

High-level Summary of the 1st Ethiopian Housing Symposium June 21-22, 2024, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Theme- Building Homes, Empowering Lives: Advancing Inclusive Housing for Sustainable Development

Ethiopia's housing sector is crucial for economic growth and development, facing challenges such as rapid urbanization, high housing costs, and inadequate infrastructure. The shortage of affordable housing, particularly in urban areas, leads to overcrowding and unsafe living conditions. The government is addressing housing challenges through urban planning strategies, land administration improvements, and public-private partnerships. Slum upgrading programs aim to enhance living conditions, while priorities also include promoting affordable rentals, ensuring housing security for vulnerable groups, and involving local communities in decision-making. However, enforcement remains a challenge, highlighting the need for stakeholder collaboration to recognize housing as a fundamental right crucial for sustainable development and social inclusion.

The 1st Ethiopian Housing Symposium emerges against the backdrop of pressing challenges within the nation's housing sector, intricately linked to its economic growth and overall development. Rapid urbanization exacerbates these challenges, triggering a surge in demand for urban housing and the proliferation of informal settlements. Consequently, affordability becomes a critical concern, particularly in urban areas where demand exceeds supply, resulting in overcrowding and substandard living conditions. The first national housing symposium provides a platform for stakeholders to collaborate on solutions. It fosters dialogue, knowledge sharing, and partnerships to address housing challenges comprehensively.

The Ethiopian Housing Symposium, scheduled for June 21-22, 2024, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and organized by Habitat for Humanity Ethiopia and partners, adopts a comprehensive approach to discuss housing challenges and opportunities. It engages diverse stakeholders such as government officials, NGOs, and industry experts in various activities over the two-day event, including panel discussions, research presentations, and insights from Habitat for Humanity's interventions across Africa. Topics cover a wide range, from housing finance to sustainability and women's empowerment. Expected outcomes encompass enhanced understanding, strengthened partnerships, and policy recommendations. The symposium promotes collaboration among stakeholders and will host approximately 70 participants. Monitoring efforts will track attendance and session evaluations, with post-symposium engagement focusing on sustaining partnerships and advocating for policy support.

The symposium is spearheaded by a 5-member taskforce, aiming for sustainability through strategic measures such as establishing a taskforce, securing funding, and maintaining a digital presence. The Symposium Organizing Taskforce will play a central role in coordinating and managing the symposium's activities. Its key responsibilities include overall coordination to ensure alignment with objectives and timelines, program development involving selecting speakers and structuring sessions, stakeholder engagement to promote participation and collaboration, communication and promotion to raise awareness, monitoring and evaluation to assess outcomes and gather feedback for future improvements, and day-to-day operations management including registration and logistical issues handling during the event.



National Taskforce

Objectives of the Housing Symposium

The symposium aims to convene a diverse range of stakeholders to discuss and promote innovative housing solutions that are low-cost, inclusive, and affordable, ultimately driving economic growth in the country. It will be a platform for sharing experiences, best practices, and addressing challenges related to housing affordability and habitability.

The specific objectives of the symposium are:

- a)** To facilitate the exchange of best practices, research findings, policy frameworks, laws, action programs, coordination models, and innovative ideas among participants to enrich the collective understanding of housing challenges and potential solutions in Ethiopia.
- b)** To identify critical policy gaps and challenges in the housing sector and work towards inputting actionable recommendations to address them effectively.
- c)** To foster collaboration and networking opportunities as well as new connections among stakeholders to enhance joint efforts in advancing housing initiatives across the country.

Focus Areas of the Symposium

In this symposium, scholars and practitioners are expected to present best practices, innovative housing solutions, or research findings in one or more of the symposium's focus areas. The discourse on housing finance in Ethiopia spans various dimensions, ranging from the dichotomy between housing ownership and rental options throughout its past, present, and into the future. An integral

facet involves creating accessible housing microfinance solutions tailored for vulnerable groups. Additionally, addressing systemic inequities involves considerations of housing, land access, and property rights. Effective housing construction project management remains a crucial focus in Ethiopia. Meeting the growing housing needs of the youth and responding to the increasing demand for housing are paramount concerns. The urban landscape is further shaped by initiatives such as slum upgrading and ensuring access to basic services. Sustainability comes to the forefront in the discussion on building and recycling climate-resilient housing for vulnerable groups. Another vital aspect involves empowering women through their land and housing rights. Finally, exploring entrepreneurship and innovation, particularly in alternative building materials and green financing, contributes to the multifaceted approach to housing development in Ethiopia.