



Institutional profile: Habitat International Coalition 1976–2006

1. *Environment and Urbanization* Vol 2, No 1 (1990) contains a profile of Habitat International Coalition that provides more details of the Coalition's work prior to 1990. Vol 3, No 2 (1991) has a profile of the Coalition's Women and Shelter Network, and Vol 5, No 2 (1993) a profile of one of the regional focal points, the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights. The special issue of *Environment and Urbanization* on Evictions, Vol 6, No 1 (1994), was also developed in collaboration with Habitat International Coalition.

I. INTRODUCTION⁽¹⁾

Habitat International Coalition (HIC) is an independent, non-profit alliance of more than 300 organizations and individuals that has been working in the area of housing and human settlements for 30 years. The strength of the Coalition is based on its worldwide membership (it has members in 60 nations) and the fact that it brings together a range of civil society groups, including:

- social organizations and movements, associations and cooperatives that unite inhabitants struggling to implement their rights to the city, land and housing;
- civil or non-governmental organizations or unions that unite professionals and technicians who act in solidarity with people's causes and who orient their work to support habitat production and social management processes;
- academic groups, researchers and technicians focused on urban and housing issues and other issues such as the environment and gender, that cross the broad field of human habitat; and
- organizations and activists interested in promoting, defending and guaranteeing the fulfilment of the human rights linked to habitat, in particular in relation to the homeless, the evicted and displaced, women and society's most vulnerable sectors.

The Coalition is formed by organizations, but individuals who wish to support HIC activities can become "friends of HIC".

Based on advocacy and support for the urban poor, solidarity networking, popular mobilization, debate and analysis, HIC works to unite civil society in a shared commitment to ensuring secure housing and a liveable planet for all. Its work focuses on defending and implementing the human rights linked to housing/habitat, i.e. land, housing, clean water, sanitation, a healthy environment, access to health services, education, basic goods, transport and recreation, access to the means of subsistence and social protection, and preservation of social, natural, historic and cultural heritage.

The Coalition has a small secretariat in Santiago (Chile), and regional focal points for Anglophone and Francophone Africa, Asia (the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights), Latin America and the Caribbean, North

America and the Middle East/North Africa (Box 1). These coordinate communications, exchanges and campaigns.

Much of the Coalition's work is on particular themes and is organized by groups or networks – such as the Housing and Land Rights Network, the Women and Shelter Network, and the Habitat and Environment Committee, whose work is described in detail below. The Coalition also maintains working groups with less formal structures, which arise from members' initiatives and bring together HIC members with a common interest in the social production of housing as well as joint task-specific efforts such as the development of the Charter of the Right to the City.

In 2005, members initiated two new groups to exchange experiences of struggles and means of organization: the Working Group on Privatization and Globalization of Habitat, which focused on land, housing, utilities and the impact of free trade agreements in habitat; and the Task Force on Housing and Land Rights in War, Conflict and Foreign Occupation.

As all these groups have evolved at different stages of Habitat International Coalition's 30 years of activity, each has its own level and type of expertise to serve members. This includes research, joint advocacy, training and capacity-building, as well as the development and dissemination of common methodologies.

The Coalition's board meets once a year and includes: the president of the Coalition; one representative from each approved region having 100 members or less (regions with more than 100 members may have two representatives); one representative from each of the networks noted above; three delegates from the Women and Shelter Network; and two invited members from social movements. There is also an annual General Assembly of members that oversees the board and discusses policy issues. HIC's work is coordinated from its General Secretariat.

HIC promotes awareness of human settlement problems among the public and in forums at all political levels. It also exchanges information on problems and solutions, undertakes research, sponsors seminars and conferences, and acts as a contact between NGOs, international organizations and donor agencies with a specific interest in human settlements.

HIC works for the effective implementation of the civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights that allow people access to information and to organize and express themselves, and which guarantee respect and secure access to rural and urban environments for women, disabled and vulnerable groups, minorities, refugees, slum dwellers and migrants. HIC's constitution sets out objectives that it pursues at local, national, regional and international levels, including:

- Recognition, defence and full implementation of everyone's right, everywhere, to a secure place to live in peace and dignity. Legal protection of the human right to housing is a first step in supporting the efforts of communities producing housing. Since 1988, HIC has contributed to the work of UN human rights bodies in defining the right to housing, as well as states' obligations to respect and fulfil this right.
- Defending the human rights of the homeless, poor and inadequately housed. HIC promotes public awareness of human settlement problems, as well as potential solutions. It serves as a platform for formulating policies and strategies in the field of human settlements,

BOX 1
Habitat International Coalition secretariat and regional focal points

General Secretariat

Ana Sugranyes
Santiago Bueras 142, Of 22
Santiago, Chile
Tel/Fax: +56 2 664 1393; +56 2 664 9390
E-mail: gs@hic-net.org
Web: <http://www.hic-net.org>

Regional focal points

Asia

Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR)
73 Soi Sonthiwattana 4
Ladprao 110, Ladprao Road
Bangkok 10310, Thailand
Tel: +662 538 0919
Fax: +662 539 9950
E-mail: achr@loxinfo.co.th
Web: <http://www.achr.net/>

Africa (Anglophone)

Mazingira Institute
PO Box 14550
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254 2 443 226; 443 229; 443 219
Fax: +254 2 444 643
E-mail: mazinst@mitsuminet.com
Web: <http://www.mazinst.org/>

Africa (Francophone)

Environnement et Développement du Tiers-Monde (ENDA-RUP)
Rue Carnot 54
BP 3370
Dakar, Senegal
Tel: +22 1 822 0942
Fax: +22 1 823 5157
E-mail: rup@enda.sn
Web: <http://www.enda.sn/>

Europe

Ad-hoc committee. During transition, contact:
Knut Unger (unger@mwwit.de) or Ana Sugranyes (gs@hic-net.org)

continued

BOX 1
Continued

Latin America

Coalición Internacional para el Hábitat – México
 Tacuba #53, 1er piso – Colonia Centro
 06000 México DF
 Tel: +52 55 5512 1586
 Fax: +52 55 5512 6726
 E-mail: info@hic-al.org
 Web: <http://www.hic-al.org/>

Middle East/North Africa (MENA)

HIC-HLRN
 7 Muhammad Shafiq Street, No 8
 Muhandisin
 Cairo, Egypt
 Tel/Fax: +20 (0)2 347 4360
 E-mail: hic-mena@hic-mena.org
 Web: www.hic-mena.org

North America

National Alliance of HUD Tenants
 42 Seaverns Avenue
 Boston, MA 02130, USA
 Tel: +1 617 267 9564
 Fax: +1 617 522 4857
 E-mail : naht@saveourhomes.org
 Web: <http://www.saveourhomes.org/>

and serves as an advocate for these in international organizations and forums.

HIC's strategic focus includes:

- Developing relationships inside and outside HIC, through advocacy, promotion, facilitative, supportive and direct action, and strengthening civil society's role in improving housing and settlement development.
- Supporting community-based efforts to improve housing and settlements and alleviate poverty by assisting a broad range of people's actions addressing a set of core issues, namely housing, governance and poverty.
- Advocating for the recognition, defence and full implementation of housing rights to improve the quality of life of the poor, through the improvement of housing conditions, income enhancement and social empowerment; and to move towards a sustainable environment.

To attain these objectives, HIC works to:

- support campaigns for housing rights and against forced evictions;
- coordinate NGO conferences on housing and land rights;
- develop and apply monitoring and training methods;
- publish public information and advocacy materials;
- provide those involved in local struggles with access to the UN human rights programme and reporting mechanisms;
- support exchanges of expertise and strategies;
- facilitate networks and information exchanges;
- conduct national fact-finding missions;
- enable research and other projects; and
- support any other legal activity towards housing solutions.

Currently, activities concentrate on:

- solidarity actions for the human right to housing and land;
- the global implementation of popular and democratic strategies towards the planning, financing, construction and governance of human settlements, termed the “social production of habitat”;
- the discussion and implementation of the Charter of the Right to the City, which has been initiated in Latin America;
- participation at the World Social Forum and the Regional Social Forums; and
- information and experience exchange regarding social habitat issues all over the world.

The Coalition’s website has details of a wide range of its publications and the publications of its networks.⁽²⁾ It also has details of many of its member organizations.⁽³⁾

2. See http://www.hic-net.org/study_cases.asp

3. See <http://www.hic-net.org/linksResult.asp>

II. HIC’S ORIGINS

Habitat International Coalition originated in a committee formed by NGOs working on housing issues after the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972. It was formed to help organize and coordinate the NGO input into the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements in Vancouver in 1976. The active engagement of many NGOs and other civil society groups at the 1972 Stockholm conference set a precedent that was then followed at other global UN conferences from the early 1970s to the present. At the time, HIC was called the Habitat International Council and it had a major role in organizing Habitat Forum, the NGO forum at the 1976 Vancouver conference. After the conference, this committee recognized the need for continued encouragement and support for NGOs to pressure governments and international agencies to follow up the recommendations they had officially endorsed at the 1976 conference. It also sought to represent NGO interests at the new UN agency set up after the 1976 conference – initially called the UN Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and later the UN Human Settlements Programme.

Between 1976 and 1987, HIC grew but had difficulties widening its membership in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. During this period, many NGOs in these regions developed innovative ways of working with low-income groups and their community organizations to improve housing conditions or to put pressure on governments to address

housing needs. In 1985, HIC launched a project to document what NGOs were doing in this field, and this resulted in the production of a catalogue of many innovative projects and a book on “building community”.⁽⁴⁾ As part of the preparations for the UN International Year of Shelter for the Homeless in 1987, HIC members organized a conference in Limuru, Kenya, bringing representatives from over 40 NGOs from Africa, Asia and Latin America, and many international NGOs. This provided the opportunity to discuss how to make HIC more representative of NGOs from these regions – and those discussions stimulated a new structure for HIC and new work lines, including many of those described above; HIC’s secretariat moved to Mexico in 1988. The Coalition helped organize the NGO forum at the second UN Conference on Human Settlements in Istanbul in 1996 (the “UN City Summit”) and has been active in the World Urban Forums in Nairobi (2002) and Barcelona (2004), in the World Social Forums and in many other UN conferences.

During the UN’s Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, much of HIC’s efforts within the NGO Global Forum were focused on the Urbanization Forum, where more than 140 organizations from around the world signed the statement “Towards Just Democratic and Sustainable Cities, Towns and Villages”. During the 2002 World Social Forum, civil society representatives developed the World Charter for the Right to the City as an instrument to strengthen popular urban processes, the vindication of rights, and the articulation of struggles. The Right to the City goes beyond the conventional focus on improving peoples’ quality of life based on housing and the neighbourhood, to encompass quality of life and participation at the scale of the city and its rural surroundings, as a mechanism for protecting the population that lives in cities or regions with rapid urbanization processes. This implies initiating a new way of promoting, respecting, defending and fulfilling the civil, political, economic, social, cultural and environmental rights guaranteed in regional and international human rights instruments.

III. THE CONTEXT FOR HIC’S CURRENT WORK PROGRAMMES

It is estimated that 900 million urban dwellers and over one billion rural people now live in overcrowded and poor quality housing without adequate provision for water, sanitation, drainage or the collection of household waste.⁽⁵⁾ More than 1.2 billion people still have no access to safe drinking water, and 2.4 billion do not have adequate sanitation services.⁽⁶⁾ War, occupation, discrimination, development projects, privatization and economic reforms have evicted millions from their rightful homes and lands. The global number of slum dwellers is projected to increase five-fold between 1990 and 2020, the period during which the Millennium Development Goals seek to reach one hundred million slum dwellers with significant improvements to their lives.⁽⁷⁾

The privatization of social housing and of utilities, as well as the greater scarcity of social services, land and other resources under the constraints of economic globalization and neo-liberal policies, has affected lower-income groups in most of the world and has led to new types of insecurity. Public policies in a globalizing world increasingly reduce housing to a commodity, and measure the value of human settlements in business terms, excluding hundreds of millions of low-income

4. Turner, Bertha (1988) (editor), *Building Community – A Third World Case Book from Habitat International Coalition*, Habitat International Coalition, London.

5. UN-Habitat (2003), *The Challenge of Slums: Global Report on Human Settlements 2003*, Earthscan Publications, London.

6. UN-Habitat (2003), *Water and Sanitation in the World’s Cities; Local Action for Global Goals*, Earthscan Publications, London, 274 pages.

7. UN Millennium Project (2005), *A Home in the City. The Report of the Millennium Project Taskforce on Improving the Lives of Slum Dwellers*, Earthscan Publications, London and Sterling VA, 175 pages.

families from habitat policies, plans and programmes. Governments have limited capacity to influence the housing market, and there are insufficient low-cost houses available for sale or rent. This situation generally worsens in times of economic recession.

Popular sectors have developed their own strategies and mechanisms to resolve their vital needs. Social groups are driving innovative, self-managed initiatives that are capable of addressing the complex challenge of satisfying their needs and of integrating the management of their productive, cultural and community-living processes. The most visible results of the organized struggle for land, housing and basic services are homes, housing complexes and popular neighbourhoods, produced and managed under the direct control of the social organizations and communities living there.

For the poor, the housing issue is not resolved with increased housing stock measured in terms of, for instance, number of units or area of new housing or lengths of pipes. The struggle for housing involves an economic and social strategy of insertion in the city or in the rural environment, and is thus a struggle against poverty. It also represents the construction of a responsible and informed citizenship capable of influencing democratic management in their communities and cities. The local practices are testimonies to social effort and responsible citizenship and to struggles against marginalization, social and urban segregation, dispossession and private appropriation of common property goods.

People's own efforts to improve their habitat do not absolve the state of its obligations to citizens and residents. Governments have a duty to refrain from forced eviction, confiscation, discrimination, corruption, withholding of services, repression of human rights defenders, and other violations. International law and the commitments by governments to development targets made at global summits, including the Millennium Summit and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, recognize the right to adequate housing and land. Although it is rare for these to be conscientiously applied, these long-established obligations and instruments of guidance for states and society remain a resource and point of reference that should be applied to all aspects of development.

IV. HABITAT AS IF PEOPLE MATTER

Four perspectives are central to HIC's work:

The **social production and management** perspective concerns practices that affirm people as active agents of change, striving for human development within the context of global and local deprivation. These practices entail self-determination by people, their own regulation of the ends, means and relations of production, and the sharing of habitat goods and services that are essential for the maintenance of human dignity for all.

The **human dignity and rights** perspective seeks to enhance the implementation of international consensus, commitments and obligations, including those relating to the universal entitlements of individuals and groups – women, men, youth and children. These human rights reflect and help to secure freedom and well-being, skills, wealth, power and respect. It involves the defence and fulfilment of human

rights, specifically the right to adequate housing, which includes secure tenure.

The **sustainable environment** perspective involves enhancing the implementation of international consensus, commitments and obligations to ensure social, economic and environmental sustainability of “habitat as human settlements” and “habitat as planet Earth”.

The **gender equality** perspective involves enhancing the implementation of international consensus, commitments and obligations to ensure the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, including domestic violence in all situations. It promotes equal access of women and men to social, economic, cultural and environmental features of habitat, and the effective participation of women in decision-making.

V. HIC INITIATIVES

a. Social production and management of habitat

HIC'S work on social production and management of habitat seeks to derive practical lessons from the compilation and analysis of “people's processes” in initiating, designing, building and maintaining local environments. These experiences, which build upon local social resources and demonstrate local social reliance and ingenuity, generate and promote methods and strategies that then can be shared and replicated across regions. More than 200 people-centred experiences in the production, improvement and management of habitat have been documented by HIC since the early 1980s in publications such as *Building Community* (1988), *Building the City with the People* (1997), *Anatomies of a Social Movement* (2004) and *From Marginality to Citizenship* (2005).⁽⁸⁾

b. The Housing and Land Rights Network

The Housing and Land Rights Network is a specialized group of HIC members who cooperate to develop methods and share strategies for using human rights to promote and defend adequate housing and land for deprived persons and groups. The main purpose of its global programme is to promote throughout the HIC and beyond the human right to adequate housing as the right for “*everyone, everywhere to gain and sustain a secure home and community in which to live in peace and dignity.*”

This network has carried out several fact-finding missions and monitoring exercises to further develop the entitlements related to the human right to adequate housing. In 2005, the network launched the Housing and Land Rights Monitoring Toolkit to promote a practical methodology for monitoring and resolving human settlement problems within a framework of legal obligations of the state and its compliance with international standards, in particular the Habitat Agenda,⁽⁹⁾ pertaining to the application of human rights in the field of human settlements. The intent here is to translate these legal achievements into practical gains for people. Since 2003, this network has worked with the UN Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing to enhance the regional consultations on “women's human rights to adequate housing and land.”

8. See reference 4; also Habitat International Coalition (1997), *Building the City with the People: New Trends in Community Initiatives in Cooperation with Local Governments*, HIC, Mexico City; Schelcha, Joseph (2004) (editor), *Anatomies of a Social Movement*, HLRN/HIC, Cairo; and Habitat International Coalition (2005), *From Marginality to Citizenship: 41 Cases of Social Production and Management of Habitat*, HIC-AL, Mexico.

9. This was the main document that was formally endorsed by governments at Habitat II, the second UN Conference on Human Settlements (also called the UN City Summit) in Istanbul in 1996.

BOX 2

Documents available from the website of the Housing and Land Rights Network, Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

The headings below are those within the website: <http://www.hic-mena.org/documents.asp>, from which documents can be accessed and downloaded.

Legal sources of the human right to housing

- Constitutional provisions for the right to adequate housing (MENA and other countries)
- Domestic legislation for the right to adequate housing (MENA and other countries)
- International human rights law
- International humanitarian law
- Jurisprudence (MENA and other countries)

Reports

- Fact-finding mission reports
- Government reports
- HIC reports
- NGO parallel reports
- HIC press
- HIC statements
- Conference reports

UN documents

- Political bodies
 - General Assembly
 - Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
 - Security Council
 - Commission on Human Rights

Factual bodies

- Sub-commission on Promotion and Protection of Human Rights
- Special Rapporteurs
 - Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing

Legal bodies

- International Court of Justice
- International Criminal Court

Treaty bodies

- Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- Committee on the Rights of the Child
- Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD)
- Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women
- Committee against Torture
- Other

Implementing bodies

- UNDP (United Nations Development Programme)
- UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme)
- UN-Habitat (United Nations Human Settlements Programme)
- ESCWA (Economic and Social Committee of Western Asia)

Secretariat

continued

BOX 2 Continued

The website also has documents under various headings for each country in the Middle East and North Africa, and documents available under the following headings:

- Discrimination in housing
- Forced evictions
- Foreign occupation (and comparable forms of alien domination)
- Globalization and economic and social rights
- Housing finance and microcredit
- Human right to adequate housing
- Monitoring economic and social rights
- Population transfer and demographic manipulation
- Refugees (and IDPs, including return and restitution of property rights)
- Compilation of economic, social and cultural rights conditions of
Palestinians
- Right to land
- Social mobilization and social movements
- Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing
- Women's rights to housing and land
- International cooperation (as a human rights treaty obligation)
- Children and the right to housing
- Popular sources, claiming the human right to land and housing
- Migrant workers and the right to adequate housing
- Indigenous peoples
- Solutions
 - Budget analysis
 - Strategy database (housing rights cases)
 - Loss matrix
 - HLRN housing and land rights monitoring "toolkit"

SOURCE: <http://www.hic-mena.org/documents.asp>

Building upon HIC's long experience of advocating for indigenous housing and land rights in Palestine, this network also addresses special needs across the Middle East/North Africa region by promoting rights-based solutions for local and regional housing struggles. The HIC–Middle East and North Africa website provides a self-service database for members and the public, including resources in Arabic, not found elsewhere, on housing and economic/social/cultural rights. It also allows network members access to the membership database, enabling them to find partners for skills and expertise exchange, and for campaigns and other activities in building housing and solving land rights problems.

The Housing and Land Rights Network shares with HIC a set of objectives that bind and shape their commitment to communities struggling to secure housing and improve their well-being and living conditions as a human right. The network seeks to:

- advocate the recognition, defence and full implementation of everyone's right everywhere to a secure place to live in peace and dignity;
- promote public awareness about human settlement problems and needs, globally;
- defend the human rights of the poor, displaced, homeless and inadequately housed; and
- maintain a progressive platform for formulating common housing rights strategies.

To implement these objectives, coordinating bodies help network members by providing them with services that maximize their chances of defending people's rights. These services seek to build capacity and practical skills while linking network partners through reciprocal solidarity actions, as well as building broader, external alliances to advocate for the human right to adequate housing at all possible levels. To reach these goals, and to respond to members' demands and initiatives, the network has developed a range of tools and practical activities offering:

- technical and material assistance for members to conduct effective local, national, regional and international housing rights campaigns;
- human resource development, human rights education, and training in programming, monitoring and self-representation skills;
- exchanges and dissemination of member experiences, "best practices" and problem-solving strategies;
- action-oriented research, production and distribution of knowledge in the form of practical guidance and country assessments for use in promoting and defending the human right to housing;
- opportunities to participate in international forums and UN human rights bodies in order to develop, monitor and report in solidarity on standards relating to the human right to adequate housing, and to clarify state obligations to respect, protect, promote and fulfil that right;
- development of the legal framework for protecting the human right to adequate housing and land, and for building housing solutions, including social production of habitat, for communities across the network;
- a system of urgent action appeals to members and others to act in practical solidarity in defending against forced eviction and other violations; and
- access to regional and international human rights mechanisms, including preparation and presentation of parallel reports to UN treaty-monitoring bodies, and cooperation with Special Rapporteurs.

The Housing and Land Rights Network maintains practical links at three levels. The network is primarily dedicated to maintaining the cooperation of HIC members interested in the human rights approach to human development. However, it also plays a wider coalition-building role, mainstreaming the concept of the human right to adequate housing universally throughout HIC. As a strategic principle, this network also maintains productive relationships with other networks and coalitions globally, joining forces and pooling resources in the pursuit of common human rights values and goals.

BOX 3
**Secretariat and regional programmes for the Housing and
 Land Rights Network**

Housing and Land Rights Global Coordination Office

7 Muhammad Shafiq St, No 8

Muhandisin, Cairo, Egypt

Tel/Fax: +20 (0)2 347 4360

E-mail: hln@hln.org

Web: <http://www.hic-mena.org/home.htm>

Middle East/North Africa (MENA) Programme

7 Muhammad Shafiq St, No 8

Muhandisin, Cairo, Egypt

Tel/Fax: +20 (0)2 347 4360

E-mail: hic-mena@hic-mena.org

Web: <http://www.hic-mena.org/home.htm>

South Asia Regional Programme (SARP)

HLRN-INDIA

B-28 Nizammuddin East

New Delhi 110013, India

Tel/Fax: +91 (0)11 2435 8492

E-mail: hic-sarp@hic-sarp.org

Latin America Programme (LAP)

HIC-América Latina

Tacuba No 53, 1er Piso

Colonia Centro

06000 México DF

Tel: +52 (0)55 12 15 86

Fax: +52 (0)55 12 38 42

E-mail: hic-al@hic-al.org

Web: www.hic-al.org

Sub-Saharan Africa Programme (SSAP)

c/o Mazingira Institute

PO Box 14550

Nairobi, Kenya

Tel: +254 (0)2 443 226; 443 229; 443 219

Fax: +254 (0)2 444 643

E-mail: mazinst@mitsuminet.com

Web: www.mazinst.org

In addition to its global programme, the network operates regional programmes in the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) and South Asia, as well as emerging regional initiatives in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa. Box 3 gives details of contact addresses.

c. The Women and Shelter Network

The Women and Shelter Network is a group of organizations that recognize the particular struggle of women in accessing land and housing and in participating in all aspects of human settlements development.

Member organizations support and work with low-income communities, and link to provide mutual capacity-building and solidarity both regionally and globally. This network has developed initiatives highlighting and strengthening women's participation in the struggle for land and urban services, and has had a formal consulting relationship with UN-Habitat since 1989.

The mission of the Women and Shelter Network is *"to unite, promote and support women and their organizations in the development of human settlements that improve women's and a community's quality of life."* The main achievements have been: the production of knowledge and proposals for public policies, including issues of housing, territorial and urban development including the gender approach; the development of toolkits for mainstreaming the gender perspective; and strengthening local processes for reinforcing women's leadership and participation in the political arena. This network has carried its message successfully to multilateral conferences of the United Nations such as CEDAW and the World Urban Forums, and has participated actively in international forums such as the World Social Forums.

When the HIC board was restructured in 1987, to ensure that it adequately represented civil society groups in Africa, Asia and Latin America, one of its first actions was to create the Women and Shelter Group, in order to formulate a plan of action for HIC in the area of women and shelter. In its first meeting in New Delhi, India, in 1988, the group worked to identify priority concerns, formulate a plan of action and define a structure that would allow and encourage women in community-based organizations to identify shelter priorities, exchange experiences, acquire information and skills and influence shelter policy and planning. This plan of action was presented to the HIC board, where agreement was reached on forming the Women and Shelter Network and on the representation by three members of the Women and Shelter Group on the HIC board. The network's group was formally adopted as an HIC sub-committee, and women and shelter representatives were named for the other three sub-committees. Its work programme was developed at subsequent meetings.

The Women and Shelter Network works at local, national, regional and international levels:

- to promote and strengthen horizontal exchanges among members;
- to support lobbying for land and housing rights for women;
- to link global processes with local action;
- to provide greater access to information and training on human settlements;
- to create public awareness about the priorities of women and habitat;
- to voice the concerns of women in low-income communities;
- to ensure women's concerns are policy priorities for agents working in human settlement development;
- to develop and deliver campaigns that ensure that policies support women's priorities; and
- to promote the development of disaggregated data and clear indicators that measure women's access to land and shelter.

The network is composed of initiative centres that actively promote the objectives and activities of the network through concrete work in their countries. These name a regional or sub-regional reference centre

that, together, form the Women and Shelter Group, the directing body of the network. The group formulates policies and designates the International Secretariat to facilitate and support the network's activities. From 1990 to 1995, the network was coordinated by a secretariat in the Mazingira Institute in Kenya; in 1996, the secretariat moved to Fedevivienda, Colombia, for an interim period and, in 1997, it was transferred for a three-year term to the Women's Advancement Trust, Tanzania. Membership is open to all organizations and individuals addressing issues of human settlements who have or want to develop a focus on women. Box 4 gives details of contact points.

BOX 4

Contact points for the Women and Shelter Network

For more information on the network, see <http://www.hicwas.kabissa.org/>

Africa (Anglophone)

Women Advancement Trust (WAT)

Ufipa Street, Kinondoni

PO Box 5914

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Tel: 2 55 22 2667091

Fax: 2 55 22 2775363

E-mail: wat@ud.co.tz

Web: <http://www.kabissa.org/was>

Africa (Francophone)

Réseau Femme et Habitat

CONGEH

BP 14836

Yaoundé, Cameroon

Tel: +237 223 9828

Fax: +237 223 4677

E-mail: cdcongeh@yahoo.fr

Latin America

Red Mujer y Hábitat

9 de Julio 2482

X 5003 CQR

Córdoba, Argentina

Tel/Fax: +54 351 4891313

E-mail: gem@agora.com.ar and ciscsa@arnet.com.ar

Web: www.redmujer.org.ar

Middle East and North Africa (MENA)

Arab Women's Habitat Network

PO Box 17218

Amman, Jordan

Tel : +962 795 350094

Fax : +962 646 28938

E-mail: maiasfour@yahoo.com

South Asia

Coordination Women and Adequate Housing

c/o Shivani Choudry

E-mail: schaudhry@hic-sarp.org

10. See <http://www.hicwas.kabissa.org/formtray.html>

11. The work of this network is coordinated by ENDA-RUP, Ecopole Ouest Africaine Jacques Bugnicourt, Rue Félix Eboué, BP 27083, Dakar, Senegal; tel: +22 1 822 0942; fax: +22 1 823 5157; e-mail: rup@enda.sn; web: <http://www.enda.sn>

Membership of the network is not limited to NGOs or to HIC members. Any individual or member of an organization working on human settlement issues (including land, shelter, health, income generation, credit services or community organization), who has a focus on women's particular problems and is concerned with taking or supporting action at a community level, can join the network.⁽¹⁰⁾

d. Habitat and Sustainable Environment Network

The main objectives of the Habitat and Sustainable Environment Network⁽¹¹⁾ (formerly called the Habitat and Environment Committee) are:

- To establish linkage between issues of habitat and environmentally sustainable development in order to improve the quality of people's living conditions in communities; and to create a meeting place for supporting action – particularly that aimed at poor residents of marginalized human settlements – by acquiring experiences, resources, technologies and skills that enable all active and organized promoters of human settlement development to fight poverty.
- To help gather information in order to draw up detailed guidelines on how people and organizations can be better empowered and integrated into the decision-making apparatus.
- To devise tools for facilitating interaction between the network members so that they can better serve communities, by assisting them in technical matters and helping them gain access to knowledge and communication skills, in order to promote new modalities of participation in projects for developing human settlements.

Networking is rooted in regional reference centres: CINARA for Latin America, Barefoot College for Asia, the Mazingira Institute for Anglo-phone Africa, and the European Social Forum/Global Water Contract for high-income nations.

During its first stage, this network focused on the integration of issues concerning habitat and environment, and lobbying activities at the international level starting at the UN Earth Summit in 1992 and at the UN City Summit in 1996. It also had a lead role within civil society regarding questions relating to water and human rights at the UN Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002. The network has implemented a global research action project on pro-poor governance in water, sanitation and waste management. After the Johannesburg Summit, its work has focused on such themes as:

- human rights implementation and globalization, including water campaigns and the impact of water privatization (e.g. in Cochabamba, Bolivia), and people under occupation;
- social habitat watch activities to monitor implementation at regional, national and local levels, including the roles of civil society and private enterprises. This includes monitoring the Cities Feeding People initiatives, and urban agriculture with new global trends of inclusiveness of urban development; and
- sustainable development and people under occupation.

In order to deepen findings regarding pro-poor governance for water delivery and waste management, as well as bringing specific inputs to the

global agenda, the network will focus more on water, sanitation, waste management and consumption issues in urban development.

VI. HABITAT INTERNATIONAL COALITION PUBLICATIONS

Learning from experiences and sharing information is key to HIC. HIC publications focus on people's assets and knowledge through case studies, experiences and regional and thematic cross analysis. It also includes different inputs for defending, enhancing and fighting for housing and land rights.

- Turner, Bertha (editor) (1988) (with the Introduction and Conclusions by John F C Turner), *Building Community: A Third World Case Book*, Community Books, London.
- Habitat International Coalition (1987), "Limuru Declaration", HIC, Limuru, Kenya, April.
- Habitat International Coalition (1992), "Towards Just Democratic and Sustainable Cities, Towns and Villages", NGO Global Forum, HIC, FCOC, Forum for Urban Reform, Rio de Janeiro.
- Habitat International Coalition (1997), *Building the City with the People: New Trends in Community Initiatives in Cooperation with Local Governments*, HIC, Mexico City, México.
- Schechla, Joseph (editor) (2005), *Methodology for Monitoring the Human Right to Adequate Housing: The "Tool Kit"*, Housing and Land Rights Network, Cairo.
- Various authors (2005), "World charter for the human right to the city", document for debate, Barcelona, September.
- Habitat International Coalition (2005), *From Marginality to Citizenship: 41 Cases of Social Production and Management of Habitat*, HIC, México.

HIC has prompted debates that have contributed to:

- The General Comment 4 to the CESCR: The Right to Adequate Housing, Art.11 (1) of 13/12/91, [http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/\(symbol\)/CESCR+General+comment+4.En?OpenDocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/tbs/doc.nsf/(symbol)/CESCR+General+comment+4.En?OpenDocument)
- The Habitat Agenda – Habitat II Conference in Istanbul, Turkey, 3–14 June 1996, http://www.unhabitat.org/declarations/habitat_agenda.asp

Since 2003, HIC has been working closely with the Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing for the Regional Consultations on Women and Adequate Housing: <http://www.ohchr.org/english/issues/housing/women.htm> and <http://www.hic-net.org/indepth.asp?PID=33>

VII. STRATEGIC LINES FOR 2005–2007

Certain strategic lines were adopted at the board meeting in Cairo in September 2005, which will help to integrate the long-term programmes and orient activities over the next three years.

- Promote the social production of habitat – which will include advocating for "cities without slums", by advocating a rights-based and people-centered approach for development assistance.

- Continued monitoring by HIC membership and national and regional “observatories” to document the experience of different programmes, actors and legislative processes pertaining to people-centred development of habitat, and to monitor the activities of government and private market investors in the field of real-estate.
- Campaign to win explicit clarification that Target 11 of MDG 7 (Reduction in the number of people living under slum conditions by 100 million by 2015) refers to a net reduction in the number of people living under slum conditions (i.e. including preventing the anticipated increase of 500 million more people living in slums), and to permanently redress the problems of those without homes in this context.
- Campaign globally and at other levels against forced evictions and homelessness and their causes, from globalization to the negative effects of privatization in all their forms (including policies of international agencies), and support political and social movements that oppose such trends as megaprojects, privatization of social housing and utilities.
- Support civil society in confronting arbitrary and authoritarian regimes and failed or weak states, through networking in the field (training and building capacity) and solidarity campaigns. In particular, denounce and oppose military occupation and violations of housing and land rights, including forced eviction and the destruction of habitat. Emphasize the economic, social and cultural rights of minorities, and create special programmes, including activist training.
- Link HIC campaigns for housing and land rights and against forced evictions with campaigns for the right to water, sanitation and the right to the city, as part of an holistic approach to urban and rural habitat.
- Deepen HIC’s relations within the World Social Forums and related activities (i.e. the process of the Charter for the Right to the City), and participate in the three decentralized global forums in 2006.
- Promote participatory global monitoring and advocacy campaigns, exchange programmes implementing these and other agendas such as Habitat II and Local Agenda 21, and prepare for upcoming events such as the 30th Anniversary of HIC (i.e. Campaign on Land and Housing). Network with other global networks to achieve these goals.
- Mainstream a gender-based approach and strengthen women’s leadership at all levels for influencing public policies. Change the concepts and the inherited cultures concerning violence against women in relation to housing and land rights and the right to the city. Strengthen the Women and Shelter Network and its participation in all HIC programmes.

For more details, see the HIC website: www.hic-net.org

President: Enrique Ortíz
 Tacuba #53, 1er piso – Colonia Centro
 06000 México DF
 Tel: +52 55 5512 1586
 Fax: +52 55 5512 6726
 E-mail: president@hic-net.org

General Secretariat: Ana Sugranyes
Santiago Bueras 142, Of 22
Santiago, Chile
Tel/Fax: +56 2 664 1393; +56 2 664 9390
E-mail: gs@hic-net.org