

University Of Minnesota - Human Rights Resource Center - The Right To Adequate Housing



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Housing forms an indispensable part of ensuring human dignity. “Adequate housing” encompasses more than just the four walls of a room and a roof over one’s head. Housing is essential for normal healthy living. It fulfills deep-seated psychological needs for privacy and personal space; physical needs for security and protection from inclement weather; and social needs for basic gathering points where important relationships are forged and nurtured. In many societies, a house also serves an important function as an economic center where essential commercial activities are performed.

Despite global recognition of the importance of housing to human welfare and survival, it is estimated that over one billion people live in inadequate housing while over 100 million people are homeless. Governments claim lack of capacity and resources to implement programs and undertake reforms aimed at creating the conditions for expanding access to housing. The right to adequate housing therefore provides a unique paradigm for monitoring the steps taken by states towards the provision of housing through citizens’ demands and insistence upon the fulfillment of this basic human right.

Read more: <http://www1.umn.edu/edumat/module13.htm>