The Link between Homelessness and Migration
Fostering Inclusive Neighbourhoods

THEMATIC LEARNING REPORT

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ABOUT MC2CM

Internal and international migratory movements in the wider Mediterranean region have a direct and long-term impact on the development of the region's urban areas, as these are often the departure, transit and destination points for migrants. As the first interlocutors of the inhabitants, local governments are also key actors in removing barriers for the economic, social and cultural inclusion of newcomers, as well as fostering their contribution and participation in the local life. In order to maximise this development potential, local governments need to be recognised as institutional partners in migration governance policies and endowed with the necessary and relative competences, resources and capacities, especially with regard to guaranteeing access to rights and services.

In this context, the **Mediterranean City to City Migration Project** (MC2CM), launched in 2015, aims to contribute to improving the urban governance of migration, particularly within a network of cities in North Africa, the Middle East and Europe. The project's activities are grouped into a **Dialogue** component to facilitate the exchange of experiences and policy options between cities, a **Knowledge** component that assists partner cities in studying their migration situation and defining their profile, and an **Action** component that accompanies the transfer and implementation of cooperation actions.

DIALOGUE	**KNOWLEDGE**	**ACTION**
Nurturing dialogue between cities and relevant stakeholders through peer-to-peer learning and exchanges	Supporting knowledge generation and development of evidence-based approaches	Providing sustainable solutions and testing tools to address migration-related challenges and opportunities

The project is implemented by a consortium led by the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), in partnership with the United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) Network and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT).

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report explores the key learnings shared at the MC2CM peer-to-peer event on **The Link Between Homelessness and Migration: Fostering Inclusive Neighbourhoods**, held virtually on 28 – 30 April 2021 and hosted by Municipality of Dortmund. The document further draws from broader learnings from the global homeless services sector and other relevant academic publications and data. The report positions these learnings within the framework of the MC2CM project as well as Agenda 2030, the New Urban Agenda, the Global Compact on Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees. This thematic report shares concrete examples as well as actionable guidance and policy recommendations for how to support migrants out of homelessness and into secure, adequate housing accommodation.

Migrants, including refugees, face particular challenges to accessing housing. Due to conflict, natural disasters, climate change, and other regions, migration is often spontaneous; therefore, host cities are frequently found trying to accommodate additional populations without the advantage of long-term planning and equitable distribution. Migrants face formal exclusion to welfare, housing services and labor markets, as a result of policies that aim to create a hostile environment that deters migration. For example, homeless shelters sometimes restrict access to nationals or to documented migrants. These discriminatory practices often lead migrants to live and work in precarious conditions, susceptible to a range of human rights violations. On a logistical level, there is often little coordination between migration programmes and housing services, leading to ineffective and duplicative systems. This convergence of forces frequently results in migrants living on the streets, in overcrowded conditions, in informal settlements and in situations where they are at risk of forced eviction.

Though the challenges are undeniably steep, there are both innovative approaches and proven practices outlined in the report that, if implemented, can lead to better policy and programmes. These innovations include collaborative responses, prevention programmes, housing and real estate development, and integrated services. This document concludes with several policy recommendations addressed to local and national governments, along with advocacy approaches that civil society and other stakeholders can consider as avenues to securing the suggested policies and programmes that will together ensure that migrants are able to better access their human right to housing.

Borsigplatz (Source: Municipality of Dortmund)

KEY CONCEPTS

The intersection of housing with human rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights acknowledges, in Article 13, the right of everyone to "freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state" as well as "to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country." Further, in Article 25, the Declaration states that everyone has the right to "a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including adequate food, clothing and **housing**…" Taken together, these Articles clearly posit that every person, irrespectively of their migratory background, has an inherent human right to adequate housing.

This right to adequate housing is recognized in many other international commitments, such as the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees; the 1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families; the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights; the 2016 New Urban Agenda; and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These frameworks recognize housing as a pathway to integration and inclusion for migrants and refugees. Having access to a stable, adequate and well-connected home impacts the ability of migrants to create social connections, enroll in education, secure employment, and access other urban opportunities and services. Having a stable and adequate home is also a prerequisite to maintaining health and personal safety, as clearly demonstrated by the COVID-19 pandemic where "stay at home" orders were the first line of defense against the coronavirus.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights[1] notes that migrants have particular challenges to accessing their right to adequate housing:

1 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2014). The Right to Adequate Housing [Fact sheet]. https://www.ohchr.org/documents/publications/fs21_rev_1_housing_en.pdf

> People on the move, whether they are refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons or migrants, are particularly vulnerable to a range of human rights violations, including violations of the right to adequate housing. Displaced persons are also particularly vulnerable to discrimination, racism and xenophobia, which can further interfere with their ability to secure sustainable and adequate living conditions. People who have been forcibly displaced will often have suffered trauma during their flight, and will have lost familiar coping strategies and support mechanisms.

Former Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing, Ms. Leilani Farha, described homelessness as a "global human rights crisis" and urged that the "elimination of homelessness be affirmed as a cross-cutting human rights priority in socioeconomic policy, planning and development." Ms. Farha further affirmed that, "people on the move, especially international migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons, are also at significant risk of homelessness. Those groups suffer multiple discrimination and numerous obstacles in securing temporary or permanent housing."[2]

2 Farha, Leilani. (2015). Report of the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context. (A/HRC/31/54).

Grounding migrant-related programmes and policies in the broader dialogue of the human right to adequate housing is critical for providing person-centered services and a tool for holding governments accountable.

The New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The New Urban Agenda (NUA), adopted in 2016 at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), envisions cities that "progressively achieve the full realization of the right to adequate housing…" It recognizes the "need to give particular attention to addressing multiple forms of discrimination faced by…homeless people…refugees, returnees, internally displaced persons and migrants, regardless of their migration status."[3] Throughout its commitments and calls to actions, the New Urban Agenda consistently mentions the vital role of housing in creating strong and healthy cities and settlements and draws the connections to ensuring that housing is accessible to the most vulnerable populations, including migrants.

The importance of housing carries forward strongly into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, where Sustainable Development Goal 11 aims to "Make cities and settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" and its Target 11.1 is to "Ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services." Similarly to the New Urban Agenda, Agenda 2030 urges governments to implement holistic and integrated responses to the challenges presented by migration for sustainable urban development.

3   United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development. (2016). The New Urban Agenda. (A/RES/71/256).

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The Global Compact on Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees

Finalized in 2018, the Global Compact on Migration is the "first-ever UN global agreement on a common approach to international migration in all its dimensions."[4] The compact lays out 23 objectives for better managing migration. Though it does not specifically mention housing, it "intends to reduce the risks and vulnerabilities migrants face at different stages of migration by respecting, protecting and fulfilling their human rights and providing them with care and assistance"[5] and hearkens back to the New Urban Agenda, the 2030 Agenda, and other foundational declarations, covenants, and treaties.

Similarly, the Global Compact on Refugees was affirmed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2018, as "a framework for more predictable and equitable responsibility-sharing" designed to ease pressures on host countries, enhance refugee self-reliance, expand access to third-country solutions, and support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity.[6] The Compact's indicator framework references the importance of enabling the right to housing as a means of ensuring other rights, such as the right to work.[7]

Common Definitions of Homelessness

Homelessness is an issue sitting at the intersection of public health, housing affordability, domestic violence, mental illness, substance misuse, urbanization, racial and gender discrimination, infrastructure, and unemployment. Given the complexities of homelessness, compounded by cultural nuances of what a home is, there is no single definition of homelessness. However, a spectrum of definitions exist by which countries can select which definition best fits their context – while acknowledging that no form of homelessness is acceptable, measure the scope of the problem accordingly, and then select program interventions that effectively address the problem.

The United Nations Statistical Division groups homeless persons into two categories:

- Primary homelessness (or rooflessness). This category includes individuals who live in streets or without shelter.

- Secondary homelessness. This category includes those with no usual place of residence, those who move frequently between accommodations. Also included are those who take up long-term residence in 'transitional' shelters or similar accommodations for people who are homeless.

4   United Nations. (2016). Global Compact on Migration. https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/migration-compact

5   Global Compact on Migration. (2018). Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration. https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180713_agreed_outcome_global_compact_for_migration.pdf

6   United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. (2018). The Global Compact on Refugees. https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/the-global-compact-on-refugees.html

7   United Nations High Commission for Refugees. (2019). Global Compact on Refugees: Indicator Framework. https://www.unhcr.org/5cf907854

The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and UN Habitat convened an Expert Group Meeting on Homelessness in Nairobi, Kenya in May 2019, comprised of 15 international experts on homelessness.[8] The Expert Group considered many definitions of homelessness such as the ETHOS typology and 'domains of home' and proposed the following definition:

> Homelessness is a condition where a person or household lacks habitable space, security of tenure, rights and ability to enjoy social relations, including safety. Homelessness is a manifestation of extreme poverty and a failure of multiple systems and human rights.

The Expert Group further included the following sub-categories that describe different manifestations of homelessness:

- People living on the streets or other open spaces (for example, people sleeping in their cars and "pavement dwellers")

- People living in temporary or crisis accommodations (for example, night shelters, hostels and other types of temporary accommodation, refuges for those fleeing domestic violence, camps provided for internally displaced persons, camps or reception centres and temporary accommodation for asylum seekers)

- People living in severely inadequate and insecure accommodation (for example, extremely overcrowded conditions, unconventional buildings and temporary structures, including slums and informal settlements)

- People lacking access to affordable housing (for example, people sharing with friends and relatives on a temporary basis, people living in cheap hotels, bed and breakfasts)

The recommendations of the Expert Group were incorporated into the UN Secretary-General's report on *Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness* which further notes that "these categories are fluid an interrelated, as people move from one category to the other and back again; they cannot be considered in isolation. However, each category requires a range of different solutions." The report of the Secretary-General also states that migrants are a particularly vulnerable and "overrepresented" in the demographics of people experiencing homelessness.[9] The recommendations of the Expert Group were also included in the June 2020 ECOSOC resolution on *Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness*[10] and in the November 2021 General Assembly resolution on *Inclusive policies and programmes to address homelessness, including in the aftermath of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19)*[11]. Both resolutions noted that:

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8   United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (2019). Expert Group Meeting on Affordable Housing and Social Protection Systems for All to Address Homelessness: Proceedings. https://unhabitat.org/expert-group-meeting-on-affordable-housing-and-social-protection-systems-for-all-to-address

9   United Nations Secretary General. (2019). Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness. (E/CN.5/2020/3.)

10 United Nations Economic and Social Council. (2020). Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness. (E/RES/2020/7).

11 United Nations General Assembly. (2021). Inclusive policies and programmes to address homelessness, including in the aftermath of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). (A/C.3/76/L.12/Rev.1).

that homelessness is not merely a lack of physical housing, but is often a disaffiliation process interrelated with poverty, lack of full and productive employment, decent work and access to infrastructure, as well as other socioeconomic issues that may constitute a loss of family, community and a sense of belonging, and, depending on national context, can be described as a condition where a person or household lacks safe habitable space, which may compromise their ability to enjoy social relations, and includes people living on the streets, in other open spaces or in buildings not intended for human habitation, people living in temporary accommodation or shelters for people experiencing homelessness, and, in accordance with national legislation, may include, among others, people living in severely inadequate accommodation without security of tenure and access to basic services.

Though by no means a perfect, complete or universally accepted definition of homelessness, the Expert Group report, the UN Secretary-General's report, and the ECOSOC and UNGA resolutions provide us with a common language by which we can successfully describe the global phenomenon of homelessness.

DRIVERS OF HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness is widely becoming recognized as a global human rights crisis that has an immense impact on the rights to life, security and dignity, especially for persons in vulnerable situation. It affects people in both urban and rural areas. While individual, environmental, and structural and institutional drivers all contribute to homelessness, it is critical to understand homelessness as a societal rather than an individual failure.

Homelessness is a complex issue. It sits at the intersection of public health, mental health, physical health, disability, housing affordability and infrastructure, unplanned urbanization, poverty, unemployment, violence, trauma, substance abuse, gender discrimination, racial discrimination, climate change, and more. The interplay between these elements is expressed in a host of ways depending upon local context. Levels of homelessness rise and fall dependent on shifts in and changes to any one of the elements.

In any of its forms, homelessness occurs when people cannot access the housing and support they need to be stably and adequately housed. It is always the result of accumulated factors. The immediate cause is often an exogenous shock, such as a health crisis, unexpected job loss, or abrupt housing loss due to eviction or relationship violence. But socio-structural factors make certain people especially vulnerable to homelessness, and gaps in the social safety net and homelessness services systems can extend homelessness or make it more difficult to remain housed.

Migrants, including refugees, are a population that is particularly vulnerable to homelessness and housing insecurity. Due to conflict, natural disasters, and climate change, among other reasons, migration is often spontaneous. Host cities face several challenges in addressing migrant homelessness. These challenges include lacking competencies, having to accommodate influxes in additional populations without the advantage of long-term planning and equitable distribution of resources, limited housing stock and limited budget resources.

Specific Challenges that Migrants Face to Housing

Migrant groups living in cities tend to experience more difficulties in accessing adequate housing compared to native-born populations. According to the European Union's (EU) migrant integration statistics, migrants face steeper challenges in affording housing. Twenty-five percent of non-EU citizens pay more than 40 percent of their disposable income in housing compared to nine percent of national citizens. The number is slightly lower, 19 percent, for citizens migrating from another EU country. Data from the Norwegian Refugee Council shows that in 2014 58% of household expenditure for Syrian families was on rent[12]. Data reported by UNHCR[13] in 2017 shows that up to 43% of refugee household in Lebanon reported either borrowing money to meet rent cost or they are unable to pay the rent and therefor in debt. According to the Results of the 2021 National Survey[14] carried out by the Moroccan High Commission for Planning, migrants households in the Kingdom experience greater difficulties than national counterparts in accessing housing, with

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12 Norwegian Refugee Council. (2014). A Precarious Existence: The shelter situation of refugees from Syria in neighbourhood countries. https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/reports/a-precarious-existence---the-shelter-situation-of-refugees-from-syria-in-neighbouring-countries.pdf

13 UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP. (2017). Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees living in Lebanon. https://www.unhcr.org/lb/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2018/01/VASyR-2017.pdf

14 Haut-Commissariat au Plan, Royaume du Maroc. (2021). La Migration Forcée au Maroc - Résultats de l'Enquête Nationale. https://www.hcp.ma/downloads/Enquete-Nationale-sur-la-Migration_t21608.html

61.9% of households reporting either high costs of rent, or unattainable guarantees required and the difficulties to obtain a lease contract.

In 28 EU countries, migrants are disproportionately dependent on private rentals, are more likely to be discriminated against and are also more likely to be uninformed of their rights. Across Europe, migrant households are three times less likely to be homeowners, especially in destinations such as Spain, Italy, Greece, and Belgium.

Migrants are also more prone to be living in overcrowded conditions. In the EU, overcrowding is understood as the ratio between household rooms and number of household members. The United Nations understands that a dwelling unit is considered to provide sufficient living area for household members if there are fewer than three persons per habitable room. In 2019, non-EU citizens were twice as likely to be living in overcrowding compared to nationals. Nearly one in four people in deprived or overcrowded homes in OECD countries live in a migrant household. EU-wide, the overcrowding rate among those born outside the EU and aged 20-64 stands at 25 percent, compared with 17 percent for the native-born. The levels are higher (40-55 percent) in Central and Southeast Europe (Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, and Poland) and lower (<10% percent in Belgium, Cyprus, Ireland, Malta, and the Netherlands. Data from the World Bank on housing deficit in Jordan showed that non-Jordanian families (particularly Syrians and Egyptians) represented 73% of those living in overcrowding[15]. UNHCR's Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees living in Lebanon[16] shows that in 2020 over half (58%) of Syrian refugee households were living in shelters that were either overcrowded, had conditions below humanitarian standards and/or were in danger of collapse Similar information were gathered by the Moroccan National Survey 2021 according to which almost three quarters (72.1%) of migrant households live in overcrowded dwellings. A study carried out by UN-Habitat Tunisia to strengthen advocacy to ensure adequate housing in the face of COVID-19 also highlighted the fact that people of sub-Saharan background in the country often experience unhealthy and dilapidated housing, overcrowding, racism, sexism, neighbourhood harassment and hostility, high rents, low income, exploitation, eviction[17].

Systemic Barriers that Migrants Face to Housing

In terms of systemic barriers, policy frameworks governing migrants' access to welfare and housing-related services are often tiered, with certain migrants accessing greater rights than others due to factors such as their migratory status and length of residence.

The criminalization of homelessness is an ineffective strategy used in many areas to further displace and punish people who are homeless and is sometimes used as a ground for refusal or cancellation of asylum or resident permit.
Policies that ban or prohibit homelessness are counterproductive and penalize people who are in need of housing and supportive services.

Many migrants are also vulnerable to exploitation by landlords and various authorities, as they are more likely to be uninformed of their rights. Their undocumented status can bring about humiliation, criminalisation and added stigma, resulting in most migrants being unwilling to make use of their entitlements, challenge abusive rental practices, and turn to support services. These discriminatory practices often lead

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15   World Bank Group. (2018). Jordan Housing Sector Review. https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/31622/Jordan-Housing-Sector-Assessment-Housing-Sector-Review.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

16   United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination in Lebanon, UNHCR Lebanon, WFP Lebanon, UNICEF Lebanon. (2020). Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/VASyR%202020.pdf

17   United Nations Human Settlement Programme. (2021). Tunisie : Renforcement des systèmes de protection sociale et de secours économique pour les segments vulnérables et marginalisés de la population en réponse au COVID-19.

migrants to work in irregular employment and live in precarious conditions, further exacerbating their vulnerability to forced evictions and homelessness.

Migrants also often face spatial segregation, as urban renovation programmes displace vulnerable populations to the periphery of the cities where they cannot easily access services and opportunities. When faced with no other choice, migrant populations, including refugees, will ultimately use available land to settle, namely areas that lack proper tenure and ownership. Often, such places are located in areas prone to natural hazards, or on unsuitable land for housing, adjacent to roads, railways, riverbeds, slopes, etc. Furthermore, poverty and marginalisation intersect and are often concentrated in specific locations. Housing location, in fact, often affects the experiences and opportunities that people may have, including access to jobs, services, transport, education, and civic and political participation. Spatial inequalities in cities perpetuate other forms of social, economic, political or cultural inequality.

Services that migrants are able to access are often poorly coordinated, not tailored to their experiences as migrants, cannot be translated into other languages, and have complex and lengthy administrative procedures.

Migrants also face challenges in accessing the labour market and often resort to work in the informal sector, without the social protection mechanisms associated to formal work, or to accept low-wage jobs that impact their ability to sustain housing costs.

Local and national authorities are generally lacking sufficient financial resources and technical skills to facilitate migrant inclusion in planning and decision-making processes. Migrants are not included in participatory processes, their needs and interests are unknown, and therefore the "solutions" and programmes offered do not adequately meet their needs.

Migrant Groups Particularly Vulnerable to the risk of Homelessness

Migrants are often conceived as a homogenous group, especially within the homeless populations. Age, gender, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, country of origin, legal situation or migration status, level of education, and other factors are all personal characteristics that are represented among the sub-populations of migrants that are most likely to become homeless.

For example, migrant women are sometimes forced to depend on male family members to renew residency permits or to access housing through formal markets. In the case of refugee camps, women live in open tents, most often without adequate facilities; they may feel compelled to move to cities in search of opportunities despite the risk of ending up on the streets. Women in temporary shelters or overcrowded situations particularly have their dignity, privacy, and personal security threatened. Women who are homeless face increased dangers of assault, abuse, kidnapping and trafficking, and comprise a larger portion of those experiencing "hidden homelessness" which is more difficult to account for and address.

Similarly, many migrant children and young people have suffered from traumatic experiences during their primary years of development. These experiences may include poverty, abuse, and violence. Most shelters do not have services tailored to fit the needs of children and young people. Depending on their migrant status, young people can abruptly lose public support when they turn age 18, and they are particularly vulnerable to homelessness during that transition. Proof of residence is often required for school enrollment, and this requirement prevents young people living in informal, temporary, or unstable housing situations from accessing their right to an education.

Another population at heightened risk of homelessness is undocumented migrants. In many countries, irregular migration is criminalized and those with irregular migrant status receive little to no mainstream public support. In some cases, they are subject to deportation if they seek to access support. Undocumented migrants also face great difficulties in accessing housing, as cities can enforce restrictive policies which require landlords and employers to check residency permits. In some cities, renting housing accommodation to migrants is a criminal offence. Homeless shelters are sometimes restricted to national citizens or to documented migrants and may be required to report their clients to the authorities, barring those with irregular migrant status from accessing the most basic form of housing. These discriminatory policies and practices create fear and distrust and effectively prevent migrants from securing housing or housing support services.

KEY LEARNINGS

More than 100 participants from 21 municipalities and local government associations, 17 CSOs, and experts and representatives of international organisations virtually convened from 28 – 30 April, 2021, to discuss The Link Between Homelessness and Migration: Fostering Inclusive Neighbourhoods. The key learnings and concrete examples from this convening are outlined below.

- Awareness needs to be raised within local municipalities and national governments about the complex challenges faced by migrants. Narratives around homelessness and migration must recognise that there are complex and structural issues faced by people with migratory background and that homelessness is not the result of individual failures. Narratives should include social cohesion language and messages around evidence-based approaches that position the problem as one that is possible to solve. Awareness building campaigns should connect to policy and advocacy platforms.

SPOTLIGHT ON: ILLINOIS, USA REFUGEE ACTION NETWORK

Illinois' Refugee Action Network uplifts the voices of refugees; educates communities, civic leaders and the media about refugees; and mobilizes individuals and organisations to advocate for refugees. RAN uses its inclusive network to raise awareness and face challenges that lead to homelessness in the refugee and asylum seeker community. In particular, **it works with policymakers and legislators to highlight the slow legal procedures which prevents refugees from accessing services, housing, and employment opportunities.**

Recently, RAN has advocated to maintain the eviction moratorium which was set in place as an emergency response to COVID-19, as well as advocating for state government funding for affordable housing and property tax freezes for owners offering reduced rent units.

- It is of critical importance for municipalities and other key partners to understand the heterogeneity of migrants, in order to best address their particular needs. Including migrants as key stakeholders in decision-making processes is one avenue towards greater understanding.

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SPOTLIGHT ON: BEIRUT SOCIAL & PROTECTIVE

Social, safety, and security conditions have worsened in the poor neighbourhoods in Beirut that host Palestinian and Syrian refugees. Before designing and implementing any solution, a Municipal Social Cell was established that:

– Reviewed a previous UN-Habitat neighborhood study and selected the two most vulnerable neighborhoods

– **Held introductory meetings with those neighborhoods' Mukhtars**

– **Held Key Information Interviews with Mukhtars to understand their unique needs and gaps in services**

– Held meetings with municipality focal persons

• Homelessness and migration are both central areas of work for cities and related policies and programmes need to be better institutionalised and resourced. Policy frameworks[18] should, as far as possible, be harmonised to meet local needs, and streamline coordination and resources between local and national governments.

18 Government of Ireland. (2007). National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016. http://www.socialinclusion.ie/documents/NAPinclusionReportPDF.pdf

SPOTLIGHT ON: IRELAND'S NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION, 2007-2016

Ireland's ten-year plan sets out **a comprehensive and wide-ranging programme of action, with twelve specific goals** encompassing education, employment and income, housing, health, and integration of migrants. The goals are regularly monitored for progress.

– The housing goal includes quality of housing, increasing housing stock, and meeting the needs of special population groups such as those who are homeless and migrants

– The integration goal includes commitment of national funding for translation services, literacy and language services, and training and employment support services

- A multi-sectoral, collaborative response is needed. Coordination, cooperation and exchange of information between stakeholders must be enhanced to ensure efficient mechanisms to prevent homelessness among migrants. This includes links to employment, entrepreneurship, language, and technical skills programmes. Partnerships with the private sector should be explored to unlock alternative finance sources for affordable housing.

SPOTLIGHT ON: DORTMUND, GERMANY'S VIERTELWERK

Dortmund's overall migration strategy has nine pillars of focus, including one on employment and one on housing. A central city district has exploitative tenancies and substandard homes, and a high number of migrants due to industry.

A non-profit real estate corporation was founded to:

– Purchase and modernize housing, without displacing residents

– Maintain affordable rents

– Provide training and employment for youth and unemployed residents via the renovation and maintenance processes

In addition, once the housing was rehabbed, Viertelwerk partners with other agencies in order to provide residents with:

– Counseling and connection to additional services

– Age and gender appropriate leisure activities

– Education and language development support

– Training apartments for young people

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- Better data collection around migration, housing condition and insecurity or homelessness among migrants will be critical to understanding which approaches are most effective at stabilizing them.[19]

19 Siqi, Z., Zhida, S., Weizeng, S. (2020). Do affordable housing programs facilitate migrants' social integration in Chinese cities? Cities, 96.

SPOTLIGHT ON: CHINA MIGRANTS' DYNAMIC SURVEY

Since 2009, China's National Health and Family Planning Commission has conducted an annual survey of migrants in more than 300 cities, using a stratified random sampling technique to select survey participants. Respondents answer questions on demographic characteristics, housing conditions, neighbourhood environments, employment status, income, and access to health and medical services.

Researchers were able to analyze whether affordable housing programmes improved migrants' social integration status in Chinese cities. The empirical results indicate that affordable rental housing programmes generate a much better effect in facilitating migrants' social integration, while the affordable owner-occupied housing program does not have a satisfactory effect.

From the data, the researchers concluded that the Chinese government should establish policies that encourage mixed communities of both migrants and local residents and provide more affordable rental units.

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- Helping migrants and key stakeholders understand migrant rights under national and international legislation, as well as the services that can be local accessed, will increase integration. This can be accomplished through information hubs, as well as through "ambassador" programmes that leverage the knowledge and expertise of long-term migrants in a peer-to-peer format.

SPOTLIGHT ON: GREATER MANCHESTER, UK'S A BED EVERY NIGHT

Greater Manchester's A Bed Every Night programme provides a temporary bed and support services for anyone sleeping on the streets, including migrants. According to UK regulation, migrants do not have recourse to public funds, and so the A Bed Every Night programme uses charitable funds to provide support to migrants.

A key worker is present at every property to provide support to tenants. **Specialist immigration advice and support is also available. This has led to several users regularizing their migrant status. It has also created a broader understanding for both migrants and service providers of the options that are available** to them, even with restrictions on services provided by public funds.

- Local authorities and stakeholders should monitor housing discrimination and violations, in particular those leading to unlawful evictions.

SPOTLIGHT ON: HOUSING MONITOR, LEBANON

Housing Monitor is a housing rights project in Beirut run by Public Works Studio. It provides a safe and secure database for people to report housing violations and responds to individuals' housing needs with access to legal and social services, building awareness among vulnerable groups, particularly refugees and migrant domestic workers, who have limited legal representation and/or knowledge of their rights.

Housing Monitor works with Resident associations, coalitions, and partnerships with organisations including Legal Agenda, Anti-Racism Movement and the Lebanese Union for People with Physical Disabilities, establishing channels through which people can demand their housing rights. It mobilises local advocacy efforts to demand housing policy reform.

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- Effective systems of ending homelessness must also include prevention strategies[20] that "turn off the tap" of people entering homelessness. Prevention programmes that address the housing needs of migrants before they need to access emergency shelters or sleep rough should be prioritized.

20 Oudshoorn, A., Benbow, S., Esses, V., Baker, L., Annor, B., Coplan, I., Shantx, J., Ezukuse V. (2020). Homelessness Prevention for Refugees: Results From an Analysis of Pathways to Shelter. *European Journal of Homelessness, 14*(2).

SPOTLIGHT ON: NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE, UK

Newcastle upon Tyne is a Sanctuary City and consistently in the top 20 local authority areas that host asylum seekers receiving state support for accommodation, but those entitlements end after just three or four weeks.

A Cross Council Migration Group was formed, which **selected partner organisations responsible for identifying and supporting refugees at the point of transition off public entitlements to prevent homelessness**. These partners offer refugees a variety of services and help them navigate the resources that can move them to housing stability.

POLICY AND PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS

A city's ability to respond to migrant fluxes and local government's capability to mitigate the rapid changes occurring will depend upon the adequacy of national and local migration policies linked to housing. In addition, the city's capacity to undertake practical solutions will hinge on their ability to create productive partnerships with other key stakeholders. Below are a set of recommendations spanning policy and practice for governments and other actors to consider as they reckon with how to create, implement, and evaluate concrete strategies and intervention that will support migrants in securing stable housing.

For national governments

- To recognise that well-directed migration policies have the power to contribute to the flow of money, increase public revenue, knowledge and ideas between cities of origin and destination, as well as enhancing social cohesion and livelihoods in the entire community.

- To work in collaboration with academic, civil society organisations, and people with the lived experience of homelessness and migration to undertake a review of the common definitions of homelessness and pass legislation that sets their national definition of homelessness. It is recommended that this legislation describe groups that are particularly vulnerable to homelessness in their nations, including migrants. It is recommended that this legislation acknowledge the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and specifically the right to an adequate standard of living, including housing.

- To empower national statistics office to conduct comprehensive enumeration strategies that collect disaggregated data on homelessness, and explore means by which that data can be applied to decision making. It is recommended that any homeless data collection efforts follow the five principles of the Inclusive Data Charter: [21]

  – Principle 1: All populations must be included in the data

  – Principle 2: All data should, wherever possible, be disaggregated to accurately describe all populations

  – Principle 3: Data should be drawn from all available sources

  – Principle 4: Those responsible for the collection of data and production of statistics must be accountable

  – Principle 5: Human and technical capacity to collect, analyse and use disaggregated data needs to be improved, including through adequate and sustainable financing

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21 Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data. (2018). Inclusive Data Charter. https://www.data4sdgs.org/sites/default/files/2018-08/IDC_onepager_Final.pdf

- To establish cross-cutting working groups of senior-level officials that comprehensively represent Ministries of Housing, Homelessness, Health, Migration, Labor and Employment, Local Governments, and other ministries or departments that oversee the implementation of related legislation and programmes. This working group should review and align policies, programmes, and communications for enhanced service delivery.

SPOTLIGHT ON: UNITED STATES INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) **coordinates and catalyzes the national response to homelessness, by convening and working in close partnership with 19 national ministries.**

These ministries include the Department of Homeland Security, which oversees immigration and citizenship services.

USICH works across national, state, and local governments to create partnerships, use resources in the most efficient and effective ways, and implement evidence-based best practices to achieve the goals of the United States Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness.

The council meets four times a year in addition to interagency working groups focused on key issues and activities. These meetings all focus on identifying high-impact strategies and aligning efforts.

- To review and revoke legislation that criminalizes, discriminates against, and otherwise causes the social exclusion of migrants.

SPOTLIGHT ON: GUIDELINES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE HOUSING

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing released guidelines on the implementation of this right. Guideline 5 specifically speaks to homelessness and criminalization.

"States should provide access to safe, secure and dignified emergency accommodation, with necessary supports and without discrimination on any grounds, including migration status, nationality, gender, family status, sexual identity, age, ethnic origin, disability, dependence on alcohol or drugs, criminal record, outstanding fines or health. States should take special measures to protect the rights of children in street situations.

Individuals and families should be provided access to adequate permanent housing so as not to be compelled to rely on emergency accommodation for extended periods.

States should prohibit and address discrimination on the ground of homelessness or other housing status and repeal all laws and measures that criminalize or penalize homeless people or behaviour associated with being homeless, such as sleeping or eating in public spaces. The forced eviction of homeless persons from public spaces and the destruction of their personal belongings must be prohibited. Homeless persons should be equally protected from interference with privacy and the home, wherever they are living."

- To pass legislation requiring a certain percentage of affordable housing stock be created or maintained annually, with a certain percentage of that stock reserved for migrant, refugee, and asylum-seeking individuals and families.

- To the extent possible, provide local governments with the financial resources needed to implement and enhance housing programmes and services for migrants. National governments should set and hold local governments and other funded agencies responsible for meeting particular outcomes, such as a reduction in the number of migrants experiencing street or shelter homelessness and an increase in the number of migrants who secure permanent accommodation. These outcomes should be regularly monitored, and programmes adapted according to the evidence.

- To review and revoke legislation that criminalizes, discriminates against, and otherwise causes the social exclusion of migrants.

For local municipalities

- To ensure that local statistics offices align and coordinate with the national statistics office on comprehensive enumeration strategies that collect disaggregated data on homelessness.

- To mirror the national cross-cutting working group and have a local version with their officers responsible for housing, homelessness, health, migration, labor and employment, and other ministries regularly meeting to review and align related programmes. Local governments should consider how to incentivise collaboration from businesses, academic, and civil society groups.

- Prohibit and monitor discrimination in access to housing on grounds of nationality, race, ethnicity, or religion and involve all members of society in the fighting against discrimination in the private housing market.

- To the extent possible, supplement national funding, providing financial resources to civil society organisations and other key stakeholders to implement and enhance housing programmes and services for migrants. Local governments should set and hold funded agencies responsible for meeting particular outcomes that reinforce any national outcome mandates. These outcomes should be monitored, and programmes adapted according to the evidence.

- Pass legislation requiring that a certain percentage of affordable housing stock be created or maintained annually, with a certain percentage of that stock reserved for migrant, refugee, and asylum-seeking individuals and families. Housing should be integrated within existing neighbourhoods with access to services and opportunities, not on the outskirts of the city or in undesirable locations.

- Promote the use of urban renewal and the use of vacant stock -where available- for migrant

SPOTLIGHT ON: TUNIS: THE OUKALAS PROJECT

Structured around two main objectives, the project aimed to improve living conditions for residents of the Medina, many of whom were internal migrants, whilst also restoring historic buildings and monuments in the neighbourhood. The project gave priority to vulnerable groups – defined as families living in buildings at imminent risk of collapse; very poor families; aged people living independently; and female-headed households.

The project included the following activities:

– The relocation of families living in Oukalas into 2,000 new social housing units equipped with basic services and infrastructure (electricity, potable water, sanitation, roads, public lightning, schools, markets etc.)
– The demolition of old buildings at risk of collapsing and replaced with newly constructed buildings to provide shelter for groups and individuals living in Oukalas
– The provision of housing loans to selected households for the renovation and rehabilitation of their apartments
– The restoration and rehabilitation of public buildings and historic monuments

- To consider creating and implementing programmes that welcome and integrate migrants into the fabric of the community, such as cultural events and activities, neighbourhood ambassador groups, and similar approaches.

- To consider establishing or expanding mediation strategies between perspective tenants and landlords.

SPOTLIGHT ON: MADRID, SPAIN'S PROVIVIENDA

Provivienda's Rental Mediation Programme mediates between property owners and individuals with low incomes and limited social support, to open up opportunities in the rental market that would not otherwise be available. The Programme particularly focuses on individuals with low incomes and limited social support, including refugees, migrants, and people experiencing homelessness.

Provivienda works with local authorities who refer people to them, and Provivienda works with landlords to arrange the accommodation. To attract landlords, Provivienda offers and arranges multi-risk insurance guarantees for rental payment, though they are rarely called upon as unpaid rents are rare in the programme. Agreed rents are approximately 20 per cent lower than market rents, but still attractive for landlords, particularly those whose property was standing empty.

Provivienda also provides a range of services including information and training to tenants and landlords on their rights and obligations under tenancy law; assessment of rental properties including valuations and furniture inventories, selection and invitation of applicants for identified properties, drafting of contracts and follow-up and assistance over problems, termination of contracts, defaults etc. These services are provided without any charge. It also makes arrangements for those single people who do not have friends to share with to move in with others, in 'Living Groups'.

For other stakeholders

Recognizing that preventing and ending homelessness for migrants will require a whole-of-society approach, it is further recommended that:

- People with the lived experience of homelessness and migration be incorporated at every level of program and policy design, as true partners in the creation and implementation of solutions.

SPOTLIGHT ON: CANADIAN LIVED EXPERIENCE LEADERSHIP NETWORK

The Canadian Lived Experience Leadership Network (CLELN) is a collective of diverse people with the lived experience of homelessness and expertise in grassroots organizing, advocacy, mentorship and peer support. Under a motto of "nothing about us without us," they work to ensure that the voices of people with lived experience are in the forefront of all matters regarding homelessness.

They value, listen to, and actualize the voices and ideas of people with the lived experience of homelessness and housing insecurity in policy discussions and public debate.

CLELN has developed training to support the transformation of homelessness programmes and services, and host webinars and disseminate resources on lived experience advocacy, equity and diversity policies, and employment and leadership development.

- Global and regional entities should generate joint programmes on migrants and cities, with a strong focus on local authorities, developing urban and housing policy under a human rights frameworks.

- Academic and civil society institutions should participate in the strengthening of the evidence-base on migrants' access to and outcomes as relates to adequate housing.

- Joint normative tools, capacity building modules, and field operations toolkits related to migration and homelessness should be developed.

- Entrepreneurs, businesses, technical schools and training programmes like apprenticeships should be utilized to promote a diverse economy and support new labour opportunities.

- The housing development, real estate, and financing sectors should be engaged to invest in opportunities that facilitate migrant access to adequate housing.

TOOLS AND RESOURCES FOR ADDITIONAL LEARNING ON HOMELESSNESS AND MIGRATION

Canada
Homeless Hub resources on "newcomers, including immigrants and refugees"
https://www.homelesshub.ca/about-homelessness/population-specific/newcomers

Europe
FEANTSA resources on the theme of migration
https://www.feantsa.org/en/resources/resources-database?theme=migration

United Kingdom
Homeless Link resources on "non-UK nationals"
https://www.homeless.org.uk/our-work/resources/non-uk-nationals

United States
Alliance to End Homelessness resources on immigration
https://endhomelessness.org/category/immigration/?post_type=resource

International
Institute of Global Homelessness Hub resources on "migration"
https://ighhub.org/search-library?k=migration

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