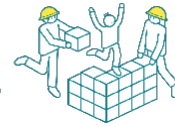




CoHabitat  
Network



# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT





## CoHabitat is a joint initiative by Civil Society Organisations working in the field of community-led housing

**Community-led housing** is a process by which inhabitants play a leading role in addressing their housing needs. With the right support of other actors, they join forces to collectively plan, finance, build or renovate and manage housing, outdoor spaces, and facilities. In doing so, they exercise their Right to the City and they influence their built environment to make it permanently affordable and secure for future generations.

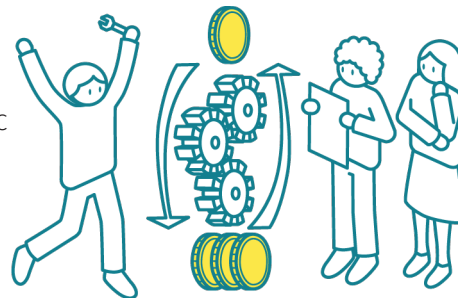
**CoHabitat** is a non-profit informal network of Civil Society Organisations and their allies who promote people-led solutions in response to the global and local manifestations of the housing crisis: the unequal access to adequate housing; the commodification and financialization of land and housing; the challenges posed by the environmental and climate emergency; the dispossession of homes and livelihoods due to conflict; the isolation and exclusion of minorities and vulnerable social groups like ageing populations.



## From our different geographies, cultures and types of organisations, we collaborate in the following ways:



1. Unlock creativity and solidarity by learning from each other, sharing our experiences.
2. Advocate collectively through joint events, campaigns, publications, public statements and supporting other Network member's local struggles.
3. Produce knowledge and best practices for different audiences through research, systematisation, international awards, project mapping and policy-papers.
4. Experiment and promote innovative financial tools to help Community-Led Housing initiatives emerge and scale-up.
5. Network and facilitate collaboration opportunities between strategic actors from different fields to create new synergies."



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## FOREWORD

In 2023, the CoHabitat Network continued to exchange practices, strengthen existing collaborations and promote strategic internal reflections on outcomes we want to contribute to as a Network. These reflections began in 2022, and by the end of 2023, the in-depth internal evaluation was completed.

On the eve of its tenth anniversary, which will be celebrated in 2024, it was important to reflect on and update CoHabitat's tools and governance structure taking into account members' needs, and urbaMonde's financial and human capacities as the coordinating organisation.

CoHabitat has continued to actively engage with various organisations working for the right to housing.

New organisations have expressed the wish to join the Network and to have an international perspective in their work on community-led housing - which testifies to the recognition of CoHabitat as a relevant global network.



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## ACRONYMS

ACHR	Asian Coalition for Housing Rights
CatComm	Catalytic Communities
CHI	Co-operative Housing International
CLH	Community-led housing
CLT	Community Land Trust
CLTB	Community Land Trust Bruxelles
ECLTN	European Community Land Trust Network
FGC	Fédération genevoise de coopération
FUCVAMU	Uruguayan Federation of Mutual Aid Housing Cooperatives
GPR2C	Global Platform for the Right to the City

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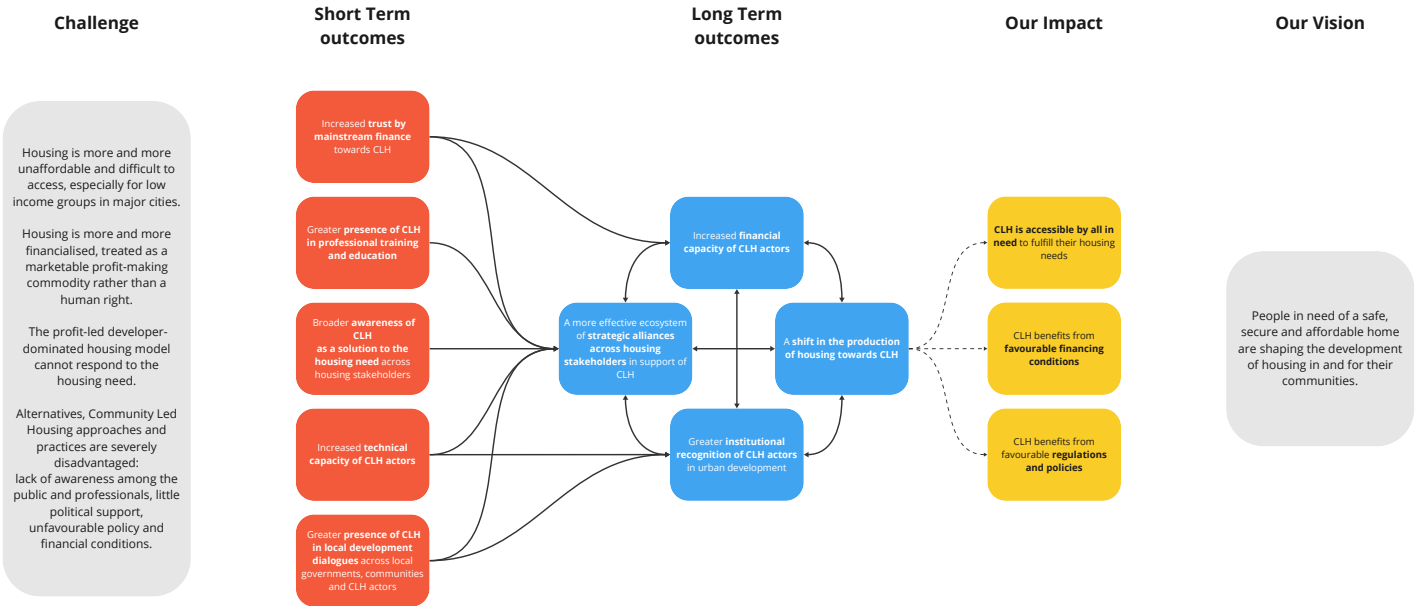
HIC	Habitat International Coalition
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
ISHF	International Social Housing Festival
NASCO	North American Students of Cooperation
SDI	Slum Dwellers International

# Structuring our Collaborative Network

Over the first nine years of our Network, we have collaborated based on mutual trust and respect. As the Network got more visibility, attracted new potential members and kept on developing in a changing context we needed to redefine what unites us and how we work together as an informal network. Impulsed by urba-Monde between August and November, a participatory process with Network members allowed to co-produce and agree on several documents.

1. The **CoHabitat Theory of Change** developed with the active support of World Habitat was elaborated, defining the vision and short to medium-term outcomes the Network would like to contribute to.
2. The **CoHabitat Charter** must be signed by all organisations who want to stay or become members.
3. A **CoHabitat Governance** protocol attached to the charter specifies our internal processes.

These documents will be soon available on our website and we are pleased to enter our tenth year of existence with a more structured framework to foster future collaborations. The **self-managed work groups** defined in the Governance document allow members to interact more between the general meetings and advance concrete works (for instance Policy and advocacy, Financing of CLH, Community response to climate change, Conceptual definitions of CLH, Strategic reflection on network and umbrella organisations' support role, etc.).

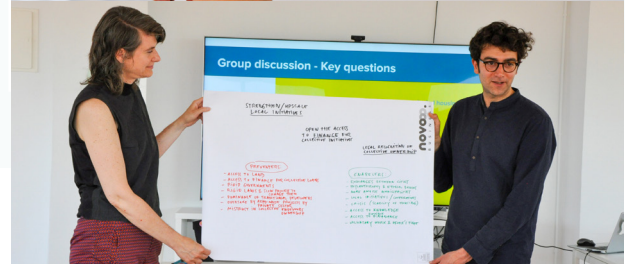


# CoHabitat Discussions

## Annual Meeting in Barcelona

In early June 2023, [CoHabitat's annual meeting](#) was organised in Barcelona, one day before the start of the International Social Housing Festival (ISHF). In fact, many CoHabitat members were planning to attend this strategic event (Community Land Trust Brussels (CLTB), Cooperative Housing International (CHI), Global Platform for the Right to the City (GPR2C), Habitat International Coalition (HIC), Habitat & Participation, International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), MOBA, Sostre Civic and World Habitat), and urbaMonde fundraised to invite others to participate (Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR), Catalytic Communities (CatComm), Habitat Participatif France, Multipro, Uruguayan Federation of Mutual-aid Housing Cooperatives (FUCVAM)).

The organisation of CoHabitat's annual meetings on the margin of the ISHF was much appreciated by members,





as it provides important networking spaces and access to multilateral discussion forums for member organisations. Combining the meeting with a major international event also helps to reduce the carbon footprint of the participants.

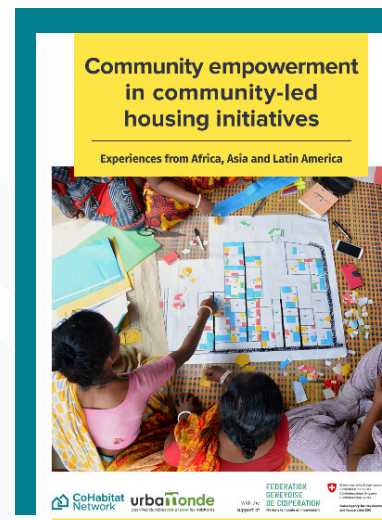
During a whole day at Nau Bostik alternative space, the annual gathering allowed long-standing and recent members to exchange their priorities, needs, expectations, and inputs on CoHabitat's strategy. Following the internal meeting, a networking session was organised in which external organisations interested in getting to know more about the Network were invited, such as [CoopLink](#) (Netherlands), [La Dinamo](#) (Catalonia) and the [European Community Land Trust Network](#) (ECLTN).

## South-South learning and knowledge exchange

During 2023, urbaMonde led a series of workshops with CoHabitat members from the Global South on the systematisation of CLH initiatives with a focus on **community mobilisation and capacity building**. The participating grass-roots organisations were ACHR (Asia), CatComm (Brazil), FUCVAM (Uruguay), Multipro (Nicaragua), urbaSEN (Senegal).

The systematisation of these aspects has proved very useful for all the organisations involved, enabling them to better understand the various realities in which they operate, and the different strategies put in place according to the challenges encountered. Through several exchanges, this process has allowed the co-construction of knowledge around the empowerment of communities based on the innovative solutions put in place at the local level, e.g. community-led schools based on popular education or community-managed financial mechanisms for land acquisition and construction processes. The brochure compiling these findings was published in 2024.

Participants' enthusiasm encouraged them to continue this process in 2024 with a specific focus on **community-led financial mechanisms**. UrbaMonde will raise funds in 2024 to implement this new collaborative capitalisation process involving several peer-to-peer workshops.



## CoHabitat Online Conversations

In December 2023, the annual online session was held successfully, gathering 15 participants from 13 member organisations to share the Network's and each members' achievements, collectively evaluate the annual activities, and gathering insights for the following year's planning.

Among other collaborations, it was decided to hold an in-person gathering in October 2024 in Geneva to celebrate **CoHabitat's 10th anniversary** with a multi-day programme including internal workshops, a public conference, and visits to housing cooperatives.

## CoHabitat Internal Evaluation

2023 was an important year for the restructuring of the CoHabitat Network. Between the end of 2022 and early 2023 urbaMonde conducted an internal evaluation with CoHabitat's historical partners to better understand their views on the network. Individual interviews were used to evaluate CoHabitat's main tools, such as the Awards and Regional Hubs, the annual meetings, the documentation, and the cohabitat.io database, and above all, to gather ideas on planning for the upcoming years.

The results were gathered in an internal evaluation report, which also provided an historical overview of CoHabitat and its milestones from 2014 to the present.

# CoHabitat Open Events

## International Social Housing Festival

*Coordinated by urbaMonde in collaboration with CoHabitat Network partners*

The International Social Housing Festival 2023 brought to Barcelona over 2,100 participants from non-governmental organisations, representatives of public authorities and the private sector, academia, and other key stakeholders in the housing sector.

As part of this festival, CoHabitat collaborated with several partner organisations to set up the «**Community-led Housing Track**»: a programme of roundtables, visits and networking opportunities focusing on community-led housing. This programme contributed to give visibility to CoHabitat and its members' activities.

Network members who came to Barcelona were able to take part in 3 days of events featuring key discussions on social housing, as well as visiting local “right-to-use” housing cooperatives developed by the inspiring local ecosystem of cooperative organisations including Sostre Civic, La Dinamo, Coop57.



This inspiring catalan CLH model was made possible through the fruitful collaboration between these civil society actors and the City Council of Barcelona between 2015 and 2023. An event organised by urbaMonde and the Network of Cities for Collaborative Housing ([NETCO](#)) invited representatives of the Cities of Barcelona, Brussels, Lyon, The Hague and civil society representatives from Austria and France to discuss why and how these collaborations can work (Notes and takeaways).

World Habitat organised an event around the 2023 World Habitat Award winners, including Sostre Civic who won the silver award for its inspiring work in developing the right to use housing cooperative model in Catalonia: **“World Habitat Awards: Affordable Housing & Homelessness Prevention Best Practice”**.

Catcom and CLTB were part of the event **launching the new European Community Land Trust Network**, which aims to connect CLTs and scale the model on the European level.

The workshop **“Community-led Housing Solutions for Students and Seniors”**, co-organised by CHI and urbaMonde, explored solutions to housing insecurity for students and





seniors. The speakers included [La Ciguë](#) (Geneva); [Student Coop Homes](#) (UK); [Studentendorf](#) (Berlin); [Distrito Natural](#) (Spain); [Fondazione Housing Sociale](#) (Italy). The discussion highlighted the potential of collaborative and inclusive social housing, self-management and sustainable architecture to address the challenges faced by vulnerable groups. The student housing cooperative model is inspiring in that sense, as it creates a supportive community for students throughout their academic journey and beyond.

Invited by [Legacoop](#) (Italy), urbaMonde spoke about the Swiss housing cooperatives at another transformative conference: “[RECOOP UP! Innovating housing, welfare, and culture with a neo-mutualistic mindset](#)”, featuring speakers from diverse backgrounds and nationalities. Together,

they explored the synergy between social housing and local services, igniting social innovation. The focus was on revitalising the ‘cooperative of inhabitants’ model within a ‘neo-mutualistic’ paradigm, fostering solidarity-based welfare and cultural enrichment through shared spaces.»

At the end of ISHF, together with Sostre Civic, a broader networking event was hosted at Nau Bostik aiming at gathering civil society organisations, representatives of public authorities and residents of Barcelona’s housing cooperatives. The event counted with more than 100 participants from 24 countries, including from the Global South. It was a big success for fostering collaborations and connections between key stakeholders of the housing sector.



ISHF INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL HOUSING FESTIVAL BARCELONA 2023  
INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL HOUSING FESTIVAL BARCELONA 2023  
socialhousingfestival

INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL HOUSING FESTIVAL BARCELONA 2023

**To the blog post and full ISHF 2023 Report**

INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL HOUSING FESTIVAL BARCELONA 2023

ISHF  
ISHF  
INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL HOUSING FESTIVAL BARCELONA 2023

## NETCO Conferences

*Organised by NETCO members*

The Network of Cities for Collaborative Housing (**NETCO**) started to realise exchange activities in 2023. In its initial phase, supported with European funding (end of 2022 - beginning of 2024,) NETCO comprises 17 European cities and regional governments. During 2024, it will likely become a permanent network that will admit new member cities who want to benefit from peer-to-peer exchanges between public servants and policymakers around Collaborative Housing projects and policies.

During 2023, public servants met, visited projects and held conferences in Bologna, Barcelona, and Berlin. The city of Barcelona and **Id22**, which facilitate these NETCO exchanges, invited urbaMonde to participate in the Barcelona and Berlin gatherings. UrbaMonde and MOBA will also participate in the Brussels gathering of NETCO early 2024.

Collaborations will continue in 2024, strengthening the link between a network of progressive cities and CoHabitat gives great hope to influence new generations of enabling policies for collaborative housing to emerge in new cities and countries across Europe.



# CoHabitat Partnerships

## Pan-European Network of Student Housing Cooperatives

Finding affordable housing is one of the biggest challenges for students and young people. The housing cooperative model has proven to be an effective alternative to the traditional housing market for this population, offering affordable rents, good living and studying conditions, and an enriching experience in relation to community life, solidarity, and self-help.

Inspired by the experience of the North American Students of Cooperation (NASCO), several European student housing cooperatives came together in 2020 (namely La Ciguë in Switzerland, Student Co-op Homes in the UK and Studentendorf in Berlin) with the support of Cooperative Housing International and urbaMonde. They started to think how to federate to create a strong movement able to promote the development and the scaling-up of this housing model in different European contexts.

Since then, this network has strived to structure and develop, creating spaces of experience exchanges, mutualisation, and common reflections. In 2023, several online meetings were held, and an in-person meeting was organised in the framework of the ISHF in Barcelona.



## Fostering a European Housing Cooperative Ecosystem



There is a growing trend among community-led housing players to join forces and seek to federate into a broader movement in Europe. In 2023, MOBA Housing SCE, Sostre Civic, NETCO, and urbaMonde created a consortium with the support of the Laudes Foundation, exploring possible pathways to strengthen and scale up the European housing cooperative ecosystem. The discussions focused on the burning issues of access to finance and supportive public policies. Creating the necessary knowledge base that empowers local governments, thinking of new ethical and cross-regional financial facilities, fostering multi-stakeholder collaborations in the financial sector, and encouraging investment in socially responsible housing initiatives are at the heart of the strategic thinking of this consortium.

Other similar spaces emerged in 2023, like the **European Network of Emerging Community-led Cooperative Housing Organisations** who also met in Barcelona and coordinated an [event](#) on how to support the establishment of affordable cooperative housing, knowledge exchange between different stakeholder groups and how to obtain funding through the EIB for small scale housing cooperatives. One of the initiatives arising from these discussions is the [commoning space network](#), founded in December 2023 and led by the Mietshäuser Syndikat in Germany.

## Global South - International Cooperation Projects

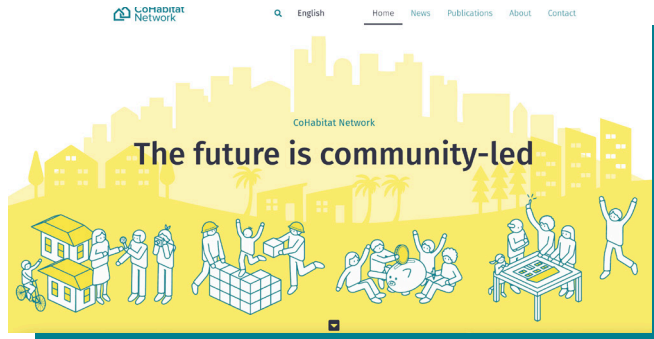
Since it was founded, the CoHabitat Network has aimed to build bridges between different regions of the world, particularly between the global South and the global North. International solidarity between CLH players is a key value in the network's activities and mission. In this sense, several international cooperation projects have been set up by urbaMonde and network members, aiming to support local CLH initiatives in Latin America, Asia and Africa.

In 2023, with the active support and collaboration of ACHR's secretariat, two new projects were launched in Indonesia (with [Urban Poor Consortium](#)) and Bangladesh (with the [Platform of Community Action and Architecture](#)) with the support of the [Geneva Cooperation Federation](#) (FGC). Both projects aim to explore, strengthen and scale-up CLH models as a solution for low-income communities living in informal settlements.



# Communication & Documentation

## Newsletter & Website

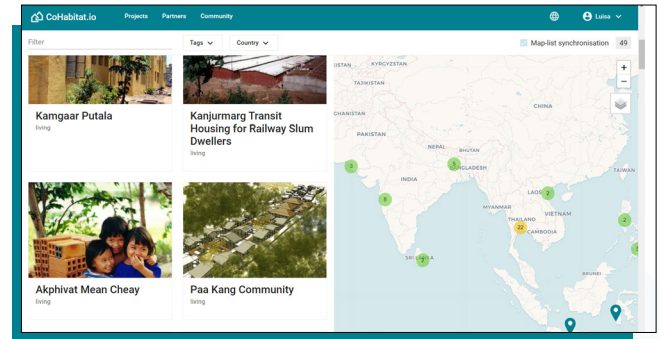


In terms of communication, 5 newsletters were sent out throughout the year. In addition, news about our partners and their activities were regularly published on our official website and social media channels. During 2023, urbaMonde has worked on setting up a **new website** for the Network, which will be online in 2024.

► [Website](#)

► [Sign up to the CoHabitat Newsletter](#)

## CoHabitat.io



Some partners have continued to **document CLH projects** to the database cohabitat.io. urbaMonde is raising funds in order to update the API and the project entries, add information and translate projects which are only in one of the languages of the site (English, Spanish and French).

► [Browse projects](#)



# CoHabitat Network

With the support and active participation of the CoHabitat Members:



With the financial support of



Bringing together  
community-led  
housing organisations  
& allies from across  
the world, who work  
to secure housing  
through collective, non-  
speculative, people-led  
solutions.

[co-habitat.net](http://co-habitat.net)