



Invitation to join the Asia Habitat Dialogues: shaping sustainable, equitable, and resilient habitats

The 'Asia Habitat Dialogues' is an initiative by the Working People's Coalition (WPC) and Habitat International Coalition (HIC) to facilitate regional political reflection, solidarity and to identify joint priorities and action on habitat-related matters.

The scale and scope of urbanisation processes in Asia is deepening inequality through disruptive changes to existing systems. As the demand on resources such as housing, basic services and infrastructure increases, the pressure on inhabitants and the environment becomes untenable.

There is an emergent and pressing necessity, therefore, to review our conception of urban and rural habitats across Asia with a more comprehensive lens. This entails approaching habitat, not as a mere dwelling place or as physical infrastructure, but to build regional and cross-sectoral approaches to human settlements that emphasise rural-urban linkages and the interlinkages between shelter, basic services, food, social protection and livelihoods. Such an approach also includes a deeper interaction with the political, socio-economic systems that influence the governance, sustainability, accessibility, use, and control of territories. It takes into account specific geographies and histories in the evolution of alternatives.

Although civil society organisations, local governments, political parties, academics and practitioners have been working on various habitat-related issues in Asia, approaches are often siloed. There is a need to develop more comprehensive, active and grounded approaches that analyses various problems, policies and experiences in the different national and sub-regional contexts in order to find and implement solutions which are becoming increasingly critical and urgent. The challenge lies in fostering such a collaboration, encouraging diverse actors to jointly understand current habitat landscapes, build solidarity, exchange knowledge, and formulate common narratives and strategies across all spheres of governance.

To achieve this collaboration, the Working Peoples' Coalition (WPC) and Habitat International Coalition (HIC) are organising the **Asia Habitat Dialogues**. The purpose is to contribute to the cultivation of liveable, equitable, and resilient rural and urban habitats across Asia. We are striving to create a pan-Asian process that can facilitate political reflection and learning, regional solidarity, the identification of regional priorities and joint action. The intention behind the Asia Habitat Dialogue process is to craft an arena for consistent interaction and action. Ultimately, we aim to distil our shared insights into a guiding manifesto and a process for joint advocacy and campaigns throughout the region.

The Asia Habitat Dialogues process includes four key phases:

1. **Mapping the landscape of habitat-related actors, issues and approaches in Asia:** this entails mapping relevant actors, pertinent issues, and diverse approaches within Asian housing and land organisations. Our focus will be on understanding shared issues and priorities to inform the content of the online dialogues and identify potential areas for collaboration and action.
2. **Online dialogues:** the online dialogues are envisioned as spaces of horizontal exchange and will focus on the below thematic areas (which will be further complemented by thematics emerging from the mapping). Each dialogue session will feature an input to stimulate discussion, with the aim of collectively identifying initial regional priority areas for each thematic..
 1. **Sustainable development and livable cities in Asia:** Introductory session to analyse cross-cutting trends in Asia, involving urbanisation in Asian cities, SDGs, how Asian cities can support a sustainable way of life for people and the planet and how we can envision this together. ..
 2. **Housing, land, and public services:** towards affordable, adequate, accessible, and resilient solutions
 3. **Habitat, caste, class, and gender:** addressing intersectional challenges in Asia
 4. **Social protection, guaranteed decent livelihoods, migration,** informality and the world of work
 5. **Ecology, climate justice, indigenous communities and just transitions for working people**
 6. **People-centric resilient planning, building and regulation**
 7. **Urban-rural continuum:** agrarian distress, displacement, dispossession
 8. **Alternative approaches,** community-led initiatives, and mobilisation strategies for sustainable futures
3. **In-person gathering of Asia-based organisations:** This in-person gathering is envisioned to take place with a representative and cross-sectoral group of regular and engaged participants of the online dialogue sessions. The venue and the dates for this meeting are yet to be decided. Based on the priority areas emerging from the various online dialogue sessions, the group will elaborate a regional manifesto and process that could possibly be launched later at the World Social Forum in February 2024 in Kathmandu, Nepal.
4. **Invitation to join HIC co-learning spaces:** In parallel to the Asia Habitat Dialogue process, HIC will be hosting two online co-learning spaces between September and November 2023, one on Climate Justice and the other on Social Production of Habitat. The participants of the Asia Habitat Dialogues are invited to join these co-learning spaces to engage with cross-regional and global mobilisation and action on these two thematics, enriching the Asia Habitat Dialogues with a global perspective and the co-learning spaces with Asia-based perspectives.

Through these steps, we hope to forge a common vision, and foster a stronger, united voice for sustainable and equitable rural and urban habitats in Asia. We believe that this process is essential given the growing crisis of sustainability of people and the planet on the Asian continent.

We invite you to join us on this journey by participating in the mapping of Asian organisations working on Habitat. Please tell us about your work by completing this [google form](#)

For queries please contact

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