michael. “Long-Term Plan for Housing: Secretary of State’s Speech.” GOV.UK. July 24, 2023. <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/long-term-plan-for-housing-secretary-of-states-speech>.
- Gyourko, Joseph, and Raven Molloy. “Regulation and Housing Supply.” NBER. October 2014. https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w20536/w20536.pdf.
- Lalaine, C. Delmendo. “Investment Analysis of Egyptian Real Estate Market.” *Global Property Guide*. April 25, 2023. <https://www.globalpropertyguide.com/middle-east/egypt>.
- Ludden, Jennifer. “Most Homes for Sale in 2023 Were Not Affordable for a Typical U.S. Household.” *NPR*. December 24, 2023. <https://www.npr.org/2023/12/24/1221480443/most-homes-for-sale-in-2023-were-not-affordable-for-a-typical-u-s-household>.
- Mahmoud, Mariam Aref. “Housing Crisis by Design: Egypt’s Politics of Respectability.” *The Avery Review*. Accessed January 13, 2024. <https://averyreview.com/issues/62/housing-crisis-by-design>.
- Mariotti, Tony. “Green Building Statistics (2024).” *Ruby Home Luxury Real Estate*. September 11, 2023. <https://www.rubyhome.com/blog/green-building-stats/>.

- “Natural disasters, storms and droughts: The top climate emergencies for refugees in 2023.” *USA for UNHCR*. December 21, 2023. <https://www.unrefugees.org/news/natural-disasters-storms-and-droughts-the-top-climate-emergencies-for-refugees-in-2023/>.
- Ochogwu, Sunday. “FG Hints on Building New Homes to End Housing Deficit in Nigeria.” *Daily Post Nigeria*. October 23, 2023. <https://dailypost.ng/2023/10/23/fg-hints-on-building-new-homes-to-end-housing-deficit-in-nigeria/>.
- Oyewole Amos, Ibitoye. “Housing Policy in Nigeria: An Overview.” *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*. April 2015. https://www.aijcrnet.com/journals/Vol_5_No_2_April_2015/8.pdf.
- Pandey, Ashish. “Are green buildings expensive alternatives to traditional structures?” *The Economic Times*. August 2, 2023. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/small-biz/sustainability/are-green-buildings-expensive-alternatives-to-traditional-structures/articleshow/102340836.cms>.
- Rao, Arya, and Shira Hornstein. “How the twin crises of climate change and poor public housing are harming people’s health.” *STAT*. August 29, 2023. <https://www.statnews.com/2023/08/29/climate-change-public-housing-health-consequences/>.
- ReliefWeb. “Morocco Earthquake September 2023 Situation Report.” September 15, 2023. <https://reliefweb.int/report/morocco/morocco-earthquake-september-2023-situation-report-4-26-september>.
- Schuetz, Jenny. “Who’s to blame for high housing costs? It’s more complicated than you think.” Brookings Institute. January 17, 2020. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/whos-to-blame-for-high-housing-costs-its-more-complicated-than-you-think/>.
- Schwartz, Omri. “What is Nature Centric Biophilic Interior Design?” Nazmiyal Collection. August 18, 2023. <https://nazmiyalantiquerugs.com/blog/what-is-nature-centric-biophilic-interior-design/>.
- Thursd. “Green Biophilic Buildings Take Over Major Cities in The World.” December 27, 2023. <https://thursd.com/articles/green-biophilic-buildings-take-over-major-cities-in-the-world>.
- Tsai, Michael. “Schatz urges permanent authorization of disaster recovery program.” *Spectrum News*. December 13, 2023. <https://spectrumlocalnews.com/hi/hawaii/news/2023/12/12/schatz-urges-permanent-authorization-of-disaster-recovery-program>.
- US Department of Energy. “Aim for Zero - Zero Energy and Zero Energy Ready Homes.” Accessed January 13, 2024. <https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/aim-zero-zero-energy-and-zero-energy-ready-homes>.
- US Department of Housing and Urban Development. “HUD’s Climate Action Plan.” Accessed January 13, 2024. <https://www.hud.gov/climate>.
- US Department of Housing and Urban Development. “HUD’s Climate Action Plan.” Accessed January 13, 2024. <https://www.hud.gov/climate>.
- UtilitiesOne. “Green building codes and regulations Paving the way for sustainable construction.” October 17, 2023. <https://utilitiesone.com/green-building-codes-and-regulations-paving-the-way-for-sustainable-construction>.
- UtilitiesOne. “Net Zero Homes and Beyond Exploring Success Stories.” November 6, 2023. <https://utilitiesone.com/net-zero-homes-and-beyond-exploring-success-stories>.
- Williams, Ashley R., Henrik Pettersson, Renée Rigdon, Clint Alwahab, Marco Chacón, and Amy O’Kruk. “Everything was on fire: The hours that brought Lahaina to ruins.” *CNN*. August 18, 2023. <https://www.cnn.com/interactive/2023/08/hawaii-wildfires-timeline-maui-lahaina-dg/index.html>.
- Yasser, Elsheshtawy. “Egypt’s New Administrative Capital Is Another Desert Folly.” *DAWN*. June 30, 2023. <https://dawnmena.org/egypts-new-administrative-capital-is-another-desert-folly/>.

The National High School Model United Nations Conference (NHSMUN) is a project of IMUNA, a non-profit organization formally associated with the United Nations Department of Global Communications (UNDGC). IMUNA is dedicated to promoting global issues education through simulation.

Written by Edward Hagerman, Brock Lichthardt, Marwa Medjahed, and Olivia Pham

Edited by Parthav Easwar, Christian Hernandez, Rekha Marcus, Therese Salomone, and Ellie White

© 2024 IMUNA. All Rights Reserved.

