Contribution to the UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing

Guidelines for the Implementation of the Right to Adequate Housing

Submitted by the UCLG Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights (UCLG-CSIPDHR) and the UCLG Research Department (UCLG-GOLD)

The following report is a compilation of local government-led practices contributing to the implementation of the right to adequate housing. It also builds on local government key messages, challenges and priorities on this matter presented in the framework of UCLG and its Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights (UCLG-CSIPDHR), as well as on the report "Rethinking Housing Policies: harnessing local innovation to address the global housing crisis" edited by the UCLG Research Department. Acknowledging the existing diversity of practices and approaches to the topic, it intends to provide a local government contribution to the UN Guidelines for the implementation of the right to housing, that will be presented to the Human Rights Council by the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing, Leilani Farha.

I – INTRODUCTION: ON THE SHIFT MOVEMENT AND UCLG AND THE UCLG-CSIPDHR ENGAGEMENT WITH THE RIGHT TO HOUSING

1. Over the last three years, local governments gathered in the framework of UCLG and its Committee on Social Inclusion, Participatory Democracy and Human Rights have adopted a fundamental role in "The Shift" movement led by UN Special Rapporteur Farha. Since its inception, the Shift aimed at promoting a change in the mainstream housing conversation so that renewed measures can be adopted; chiefly, government strategies that acknowledge housing as a human right and consequently address the ongoing housing crisis and one of its root causes: its financialization.

2. The adoption of the "Cities for Adequate Housing" Declaration (2018) by more than forty local authorities from UCLG laid the basis for strengthened local government shared action in this area in cooperation with The Shift and civil society. Its origins lie in the Habitat III Quito Conference, where UN Special Rapporteur Farha and UCLG CSIPDHR joined forces to raise awareness on the central role housing played for the planet's sustainable urban development. From 2018 onwards, local governments gathered in UCLG and its CSIPDHR have started to further develop the contents of the Declaration in close connection to emerging human rights debates and the 2030 localization agenda.

3. The Cities for Adequate Housing Declaration is articulated around the following five demands by local governments and proposed policy axis[1]:

a) **More powers to better regulate the real estate market**: Local governments demand more legal and fiscal powers to regulate the real estate market in order to fight against speculation and guarantee the social function of the city;

b) **More funds to improve public housing stocks**: Local governments demand more resources and commit increased investment to strengthen the public housing rental stock in all neighbourhoods;

c) **More tools to co-produce public-private community-driven alternative housing**: Local governments are committed to boosting mixed residential solutions, which are neither solely government-driven nor purely based on commercial gain;

d) **Commitment to an urban planning that combines adequate housing with quality, inclusive and sustainable neighbourhoods**: Local governments defending planning mixed, compact and polycentric cities where housing benefits from a balanced context and contributes to the social, economic and environmental sustainability of the urban fabric;

e) **Strengthened municipalist cooperation in residential strategies**: Local governments commit to enhance cooperation and solidarity within city networks that defend affordable housing and equitable, just, and inclusive cities by boosting long-term strategies on a metropolitan scale.

4. In support of the work jointly developed by the Special Rapporteur and the UCLG-CSIPDHR, the UCLG Research Department commissioned between 2018 and 2019 the elaboration of a series of papers on the state of housing in Africa, Latin America, Asia-Pacific and China. The papers were developed by regional housing experts and, beyond providing an insightful description of the state of housing in each of the geographies covered, they analyse the key mechanisms available to Local and Regional Governments (LRGs) to advance the right to housing. "Rethinking Housing Policies" compiles these papers' findings, exploring local housing innovations across the world and the role that LRGs and civil society can play in leading, promoting and enabling such initiatives. It examines what institutional frameworks, policy capacities and partnerships can allow LRGs to leverage the potential of local action to fulfil populations' housing needs, and in particular, those of the most vulnerable ones.

II - FIRST BLOCK: OVERALL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RIGHT TO HOUSING [2]

Local governments' competences on issues such as urban planning and basic service provision, as well as regarding the social inclusion of vulnerable groups, turns them into a critical lever for the implementation of many human rights. The right to housing is not only among these, but is also a central and fundamental precondition to access many other fundamental rights in the city. More broadly, and from the perspective of international law, it should be recalled how the integral state institutions (which also includes local government) operate within a common framework of the state's obligations – including their obligation to respect, protect and fulfill human rights.

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[1] URL: https://citiesforhousing.org/ (11/25/2019)

[2] The first block comprises **Guidelines No. 1** (Recognize the right to housing as a fundamental human right in national law and practice), **No. 2** (Design, implement and regularly monitor comprehensive strategies for the realization of the right to housing), **No. 3** (Ensure the progressive realization of the right to adequate housing in compliance with the standard of reasonableness) and **No. 8** (Clarify the obligations of businesses in relation to the right to housing and address financialization of housing).

The role adopted by many local governments with regards to the promotion and protection of human rights has been increasingly acknowledged by the international community since the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (1993) and, especially, following the 2015 Human Rights Council Report "Role of local government in the promotion and protection of human rights" (A/HRC/30/49)[3]. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing has addressed local government contribution to the implementation of the right to housing throughout many of her reports, particularly in her annual report A/HRC/28/62 (2014).

Over the last few years, many cities have increasingly adopted bolder commitments on the right to housing. At an international level, and as mentioned earlier, more than 40 local authorities joined the UCLG "Cities for Adequate Housing" Declaration, which stated that "*We, the local governments strongly believe that all people should have actual access to adequate housing, understood by the United Nations as the one that has the correct affordability, legal security of tenure, habitability, availability of services, materials, facilities and infrastructure, accessibility, location and cultural adequacy*".

At a local level, various local governments have adopted pioneer commitments for the right to housing. **Mexico City** recognized the right to adequate housing in the city's political constitution, adopted in 2017, and called on competent authorities to uphold adequate housing seven conditions[4]. **Barcelona** also adopted a pioneer law and program for the right to housing to be developed across a 10-year period[5]. **San Antonio de Areco**, in Argentina, has created a municipal program aimed at "promoting the right to adequate and sustainable housing" by addressing informal settlements' upgrading and social housing development, as well as land speculation[6]. Through its housing justice 2.0 program, **Taipei** is not only building a large amount of social housing units to combat the rise of rental prices, but also focuses on providing residents with better access to public services[7]. The **Government of Catalonia** has also adopted measures in the field of neighborhood upgrading and social housing development through INCASÒL "*Lloguer Assequible*" (affordable rental) program [8] [9].

As highlighted in the Guidelines, the "Cities for Adequate Housing" Declaration and UCLG's "Rethinking Housing Policies" report, the financialization of housing effectively entails a daunting challenge to promoting the right to adequate housing. From the local perspective, financialization dynamics imply the delocalization of housing. Housing markets become disconnected from the local context they are embedded in, and thus, from the realities of local populations' housing needs, while it challenges the capacity of local governments to address the situation. For LRGs to be able to curb the housing insecurity, the eviction of local communities and subsequent homelessness crisis triggered by the financialization of housing, the report points at the potential of revisiting financial regulatory frameworks and promoting rights-based local policies that tackle speculation in an integrated manner. Multilevel frameworks that promote local autonomy also allow local governments to promote local housing innovation in spite of reduced resources and capacities.

It is also worth noting how, in recent years, many cities managed to assert their regulatory capacities in real estate market, and to reshape their relationship with private developers. **Montevideo**'s *Cartera de Tierras* (Land Portfolio) is among the most consolidated experiences in regards to creating a local

[3] Know more about UCLG and the UCLG CSIPDHR contribution to this process here: https://www.uclg-cisdp.org/en/activities/human-rights-cities/advocacy (11/25/2019)
[4] See chapter 9E (Derecho a la Vivienda) URL: http://www.infodf.org.mx/documentospdf/constitucion_cdmx/Constitucion_%20Politica_CDMX.pdf (11/25/2019)
[5] URL: https://habitatge.barcelona/en/strategy/right-to-housing-plan (11/25/2019)
[6] URL: http://instituciones.areco.gob.ar/hcd/index.php/2016/4259-4119-16-creacion-ente-m-de-habitat-social (11/25/2019)
[7] URL: https://english.gov.taipei/News_Content.aspx?n=A11F01CFC9F58C83&sms=DFFA119D1FD5602C&s=343FD26707022DE3&ccms_cs=1 (11/25/2019)
[8] URL: https://www.uclg-cisdp.org/sites/default/files/El%20Institut%20Catal%C3%A0%20del%20S%C3%B2l.pdf (11/25/2019)
[9] http://incasol.gencat.cat/es/actualitat/noticies/Noticia/not_180704_nova_convo_150hab (11/25/2019)

bank of public land[10]. This program includes means for the local government to adequately tax private real estate transactions, something which allows the municipality to develop its own social housing programs. European cities like **Berlin** and **Amsterdam**[11] have been recently looking at ways to better regulate the rental market, and **Barcelona** was among the latest to adopt an inclusionary housing measure which will set a minimum of 30% for all new homes to be protected housing[12].

III - SECOND BLOCK: VULNERABLE GROUPS AND SOCIAL INCLUSION [13]

Beyond fulfilling the universal nature of the right to housing, the local government sphere has shown to be particularly sensitive to the needs of vulnerable groups in accessing housing. As reflected in the proposed guidelines, this entails both putting in place measures to combat discrimination in access to housing (No. 4) as well as addressing the particular needs of groups such as women (No. 5), people who are homeless (No. 6 and No.7) or migrants (No. 9). Informal settlements dwellers (No. 12) belong in this group yet in this document they will be addressed in the next block

There's a good amount of examples on local government-led non-discrimination initiatives (such as an Office for Non-Discrimination or a local ombudsman) focusing mainly on fighting discrimination of vulnerable groups in public service delivery as well as urban life in general. Local governments are also well placed to ensure universal access to basic services, including water and sanitation, social benefits, food, electricity and heating. As a matter of fact, many cities are increasingly addressing housing challenges through these two areas, fighting discrimination in access to housing as well as paying particular attention to vulnerable groups in this regard (mainly through social services).

New York counts with a City Human Rights Law that "prohibits discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodations (...) and protects (residents) against retaliation, discriminatory harassment, and bias-based profiling by law enforcement"[14]. Protected classes include, among others, age, color, gender, race or religion/creed. The Departmental Council of **Seine-Saint-Denis**, in France, launched in 2019 a local alliance "against energetic poverty" in order to support vulnerable families' access to habitability conditions in their own homes[15]. The **City of Pikine**, in Senegal, has worked together with local CSO and development agencies to put in place a "Boutique des Droits" (Rights Office) that offers different types of legal assistance to women who have suffered violence[16]. That includes housing and land-related lawsuits. Uruguay's Capital City, **Montevideo**, has recently inaugurated a "Trans House" (as part of its cross-cutting right to housing program "Fincas") with a view to offer housing solutions to transgender people and to fight discrimination and promote the exercise of their rights through affirmative action[17] [18]. **Móstoles** has put in place innovative measures to address the issue of homelessness, as the City counts with a "Housing First" program and several

[10] URL: http://montevideo.gub.uy/institucional/dependencias/tierras-y-habitat (11/25/2019)

[11] URL: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/mar/18/buyer-beware-amsterdam-seeks-to-ban-buy-to-let-on-newbuild-homes?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other (11/25/2019)

[12] URL: https://www.barcelona.cat/infobarcelona/en/housing/organisations-and-political-groups-reach-an-agreement-to-allocate-30-of-all-new-homes-as-protected-housing-2_711671.html (11/25/2019)

[13] The second block comprises Guidelines **No. 4** (Address discrimination and ensure equality), **No. 5** (Ensure gender equality in housing), **No. 6** (Eliminate homelessness in the shortest possible time), **No. 7** (End criminalization and discrimination on the ground of homelessness or housing status) and **No. 9** (Ensure the right to housing for migrants).

[14] URL: https://www1.nyc.gov/site/cchr/law/the-law.page (11/25/2019)

[15] URL: https://lemag.seinesaintdenis.fr/Le-Departement-lance-une-alliance-pour-lutter-contre-la-precarite-energetique-2028 (11/25/2019)

[16] URL: http://femmesjuristes.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Pre%CC%81sentation-Boutique-de-Pikine-et-Statistiques-2013-2017.docx (11/25/2019)

[17] URL: http://montevideo.gub.uy/noticias/vivienda/se-presento-el-proyecto-fincas (11/25/2019)

[18] URL: https://www.uclg-cisdp.org/en/news/latest-news/montevideo-presents-%E2%80%9Cfincas%E2%80%9D-urban-renewal-project-aimed-transforming-abandoned (11/25/2019)

measures in the field of public space regulation and emergency shelter to protect the rights of people who are homeless[19] (following the model proposed by FEANTSA's Homeless Bill of Rights initiative[20]).

The role of local governments in ensuring access to housing for migrants and refugees is also critical. **Dortmund** (Germany) applies a comprehensive housing strategy aimed at tackling the links between migration and poverty among vulnerable communities. Through an integral programme in coordination with the State, the city pursues decent living conditions and sustainable social inclusion by purchasing buildings to be rehabilitated by those communities, which can access employment projects. In partnership with the University, Dortmund has set up a dual university course on "Poverty and Displacement" to reinforce capacity building about inclusive planning and local policies. In 2015, the **City of Nuremberg** adopted a municipal measure seeking to facilitate the process of integration of refugees through a package of measures that included ensuring housing and emergency shelter for the newly arrived[21]. After local civil society initiative, the City has also funded residential units for LGBT refugees[22]. The Dutch **City of Utrecht,** on the other hand, has put in place an innovative co-housing measure (Plan Einstein) to support access to housing and provide integration opportunities for young refugees, who live together with local residents in affordable housing units[23].

IV - THIRD BLOCK: URBAN PLANNING FOR RESILIENCE AND UPGRADING [24]

The management of cities' growth over the next decades must occur in an environmentally sustainable manner that emphasizes the need to ensure all populations' right to adequate housing. Reinforcing the link between the promotion of the right to adequate housing and urban planning for resilient development becomes particularly important in the face of climate change-induced extreme weather events, such as droughts, heat and cold waves and heavy rains, which have an impact on the available land for housing and on the existing housing stock. Informal settlements, which are home to the poorest citizens, are particularly exposed to and affected by these phenomena, being increasingly threatened by floods, droughts, hurricanes and other extreme events that also endanger their provision of water, fresh air and food. Local governments can promote a rights-based approach to urban development through the role they play in settlement upgrading and, when it is unsafe to do so, in promoting re-settlement policies that protect populations' rights.

Local governments play a determinant role in promoting inclusive upgrading strategies by building resilience in housing, infrastructure and services in partnership with the residents. The Metropolitan Government of **Plaine Commune**, in France, has recently put in place an ambitious program aimed at upgrading the built environment and revitalizing community life in deprived neighbourhoods of nine different cities. This has been possible thanks to the cooperation between different spheres of government and ANRU - the National Association for Urban Upgrading[25]. The Housing Authority of **Buenos Aires** has designed an innovative Socio-Urban Integration Plan, focused on building local capacity, based on housing (connection to infrastructure for service provision), socio-economic and urban integration of informal settlements. The city of **Vihn,** in Vietnam, offers an example of the

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[19] URL: https://www.uclg-cisdp.org/en/news/latest-news/m%C3%B3stoles-spain-leading-ambitious-strategy-right-housing-and-rights-homeless-people (11/25/2019)

[20] URL: https://www.feantsa.org/en/campaign/2017/11/21/homeless-bill-of-rights (11/25/2019)

[21] URL: https://www.nuernberg.de/internet/integration_e/examples.html (11/25/2019)

[22] URL: https://www.dw.com/en/refugee-homes-for-homosexuals-set-to-open-in-nuremberg-and-berlin/a-19003813 (11/25/2019)

[23] URL: https://plan-einstein.nl/ (11/25/2019)

[24] The third block comprises Guidelines **No. 12** (Upgrade informal settlements incorporating a rights-based approach), **No. 13** (Prohibit forced evictions and prevent evictions) and **No. 14** (Review all housing policies to ensure their environmental sustainability and develop and implement strategies to address the effects of the climate crisis on the right to housing)

[25] URL: https://plainecommune.fr/projets/nos-quartiers-changent/ (11/25/2019)

capacity of local government to promote community-driven upgrading initiatives, where the community was engaged in re-planning and reconstructing their own housing on-site.

The "Rethinking Housing Policies" report outlines common features that contribute to enhancing respect for human rights when upgrading is not possible, such as engaging with those who move (as happened in the cities of **Mumbai** in India, **Nairobi** in Kenya or **Mandaue** in the Philippines), minimizing the numbers that need to move (as did the **Mumbai** local authority, which negotiated that residents should occupy smaller plots facing the relocation of houses on railway tracks) and avoiding relocation sites that are far from job opportunities and disconnected from infrastructures (such as **Iloilo**, where resettlements must happen within 4 km from original settlements).

Seoul is also pioneer in regards to introducing human rights criteria during eviction processes. Over the last few years, the City has put in place a Human Rights Protection Group at Demolition Sites in cooperation with Seoul's Bar Association, mainly charged "with the protection of residents at demolition sites and evictions, through monitoring and preventing human rights violations throughout the process[26]". Following Spain's eviction crisis, many local governments - such as **Terrassa**[27], **Barcelona**[28] or **Móstoles**[29] - have put in place local programs to support families afford their rents or offer housing alternatives in case of losing their homes. The case of Spanish cities is similar to that of **Bologna** (Italy), which has been localizing a national protocol to fight evictions. Through this temporal mechanism (implemented to address the ongoing eviction crisis), Bologna protects tenants who are about to lose their homes because they become unemployed or are unable to pay their rent [30] [31]. It is worth highlighting that a common feature of initiatives that yielded the desired outcomes is that local residents and their organizations were actively engaged in the planning and management processes. An example is the "*Programa de Realojos*" (Rehousing Programme) in **Montevideo**, which involved resettling families located in contaminated or flooded areas in new housing units built by the municipal government. Numerous examples of rights-based initiatives either led, enabled or promoted by the local government level can be found across the world[32].

V - FOURTH BLOCK: ACCOUNTABILITY AND ACCESS TO JUSTICE [33]

There are no few examples of local government initiatives seeking to ensure access to justice for those individuals that have seen their rights violated in their local jurisdiction, including the right to adequate housing. Due to their specific nature as sphere of government, local government action in this area tends to focus on establishing support mechanisms for victims and, eventually, to offer reparations. In certain contexts, local government contribution has also proven critical to support civil society and human rights defenders. Other local governments have also led strategic litigation

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[26] URL: https://www.uclg-cisdp.org/en/news/latest-news/seoul%E2%80%99s-quest-bring-human-rights-all-parts-citizens-lives-interview-human-rights (11/25/2019)

[27] URL: https://aoberta.terrassa.cat/tramits/fitxa.jsp?id=7422 (11/25/2019)

[28] URL: https://ajuntament.barcelona.cat/premsa/2018/04/24/la-ucer-es-consolida-baixen-un-22-els-processos-judicials-de-desnonament-i-alhora-lajuntament-augmenta-un-245-latencio-de-lemergencia/ (11/25/2019)

[29] URL: https://www.mostoles.es/es/noticias-1/hemeroteca/oficina-vivienda-prestara-asesoramiento-legal-vecinos-sufri (11/25/2019)

[30] URL: http://www.comune.bologna.it/casa/servizi/8:4967/7769/ (11/25/2019)

[31] URL: https://www.uclg-cisdp.org/en/news/latest-news/bologna-providing-social-housing-and-fighting-evictions-through-solidarity-and (11/25/2019)

[32] "Rethinking Housing Policies" provides a compilation of many such initiatives. Including, but not limited to, the "Programa Urbanización de Asentamientos Informales" (Urbanization Program of Informal Settlements), in the Province of Córdoba (Argentina); the "Programa Rosario Habitat - PRH" (Rosario Habitat Program), in Rosario (Argentina); the "Programa de Urbanização de Assentamentos Populares - PROAP - Favela-Bairro" (Urbanization of Popular Settlements Program - Slum-Neighborhood) in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil); "Programa Santo André Mais Igual" (More Equal Santo André Program), in Santo André (Brazil); "Programa Terra Mais Igual" (More Equal Land Program) in Vitória (Brazil); and "Programa Mejoramiento Integral de Barrios - PMIB" (Integral Neighborhood Improvement Program) in Medellín, Colombia, among others.

[33] The fourth block comprises Guidelines **No. 15** (Ensure effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms) and **No. 16** (Ensure access to justice for all aspects of the right to housing)

strategies on housing or discrimination-related issues. More broadly, local governments have also addressed this issue by mainstreaming transparency and accountability measures as administration.

In order to strengthen its monitoring capacity over real estate market, **Barcelona** and other metropolitan and regional spheres of government have put in place the "Observatori Metropolità de l'Habitatge" (Metropolitan Housing Observatory) which comprises detailed information on issues such as land and rental prices or vacant housing in the metropolitan area of Barcelona. The experience of Barcelona is similar to that of **Paris**, which counts with a Housing and Habitat Observatory since 2006, allowing the city to access an extensive set of indicators and data on the local housing market.

Local governments play an important role in making information on human rights more accessible to residents. For instance, **Grenoble** (France) has put in place a guide aimed at providing foreign residents[34] with easy-to-use information on which institutions should they address to access social housing or emergency shelter, as well as which steps should they follow and which conditions should they meet to be eligible. **Terrassa** has been a pioneer in the field of strategic litigation against banks holding vacant housing in a time of residential emergency, filing more than 180 lawsuits against financial entities[35]. This case is similar to that of Dutch cities like **Utrecht**, which have defended their right to offer "bed, bath and bread" to rejected asylum seekers even though they didn't count with the permission of national authorities to do so (something which also led to a still ongoing lawsuit at national courts[36]). Local institutions such as the ombudsperson-like program put in place by **Seoul and Gwangju** in South Korea have also aimed at turning local government more responsive in this regard, protecting social housing dwellers and tenants.

VI: Fifth block: Governance and multi-stakeholder environment [37]

As is emphasized by the "Rethinking Housing Policies" report, housing is part of LRGs' core responsibilities in many countries, representing on average approximately 10% of subnational expenditure worldwide.[38] Most importantly, when housing is understood to encompass not just housing structures, but housing-related infrastructure (such as piped water, sanitation, drainage, etc.), housing location and urban amenities that contribute to enhancing populations' prosperity, LRGs play a critical yet often understated role as addressing these needs corresponds to their daily responsibilities. Moreover, local governments may also promote adequate housing through the creation of a regulatory enabling environment within their competences to enable alternative approaches to housing solutions.[39] Such is the example of **Pune**, in India, where the local government changed project tendering norms to enable NGOs to participate in the upgrading of the Mother Teresa Nagar settlement by supporting Women Together, the local women-led community organization.[40]

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[34] URL: http://www.gre-mag.fr/site/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Guide-CoFraCiR.pdf (11/25/2019)

[35] URL: https://www.terrassa.cat/noticies/-/asset_publisher/KdWYOJc3Om98/content/noticia-l-ajuntament-de-terrassa-obre-180-expedients-nous-a-entitats-bancaries-per-habitatges-buits?_101_INSTANCE_KdWYOJc3Om98_lang=ca?terrassaseotitle=L%27Ajuntament%20de%20Terrassa%20obre%20180%20expedients%20nous%20a%20entitats%20banc%C3%A0ries%20per%20habitatges%20buits (11/25/2019)

[36] URL: https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-europe-migrants-netherlands/dutch-compromise-over-bed-bath-and-bread-for-rejected-asylum-seekers-fails-idUKKBN13G1FQ?fbclid=IwAR1_RixbJmhocplKafrdjzytZVrtMCygcMHM_h54wo6TtiUpcCOxYVxs9Ds (11/25/2019)

[37] The fifth block comprises Guidelines **No. 10** (Ensure meaningful participation of all those affected in the design, implementation and monitoring of housing policies, programs and strategies), **No. 11** (Specify the responsibilities of each level of government and ensure coordination and accountability for the realization of the right to adequate housing) and **No. 17** (Undertake international cooperation to ensure the realization of the right to adequate housing)

[38] According to the data collected in 67 countries by the World Observatory on Subnational Government Finance and Investment

[39] Somsook Boonyabancha and Thomas Kerr, 'Lessons from CODI on Co-Production', Environment and Urbanization 30, no. 2 (2018): 444–60.

[40] Sheela Patel, 'Upgrade, Rehouse or Resettle? An Assessment of the Indian Governments' Basic Services for the Urban Poor Programme', Environment and Urbanization 25, no. 1 (2013): 177–88; Sundar Burra, Diana Mitlin, and Gayatri Menon, 'Understanding the Contribution of the BSUP (JNNURM) to Inclusive Cities in India', ESID Working Paper No. 97, 2018.

Local governments may also contribute to lowering house prices through changing plot sizes provided they remain adequate. Examples include **Windhoek**, Namibia where changing plot sizes lowered the price of formal housing;[41] in **Bangkok**, Thailand it allowed the implementation of community-led upgrading programme to address overcrowding in Bonkai; in **Merida**, Mexico, the change in plot-size standards promoted the financial feasibility of developing housing for lower-income populations to the 36% of a mixed housing public project.[42]

Drawing from the experiences of cities in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe, "Rethinking Housing Policies" makes the point that in many cities there is a pressing need to integrate housing policies within the framework of urban planning and policies. Adopting such an urban and territorial approach to housing policies reinforces the capacity of LRGs to promote inclusive and fairer urban growth and avoid the limitations of the "project-based" approach to urban development. In order to do so, it is necessary to consider the interconnectedness between all the housing subsystems (formal and informal, owner and tenant-occupied...), as well as the embeddedness of these subsystems within the citywide, metropolitan-wide and region-wide land and housing systems.

Multi-level cooperation mechanisms provide tools for advancing these objectives. The **Government of Catalonia**, through INCASÒL and its cooperation with Catalan municipalities, has been promoting neighbourhood upgrading programs (*Pla de Barris*) as well as social housing development throughout almost two decades. The multi-stakeholder initiatives led in **Plaine Commune** (France) - a metropolitan government supporting neighbourhood upgrading programs in nine different municipalities in cooperation with the national agency ANRU - **San Antonio de Areco** (Argentina) - which has made good use of a provincial law to adopt its own social housing program - or **Bologna** (Italy) - through the way it fought evictions in coordination with local courts and national authorities around the national law "*Protocolo Sfratti*"- are other good examples in this regard.

Local governments are also a critical lever in strengthening community participation regarding the right to housing. As recalled by the Cities for Adequate Housing Declaration, many local governments are looking forward to be better able to "count on the strength and talent from our cities' productive and social fabric to co-produce mixed solutions, instead of exclusively focusing on public or business-led schemes". Relevant practices on community-led housing solutions spring from Latin America - take for instance the long-consolidated example of **Montevideo** Housing Cooperative movement - to Europe - in Italy, **Bologna** counts with a vibrant cooperative housing movement that is now involved in fostering neighbourhood upgrading process. Bologna's housing cooperatives have also recently seen an extended legal acknowledgment by municipal authorities[43] [44]. In Tunisia, a participatory budgeting experience led by the **City of Sfax** allowed residents of the historical centre to decide over different investments regarding their neighbourhood upgrading, which resulted in a more efficient allocation of resources.

Nevertheless, the "Rethinking Housing Policies" report also highlights that in many territories, local authorities face barriers in using planning and urban management tools, such as a lack of control of land ownership regulations and their enforcement or limited local taxation capacities. It stresses how, particularly in low and lower-middle income countries, many national governments have devolved responsibilities for housing to LRGs without the required technical and financial support. It is also

[41] Diana Mitlin and Anna Muller, 'Windhoek, Namibia: Towards Progressive Urban Land Policies in Southern Africa', International Development Planning Review 26, no. 2 (2004): 167–86.
[42] Steer Davies Gleave, Andean Partners in Rocca and de Mendiola, 'Affordable Housing in the World's Cities: Urban 20 the White Papers'.
[43] URL: https://www.uclg-cisdp.org/en/news/latest-news/bologna-providing-social-housing-and-fighting-evictions-through-solidarity-and (11/25/2019)
[44] URL: https://www.porto15.it/ (11/25/2019)

important to address inconsistencies between local and national strategies, and the availability of institutional coordination channels to provide access to instruments required for local housing policy.

Colombia provides a good example of national government policy creating ways to support LRGs in the preparation of "Planos de Ordenamento Territorial" (Land Management Plans) and the 1997 places several national ministries at the disposal of municipalities.[45] In **Thailand**, the national upgrading program Baan Mankong has promoted cooperation with the Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI) and the local communities of informal settlements, who have been engaged in a variety of local initiatives nationwide to advance security of land tenure and ensure the provision of basic services in the settlements. In the **Philippines**, a national law was passed in 2008 that instructed municipal governments to establish collaborative local housing boards. In **Iloilo,** the local housing board includes the municipality, NGOS and representatives from the urban poor federation. It has promoted citywide savings' groups, a citywide urban poor network and promoted a platform to engage all local stakeholders in conversations regarding housing, land tenure, relocation and disaster rehabilitation projects.[46] At the state level, **Goiás**, in Brazil, the state government has actively helped its municipalities to develop local social-interest housing plans.

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[45] See: article 23 of Law 388/1997.
[46] For further information on the approach of Iloilo to housing policy and urban development, and the role played by the local housing board, please see: https://iloilocity.gov.ph/main/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/2013-2019-CDP.pdf