

Habitat for Humanity, UN-HABITAT to host conference on African land governance, management

Land is integral to securing shelter, agriculture for food security, mobilising investments and for the sustainable management of resources. With these issues in focus, Habitat for Humanity's Solid Ground Campaign, in association with the Urban CSO Cluster of the Global Land Tool Network (GLTN) of UN-HABITAT, will be hosting a conference in Pretoria, 15-17 August.



The [Partnership for Action: Improving Land Governance and Management in Africa](#) will see stakeholders from multiple sectors come together to explore approaches to land governance for inclusive and sustainable development in South Africa.

Sustainable community development

Anne Myers, the director of Habitat's Solid Ground Campaign - designed to focus on land policies and systems to ensure that more people around the globe have access to adequate housing - believes the conference will capture key issues related to the planning and upgrading of human settlements through land use planning tactics with adequate housing as a driver of sustainable community development.

"National land policies, guided by the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa, need to be supported by participatory implementation strategies and practical tools that are relevant to Africa and take into account key players," says Susana Rojas Williams, co-lead of GLTN's Urban CSO Cluster and director of International Shelter Initiatives from Habitat for Humanity International.

"The public provision of serviced land and housing in Africa faces obstacles, human and financial resource constraints and institutional bottlenecks. We need to design responsive land and housing policy approaches taking into account the realities and contexts of the policy-making environment," says Tamzin Hudson, senior advocacy specialist at Habitat for Humanity Europe, Middle East and Africa.

Adressing urban poverty

Africa has the highest urbanisation rates globally, and it is estimated that 87% of the population growth in Africa will take place in urban areas over the next two decades. Urban poverty is increasing at a rapid rate, and many African countries are unable to provide basic services or adequate housing due to their economic situation, planning deficiencies, budget constraints and institutional weaknesses. This has resulted in slums and informal settlements cropping up that come with many problems and which this conference hopes to address.



“Secure land tenure and property rights are fundamental to shelter and livelihoods as well as the realisation of human rights, poverty reduction, economic prosperity and sustainable development,” explains Oumar Sylla, unit leader, Global Land Tool Network.

The conference is taking place at a time when there is a heightened focus on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, which together set out a vision for vibrant, resilient and sustainable human settlements. This broader developmental agenda will inform many of the sessions and there will be a dedicated session on local implementation towards the SDGs.

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