Housing and Settlements in the Context of Disaster Risk Reduction including Climate Change Adaptation

Housing is essential to the well-being and development of most societies. It is a complex asset, with links to livelihoods, health, education, security, and social and family stability. Housing acts as a social centre for families, a source of pride and cultural identity, and a resource of both political and economic importance. In 1972, John Turner pointed out that the word ‘housing’ can be used as a noun or as a verb. The noun ‘housing’ describes a ‘commodity or product’, while the verb ‘to house’ describes the ‘process or activity of housing’ (Turner and Fichter 1972, p. 151). According to this distinction, housing must be understood as what ‘it is’ and what ‘it does’ in people’s lives, and therefore, people’s experience in the way houses are promoted, built or used becomes crucial.