



World Habitat Day 2026

MAROUA, September 28 – October 5, 2026

Global Theme: “Adequate Housing for All”

**National Theme: “An adequate Roof for Every Family,
Sustainable, Inclusive, Smart, and Resilient Cities for All:
The Seven-Year Term of Great Hopes”**

Call for Papers

August 2026

Description

According to the United Nations' World Urbanization Prospects 2018 report, cities absorb almost all of the world's population growth, with an urbanization rate of 55.3% (4.2 billion inhabitants) in 2018, projected to reach 68.4% in 2050 (6.7 billion inhabitants). Ninety percent of this urban growth occurs in developing countries. Data from UN-Habitat's World Cities Report 2022, "Envisaging the Future of Cities," indicate that Africa has the highest rate of urban growth in the world (3.4%). By 2050, six out of ten Africans will live in urban areas.

Cameroon has followed this global trend, accelerating sharply since the 1980s. The urbanization rate increased from 28.5% in 1976 and 37.8% in 1987 to 52% in 2010 (BUCREP - RGPH 1976, 1987, 2005), with an estimated 59.4% in 2022 (BUCREP).

This rapid urbanization, which is both demographic and spatial (urban sprawl), inextricably links the country's development to the future of its cities. It poses multiple challenges that directly affect the well-being of the population: land insecurity, a lack of infrastructure and urban services (transport, sanitation, waste management, energy, and other socio-collective facilities), poverty and exclusion, security, and a significant gap in adequate housing.

Added to these challenges is the climate crisis, which imposes adaptation, mitigation, and resilience needs on cities in the face of climate change's effects, including disasters. It is also important to note the impact of internal and external migration crises on the urban fabric. Many cities are being reconfigured by population displacements resulting from conflicts, leading to additional pressure on urban services.

Among these urban challenges, housing is a key issue. Spontaneous settlements, characterized by the emergence of slums in the early 1980s, have hampered planning efforts and created significant constraints in terms of sanitation and urban mobility. Like other African countries, Cameroon has a considerable gap in decent housing. It is estimated at 2.5 million units, with an increase of 100,000 to 120,000 units per year. According to the National Development Strategy (NDS30), only 40.3% of households live in decent housing (NDS30, page 166).

To mark global awareness of the challenge of sustainable urbanization and to provide development actors with an opportunity to reflect on corresponding solutions, the United Nations, through **General Assembly Resolution 40/202 of December 17, 1985, established World Habitat Day (WHD)**. This celebration has become a key event on the international agenda for assessing the location of urban targets for the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 11, which aims to **"make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable."**

Celebrated on the first Monday of October, under a theme related to urban agendas, WHD highlights the fundamental right to decent housing. It encourages states, local authorities, the private sector, experts, academia, civil society, and citizens to reflect on the challenges of sustainable urbanization and decent housing for all in a context of multiple crises.

The theme chosen for the 2026 celebration is: **"Adequate Housing for All."**

In Cameroon, with the High Approval of the Head of State, The World Housing Day is celebrated during a week of activities, the National Housing Week. **The city of Maroua will host the 2026 Celebration from September 28 to October 5, 2026.**

Organized by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, in partnership with the United Nations Human Settlements Organization (UN-Habitat), the WHO, and the Cameroon Urban Platform, and in collaboration with the City of Maroua, this week is envisioned as a time to mobilize the scientific community through roundtables, dialogues, and thematic sessions related to the global theme and its national adaptation. The national theme is: “A decent roof for every family, sustainable, inclusive, smart, and resilient cities for all in light of the Seven-Year Term of Great Expectations.”

This theme invites us to rethink housing policy in Cameroon in the face of persistent challenges such as land availability, financing, and production technologies. It will allow us to address the issue of decent housing from the perspective of human dignity and within the broader framework of sustainable urbanization. It will also demonstrate that the housing challenge represents a significant opportunity for wealth and job creation, in line with the National Development Strategy 30 (SND30) and at the start of the Seven-Year Term of Great Hopes.

In this context, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, in partnership with the University of Maroua, is launching a call for papers in the form of scientific articles or project proposals, to be submitted in English or French.

Themes

Submissions are welcome (but not limited to) in the following thematic areas:

- New Housing Production Technologies: Industrialization and AI
- The Land Challenge: What Land Reform for Sustainable and Inclusive Housing Policies?
- Financing: Shifting the Paradigm to View Decent Housing as an Opportunity for Economic Growth and Employment
- Cameroon's Architectural and Cultural Heritage as a Response to the Challenge of Decent and Affordable Housing in the Context of Climate Change?
- Real Estate Development and Self-Build: Targeting Women and Youth (in the form of a Forum of projects led by these target groups)
- Urban Sanitation as a Challenge for Decent Housing
- Housing and Health: Housing in the Face of Health Crises

Researchers are also invited to contribute to the **Maroua Declaration on adequate Housing in Cameroon**.

Submission Guidelines

Scientific Article: Article title, authors' names and surnames, scientific or professional affiliation, 4 to 5 keywords, with a 500-word text presenting the research question and the field of study.

Project article: article title, authors' names, scientific or professional affiliation, 4 to 5 keywords, with a 300-word text presenting the field of study and the research question.

Poster: poster title, authors' names, scientific or professional affiliation, 4 to 5 keywords, with a 300-word text presenting the field of study and the research question.

Open opinion piece: title, authors' names, scientific or professional affiliation, 4 to 5 keywords, with a 300-word text presenting the field of study and the research question.

Dates

According to the indicated themes, scientists and experts interested in this scientific event may submit an abstract in French or English, depending on the type of presentation, to **jmhmaroua2026@gmail.com by September 12, 2026.**

Full contributions, in French or English, must be submitted in Word format for scientific articles, project articles, and opinion pieces after abstracts have been accepted by September 25, 2026:

Further information on World Habitat Day can be found on the website:
<https://www.jmhmaroua2026.org/>