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7.4. Housing

Most of the population have access to electricity, clean water and housing.668 However, according to the most recent national census, over 1.7 million people lived in urban slums under ‘unhygienic and unplanned conditions with very poor-quality housing structures’.669 While this figure could not be corroborated, and other sources suggested larger numbers including UNDP stating in 2020 that about 60 million people lived in urban slums,670 and Iqbal Habib, architect and board of trustee’s member of Bangladesh University, stating that 4.4 million people lived in slums in Dhaka alone in 2022.671 Bangladesh is experiencing rapid urbanisation, with the urban population more than doubling from 30 to 70 million in the period 2000–2023. This has created a significant demand for affordable housing, with a current deficit of about 6 million units. Only 31 500 units are built annually, which correspond to 1 % of the demand. As a result, slums have been growing, including the Dhaka slum population which increased by 20 % in 2010–2020.672 According to the Daily Star, around 100 000 new apartments need to be built every year, while the real estate market can only supply 8 % of required units. Meanwhile, most cannot afford homeownership due to high interest rates.673

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