

## Grassroots PCG Response to New Urban Agenda (Surabaya Draft)

Discussions around informal settlements and their upgrading - housing, basic services like water, sanitation, and energy - **do not make mention of the agency and innovation inherent in urban poor communities** - with regards to the use of innovative methodologies, technologies, and finance mechanisms. Language around the co-production of solutions (by both urban poor communities and other urban decision makers) that capitalises on these must be included in the NUA in order to encourage governments to create space for these in national and local policies and implementation strategies.

**Community-collected data** is mentioned briefly, but the important role that it plays for cities is not adequately emphasised. Community-driven data collection empowers communities to play an active role in the development of their cities, which is of course key to the creation of truly resilient cities. It also allows for active participation of communities from the beginning of the development process through the identification of development needs and priorities, and through to the monitoring of implementation of strategies.

Involvement of grassroots communities should be mentioned in further references to the use of data in the implementation and monitoring of the New Urban Agenda, particularly regarding the use of data for the development of a basic land inventory and regarding the monitoring of progress achieved in the implementation of sustainable urban development policies and strategies. Organised urban poor communities should be regarded as invaluable resources in holding governments accountable to their commitments.

Urban development policy and practice must be informed by the uniquely rich information that organized informal settlement and slum dwellers gather through settlement and city-wide community-driven data collection methodologies, including profiling, enumeration and mapping. Data collection serves as a critical tool for the empowerment of these communities, and as a powerful basis from which to enter into partnerships with other key stakeholders, including the State, to set the agenda for development priorities and upgrading needs.

While the change from "addressed" to "prevented" with regards to evictions is definitely welcome, there is little discussion (as has already been mentioned) of **strategies that cities can implement to prevent evictions**. Indeed, the language around the prevention of informal settlements is concerning. At SDI we like to talk about "inclusive" cities as being "slum friendly cities." That is the kind of attitude and those are the types of strategies we want to see the NUA advocating for - ones that create cities that are embracing of informality. This includes the approaches to evictions. What we would advocate for then would be the creation of a holistic approach to evictions that calls for the co-production of alternatives to evictions through active partnerships between organised urban poor communities and urban decision makers, particularly local governments.

The NUA should strengthen its commitment to prevent forced evictions through a call to **institutionalize collaborative planning towards eviction alternatives in partnership with organized communities of the urban poor**. We emphatically insist that the New Urban Agenda commit to an end to the practice of forced evictions of any kind and for any reason. The co-production of in situ, incremental slum upgrading solutions should be referenced as providing effective alternatives to evictions and as the default approach to dealing with inadequate, unsafe housing, infrastructure and basic services. When this is not feasible, organised urban poor communities should be central to the planning and implementation of the relocation and resettlement process.

*In relation to paragraphs 11 (d), 13 (c) ii, 60 and 64 we are concerned that the objective should be “sustainable economies,” rather than “sustainable economic growth,” with the emphasis on full and productive employment and decent work, rather than economic growth:*

- 11 (d) meet the challenges and opportunities of present and future sustained, inclusive and sustainable economies, leveraging urbanization for structural transformation, high productivity, value-added activities and resource efficiency, harnessing local economies, recognizing the contribution of the informal economy and supporting a sustainable transition to the formal economy;
- 13 (c)ii Strengthening urban governance, with sound institutions and mechanisms that empower and include urban stakeholders, as well as appropriate checks and balances, providing predictability and coherence in the urban development plans to enable social inclusion, sustained, inclusive, and sustainable **economic-growth economies** and environmental protection;
- 60. We commit to address the social, economic, and spatial implications of ageing populations, where applicable, and harness the ageing factor as an opportunity for new decent jobs and sustained, inclusive, and sustainable **economic-growth economies**, while improving the quality of life of the urban population.
- 64. We commit to use a smart city approach, which makes use of opportunities from digitalization, clean energy and technologies as well as innovative transport technologies, thus providing options for inhabitants to make more environmentally friendly choices and boost sustainable **economic-growth economies**.

***We welcome 12 (b) which states that the NUA will be guided by the following interlinked principles:***

- 12 (b) ...promoting full and productive employment and decent work for all, ensuring decent job creation and equal access for all to economic and productive resources and opportunities

***We welcome the retention unchanged of paragraph 41.***

- 41. We recognize that sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, with full and productive employment and decent work for all, is a key element of sustainable urban and territorial development and that cities and human settlements should be places of equal opportunities allowing people to live healthy, productive, prosperous, and fulfilling lives.

***We strongly suggest the inclusion of references to the urban poor (paragraphs 32, 40, 46):***

- 32. We commit to ensure equitable and affordable access to sustainable basic physical and social infrastructure for all, without discrimination, including affordable serviced land, housing, modern and renewable energy, safe drinking water and sanitation, safe nutritious and adequate food, waste disposal, sustainable mobility, healthcare and family planning, education, culture, and information and communication technologies. We further commit to ensure that these services are responsive to the rights and needs of women, children and youth, **the urban poor**, older persons and persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and local communities, and others that are in vulnerable situations

such as refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants. In this regard, we encourage the elimination of legal, institutional, socio-economic, or physical barriers.

40. We support sub-national and local governments, as appropriate, in fulfilling their key role in strengthening the interface among all relevant stakeholders, offering opportunities for dialogue, including through age and gender responsive approaches, and with particular attention to the rights and needs of, and potential contributions from, all segments of society, including men and women, children and youth, older persons and persons with disabilities, **the urban poor**, indigenous peoples and local communities, refugees and internally displaced persons and migrants, regardless of migration status and without discrimination based on race, religion, ethnicity, or socio-economic status.
46. We encourage effective participation and collaboration among all stakeholders, including local governments, the private sector, civil society, women and youth organizations, as well as those representing persons with disabilities, **the urban poor**, indigenous peoples, professionals, academic institutions, trade unions, employers' organizations, migrant associations, and cultural associations, in ascertaining the opportunities for urban economic development as well as in identifying and addressing existing and emerging challenges.

***We broadly welcome the new paragraph 54 but request a change to emphasise inclusion.***

54. We commit to increase economic productivity by providing the labor force with access to income-earning opportunities, as well as the knowledge, skills and educational facilities that contribute to an innovative and ~~competitive~~ **inclusive** urban economy. We also commit to increase economic productivity through the generation of full and productive employment, decent work, and livelihood opportunities in cities and human settlements.

***We strongly support the retention of paragraphs 55 and 57.***

55. We commit to promote full and productive employment, decent work for all, and livelihood opportunities in cities and human settlements with special attention to the needs and potential of women, youth, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and local communities, refugees and internally displaced persons, and migrants, particularly the poorest and those in vulnerable situations, promote non-discriminatory access to income-earning opportunities.
57. We commit to recognize the contribution of the informal working poor in the informal economy, particularly women, including the unpaid, domestic, and migrant workers to the urban economies, taking into account national circumstances. Their livelihoods, working conditions and income security, legal and social protection, access to skills, assets and other support services, and voice and representation should be enhanced. A progressive transition of workers and economic units to the formal economy will be developed by adopting a balanced approach, combining incentives and compliance measures, while promoting preservation and improvement of existing livelihoods.

***We are concerned about the promotion of smart city ideals, as outlined in new paragraph 64, as being purely technologically driven and request that the social justice and inclusion dimension of this approach be emphasised, eg:***

64. We commit to ~~use~~ **explore** a smart city approach, which makes use of opportunities from digitalization, clean energy and technologies as well as innovative transport technologies, **based on principles of social inclusion and social justice**, thus

providing options for inhabitants to make more environmentally friendly choices and boost sustainable economic growth.

***We note the inclusion of new para 129, but are concerned about the emphasis on foreign direct investment without due recognition of the importance of local investment from informal economy operators and others. We therefore request a change to this paragraph as follows:***

129. We call on business to apply their creativity and innovation toward solving sustainable development challenges in urban areas, acknowledging that business activity, investment and innovation are major drivers of productivity, inclusive growth and job creation and that investment **from micro to macro scales**, along with a stable financial system are a vital complement to development efforts.

***We welcome the inclusion of stakeholders in the urban governance process, through capacity development (paragraph 143) and capacity development of government to partner with these stakeholders (paragraph 144), and references to “multi-stakeholder partnerships.” (paragraph 148). We also recognize the inclusion of “local communities” as recognized stakeholder in this latest draft; however, we strongly recommend the inclusion of recognition of the “urban poor” and “organized groups of the urban poor” as a stakeholder and partners in urban governance (paragraphs 144, 145, 149).***

144. We will promote the strengthening of the capacity of national, sub-national, and local governments, including local government associations, as appropriate, to work with women and girls, children and youth, older persons, and persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and local communities, **organized groups of the urban poor** and those in vulnerable situations as well as with civil society, the academia, and research institutions in shaping organizational and institutional governance processes, enabling them to effectively participate in urban and territorial development decision-making.

145. We will support local government associations as promoters and providers of capacity development, recognizing and strengthening, as appropriate, both their involvement in national consultations on urban policies and development priorities, and their cooperation with sub-national and local governments, along with civil society, private sector, professionals, academia and research institutions, **organized groups of the urban poor** and their existing networks, to deliver on capacity development programmes by means of peer-to-peer learning, subject matter related partnerships, and collaborative actions such as inter-municipal cooperation, on a global, regional, national, sub-national, and local scale, including the establishment of practitioners' networks and science-policy interface practices.

149. We will promote capacity development initiatives to empower and strengthen skills and abilities of the women and girls, children and youth, older person and persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, ~~and~~ local communities **and organized groups of the urban poor**, as well as persons in vulnerable situations for shaping governance processes, engaging in dialogue, and promoting and protecting human rights and anti-discrimination, to ensure their effective participation in urban and territorial development decision-making.

***We welcome proposals in paras 155-164 for the regular review of the New Urban Agenda and ensuring an agency with a strong urban focus in the UN system.***