



The difficulties to have **DECENT** housing

SUMMARY

Among the main advantages we are able to identify as a result of having decent housing, we find the capacity to face extraordinary situations like the COVID-19 pandemic or the earthquakes in Mexico in 2017.



The importance of having decent housing is based on the possibilities and improvements made on life as a result of increasing indexes related to social welfare.

The most deficient public services in the region are basic services related to **water supply, drainage systems, and electricity.**



Having decent housing promotes resilience

Among the main advantages resulting from having decent housing, we are able to find that people may develop the capacity to face extraordinary situations, as we have witnessed after the COVID-19 pandemic or the earthquakes in Mexico in 2017.

For that reason, it is urgent to implement local, regional, and global actions to meet the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs), which promote that after implementing safe environments for families, their security would be a guarantee.

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Part from having a salary and decent working conditions, a problem detected in Latin America and Mexico is the access to decent housing. According to the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights; part of the United Nations

(UN), decent housing is: “the housing where citizens are able to live in safely, peacefully, and decently”. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to meet that objective in most of the countries on the planet as we observe that inequality gaps are difficult to reduce.

Housing as the engine for welfare

Right before the COVID-19 pandemic showed the multiple inequality gaps in the world, the World Bank (WB) highlighted the importance of improving quality and quantity of housing in the planet. Only in 2019, it was estimated that in Latin America 2 out of 3 families needed to improve the quality of their housing, as they did not fulfill the minimal requirements to guarantee a dignified life.

Despite highlighting the importance of having dignified areas to live in, the combat to inequality gaps seemed to be in stand-by in most countries around the world. In the face of an economic crisis, constant currency devaluations in Latin America, the loss of employment and the increase of informal jobs; people in poverty are in constant danger every day due to the lack of a firm floor and a roof to protect them.

More quality and less quantity

In the forum “Housing, What is next? challenges and innovation in the Global South”, organized in 2018 by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), we could observe that the Latin American diagnosis already showed some matters that were urgent to attend to.



Among the main problems that the continent currently faces we find that people live in overcrowded areas with **dirt floors** and **weak roofs**, according to IDB.



In some of the main conclusions they had, they mentioned that in the region at least 9 out of 10 housing needed to be improved. Also, it was important to promote improvements on regulations related to land proper-

ty, a severe improvement on public services (like drinking water services or electricity), as well as improvements on the equipment for housing and encouraging constructions using environment-friendly materials.

Mexico and decent housing

Although decent housing is recognized in the Mexican Constitution as a fundamental right, that right is not a guarantee at all, and the way to have access to it becomes less accessible due to the increase of Mexican people working for the informal sector; according to data provided by the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI).



According to experts, **decent housing** consists of areas **over 40 square meters** with the **minimal basic services.**

In accordance with Mariana Sánchez Vieyra, Technical Secretary in charge of the projects of the University Program on Studies about the City (PUEC) in Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM), the importance of having a decent area to live in is directly related to the increase and decrease, according to each case, on life expectancy of people. As evidence of that, we found that children and teenagers in street situations only live 25 years on average, which represents 50 years less than a regular Mexican owning a house.

Decent housing needs to cross the line of regulations because people owning a house not only live in a safe place with the minimal conditions, but also, they are able to develop their capacities and improve their realities. For that reason, it is important to create common areas where the three levels in the Government, companies, and civil societies might promote decent housing in order to improve social welfare.

CMT, the Welfare Ecosystem and the importance of decent housing

Since inception, Congregación Mariana Trinitaria (CMT) has focused on improving social welfare for all the people. For this reason, after the implementation of the CMT Welfare Ecosystem Model, the Network of Housing was promoted so that all the people who need assistance to improve their hous-

ing may have access to it. That network is aimed at combating deficiencies in housing, and also to provide support and solutions to build, enlarge or improve housing, having access to basic services, and adapting technologies to housing in order to protect the environment.

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