**REPORTS ON DISCRIMINATION, SEGREGATION AND THE RIGHT TO ADEQUATE HOUSING**

QUESTIONNAIRE

**BASIC INFORMATION**

1. Name of Individual, Organization, Institution, Agency or State: Housing Development Board (HDB), Singapore

Type of Entity\*

[x]  National Government or federal governmental ministry/agency

[ ]  Inter-governmental organization or UN agency

[ ]  Local or regional government, agency, representative or mayor

[ ]  Association, tenant union or housing cooperative

[ ]  NGO network, umbrella organization

[ ]  Community-based NGO

[ ]  Academia

[ ]  Foundation

[ ]  National human rights organization, ombudsperson

[ ]  Real estate, urban planning or construction

[ ]  Real estate investor or investment fund

[ ]  Trade Union

[ ]  Other:

2. Categorization of your Work

Please select one or more responses, as appropriate.

[ ] Public administration

[ ] Advocacy

[ ] Funding

[ ] Legal Assistance

[ ] Networking

[x] Policy

[ ] Research

[ ] Technical Assistance

[ ] Training

[ ] N/A

[ ] Other:

3. City/Town: Singapore

4. State/Province: Singapore

5. Country (please indicate your region or “international” if focus the work of your organization covers multiple countries); Singapore

**HOUSING DISCRIMINATION**

7. What specific forms of de facto or legal discrimination or barriers towards equal enjoyment of the right to adequate housing do the following groups face in your country (please provide evidence with examples, studies, reports and relevant statistical information):

* People of African Descent, or Roma
* Racial, caste, ethnic, religious groups/minorities or other groups
* Migrants, foreigners, refugees, internally displaced persons
* Women, children or older persons
* Indigenous peoples
* Persons with disabilities
* LGBTQ persons
* Low income persons, including people living in poverty
* Residents of informal settlements; persons experiencing homelessness
* Other social groups, please specify

Click here to enter text.

8. Discrimination in housing can affect various dimensions of the right to adequate housing and other human rights. Could you provide more details regarding the specific areas in which housing discrimination is experienced? Below are examples of various forms of discrimination that can be experienced in relation to different dimensions of the right to adequate housing:

*Accessibility*

* Discrimination in relation to access to land, including water and natural resources essential for habitation;
* Discrimination in relation to housing for rental or for acquisition or in accessing public or social housing;
* Access to emergency and/or transitional housing after disaster, conflict related displacement or in case of homelessness, family or domestic violence;
* Accessibility of housing for persons with disabilities or older persons, including access to housing for independent living or to care homes;
* data collection or requirements to furnish certain certifications resulting in the exclusion of particular persons from accessing housing;

*Habitability*

* discrimination in relation to housing conditions, overcrowding or housing maintenance;
* Exposure to health risks within the home, including lack of ventilation, heating or insulation, exposure to fire or housing collapse risk, unhealthy building materials, or other unhealthy housing covered by the WHO Guidelines on housing and health;
* Exposure to other risks which render housing uninhabitable, including sexual or gender-based violence, interference with privacy and physical security in the home and neighbourhood;
* Discrimination in relation to housing renovation or permission of housing extension;

*Affordability*

* Discrimination in relation to access to public benefits related to housing;
* Lack of equal access to affordable housing;
* Discrimination in public and private housing financing;
* Discrimination related to housing and service costs, housing related fees, litigation or taxation;

*Security of tenure*

* Discrimination in relation to ownership or inheritance of housing and land and related natural resources including water including on the basis of a distinction between formal and informal tenure arrangements;
* Discrimination in relation to evictions, resettlement and compensation for loss or damage of housing, land or livelihoods;
* Differential treatment in land or title registration, permission of housing construction;

*Availability of services, materials, facilities and infrastructure*

* Discrimination in relation to access to work, schooling, health care or public benefits based on the residential address or related to a lack of an official address;
* Public transportation services and transportation costs;
* Provision of water, sanitation, energy, waste collection and other utility services; their quality or cost, including interruptions/blackouts including policies relating to disconnection from utility services;
* spatial disparities in access to health care, education, child care, cultural and recreational facilities;

*Location*

* Discrimination in relation to freedom of choice of the place of residency within the country, within a particular region or location;
* Discrimination based on place of residence or address, such as exclusion from invitation to job interviews or access to credit;
* Exposure to environmental health risks, such as external air quality, flooding, toxic ground exposure; noise; risk of landslides etc.;
* Living quality and physical security in the neighbourhood, including geographical disparities in policing and law enforcement;

*Cultural adequacy*

* Discrimination in relation to the recognition of culturally adequate dwellings as housing as well as equal access to public space;
* Prohibition of accessing, maintaining or constructing culturally adequate housing;
* Lack of recognition of mobile forms of residency.

Click here to enter text.

9. Are there any particular current laws, policies or practices in your country, region or town/community that contribute to or exacerbate discrimination in relation to the right to adequate housing?

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10. Can you explain exemptions in national law that allow (certain) public, private or religious housing providers to give preferential or exclusive access to housing to members of a particular group, for example based on membership, employment contract, public service, age, disability, civil status, sex, gender, religion, income or other criteria?

Click here to enter text.

11. In case there may be differential treatment of particular groups in relation to housing, please explain why such treatment could be justifiable according to international human rights standards - for example positive measures benefiting a particular group to overcome systematic discrimination or disadvantage-or if it would amount to discrimination?

Click here to enter text.

**SPATIAL AND RESIDENTIAL SEGREGATION**

12. What forms of spatial segregation along racial, caste, ethnicity, religion, nationality, migration status, heritage, economic status/income or other social grounds can be observed in urban and urban-rural contexts in your country?

Click here to enter text.

13. What impacts do these forms of spatial and residential segregation have on affected communities? Please point to indicators such as rates of poverty, un-employment and under-employment; prevalence rates of malnutrition; disparities in access to services and facilities (such as access to schooling, health care or other public benefits); disparities in access to infrastructure (lack of and/or poor quality provision of water, sanitation, transportation, energy, waste collection and other utility services); rates of exposure to environmental health risks (poor air quality, flooding, toxic ground exposure, etc).

Click here to enter text.

14. Have any particular historical or current laws, policies or practices in your country, region or town/community caused or exacerbated segregation?

Click here to enter text.

15. In your view, what factors (current or historical) are the principal *drivers* of spatial and residential segregation in urban and urban-rural contexts in your country?

Click here to enter text.

16. Are there examples in your country of where spatial and residential clustering has been a result of voluntary choices of residence by members of particular groups?

Click here to enter text.

17. The preservation of cultural identity, the right to self-determination of indigenous peoples and the protection of minority rights are examples of grounds for which groups may choose to live separately. Can you comment on how these forms spatial/territorial separation are evidenced in your country, if these communities they are subject to discrimination and suffer adverse consequences from spatial segregation such as through disparities in access to services, infrastructure, living conditions, etc.?

Click here to enter text.

18. In your view, are certain forms of observed residential separation/voluntary clustering compatible with human rights law and if so why? (for example to protect rights of minorities or to respect the freedom of choice of individuals to decide with whom to live together).

Click here to enter text.

19. Are there any laws or policies requiring certain individuals (and their families) to live in particular housing provided to them or in a particular geographical area (e.g. asylum seekers, migrants, IDPs, refugees, ethnic, religious, linguistic or other minorities, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, public service and military personnel)?

Click here to enter text.

20. In your view, what are the principal *barriers* to diminishing spatial, including residential segregation?

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**MEASURES AND GOOD PRACTICES TO CURB DISCRIMINATION AND REDUCE SEGREGATION**

21. What laws, policies or measures exist at national or local level to prevent or prohibit discrimination in relation to the right to adequate housing?

The Housing & Development Board (HDB) is Singapore’s public housing authority and a statutory board under the Ministry of National Development. HDB was formed in 1960 amidst an acute shortage of proper housing for the population. At that time, many were living in unhygienic slums and crowded squatter settlements. HDB’s immediate task was to solve the nation's housing crisis – to house as many people as possible within the shortest time possible.

Today, HDB has completed more than one million apartments in 23 towns and 3 estates across Singapore. These HDB apartments are home to over 80% of Singapore's resident population, from the lower-income to the upper-middle-income. Of these, 9 in 10 residents own the apartments they live in. This makes home ownership rates in Singapore among the highest in the world.

One of the factors that has contributed to the high homeownership rates is the public housing subsidies and grants provided by the Government, to ensure that ownership of an HDB flat remains affordable and continues to be within reach of home buyers. For the poor and needy citizens who are unable to buy a flat and have no family support, HDB helps them with public rental flats that are heavily subsidised.

**Promoting Social Harmony and Integration**

Singapore’s public housing policies and design are formulated to foster community bonding and social integration, so that Singaporeans of different ethnic and socio-economic groups can live together and interact with one another. Some of the measures/policies are as follows:

1. Physical Design

To encourage social interaction and promote community bonding amongst residents, HDB plans and designs a variety of shared spaces and social facilities such as fitness corners and playgrounds in the neighbourhoods. A good mix of apartment types and sizes is also provided within each HDB block and precinct to cater to different socio-economic groups.

1. Public Housing Policies

HDB has put in place the [Ethnic Integration Policy (EIP)](http://www.hdb.gov.sg/residential/buying-a-flat/resale/eligibility/ethnic-integration-policy-and-spr-quota) to promote racial integration and harmony, and prevent the formation of racial enclaves. Based on the ethnic make-up of Singapore, a quota is set for each ethnic group in each block and neighbourhood, to ensure a balanced mix of various ethnic communities in HDB towns.

1. Community Bonding Programmes

Beyond the physical design and housing policies, HDB also plans for a variety of activities within the towns to liven up common spaces, and creates opportunities for neighbours to get to know one another. Residents can also receive funding and support to co-create their living environment and initiate activities that will bring their community together.

**Meeting the Diverse Housing Needs of Singaporeans**

Singapore takes a long term and comprehensive approach to planning and building new towns. HDB estates are designed as fully self-contained towns, with a complete range of facilities and integrated transport network to meet residents’ daily needs. Beyond building new estates, HDB also continually rejuvenates its older estates through various upgrading and estate renewal initiatives, to improve the living environment of residents.

With the fast ageing population, the needs of the elderly are a priority. Among the many housing options available to the elderly, they could also opt to buy an HDB flat which allows them to choose a lease length (ranging from 15 to 45 years) according to their preferences. Such flats are also designed with senior-friendly features to meet their needs.

To make HDB estates and flats barrier-free and accessible to all, regardless of age or ability, HDB has incorporated Universal Design (UD) in all its projects since 2006, including features such ramps, wider internal corridors and doorways etc.

As HDB enters its seventh decade, a refreshed roadmap, “Designing for Life” has been drawn up to guide its plans for the next 10 to 15 years. Supported by three pillars, ‘Live Well’, ‘Live Smart’, and ‘Live Connected’, the roadmap will address key trends that will impact the future of HDB living, and focus on creating homes that contribute to residents’ physical health, mental and social needs.

More information can be found at these websites:

* Public Housing - A Singapore Icon: [Housing and Development Board](http://www.hdb.gov.sg/)
* HDB’s latest Annual Report: [Annual Report 2019/2020](http://www20.hdb.gov.sg/fi10/f10221p.nsf/hdb/2020/index.html)
* Press releases: <http://www.hdb.gov.sg/cs/infoweb/about-us/news-and-publications/press-releases>
* HDB publications (e.g. Dwellings, Housing Scene): <http://www.hdb.gov.sg/cs/infoweb/about-us/news-and-publications/publications>

22. Have your State, regional or local Government adopted any positive measures, such as measures of affirmative action, to reduce discrimination, segregation or structural inequality in relation to housing? To what extent have such initiatives been successful to address housing discrimination and segregation?

Please refer to above as there is no local government system in Singapore.

23. Have any particular laws, policies or measures been implemented to limit or reduce residential segregation? To what extent have such policies raised human rights concerns?

Click here to enter text.

24. What is the role of the media, as well as other non- governmental organizations, of religious and governmental institutions, in fostering a climate that reduces or exacerbates discrimination in relation to housing and segregation?

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25. Which institutional mechanisms exist to report, redress and monitor cases of discrimination or segregation in relation to the right to adequate housing and how effective have they been to address discrimination?

Click here to enter text.

26. In your view, what are the principal barriers to seek justice for discrimination/segregation in relation to the right to adequate housing?

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27. Can you specify how individuals and groups subject to structural discrimination or experiencing segregation can submit complaints to administrative, non-judicial or judicial bodies to seek relief? Please share any leading cases that have been decided by your courts or other agencies in this respect.

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**DATA ON DISCRIMINATION IN HOUSING AND SPATIAL/RESIDENTIAL SEGREGATION**

28. Is any data on housing disparities, housing discrimination and spatial segregation collected and publicly available? If so where can it be accessed? Are there any practical or legal barriers to collect and share such information in your country?

Click here to enter text.

29. Can you kindly share any studies or surveys by local, regional or national Governments or by other institutions to understand better housing disparities, housing discrimination and spatial segregation and how it can be addressed (e.g. title and link, or kindly submit document).

Click here to enter text.

30. Can you provide information and statistics related to complaints related to housing discrimination, how they have been investigated and settled, and information on cases in which private or public actors have been compelled successfully to end such discrimination or been fined or sanctioned for non-compliance?

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