



CONCEPT NOTE

HLPF 2026

Event Title: “Thirst, Hygiene, and Dignity: The hidden face of Homelessness under SDG’s 6,7,9,11 and 17

ECOSOC-accredited Sponsor: Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul

ECOSOC-accredited Co-Sponsors: Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary - Loreto Generalate, Working Group to End Homelessness, NGO Committee for Social Development, Justice Coalition of Religious

Partners: Mary Ward Centre, Toronto

Event Date: July 7 or July 9, time TBC

Venue: TBC

Format: Hybrid (in-person/online); 90 minutes duration

Background and Rationale:

More than 1.6 billion people worldwide lack adequate housing, and at least 150 million are entirely without shelter. Homelessness is not merely an absence of a roof — it is the compounded denial of water, sanitation, energy, safety, dignity, and economic participation. It is both a cause and consequence of systemic inequality, and its persistence represents one of the most visible failures of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

With the SDG midpoint now past and voluntary national reviews underway, the HLPF provides a critical moment to examine how homelessness intersects with the goals under review — particularly SDGs 6, 7, 9, 11, and 17. Progress on these goals is inextricably linked: a person without stable housing cannot meaningfully access clean water or sanitation (SDG 6); cannot benefit from affordable, clean energy (SDG 7); is excluded from digital and physical infrastructure (SDG 9); and is the direct subject of SDG 11’s target 11.1 on adequate housing for all. Realizing these commitments demands the kind of integrated, multi-stakeholder partnership envisioned by SDG 17.

This side event brings together member states, UN system entities, civil society, and — critically — a person with lived experience of homelessness to interrogate what is working, what is failing, and what bold action is needed in the final years of the 2030 Agenda.

As countries present progress at the High-Level Political Forum 2026, there is an urgent need to highlight homelessness as a cross-cutting development and human rights issue. Addressing it requires integrated, people centered, and partnership-driven approaches that bridge humanitarian response, development policy, and systemic change.

Objectives:

This event seeks to:

- Illuminate the multi-dimensional connections between homelessness and SDGs 6, 7, 9, 11, and 17, drawing on evidence and policy experience from diverse national contexts.
- Amplify the voice and expertise of people with lived experience, ensuring their perspectives shape policy dialogue rather than illustrate it.
- Promote integrated and rights-based policy solutions to address homelessness.
- Generate a set of actionable commitments from panelists that can be tracked and reported on within voluntary national review processes.
- Strengthen partnerships between governments, UN agencies, and civil society to accelerate progress toward SDG 11.1 and related targets.

Key guiding questions

- How does lack of access to water and sanitation shape the daily realities of people experiencing homelessness?
- What integrated approaches can link SDG's 6,7,9, and 11 to effectively address homelessness?
- How can partnerships (SDG 17) be strengthened to ensure inclusive service delivery?
- What good practices from grassroots to global levels can inform policy and systemic change?

Format

The event will be an interactive intervention 75–90-minute panel combining:

- Short keynote framing
- Panel intervention from diverse stakeholders
- Testimony from grassroots experience
- Moderated discussions
- Q&A with participants

Proposed speakers (To be confirmed)

- Member State keynote - Kenya (TBC)
- UN Agency - UN Habitat (TBC)
- Lived experience representative
- Community-based organization - Mary Ward Centre, Toronto, Canada
- Grassroots representative

Expected Outcomes

- Increased awareness of homelessness as a multi SDG issue
- Identification of practical, integrated solutions
- Strengthened collaboration across sectors and stakeholders

Target Audience

- Member States and government representatives
- UN agencies and experts
- Civil society and grassroots organizations
- Faith-based organizations.