

Annual Report 2020



2020 highlights in numbers	3
Our mission and objectives	5
The World Habitat Awards	7
Innovating, scaling up and transfer	10
Ending Street Homelessness in Europe	15
Global community-led housing	22
TECHO	27
Our land	29
Reducing our carbon emissions	30
Our commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion	31
Governance	32
Financial review	33
Future plans	34
How our activities deliver public benefit	36

2020 highlights in numbers



996 households

have improved housing as a direct result of our work



994 people

in permanent accommodation in our campaign cities



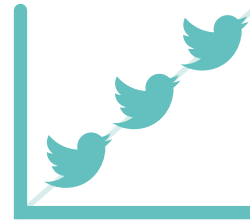
7 groups

supported to develop community-led housing



1,915 people

attended World Habitat seminars and events



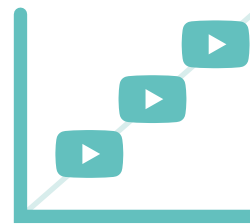
54% increase

in Twitter reach from 2019



19% increase

in unique visitors to our website from 2019



35% increase

in views on our YouTube Channel from 2019



Viviendas para las
Entidades Sociales,
Barcelona

Our mission and objectives

We are passionate about challenging the chronic injustice of the one-in-seven people across the world who live without a proper home.

Our mission is to help those who live on the streets; those who have lost their homes due to war and disasters; and those who simply cannot afford to live where they need to.

Everything we do is focused on understanding what works and getting solutions to the people who need them most. This annual report and accounts tells the story of our progress over the last year towards achieving that mission.

Safe and secure housing is a human right; without it, people cannot fulfil their true life-potential. For a large proportion of the world's population, poverty, conflict, natural disasters, and the growing impacts of the climate emergency deny people that fundamental right. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought the inequalities in housing into sharp focus. A secure home is not just a necessity to keep safe from the virus, but it provides resilience to the economic and social impacts that the pandemic has unleashed.

UN-Habitat estimates that around a billion people currently live in unsafe and unhealthy homes and millions more have no home at all. It does not have to be like this. Despite setbacks caused by COVID-19, over the last few decades the world has made huge progress in social development. Billions have been lifted out of poverty. Life expectancy has soared, and more people than ever are safely housed. A world where everyone has a safe and secure home is a goal that is within reach.



However, there are new dangers that threaten this progress. Old political and economic certainties have retreated, weakening people's rights and increasing the risk of conflict.

The economic impacts of the pandemic have weakened people's security, increasing the risks of evictions and homelessness. A rising global population is straining the world's resources and the climate is becoming increasingly unstable and unpredictable. These tensions are felt first by the poorest people who can least afford to insulate themselves from the effects.

However, the poorest are often the most resourceful, and their communities are often the strongest. In our experience, with the right financial and social support, most communities have the potential to solve their own housing struggles and find a path out of poverty. Indeed, housing is always better, and the impacts on communities more significant, if they are shaped by those who are directly affected.

Solutions to most of the world's housing problems already exist, but most communities do not have access to the knowledge, support, expertise and experience to make full use of them. World Habitat is a catalyst, seeking out solutions to the world's housing problems – helping them to grow and develop, and then transfer them to communities in new places where they are needed most.

In 2020 we sought to have a greater positive impact than ever before. We sought to develop and adapt our approach to the changed housing needs, and the limitations imposed on us as a result of COVID-19. Our work – which this report details – continued to implement the strategy approved by our Trustees, that has guided our work from 2019 to 2021.



Our strategy sets our objectives to:

- Seek out and develop new and effective solutions to the world's greatest housing challenges.
- Support emerging innovative ideas and projects to develop and grow, so they help more people.
- Invest in housing projects to help them reach more people.
- Promote proven housing solutions and help to transfer them to places where they are needed most.
- Work around the world to develop what works and to discover new solutions to making housing safe and secure.

The World Habitat Awards

Seeking out and developing new and effective solutions to the world's greatest housing challenges

The World Habitat Awards were established in 1985 as our contribution to the UN International Year of Shelter for the Homeless and we have operated it every year since in partnership with UN-Habitat.

With entries from across the world, the Awards identify, recognise and showcase some of the very best solutions to the many housing challenges people and communities face.

The 2019 Gold Award winners were presented with their awards in February 2020 at the 10th Session of the World Urban Forum in Abu Dhabi, UAE. 2019 was the first year that the World Habitat Awards consisted of Gold, Silver and Bronze Awards.

The two Gold Award winners were: *Restoration of dignity and human rights of indigenous tribal community* in Karnataka, India and *Viviendas para las Entidades Sociales* in Barcelona, Spain.



Restoration of dignity and human rights of indigenous tribal community is a project designed to break the cycle of caste-based oppression in Karnataka, India.

The Koraga tribal community suffered centuries of oppression under India's historic caste system. While caste-based discrimination is technically illegal today, many of the practices and prejudices remain. The community had been subject to land expulsions, had few livelihood opportunities and was suffering from malnutrition. All of these issues contributed to the continued practice of Ajalu, where Koragas were made to eat leftover food from upper caste households mixed with hair, fingernails and other inedible substances.

ActionAid India, with the Koraga Federation and Samagra Grameena Ashram (SGA), worked with the Koraga people and nine other tribal communities in Karnataka state to break the cycle of caste-based oppression through social and economic empowerment. This was primarily achieved by supporting indigenous communities in accessing government schemes to which they were entitled.

Under this initiative, more than \$5 million USD of support has been generated for the Koraga people and other tribal communities in the form of housing grants, pension entitlements, nutrition and food security schemes, land, agricultural support and education.

Thousands of acres of land have been secured for tribal communities and 19,000 people have accessed grants to build homes. This has acted as a foundation for them to rebuild their lives. Enhanced access to state-sponsored nutrition programmes have improved food security and health among the Koraga community. More children attend school and have access to scholarships, while Koraga women hold leadership positions within the community and more than 1,000 have been supported to become self-sufficient.



As a result, marginalised tribes are now able to resist oppressive practices and access their basic human rights, restoring their dignity and transforming their lives for generations to come.

“ I love World Habitat ... for it's true, unique and outstanding work in securing affordable, safe and quality housing throughout the globe. ... and [to] find out answers.”

Ashok Kumar, Samagra Grameena Ashram

Viviendas para las Entidades Sociales **increases affordable housing in Catalonia** **by renovating empty homes.**

Millions of tourists visit Barcelona each year, choosing to stay in apartments advertised on short-term letting platforms and playing an unwitting role in the city's growing housing crisis. Each home taken out of circulation for local people to rent increases the pressure on affordable housing in Catalonia, which currently has a shortfall of 170,000 homes. At the same time, 450,000 homes lie empty. As unemployment rises and incomes fall, those who do have a home are at increasing risk of eviction and homelessness.



The *Viviendas para las Entidades Sociales* project, run by **Hàbitat3**, increases the supply of affordable housing in the region by acquiring and renovating empty homes or securing leases and offering them to charities working with vulnerable people. Hàbitat3 renovates the homes in collaboration with local social enterprises who train socially excluded people to help them find work in the future. It manages the homes while the charities select the tenants, providing ongoing support in areas such as mental health, drug addiction, disability, gender violence and migration. So far, Hàbitat3 has worked with 28 charities across Barcelona and the surrounding area.

Hàbitat3 now manages 100 properties through the project, providing a home for 187 vulnerable tenants. Hàbitat3 continues to work with Barcelona City Council and the Catalan Government to ensure it can provide more homes and give more people the opportunity to build a better life.

The World Habitat Awards Gold Winners' trophies were presented to Xavier Mauri Coll and Natalia Martinez Mustienes from Hàbitat3 and to Nandini Krishnaswamy, Sandeep Chachra (from Action Aid India), Ashok Kumar (representing Samagra Grameena Ashram) and Shakuntala (representing the Koraga community) by Victor Kisob, Assistant Secretary-General, Deputy Executive Director for UN-Habitat.

Leilani Farha, the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing (at the time of the awards) and one of the judges of the World Habitat Awards, appeared at the presentation by video message to congratulate the Gold Award winners for their innovative work.

Innovating, scaling up and transfer

We will bring people and ideas together to help transfer ideas to new places where they are needed most

Pakistan Chulab project



World Habitat is committed to helping projects develop and grow, and to finding and sharing great practice from around the world, so that practice can be transferred to where it is needed most.

Through our exChange events, we facilitate global learning on outstanding housing solutions, which are open to housing practitioners, researchers or policymakers with an interest in exchanging and transferring ideas, methods and proposals. The exChanges often feature our Gold Award winners and provide a practical, in-depth understanding of the technical, social and financial aspects of innovative approaches to overcoming housing challenges and helping projects and programmes to develop their work. As a result, many of the participants adapt and transfer relevant elements of the approaches to their own context.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions this year, World Habitat facilitated all exChange sessions virtually.



Fostering organisational growth and expanding programme scope in Barcelona.

In 2019, Hàbitat3 was awarded the World Habitat Gold Award for its programme *Viviendas para las Entidades Sociales*, which led to its participation in an exChange collaboration.

Hàbitat3, supported by *Taula d'Entitats del Tercer Sector Social de Catalunya*, is a social housing provider and manager that helps people, particularly those from vulnerable communities, access a decent home. In its Gold Award programme, Hàbitat3 renovated empty homes in Barcelona and collaborated with social entities and public administration to carry out social inclusion projects through housing provision. Our exChange event was focused on how they could expand their work to the private rented sector (PRS), while also seeking organisational scale-up strategies from other entities focused on affordable housing.

World Habitat facilitated a series of exChange sessions between Hàbitat3 and similar organisations within our extensive network, including previous winners of the World Habitat Awards. The partners for this exChange were Crisis (UK), Homes For Good (UK), the Y Foundation (Finland), dot dot dot (UK), Community Solutions (USA), Mutual Housing (USA) and Neunerimmo (Austria).

Several sessions were held and covered the key issues which organisations in the affordable housing sector face, including funding mechanisms, tenant support, property management, commercial opportunities, political advocacy and collaboration with local authorities and private sector actors. These conversations not only helped identify different strategies for Hàbitat3 to pursue in the coming year, but also encouraged other organisations to discuss their own social values, ambitions and desired future impact.

Katharine Hibbert of dot dot dot valued the diversity of the participants in inspiring her own organisation's work.

“ I think it is really helpful to have such an international group of people, to get that inspiration, get some ideas from elsewhere, and also to be reminded of how ambitious it is worth being and how ambitious it is possible to be.”



Mutual Housing, USA

Chris Hancock of Crisis used it as an opportunity to reflect upon and reinvigorate his own organisation's goals.

“ This exChange has really reinvigorated my ambition of what I think we can achieve ... [it] has been really helpful and helped me push forward some conversations internally about our own ambitions and what we can do as an organisation ourselves. It also encouraged me to reconnect with a number of organisations in the UK working in the private renting sector, to share ideas and some of [the] ambition that we've seen here.”

Juha Kaakinen of the Y-Foundation (winner of a 2014 World Habitat Award) found support and solidarity among likeminded organisations.

“ I found it very inspiring and almost got the feeling that I was talking with relatives or a cousin-organisation, because in spite of the differences, there was so much in common, a similar ethos, similar impatience to get results and move forward. And it also made me think about several things in our own doing.”

Xavier Mauri of Hàbitat3 valued the expertise of participants who had introduced methods to scale up their own organisations, while still preserving aspects of their founding social values.

“ We wanted to hear the thoughts of organisations with more years of experience, like Y-Foundation, which mainly started offering housing to homeless people, but four years ago they acquired 8,000 social units [and are] not [solely] social anymore. This is an interesting way to grow and open your mind. There might be opportunities that allow an entity to open their vision, even to broaden the spectrum, and to have a much bigger impact, without leaving out what they wanted to do.”

As a result of the exChange events, Hàbitat3 reported key changes in how they will implement their work – specifically in how they will operate their funding structure and how they will engage with the Catalan Government. Moreover, all participants expanded their network and committed to future engagements with each other to ensure continued knowledge sharing and mutual learning.



Building on land rights gains with tribal communities in India

We have begun work with our other 2019 World Habitat Award Gold winners – the Koraga Federation and Samagra Grameena Ashram, however they have been focused on emergency responses which has delayed our activities.

We are planning on funding a new development role for two years who will work with tribal communities such as the Koragas, Jenu Kurubas and Eravas Soligas Hasalaru who have all accessed rights to their land through successful mobilisation. The role will help tribal communities to build houses that are compatible with living in the forest.

Currently, planning land use specifies forest and development land as two separate and incompatible land uses. People are not permitted to live in protected forests, and most of the new housing development in rural Karnataka involves clearing areas of forest.

This proposal would offer a way in which forests and housing could co-exist. It would also allow tribal communities to diversify agricultural activities to use their land in a sustainable and eco-friendly way, while also developing income streams.

In addition to funding the role, we will also fund for a film to be made that documents the success of the Koragas, focusing on the key lessons and learning that others could adapt to their situation.

We will evaluate this work after the initial two-year period, with the potential to (i) cease funding to the role, (ii) continue with the current activities, (iii) transfer the role to work with other groups, such as those in bonded labour.

Pakistan Chulahs project

We have continued to support our 2018 World Habitat Award winner – the Pakistan Chulah project, run by Heritage Foundation, Pakistan. We have funded the building of six training centres in the remote villages in Sindh province that the project supports. The training centres are in many cases the first community buildings in each village. They provide a location in which training and skills development of local people can take place, so that knowledge about building chulahs (clay ovens for cooking food) and other home and community improvements can be spread to more people more quickly.

The Heritage Foundation, Pakistan are providing funding for trainers and training materials. A further 28 training centres are due to be built, although construction has been delayed by local flooding and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Although delays in the project have meant that it has not been possible to use the existing training centres for skills training, many of the training centres built with World Habitat's funds have become important hubs for local residents. The project reported that 30-40 villagers have been able to use the centres every day as community meeting places. In response to lockdown restrictions the project has concentrated on developing video tutorials for remote teaching.

“With reputable organisations like World Habitat spreading the word and raising awareness about the good work being done in the most unexpected quarters, there are more chances that people round the globe will adopt these methodologies. Networking with other organisations can also similarly bear fruit.”

Shanaz Ramzi, Heritage Foundation of Pakistan

Ending Street Homelessness in Europe

We will work intensely with a group of European cities to help them first reduce, and then end street homelessness



The strength of our European End Street Homelessness Campaign is the collaboration of a network of local city campaigns, working together – through support workers, directors of charities, local government officials, community volunteers and people with lived experience of street homelessness – to end street homelessness in their communities.

The cities come together to share expertise and exchange experiences to help them learn from each other and show how communities everywhere can develop solutions to street homelessness.

In 2020, our international campaign was confronted with the additional challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic, which dramatically affected the way we had previously worked. Most importantly, COVID-19 has brought into sharp focus the importance of 'home' as the first line of defence against public health emergencies.

For people with nowhere to call home and those without the support they need to keep it, 2020 was a year that demanded swift and effective action. Across cities in Europe and within European End Street Homelessness Campaign partner organisations, we have seen a rapid transformation in the way services are run and how support is delivered.

In the UK, campaign cities Westminster, Torbay, Croydon, Leicester and Brighton were part of the 'Everyone In' initiative, a government intervention that saw almost 15,000 people experiencing homelessness brought into safe accommodation within weeks of the UK going into lockdown. Similar interventions took place in Belgium and Spain but were more limited, with people still sleeping on the streets. Our city partners provided access to basic services including food, clothing and health checks. For countries like Slovakia without these mass programmes, our street outreach partners - OZ STOPA Slovensko - provided an award-winning response to those left out on the streets. In December 2020, they were recognised by the Slovakian Public Defender of Rights for their outstanding contribution in support of vulnerable people during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, we saw major successes with our partners Action Homeless in Leicester, who started their first ever Housing First programme. OZ STOPA Slovensko also set up two pilot housing projects in Bratislava - offering a genuinely sustainable housing response to homelessness in the city.



OZ STOPA Slovensko, Bratislava

“ Sometimes there’s a client who you’ve worked hard with, and you persisted in walking with them, yet not interfering too much, and then you see how their life turned out. Now they have money, a job, and they’re happy ... They have that warmth, a home to come back to. And that feels amazing.”

Martina Pisárová, Deputy Director, OZ STOPA Slovensko

Despite the logistical challenges presented by COVID-19 and local lockdowns, our partners in Barcelona and Brussels were still able to bring together members of their local communities to undertake Connections Weeks. This vital survey tool allows local services to understand both the scale and depth of support required for those experiencing homelessness. The figures are stark, but vital in helping local services to focus resources on providing long-term solutions to homelessness.



SNAPSHOT

BARCELONA

Over half (50%) of people sleeping on the streets say their situation has become **worse since the outbreak of COVID-19**.

The number of young people experiencing homelessness is increasing – 13% are aged 16 to 25, in comparison with 8% in 2016.

Almost **three out of four** people are from **countries other than Spain**.



Brussels



SNAPSHOT

BRUSSELS

Approaching half (44%) of people reported having been **attacked or beaten** since they became homeless.

Over half (54%) of people sleeping on the streets have **not had access to any accommodation since March 2020** – the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis.

One in three (33%) are currently **unable to meet all of their basic needs**.

Our campaign cities in numbers

994 people

housed in permanent accommodation



1 million+

people reached through our #EveryoneDeservesAHome social media campaign on World Homeless Day 2020



990 volunteers

took part in two Connections Weeks



Only 4 people

recorded on the streets of Glasgow at the end of 2020



5 grants*

awarded by World Habitat through the independent Innovation Grants* programme



534 surveys

with people experiencing street homelessness



200 households

accommodated by Torbay Council during the emergency response



220 people

given emergency accommodation by Brighton & Hove Council – with rapid access to health support and a substance misuse service



500+ people

moved off the streets into hotels in Westminster, London – the offer was made to anyone rough sleeping even if they had No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)



*Innovation Grants

We awarded Innovation Grants to the Westminster Homelessness Partnership. One helped to fund a workshop, to ensure they were able to capture all the learning from their work responding to COVID-19 and help all partners make more systematic changes in the future.

Another grant part-funded a new website, to provide a 'shopfront' for the vast range of people who want to work together to end homelessness and provide clarity to those who face rough sleeping across Westminster.

“ Why am I so able to commit to this issue? Because ignoring a failing system doesn't make it go away. Because we have a real opportunity here to make a difference for our clients.”

Westminster Homelessness Partnership workshop participant

“ The website is an excellent resource for our partnership. We can signpost people to this to explain our work, for example potential new partners and key individuals – including, [a local] social enterprise and new executive directors in the council, including the cabinet member in Westminster responsible for homelessness.”

Westminster Homelessness Partnership partner



Westminster, London

LEICESTER

By working together, we know that we can end homelessness. Leicester's Homelessness Charter brings together members of the community, charities, the City Council, healthcare providers and other public services, faith groups, and businesses. It mobilises different sectors from across the city to come up with solutions to the most challenging issues around homelessness.

The COVID-19 pandemic is not a crisis isolated to one sector and has required a city-wide response. Leicester – which has experienced the longest-running restrictions of any city in the UK since the start of the pandemic – has a solid foundation of cross-sector collaboration. This led to over 545 people experiencing homelessness being swiftly housed in emergency accommodation between March and October, to protect them from the virus. The rapid response meant very few cases of COVID-19 among those experiencing homelessness – and the Charter provides the perfect space for working closely with health partners across the region.

The Charter created workstreams to look at how the impacts of COVID-19 would increase pressure on people – through financial insecurity, job losses, and evictions – and cause whole new groups of people to be forced onto the streets. Focusing on preventing homelessness is key to creating sustainable solutions to the housing crisis.

Stable housing is a key part of the solution to street homelessness. Campaign lead, Action Homeless, took a big step towards creating access to long-term housing and support for people who have been sleeping on the streets for a long period of time. Their new Housing First project will house 18 people and give them the flexible support they need to thrive in their homes and city.





Responding to COVID-19

2020 began with big plans for the campaign – to continue building on its success by supporting city campaigns to drive action in their local area using our Innovation Fund and a wide range of support options. We were also taking active steps to develop our network across Europe by welcoming new cities into the campaign. Global events meant our priorities quickly shifted as our network of partners reacted to the unfolding outbreak of COVID-19. We were proud to see our campaign partners reacting quickly, many utilising partnerships created through the campaign to collectively respond to COVID-19. These relationships were often crucial in creating a swift and effective response with many organisations working together to rapidly transform the service and support they offered – providing vital housing and other support.

Reacting to the needs of our partners, we began to record, learn from, and disseminate the best practice around homelessness responses to COVID-19. We gathered and shared case studies from our campaign cities across Europe, shared effective practice and helped our cities learn from the emerging practice. We moved events online, including our virtual Annual Gathering of Cities, and adapted how we provide grants through the Innovation Fund – helping campaign partners plan for safe and permanent solutions beyond temporary COVID-19 interventions.

After a year in which housing and safe accommodation has played a central role in a global health emergency, we face 2021 with a greater sense of purpose and resolve in our mission. The COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the importance of a safe and secure home – and World Habitat will continue to shine a spotlight on those organisations across Europe that maintain this fight for the right to housing. Our campaign is both needed – and is more important – than ever before.



Global community-led housing

We will bring people and skills together and we will invest to help communities develop their own housing in new places where they are needed most

Around the world, too many people are caught between unaffordable or inadequate housing in the private market, and a lack of good-quality public housing.

In response, some communities have taken control and provided their own solutions. They have developed housing to fit their needs, aspirations and values. And all have one thing in common – they are community-led with local people in control.

At World Habitat, we believe that people-led housing is an exciting and sustainable solution to the urgent need for affordable, high-quality homes. With this in mind, our Global Community-Led Housing programme collaborates with individual community-led housing projects while also helping to build international networks to support and nourish the growth of this vital approach.

Catalytic Communities, Brazil

In 2020 the support to our local partners in **Brazil – Catalytic Communities** – has helped develop approaches to engage the **Trapicheiros community** in the establishment of the Favela CLT. If this is successful it will be the first Community Land Trust in Brazil.

“Thanks to support from World Habitat, we are working with Trapicheiros' residents, through diverse workshops, meetings, events and door-to-door activities; achieving resident mobilisation; mapping the community; conducting community planning; and designing alternate laws to facilitate the implementation of CLTs – not only in Trapicheiros, but across Brazil.”

Theresa Williamson, Executive Director of Catalytic Communities

Through these activities – before COVID-19 impacted on face-to-face activities – the CLT Working Group was able to reach almost two-thirds (65 per cent) of all residents.

And almost all of these (90 per cent) expressed their commitment to work together to create a CLT. Once pandemic restrictions were enforced, the Favela CLT Working Group used online communication to connect closely with other communities and experts beyond Rio, including lawyers and legal experts, activists, urban environment professionals, academics, and national and international institutions.

This work will provide a template to inform the planning of further CLTs, and to inspire legislation to support future expansion.

“We are deeply grateful to World Habitat for the entire process you have made possible, we certainly would not have gotten this far without you. The international experience that you bring with regard to protecting housing rights inspires us to continue on our path to building a more sustainable, democratic and just city.”

Theresa Williamson, Executive Director of Catalytic Communities



Bangladesh

Our partnership with the Council of Minorities is working to secure land and housing in two former refugee camps in Dhaka, Bangladesh, through a community-led process. The project aims to develop a Community Land Trust, or a suitable alternative.

Throughout 2020, we supported this project by funding the first two phases, which enabled the project to recruit experts and stakeholders to be involved in building the capacity of the local leadership and by providing advice.

During Phase One, the project carried out focus groups with local young and elderly people, and members of the current leadership, to understand their needs, fears and aspirations. Young people highlighted the lack of even basic documentation of the camps' infrastructure and land use patterns. This inspired them to take on important roles – including the social mapping of the camps' history and its key characteristics.

Phase Two aims to deliver further outreach and capacity building with more of the camp-based leadership. Key stakeholders and advisors are being introduced to support residents, while further household and settlement-wide data is being collected by local young people using new technology.

Both the data collected and the blueprints will be used to formalise land tenure negotiations and future upgrading works. They will also help mobilise the community to document their current situation and help them outline their needs and advocate for change.



Council of Minorities, Bangladesh

“It has become necessary, more than ever, that the community empower themselves and defend their rights. Creating maps and profiles at the community level can be a powerful tool since it presents a collective expression of their entitlements. This will enable them to legitimise their claims and actively decide what development should mean in their own communities and territories.”

Rabeya Rahman, a community architect and Design Lead for the project

International collaboration

We have been a key partner in developing and maintaining the global CoHabitat Network, an international community-led housing network facilitated by the Swiss-French NGO urbaMonde and involving key global organisations. This has included working together to create and deliver key tools, organising regional hubs for peer-learning and Network Awards to celebrate and share best practices. In 2020, our collaboration has focused on consolidating the tools that support the network members in learning from each other and documenting and sharing ground-breaking examples of community-led housing, including through our #CoHabitatNetwork social media campaign during Urban October.

“World Habitat’s strategical and financial support is fundamental for the CoHabitat Network to continue its activities of documenting, advocating and creating collective tools to support CLH initiatives globally.”

Léa Oswald – urbaMonde

We worked closely with MOBA Housing SCE – a network of emerging housing initiatives in Central and South Eastern Europe – by providing both advisory and financial support. MOBA members and their partners have been carrying out key activities to create an enabling environment for rent-based housing co-operatives across the region.

This includes developing the MOBA Housing Development Fund which, once operational, will channel investment towards housing co-operatives, hence addressing the current lack of financial infrastructure. World Habitat has designated grants to support specific projects, such as developing architectural designs for pilot co-operatives in Serbia and Slovenia, with attention to intergenerational and environmental aspects.

Over the past year, World Habitat has also expanded its approach to grant-making, which will see five new projects led by MOBA members funded in 2021. This will include: developing a national umbrella organisation for co-operative housing in Hungary, land scanning for a pilot project in Belgrade, business plan development for a housing co-operative in Prague and advocacy to influence housing policy in Croatia and Slovenia.



MOBA Housing SCE workshop, Belgrade

“ [Our] model is truly a co-operative model, based on a joint investment by the members, the provision of the land by the municipality, a loan from the national housing fund and resources from external lenders or investors. [...] We have made significant progress in developing the first pilot project.”

Anja Lazar & Rok Ramšak, Zadrugator

We also provided funding for the publication, *On Common Ground: International Perspectives on the Community Land Trust*, by the Center for CLT Innovation, which features a foreword by our Chief Executive, David Ireland. This publication represents an impressive collection of examples of community land trusts from around the world – including emerging examples in the Global South, and traditional collective land tenure models.

“ For more than a decade, World Habitat has helped to spur the global spread of community land trusts by raising the international profile of this innovative housing strategy and by facilitating the exchange of ideas among CLT practitioners from different countries. My hope is that *On Common Ground* – that would not have happened without World Habitat’s early support – will do more of the same, encouraging further growth and diversification of a unique model of community-led development on community-owned land.”

*John Emmeus Davis, one of the editors of *On Common Ground**



CASE STUDY

LEEDS COMMUNITY HOMES

Leeds Community Homes is an umbrella Community Land Trust. It was set up by two of our World Habitat Awards projects – Canopy (winner 2015) and Lilac (finalist 2015) – alongside five other Leeds-based community organisations. It helps communities across Leeds to create new community-led homes, either by building new homes or bringing empty homes back into use. In 2015 World Habitat provided the initial start-up funding to help establish Leeds Community Homes.

We subsequently made a £25,000 social investment in Leeds Community Homes through a community shares issue. Leeds Community Homes set a goal to raise £360,000, and successfully achieved it. This investment enabled the purchase of 16 permanently affordable flats on an eco-development in Leeds’ Climate Innovation District. The funds also enabled the development of proposals for future projects to build more affordable homes. Nine of the homes have been made available for discounted rent, while seven will be sold at 60% of market prices, a figure agreed by members to be genuinely affordable. The new homes are wood construction, reducing embodied energy costs. They are so well insulated that a boiler was not needed. Heating needs are so low that they can be met with 100% renewable energy.

Leeds Community Homes plan to build 1,000 environmentally high performing community led homes in Leeds by 2028. These new homes will be affordable to local people both now and for future generations.



TECHO

*For the first time in our history, we awarded an **Outstanding Contribution to Housing Award** in 2020*

We – alongside an independent panel of housing experts – wanted to mark the incredible work of the youth-led organisation **TECHO**, to recognise its work supporting millions of people into housing across Latin America and the Caribbean.

TECHO

In just 23 years, TECHO has progressed from a small housing project in Chile – led by a Jesuit priest – to an international operation covering 18 countries. Having built over 135,000 homes and carried out over 300 infrastructure projects in more than 600 communities – with the support of over one million volunteers – their work represents a unique combination of scale, transferability and adaptation.

“We are deeply grateful to receive this international award. It is an acknowledgment of the achievements, effort and perseverance over more than 23 years of active and collaborative citizen participation by Latin American youth and residents of popular settlements in the region. This award represents a new definition of shared work, collaborative action and dialogue between popular settlements and the youth of Latin America. It motivates us to continue working in a co-ordinated way, adapting to the circumstances in order to continue transforming the lives of millions of people.”

Juan Pablo Duhalde, General Director at TECHO

World Habitat and TECHO have entered into a transregional, strategic partnership. Together, we will work to promote, strengthen, and integrate each other's networks to increase knowledge sharing among diverse housing stakeholders. As such, TECHO will act as a key promoter of the World Habitat Awards in Latin America and will participate in an exChange collaboration with members from World Habitat's global network.

“The award and partnership with World Habitat are vital for promoting spaces in which to exchange lessons and learning. Understanding the situations in other areas of the world will be essential for innovating in our work on the ground, and we believe that our experience in Latin America can also contribute a great deal. Today, multi-actor work is the best way to achieve agreements and actions that allow us to prioritize. This type of alliance is the route to collaboration between all the key actors.”

Juan Pablo Duhalde, General Director at TECHO

Our land

World Habitat owns a small portfolio of land local to our office in Leicestershire in the UK. The land was bequeathed to the organisation when it was established. It is largely rented to local farmers and used for agricultural purposes. In the past some land has been sold and the proceeds invested to provide income for the charity.

During 2020 we carried out maintenance work at the Peter Memorial Elderfield Wood – a 27-acre area of woodland planted in memory of our founder. This continued the improvements detailed in our 10-year management plan and included mowing the rides, thinning of the trees – carried out by a wood fuel group organised by the Conservation Volunteers – a tree safety inspection for the site and drainage work near the Forest Rock boundary.



Reducing our carbon emissions

Our Trustees acknowledge the seriousness of the climate emergency and want to ensure World Habitat is socially responsible and reduces and manages its own impact.

Like all organisations our activities consume energy and generate carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions. Our international travel means we consume more than most organisations of our size. We take our responsibilities seriously and have developed a carbon management plan that seeks to reduce our carbon emissions and offset all that we emit. Trustees have approved targets to reduce our carbon emissions by 50% of our 2016 levels by 2030 and reduce them to zero by 2050.

We offset all the emissions we produce. We see real value in carbon offsetting as a means of encouraging investment in carbon saving technologies and alternatives. We do not see carbon offsetting as an alternative to emission reductions. Our carbon management planning sets an annual organisational emission

reduction target, and annual carbon budget for each programme.

To offset our emissions, we invest in housing-related programmes that reduce carbon emissions and also help provide safe and secure housing for low-income people. We are currently planning to develop our carbon offsetting programme to enable others to invest in these same programmes.

In 2020, our carbon emissions were 27.5 tonnes. This was a significant reduction on our peak year of 2017 when we emitted 143 tonnes, and is the third successive year of reductions. It must however be seen in the context of significantly reduced international travel and staff working from home due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We will look to proactively adjust our approaches and policies so that we can continue to have a growing impact as an organisation whilst reducing our carbon emissions to at least meet our targets.

Our commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion

As an organisation that is committed to social justice across the globe, diversity is intrinsic to everything we seek to do. Events in 2020, particularly the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis and the subsequent global reaction, caused us to reflect on how well we measured up to the aims we aspire to. Trustees acknowledge that minority groups are underrepresented in both the staff team and the Board, and have made a commitment to make further improvements with the aim of addressing this. We revised and shared our commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion and set out a new series of objectives that we will review and update so that we continuously improve.

- **Commitment to improvement** – In our 2019–2021 strategy we committed to improving diversity. We have agreed to increase diversity on the board of trustees, and have introduced a ratchet so that diversity will not decrease again in the future. All staff and trustees have received diversity training. Our commitment to increasing our diversity has been published on our website and reflected in our delivery plans with a set of clear actionable steps. We have committed to ensure that our website and social media reflect this.

- **A good employer** – Trustees have committed to update and receive annual diversity monitoring. We are revising our recruitment process in line with good practice. We have committed to regular diversity training for all staff (at least once a year).
- **Improving how we work with others** – As a global charity, trustees have committed to a range of actions to more effectively develop our approach to diversity and inclusion through our partnerships and the work we deliver. As we develop our new strategy, we will take active steps to improve our diversity and improve the impact of our programme delivery. We will increase our accountability and our understanding by building on the diverse nature of our networks to improve our work by actively involving them in shaping that work and seeking feedback.
- **Measuring progress** – To help us measure our progress we have recently signed up to the National Centre for Diversity Investors in Diversity for Small Charities Award. We will seek accreditation in 2021.

Governance

In 2020 we reorganised our staff structure so that we could better deliver our strategy. The reorganisation enabled us to create and recruit to new staff posts better orientated to our programmes. We also improved our management structure creating a new role of Deputy Chief Executive and subsequently recruiting Louise Winterburn (previously head of our homelessness programme) to this important new post.

In 2018 World Habitat signed up to the Charity Code of Governance. This code is a practical tool to help charities and their trustees develop high standards of governance. The principles are based on, but go beyond, legal requirements. The code says that it is deliberately aspirational. It is produced by a large group of charities including NCVO and ACEVO. The Charity Commission has observer status.

There are two versions of this code. World Habitat has adopted the version for larger charities.

We review all our governance policies and activities annually and measure them against the code. During 2019 World Habitat reviewed all its activities to ensure they meet the code's recommendations. Trustees agreed that any areas where we do not meet the standard we will publish in the annual report.

Trustees agreed that in 2020 for the first time the charity is fully compliant with the Charity Code of Governance. The trustees and Senior Management Team will review this on an ongoing basis.



SDI Alliance, Zimbabwe

Financial review

Overview of the year

In 2018, the trustees carried out a detailed review of the charity's activities and produced a strategic plan for the direction and activity of the charity for the following three years (until December 2021). The implementation of the plan started during 2019.

The total income for the year was **£1,147,178**. This represents a 17 per cent reduction on the income in 2019 of **£1,379,706**. The reduction is primarily due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The investment income was severely reduced due to companies cancelling their dividend payments.

The principal funding source is income received from financial investments (**£1,114,622** i.e. 97.2 per cent), with the remaining 2.8 per cent secured from grants, rental income, interest and sales. Expenditure in the year was **£1,010,206**. This was lower than income by **£136,972**. This was lower than budgeted expenditure due to lower office costs, with the office being closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and lower programme costs due to there being no international travel. Events were held online, and local experts were used to carry out the evaluation visits for the World Habitat Awards.

Carbon offsetting costs have increased in the year, as we have started to develop our carbon offsetting programme to enable others to invest in housing-related programmes.

Investment powers, policy and performance

Under the Memorandum and Articles of Association, the charity has the power to make any investment that the trustees see fit. Investments are held to provide an income to further the objectives of the Foundation, both now and in the future. The investment policy has been amended to reflect the slight shift in emphasis towards income, rather than capital growth.

Capital appreciation of the investments continues to ensure that the value of the original gift is maintained in real terms in the longer term, recognising that there will be short-term fluctuations due to changes in stock market values. World Habitat seeks to ensure that a sufficient income stream is generated to cover its current activities without incurring undue financial risk for the charity.

The income from the charity's investments reduced by 16.6 per cent from **£1,373,590** in 2019 to **£1,145,770** in 2020. There was a decrease of **£2,162,222** in the valuation of the World Habitat total investment portfolio at the year end from **£34,669,806** in 2019 to **£32,507,584** in 2020. This decrease was due to the uncertainty around the COVID-19 pandemic, with many companies reporting a reduction in trading income and therefore cancelling their dividend payments. The investment portfolio recovered well during November 2020 due to the announcement of the vaccine to fight the pandemic.



Just a Change, Portugal

Future Plans

We believe that 2021 is an important year for World Habitat's future

We will develop an ambitious new strategy throughout the year, that will guide our work for the subsequent three years.

This strategy will build on our previous achievements and aim to help marginalised communities and those on low incomes to benefit from a green and socially-just housing recovery to the pandemic.

Travel restrictions that were in place through much of 2020 saw us work more closely with our international partners to deliver our objectives. We do not want to assume a return to business-as-usual model when COVID-19 subsides, but build on the advantages of the ways of work we have developed over the pandemic. We plan to develop our diverse and international network of partners in 2021 by firstly surveying their views and later making changes so that we can co-ordinate our work better.

Like many other organisations our staff have been working from home for over a year in order to keep them safe from the virus and to comply with the law. We plan to gradually reintroduce office working during the year provided that it is safe to do so, and the law permits it. Our plan to relocate our main workplace to a city centre location in Leicester in 2020 was not possible, but we aim to achieve it in 2021 so that staff have a stimulating workplace and we are better connected to our partners.

We plan to continue to improve and develop the World Habitat Awards. We were heartened by the fantastic response to the 2020 competition. We believe that sharing and helping the uptake of good practice has never been more important. We will develop and improve our exChange work to increase our impact. We will seek out evidence that seemingly impossible and insoluble housing problems can be solved and, where we can, demonstrate solutions that can be scaled-up and transferred so that they become world leading.

We are also planning to develop the European End Street Homelessness Campaign. COVID-19 has dramatically changed the environment in which the campaign operates. In some countries people who were street homeless were temporarily housed in hotels and there has been great progress in permanently housing some of them. In other countries homeless people have become more marginalised with shelters and outreach services closing. In all countries the risk of homelessness has increased.

Whilst the objectives of the campaign are unchanged, how we achieve them might need to. We aim to be broadminded and agile in how the campaign can add most value and help cities achieve their aims of permanently housing those who are street homeless.

We will continue to develop our Global Community-led Housing programme and take our work into parts of the world where the concept is less developed. We are enthusiastically working with some of the poorest communities around the world to develop and improve their homes and communities through adapting and adopting community-led approaches.

We will vigorously pursue efforts to reduce our own carbon emissions and encourage our partners to do the same. Our own carbon emissions have reduced significantly as we have travelled less as a result of travel restrictions. We aim to avoid a return to usual approach and retain the best of what we have learned over the last year. We will adopt new policies that enable us to achieve an increased impact against our strategic objectives and continue to reduce our emissions towards zero.

We will develop our own housing-based carbon offsetting programme that invests in the construction of net-zero carbon homes in Africa, so that it can be verified and enable others to invest.

We will continue to review and monitor our financial investments. We will be changing our investments to more progressive investments that are in line with our ethical policy, with a final decision made by our Board of Trustees in September. We aim to ensure our investments are free from arms sales to military regimes, unethical lending practices, human rights violations, environmental degradation and activities that are incompatible with the 2015 Paris Agreement to limit the increase in global average temperature to 2°C and pursue efforts to limit the increase to 1.5°C.

We will continue to work with the local community to provide greater public access and undertake environmental improvements to our land assets.

How our activities deliver public benefit

When planning activities for the year, World Habitat trustees had due regard to guidance on public benefit produced by the Charity Commission

Our charitable activities focus on the prevention or relief of poverty, and the advancement of education for the public benefit.

In particular, our programmes aim to increase the provision of adequate housing for people with few housing choices. Our work in operating and promoting the World Habitat Awards aims to fuel innovation and inspire others to adopt the best housing practice and enable the best housing projects to scale up, expand and be replicated where they are needed most. This, we believe, will enable more people in housing need to be better housed.

Our Global Community-Led Housing programme aims to create the conditions in which community led-housing can scale up and expand. This will provide a greater provision and greater choice of low-cost housing benefiting people on low incomes.

Our European End Street Homelessness Campaign aims to help end street homelessness in participating cities in Europe. Street homelessness is the most extreme form of social exclusion. People living on the streets have

dramatically worse health, lower life expectancy and lower life chances than others in society. This campaign aims to create the conditions in which people living on the streets are quickly and permanently housed.

Trustees believe undertaking our main activities described above fully meets the requirements of section 17 of The Charities Act 2011 to deliver public benefit.

“ I am so grateful for our partnership, for the candid and supportive advice you all have given us over the years, and for the impact your work has made on ours ... What a model for the sector.”

Jake Maguire, Community Solutions





**Our vision is a world where
everyone has a safe and secure
home in a successful community**

We are:

- an agent for change
- globally minded
- independent
- innovative
- caring
- well connected.

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Pages 29 & 30 – Elena Garcia
Page 32 – Zimbabwe SDI Alliance
Page 34 – Just a Change
Page 37 – Gábor Bankó

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