



Equality Rights Alliance

Women's Voices for Gender Equality



National Plan on Gender Equality

Affordable and Appropriate Housing for Women

Key Information

Housing policy is not age or gender neutral

Older single women emerged in the 2016 census as the fastest growing cohort of people experiencing housing stress and homelessness. The number of homeless women 55+ went up by 31% and the number of homeless women aged 65 – 74 increased by 51%.

Domestic and family violence is the number one reason women become homeless in Australia. 40% of female clients cite it as the main reason for seeking homelessness assistance.¹

Women's housing needs are influenced by:

- Low incomes
 - 51.5% of people living in poverty are girls and women (Davidson, et al., 2018)
 - 51% of low-paid employees are women, despite making up only 47% of the total workforce (ACOSS, 2019)
- Caring responsibilities
 - There are 959,543 single parent families in Australia
 - 81.8% are single mother families (ABS, 2019c)
- Domestic and family violence
 - 91% of adults seeking homelessness support as a result of domestic & family violence are women (AIHW 2018).

Women's housing needs are reflected in housing support and service use:

- Women make up 63% of people aged 15+ assisted by specialist homelessness services (AIHW 2018).
- Women are 62% of social housing tenants (AIHW 2019).
- 45% of rent assistance recipients are single women (while 30% are single men and 20% are couples).²

¹ CHP analysis of AIHW, Specialist Homelessness Services Collection, 2017-18.

² 2018 data on Commonwealth Rent Assistance commissioned from Department of Social Services for ERA.

Background

Housing affordability remains a chronic problem in Australia. Affordable rental properties are increasingly unavailable for people on low incomes (Anglicare Australia, 2019), the number of people seeking assistance from homelessness services rises every year (AIHW, 2018) and the national waiting lists for social housing remain at approximately 190 000 households (SCRGSP, 2016). Further, 897 000 of households living in the private rental market satisfy income eligibility tests for public housing, pointing to an even greater latent demand (Wood, 2016).

Gendered experiences of economic insecurity, such as the gendered pay, wealth and superannuation gaps make access to affordable housing particularly difficult for women. The lack of affordable housing that is *appropriate* to the needs of women with caring responsibilities is a critical issue. In addition, gendered experiences of violence affect women's housing security and stability (Flinders Institute for Housing, Urban and Regional Research, 2018). Consequently, women are the main beneficiaries of housing support systems. According to the 2016 Census, women and girls make up 42% of people experiencing homelessness and, according to the ABS Survey of Income and Housing, women make up 52% of persons living in low income households in rental stress (ABS, 2016). Further, women are the majority of public housing tenants, Commonwealth Rent Assistance payment recipients,³ and specialist homelessness services clients (AIHW, 2018, 2019).

Housing Support and Assistance Demand Reflects Gendered Needs

The high levels of women's housing needs are reflected in their high levels of use and demand for housing assistance and support. For example, the typical social housing tenant is a woman: in public housing she is a woman over 55 and living alone; in State Owned and Managed Indigenous Housing, she is a woman aged 25-54 with dependent children, and in community housing, she is a woman over 45 and living alone (AIHW, 2017a). As a result of these high usage levels the under-resourcing of housing safety nets and funding cuts to services disproportionately affect women and undermines the Australian Government's gender equality objectives (Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, 2016). For example, of the people in receipt of the maximum rate of CRA, 47.5% are single women (25% are single men and 27.4% are couples). Of the people who remain in housing stress after receiving CRA, 50% are single women (30.3% are single men and 19.6% are couples). Further, women make up 63% of people aged 15 years and over assisted by specialist homelessness services and 70% of unassisted requests for homelessness services (AIHW, 2018).

The Impacts of Violence on Housing

Domestic and family violence is a primary driver of homelessness and pathways into housing insecurity for women and their children. 37.2% of people assisted by specialist homelessness services are experiencing domestic and family violence, with 27.6% reporting violence as the main reason for seeking assistance (AIHW 2018). The vast majority are women and children, with women making up 91% of adults seeking homelessness support as a result of domestic & family violence (AIHW 2018). There is also evidence that a lack of available and affordable housing is a reason that women remain in dangerous situations, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women (Flanagan et al., 2019, Cripps and Habibis, 2019).

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³ Data on Rent Assistance Income Units by Sex provided to ERA by Department of Social Services.

Tenancy laws compound issues of debt and housing insecurity for people experiencing domestic and family violence (Flanagan et al., 2019). Increasingly State and Territory-based tenancy laws are providing more protections for victims and survivors, however, strong national standards are required to guide reform across all jurisdictions. Affordable housing and appropriate support from housing and homelessness service providers is an essential component of any comprehensive efforts.

For women on temporary visas experiencing violence, there are myriad systemic failures which impact on housing security. Many women on temporary visas, including those seeking asylum, are ineligible for many government support payments, such as Centrelink, leaving many victims/survivors financially dependent on a perpetrator (partner or other family member) or with no income. Women on temporary visas may not be eligible for many support services, such as crisis or social housing, depending on the policies of the relevant State or Territory, as well as of the individual crisis services.

Even when access to crisis support services is possible, women on temporary visas have limited pathways to re-establish economic independence and are reliant on prolonged assistance from crisis support services (Harmony Alliance, 2019). This puts heavy pressure on already under-resourced support services. In its survey of 387 women on temporary visas experiencing violence and accessing support services, the *National Working Group on Women on Temporary Visas Experiencing Violence* (2018) found that 24% of women were living in crisis accommodation, 11% were living in temporary accommodation, and 10% were living at home with a partner, increasing their risk of experiencing further violence. Further, almost one third of women had been supported by a service for more than six months, 8% for between a year and two years, and 5% of for more than two years. The report concluded that crisis and long-term housing was the service most needed by women on temporary visas experiencing violence that organisations were unable to provide.

Older Women

Single, older women are one of the fastest growing cohorts of people facing homelessness (National Older Women's Housing and Homelessness Working Group, 2018). Older people in Australia are increasingly facing more precarious housing futures, with growing numbers of retirees holding mortgage debt or living in the private rental market. In particular, single women are more likely than single men or couples to be renting or still paying off a mortgage in their retirement (Senate Economic References Committee, 2016). Between the 2011 and 2016 censuses there was a 31% rise in homelessness among older women and a 97% increase in the number of older women forced to rent in an increasingly unaffordable private market (National Older Women's Housing and Homelessness Working Group, 2018).

According to the 2016 Census, there are 290 326 single women over the age of 45 living in the private rental market. The median weekly income of this group is \$579. There are 249 610 men in the same situation and the median weekly income for this group is \$725⁴.

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4 Data commissioned by Equality Rights Alliance from the ABS in 2018. The median weekly income is calculated using the weighted average of median income for the four rental categories Rented: Real estate agent, Rented: Person not in same household, Rented: Other landlord type and Rented: Landlord type not stated.

The Housing Needs of Single Mothers and their Children

Single mothers and their children are acknowledged to be one of Australia's most disadvantaged populations (AIHW, 2017), but there is a lack of research about their experiences of homelessness and about the significant barriers (such as ineligibility for public housing) to their access to housing support. Single parent-headed families are one of the most common family types approaching homelessness services and over 40% of single parent families reside in the private rental sector (Stone et al., 2016), compared with one quarter of the overall population (ABS, 2019b). One third of single parent families live under the 50% of median income and under the poverty line (ACOSS and SPRC, 2016), and the rate of poverty among unemployed single parent families rose by 24% from 35% in 2013 to 59% in 2015 (Davidson et al., 2018). According to the ABS, women-headed one-parent families are projected to rise by between 43% and 50% from 2016 to 2041 (ABS, 2019a). Women currently head the majority (81.8%) of one-parent households, and this proportion is projected to remain relatively stable to 2041 (ABS, 2019a, 2019c).

Despite homeless women and children being recognised as a priority by the Australian Government in 2008, the rates of families experiencing homelessness has continued to rise (Australian Government, 2008). 40% of Supported Housing Services clients seek services due to family violence, with 48% of these being single mothers (Warburton, Whittaker and Papi, 2018). In 2016-17, 35% of unassisted requests for homelessness services were sole parents (AIHW, 2018). 22.3% of unassisted requests for homelessness services were single mothers (AIHW, 2018).

Housing affordability pressures in the private rental market are particularly acute for single mother-headed families. The 2019 Anglicare Rental Affordability Snapshot found only 0.8% of properties nation-wide were affordable for a family in receipt of the Single Parenting Payment (Anglicare, 2019). 95% of SPP recipients are women (DSS, 2019). As well as being more likely to be in the lower income quintiles, homeless single mothers face additional pressures in caring for children in unstable accommodation (Wilkins, 2016). A generally unaffordable housing market is exacerbated for families living below the poverty line, with other cost pressures such as heating, transport, medical care and school related expenditure arising from the costs of living in low cost or poorly maintained housing putting extra pressure on housing expenditure.

Warburton, Whittaker and Papi (2018) highlight international research that identifies differences between homeless families and other homeless groups, recommending tailored support and intervention to address the specific needs of families. Current restrictions, such as long waiting lists for housing, limited housing options for women with children who are exiting homelessness services, discrimination in the private rental market (Choice, National Shelter, NATO, 2017), being deemed 'low priority' on government housing lists and some mothers being ineligible for public housing because of their employment, exacerbate the problem (Warburton, Whittaker and Papi 2018). Researchers have suggested that early engagement with homelessness support services is a protective factor against these women re-entering homelessness, so early intervention services should be investigated as a priority (Warburton, Whittaker and Papi, 2018).

Anecdotally, single mothers also face discrimination when attempting to enter or re-enter the housing market, as they are perceived by landlords as less reliable tenants (ABC News, 2017). Some single mothers expressed concern about their ability to maintain private rental properties due to affordability, tenuous lease duration and ongoing payments (Warburton, Whittaker and Papi. 2018). Victoria's Council of Single Mothers and Children reports that housing assistance is now the most common request the organisation receives (Duke, 2015).

There are currently research gaps regarding the experience of younger single mothers, with indications this group is more vulnerable and may need specialised supports (Warburton, Whittaker and Papi, 2018).

Not Just a City Problem

Women in rural Australia face significant and distinct challenges in realising their rights to housing. These barriers to affordable, appropriate and safe housing are shaped by gender and location. Many of the key issues mirror those found in Australia's metropolitan areas, including population growth, ageing populations, balance between supply and demand for housing, inadequate social housing provision and the impact of housing finance (AHURI, 2011). However, women in rural communities also face a range of unique barriers, including the impact of the resources boom (resulting in a bifurcated housing system), geography (planning), spatial differentiation, localism and greater proportions of populations that identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Other issues arise from increases in tourism and short-term stay holiday homes without sufficient impact planning for local housing availability and affordability (Beer, 2017). On the whole there is limited research and data specifically on women's housing needs in rural Australia.

According to the ABS (2019b), 57% of low-income rental households are spending more than 30% of their income on housing. In capital cities, the proportion is 47% and for the balance of States and Territories it is 38%. According to Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2018), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make up 50% of people assisted by specialist homelessness services in outer regions and 90% in remote and very remote areas. Culturally and Linguistically diverse women living in regional, rural and remote places also experience additional barriers to accessing culturally relevant and appropriate support, such as racism, cultural isolation and a lack of interpreting and language support (Wendt, et al., 2015). This is particularly problematic given proposals that require migrants to live in regional and rural areas (Elton-Pym, 2018).

Current Policy Environment

The National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA) is an overarching intergovernmental agreement to improve access to affordable housing. Responsibility for housing policy is shared by Federal and State/Territory jurisdictions, making bipartisan agreement across the Federal Government and States/Territories essential to improving housing outcomes for women. The NHHA represents a good start, but it needs to be guided by a National Housing and Homelessness Strategy which:

- covers all policy areas relating to housing affordability,
- includes a robust gendered analysis and
- includes gendered actions and measurable gendered targets to reduce homelessness, create additional permanent social and affordable housing options for women in each State and Territory, and to ensure access to appropriate specialist services in cases of violence.

In addition, the inter-jurisdictional nature of housing policy means that a common understanding of the importance of housing policy across Governments is important. The Commonwealth has committed internationally to the adequate provision of housing as part of the right to an adequate standard of living.⁵ Australia has long been criticized in international arenas for its failure to enact this and other human rights commitments through a Human Rights Act. A common understanding and baseline for action across jurisdictions should be established by articulating the right to adequate housing as part of a broader Commonwealth Human Rights Act (see *Institutional Mechanisms* section).

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5 See International Commitments section below.

The Federal NHHA contribution of approximately \$1.5 billion to cover all service provision and housing construction is insufficient to address the urgent need to significantly increase social housing stock. Between 1991 and 2001 funding for social housing fell by 25% (Toohey, 2014), and is now at historic lows (RMIT ABC Fact Check, 2019). The existing shortfall in stock, evidenced by 190 000 households waiting for social housing and a daily turn-away from specialist homelessness services of 261 people, cannot be addressed without significant additional funding to build new public and community housing, particularly for long-term housing solutions. The National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation (NHFIC) is good step forward, but the NHFIC will take time to deliver significant contributions to current stock levels. Further, the NHFIC should be viewed not as a replacement for direct Government funding of public housing, but as a supplement to Community Housing sector stock. A federal funding commitment to address the neglect of public housing over the past 30 years is essential.

This shortfall has had particularly severe ramifications for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, particularly women experiencing violence. 21.5% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live in social housing. Inadequate and unsafe homes, including homes where violence is present, are considered legitimate reasons for the forced removal of children by the State under current legislation. As a result, shortages in housing mean women risk child removal both when staying in a violent situation, and when trying to leave (Cripps and Habibis, 2019).

Building affordable stock must be a targeted process supported by locally relevant data. The notion of 'affordable' housing must include assessment of secondary housing costs such as increased transport and childcare costs and reduced earning power caused by locating affordable properties at a distance from employment opportunities and the utilities and health costs of living in poorly designed or maintained properties. Affordable stock must also be cost effective and appropriate to the needs of women, including universal design as a standard and considering adaptable designs which would permit repurposing or re-sizing where appropriate.

In the last decade, community housing stock has more than doubled to approximately 82 900 dwellings (AIHW, 2018). According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare there are approximately 815 community housing organisations (mainstream and Indigenous) in Australia. We estimate that approximately 7 gender specialist and women specific community housing organisations in Australia provide long-term housing. With the advent of the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation (Affordable Housing Bond Aggregator), the community housing sector is projected to continue its expansion. Support for specialist women's housing agencies is critical to meeting women's housing needs. Firstly, these agencies are connected to other women's services and provide pathways into long-term housing from crisis and transitional support. Secondly, there are issues for vulnerable women who may not feel safe or supported in approaching generalist or mainstream organisations (AWAVA, 2016). Thirdly, these agencies have a heightened understanding of what constitutes appropriate housing for vulnerable women, including location safety, security and use of women contractors to conduct housing repairs and maintenance (Taylor, 2017). Support is also required to for women's housing organisations to meet the long-term housing needs of low-income and disadvantaged women and their families through a range of affordable rental and ownership models. Successful pilots should receive long-term funding and funding processes should be reviewed to eliminate bias against smaller-scale specialist women's services.

Housing policy settings are currently skewed towards ownership and investment through tax levers such as negative gearing and capital gains tax rebates while the social housing and rent assistance systems are under unsustainable pressure. There is an urgent need for a reprioritisation of federal housing funding. While estimates vary, the Parliamentary Budget Office posits that the budget impact of negative gearing is *at least* \$2 billion. Compare this to the \$1.5 billion allocated to the NHHA.

The gendered implications of this resource distribution point to the inequities at the heart of housing policy: “the typical negatively-g geared investor is male, aged in his mid-to-late forties; employed full-time and has a tax assessable income of \$91, 000” (Duncan et al., 2018) and, as previously mentioned, the typical social housing tenant is a low-income woman. The majority of negative gearing benefits are received by men (Leigh, 2018).

A gender-responsive approach to housing and homelessness policy in Australia is needed to engage effectively with the structural disadvantages experienced by women generally across the life cycle as well as the particular situations of different groups of women facing housing insecurity and unaffordability. A gender-responsive housing policy would acknowledge and address the gendered drivers of women's experience of violence and homelessness. Such an approach needs to focus on preventing homelessness resulting from gendered and family violence and support victims/survivors through specialist women's services. A gender-responsive strategy would be founded on the principles of visibility, capability and accountability. Visibility ensures that women in their diversity are named and included. Capability ensures that housing systems are *adequately resourced* to meet the housing needs of women in their diversity. Accountability ensures that such a policy includes gender indicators in the performance framework. Australia should consider the approach taken in Canada's National Housing Strategy, which has quarantined 25% of its funding for projects and services that directly address the needs of women and their families (Government of Canada, 2018, p.11).

Intersectionality and Diversity Spotlight

- Women with disabilities face additional barriers in accessing appropriate, safe and affordable housing (WWDA, 2004). Consequently, the proportion of people with a disability in public housing is double that of the mainstream population (DPO Australia, NWA, 2019).
- Aboriginal women are 2.2 times more likely than non-Aboriginal women to be homeless at some point in their life (McEntyre, 2015).
- Inadequate and unsafe homes, including homes where violence is present, are considered legitimate reasons for the forced removal of children by the State under current legislation. As a result, shortages in housing mean women risk child removal both when staying in a violent situation and when trying to leave (Cripps and Habibis, 2019).
- Women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds can experience a lack of culturally safe homelessness services, including through a lack of interpreters and translators (FECCA, 2012).
- For those women on temporary visas who are experiencing violence, crisis and long-term housing is the most needed service that organisations are unable to provide (National Working Group on Women on Temporary Visas Experiencing Violence, 2018).
- Lesbian, gay and bisexual people are twice as likely to experience homelessness and are more likely to be homeless when young. LGBTQ people experience misgendering, harassment, violence and discrimination in shared accommodation, housing services and private rentals (McNair et al., 2017).

Recommendations

- 1. Develop a gender-responsive national housing strategy which includes ambitious goals to reduce homelessness and increase affordable housing stock.** Include actions and measurable targets to create additional permanent social and affordable housing options for women in each State and Territory, and particularly for single women. The gender responsive national housing strategy should be designed to complement the NHHA.
- 2. The recommendations from the Retiring into Poverty report to address older women's housing insecurity should be adopted.** Specifically, a Seniors Housing Gateway Program must be established, and the Assistance with Care and Housing for the Aged Program must be expanded.
- 3. Further research must be undertaken to obtain data on the housing needs of women in their diversity.**
- 4. Ensure services that are appropriately specialised, competent, inclusive, accessible and culturally safe are resourced to meet the needs of women experiencing domestic and family violence and their children.**
 - a) All agreements (bilateral or overarching) that address homelessness need to be progressively amended to include the requirement not only that State/Territory strategies include measures to support women and children escaping violence but also that funding spent under these strategies goes to services with specialist capability to address the gendered dynamics of violence and homelessness (i.e. specialist women's services and/or generalist services with documented specialist capability).
 - b) Adequate and sustainable funding is needed to meet demand for homelessness services, while ensuring that funding goes to services that are appropriately specialised, competent, accessible and culturally safe for the full range of diverse groups of women and children who need them.
 - c) There must be increased transparency of the NHHA to include clear tracking of funding to all specialist homelessness services.
- 5. Re-establish a federal Minister for Housing cabinet position to reflect the importance of housing and homelessness to the Australian community and economy.**
- 6. Refund the Remote Housing Agreement with coverage of SA and QLD.**
- 7. Undertake tax reforms to curb negative gearing, such as limiting negative gearing to income from investment, and reduce the capital gains tax exemption.** Redirect revenue generated from reform to the capital gains tax exemption and negative gearing to housing support systems for low-income households.
- 8. Reform housing assistance.** Currently individualised housing assistance, such as Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA), is standardised rather than tailored to individual preferences and need. A diversity of housing assistance measures should be available according to need, rather than where income is sourced. The base rate and indexation of CRA should also be examined and reformed with a view to addressing the fact that over 40% of recipients remain in housing stress after receiving the full payment.

9. Implement National Minimum Standards on tenancy reform to protect victims/survivors of domestic and family violence.

Although some progress has been made on tenancy reforms, on the whole the commitments made in the Third Action Plan of the National Plan in relation to housing and homelessness still need to be implemented. The following principles should inform minimum tenancy standards:

- a) A victim-survivor of domestic violence should be able to end their lease without liability in circumstances of domestic violence.
- b) A perpetrator should be responsible for the damage caused by a perpetrator and a domestic violence victim-survivor should not be liable at all in such circumstances.
- c) Reform tenancy legislation to grant tribunals discretion to hold only one party liable or limit liability where a victim / survivor has incurred tenancy debt as a result of violence (eg: rent arrears incurred after fleeing a property).

10. Ensure governments in all jurisdictions work together to extend access to government funded services, including crisis payments and emergency housing, to all victims/survivors of domestic, family, sexual and intimate partner violence, irrespective of current visa status, across all States and Territories. Governments should:

- a) Expand eligibility for relevant payments and services, including crisis and welfare payments and emergency housing, to all victims/survivors of domestic, family and sexual violence, irrespective of current visa status, across all states, territories and federal legislation.
- b) Ensure all relevant service providers offering support to women on temporary visas experiencing violence – including crisis housing, health, legal, domestic, family and sexual violence crisis services and community organisations – receive adequate funding to cater to the additional needs of these victims/survivors.
- c) Ensure all relevant service providers offering support to women on temporary visas experiencing violence are sufficiently funded to undertake training on cultural competency, trauma-informed practice and family violence.
- d) Ensure access to free independent interpreters to all disadvantaged populations via appropriate funding of interpreter services to community organisations in the areas of family violence, migration, sexual assault support services, multicultural services and others.

11. Determine and implement the public subsidy and/or direct government investment required to fund an increase in social and affordable housing stock.

This must include direct government funding for public housing, as well as generating funding through the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation. Implement strategies to prevent economic insecurity for women, and heightened risks of housing stress and homelessness. See *Economic Wellbeing section*.

International Commitments

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

SDG Goal 1 (No poverty)

- By 2030, ensure that all men and women, in particular the poor and the vulnerable, have equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance.
 - Target: Proportion of total adult population with secure tenure rights to land, with legally recognized documentation and who perceive their rights to land as secure, by sex and by type of tenure.

SDG Goal 5 (Gender equality)

- End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.
- Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.
- Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

SDG Goal 11 (Sustainable cities and communities)

- By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)

Article 11

1. The State Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living... including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The States Parties will take appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right.

1966, A/RES/2200A(XXI), Art.11, para.1

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

Article 14

1. State Parties shall take all appropriate measure to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, that they participate in and benefit from rural development and, in particular, shall ensure to such the right

(f) To enjoy adequate living conditions, particularly in relation to housing, sanitation, electricity and water supply, transport and communications.

1979, A/RES/34/180, Art.14, para.2(f)

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 1995

Strategic objective A.1. Review, adopt and maintain macroeconomic policies and development strategies that address the needs and efforts of women in poverty

Including actions be governments to:

58(m) Enable women to obtain affordable housing and access to land by, among other things, removing all obstacles to access, with special emphasis on meeting the needs of women, especially those living in poverty and female heads of household;

1995, A/RES/50/42, pp.58, op.(m)

The New Urban Agenda 2016

States parties envisage cities and settlements that:

Para.13 (a) Fulfil their social function, including the social and ecological function of land, with a view to progressively achieving the full realization of the right to adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, without discrimination...

Guided by the following interlinked principles:

Para.14 (a) Leave no one behind, by ending poverty in all its forms and dimension, including eradication of extreme poverty, by ensuring equal rights and opportunities, socioeconomic and cultural diversity, and integration in the urban space, by enhancing liveability, education, food security and nutrition, health and well-being, including by... providing equal access for all to physical and social infrastructure and basic services, as well as adequate and affordable housing;

Reiterates the right to adequate housing, that is gender-responsive and affordable and appropriate:

Para.31 We commit ourselves to promoting national, subnational and local housing policies that support the progressive realization of the right to adequate housing for all as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, that address all forms of discrimination and violence and prevent arbitrary forced evictions and that focus on the needs of the homeless, persons in vulnerable situations, low-income groups and persons with disabilities, while enabling the participation and engagement of communities and relevant stakeholders in the planning and implementation of these policies, including supporting the social production of habitat, according to national legislation and standards.

Para.32 We commit ourselves to promoting the development of integrated and age- and gender-responsive housing policies and approaches across all sectors, in particular the employment, education, health-care and social integration sectors, and at all levels of government – policies and approaches that incorporate the provision of adequate, affordable, accessible, resource-efficient, safe, resilient, well-connected and well-located housing, with special attention to the proximity factor and the strengthening of the spatial relationship with the rest of the urban fabric and the surrounding functional areas.

Para.33 We commit ourselves to stimulating the supply of a variety of adequate housing options that are safe, affordable and accessible for members of different income groups of society, taking into consideration the socioeconomic and cultural integration of marginalized communities, homeless persons and those in vulnerable situations and preventing segregation. We will take positive measures to improve the living conditions of homeless people, with a view to facilitating their full participation in society, and to prevent and eliminate homelessness, as well as to combat and eliminate its criminalization.

A/RES/71/256, pp. 13(a), 14(a), 31, 32, 33

CSW Agreed Conclusions

CSW63: Social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (2019)

(h) Ensure that social protection, public services and sustainable infrastructure contribute to efforts to eliminate, prevent and respond to all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private spaces, through multisectoral and coordinated approaches to investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of violence against women and girls and end impunity, and to provide protection and equal access to appropriate remedies and redress to comprehensive social, health and legal services for all victims and survivors to support their full recovery and reintegration into society, including by providing access to psychosocial support and rehabilitation, and access to affordable housing and employment, and bearing in mind the importance of all women and girls living free from violence...

(hhh) Integrate a gender perspective into the planning and use of public spaces, the design and development of smart cities, communities and rural areas and intelligent mobility planning processes; and promote the mobility and empowerment of women and girls, including those with disabilities and those who are homeless, and promote inclusive societies, including through adequate housing, and in doing so ensure that public urban, rural and peripheral transport, including land and water transport systems and infrastructure, are sustainable, accessible, safe and affordable and gender-responsive, that they take into account the different needs of women and men, girls and boys and are adapted to be used by persons with disabilities and older persons;

E/CN.6.2019/L.3, pp. 47, op. (h), (hhh)

CSW58: Challenges and achievement in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls (2014)

Para.42, (k) Address the multiple and intersecting factors contributing to the disproportionate impact of poverty on women and girls over their life cycle, as well as intra-household gender inequalities in the allocation of resources, opportunities and power, by realizing women's and girls' civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development, and ensure women's and girls' inheritance and property rights, equal access to quality education, equal access to justice, social protection and an adequate standard of living, including food security and nutrition, safe drinking water and sanitation, energy and fuel resources and housing...

E/CN.6/2014/L.7, pp.42, op.(k)

CSW57: Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls (2013)

Para.34, (ddd) Establish comprehensive, coordinated, interdisciplinary, accessible and sustained multisectoral services, programmes and responses at all levels, and with the support of all available technologies, for all victims and survivors of all forms of violence against women and girls based on their needs... including... State and independent women's shelters and counselling centres, 24-hour hotlines, social aid services, one-stop crisis centres, immigration services, child services, public housing services to provide low threshold, easy to reach and safe assistance for women and children, as well as assistance, protection and support through access to long-term accommodation, educational, employment and economic opportunities...

E/2013/27-E/CN.6/2011/12, pp.34, op.(ddd)

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