



## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR RESEARCH SERVICES**

INQUIRIES AND PROPOSALS SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:

**Maria Carrizosa**

**Associate Director for Global Housing Policy**

**[mcarrizosa@habitat.org](mailto:mcarrizosa@habitat.org)**

285 Peachtree Center Avenue, NE, Suite 2700

Atlanta, GA 30303

+1(212)603-9801

## I. GENERAL INFORMATION.

This is a request for proposals (RFP) to Habitat for Humanity International, Inc. The term “Contractor” means the entity that is chosen to provide the services described in the RFP. The detailed scope of work for the research can be found as an annex to this RFP.

Founded in 1976, Habitat for Humanity International, Inc. (HFHI or Habitat) is a non-profit ecumenical Christian organization that partners with people all over the world to help them build or improve a place they can call home.

### A. Instructions on Proposal Submission.

1. **Inquiries.** Inquiries concerning this RFP should be mailed to:

Maria Carrizosa

Associate Director for Global Housing Policy

[mcarrizosa@habitat.org](mailto:mcarrizosa@habitat.org)

285 Peachtree Center Avenue, NE, Suite 2700

Atlanta, GA 30303

+1(212) 603-9801

2. **Submission of Proposals.** All proposals and checklist/certifications shall be submitted by electronic mail in PDF format to the e-mail address above. If desired, Contractors may submit examples of past work by delivering such work to HFHI at the address listed above by the closing submission date, August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024.
3. **Conflicts of Interest.** Contractors are expected to self-identify any real or perceived conflict of interest that may exist if Contractor is selected. HFHI requests that Contractor clearly identify the conflict and propose a mitigation strategy as part of the proposal response and attach an explanation to the checklist/certification.
4. **Conditions of Proposal.** All costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal in response to this RFP will be the responsibility of the Contractor and will not be reimbursed by HFHI.
5. **Confidential HFHI Information.** All information about HFHI provided during the RFP process shall be considered confidential and cannot be released without the express permission of HFHI. HFHI may include separate nondisclosure documents in a technical proposal at a later date.
6. **Right to Reject.** HFHI reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received in response to this RFP, to engage in additional discussions with one or more Contractors, and to issue amendments to the RFP based on initial submissions.
7. **Notification of Award.** It is expected that a final decision and selection will be made within two (2) weeks of the closing date for the receipt of proposals. Upon conclusion of final negotiations with the successful firm, all Contractors submitting proposals in response to this RFP will be informed, in writing.
8. **Contract for Services.** It is HFHI’s intent to enter into a written agreement with the successful Contractor. The terms and conditions of such an agreement are subject to negotiation.

9. **Availability.** Work is expected to immediately after negotiations are completed with the successful Contractor. Contractors are encouraged to confirm immediate availability of existing resources in their proposal.
10. **Description of Entity:** Include a description of Contractor's structure (corporation, partnership, LLC, LLP or other); date of incorporation or organization; Contractor's ownership; executive officers and/or principals; primary business office and locations of other offices. Please provide the number of employees, number of clients, annual gross revenue, and all information relevant to the services to be provided.

## II. BASIC SCOPE OF WORK.

HFHI is soliciting consultancy services, with a budget of USD 70,000, to undertake a research project on the intersection of informal settlements, public health, and gender equity; with the basic elements outlined below and further described the Detailed Scope of Work Annex. The annex provides the preferred technical, tactical, and methodological approach. However, HFHI is open to discussing and refining the scope and design of the research, to leverage the consultant's expertise and ensure the research is conducted efficiently and effectively.

Deliverables to HFHI shall include those customarily performed by a think tank, research institution, or consultant firm to a business in the same or similar industry, including, but not limited to, the following:

- A. Issue brief of approximately 10,000 words excluding bibliography and annexes. The narrative style should balance technical rigor, appeal to a policy minded G7 audience, and clarity so that content is also relevant to the general public.
- B. New global statistics that contribute newsworthy hard evidence to policy discussions on informal settlements, public health, and gender equity.
- C. Comprehensive country-level dataset that will be used by HFHI to contextualize the global messages at the regional and the national levels.
- D. Local ground-truthing of the global statistics that includes the voices of people living in informal settlements in at least three regions of the world. This exercise can be coordinated with HFHI's network of national offices.
- E. Methodological annex that clarifies the framework, process, indicators, and limitations.
- F. Validation of with external stakeholders -via a workshop or some other tool- of the policy recommendations prepared by researchers with HFHI staff.
- G. Present the research's findings in at least one internal and one external venue.

HFHI will look evaluate proposals by Contractors addressing the above areas, with the additional considerations in the Detailed Scope of Work. We encourage Contractors to provide information about other services which may be offered or provided based on any particular area of expertise.

## III. PROPOSAL CONTENTS.

- A. **Experience and Qualifications.** The Contractor should describe its experience and qualifications with particular emphasis on those relevant to the services outlined in Section II of this RFP and further described in the detailed scope of work; including:

1. **Business overview:** General information on the organization including length of time in business, structure, size, areas of expertise, key personnel, key projects, awards and industry recognition. Include client reference information for at least three clients, preferably from comparable clients to HFHI, like INGOs in the sector.
2. **Proposed team:** Describe the team that will be assigned to this project. Clarify roles, estimate dedication and qualifications per team member. Identify any subcontractors whose services will be needed for this project. Please provide summarized CVs for each team member.
3. **Specialized software:** If relevant, include a description of the expected software packages used by Contractor in the development of this work.
4. **Template contract:** HFHI uses a template Professional Services Agreement, but should Contractor request to use its own template, then it is suggested to include it for HFHI's review.

**B. Narrative proposal.** The Contractor should describe in a concise yet detailed manner the plan and methodology in response to the RFP document, including the Detailed Scope of Work, its approach to the project research team, their size, structure, and areas of expertise which should include the following:

1. **Background and significance.** The proposal should explain how the research content and approach will ensure worthwhile contributions to the sector.
2. **Research objectives and questions.** Consultants should clearly state the objectives, questions and / or hypothesis.
3. **Methodology:** Describe the data collection, analysis, and validation techniques and methods that will be used for each of the components of the project.
4. **References:** A section including the sources cited within the document and any other major relevant references.

**C. Fee Structure.** HFHI seeks to enter a contract for a fixed lump sum of \$70,000 USD, to deliver the services outlined in this RFP and detailed in the scope of work. The staggered payments ensure payments are connected to satisfactory reception of partial deliverables.

HFHI suggests the Consultants a staggered payment structure aligned with the suggested methodological approach outlined in the Annex.

1. **Inception report:** clarifies the viability of the research and outlines the path forward; for \$5,000 USD.
2. **Part 1 Literature review:** explains the process and results of the systematic an/or comprehensive literature review; for \$10,000 USD.
3. **Part 2 Modeling and ground truthing,** describing the research method, statistics, key findings, and validation process; for \$35,000 USD.
4. **Part 3 Recommendations,** which should be the result of a structured process including input from HFHI as well as key external stakeholders. This last part will be submitted together with the revised text of Parts 1 and 2, so that the full project is delivered. For \$20,000 USD. B

Consultants should clarify if they agree with this payment structure, or suggest an alternative, that may offer better value, predictability, and/or project communication.

#### D. Timeline and work plan.

Consultants should outline a workplan in alignment with their proposed research plan. It is expected that this workplan details the dates of each deliverable, either according to the suggested structure by HFHI or their alternative preference.

This suggested schedule is based on our current timelines but is subject to change. Contractor should review the timeline and either confirm that it will be capable of meeting deadlines below or propose an alternative, that complies with HFHI's needs for a release date.

<i>Project milestones</i>	<i>Estimated date</i>	<i>Fee</i>
1. Request for proposals (RFP) publication	15-Jul-24	
2. RFP closes	5-Aug-24	
3. Selection process and contracting	13-Sep-24	
4. Inception report (includes outline and workplan)	23-Sep-24	\$5,000
5. Literature review (part 1)	7-Nov-24	\$10,000
6. First draft of report parts 1 and 2 (includes modeling)	23-Jan-25	\$35,000
7. Recommendations workshop (includes revised draft recs)	11-Mar-25	
8. First draft of the complete report for reviews (all parts)	21-Mar-25	
9. Internal and external review process final review	4-Apr-25	
10. Final text by consultants	21-Mar-25	\$20,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$70,000</b>

#### IV. PROPOSAL EVALUATION

**Evaluation Procedure and Criteria.** HFHI staff will review all proposals within Delegation of Authority Policy parameters. HFHI may request an online meeting with qualified Contractors prior to final selection.

All proposals will be evaluated systematically, based on the following criteria:

1. Quality and feasibility of the methodological proposal
2. Research and policy experience in the field of public health, adequate housing, informal settlements, feminist foreign assistance, as well as global advocacy messaging.
3. Profile and competencies of consultant(s) firm: knowledge, experience, composition, reputation and other necessary related competencies for global advocacy.
4. Demonstrated interest and capacity of adapting to HFHI needs and refine the questions presented in the RFP to better serve the purpose of the final document.
5. Suitability of the financial proposal: for the activities laid out in the methodology, within the financial and time resources of the project.
6. Experience communicating with diverse populations, proven understanding of and incorporation of inclusiveness and equity when carrying out consultancy – through workstyle, process and final deliverables.

7. Demonstrated alignment with Habitat's core values: courage, humility and accountability.

## V. GENERAL

- A. Evaluation Procedure and Criteria - Waiver Authority.** HFHI reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to waive minor irregularities in submittal requirements, to request modification of the response, to accept or reject any or all responses received, and/or to cancel all or part of this RFP at any time prior to awards.
- B. Disclaimer.** This RFP does not commit HFHI to award any funds, pay any costs incurred in preparing a response, or procure or contract for services or supplies. HFHI reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses received, to meet with and negotiate with all qualified Respondents, cancel or modify the RFP in part or in its entirety at any time, or change the response guidelines, when it is in its best interest.
- C. Changes/Amendments to RFP.** This RFP has been distributed electronically using HFHI's email system. Any update and/or changes will be communicated by this process.
- D. Obligations.** HFHI is not obligated to take any course of action as the result of this RFP. Issuance of this RFP does not constitute a commitment to award any contract.
- E. Ownership of Information.** Information submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of HFHI. All responses will be kept private from other third parties.
- F. Reconsideration.** HFHI reserves the right to reconsider any proposals at any phase of this procurement process.
- G. Email Failure.** HFHI will not be held responsible for the failure of any email delivery service to deliver a proposal response.
- H. Contractor's Responsibilities.** It is solely the Contractor's responsibility to: (1) ascertain that it has all required and necessary information, documents and addenda, prior to submitting a response; and (2) ensure that the response is delivered to the correct email address on or prior to the date and time listed. Late responses, regardless of delivery means, will not be accepted. Submittals received by hand delivery, telephone or facsimile will not be accepted.
- I. Cancellation and/or Amendment.** HFHI reserves the right to reject all submittals or any portions thereof. HFHI reserves the right to cancel, issue amendments or modify this RFP to correct any errors or to clarify requirements.

## Request for Proposal Checklist, Privacy Questionnaire and Contractor Certification

*You must attach a detailed disclosure for "yes" answers to the questions below*

	YES	NO
<p><b>Conflicts of Interest.</b> Have you self-identified any real or perceived conflict of interest that may exist if Contractor is selected? If yes, please clearly identify the conflict and propose a mitigation strategy as part of your disclosure. Refer to Section 4 of Habitat's Code of Ethics for discussion of Conflicts of Interest.</p>		
<p><b>Felonies.</b> In the past ten years, has Contractor or any of Contractor's officers or principals:</p> <p>(1) been convicted of or pled guilty or nolo contendere ("no contest") in a domestic, foreign, or military court to any felony?</p> <p>(2) been charged with any felony? You may limit your response charges that are currently pending.</p>		
<p><b>Misdemeanors.</b> In the past ten years, has Contractor or any of Contractor's officers or principals:</p> <p>(1) been convicted of or pled guilty or nolo contendere ("no contest") in a domestic, foreign, or military court to a misdemeanor involving any fraud, false statements, or omissions, wrongful taking of property, bribery, perjury, forgery, counterfeiting, extortion, or a conspiracy to commit any of these offenses?</p> <p>(2) been charged with a misdemeanor listed above?</p>		
<p><b>Regulatory Actions.</b> Has any federal, state, local or foreign regulatory agency ever:</p> <p>(1) found Contractor or any of Contractor's officers or principals to have made a false statement or omission, or been dishonest, unfair, or unethical?</p> <p>(2) found Contractor or any of Contractor's officers or principals to have been involved in a violation of regulations or statutes? (Include without limiting any suspensions or debarments, anti-money laundering actions, or actions involving bribery or corruption)</p> <p>(3) found Contractor or any of Contractor's officers or principals to have been a cause related to business being denied, suspended, revoked, or restricted? (Include any suspensions or debarments)</p> <p>(4) entered an order against Contractor or any of Contractor's officers or principals?</p> <p>(5) imposed a civil money or criminal penalty on Contractor or any of Contractor's officers or principals, or ordered Contractor or any of Contractor's officers or principals to cease and desist from any activity?</p>		
<p><b>Civil Litigation.</b> Has Contractor or any of Contractor's officers or principals had a civil judgment rendered against them or is presently civilly charged for commission of fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a federal, state, or local government transaction or public contract; violation of federal or state antitrust statutes; or commission of embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property?</p>		

<p><b>Litigation and Regulatory Proceedings.</b> Is Contractor or any of Contractor's officers or principals subject to any pending or threatened litigation or regulatory proceeding that could materially impact the Contractor's ongoing operations or ability to deliver services and any current or prior proceedings regarding suspension or debarment from doing business with the US Government or any other government? If yes, provide detail and status of the litigation or proceeding.</p>		
<p><b>Insurance.</b> Does Contractor maintain in full force and effect the following insurance coverage:</p> <p>(1) a standard policy covering Contractor's obligations for Workers' Compensation Insurance and Employer's Liability Insurance sufficient to comply with all applicable statutory, regulatory, and other legal requirements?</p> <p>(2) Commercial General Liability, a/k/a business liability (covering 3<sup>rd</sup> party injury, property damage and other losses) and/or Excess Umbrella Liability Insurance covering Contractor's performance for the services contemplated in the RFP?</p> <p>(3) Cybersecurity Insurance?</p> <p>If yes, please provide a detailed description of each of the coverages.</p>		
<p><b>Financial Statements/Annual Report.</b> Contractor must provide a complete set of audited financial statements for the past three years. All financial statements should be prepared according to generally accepted accounting principles.</p> <p>Contractor should note that HFHI reserves the right to purchase credit reports and additional financial information as it deems necessary.</p> <p>Please provide a copy of your most recent corporate annual report.</p> <p>If the Contractor is not a public company, it must provide financial statements that can be used during the evaluation to determine its financial viability.</p>		
<p><b>Qualified or Adverse Opinion.</b> During the past 10 years, has the Contractor received a qualified or adverse opinion from any financial audit?</p>		
<p><b>SOC Reports.</b> Does Contractor have a SOC 1, 2, 3 or SOC for Cybersecurity? If so, please attach the most recent report.</p>		
<p><b>Control.</b> Does any person or entity not named in your proposal response control, directly or indirectly, your management or policies?</p>		
<p><b>Small Business/Minority Business.</b> Are you a certified small business in the following categories: disadvantaged business enterprise, minority-owned business, woman-owned business, a business that a service-disabled veteran owns or an emerging small business? HFHI also encourages joint ventures or subcontracting with certified small business enterprises. If yes, please provide detail description of your certification.</p>		
<p><b>Product or Service Warranties.</b> Does Contractor provide any warranties for products or services? If so, please describe.</p>		
<p><b>SLAs and Disaster Recovery Plans.</b> Does Contractor have standard SLAs and Disaster Recovery Plans?</p> <p>If so, Contractor should provide details of its service-level agreements (SLAs), including system availability, system response times, and support ticket resolution times. It should also provide a documented copy of its disaster recovery plan, including target periods for recovery point objective (RPO) and recovery time objective (RTO).</p>		





## Privacy Questionnaire-

**Provide responses in a separate document if personally identifiable information (PII) will be processed or transmitted as part of the services. Please number responses to correspond with the questions below.**

1) Please describe the types and categories of personal information you collect from or about individuals (employees, consumers, business contacts, etc.) whether directly from individuals or from third parties, (e.g., contact information, health or medical information, credit card or other financial information, etc.). *In particular, please specifically identify if you collect sensitive personal information (e.g., Social Security numbers; health and medical information; geo-location information; driver's license numbers; credit card, debit card and other financial account numbers; information online from children under the age of 13) or Personal Health Information as defined by HIPAA.* ("Personal information" means any information relating to an identified or identifiable, person or that can be used to identify a person.)

2) Describe where you store personal information (e.g., local server, third party cloud storage vendors; also, geographical locations / countries).

3) Do you have one or more privacy policies or privacy notices (collectively referred to as "privacy policies") relating to information from consumers and employees, including consumer and employee facing privacy policies, and internal privacy policies intended for employee compliance? Please provide copies.

4) Do consumers and employees consent to your privacy policies and/or collection of personal information? If so, how?

5) Have you used a third party to audit your privacy and/or information security practices? If so, by who and how often? Please provide copies of all written privacy or information security audits and assessments for the last [six (6)] years.

6) Are any aspects of your business or operations inconsistent with your privacy policies? If so, please describe.

7) If you share personal information with third party vendors, suppliers, contractors or agents, please describe the circumstances and categories of personal information shared. Please provide copies of the relevant agreements, including all provisions that limit the use of the personal information for other purposes (such as provisions dealing with confidentiality, user data use, and audit rights).

8) Do you have written information security policies? If so, please provide copies of all relevant documentation.

9) Do you have written disaster recovery and/or business continuity policies? If so, please provide copies of all relevant documentation.

10) How do you limit access to personal information by unauthorized parties?

11) How do you limit employees or other staff access to personal information? How do you change access levels?

12) Do you have separate limits for access to sensitive personal information and sensitive business information (e.g., company financial information, business plans, trade secrets, etc.)?

13) Have you received any complaints or claims from customers or employees, third parties, regulators, the government, or other organizations related to your privacy practices within the past 6 years? If so, please describe from whom, when and the details of the complaint or claim. Please provide all documentation relating to

all such complaints or claims; notifications to affected individuals, law enforcement, governmental agencies, credit reporting agencies and other third parties; and any resolutions thereof.

14) Have you notified any individual of a privacy or security breach relating to their personal information within the past 6 years? If so, please provide all relevant documentation.

15) Have you been involved in any litigation, arbitration, regulatory investigation, regulatory enforcement action or other legal proceeding relating to your privacy or security practices within the past 6 years? If so, please provide all relevant documentation.

16) Do you share personal information with third parties for the third parties' direct marketing purposes (i.e., to market their products or services, not yours)? If so, please describe to whom.

17) Do you engage in online behavioral advertising, internet-based advertising or targeted advertising (tracking – directly or through advertising networks – online activity over multiple websites for the purpose of delivering interest-based advertising)? If so, please describe.

18) Do you have an opt-out database (a “do not call” list) for telephone, email and text message contacts?

19) Can your users or customers opt in or opt out of various uses of their information (including receiving marketing materials)? At what point? Do you use an “opt-in” or “opt-out” approach? Please provide a screen shot or description of the process.

20) Do you engage in telemarketing or send text messages for marketing purposes? If so, please provide documentation relating to compliance with the Telephone Consumer Protection Act.

21) Do you collect personal information from consumers who purchase products or services by credit card (e.g., address, zip code, telephone number, etc.)? If so, please describe the information collected.

22) Do you truncate credit card and debit card numbers (no more than the last 5 digits) and the card's expiration date on all credit card and debit card receipts that you give your customers?

23) Are you a member of any privacy, security or marketing self-regulatory programs or organization dealing with the privacy or security of personal information?

24) Do you have one or more employees responsible for data privacy and/or security? If so, please provide the name(s) of the employee(s).

25) Do you have a privacy or security incident or breach response process or policy? If so, please provide copies of all relevant documentation.

26) Do you have internal privacy awareness training? If so, please describe it (when provided and to whom) and provide copies of all relevant documentation.

## CONTRACTOR'S CERTIFICATION

By responding to the RFP, Contractor certifies to the best knowledge of the person signing the RFP that all Contractor information, including without limitation any information relating to goods or services, that you seek to offer through the RFP, and any of your actions involving the goods or the services:

- Will be accurate and complete and will not be fraudulent, fictitious, counterfeit, defamatory, libelous, threatening, harassing, misappropriated, stolen or otherwise unlawful or illicit.
- Shall not infringe the intellectual property rights or other proprietary rights of any third party, including without limitation copyrights, patents, trademarks, trade secrets or rights of publicity or privacy.
- Shall not violate any law, statute, ordinance, or regulation ("Law"), including without limitation those Laws governing construction, consumer protection, transportation of hazardous materials, drugs, health, privacy, data security, or false advertising.
- Shall not involve the purchase or sale, or offer for the purchase or sale, of any prohibited items, including those prohibited by laws, regulations or HFHI written directives.
- Shall not link directly or indirectly to or include descriptions of goods or services that: (a) are identical to goods or services that you are offering but are priced lower than the amount specified in the RFP; or (b) are intended to create a market for such goods or services; or (c) you do not have a right to offer for sale.
- Shall ensure that its personnel, agents, contractors and subcontractors conform to the highest standards of moral and ethical conduct including, but not limited to, the expectations established in the [Habitat Code of Conduct - Ethics Covenant](#) and further attests that it has read and will comply with its provisions.
- Shall comply at all times with all federal, state, foreign and local laws, applicable to performance of the services, including, without limitation, maintaining appropriate permits and licenses and privacy laws that relate to privacy and protection and security of personal information.
- Shall comply and will be bound by all applicable federal and local laws, rules, regulations, orders, instructions and other directives governing equal employment opportunity.

**Acknowledgement: Equal Opportunity.** HFHI is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer. Contractor acknowledges that HFHI does not discriminate in its hiring, programs and activities and assures HFHI that it complies with all Federal laws as applicable, including but not limited to Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1975, as amended. Contractor acknowledges that HFHI expects its Contractors to demonstrate a high-level commitment to diversity in Contractor's business practices and in particular, the services provided, including the use of subcontractors.

**Name of Contractor** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Executive Officer or Principal** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed or Typed Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_



## ANNEX. DETAILED SCOPE OF WORK

G7 Canada 2025 HFHI Issue Brief on:

### **Public Health and Gender Equity in Informal Settlements**

**The gender norms affecting healthcare in informal settlements** (Placeholder title)

#### **I. Organizational background.**

Since 1976, Habitat for Humanity has been driven by the vision that everyone needs a decent place to live. Today Habitat for Humanity International, HFHI, is a leading global housing organization that works in local communities across all 50 states in the US, 46 local organizations in Canada, and with presence in more than 70 countries around the world, including 16 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, 20 in Asia Pacific, and 12 in Africa. Habitat for Humanity works with communities, regional and national governments, peer organizations, and the private sector to remove the systemic barriers that prevent people from accessing adequate, resilient housing.

#### **II. Advocacy at Habitat.**

Habitat for Humanity is one of the few housing-focused, international, non-governmental organizations, recognized globally for our effective approach and positive impact in addressing housing needs of low-income individuals and families. Recognizing that the global need for adequate shelter is far too great to meet through building alone, Habitat for Humanity expands its impact by engaging in advocacy at every level of government to remove barriers to affordable housing and eliminate threats to housing security.

Habitat for Humanity's first global advocacy campaign, [Solid Ground](#), ran from 2016- 2020. Habitat organizations and partners in more than 40 countries influenced policies and systems at all levels of government, resulting in over 12 million people with increased access to land for shelter and housing. Learning from Solid Ground, Habitat for Humanity launched Cost of Home — our first U.S. national advocacy campaign — from 2019-2024, which resulted in over 6.6 million people gaining access to stable and affordable homes, and more than 300 policy changes influenced by local and state Habitat organizations. Building on this momentum, Habitat for Humanity's network has a clear drive to achieve collective impact through future global advocacy campaigns.

In 2023, Habitat for Humanity launched [Home Equals](#), a global advocacy campaign aiming to improve access to adequate housing for the 1.1 billion people living in informal settlements. The [Home Equals launch report](#) by the International Institute for Environment and Development, provided robust evidence of the transformative impact that investing in informal settlements could yield in terms of human development outcomes. Upgrading informal settlements at scale could yield up to 10.5% growth in GDP in least-developed countries, it could increase the expected years of schooling by as much as 28%, and it could increase global life expectancy by 2.5 years.

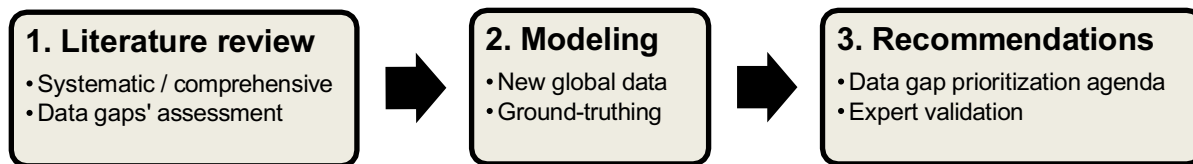
Inspired by these large-scale gains, the campaign promotes 46 Habitat organizations across the world to work alongside communities, partners, as well as national and local governments to advance this goal through direct upgrading projects and policy change. In the last year, our network managed to influence 45 policies or

systems changes at the national or local level that reached at least 3 million people living in informal settlements and unlocked \$63 million of government funds.

At the global level, Habitat for Humanity International considers the G7 (the main donor countries) as a critical advocacy target, with the overarching purpose of raising the profile of adequate housing and informal settlement upgrading as a critical component of Overseas Development Assistance, ODA. During Italy's G7 Presidency, HFHI elevated the issue of [internal climate migration and its impact on informal settlements](#). In coordination with [Habitat Canada](#), HFHI will continue to engage in the processes leading to the 50<sup>th</sup> G7 Summit in Canada in 2025, in alignment -as detailed later in this document- with Canada's [Feminist International Foreign Assistance Policy, FIAP](#).

### III. Suggested research components

HFHI envisions the research process in three large parts: 1) a systematic literature review, 2) modeling of new global statistics with country level numbers including local level ground-truthing, and 3) a structured process to produce recommendations that includes a data gap prioritization agenda and a workshop for expert validation of the calls to action.



#### 1. Systematic literature review of the linkages between health, gender, and informal settlements

The starting point of the research process could be a systematic and or comprehensive review (and ideally a meta-analysis) of the overlap of the three issues: 1) public health, 2) gender equity, and 3) informal settlements. Unlike traditional narrative literature reviews, [systematic reviews are more comprehensive and rigorous in their approach, thus minimizing bias in the findings](#). This will allow to scan the state of evidence from published studies across various key sectors and disciplines: public health; gender and feminist studies; urban studies, adequate housing, and sustainable development. In housing and urban studies systematic literature reviews are not as common as they are in public health. This represents an opportunity to contribute a novel level of analysis currently absent from mainstream discussions around informal settlements.

Recognizing that most research and gender analysis heavily depends on disaggregated data, this research wants to place emphasis on data gaps from the onset, listing and assessing the indicators available to prepare for more refined conclusions on data gaps. Part of the outcomes of this first part should be a prioritized list of viable indicators that are missing, that HFHI should advocate for.

#### 2. Model hidden neighborhood effects on health for women in informal settlements at the global level

The suggestion is to adopt a similar modeling design used in the [Home Equals report](#). This would entail identifying evidence of both the positive contributions to public health and the gender specific health costs that people in informal settlements experience (using a subset of studies from the systematic review). These findings are translated into a series of assumptions for statistical modeling. A statistical model would be used to estimate the joint effects at a country level. Then, the results of these modeling would be applied to other countries for which there is incomplete data using theoretical types instead of taxonomies. This

methodological approach enables one to extrapolate from the existing evidence base, with a certain degree of confidence.

To complement this high-level methodological approach, the researchers are expected to develop a *ground-truthing exercise to test the validity of the global findings*. This could take the form of resident surveys and or expert interviews, or some other complementary methodology. This qualitative component can be performed in coordination with HFHI's network of national offices to ensure the connecting with local experts, including the voices of women living in informal settlements in at least three regions of the world.

### **3. List areas of opportunity and policy recommendations**

Given the unique overlap of issues addressed by this research, we expect that the range of policy solutions presented will be distinctive and compelling to the G7 and other development assistance actors, national and local actors, practitioners, and communities living in informal settlements.

In alignment with a feminist development approach championed by FIAP, these areas of opportunity should comply with the UN-Women's 5Rs principle: **Recognize** differential roles and impacts; **Reduce** disproportionate burdens; **Redistribute** more equitable opportunities, **Reward** efforts and contributions that remain invisible or silent; and **Represent** those excluded or vulnerable in formal and legal structures with voice and leadership.

*Assessment and prioritization workplan of data gaps.* A known conclusion and recommendation of this research is a compilation of available global indicators on the specific overlap of the triad: public health, gender equity, and informal settlements (or their proxies in parts of the world where this term is not contextually applied, but where a number of [dimensions right to adequate housing](#) are infringed). In addition to the stocktaking of existing global indicators, including those listed in [WHO's social determinants of health monitoring framework](#), the consultants will identify a list prioritizing the top ten indicators and disaggregation levels that are most needed. This component will also include a suggested action plan identifying promising methodologies and potential actors (including non-traditional) that can contribute to filling those gaps in the future.

*Validation of draft recommendations with key external stakeholders.* The report will detail a list of solutions that take into account the full extent that gender roles in informal settlements play in terms of health outcomes. The solutions identified by the consultants will be discussed with HFHI and validated in a workshop with key experts in the field organized by the consultants as part of the research process.

## **IV. On the Home Equals communications strategy**

HFHI communications strategy has identified that our policy asks will resonate better with advocacy targets and the public if we reframe informal settlements as sites of opportunities rather than a burden, by showing how providing adequate housing can unlock wider benefits for communities, governments, and enterprises. Our strategy suggests this to be done by:

- Providing evidence of the positive human potential. Positive discourses showing concrete examples of a sense of community, innovation, entrepreneurship, and empowerment are more successful than over-emphasizing the negatives: vulnerability, complexity, and cynicism that dominate discourses around informal settlements.
- Linking informal settlements to other topics in the development and political arena. Connecting with salient issues like health, education, economy, climate change, and social justice beyond the housing sector, can help raise their profile in the public eye.
- Underline that the numbers of people living in informal settlements are growing. The scale and growth raise the urgency and proves that if not tackled now, it will become more difficult and expensive later, whereas early intervention has positive multiplier effects.

## V. Suggested guiding questions

The exact research question/s will be formulated by the consultants at the onset of the research process and agreed upon by HFHI. The list below is merely illustrative and aims to facilitate conversation on possibilities.

- Are there gender disparities in housing-related social determinants of health? How are these reflected in informal settlements?
- How are gender norms contributing to family and community health in informal settlements? What are positive and negative the neighborhood effects of health on women? How does this vary between informal settlements and other parts of the city? Are there observable trends by regions?
- How do gender roles influence health outcomes in informal settlements?
- To what extent do gender-responsive interventions improve health outcomes in informal settlement populations?
- How does empowerment of women in informal settlements contribute to better public health outcomes for the community as a whole?

## VI. Notes on the linkages between FIAP and adequate housing

HFHI expects this research to demonstrate awareness and alignment with Canada's [Feminist International Foreign Assistance Policy, FIAP](#). The research should make a strong evidence-based case for an increased focus on informal settlements' upgrading as a means to accelerate sustainable development ([particularly SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 13, 16](#)) across FIAP's action area policies: human dignity; growth that works for everyone; environment and climate action; inclusive governance; peace and security. In addition, Given that the [legal, technical, and statistical definition of "informal settlements" is closely interrelated with that of "adequate housing"](#) (sharing the majority of its dimensions), it is expected that this research adopts a nuanced yet comprehensive approach.

Among the strategic issues to explore connecting gender equity, public health, and adequate housing are the following:

- Improving access to water is particularly beneficial to women and girls, especially given that they are responsible for fetching water in 7 out of 10 households without water on premises.
- Ensuring adequate access to sanitation, including adequate well-maintained shared sanitation, is particularly beneficial for women and girls who in addition to enjoying general health and wellbeing, can improve their menstrual hygiene management.
- When women improve their security of tenure, their sense of security, protection against Gender Based Violence, and their mental health improves.
- Women and girls invest in care work three times more hours per day than men and boys, this unpaid labor represents at least 9% of global GDP, or 11 trillion dollars. The bulk of this time is spent at home.
- Improving adequate housing in informal settlements is particularly beneficial for women given that most home-based workers are women (57%) and because in low-income countries informal employment is more prevalent in women than in men.