



**MISEREOR**  
IHR HILFSWERK

2012

## GLOBAL EVALUATION OF HABITAT INTERNATIONAL COALITION (HIC)



Report prepared for  
Misereor and the Habitat International Coalition

Evaluation No: 1768-Z1014-0816

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## Glossary

### **Board**

HIC's Board is composed of the following:

- The President of the Association.
- One representative and one alternate of the opposite gender from each approved region of the Association having 100 members or less. Regions with more than 100 members may have two representatives.
- One representative from each of the approved Committees
- Three delegates of the Women and Shelter Committee.
- Two invited members from social movements, in addition to any other Board members who may originate from social movements.
- One associated Board member may be named by the Board.

### **Contacts (or Social Base)**

HIC defines as 'contacts' non-members and non-friends such as:

- organizations that have applied to HIC Membership to become Members and have been approved but have never paid their membership fees.
- Individuals that have applied to HIC Membership to become Friends and have been approved but have never paid their membership fees.
- organizations that have applied to HIC Membership to become Members and have not been approved.
- Individuals that have applied to HIC Membership to become Friends and have not been approved.
- Subscribers to HIC News
- Organizations allies or partners

### **Executive Committee**

HIC's is formed by the President, Vice-President, Treasurer, General Secretary, and three additional Board members designated by the Board from amongst its members. The members of the Executive Committee represent at least four regions of the Association. Every effort is made to assure gender balance among the Executive Committee members. The Executive Committee is responsible to ensure the follow-up of the principal decisions of the Board and to orient important decision-making and provide guidance to the General Secretary between meetings of the Board.

### **Friends**

HIC defines as 'friends' individuals that have applied to HIC Membership and have been approved. They have paid at least once their membership fees.

### **General Secretary**

(see HIC-GS Position description in <http://www.hic-net.org/document.php?pid=3739>)

- The General Secretary is in charge of the day-to-day business of the Association. He/she is responsible for his/her activities to the Board.
- He/she represents the Association in legal and other matters.

- He/she originates from among the Asia-Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Francophone Africa or Anglophone Africa regions. The Secretariat or the Association is located in one of these regions.
- The Board is responsible for the appointment and dismissal of the General Secretary.
- The General Secretary, who is an employee of the Association, is designated for a period of four years. This period may be extended at the discretion of the Board.
- The Board is responsible to evaluate and decide as to the convenience and moment to change the seat of the Secretariat to another country.

### ***Members***

HIC members are organizations that have applied to HIC Membership and have been approved. They have paid at least once their membership fees.

### ***Operational Structures / Offices***

These are the regional "Focal Points", thematic and global coordination; currently, it means: the offices in México "HIC-AL", in Cairo "HIC-HLRN" and "HIC-MENA", in Delhi "HIC-SA", in Santiago "HIC-GS".

### ***Policy Bodies***

HIC's policy bodies are the General Assembly, the Board and the Executive Committee (which most probably will disappear in the new constitution)

### ***Regions***

Currently the HIC regions are Anglophone Africa, Europe, Francophone Africa, Latin America, North America and South Asia.

### ***Regular Members***

HIC's "regular members" are the same as the "members" but have paid their annual membership fees for the ongoing year (365 days from the payment reception date).

### ***Working Groups***

HIC Working Groups are established at the initiative of those members of the Association interested in participating in activities focused on specific themes, either to support of the established Committees or to explore new areas of interest for the Association

*For more details, please refer to the Constitution of Habitat International Coalition: <http://www.hic-net.org/document.php?pid=2562>*

## Acronyms

**ASDE:** Alternativas Sostenibles de Desarrollo  
**DAC:** Development Assistance Committee  
**ExCom:** Executive Committee  
**ECOSOC:** Economic and Social Council  
**EU:** European Commission  
**FAO:** Food and Agriculture Organisation  
**FIAN:** Foodfirst Information & Action Network  
**GA:** General assembly  
**GS:** General Secretary  
**HIC:** Habitat International Coalition  
**HIC-AL:** HIC in Latin America  
**HIC-HLRN:** Housing and Land Rights Network  
**HIC-MENA:** HIC in Middle East and North Africa  
**HIC-SA:** HIC in South Asia  
**HIC-SARP:** South Asia Regional Programme (same as HIC-SA)  
**HR:** Human Rights  
**HSE:** Habitat and Sustainable Environment Committee  
**IAI:** International Alliance of Inhabitants  
**IMF:** International Monetary Fund  
**NGO:** Non-Government Organisation  
**OAP:** Organizational Amendment Plan  
**OHCHR:** Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights  
**TOR:** Terms of Reference  
**UAA:** Urgent Actions Appeals  
**UN:** United Nation  
**UNHCHR:** UN High Commission for Human Rights  
**WAH:** Women and Habitat Committee  
**WHRC:** World Habitat Research Centre  
**WUF:** World Urban Forum

## Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of an Evaluation of the Habitat International Coalition (HIC) carried out by a team of three consultants between May and October 2012 on behalf of Misereor. Through a number of interlinked participatory methods including a series of workshops, interviews and an online survey, the evaluation systematically addressed all the themes and questions raised by the TOR. These were ordered alphabetically as presented in the following summary of the evaluation's main findings presented in chapter 3, and the evaluation's recommendations, presented in chapter 4.

### **A. Overview and appreciation of the 2008 Organizational Amendment Plan (OAP) and its implementation process following the recommendations from the last HIC global evaluation with consideration of the 2011 mission and strategic lines**

Both for its non-participatory approach and its emphasis on institutional aspects the 2007 evaluation and its recommendations were not very well known and/or appreciated by HIC members and by the Board. The 2007 evaluators' lacking sympathy for right-based approaches may further have led to frustrations and the perceptions that the evaluation was not very useful. Nevertheless, although its recommendations were not entirely followed they provided the legitimacy needed by the GS to improve HIC's overall organizational and financial management, to simplify its organizational structure, and to trigger some important initiatives, such as an improvement of the websites, the creation of HICademy and the Members' Space, and the compilation of an Annual Report, which has been regularly published since 2007.

### **B. Appreciation of the socio-economic and political context; recently occurred important changes, which have repercussions for the HIC mission, strategy and structures**

While HIC staff, Board members and the ordinary HIC members present in Rio and Naples proved to be aware of the wide number of issues and strategies relevant to pursue their goals there is a tendency among some of them to confuse contextual factors affecting land and housing rights with new themes that they would like to pursue in their own right. This leads to dispersion and the risk to address too many issues without having a clear focus and message. While it is understandable that HIC members are a very heterogeneous group of organisations that in many cases may have in common not much else than supporting HIC's overall cause, as far as the global coalition is concerned HIC should have a clearer focus, reflecting its official objectives as expressed in its constitution. It makes sense that regional offices and member organisations are engaged in context specific discourses, project and actions, but as a global network HIC needs a simple and clear common denominator, i.e. a core message and mandate, which is presently lacking. This recommendation was already made by the 2007 evaluation and so far has not been given the required attention. Considering that according to its Constitution HIC is dedicated to the recognition, defence, and full implementation of the right of everyone to a secure place in which to live we consider that HIC's focus on housing and land rights should be more explicit and visible at all levels.

### **C. Identification of the current HIC role and what it will be in the next five years and further on**

A participatory review of HIC's present and future role revealed that both HIC structures as well as HIC members basically agree that it should not undergo major changes in the future. However, in particular workshop participants had multiple suggestions on how HIC could become more effective by 'modernizing' its strategies and revise the roles of its policy and operational structures. The lively discussions on the role of HIC reflected a profound commitment towards the Coalition, but also the expectation that it could do more if its structures were more effective. These indirect critiques, however, do not sufficiently take into consideration the limited resources with which HIC is implementing its mandate. Nevertheless, in particular the suggestions to review the role of the policy structures are to be taken seriously. This evaluation provides concrete suggestions on how policy structures could be reformed so as to become more effective.

#### **D. The relevance of networking for members with reference to their sphere of influence, and HIC's role in strengthening social actors in public policy-making on housing and land at international, regional national and local levels**

Networking at national, regional and global level appears to be one of HIC's main strengths. The Coalition's good collaboration with other organisations, social movements and networks, which in some cases may even be considered as competitors (e.g. IAI) reflects a certain sovereignty and the capacity to focus on common issues rather than on organisational and personal differences. The fact that alliances and collaborations take place in the context of specific events reflects the nature of its policy advocacy strategy but also the lack of financial and human resources to sustain long-term project-based collaborations. The difficulties to ensure continuity in relations with members and networks are typical of transnational networks. The challenges of organising large groups for collective action to pursue global public goods are a well-known phenomenon that threatens the survival of many transnational networks. Accordingly, the fact that HIC survived for over 35 years should already be considered as an important achievement. The fact that collaborations emerge around specific issues and events, which was considered a problem by the 2007 evaluation should rather be considered as normal and functional to the sustainability of the Coalition. The valuable support provided by HIC to the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing needs to be underlined and provides a good example of the importance of an institutional framework to link local-level organizations and social movements with international agencies. However, the survey findings and the limited use of the HIC Member Space show that effective collaboration to pursue common goals continues to require physical contact and concrete opportunities to meet, while virtual collaborations do not take off easily.

#### **E. HIC operational structures and their relationship to the members and potential members**

A review of HIC's relation with members and potential members has shown that only a moderate percentage of HIC members have frequent interactions with HIC structures. However, these were found to extend their services and increasingly establish close collaborations in the framework of specific projects also with organisations that are not necessarily HIC members. While there are valid arguments not to limit support and partnerships to HIC members, by doing so it is very difficult to have any credible argument to convince an organisation to become a member of HIC. In fact, an exclusive access to the Member Space does not prove to be a sufficiently attractive incentive to motivate organizations to become HIC members. Quite to the contrary, members' appreciation of this platform still needs to be confirmed. If an organisation is not willing or able to treat its members differently from non-members, i.e. to create some selective incentives to become members, it is unlikely to be able to mobilize new members, in particular if on top of this it feels uncomfortable in doing so. At the same time HIC needs a social and organisational base for policy advocacy purposes and to maintain its credibility as an international coalition. This dilemma has to be addressed by HIC and unlike other issues that can be treated differently by the various regions should be managed homogeneously.

#### **F. The efficiency, adequacy and sustainability of the operational structures (General Secretariat, thematic and regional structures, especially HIC-HLRN, HIC-Africa, HIC-AL, HIC-MENA and HIC-SA), and possible ways to organize the collective work**

According to HIC staff's self-perception their regional and thematic structures are by and large able to fulfil their mission and accordingly are not considered a problem. What is particularly valued is that HIC does not exclusively act as an enabler and intermediary of social movements but is itself active in the promotion of housing and land rights through its own initiatives and projects. This is considered necessary not only to ensure HICs' financial sustainability but also to keep in touch with the reality on the ground and to experiment new strategies. There is no doubt that HIC staff is very committed and successful in keeping the coalition moving and active on many fronts in spite of its rather limited human and financial resources. HIC's efficiency and sustainability may nevertheless be questioned with regard to a number of critical issues: (i) HIC members and friends, and even some HIC staff continue to be rather confused about the logic of having separate regional and thematic structures and thus question the functionality of this division; (ii) HIC's recently elected new President may be considered a welcomed generational and gender change in an

organization whose image suffered for being considered as male dominated and in need of a generational change. However, there is a risk that this change may weaken the regional strength of HIC-AL; (iii) The number of active and visible structures appears to be limited to HIC-AL, HLRN/HIC MENA and HLRN/HIC-SA. (iv) Although there is no question that the GS has carried out its role over the last eight years very effectively, the efficiency of having HIC's General Secretariat in a country with no other operational structure needs to be reconsidered; the future role of the GS needs special attention in view of the end of the term of HIC's present GS. A decision about where the GS should be located needs to reflect the recommended organisational changes, in particular the merger between thematic and regional structures. The overall efficiency and sustainability of HIC could benefit from a GS located in a more central place (i.e. somewhere between the East and the West) and if logistics and administrative staff could be shared with one of HIC's structures. This however should not jeopardize the operations of a regional structure and by no means implies that the overall number of HIC staff can be reduced.

### **G. Overview, relevance, legitimacy and representation of HIC policy structures: General Assembly, Board and Executive Committee**

HIC's policy structures consist of the General Assembly, the Board and the Executive Committee. There was a general consensus among HIC representatives that its policy structures are a formal requirement that give legitimacy to the organisation. They are considered as indispensable and are what makes the difference between HIC and other organizations. HIC staff and Board members go as far as maintaining that it is thanks to this organisational framework that HIC could survive so many years. Through its policy structures HIC aims at ensuring accountability to its members and to ensure that its goals and activities are endorsed through democratic processes. Considering HIC's strong belief in its policy structures their existence as such may not be questioned. However, this does not necessarily mean that their functioning and operation are effective; only few HIC members had ever a chance to participate in the General Assembly, the Board is not operating effectively and the Executive Committee is not formally nominated. While the evaluation recognises the importance in maintaining these institutions, it recommends reducing drastically the Board to a limited number of competent and committed members that should physically meet once a year. A more active role of the Board may render superfluous the Executive Committee. The evaluation further recommends enhancing the attractiveness of participating in the General Assembly by giving more attention to this annual event and by providing more space to its participants to express their views and concerns.

### **H. The Coalition's identity and visibility based on the involvement of its members**

The evaluation found that HIC members are not directly benefiting from "being part of HIC" and do not identify themselves as "HIC Members" in their daily work at national or local level. The main reason given is their limited awareness about HIC's international activities as well as few direct relationship/communication with the Coalition, interacting generally only with the regional structures and/or with the GS. Regarding HIC visibility and international image, what mainly emerges from the evaluation is the urgent need for a true and common communication strategy. This issue has already been discussed several times during the past years especially during the 2007 evaluation but with no tangible results yet. There are various websites of HIC and the regional structures available online, in some cases the only similarity being the name and the logo. Not all of these websites are still being updated, or indeed are still linked to the main HIC website (e.g. the Women and Habitat website is only accessible via a web search). This multiplicity of websites presents an incoherent identity. In general, HIC is aware of the weakness of its communication aspect and willingness to improve the image at international level is real. The main constraint to develop an effective communication strategy until now has been the lack of financial and human resources and the limited priority given by some of the regional structures to this activity.

### **I. The relevance of Human Rights (HR) advocacy and the development of HR standards/tools to HIC**

Human rights approaches, specifically the realisation of the right to adequate housing, are a key element of the strategy and philosophy of HIC globally. There are, however, different approaches and understanding of

the relevance and usefulness of how this should be achieved between regions, due to conflicting ideologies and widely differing political contexts. Broadly, the work on rights carried out in Latin America is dependent on a 'collective' understanding of human rights, of rights that are not necessarily formal rights that are international recognised by UN structures, but that are built out of social movements, such as the right to the city and the 'rights of mother earth'. The Housing and Land Rights Network (HLRN), on the other hand, promotes the formal use of the right to adequate housing, through advocacy and monitoring processes, and engagement with the UN structures such as the Human Rights Council. This disparity in approach has led to some misunderstandings between the HIC regional structures, but also simply reflects the different cultures in the different regions. Further, HIC-AL has members that are also engaging strongly in promoting the inclusion of human rights, such as the right water and sanitation into constitutions and legislation. Regarding HIC campaigns for Housing and Land Rights, there's a lack of compatibility and coherence between the various campaigns at local and regional level. Indeed, international HIC campaigns often do not sufficiently reflect the local dynamics, making it difficult for the local organizations to really link them to their specific struggles. While there are of course local and regional nuances on specific issues, an effective international network should be able to draw out a 'global story' that has resonance across nations and regions. HIC is not at the moment pulling together to draw out that inspiring, connecting 'global story'

#### **J. The relevance of gender and generation aspects for the coalition and its members**

While the members of HIC structures, including General Secretariat, Board and staff of regional and thematic structures, are (now) gender-balanced, there is no longer a dedicated programme that has the responsibility of mainstreaming gender and generational aspects into the work of HIC. This lack is felt by the members, who feel that they would benefit from more clarity on what gender and generational aspects mainstreaming entails, what specifically members should be considering in their day-to-day work, and how successes or failures in this area can be measured. The different contexts and ideologies between regions are putting up a barrier to understanding how best to progress in these areas. As with the role and understanding of how human rights are interpreted and operationalized, these regional contextual differences must be clarified and if not harmonised at least respected and accepted.

#### **K. HIC's funding strategies and plans for financial sustainability**

The main aspect that emerged from the evaluation is that, although the issue of HIC financial sustainability has been several times discussed among the structures, there is no sustainable achievement in the articulation of a global strategy in this regard; in other words, there is no common global fundraising strategy among HIC structures. As a global network, there is a deficiency in finding funds or rather in diversifying its historical sources of financing, leading HIC to remain mostly supported by and dependent on Misereor. The relations with donors are mainly bilateral which makes the negotiations more substantive; besides it can be seen as "competition" between HIC members/structures and threatens the "coherence" and continuity of the processes HIC is supporting. There no clear strategy of contacting new donors beyond sporadic or casual contacts. HIC need to find new and creative alternatives to raise funds and human resources should be strictly devoted to this rigorous task.

#### **Recommendations**

Based on the above findings the evaluation concluded with the following recommendations: (i) HIC should simplify its organisational structure to present a more coherent image towards outside; (ii) Simplify its policy structures; (iii) Improve the relevance and effectiveness of the Board and the General Assembly; (iv) Abolish compulsory membership contributions in cash; (v) Abolish contributions in kind as an alternative to the payment of membership fees; (vi) Mainstream a right-based approach; (vii) Undertake a participatory evaluation of the effectiveness of the tools developed by HLRN; (viii) Develop a more visible and inclusive strategy to interact with the UN system; (ix) Improve its communication strategy; (x) Enhance the importance of transnational projects; and (xi): Give utmost importance to the Succession Plan of the General Secretariat. Details about these recommendations are given in chapter 4.



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## 1. Introduction

This report presents the findings of an Evaluation of the Habitat International Coalition (HIC), an independent, non-profit coalition of social movements, organizations and individuals who have been struggling together to realize habitat rights and social justice throughout the world for the past 35 years. HIC is a membership-based global network presently counting 339 organizations, 62 paid friends, and a social base of 1,818 organizations and individuals from 122 countries around the world. The strength of HIC is based on its worldwide membership and the fact that it brings together a range of civil society groups.

The evaluation was commissioned by Misereor and aimed to assess the appropriateness and relevance of the Coalition's strategies, structures and actions, their results and impacts at international, regional, national and local levels in accordance with the needs and expectations of its members, as well as to the advocacy and networking capacities of the Coalition. More specifically the evaluation aimed at analysing the results and impacts of the Coalition's global activities at the policy and operational levels (General Assembly, Board, Executive Committee, General Secretariat, regional and thematic structures), with regard to members, allies and other stakeholders, for the promotion, defence and implementation of housing and land rights and other related habitat rights and solutions for and by the poor; to identify the lessons learned from the past practices and suggest how to use them to further strengthen the Coalition; and: to contribute to a strategic thinking process on the Coalition's sustainability, in terms of training and renovation of leadership, its legal status, the constitution, and of operational and financial feasibilities.

The evaluation was carried out by a team of three consultants between May and November 2012 and strived at adopting a prospective and participatory approach. In fact, throughout the evaluation HIC staff was actively involved in the process by supporting for example the development and implementation of the online survey, by providing valuable comments and additions to the first round of findings and recommendations, and by means of an intensive interaction with the evaluators via Skype throughout the evaluation process. Its aim was to articulate recommendations for the future at strategic and operational levels that reflect the needs and concerns of HIC's members, policy- and operational structures. To this end the evaluators adopted a number of interlinked participatory methods including a series of workshops, interviews and an online survey to which all HIC members, friends and contacts were invited to participate.

The following report presents the findings of the evaluation. Its structure strictly adheres to the detailed Terms of Reference (TOR), which are attached to the main report in its Annex 1. After a brief overview of the evaluation's methodology each of the themes and questions raised in the TOR is discussed in chapter 3 of this report. This chapter is followed by a concluding chapter, which presents the evaluation's main recommendations.

We would like to thank all those who made this evaluation possible, i.e. all HIC staff, members, and friends who gave us much of their time to answer our numerous questions and actively participated in the workshops and survey. In particular we would like to thank the General Secretariat for kindly and efficiently organising the workshops, translating the survey questionnaire in Spanish and French, supporting the implementation of the online survey, and always being very responsive to our numerous requests for clarifications. Indeed, evaluating HIC turned out to be a major challenge considering its long history, the heterogeneity of its members, and the significant differences between the political and socio-cultural contexts in which HIC is active and would have turned into an impossible task without this support.

## **2. Methodology**

This participatory evaluation was carried in close collaboration with HIC staff through a set of interlinked methods that are briefly discussed in the following sections.

### **2.1 Review of secondary literature**

HIC publishes a large number of documents both online as well as hardcopies. A review of HIC's publications was particularly important in terms of assessing HIC's policies, processes and the effectiveness of its communication strategies. Throughout the evaluation HIC staff has been helpful in orienting the evaluators towards the most critical documents and providing additional explanations when required. A list of the documents reviewed for the purpose of this evaluation is given in Annex 10.

### **2.2 Workshops with HIC staff and HIC members**

An important building block of the evaluation was constituted by the series of workshops that were held in Rio, Mexico, Cairo and in Naples. In Rio (21 participants) the intention was to hold separate workshops with HIC members and HIC staff and board members so as to get an input on the various issues raised by the TOR from different perspectives. This turned to be impractical because of the insufficient number of members present in Rio and because of the multiple roles of some of the participants. In Mexico the five workshop participants were divided in HIC AL professional staff and administration and finance personnel. In Cairo the majority of the 13 participants were HIC members. In Naples the majority of the 19 participants were HIC GS, regional and thematic staff who were given an opportunity to provide a feedback on the outcomes of the workshops held in Rio and to make suggestions on how the preliminary recommendations could be implemented. These workshops were an opportunity to ensure an active participation of HIC staff and members in the evaluation process and to collect valuable information which were compiled in one table given in Annex 4. A list of the workshop participants is given in Annex 6 whereas a summary of the issues that emerged along with some of the evaluation team's comments are given in Annex 5.

### **2.3 Participatory observation**

During the World Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio in June 2012 as well as during the World Urban Forum (WUF) held in Napoli in September 2012 the evaluators could participate in several events organized by HIC or in which some of its staff had a prominent role. This gave the opportunity to interact on a continuous base with HIC representatives, to observe in action, and to gain a better understanding of its communication strategies, its alliances with other networks, and its interaction with local organisations. Participatory observation was particularly important in terms of assessing the relevance of participating in large international meetings such as Rio+20 and the WUF 2012.

### **2.4 Online survey**

The overall objectives of the evaluation were to assess the relevance, appropriateness, results and impacts of HIC's strategies and to identify recommendations for future strategic and operational levels by means of a prospective and participatory approach. The evaluation aimed at giving voice to all HIC members, which was only possible by means of an online survey. The questionnaire for the online survey was jointly developed with HIC staff, which also ensured its translation in French and English, and its implementation. The survey findings may not only serve the purpose of the evaluation. More importantly, they may also support HIC's general secretariat and its regional and thematic structures to better understand their member organizations' specific interests and concern, their needs and expectations, the factors determining their willingness to pay their member registration fees, the reasons why some of them do not pay them, etc.

Accordingly we conducted an online survey covering 100% of the HIC member organizations, friends, and social base. The original database sent by HIC included 334 members, 61 friends, and 1.430 contacts. This database had to be revised several times because much of the information was outdated and the contacts given no longer valid. Further it had to be divided in three languages (English, French and Spanish) because the system used (Monkey Survey: <http://surveymonkey.com/>) does not allow for multilingual surveys. The survey could finally be launched online on 19 July 2012 and was sent to a total of 1.693 email addresses including 334 members, 22 friends and 1.329 contacts. The first results, which were presented at the meeting in Naples (Italy) in late August, were based on a sample of only 73 respondents. For this reason the survey was re-launch until October 29, 2012. Finally 156 persons participated in the survey, among whom 110 were HIC members. This figure also includes some HIC staff who also participated in the survey thereby somewhat distorting its findings.

With 9% answers the survey findings may be considered as statistically representative. However, as was pointed out by some of the participants in Naples we are aware that this research instrument also has its limitations as it does not reach out to users of HIC instruments or to organizations otherwise benefitting from HIC services that for some reasons are not HIC members. Further, the survey respondents may not be a truly representative sample of HIC members as many among them are also members of the Board or even HIC staff. This issue will be further discussed in the report. The questionnaire employed for the survey is presented in Annex 7. Its most relevant findings are discussed in the main report, whereas a full overview of the survey findings is given in Annex 8.

## **2.5 Interviews with key informants**

In-depth interviews with key informants in face to face meetings or via Skype were held to gain a better understanding of the perspectives on critical issues raised in the TOR prevailing among different categories of stakeholders, including HIC staff, HIC board members, former and present HIC presidents, HIC members, members of other alliances and representatives of organizations having a close contact with HIC. A list of the interviewed persons is given in Annex 9.

## **2.6 Content analysis of HIC websites**

The various HIC-related websites, including the Members Space, were explored in detail, to see both how HIC presents itself to the outside world, and what information or tools are generally available to non-members, and through the members' space, to explore what information and tools are available to the members and staff of HIC. A list of the websites explored is available in Annex 10.

### 3. Evaluation Findings

#### 3.0 Facts and figures about the Habitat International Coalition (2012)

The Habitat International Coalition (HIC) is an independent, non-profit coalition of movements, organizations and individuals who have been struggling together to realize habitat rights and social justice throughout the world for the past 35 years. HIC, which is registered as an Association in The Netherlands, is a membership-based global network comprised according to the latest figures (2012) of 352 organizations (of which 32 had the right to vote in the General Assembly meeting on 2 September 2012), 61 paid friends, and a social base of 1,902 organizations and individuals. Members, friends and the social base come from 122 countries around the world.<sup>1</sup>

The strength of HIC is based on its worldwide membership and the fact that it brings together a range of civil society groups. HIC works to strengthen social expressions in a shared commitment to ensure secure housing and a liveable planet for all. These efforts are based on advocacy for the urban and rural poor, for the respect, guarantee and fulfilment of the rights to adequate housing and land, and on solidarity, networking, and popular mobilization.

**Table 3.1: Overview of HIC and its members by region (2012)**

	Latin America and the Caribbean	MENA	Asia	Anglophone Africa	Francophone Africa	Europe	North America	Total
Members without right to vote	108	32	40	33	29	50	26	<b>318</b>
Members with right to vote	19	1	0	2	5	5	2	<b>34</b>
Friends	12	4	11	4	3	15	12	<b>61</b>
Social base (organisations and persons)	632	202	246	175	139	372	136	<b>1902</b>
Organisations and persons part of HLRN	30	112	36	20	12	26	15	<b>251</b>
Organisations and persons part of HC WAH Committee	39	21	9	14	14	5	6	<b>108</b>
Organisations and persons part of HIC HSEN Committee	6	16	6	9	6	4	3	<b>50</b>

Source: HIC Website (<http://www.hic-net.org/hicintheworld.php>) accessed on 8 November 2012.

**Note:** The rows entitled "Organisations and persons part of HLRN, HIC WAH, and HIC HSEN indicate the number of all those who ever "clicked" on the on-line form as interested in that Thematic Structure, regardless of their Membership status. Accordingly those "part of" include both Members and "social base" contacts in the database (Marie Bailloux, personal communication, December 2012)

<sup>1</sup> Information as of January 19, 2012. For further updating, see <http://www.hic-net.org/hicintheworld.php>



### **3.1 Overview and appreciation of the 2008 Organizational Amendment Plan (OAP) and its implementation process following the recommendations from the last HIC global evaluation with consideration of the 2011 mission and strategic lines (A)**

#### **3.1.1 TOR Questions**

The consultants were asked to provide an overview of the 2008 Organisational Amendment plan and its implementation process following the recommendations from the last HIC global evaluation with consideration of the 2011 mission strategic lines. More specifically the TOR raised the following questions:

- HIC members' opinion about the recommendations of the last HIC evaluation: Where they useful?
- Which recommendations of the evaluators have been addressed by the 2008 OAP?
- If some of the recommendations of the 2007 evaluation were not adopted, what are the reasons?
- What were the challenges to adopt the recommendations of the last evaluation of HIC?
- What are the most important changes of HIC since the evaluation (with or without the OAP)?
- How far did these changes of HIC follow the recommendations of the evaluators?
- How do HIC members perceive and appreciate those changes?

#### **3.1.2 The 2007 Evaluation recommendations**

The 2007 evaluation came forward with 18 recommendations with reference to HIC's focus and profile, on the need for strategic planning and impact orientation, on target audience and interaction with the external environment, on the need for simplifying its organisational structure, membership, internal interaction and procedures, communication strategy, services and products, and financial management that can be summarized as follows:

- i) HIC should develop a clearer profile and focus in an increasingly more competitive environment;
- ii) HIC should give more space for strategic thinking and planning, promote the active involvement of its members in this process, and in the formulation of specific programs and projects;
- iii) Move away from an event-driven mode of action and develop a more strategic perspective by preparing medium-term strategic plans;
- iv) Introduce benchmarks and indicators for measuring achievements and impacts;
- v) Target agencies other than the UN (e.g. World Bank, regional development banks, EU) in policy advocacy and lobbying;
- vi) Develop more 'localized' country-specific initiatives possibly by strategically selecting a few specific countries in which to interact with governments and by building country-specific coalitions and alliances with HIC members;
- vii) Considering the largely parallel organizational coverage set-up and thematic coverage of HIC and HLRN the organisational structure should be simplified and streamlined with the aim of reducing complexities and inconsistencies. There should be only one structure with global coverage, i.e. HIC-HLRN.
- viii) HIC should give up the ambitious idea of additional 'Thematic Networks' in favour of a more flexible approach of issue-specific working groups or committees.
- ix) All operative structures (networks, working groups or committees) should have a responsible contact person. If one does not exist it should be considered as inactive.
- x) Make membership more meaningful by formulating explicit rights, benefits, commitments and obligations;

- xi) Create more transparency in internal working procedures and decision-making processes
- xii) Define a communication strategy with clear core messages and encourage members to use its logo in their communication tools;
- xiii) Strengthen media relations;
- xiv) Enhance the use of electronic media and internet technologies, such as thematic blogs and Wikis;
- xv) Improve the practice orientation of tools and instruments;
- xvi) Produce less but more concise information;
- xvii) Explore options of developing a ‘flagship’ product, such as for example a high quality annual report, or a Wikipedia-type glossary of habitat related language, rights, violations and solutions;
- xviii) Introduce consolidated overall financial reporting

For good reasons some of these recommendations were not fully accepted by HIC, some were indeed followed, while some very pertinent ones remain to be implemented. These will be further discussed in our own conclusions and recommendations.

### **3.1.3 The Organizational Amendment Plan**

The 2008 Organizational Amendment Plan is illustrated in a document named *“Recommendations’ Implementation and Monitoring Following the HIC Evaluation 2006-2007”* that was prepared by the HIC-GS as a first draft in July 2007. In a matrix form, the document indicates the actions that HIC intended to take to implement the 2007 evaluation recommendations, with reference to some but not all of them. It is remarkable that in many cases the “agreements on recommendation adoptions” are not consistent with the recommendation of the evaluators, which are sometimes addressed only vaguely. In several cases it outlines what HIC intends to do in future, but there has not been any systematic monitoring and follow-up action. For reasons that will be further discussed below several evaluation recommendations are not addressed in the OAP at all. Moreover, as confirmed by the HIC GS, its capacity to follow up and monitor its implementation was limited.

### **3.1.4 HIC’s structures’ perspectives**

HIC staff and members’ appreciation of the previous evaluation and the following OAP was discussed in the context of the workshops held in Rio in June 2012. It immediately became clear that most participants, including primarily staff of HIC regional and thematic structures and Board members, had only a vague idea of the specific recommendations of the 2007 evaluation and of the following OAP. There was a general consensus, however, that the 2007 evaluation was not very useful. Some felt that the recommendations were too abstract and did not really address the needs of HIC. Some structures however appreciated and thus followed the evaluators’ advice on improving the financial management. Related recommendations triggered internal management changes, which were perceived as useful. Another important improvement that followed from the evaluation was the introduction of an annual report, which also includes a financial statement covering all regional and thematic structures. The HIC annual report, though it cannot really be considered a ‘flagship’<sup>2</sup>, has been regularly published ever since 2007 and constitutes an important improvement. The limited knowledge on the specific recommendations of the 2007 evaluation may be

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<sup>2</sup> The term ‘flagship’ is used in metaphoric form by organizations to refer to their highest profile or products. Accordingly HIC’s Annual Report can and should not claim to be a ‘flagship’.

partly attributed to the fact that its approach was perceived as non-participatory and that the evaluators were primarily focusing on institutional aspects.

### **3.1.5 Views from the General Secretariat**

Considering the 2007 evaluation's strong emphasis on administrative issues it is not surprising that its main impact was felt at the level of the General Secretariat. HIC's GS underlines the importance of contextualising the 2007 evaluation, which was carried out at a time HIC was still struggling to overcome the profound crisis of the 2000-2003. The management at that time was still very weak; HIC's organizational chart was so complex that nobody could understand it, and HIC's websites technically very poor. Thus, while the evaluation was not perceived to be very useful in terms of strengthening HIC's overall operations and strategies it helped the GS to whom it provided legitimacy and guidance to reorganize and to simplify the general management of HIC. While this was functional from a certain point of view it also entailed imposing on HIC the image of a membership organization that does not fully reflect its identity of an association, which as a global coalition is closer to a social movement. For example, the organizational chart was much simplified and now makes a clear distinction between policy and operational structure. Whereas from an organizational point of view this makes sense and reflects the formal structure of HIC, in reality roles and function are much more fluid and flexible, which continues to create confusion and frustration among some critical stakeholders.

As a result of the improved management triggered by the 2007 evaluation HIC developed the HICademy and the Membership space. This reflects HIC's attempt to move away from what some HIC staff defined as "an Anglo-Saxon notion of membership organisation" by giving the opportunity to members to contribute to the coalition in other ways than through the payment of membership fees.

Following the evaluation recommendation the GS initiated and coordinated an exercise of defining the position of the various structures (see: <http://www.hic-net.org/foundingdocuments.php>) This process took over two years and was carried out in different event, starting from Cairo in 2005 and followed in Barcelona in 2008. This led to the articulation of clearly defined position descriptions which are publicly available on the HIC website (see: <http://www.hic-net.org/foundingdocuments.php>) along with HIC's constitution and other relevant founding documents.

However, although the evaluation was useful to strengthen the role of the GS it was perceived as trying to force upon HIC an organizational structure more appropriate for project implementing and concrete output oriented NGOs, rather than for an Association that many of its members consider to be a social movement. Although HIC structures are indeed increasingly involved in project implementation for which they have to comply with the typical management requirements expected from their funding agencies, they keep maintaining a dual function to the extent that they continue considering as one of their core mandates the mobilisation of social movements fighting for housing and land rights.

## **3.2 Appreciation of the socio-economic and political context; recently occurred important changes, which have repercussions for the HIC mission, strategy and structures (B)**

### **3.2.1 TOR Questions**

With regard to the socio-economic and political context the TOR raised the following questions:

- What changes in the socio-economic, political and Human Rights context as well as in development and global networking of movements over the last decade have strategic relevance for HIC and its members? How have they affected HIC and its members' strategies and activities?

- Have socio-economic, political, and institutional differences between countries and regions increased or decreased? How do increasing or decreasing divergences between regions and countries affect HIC as a global movement?
- How is the development of new urban struggles and new movements in Mashrek-Maghreb, Latin America, Spain etc. affecting or influencing HIC global activities and strategies? Which relationship has HIC (its bodies or members) to those new urban struggles?

### 3.2.2 HIC structures' perspectives

New themes and strategies relevant to HIC were discussed within the frameworks of the workshops held in Rio, Mexico, Cairo and Naples. They revealed that HIC is alert and aware of relevant new themes such as climate change induced displacement, criminalization, food sovereignty, housing needs following disasters and reconstruction, land grabbing, conflicts, occupation and war, corruption and land fraud, land rights of farmers and indigenous people and of an increasing convergence between urban and rural issues. Likewise some workshop participants also mentioned a number of new strategies such as strategic litigation, prosecutions and reparations, asset recovery, participation in constitutional reform processes, recuperation of public buildings, and alliances with emerging new actors such as trade unions and political parties and promotion of the creation of syndicates. More specifically the workshop participants in Naples underlined the importance of conducting human rights-based impact assessments to include in bilateral or multilateral investment treaties, of supporting movements to occupy abandoned land and housing; engaging in more work on policy, constitutional reform to include human rights; offering human rights training and education to judges and other local authorities and government officials (as has already been initiated in India); producing material on progressive provisions on constitutional changes in housing and land rights. The workshop participants further mentioned the scope for projects aiming at linking countries working on recent constitutional changes (e.g. Egypt and Tunisia with Bolivia, Venezuela, and Ecuador, etc.) where such constitutional changes have already taken place. An example of convergence of concerns and strategies was also provided by the suggestion to reconnect with the US-based National Law Centre on Homelessness and Housing. A global strategic need that was identified in response to the changing context of housing and land rights that should be addressed by HIC is the promotion of land and housing budgeting through training of budgetary analysis. Technological innovations were recognised by many workshop participants as an opportunity to employ social media for example documenting forced evictions by using mobile phones to take photos, record videos, and audio recordings.

However, HIC with its regional and thematic structures and members in different countries and continents remains a very heterogeneous movement and the importance attributed to the above-mentioned themes and strategies varies significantly across regions. While projects and activities of HIC structures and members are very context specific and strongly influenced by historical, socio-political and cultural factors, there are also some global issues and concerns that are perceived and affecting HIC as whole. First of all, there tends to be a consensus among HIC members that the global financial crisis and the profound recession in Europe is affecting all aspects of society, economy, environment, institutions, human rights, which are bound to have major consequences on HIC members' strategies, activities and also on the availability of funds.

While HIC structures and members in their day-to-day activities are focusing on context specific activities, there is an increasing consensus among the most active HIC hubs (HIC-HLRN and HIC-LA) on the need to pursue a right based approach in particular in relation to displacements and evictions caused by land grabbing, mega-projects, and the right to water, which are recognised as a serious threat to the housing and land rights globally. Although among HIC-AL and HLRN conceptual and strategic differences still persist, the recognition of these common themes offers a new potential for global partnerships and also a consensus on the importance of action campaigns that target international financial institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank, European Central Bank and other major banks.

The Arab Spring has given a new impetus to HIC-MENA and HLRN Cairo but does not appear to have major repercussion on HIC as a global movement. Likewise, new concepts and ideas emerging in Latin America such as for example '*los derechos de la madre tierra*', remain poorly understood in other regions. Some cross-fertilization exists on issues such as the right to water. This used to be a more prominent concern in the Middle East but has recently gained much attention also by HIC-AL; the 'Right to the City' a paradigm originally more relevant in Latin America, but increasingly influencing actions and discourses also in other regions. The economic crisis leading to growing numbers of people losing their house and other rights also in Europe is triggering a revival of social movements ideologically close to HIC and hence reducing the gap between northern and southern organizations and social movements.

HIC recognizes in these changing contextual factors the need and potential to work more closely together with large-scale international alliances, the need to identify and align with important global and regional players (e.g. Via Campesina, FIAN, Take Back the Land, *Indignados* movement, Cooperatives in Egypt, nurses union for financial transaction tax).

An important contextual change that was highlighted already by the 2007 evaluation and considered relevant by a number of key informants in particular from Latin American is the decreasing role of global interlocutors such as the UN agencies and the increasing role of regional, national and local authorities, in particular in emerging economies and democracies. While HIC structures are indeed increasingly engaging in policy advocacy with national and local level institutions it does not mean that there is a consensus that the role of the UN is presently less relevant. In particular but not exclusively HLRN attribute a great importance to a continuous interaction with the UN system and in particular with the UN Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR), to such an extent that they feel a strong need to have a permanent office in Geneva. According to HLRN HIC should engage with UN agencies more, including regional offices. For example, it should press UN-Habitat to adopt a more rights-based focus. Further HIC should participate in universal periodic reviews to ensure that housing and land rights are included for each country. In the workshops in Naples participants underlined that HIC should recognize the important global spaces in which it should participate and make a more effective use of its ECOSOC status in the UN system and engage more with treaty bodies, UN-Habitat, and other UN agencies in Geneva and New York. While a close collaboration between HLRN and some UN agencies already exists this could be further reinforced for example within the framework of the World Habitat Day and also involve HIC structures other than HLRN.

### **3.3 Identification of the current HIC role and what it will be in the next five years and further on (C)**

#### **3.3.1 TOR Questions**

With regard to HIC's current and future role the TOR raised the following questions, which were extensively discussed within the framework of the workshops in Rio, Mexico, Cairo and Naples as well as in the context of interviews with the HIC board members, present and past HIC presidents, the GS and other staff from HIC thematic and regional offices.

- How do representatives of HIC bodies perceive its present role as Board members, HIC General Secretary, Executive Committee, President as well as the role of the General Assembly compared to the past? Have there been any changes?
- How do members define the role and mission of HIC? Do the members of HIC consider that role and strategies of HIC in the near future need to remain the same or which changes are required?

#### **3.3.2 General views on HIC's current and future roles**

The views and expectations of HIC's present and future role among the various stakeholders who expressed their opinion on this issue within the framework of the workshops in Rio, Mexico, Cairo and Naples are very

broad and heterogeneous. Whereas there is consensus on some issues there are also clear regional differences not only in terms of defining HIC’s role, but even on more basic questions, such as what HIC actually is: some people define HIC as a membership organisation and hence give much importance to the recruitment of new members and to ensuring that its members contribute to the Coalition in cash or kind; others define it as a social movement or as a coalition of like-minded people and organisations committed “to change the world”. Some HIC structures, such as for example HIC-SA see their role as providing support to any social movement or organisation seeking their help and would consider it inappropriate to offer such support only to its members. A certain degree of uneasiness in mobilizing new members was also expressed by HIC-LA. With HIC structures being increasingly engaged in the implementation of concrete projects it was also found that in many cases these led to partnerships with organisations that are not necessarily HIC members.

Apart from these differences there are also a number of issues on which there is a basic consensus across regions and structures. For example it is generally agreed that HIC’s main role is to influence public policies, to provide theoretical and conceptual support to social movements and thematic actions, and to act as a platform for debate and for the development of shared values and collective action. This is a role that HIC has played in the past and there is consensus that it should continue to play also in the future. Some HIC structures feel more strongly than others that HIC’s role is to promote a rights-based approach through the development of instruments and methods. While none of the active HIC structures is basically against right-based approaches are still not fully understood and supported by many HIC members, in particular Latin America and Africa.

With regard to HIC’s future role a number of key stakeholders recognise the need for strategic changes although there is no overall common vision on what such changes should include. One issue on which there is a general consensus is that in future projects are bound to become the most important source of funding for HIC structures. While this situation is primarily caused by donors’ preference to support organisations in the implementation of specific projects, this will further change the role of HIC structures in the near future, which will increasingly function as any NGO and have less time and resources to strengthen HIC as a coalition.

**3.3.3 Members’ definitions of HIC’s role and related expectations**

Members’ definition of HIC’s role and their related expectation find their expression in the reasons they provide for being members of HIC, which was asked to all members through the online survey.

**Table 3.2: Reasons for being member of HIC (N=391)**

Reason	Nr.	%
Common goals and values with HIC and other HIC Members	98	25.1
Solidarity with organizations struggling for human rights related to habitat	88	22.5
Networking with other HIC Members	62	15.9
We benefit from HIC tools and resources	45	11.5
Being a Member of HIC gives us recognition, visibility and strength	41	10.5
Networking with bilateral and multilateral agencies	30	7.7
I do not know / no answer	16	4.1
Other reasons (please explain)	11	2.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>100</b>

Note: Multiple answers possible; total number of respondents 147; total number of responses 391  
 Source: ASDE-WHRC Online survey 2012 (see: Annex 8, table 1.6)

As shown in table 3.2 the most frequent reason given by the survey respondents for being HIC members was sharing common goals and values, closely followed by solidarity with organizations struggling for human rights related to habitat. Networking with other HIC members is a reason for being HIC members for another 15.9% of the survey respondents. To this aim HIC is expected to provide platforms to meet and exchange ideas.

Other reasons given for being members of HIC were: advocacy on housing rights and related issues at global and regional levels, sharing a platform for learning from each other, capacity development and training, and participating in urgent actions. Only one of the respondents commented that their expectations from HIC were not fulfilled.

As shown in table 3.3, HIC responded to the presumed expectations of its members with a broad offer of services and products, including a global website, the member space, publications, training resources, etc. The table also shows, however, that apart from the HIC Global website, a large number of respondents are not very familiar or not familiar at all with HIC's tools and services. Indeed, the number of respondents not familiar with them in most cases exceeds the number of those familiar with them. For example, the number of respondents not familiar with HICkikipedia is 10 times higher than the number of those familiar with it. This may be explained by the fact that some of these tools are still very new, but there is also a perception among key informants that some of them are too complex and were developed with a top-down, technocratic, and not very participatory approach.

However, as will be discussed later, while HIC made an impressive effort to fulfil members' expectation by creating a web-based Member Space, this platform actually remains by and large underutilized.

**Table 3.3: Members' familiarity with HIC tools, services and projects (N = 102)**

Tools Services and Projects	Very familiar	Somewhat familiar	Not very familiar	Not familiar at all
HIC global website	33	43	14	7
HIC Member Space	13	13	35	26
Publications	20	26	24	19
HICademy	9	12	27	35
Habitat Library	13	14	27	29
Training resources	10	14	27	35
HICkikipedia	4	10	23	41
Technical Assistance	6	9	26	41
Internships	8	11	25	39
Consultancies	7	4	32	36
HIC NEWS	36	28	17	14
HIC blogs for global events	17	24	21	24
Campaigns blogs	20	21	22	21
HIC-HLRN website	10	22	23	31
HLRN Violation database	10	11	22	37
The HLR monitoring Toolkit	13	29	20	25
Urgent Action Appeals	16	21	21	29
Landpedia	4	11	24	42
Land times	6	4	27	41
HLRN Mission and Reports	9	12	23	38
HIC Middle East/North Africa website	10	6	24	38
Social Production of Habitat Website (Mena)	10	13	27	33
MENA Publications	7	11	29	36
AL website	21	13	26	23
AL Publications	18	18	24	25
SA website ( <a href="http://hic-sarp.org">http://hic-sarp.org</a> )	5	4	21	48
Publications	11	29	24	21
Documentation	11	20	27	26

Annual Reports	16	23	25	24
<b>Total frequency of answers</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>707</b>	<b>884</b>

Source: ASDE-WHRC Online survey 2012 (For details see Annex 8, table 3.1)

Not surprisingly, table 3.4 confirms that the number of HIC members that rarely or do not use HIC tools and services at all significantly exceeds the number of those who use them frequently or occasionally even though the number of those considering them as useful is higher than the number of those not considering them useful at all (see table 3.5)

**Table 3.4: Members' use of HIC tools and services (N = 102)**

Tools Services and Projects	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
HIC global website	27	27	26	13
HIC Member Space	11	11	23	37
Publications	8	9	27	38
HICademy	9	9	25	39
Habitat Library	9	10	19	44
Training resources	6	4	21	50
HICkipedia	1	6	19	54
Technical Assistance	5	2	17	53
Internships	3	9	18	49
Consultancies	19	13	17	35
HIC NEWS	18	18	22	24
HIC blogs for global events	13	16	19	31
Campaigns blogs	8	16	23	31
HIC-HLRN website	7	6	25	41
HLRN Violation database	7	7	27	37
The HLR monitoring Toolkit	9	18	20	38
Urgent Action Appeals	7	3	25	44
Landpedia	4	4	22	47
Land times	6	7	24	42
HLRN Mission and Reports	8	4	25	41
HIC Middle East/North Africa website	9	6	20	43
Social Production of Habitat Website (Mena)	10	7	27	40
MENA Publications	10	8	16	46
AL website	15	10	24	35
AL Publications	11	8	26	35
SA website ( <a href="http://hic-sarp.org">http://hic-sarp.org</a> )	9	18	16	39
Publications	12	21	23	29
Documentation	10	20	18	33
Annual Reports	27	27	26	13
<b>Total frequency of answers</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>1101</b>

Source: ASDE-WHRC Online survey 2012 (see: Annex 8, table 3.2)



**Table 3.5: Usefulness of HIC tools and services according to Members (N = 102)**

Tools Services and Projects	Very useful	Somewhat useful	Not so useful	Not useful at all
HIC global website	32	38	8	5
HIC Member Space	20	12	13	15
Publications	20	16	6	14
HICademy	20	19	8	14
Habitat Library	25	16	7	13
Training resources	15	14	14	13
HICkipedia	14	11	13	15
Technical Assistance	16	13	11	13
Internships	17	11	15	13
Consultancies	23	21	14	11
HIC NEWS	24	24	11	7
HIC blogs for global events	19	20	12	9
Campaigns blogs	18	25	8	10
HIC-HLRN website	14	17	16	12
HLRN Violation database	15	19	11	14
The HLR monitoring Toolkit	19	24	11	9
Urgent Action Appeals	12	15	13	9
Landpedia	12	14	11	15
Land times	16	14	13	15
HLRN Mission and Reports	14	15	16	13
HIC Middle East/North Africa website	17	14	13	15
Social Production of Habitat Website (Mena)	18	12	17	12
MENA Publications	14	17	14	14
AL website	23	20	9	10
AL Publications	21	21	13	10
SA website ( <a href="http://hic-sarp.org">http://hic-sarp.org</a> )	21	18	11	13
Publications	27	22	11	10
Documentation	24	21	11	9
Annual Reports	32	38	8	5
<b>Total frequency of answers</b>	<b>562</b>	<b>541</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>337</b>

Source: ASDE-WHRC Online survey 2012 (Annex 8, table 3.3)

### 3.3.4 Future roles and required changes

There is an overall consensus among HIC bodies and members that HIC's role in the future does not need to be redefined but that there is scope to change its political culture and strategies.

Some workshop participants and interview respondents perceive HIC as being too hierarchical and would like a change in terms of horizontalisation of its organisational structure. They underlined the importance of reviewing HIC constitution and by-laws and revise them by taking into considerations their consistency with reality. It was also felt that members should be more actively involved in HIC actions and projects and that the membership benefits should be made clearer. Questions emerged about the functionality of policy structures. In particular and it was argued that the role of the Board needs to be reviewed. The need to train Board members on their roles and responsibilities and to articulate a code of ethics was expressed in several occasions.

Some suggested that HIC should improve its strategies by making an enhanced use of new media tools. It was recognised that this should be linked to a larger communication strategy and may require permanent staff dedicated to communication with the capacity to develop a global press strategy, produce more press releases to increase HIC presence in the media, and create a press kit.

The importance of acquiring transnational projects involving HIC structures and members from different countries and continents was underlined not only as a strategy to finance HIC but also to create more cohesion and coherence within HIC and to reinforce a uniform collective identity through articulation and motivation. The need to redefine and strengthen the relation with multilateral and bilateral agencies, though not a primary concern among all HIC members was underlined by some HIC structures (HLRN and HIC-SA) and is increasingly considered important also by HIC-AL. The need to rejuvenate HIC and to mobilise and train new leaders was felt both among HIC members as well as among some of the organisations supporting HIC.

Not all the views on the changes deemed pertinent by some of the structures were shared by all workshop participants. For example, the desire for more autonomy and decentralisation that was expressed by some of the regions (MENA, India and Africa) to some extent contradicts the felt need for a more uniform collective image. Further, while the need to increase working also in rural areas was underlined by structures concerned with the violation of human rights in relation to land grabbing it was not considered a priority for HIC members anchored in urban contexts with experience and competence in the social production of habitat. Several workshop participants felt the need for generational change within HIC structures. This could be achieved by making an effort to seek capable youth, by developing a board training manual and by developing a training package aiming at explaining how to become involved in the Coalition.

### **3.4 The relevance of networking for members with reference to their sphere of influence, and HIC's role in strengthening social actors in public policy-making on housing and land at international, regional national and local levels (D)**

#### **3.4.1 TOR Questions**

- How do members benefit from the HIC contributions as a global coalition for the implementation of the rights to adequate housing and land and for the realization of public policies to improve the living conditions of the urban poor?
- What kind of relationship does HIC and its members have with other relevant networks and actors and does that relationship strengthen the impact of the Coalition's activities?
- How do other important actors in the field (relevant local actors in the struggle for habitat and land rights as well as members of international human rights or UN bodies) benefit from the networks' contributions in advocating for habitat rights and policies?

#### **3.4.2 Members benefit from HIC for global networking**

As mentioned in section 3.3 global networking is not the main reason given by HIC members for adhering to the Coalition, but nevertheless an important expectation for nearly 40% of the respondents. However, as shown in table 3.6 not all HIC members are in contact with other members. Over 24% of the survey participants who responded the questions related to this subject had no contact with other HIC member in their own country, 33.3% none in their region and over 38.4% no contacts with other HIC members at international level. Only an average of 10% of the respondents had regular contacts with more than 6 members at national, regional and international level, whereby it needs to be underlined that HIC staff, including the GS, also participated in the survey. The data show that HIC members' interest and capacity to

network with other HIC members is heterogeneous but quite important for most of them, although, as mentioned by some in their comments to this question, the contacts between them are limited due to the lack of resources for joint activities and meetings.

**Table 3.6: HIC Members' national, regional and international contacts with other HIC members (N = 99)**

Number of contacts	National level		Regional level		International	
	Nr.	%	Nr.	%	Nr.	%
None	24	24.2	33	33.3	38	38.4
1-3	35	35.4	33	33.3	25	25.2
4-5	10	10.1	11	11.1	8	8.1
More than 6	9	9.1	11	11.1	8	9.1
NA	21	21.2	11	11.1	20	20.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: ASDE-WHRC Online survey 2012 (For details see: Annex 8, tables 4.1, 4.2, 4.3)

HIC plays an important role in facilitating the contact among its members. In fact, as shown in table 3.6 about 60% of the survey participants considered HIC's role in facilitating an exchange of information among members as somewhat or very useful. It should also be mentioned that over 22% considered HIC's role in this domain as not so useful or not useful at all.

**Table 3.7: Usefulness of HIC to facilitate information exchange among members (N=102)**

Degree of usefulness	Nr.	%
Very useful	37	36.3
Somewhat useful	24	33.5
Not so useful	18	17.6
Not useful at all	5	4.9
No answer/not applicable	18	17.6

Source: ASDE-WHRC Online survey 2012 (for details see: Annex 8, tables 4.1, 4.2, 4.3)

### 3.4.3 The role of the HIC Members' space

The members' space was created in 2011 as a dedicated space for members to share ideas and information, as well as to provide information for the eyes of members only. This includes access to information on members, including some contact details, tools such as 'HICkikipedia', an online dictionary of terms related to housing and evictions and is planned to provide information on events, training, and other activities.

This space is still pristine, and appears to be being used by members (and this is confirmed by the survey figures shown in table 3.5) – while the structure is there for members to provide information on their work, and on their policies relating to specific issues (such as a gender policy etc.) this has not been used at all.

The members' outlines are not fully filled out, without any contact data, so have limited function. The reason for this lack of information is not specified, but we assume that this is the aspect that could be most useful to members, but without contact data, it cannot be used.

HICkikipedia was originally in the members' space, but appears to have been moved to the main website. This is a series of definitions of habitat-related words, but there could be more clarity as to where the definitions come from and how they were developed.

There are innovative ideas for sharing self-evaluations of issues important to HIC members, such as 'Advance towards the Gender Strategy' asking for 500 word commentaries. However, this has not been utilized by the members.

The whole members' space is based on the assumption that people whenever given an opportunity enthusiastically participate, which is unfortunately not the case. Collective action theory and research suggests that there need to be clearer benefits from engaging in activities proposed by this kind of initiative (the members' space) for engagement between members, and this members' space to be effective.

#### **3.4.4 Relationship between HIC and its members with other relevant networks**

The majority of the HIC members and structures entertain intensive collaborations with other organizations and networks. The online survey revealed that 71% of the HIC members are also members of other international coalitions, social movements and networks. With regard to HIC's regional and thematic structures, both interviews with structure representatives as well as HIC's Annual Reports provide several examples of close collaborations with other national and international networks and organizations.

Participation in events organised or co-organized by, and/or actively involving HIC in Rio, Mexico, Cairo and Naples provided a good opportunity to observe HIC's relationship with local and global networks and certainly proved to be one of HIC's main strengths. In Rio HIC staff and members took the opportunity to meet its local members and social movements, and to participate and provide support to rallies aiming at raising international awareness on urgent local issues. Further HIC involved in its events large numbers of representatives from other relevant networks giving them equal space and visibility. The causes, for which HIC is struggling, rather than gaining visibility or prominence, always appeared to be the main concern of HIC. Particularly remarkable was the support given by HIC to the emerging social movement in Naples in organizing the social forum parallel to the WUF. This event was very well organized, managed to mobilize several high profile speakers and attracted a high number of participants. HIC's support to the social movement in Naples is likely to leave behind a significantly strengthened and consolidated organization, much needed in a context where the rights to housing and to the city are increasingly jeopardized by forced evictions and the privatization of public spaces.

Although in the framework of interviews some key informants argued that HIC perceived other organizations as competitors rather than allies, our observations do not confirm this statement. Another critique that was raised by some workshop participants is that in particular at international level alliances are sporadic, selective and occur on an ad hoc basis. We do not consider these critiques as fully justified to the extent that they have to be put in relation to HIC's limited resources and to the nature of social movements. Indeed it is a well-known challenge of global social movements in general to sustain collective action, and to pursue long-term participation to pursue common goals.

#### **3.4.5 HIC Benefits for other important actors**

Both at national and international level HIC staff have established close collaborations not only with their members but also with other organisations active in the field of housing and land rights. Increasingly important are collaborations with national lawyers and national judicial systems, which have taken place in Latin America, India, and in the Middle East. At an international level in particular HLRN is having a close collaboration with the UN High Commission for Human Rights (UNHCHR) in Geneva. An important evidence of the role of HIC as a network for other actors was provided by the Special Rapporteur for the Rights to Adequate Housing the UNHCHR who argued that her work was contingent upon the support of HIC members coordinated by the HIC GS. Indeed, in all her fact finding missions the Rapporteur could rely on an intensive support of HIC GS through whom she could establish contacts with relevant local organizations, communities and grassroots movements (Raquel Rolnik, personal communication, Rio de Janeiro, July 2012).

### 3.5 HIC operational structures and their relationship to the members and potential members (E)

#### 3.5.1 TOR Questions

- What kind of relationship exists between HIC member organisations and the regional or thematic operational structures of the network and how do members benefit from this relationship?
- To what extent have the HIC operational structures been able to contact potential member organisations and motivate relevant local/regional actors in the struggle for housing and land rights to become members of the Coalition?

#### 3.5.2 Relationship between HIC member organisations and the General Secretariat and regional and thematic operational structures

An attempt to appraise the relationship between HIC members and HIC structures was made through the online survey. As shown in table 3.4, with regard to the General Secretariat it was found that over 60% are basically familiar with its activities and that almost an equally high percentage entertains regular contacts with it (see table 3.5). This shows that the General Secretariat does not only act as a coordinating body between the structures but constitutes an important reference point for some HIC members on its own. As pointed out by the GS, this is particularly the case for members from countries whose regional structures are relatively inactive or whose activities and priorities do not reflect those of their members. The fact that the membership database is managed by the GS further determines a relatively close and direct relation between the GS and HIC members.

**Table 3.8: Members' familiarity with HIC GS and its activities (N=102)**

Degree of usefulness	Nr.	%
Very familiar	22	18.6
Somewhat familiar	49	41.5
Not so familiar	32	27.1
Not at all familiar	11	9.3
No answer/not applicable	4	3.4
Total	118	100

Source: ASDE-WHRC Online survey 2012 (see Annex 8, table 2.1)

**Table 3.9: Frequency of contact with GS over the last five years (N=118)**

Degree of usefulness	Nr.	%
Frequently (more than twice a year)	36	30.5
Occasionally (once every 1-2 years)	31	26.3
Rarely (less than once every 2 years)	27	22.9
Never	20	16.9
No answer/not applicable	4	3.4
Total	118	100

Source: ASDE-WHRC Online survey 2012 (see: Annex 8, table 2.2)

HIC members' familiarity with regional offices in average is somewhat lower than with the GS. This is understandable if we consider that HIC does not really have regional offices in Europe, the US, Anglophone and Francophone Africa. At the same time, as shown in table 3.6, only a small percentage of respondents reported not to be familiar with the regional offices at all.

**Table 3.10: Members' familiarity with HIC regional structures and its activities (N=102)**

Degree of usefulness	Nr.	%
Very familiar	26	22.0
Somewhat familiar	42	35.6
Not so familiar	31	12.7
Not at all familiar	15	3.4
No answer/not applicable	4	3.4
Total	118	100

Source: ASDE-WHRC Online survey 2012 (for details see: Annex 8, table 2.3)

Table 3.11 show the frequency of contacts of HIC members with regional offices. Considering that HIC is a global network it was assumed that HIC members may have at times also an interest in contacting HIC structures outside their region. The survey revealed however, that most respondents had at best contacts with the HIC structures in their region and almost never with other regions. That contacts between members and structures are not as frequent and intensive as one would expect may be determined –as pointed out by the workshop participants– by the fact the roles and responsibilities of the regional structures are not clearly and uniformly defined and that there is no formal and sustained communication strategy between HIC and its members.

**Table 3.11: Frequency of contacts with HIC regional offices (N =118)**

Regional office	No. respondents from the region	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never	Not applicable	Total
HIC-AL	53	20	33	20	17	7	97
HIC-MENA	13	11	10	23	29	8	81
HIC F-Africa	17	5	11	17	39	12	84
HIC A-Africa	6	3	9	18	39	10	79
HIC Europe	27	2	11	16	36	12	77
HIC North America	8	4	4	17	41	10	76

Source: ASDE-WHRC Online survey 2012 (see: Annex 8, table 2.4)

Table 3.12 indicates respondents' frequency of contacts with thematic structures. It confirms that HLRN is the most important among the thematic structures but also shows that the WHC and the HSEC are not completely inactive as was assumed by the 2007 Evaluation. It was confirmed by workshop participants that in Latin America the WHC –after a relatively prolonged passive period– has recently become active again.

**Table 3.12: Frequency of contacts with HIC thematic structures (N = 118)**

Regional office	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never	Not applicable	Total
HLRN	25	35	22	29	3	114
Women and Habitat Committee	11	17	24	37	6	95
Habitat and Sustainable Environment Committee	6	16	30	38	6	96

Source: ASDE-WHRC Online survey 2012 (for details see: Annex 8, table 2.5)

While the survey did not allow to determine the nature of the contacts between the regional and thematic structures interviews with key informants and the annual reports give a number of examples of concrete activities through which regional and thematic structures engage with HIC members: these consist of joint actions and campaigns against violations of housing and land rights, training courses, conferences, and workshops.

However, the evaluation also pointed at some factors leading to an increasing collaboration between HIC structures and organisations other than HIC members in relation to the implementation of specific projects. HIC-LA for example was recently engaged in lawsuits concerning the right to water of specific communities in rural Mexico. Within this framework it worked closely together with rural based organisations that are not members of HIC; HIC's members and social base in Latin America are primarily urban based and focusing on the social production of habitat, which constrains collaborations both in relation to the implementation of projects focusing on rural areas as well as projects pursuing a right-based approach. This example confirms an issue pointed out by some workshop participants that cooperation between HIC structures and members emerge on opportunistic and strategic reasons rather than institutionally, i.e. through membership. This issue will be further discussed in the following sections.

### **3.5.3 HIC structures relation with potential member organisations and with other local and regional actors in the struggle for housing and land rights**

As mentioned earlier HIC has frequent and good relations with several organizations other than its members. In some cases these consist of other networks or alliances that are not necessarily potential member organisations with whom HIC engages in the organization of joint events. However, as pointed out for example by HIC-AL and by HIC-SA, HIC structures also collaborate with, and extend their services to communities and organizations that could potentially be HIC members without necessarily insisting that they should become members. HIC structures consider it unethical to extend their support exclusively to HIC members and also feel a bit uneasy about proactively acquiring new members, an act which they associate with proselytising. Further, not all like to see HIC as a membership organisation, which is considered by many as not being appropriate to all cultural contexts in which HIC is active.

HIC structures are also aware that many of its members are rather passive and accordingly recognise that mobilizing new members does not make sense unless there is the capacity and political will from both sides to engage in joint actions. Based on these considerations the debate on whether to concentrate the limited resources and capacities to engage more substantively with active members rather than investing them in acquiring new ones has been going on for several years. There is no simple answer to this dilemma: on the one hand HIC recognises that it is not worth to count among its members organisations who are not interested in participating actively in pursuing its overall objectives, on the other hand HIC rightly does not want to become a sort of closed club of like-minded organizations.

It also need to be underlined that to some extent HIC, for policy advocacy purposes at global level, needs its members probably more than the members need HIC. In fact, HIC's voice and messages are likely to have more weight if it stands for a large number of member organisations than if it reflects only the view of a small circle of friends. The ambiguity towards conceiving HIC as a membership organisation and to mobilising new members is also reflected in the limited effort that HIC puts in soliciting membership fees.

The survey not only revealed that only few members are regularly paying their fees, but a few among them indicated that the main reason for not paying their fees was that they forgot and did not recall anybody ever solicited them to do so.

### **3.6 The efficiency, adequacy and sustainability of the operational structures (General Secretariat, thematic and regional structures, especially HIC-HLRN, HIC-Africa, HIC-AL, HIC-MENA and HIC-SA), and possible ways to organize the collective work (F)**

#### **3.6.1 Questions**

With regard to the efficiency, adequacy and sustainability of HIC's operational structures the TOR raise the following interlinked questions:

- To what extent have the HIC operational structures been able to fulfil their own missions, functions and responsibilities?
- Given the specific mission, functions and responsibilities of the operational structures of the Coalition (General Secretariat, thematic and regional coordination bodies): what are the results and impacts according to the needs and purposes of HIC members?
- Overview and appreciation (current and possible) of HIC members' contributions (monetary and non-monetary) to the Coalition's global, thematic and regional strategies
- How to adjust the HIC operational structures in order to strengthen the network, improve the impact on the international and national levels and meet members' expectations and needs?

These questions will be discussed in two sections. In the following section we will present some reflections about the efficiency and sustainability of HIC's operational structures. The role of members' contributions will be discussed in a separate section. In fact, considering HIC's difficulties in mobilising both material and non-material contributions this issue needs special attention.

#### **3.6.2 Appreciation of the efficiency and sustainability of HIC's operational structures**

According to HIC staff's self-perception as expressed in the workshops in Rio and Naples their regional and thematic structures are by and large able to fulfil their mission and accordingly are not considered a problem. What is particularly valued is that HIC does not exclusively act as an enabler and intermediary of social movements but is itself active in fostering housing and land rights through its own initiatives and projects. This is considered necessary not only to ensure HICs's financial sustainability but also to keep in touch with the reality on the ground and to experiment new strategies. There is no doubt that HIC staff is very committed and successful in keeping the Coalition moving and that HIC is active on many fronts in spite of its rather limited human and financial resources. HIC's efficiency and sustainability may nevertheless be questioned with regard to a number of critical issues:

- i) HIC members and friends, and even some HIC staff continue to be rather confused about the logic of having separate regional and thematic structures and thus question the functionality of this division;
- ii) Although there is no question that the GS has carried out its role over the last eight years very effectively, the efficiency of having HIC's General Secretariat in a remote country with no other operational structure needs to be reconsidered in particular in view of its forthcoming end of term;
- iii) HIC's recently elected new President may be considered a welcomed change in an organization whose image suffered for being considered as male dominated and in need of a generational change. However, this change may weaken HIC-AL's regional strength.
- iv) The number of active and visible structures appears to be limited to HIC-AL, HLRN/HIC MENA and HLRN/HIC-SA.

Already the 2007 Evaluation provided a detailed and critical analysis of HIC's operational structures, which it considered excessively complex and not reflecting the reality. This evaluation reiterates those findings. Indeed five years later the situation has remained basically the same: among the formally existing 7



regional focal points only three –HIC-AL and HIC-MENA and to some extent HIC SA (though its activities are not very visible and confined to India)– are really active. HIC-AL and HIC-MENA are the only ones running their own programs and projects under the HIC umbrella, whereas all others participate in HIC activities on a more ad-hoc or event-driven basis.

The NGOs hosting HIC-Francophone Africa and HIC-Anglophone Africa have their independent activities that overshadow those related to HIC, whereas HIC North America and HIC Europe basically refer to a few committed individuals.

With regard to HIC's three global thematic networks although the survey indicates that some HIC members still have some association to them, it was generally agreed that they basically came to a halt and that HLRN is the only one that is really active and visible. In the MENA region and India, however, it is difficult to make a distinction between HLRN and HIC-MENA and HIC-SA.

Based on these considerations, the 2007 Evaluation recommended a rather drastic organizational reform aiming at simplifying and streamlining organizational structures: to overcome the largely parallel organizational set-up and thematic coverage it suggested merging HLRN with HICs regional structures into a new HIC-HLRN. As will be further discussed in our recommendations (Chapter 4), with some nuances this evaluation basically endorses those recommendations, with the aim to enhance HIC's overall efficiency and to render HIC's image more coherent towards outside.

While discussing the efficiency and sustainability of HIC structures the role of the General Secretariat needs some special attention in particular in view of the end of the term of HIC's present GS. Over the last eight years the GS has succeeded in restoring HIC's image and existence at a global level and to gain back the support of a considerable number of members who basically dissipated after HIC's severe crisis of 2000-2003. The GS has a leading role in managing the membership database, organizing global events, managing the membership fees, and coordinating the harmonization of HIC's image towards outside. With the support of Misereor the GS also embarked in a very ambitious project to create the Member Space, a virtual platform that should encourage HIC members to participate in collective actions aiming at pursuing its collective goals. Whereas the effectiveness of these various activities was discussed in section 3.4., in this section we would like to address briefly the link between HIC's sustainability and the forthcoming change in General Secretariat. As the severe crisis at the beginning of this century proved, this change can have major consequences on the survival of the whole network. It does not only imply replacing the present GS with a new person, but taking a decision with regard to where the secretariat should be located and what should be its functions. The present GS is very aware about the sensitivity of this issue and accordingly is trying to engage all regional and thematic structures into planning its succession. So far, however, only HLRN/MENA Cairo and HIC-SA/HLRN India have responded to its appeal with an enumeration of their own problems rather than with solutions. According to the present GS there are a number of functions that are presently carried out by the Secretariat that could possibly be devolved to the operational structures, but it is not clear what consequences this would have for the overall cohesion of the coalition. Moreover, with the operational structures already being understaffed and overburdened with their own projects and activities it is unrealistic to expect that the tasks of the GS can be devolved to the regional structures. A discussion about where the GS should be based in future needs to include a reflection about the overall organisational changes that we deem pertinent (in particular the merger between thematic and regional structures) and about what should be its future role. In any case, it would certainly benefit the overall efficiency and sustainability of HIC if the GS would be located in a more central place (i.e. somewhere between the East and the West) and if offices could be shared with one of HIC's structures.

### **3.6.3 Appreciation of HIC members' contributions to the Coalition's global, thematic and regional strategies**

HIC's seeks members' contributions to its global, thematic and regional strategies through the payment of membership fees, voluntary contributions in kind and by encouraging them to participate in its global,

regional and national initiatives. However, HIC's strategies to mobilise members' contribution so far have not proved to be very effective.

The payment of membership fees gives HIC members the right to vote in its presidential elections and in its annual General Assembly. According to HIC's Constitution yearly financial contributions by the Members and Friends along with, testamentary dispositions, legacies, and donations are expected to play a pivotal role in the finances of the HIC. In practice however this has never been the case. In 2010 for example HIC's total income was reported to be 1,145,675 USD of which only 2,823 USD (0.24%) came from membership fees. The presidential elections of 2011 most likely acted as an incentive to many members to pay their annual membership fees with the result that the amount of fees collected increased to a total of USD 4826. The increase can be attributed primarily to the payments from Latin America, whose members with voting rights between 2010 and 2011 increased from 6 to 30. Indeed, Latin American members were likely to be amongst the fiercest supporters of HIC's newly elected President. The overall number of members with the right to vote only increased from 53 to 59 but several among them may have voluntarily paid their backlog of the due membership fees from the previous year as well. Nevertheless the higher number of members who paid their annual membership fees only increased the role of this financing source in HIC's total income from 0.24% to 0.45%, an amount not sufficient even to cover a fraction of the administrative costs of managing the membership fees.

Among the survey respondents only 28% reported to pay their fees every year, whereby an equal percentage of respondents reported that they never paid them (see Annex 8: table 2.11). Only a minor percentage of respondents gave reasons for not paying the annual membership fees. Whereas over 60% did not answer the question, 14.7% argued that their organization could not afford it while 18.4% considered it too complicated to make the payment. The respondents were also given the opportunity to give details about the reasons for not paying. The most common reason given was that they had never been asked to make a payment and that they do not know when the payment is due. The negligible role played by membership fees in HIC's financial strategy reflects the ambiguity among most of its staff and board members towards this constitutional requirement for being HIC members. Most of them associate the payment of an annual membership fee with a western notion of Association that is not culturally appropriate in other contexts. Indeed it was found that the only fierce advocate for maintaining the present system was HIC's North American Board member.

The prevailing ambiguity towards the payment of annual membership fees is expressed in its shifting emphasis on non-monetary contributions, which HIC has tried to encourage through its Member Space. However, as was discussed in the previous pages, mobilising members to participate by encouraging an active involvement proves to be equally difficult.

Another indicator for members' limited active engagement is given by their low participation in activities promoted by HIC at global, national and local level. As shown in table 3.13, 3.14 and 3.15 the number of members that never engaged in any HIC initiative at all levels exceeds the number of those who ever participated in any initiative.

**Table 3.13: Participation in global HIC initiatives (N =118)**

Global Initiative	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never	NA/Not applicable	Total
Campaigns	10	14	9	29	8	70
Seminars	6	10	12	33	8	69
Conferences	3	12	11	30	10	66
HIC Board meetings	7	6	10	34	9	66
Publications	11	9	11	29	7	67
Reports	11	9	9	29	7	65
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>403</b>

Source: ASDE-WHRC Online survey 2012 (see: Annex 8, table 2.8)

**Table 3.14: Participation in regional HIC initiatives (N =118)**

Global Initiative	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never	NA/Not applicable	Total
Campaigns	10	14	9	29	8	70
Seminars	6	10	12	33	8	69
Conferences	3	12	11	30	10	66
HIC Board meetings	7	6	10	34	9	66
Publications	11	9	11	29	7	67
Reports	11	9	9	29	7	65
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>403</b>

Source: ASDE-WHRC Online survey 2012 (Annex 8, table 2.9)

**Table 3.15: Participation in local HIC initiatives (N =118)**

Global Initiative	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never	NA/Not applicable	Total
Campaigns	19	14	12	44	15	
Seminars	12	19	8	48	14	
Conferences	13	18	6	47	14	
Publications	12	12	11	48	12	
Reports	10	12	9	51	15	
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>70</b>	

Source: ASDE-WHRC Online survey 2012 (See: Annex 8: table 2.10)

### 3.6.4 HIC's performance with reference to the DAC Criteria

The overall performance rating for each of the five evaluation criteria below are based on the following scale:

- a. Highly satisfactory (fully according to plan or better)
- b. Satisfactory (on balance according to plan, positive aspects outweighing negative aspects)
- c. Less than satisfactory (not sufficiently according to plan, taking account of the evolving context; a few positive aspects, but outweighed by negative aspects)
- d. Highly unsatisfactory (seriously deficient, very few or no positive aspects)

The DAC criteria were applied particularly to the activities implemented by HIC within the framework of the project funded by Misereor "Strengthening Coordinated HIC Operation, Member Capabilities and Advocacy, January 2011- December 2013":

- Relevance: a  
The various actions undertaken by HIC are appropriately adjusting to the priorities and policies of the different target groups, members and donors despite the international events of the past three years.
- Effectiveness: b  
Until the present evaluation, the objectives and results identified in the project are being carried out efficiently despite some difficulties such as the lack of coordination between HIC structures.
- Efficiency: a-b  
Despite the limited human, financial and technical resources, HIC is properly and efficiently implementing the activities planned to meet the project objectives.
- Impact: b

HIC's flexibility has made possible a successful adaptation to the different changes produced during the activities implementation; thus, by the end of 2012 the results and indicators are being met according to the implementation plan.

- Sustainability: b-c  
HIC's dependency on few sources of funding makes it difficult to ensure the continuity of its projects without the on-going support of its usual donors. Financial sustainability is HIC's main vulnerability despite its efforts in seeking funding through new programs and projects.

### **3.7 Overview, relevance, legitimacy and representation of HIC policy structures: General Assembly, Board and Executive Committee (G)**

#### **3.7.1 TOR Questions**

- To what extent have the HIC policy structures been able to fulfil their function defined in the HIC constitution?
- To what extent do active HIC members know the policy structures of the Coalition and what do they think about their relevance, legitimacy and representation?

#### **3.7.2 The role of HIC's policy structures**

HIC's policy structures consist of the General Assembly, the Board and the Executive Committee. There was a general consensus among HIC representatives that its policy structures are a formal requirement that gives legitimacy to the organisation. They are considered as indispensable and are what makes the difference between HIC and other organizations. HIC staff and Board members go as far as maintaining that it is thanks to this organisational framework that HIC could survive for so many years. Through its policy structures HIC aims at ensuring its accountability to its members and to ensure that its goals and activities are endorsed through democratic processes. Considering HIC's strong belief in its policy structures their existence as such may not be questioned. However, this does not necessarily mean that their functioning and operation are effective. To make this point we will further discuss the role and functioning of the General Assembly, the Board and the Executive Committee need to be discussed separately.

##### **3.7.2.1 The General Assembly**

According to the 2007 evaluation the nature of the GA as a governing body is not specified very clearly by HIC's constitution; no reference is made to discuss and decide on future strategic issues, work plans or allocation of resources. Indeed, where strategic decisions are being taken and how they are being communicated to HIC members is not specified.

The functioning of the GA is hindered by low and ever decreasing member participation. In fact, our survey revealed that nearly 60% of the members never participated to the annual meeting of the GA and that most of them were only vaguely familiar with the issues that were discussed in those meetings (see table 3.16 and 3.17). This may be partly but not only attributed to the fact that only few members can afford to participate in the global events in whose framework the annual meetings of the GA are taking place. In fact, according to key informants several HIC members participated both in the Rio+20 conference and as well as in the WUF Naples but nevertheless did not show up at HIC's GA. There may thus also be other reasons for members not to participate in the GA. The lack of interest in participating in the annual meetings of the GA reflects, as was discussed in previous sections, the fact that many HIC members are not particularly involved in HIC in general, but may also be related to the way the GA is conducted. We had an opportunity to participate in the GA in Rio and Naples and found that the few ordinary members who participated ended up being rather frustrated. The GA meeting in Rio 2012 had no quorum and hence was not valid,

whereas the GA meeting in Naples took place under extreme time pressure leaving little room for strategic discussions. Members were asked to vote on issues on which they had no knowledge and information and when they raised questions were told that there was not time to discuss. The GA meeting in Naples had to be concluded in less than three hours because HIC staff had a lunch appointment with the local social movement. By and large the GA meeting gave the impression of a unilateral flow of information providing no space to members to articulate their views and concerns. The formal importance given to the GA by HIC staff and structures stands in sharp contrast with the attention given to this institution in practice. If HIC is serious about wanting to maintain this institution it should give more weight to this annual event and should provide more incentives to participate. HIC members should be given the time and possibility to raise their own issues and questions and be given the impression that their opinions count. The annual meeting of the GA should possibly be held over a full day and include a lunch, so as to give to its participants an opportunity to interact informally.

**Table 3.16: Members participation in HIC’s General Assembly (N= 113)**

Frequency	Nr.	%
Every year	7	6.2
3-5 times	12	10.6
Less than 3 times	26	23.0
Never	66	58.4
No answer/not applicable	2	1.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: ASDE-WHRC Online survey 2012 (see: Annex 8, table 2.6)

**Table 3.17: Members’ familiarity with issues discussed in General Assembly (N= 117)**

Degree of familiarity	Nr.	%
Very familiar	18	15.4
Somewhat familiar	43	36.8
Not at all familiar	25	21.4
No answer/not applicable	31	26.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: ASDE-WHRC Online survey 2012 (see: Annex 8, table 2.7)

**3.7.2.2 The President**

The Constitution does not contain a special article on the Presidency, which is an honorary position. It only states that the President is a Member of the Board and the Executive Committee, and that he/she chairs the meetings of the Board, the EC and the GA. There is no reference to the function of representing HIC externally. This seems to be formally assigned to the GS, who –according to the Constitution– represents the Association in legal and other matters. In practice, however, the President seems to be the most visible representative of HIC to the outside world. While the role of past presidents was primarily to represent HIC towards outside and to monitor and provide guidance to the GS, the recently elected president is having a much more active role and appears to be committed to revive HIC as a cohesive global social movement. The President needs to be congratulated for energy and dedication and may contribute to a much needed revision of HIC’s image which several key informants defined as old fashioned and male dominated. To some extent, however, the President is assuming roles that used to be attributed to the GS. The fact that the President used to be part of HIC’s staff to some extent further contributes to blur the difference between policy and operational structures. The role of the President in relation to the GS needs to be clearly defined the latest by the time decisions will be taken with regard to the Secretariat beyond 2013.

### 3.7.2.3 The Board

According to HIC's Constitution the Board is composed of the President, of the Association, one representative from each approved region having 100 members or less, two representatives of each regions with more than 100 members, one representative from each of the approved Committees, three delegates of the Women and Shelter Committee, two invited members from social movements, in addition to any other Board members who may originate from social movements. In addition one associated Board member may be named by the Board.

Whereas the President is elected by the General Assembly from among its members Board members are supposed to be elected through a democratic process as defined by the members of each region. Each region is further expected to elect one representative to the Board and one alternate of different gender. While the Constitution gives a number of additional details about the election modalities of Board members it does not really specify the functions and responsibilities of the Board, paying more attention to its composition, election procedures and meeting schedules. It defines as the Board's key functions to designate members of the Executive Committee from the elected Board members, the right to convene General Assemblies, to appoint, dismiss and supervise the performance of the GS, to decide on the seat of the Secretariat and to approve the establishment of Committees and their TOR and plans of action.

The Board decisions are not subject to the approval by the General Assembly. According to the 2007 evaluation the Board may be considered as the main governing and managing body of HIC where most important strategic decisions are taken. This evaluation, however, does not confirm that the Board in practice has such an important role. At present the Board is officially composed of the President plus twelve members and eight alternates (Annual Report 2011: 5), in practice however many among them have not participated in any responsibility.

It has been argued that the Board's functioning is hampered by the difficulties to meet physically and to communicate on a regular basis considering the different time zones, but this explains only partly its passive role. A number of HIC staff attributed the ineffectiveness of the Board to their lack of understanding of their role and suggested that its members should be trained and be explained more formally what it implies. The Board members who participated in the workshops in Rio and Naples and whom we could interview individually expressed their frustration on a number of issues. They maintained that communication and interaction between board members does not exist, that many Board members do not take their responsibility very seriously, but also that Board members have no influence on HIC operations and strategies.

Another issue that may be questioned is the democratic process that is supposed to lead to the election of the Board members. Considering that each region and approved committee is entitled to define internally its election procedures but that it is an accepted fact that many are almost non-existing the question emerges about who the Board members actually represent. This question is legitimate considering that HIC insists so much in its policy structures being democratically elected. The low participation in the election of Board members even in the regions that are considered to be the most active such a MENA further shows, that the HIC Board as an institution has its shortcomings<sup>3</sup>

### 3.7.2.4 The Executive Committee

According to HIC's Constitution the Executive Committee (EC) is formed by the President, the Vice-President, the Treasurer, the General Secretary, and three additional Board members designated by the Board from amongst its members. The members of the Executive Committee represent at least four regions of the Association. The Constitution underlines that every effort is made to assure gender balance among

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<sup>3</sup> In the 2010 election of Board members of the MENA region out of 61 organisations entitled to vote only 18 (29.5%) participated. There were three candidates for the position of one HIC-MENA representative and one alternative representative. The representative was elected with 14 votes and the alternative with 13 votes.

the Executive Committee members. The Executive Committee is responsible to ensure the follow-up of the principal decisions of the Board and to orient the General Secretary between meetings of the Board. Towards outside the EC has no visibility; neither the institution nor its members are mentioned for example in the Annual Reports. However, according to the GS, though no EC has been formally established, it is the most vital institution of all as it consists of the core of HIC's most committed and active staff and Board members that provide support to the GS to take strategic decisions and to run the Coalition. This group of core resource persons, however, are not necessarily those who are supposed to be officially among the ES members. Thus, while the GS definitively is supported by some staff of HIC's regional and thematic structures and by a few Board members, this group has not been formally designated as HIC's EC and its composition is not in line with HIC's constitution.

### **3.8 The Coalition's identity and visibility based on the involvement of its members (H)**

#### **3.8.1 TOR Questions**

- To what extent do members present themselves as HIC members in their public communication?
- How do members perceive the identity of the Coalition?
- How could HIC become more visible in important political spaces and in the public media?

#### **3.8.2 The Coalition's identity and visibility according to the 2007 evaluation**

The 2007 evaluation recognizes that HIC has gained a solid profile in influencing policy formulation and standard setting at the international level, namely vis-à-vis the UN system. However, in a more diverse environment and with its main goal achieved HIC's profile is considered harder to define and communicate both to members and to the outside world.

The 2007 evaluation is critical towards HIC addressing too many issues which exceed the resources and capacities available and which may lead to a failure in making tangible impacts in any of them.

#### **3.8.3 The Coalition's identity and visibility according to workshop participants**

What emerged from the workshops is that HIC members are not plainly benefiting from "being part of HIC"; they indeed don't identify themselves as "HIC Members" in their daily work at national and local level. The main reason given is their unfamiliarity of global HIC as well as the lack of direct relationship/communication with the Coalition. Indeed, it results that HIC members have very limited awareness about HIC's international activities; they mostly interact only with the regional offices. Although it is to mention that some members do use HIC image when submitting a proposal to international fundraisers.

The involvement of HIC members in joint activities appears to be weak. Many members feel that they do not receive advantages at the local level for being part of the network which gradually lead to a loss of members. Also, members do not perceive the "*militant aspect*" of HIC; some believe that the Coalition has not a sufficiently clearly defined theoretical foundation and lacks focus. Regarding HICAcademy, some regret that it was not designed in a participatory manner from the outset.

Regarding HIC's visibility and international image, what mainly emerges from the evaluation is the urgent need for a true and common communication strategy. This issue has already been discussed several times during the past years especially during the 2007 evaluation but with no tangible results yet.

HIC recognises the need to promote their activities as well as the tools and services they can offer at international level.

HIC GS believes that a significant and satisfactory communication strategy should imply the involvement of a person exclusively in charge of HIC communication at international level but also recognizes the need to train its members on communication tools and methodologies.

The evaluation further reveals that the Board and most HIC members who were present in the multiple workshops feel that the different websites should be more coherent as most of the time there's no real link between for instance MENA website and HIC Latin America website. The features of all HIC websites should be streamlined to avoid duplication of efforts. The same is mentioned regarding HIC campaigns; indeed, there is a need to coordinate and link international campaigns with national and local ones as too often the campaigns of the coalition do not coincide with local dynamics.

In general, HIC is mainly aware of the weakness of its communication aspect and willingness to improve the image at international level is real however the main constraint to develop an effective communication strategy until now has been the lack of funds and human resources.

A part from that, delegating members to participate in political spaces such as UN has been made difficult by the fact that "It is not very possible to get state actors to sit at the same table as those who are suffering from their policies". Therefore, HIC rediscovered its role to be not so linked with the official actors, but to accompany social processes that are becoming more complex. However, HIC is recognizing the difficulty of influencing complex processes.

One approach to improve HIC visibility could be through forums (such as the Land Forum in MENA which had good results) but also increasing the media attention (radio, TV, Internet) thanks to the organization of concrete events, the production and publication of material, research, studies about housing or other specific subjects, etc. Another aspect is that HIC should develop training regarding Human rights linked to Habitat for social communicators and journalists. In Latin America, the idea of organizing workshops targeting journalists has emerged in order to familiarize them on the Coalition's activities.

To create clear guidelines towards a common communication strategy (web sites, logos, etc.) with simple, direct messages and encourage members to use it.

#### **3.8.4 The Coalition's identity and visibility based on an analysis of HIC websites and documents**

The main HIC website, [www.hic-net.org](http://www.hic-net.org) is clearly structured, with ostensibly useful links to the HIC structures and activities, including access to tools such as the Urgent Action Appeals.

However, too many of the links do not work, including the links to the regional office websites, such as HIC AL, HIC-MENA and HIC-SA, or the webpages are empty. As a rule, these webpages also suffer from significant numbers of broken links. Further, while there are publications and documents available under the 'Main Publications' link, many of these are rather old – suggesting that either HIC has not published much of late, or that the website is not regularly updated. For example, HIC's annual reports from 2010 and 2011 are not currently available on the website. Much of the content and many of the documents available on the hic-net.org website have no date on them, which limits their use and interest.

The section lists all current HIC members, with a very brief description of the work that these organisations do – unfortunately, the links to the contact details is not currently working (date: 8 November 2012) although this is working in the members' space. It is crucial that this contact information is available, including where possible links to members' websites, should visitors to the website be looking for more concrete information on specific members' organisations.

The link under 'projects' which could presumably be full of project related reports only has two linked documents – from 2005 and 2011. The 'events' link is similarly empty of useful information.

Some parts of the website are only available if you approach your search in a particular way. For example, you will search in vain for the HIC Women and Habitat website from the main HIC website. It is necessary to Google 'HIC Gender and Shelter', and you are taken to a separate website (<http://www.hic-net.org/was/index.php>). This website appears not to be updated.



There is further confusion between the websites of different structures of HIC – e.g. the HIC MENA website has a more easily understood and updated version of the Violations Database, and the Urgent Action Appeals compared to the HIC-SA website (<http://hic-sarp.org>). The HIC-SA website appears to be unused or at least not updated (since at least 2010), and has empty links to the Violations Database and to the Urgent Action Appeals list. Generally links to different parts of the website, or to documents lead to ‘Error 404’. I believe that the website is being updated, but at the moment it is disappointing and would put off potential users.

Further, many of the articles or links are not dated, and have no source, so cannot be verified, or checked for relevance. Even the job opportunities have no date, so it is not clear if they are current. There is no clarity of why particular documents and articles are available on the website, or particularly how they are arranged.

HIC America Latina ([www.hic-al.org](http://www.hic-al.org)) appears to be more user-friendly, with short explanations of the nature of the work, and members’ names and links to websites given. However, again, a more detailed look at the website reveals that there are many pages that are not updated, and that the documents that are available under ‘documents’ could be better organised.

There is very little mention of particular members’ engagement on the websites – they present only generic information, and very little on specific work or projects, which presents therefore a sense of a homogenous, rather monolithic structure, without the detail and granularity that more visibility of the members’ work would provide.

The Urgent Actions from HIC – AL are not present in the main Urgent Action Appeals website – and the user is in fact in one case directed to an external organisation’s website, Grassroots International. The other urgent action appeals are not up-to-date (please see section on Human Rights).

On the [www.hic-mena.org](http://www.hic-mena.org) website, there is a documents database, arranged according to country and issue. While a search under many countries produces a list of documents provides a list of publications (with dates), a number of countries do not have any documents stored, but there is no indication of this when clicking on the links – it can take a while before a search for relevant documents is successful. It is a pity that this is not available on the main HIC website (perhaps it is planned to be?)

Further on the website:

- There could be a ‘useful links’ section added – but this would have to be regularly updated to remain relevant.
- The website comes up in general Google web searches for searches for: ‘monitoring rights toolkit’, ‘violations database’ (no. 6), ‘land rights’ (no. 4), but organizations such as Amnesty tend to come higher, and have more user-friendly websites once you get there.
- Web searches for ‘women and housing’ and ‘rights toolkit’ ‘Right to the City’ do not lead to HIC.

There is a lot more that could be done to streamline and consolidate the various different website of HIC structures. At present the websites do not have any overarching structure, and are also not properly linked, so it is not possible to move between the different websites, or indeed the activities of the different regions. This presents a confused understanding of HIC to the outside world, and to potential users and members, and suggests that the different HIC structures do not speak with one voice.

Further, the website appears not to be regularly updated, and the articles and documents that are available do not generally have clear dates on them, so it is not possible to know whether they are still relevant. Where dates are available, the documents often date back to over ten years ago, with little evidence of more recent additions.

It would be interesting to have clearer links between the work of HIC regional and thematic structures and specific members’ contributions to this work. At present the website does not reflect any particular contribution by member organisations, or how they engage with the work of HIC.

The tools, such as the definitions of habitat-related words in HICkikipedia is sometimes specific to a country (e.g. 'citizenship and nationality' talks only of Israeli citizenship) and sometimes more generally applicable, but there are no sources given to the entries. This should be addressed, as those using this tool may need more specific information, and it would therefore be useful to provide more detailed sources and links to relevant information.

It would be beneficial for the different HIC structures at least to agree on promoting (for example) a single Urgent Actions Appeal database, which is then regularly updated.

The violations database (when you find it – it is not accessible from the main HIC website, only from HLRN and HIC-MENA) has a comprehensive-looking list of housing rights violations, with links to sources, but needs to be more clearly indicated on the website. (Further discussion of the violations database under the human rights section of the evaluation)

Overall, it appears to an outsider that the website (and maintenance of the website) is not given priority by HIC members or the General Secretariat or regional structures, resulting in a rather ad-hoc approach to the information that is available. To an outsider, it would appear that HIC is an organisation that had previously a rather more exciting existence than it has now. I don't think that this is an accurate reflection of HIC, and would recommend that this aspect of their public face is addressed, to do justice to all of the interesting and important work that is being achieved by HIC.

The document database currently available on the hic-mena.org website would be better positioned on the main hic-net.org website, particularly as the documents stored on this database go beyond the MENA region.

In terms of social media, HIC has a presence on Facebook and Twitter, which appears to be well used by HIC-MENA and HIC-AL – and perhaps this is where the social campaigning of HIC is most active, replacing such tools as the Urgent Action Appeals (see below).

To conclude there is a lot more that could be done to streamline and consolidate the various different websites of HIC structures. At present the websites do not have any overarching structure, and are also not properly linked, so it is not possible to move between the different websites. This presents a confused understanding of HIC to the outside world, and to potential users and members, and suggests that the different HIC structures do not speak with one voice.

### **3.9 The relevance of HIC for Human Rights (HR) advocacy and the development of HR standards/tools (I)**

#### **3.9.1 Questions raised by the 2012 Evaluation TOR**

- What is the specific relevance of the coalition and its operational structures (not just the members) in the advocacy for Human Rights at different levels: local, national, regional and international?
- What is the relevance of the coalition and its different operational structures for the development of Human Rights standards and tools and for the defence of specific Human Rights?
- To what extent do HIC members link to the Coalition's campaign for the Right to the City in their struggles for specific Human Rights (HR: Right to Housing, Right to Water and Sanitation etc.) and for their local demands? To what extent do they use HR tools developed by the Coalition?
- What is the significance of the HR approach in HIC's global, regional, local and thematic work?
- What could be improved to strengthen the HR approach of HIC and to increase its impact?

### **3.9.2 Relevance of HIC for Human Rights (HR) advocacy and the development of HR standards / tools according to the 2007 evaluation**

The 2007 evaluation does not go into details on this issue but basically opines that since principal rights are already anchored in international legal instruments, HIC should change its focus by becoming more operation-oriented.

### **3.9.3 Issues and findings related to the relevance of HIC for Human Rights (HR) advocacy and the development of HR standards/tools**

As has been discussed earlier in this evaluation, there is an issue of coherence on specific issues between HIC's regional structures. This is particularly true in the interpretation and operationalization of human rights, specifically the right to adequate housing. The following findings demonstrate this.

The specialization in housing issues has provided an opportunity for HIC to spotlight the right to housing, for which HIC has developed specific tools and approaches, including legal tools, advocacy techniques and networking.

The evaluation reveals that the added value of the Coalition is its impact on policies (mainly regarding the rights to housing), the systematization of popular urban struggles, the capacity to assist popular movements in claiming their rights, the solidarity with global social movements (especially in the campaigns), the training workshops and seminars for the analysis of very specific problems.

HIC broadly promotes the economic, social and cultural rights agenda in the specific area of land and housing rights, to ensure that the focus of HIC's work remains on those individuals and groups who are more vulnerable to violations. Most of the members agree that HIC includes the human rights approach in its work (for instance, HLRN toolkit, Quantification of Losses and Loss Matrix), although there are regional differences in terms of understanding and emphasis given to HR approach.

Although many organizations and HIC members try to link to the Coalition campaigns for Housing and Land Rights, there can be a lack of compatibility and coherence between the various campaigns at local and regional level. HIC campaigns often do not sufficiently reflect the local dynamics, making it difficult for the local organizations to link them to their specific struggles. There's a lack of coordination; some members pointed out that the campaigns of the Coalition lack defined objectives and visible and identified results; this means that they do not feel included and do not participate actively. The campaigns often lack a strategy and/or plan of action at international, national and regional levels in order to optimize and avoid confusion. A comment from an interview with a key informant revealed that while there are of course local and regional nuances on specific issues, an effective international network should be able to draw out a 'global story' that has resonance across nations and regions. HIC is not at the moment pulling together to draw out that inspiring, connecting 'global story'. The interviewee suggested that this is not due to poor work at the national and regional level, but rather an unwillingness for people to listen to each other across regions – there is a lack of communication, and sharing of information which prevents understanding, and creates an inability to make broader decisions on issues that affect the whole international network.

An example of this is the approach to creating a statement for World Habitat Day - it is important for HIC to have one common key core message, which should be different from the UN's one, but this has proved a difficult exercise in the past, with regional structures failing to agree on one international message.

The human rights approach differs substantively between the work of HLRN and that of HIC-AL, although this is beginning to change. For HLRN, a human rights approach means utilising legal instruments, interpreting the provisions within the right to adequate housing to make specific claims on government. In the MENA region, human rights are currently a core concern and many of the organizations gravitating around HIC MENA and HIC HLRN are focusing specifically on HR. In Latin American, meanwhile, HIC structures pursue a more 'operational' strategy such as for example the 'social production of habitat', or the 'right to the city', which is not based in international law. In Latin America, as with gender and other

issues, human rights are perceived as a transversal issue and most LA HIC members are actually not specialized in human rights.

From the workshops and survey, it is thought that these differences in approach stem from contextual differences: members felt that in some Latin American countries, rights are formally already anchored more profoundly in legal instruments and it is now more a matter of implementation meanwhile in the MENA region, constitutional rights and legal instruments are being articulated at this very moment, which make a more legalistic approach to human rights presently absolutely pertinent.

Contextual and historical differences have a significant role to play in these different interpretations, and operative and more legal approaches towards the rights to land and housing should not be considered as antagonistic but as complementary. Indeed, although not all members are explicitly using the term of “Human Rights” in their daily work, they all seek their implementation through advocacy, cooperative work, alternatives developed, etc.

In general, the HIC housing and land rights ‘toolkit’ is perceived as very good technically, although many organizations consider it to be too complicated and difficult to understand. Some members confess that they do not use it in their daily work due to a lack of capacity in applying such tools. There’s a huge necessity for a formal training in order to explain to the members how to properly use HIC tool kits, or potentially it would be useful to provide a pared-down version of the toolkit.

The Violations Database and the Urgent Actions Appeals are both actively used by the MENA and SA structures, with a separate UAA section on the HIC-AL website. Unfortunately it does not appear on the HLRN Urgent Action Appeals that any members are actively responding to these appeals. It would be interesting (and perhaps encouraging?) to have this information more visible on the website. In an interview with key informants from HIC-SA, they stated that the role of HIC is not to be too visible, but that the members (or other interested organisations that HIC-SA is working with) should be the main visible partner in this work, it would still be useful to have more detail on the website, for the sake of verification and authority. HIC- MENA, on the other hand, said that members do not engage with sending letters.

The Violations Database is meant to be updated at present by members - again it is not clear to what extent this is achieved, or how much the HIC MENA and SA structures are responsible for keeping this database up-to-date. The 2012 annual report on the Findings of the HIC-HLRN violations database acknowledges the shortcomings of holding an incomplete violations database, but also provides insightful discussion on the types of evictions experienced in different parts of the world, and the reasons for these evictions, which range from ‘beautification’ of a city to present a particular image, to land grabbing to put land to more ‘productive’ use.

From the workshops organised by the evaluators it comes out that HIC should redefine its human rights approach by delimiting which rights it can plainly address. Indeed, trying to tackle all rights could lead to superficial results. HIC should continue on its path to struggle for rights related to housing and habitat making an assessment of the progresses made, the relevance and recognition gained and refine its strategy to go forwards. HIC still clearly has the specificity to address “Habitat issues” while this topic is nowadays often much “diluted” in the general concept of Human Rights in other organizations’ activities. This specificity gives a unique identity to HIC and it should hold on to it!

Nevertheless it’s also result from the evaluation that HIC Human Rights approach should include actual new concepts, such as rights to a decent housing or the Rights to Mother Earth, but also move towards social responsibility and justiciability. It is indeed essential for HIC to move forward transforming the struggles and complaints into proposal of public policies with a strategy for its adjustment and approval in each of the countries involved. As a matter of fact, the difference regarding the Human Rights approach between the different continents shouldn’t be neglected as well as the changing in the global context.

To conclude the evaluation found that human rights, specifically the right to adequate housing, and its inclusive aspect on the right to land and against forced evictions are key to the work of Habitat

International Coalition, although this is achieved through different means depending on the different contexts and ideologies of different regions, and indeed of different members.

MENA and SA regional structures, largely under the Housing and Land Rights Network banner, promote the principles and standards enshrined in the right to adequate housing, by the use of training and legal resources such as the Housing and Land Rights toolkit, and other specifically created training tools for courses that they run for different stakeholder groups including the police and the judiciary. These are based in international human rights law, and draw from that tradition. For these structures, engaging with the Human Rights Council and other relevant UN bodies is key to improving access to housing, and ideally they will open an office in Geneva to ensure better access to these institutions. MENA and SA structures are also the most active in the maintenance of the Urgent Action Appeals (although these also exist on the HIC-AL website) and the Violations Database.

HIC-AL is not currently a member of the HLRN, although the human rights principles of participation, access to information, non-discrimination and accountability are embedded in their work. The approach that HIC-AL has traditionally taken is more based in rights that have not been ratified by international treaty bodies, but which have grown out of a more operational (and, they argue, collective) approach, such as the 'right to mother earth', and the 'right to the city'. This is beginning to change, with the Mexico office engaging with (for example) the national government to include the right to water and sanitation in the revised constitution, in order to protect communities' water supplies. As part of this change in direction, HIC-AL should consider a more active part in the HLRN, as both approaches would benefit from the lessons learnt from the other, and the definition of rights as 'collective' vs. 'individual' rights is not particularly useful – the rights to housing, land, water and sanitation all enjoy aspects which are collective or individual in nature, and their promotion and realisation can utilise a range of technical, legal and social tools.

For this to be achieved, it may be necessary to provide more clarity on what the human rights framework provides and what is required, to move away from the currently divisive discussion of 'individual' vs. 'collective' rights. There are a range of tools available from advocacy and campaigning, provision of information, to the development of accountability systems, which include monitoring as well as legal processes. To this end, HLRN could work towards providing a simpler version of the Housing and Land Rights monitoring toolkit, which is currently too technical and complex for those not well versed in human rights to use. Simpler language with fewer steps would lead to the toolkit being used more often – even if some of the detailed analysis were lost.

To be useful and authoritative, both the Violations Database and the Urgent Actions Appeals that are currently on the website need to provide more detail and sources. It is a pity that members do not value these tools more, and engage with them, as the purpose of such an issue-based network, should indeed be solidarity in facing violations, and these are tools that can have a far-reaching impact beyond the local situation. This is a useful analysis, based on the available quantitative and qualitative data, and is valuable despite the fact that the database is not exhaustive, as the personal experience of being forcibly evicted has a similar impact on the family, on women, on the elderly whether it takes place in Nairobi, Buenos Aires or Cairo, and the value of solidarity in this situation, of fighting for a common cause against illegal practice should be a core element of the Coalition.

Both HIC regional structures and individual member organisations could benefit from more open and transparent discussions on this issue – the danger is that the discussions get embroiled in ideology and personal feelings.

For the Human Right approach to be truly mainstreamed, HIC actors need training to build capacity in the methodology of HR for monitoring, fact gathering, documentation, policy analysis. The investments already made in the toolkits should be better utilized and forecasted among the members; for instance the "*Violation database*" and the "*Quantification of losses*" should be promoted more among members so that they can use it and more important update it regularly, so that HIC can count on reliable and global data.

In summary, the evaluation shows that there's a challenge to mainstream the Human Rights approach within HIC as it should be more homogenous while also including regional diversities in terms of priorities, concepts and strategy; that will also means a lot more effort from all members as well as many more resources.

### **3.10 The relevance of gender and generation aspects for the coalition and its members (J)**

#### **3.10.1 Questions raised by the 2012 Evaluation TOR**

- To what extent are the activities of the coalition and its members around “core” topics like housing, upgrading or evictions sensitive to gender and generational aspects („mainstreamed”) and taking systematically into account specific needs of different gender groups and generations?
- Is the gender mainstreaming process of the Coalition addressing the right issues with adequate methods to effectively overcome lack of awareness and gender biased discrimination in the daily practice of its members?
- How is the gender mainstreaming measured?

#### **3.10.2 The relevance of gender and generation aspects for the coalition and its members according to HIC's Mission and Strategy**

Advance towards gender equality and equity is the first of the list of four central objectives of HIC, as per its Mission and strategy. HIC strives at achieving this objective through a gender-mainstreaming plan that places gender as a fundamental issue that cuts across all aspects of habitat-related rights; by strengthening women's leadership at all levels to influence public policies; by challenging inherited cultural concepts and prejudice surrounding gender-based violence and link it with the right to housing, land and the city; by promoting gender equality in the HIC inner and outer world and ensuring that women of all ages hold decision-making positions; and: by striving to eliminate all forms of legal discrimination against women and to implement national legislation and international conventions that guarantee women their habitat rights, including inheritance rights, by focusing on the promotion of legal instruments ratified by states, and on raising women's awareness about their rights (HIC 2011)

However, this admirable strategy from 2011 has not yet been put into place. The responses from members at the various workshops suggested that:

- Women and Habitat Network is dormant;
- According to the HIC staff and Board members present in the workshops gender balance within the organisation and regional structures is already realized, it needs to be maintained, but is not the most important current issue
- Gender themes are currently addressed only marginally by HIC and its members and are not considered a priority;
- HIC still needs to focus on mainstreaming a gender approach in all HIC projects and actions and to develop a Coalition-wide gender strategy and by including women's groups and gender experts in the development/planning/implementation of all
- Gender and generational issues in relation to housing and land rights are not fully understood;
- There is a lack of tools and methodologies;
- Gender-specific projects have been rejected reflecting a change in priorities among donors;

- HIC MENA identifies some specific and relevant issues related to gender and generation mainstreaming, such as: inheritance issues, new rental laws, land tenure, housing rights of disabled people

What mainly emerges from the evaluation is that, as a coalition, HIC has made more progress on gender issues than with the generational considerations in habitat issues. The gender dimension is also taken into account more than it was 20 years ago when the Women and Habitat network was first conceived. There is a clear willingness to thoroughly include this dimension in the priorities of HIC, but there is a lack of relevant tools and methodologies to pursue them. Further, the Women and Habitat Network, which at one point was quite strong and well supported, has gradually become weaker and is now transformed into a committee. It does also seem that gender and generational issues in relation to housing and land rights are not fully understood by all members. There's an urgent need to be more pro-active and to enact the existing plan to include more gender equity and generations needs within the activities of the members. Suggestions are made to organize conferences, for instance, on housing impact on issues that are pertinent to women, the young and the elderly, as well as including more women in the organization's staff.

In Cairo, the main habitat issues for which gender and generation are relevant are the new rental laws, the land tenure for women, the inheritance issue as well as the lack of women's equality before the law. These questions appear as an urgent matter in the MENA region as women are exposed to fierce attack in the countries that are witnessing revolution, since these countries are controlled by fundamentalist Muslim and are very discriminatory against women.

Besides the gender and generation dimension, some members consider that ethnic and multiculturalism issues should also be taken into consideration as well people living with disabilities and housing.

A project on gender issue was formulated with UN-HABITAT and 15 members but it was unfortunately not approved, which led to a loss of visibility of this work among the members. In addition, UN-HABITAT is not necessarily the best partner; this poses more broadly the issue of the choice of partners (including funders) and alliances.

There's a need to systematize the efforts that have been made locally in the different regions and make it visible at global level. Indeed, many organizations members have made great achievements on the road to reduce barriers between men and women but these progresses have not been capitalized within global HIC.

The Women and Housing network was proposed and initiated within the HIC network over 20 years ago, as a way of addressing some of the perceived and no doubt real problems encountered by women in the network, that it was run by men, for men. Over time, the WAH network has fallen into disuse, to the extent that currently the website dedicated to the issue of gender within HIC is no longer used or updated, and is not linked to the main website. The website does contain some useful information, with an excellent mission statement, including goals and strategies (here: <http://www.hic-net.org/was/objectives.php>), but as with many documents on the various HIC websites, there is no date, and no way of knowing if anyone is using these objectives and strategies or how they are monitored.

The documents and articles on the website date back to 2010 and before (where a date is available). It is hard to judge progress – the website is thin on this issue.

The most recent significant input was by the 2007 evaluation in 2007, which with regard to gender in the HIC network made the following rather pertinent observations:

- It is unclear whether HIC aims to be a defender of women's housing rights or aims to promote a gender-focus with HIC
- There is a wide range in understanding of what a 'gender-focus' or 'women's focus' is in different sections of HIC
- There is a gap between the ideological views

- These problems are a challenge to organizational development of HIC more generally.

Broadly, it seems that the above still holds true. While there has been significant progress with respect to the role and visibility of women with HIC's structures at all levels in the last 20 years, there is still a need for a coherent operational strategy, with relevant tools that can be used by members and the regional structures, so that HIC can actively consider both gender and generational issues more proactively in all the work that is done. The contextual and ideological differences in the different regions with respect to gender and generational issues must be acknowledged – but should not be allowed to be a barrier to progress, as they appear to be currently.

There are obviously similarities in these contextual and ideological differences with comments already made on human rights approaches in different regions within HIC, and HIC might benefit from considering gender, generational issues, disability and other specific marginalised or excluded individuals or groups through a human rights lens.

In summary, the gender approach, or gender discrimination awareness, still appears to be very theoretical within parts of HIC. Gender mainstreaming doesn't mean implementing only few projects dedicated to women and housing rights but to include a gender perspective in all HIC projects. HIC has an important role to play in furthering these aims within the housing sector, and should make the most of the visibility and authority that they enjoy.

### **3.11 HIC's funding strategies and plans for financial sustainability (K)**

#### **3.11.1 TOR Questions**

- Roles and views of donors and members
- Which options exist to secure the financial sustainability of the Coalition?

#### **3.11.2 Issues and findings**

- No common global fundraising strategy among HIC structures.
- Increasing recognition of importance of fundraising through projects to finance super-structure;
- Common projects among operational structures are needed
- Recognize non-monetary contributions and the potential of members to contribute with their capacity
- Look for sponsors and not only for donors

The main aspect that emerges from the evaluation is that, although the issue of HIC financial sustainability has been several times discussed among the structures, there is no sustainable achievement in the articulation of a global strategy in this regard; in other words, there is not a common global fundraising strategy among HIC structures.

As a global network, there is a deficiency in finding funds or rather in diversifying its historical sources of financing historical, leading HIC to remain mostly supported by Misereor.

The relations with donors are mainly bilateral which makes the negotiations more substantive; besides it can be seen as "competition" between HIC members/structures and threatens the "coherence" and continuity of the processes HIC is supporting.

There is not a clear strategy of contacting with new donors further than sporadic or casual contacts. HIC need to find new and creative alternatives to raise funds and human resources should be strictly devoted to this rigorous task.



In MENA, they have changed their strategy. They started to be more interactive with the existing donors and redirected their attention to new donors by promoting their achievements. This gave good results! It also appears important that HIC should look for sponsors and not only for donors.

Certain HIC members propose strategies to raise funds such as the organization of public events (concerts, football games and promotional activities), however pointing out that more relevance should be given to these kinds of events. Also, during all important events, the organizations members should participate financially instead of having HIC pay for everything.

HIC definitely needs to value and more recognize the non-monetary contributions and the potential of members to contribute with their capacity; this means more participation and cooperation. Indeed developing mutual support - from HIC to members and from members to HIC - could strengthen not only HIC financial existence but also HIC as a global coalition. Also, this could lead to develop more joint projects, which are definitely needed. In that sense, it is pointed out that a data-base should be created including the activity of each member/organization in order to optimize contacts and interactions between members and to share strategy and best practices.

However, HIC should be careful not to have fundraising through projects proposal becoming its only financial strategy.

Some new measures have already being taken during the process of evaluation. Indeed, HIC new president has required the establishment of a basic document gathering discussions and proposals on a financing strategy for the coming years. She has also planned to resume and /or make new contacts with cooperation agencies and foundations as well as to meet with HIC local members in several European cities.

### 3.11.3 Financial information

In order to see the financial information of HIC we include a summary table with income and expenditure of the HIC structures in the last five years.

- The tendency of income and expenditure of HIC LA are the most important of the structures but with a constant reduction in the last three years
- HIC MENA income and expenditure reduces in 2008 and 2009, maintains in 2010 and reduces importantly in 2011
- The GS has the more stable information, increases income and expenditure in 2008 and 2010 and reduces slightly 2009 and 2011
- HRLN without major variations increases the income and expenditure in 2008 y 2011
- HIC SA increase income and expenditure in 2008 and 2011

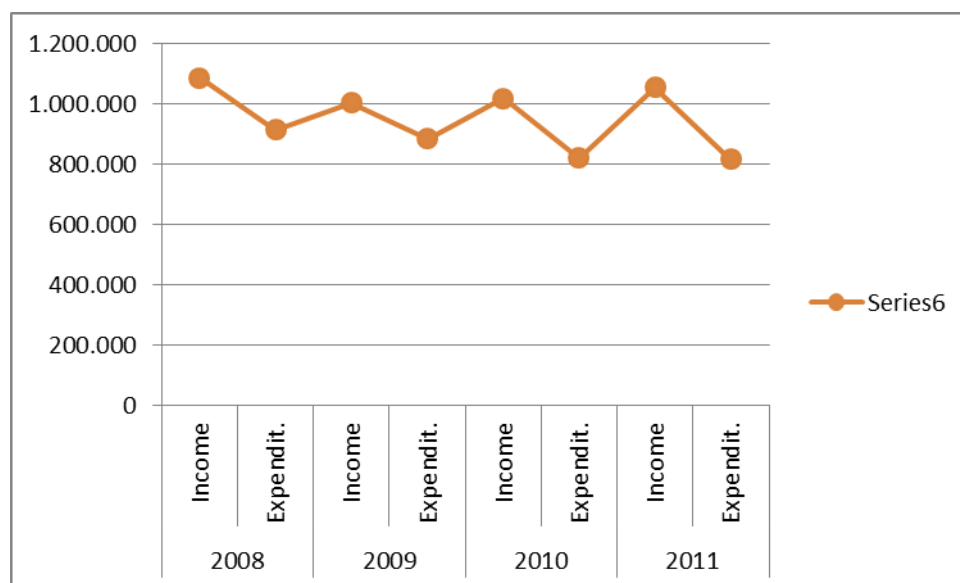
**Table 3.18: HIC Financial Statement 2007-2012**

**HIC** Financial Statement 2007-2011 (in USA Dollars)

HIC offices	2007		2008		2009		2010		2011	
	Income	Expendit.	Income	Expendit.	Income	Expendit.	Income	Expendit.	Income	Expendit.
HIC - AA			144.000	132.172	140.492	140.492	128.843	106.593		
HIC - AL	433.828	304.947	386.932	365.840	230.366	221.100	235.851	205.265	246.155	216.772
MENA	226.981	149.690	182.111	150.432	317.011	218.520	308.637	187.284	195.275	132.108
SARP			137.200	78.988	158.672	107.287	123.106	109.388	213.607	148.818
HRLN	108.373	91.704	186.165	141.964	117.180	168.166	148.717	147.682	200.033	144.129
HIC - GS	165.774	164.109	191.169	175.807	177.701	166.882	200.521	170.101	197.743	171.539
<b>Total</b>	<b>934.956</b>	<b>710.450</b>	<b>1.227.577</b>	<b>1.045.203</b>	<b>1.141.422</b>	<b>1.022.447</b>	<b>1.145.675</b>	<b>926.313</b>	<b>1.052.813</b>	<b>813.366</b>

Source: HIC Annual Reports 2007 to 2011

**Table 3.19: HIC Graphical financial Statement 2007-2012**



*Note: No taking in consideration 2007 figures and HIC-AA information*

Taking in account the total figures from HIC structures in one hand the income of 2008 is above one million dollars and reduces in 2009 and 2010 to increase slightly in 2010 and 2011, in another hand; the expenditure goes harmonically the expenditure in 2008 and 2009 and increases in 2010 and 2011.

Funding is a major constraint for HIC, which is aware that it needs to diversify its funding strategies. HIC in general and HLRN in particular are aware that funding is more likely to come through projects with clear objectives and outputs. This is seen by some as a positive new challenge as it also provides for more explicit internal milestones against which to measure one's own impact. Projects can be a strategy to finance overheads, i.e. organizational costs.

HIC-LA also considers financial mobilisation strategies employed by social movements (e.g. through concerts, festivals, etc.) as having a potential, but these do not seem appropriate for mobilizing funds for the operation of HIC's structures;

The main challenge is finding alternative sources of funding the General Secretariat, which for the nature of its work and function is unlikely to be able to finance itself through projects and hence will continue to depend on the financial support of the few organizations willing to support organisational costs such as Misereor. The survival of the GS may thus be more contingent upon reducing costs than increasing or maintaining external funding. This could be achieved by simplifying and decentralizing some of its functions. For example a lot of time and resources seems to go in the management of the member space, the registration of members and their payments, etc. By simplifying the notion of membership (only one category of member abolishing membership fee payments) the organizational burdens and costs could most likely be significantly decreased. By abolishing membership fees, HIC would also be less accountable to its members, an issue that could be instrumental for simplifying HIC's policy structure, which reflect HIC's concern of accountability towards its members.

The recent international calls for proposals increasingly place greater emphasis on transnational and transcontinental initiatives and some of them aimed particularly at networks and organizations with members in different geographical contexts; therefore HIC should regularly check on Internet for the launch of new calls which might be of its interest.

These calls for proposals are crucial to formulate initiatives involving both HIC structures and members in different countries and/or continents as well as focusing on HIC core topics. This is fundamental for the

strengthening of HIC identity, solidarity and also for promoting the transfer of skills, knowledge and good practices from one geographical area to another.

To be better prepared to meet the donors' expectative, HIC should invest in training its staff on project design and follow-up for the most important financial donors working in the international cooperation for development. In that sense, HIC could look among its members which ones are already highly trained in that topic so that they could collaborate sharing their know-how. Then, HIC could organize successive trainings in the different continents in order to transfer among all members the knowledge acquired.

## **4. Summary, conclusions and recommendations**

### **4.1 Simplify organisational structure to present a more coherent image towards outside**

This evaluation confirmed an issue that was already raised by the 2007 evaluation: HIC's organisational structure with its regional and thematic structures is too complex, does not reflect reality, and does not help to give a clear and coherent image of HIC towards outside. To make a distinction between regional and thematic structures it is dysfunctional both in terms of HIC's image towards outside, as well as in relation to the implications of the links between thematic, regional and policy structures, which are all entitled to have Board representatives. If we accept that with the exception of HLRN presently no other thematic structure appears to have any tangible activity and that the overall objectives of HIC and HLRN are the same it does not make sense to present itself as two separate organisations or to present HLRN as a thematic structure of HIC. Considering that there is no doubt that the name Habitat International Coalition needs to be retained but that it does not sufficiently clearly convey HIC's overall objectives, we reiterate the recommendation made by the 2007 Evaluation that there should be only one structure with global coverage named HIC-HLRN with a number of regionally organized focal points that could either consist in fully fledged offices or continue to be anchored in the premises of one of its member organisations. We would like to underline that this recommendation by no means entails more centralized organizational structure. The need for relatively autonomous regional structures, with their own context specific activities that may even be registered as independent organisations, is well understood and respected.

### **4.2 Simplify policy structures**

This evaluation found that at present HIC's policy structures are not very effective. In particular HIC's Board is currently oversized with positions being occupied by members who do not have the capacity and commitment to comply with their obligations. Closely related to the issues raised in section 4.1 is our recommendation to drastically reduce the size of the Board to a maximum of 5-7 members who have a proven commitment and capacity to contribute to the Coalition as per HIC's position description (see: <http://www.hic-net.org/document.php?pid=3732>).

### **4.3 Improve the relevance and effectiveness of the Board and the General Assembly**

HIC's operational structures are increasingly involved in direct projects implementation. Consequently their relation with HIC members tends to be less intensive and exclusive. It may be argued that HIC structures are more and more functioning like a NGO, even though as a Coalition HIC remains committed to its policy structures. These are believed to give legitimacy and transparency to the organisation and to distinguish HIC from other organisations. While we recognise the potential of making a more effective use of electronic platforms to organise meetings and keep a fluid communication throughout the year, it is nevertheless of utmost importance for the Board and the General Assembly to meet physically once a year. With a reduced size of the Board it may also become more realistic to mobilize the required financial means to cover its members travel expenses, which may at least partially be covered with the overall budget of the General Secretariat. With regard to the General Assembly the evaluation noticed a contradiction between the ideological importance given by HIC to this institution and the weight it is given in practice. Considering that the annual meeting of the General Assembly is the only opportunity to bring together at least some of HIC's members at least once a year, this event should be made more attractive and convey to its participants the message that their voices count. This would imply not just conducting the annual meeting of the General Assembly hurriedly between one meeting and the other, but allocate to this event a full day, including a lunch and/or dinner.

#### **4.4 Abolish compulsory membership contributions in cash**

The evaluation found that HIC is having a serious problem with mobilising its members' contribution in cash or kind for a number of reasons: (i) Most HIC members do not perceive HIC as a membership organisation but as a social movement with whom they share basic values and principles, but towards whom they have no particular strong commitment; (ii) the benefits of being a HIC member are not sufficiently clear and/or attractive to convince members to pay their annual fee; (iii) Being a member is not a prerequisite for obtaining HIC's support; (iv) HIC structures are increasingly funding its activities through projects that do not necessarily involve its members; (v) Within the framework of specific projects HIC is choosing its partners on the basis of their competences and not necessarily among its members; (vi) To maintain its image and legitimacy as a global coalition HIC needs its members more than the members need HIC; (vii) The GS does not give priority and does not have the organizational capacity to follow-up on membership fees payments; (viii) The organisational costs of managing the membership fees may by far exceed the amount of money collected. Based on these considerations we recommend abolishing the compulsory membership fees.

#### **4.5 Abolish contributions in kind as an alternative to the payment of membership fees**

Over the last years HIC has invested considerable resources to set up a system to allow members to contribute to the Coalition with non-material contributions. To this aim the GS has established a sophisticated online Member Space. So far, however, the participation of members in this global collective action has been intangible. Neither the fact that the system is still rather new nor its relative complexity can explain HIC members' lack of participation. Their passive response rather confirms a typical problem of transnational networks and the well-known challenge of pursuing collective goals of large groups (see: Scott and Carrington 2011). Indeed, as pointed out by Olson already in 1965 *"the customary view that groups of individuals with common interests tend to further those common interests appears to have little if any merit"* (Olson 1965:2). Mobilising and sustaining the participation over a prolonged period of time of large and heterogeneous groups to pursue common goals has become particularly difficult in today's context where subscribing global causes and joining multiple networks has become easier but at the same time does not entail a clear commitment to any of them. Based on these considerations HIC should lower its expectations from its members and reconsider whether it is worth investing significant time and resources in instruments whose relevance is based on the questionable assumption that wherever participation is required for the mutual benefits of a group of people it will naturally occur. To conclude, to avoid further frustrations and waste, compulsory contributions in kind should not be considered as an alternative to the payment of membership fees. Manifesting less rigid expectations from its members, may also encourage new organisations to become HIC members and make it less embarrassing for HIC's structures to invite organisations to join the Coalition (which some equated to proselytism!).

#### **4.6 Mainstream a right based approach**

According to its Constitution HIC is dedicated to action for the recognition, defence and full implementation of the right of everyone to a secure place in which to live. The achievement of this objective is contingent upon a respect of people's economic, social and cultural rights. Accordingly it does not make sense that the promotion of a rights-based approach is considered the domain of one of HIC's thematic structures. The evaluation found that in some regions the understanding of human rights based approaches remains limited even among its members, in particular in Latin America. So far HLRN apparently has not been able to contribute to overcome this situation. To this end mainstreaming a rights-based approach in HIC as a global Coalition is essential. This requires first and foremost a closer collaboration between HIC-HLRN and HIC-AL and a jointly organized effort to raise awareness about meaning and strategies related to a rights-based approach to land and housing. Achieving these goals, however, also demands HLRN to become less rigid about its definition and advocated strategies to pursue a rights-based approach and to recognize that in different socio-cultural and political context concepts and strategies may assume a slightly different

meaning. It needs to be underlined that this recommendation is closely linked to HIC's need to have a clearer focus that was already recognized by the 2007 Evaluation.

#### **4.7 Undertake a participatory evaluation of the effectiveness of the tools developed by HLRN**

While HLRN's efforts to develop tools to protect the housing and land rights of people is admirable, several stakeholders have expressed critical views about the processes and outcomes of HLRN's endeavour. The approach has been perceived as non-participatory and as a consequence the outcome, i.e. the various tools, too complex. Even HIC members and structures with a keen interest in using the tools find them rather inaccessible and often short trainings are not considered to be sufficient to overcome the difficulties faced by CBOs to apply them. Considering that we recognise the importance of these tools for HIC's future role and actions in safeguarding people's rights to land and housing, but also their present limitations, we strongly suggest exploring opportunities to evaluate their accessibility and effectiveness in different socio-cultural, institutional and political contexts through a participatory approach.

#### **4.8 Develop a more visible and inclusive strategy to interact with the UN system**

The 2007 Evaluation was rather critical towards the role of the UN system in promoting an advancement of the respect for land and housing rights at a global level and argued that whatever HIC could aim at by interacting with the UN system was already achieved. This view was neither shared by HIC nor is it supported by this evaluation. While the UN system may have its own limitation its role in protecting human rights remains essential. Over the last years HIC has continued to maintain a good connection to the UN system in general and in particular with the UN-OHCHR, through direct interactions as well as through a close collaboration with the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing. In particular HLRN is involved in policy advocacy also with other UN agencies such as UN-HABITAT and FAO and increasingly also with the World Bank. These endeavours should be sustained but also become more visible and recognisable by HIC as a whole. HIC should officially designate one person to interact with the UN system, who would gather the relevant issues and concerns from all its regions and members and who would also report back to the Coalition about on-going issues and debates at the level of multilateral agencies. Assuming this role may require a stronger presence in Geneva, which is currently constrained by the lack of funds.

#### **4.9 Improve communication strategy**

Communication within a network such as the Habitat International Coalition requires coherence, clarity and a common understanding of the issues at hand, and this will then be reflected in the face that is presented to the world through websites, communications, videos and other social media.

Unfortunately HIC's lack of international coherence on key issues and lack of ability of the different regional and / or thematic structures to communicate well, or share information, or agree on key messages for campaigns is reflected in the way it presents itself via the various websites. The incompatibility between websites has been recognised as a problem and is in the process of being addressed, but can only be fully addressed when the organisation as a whole learns to communicate better. This includes more engagement with and from members, who are currently not visible on the website, although there appears to be more engagement by members within the Facebook page(s). It may indeed be useful to make some of the information available on the members' space available to a broader public, and to utilise more social media for issues such as Urgent Action Appeals, such as Facebook and twitter, which are more effective in campaigning than websites which are managed by the organisation itself. This would allow for more effective involvement of the members, and more engagement between members, rather than having all communication go through the more traditionally positioned General Secretariat and regional structures.

#### **4.10 Enhance the importance of transnational projects**

Global projects that may be as simple as a joint publication such as for example the much appreciated book “Cities for all” are important to give cohesion to the Coalition, to create opportunities to interact and advance on specific issues, and to give visibility to HIC and its members. Though obtaining funding for global projects is considered increasingly difficult, existing opportunities should not be underestimated. HIC should make a systematic effort to explore opportunities to pursue global projects by involving and building upon as much as possible on its members’ capacity. In case of books, however, an effort should be made to disseminate them through official publishers so as to ensure a higher level of dissemination. Transnational projects can also include specific campaigns, around preventing forced evictions or a campaign around World Habitat Day, and can reflect local and regional contexts under a common banner.

#### **4.11 Give utmost importance to the Succession Plan of the General Secretariat**

Past experiences have shown that the transition to a new General Secretariat is a very delicate and risky moment that may jeopardize the very survival of HIC as a coalition. The GS whose term is coming to a conclusion by the end of 2013 is aware of this challenge and should be congratulated for having started on time with involving all concerned structures in its succession plan. Defining the function and location of the new GS needs to be closely linked with an overall reform process of HIC, which should include the ‘merger’ of HIC and HLRN, the constitutional reform allowing to review the size of the Board and the abolition of membership fees and other organisational aspects. While setting up the GS within one of its regional structures may contribute to enhance the effectiveness of both structures, it needs to be emphasized that the workload of the GS should not be underestimated; it is not realistic to expect that the role of the GS can be taken over by a regional structure and in order to maintain a certain degree of cohesion of HIC as a global coalition only a minor part of its present activities can be devolved and decentralized.