



INSURING GRASSROOTS WOMEN AND URBAN POOR PRIORITIES AND ROLES ARE REFLECTED IN THE NEW URBAN AGENDA

The Huairou Commission (HC): Women, Homes and Community network has functioned as the lead organizer and strategic convener of grassroots women's organizations and other women's groups and constituencies working to insure the New Urban Agenda (NUA) is an empowering, gender-responsive policy and partnership framework. In the General Assembly of Partners (GAP) Huairou Commission has played a lead role co-chairing the Women's Partner Constituent Group (WPCG) and has been working closely with Slum Dwellers International and WIEGO in the Grassroots' Partner Constituent Group. Through our activism and advocacy, we have publicized women's priorities and existing good practices in securing :

- ◆ access to and control over land and housing and essential basic services;
- ◆ inclusive, safe public space and transport to increase women's mobility and social status;
- ◆ economic policies that--improve women's positions in the informal and care economy, strengthen
- ◆ the collective financing mechanisms of women and enhance rural-urban linkages; and
- ◆ decentralized, local decision making processes that formally engage women leaders (from grassroots women, urban poor and informal worker organizations) and incentivize gender equitable and responsive planning, implementation and monitoring processes

have been consistently advanced in the thematic, regional and global policy deliberations and now must be reflected and protected in the final negotiations of the policy framework.

The HC also co-sponsored two Expert Group Meetings (EGMs) to broaden the evidence base documenting key

priorities and effective strategies for insuring that cities value and respond to women, especially those living and working in urban and rural poor communities, and fed the results into evolving policy negotiations. At thematic, regional and global UN policy discussions, the HC runs daily Women's Caucuses to enhance cooperation among grassroots and professional women eager to engender the urban policy framework by persuade governments and other stakeholders to adopt their recommendations.

AT THE SURABAYA PREP COM, HC'S DELEGATION FEATURES:

- ◆ Asian representatives of informal settlement organizations where women are organized and championing joint slum and infrastructure upgrading in partnership with their governments who come to secure formal roles in co-framing housing and settlement development;
- ◆ African and LAC farmer and indigenous people's organizations eager to finalize strategies related to the rural-urban continuum, women's land tenure security, access to markets and other economic opportunities; and
- ◆ Locally focused advocacy and policy experts keen to finalize more comprehensive development and implementation strategies that require women-led, grassroots community driven action to produce cities that are equitable, gender responsive, and prosperous for all.

MEMBER NETWORKS

*Federación de Mujeres
Municipalistas de América Latina
y El Caribe FEMUM/ALC | GROOTS
International | International Council
of Women | Latin American Women
and Habitat Network | Women and
Cities International | Women and
Peace Network*

COMMENTS ON RECENT REVISED ZERO DRAFT

In the context of our network's priorities and activism **we appreciate member states inclusion of some key Issues related to improving the economic, social and political standing of grassroots women in urban poor communities.** Of particular importance are references to women's security of land tenure (ref. 29), recognition of women's work in the informal and care economy (51) and the need for livelihood opportunities. Ratification of women's rights in relationship to infrastructure, basic services, food and safety and security (multiple), and the affirmation of gender-responsive risk reduction are also key (68).

We also applaud the current draft's multiple references to formulating gender responsive policies and urban planning and sector development initiatives (including housing, infrastructure, transport, tenure security, risk reduction, etc.)¹ and **URGE MEMBER STATES TO RETAIN THESE REFERENCES IN THE PREP COM OUTCOME DOCUMENT.** The call for action's emphasis on:

...addressing the specific challenges and multiple forms of discrimination faced by women and girls, children and youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, indigenous peoples, slum and informal settlement dwellers, homeless people, workers, farmers and fishers, refugees... and marginalized communities. (ref.15)

is also important to retain.

The strong emphasis on rural-urban linkages, and their potential in improving the lives and well being of peri-urban and rural women and actions such as

"strengthening the role of small and intermediate cities and towns in enhancing food security and nutrition systems, providing access to housing, infrastructure, and services, and facilitate effective trade links, across the urban-rural continuum, ensuring that small scale farmers and fishers are linked to regional and global value chains and markets... (and) support urban agriculture and farming..(ref.83)

are also key.

¹ see 10f,12c,21,26,29,36,68,81,89,100

RECOMMENDATIONS

Amidst these positives, we feel the Surabaya outcome document must add clear strategies for involving organized grassroots women and urban poor groups as leaders in implementing the New Urban Agenda and improving the quality of life of their settlements and cities. **This Requires:**

- 1 Naming grassroots women's community groups, slum and informal settlement dwellers, and informal workers as stakeholder in the Effective and Means of Implementation sections (72-145) (and elsewhere)¹¹**
- 2 Expanding urban governance sections to specify that citizen engagement strategies, involving collaborations between urban poor, grassroots women groups and their local authorities, are essential to implementing and achieving the NUA.** Transparent and equitable urban governance and citizen accountability depends upon engaging large constituencies of the urban poor in urban problem solving and the policy framework must make these links.
- 3 Noting the key roles these urban poor groups have to play** in generating disaggregated data and helping officials learn participatory, integrated resilient development approaches—good practices and resource mobilization strategies led by the urban poor.
- 4 Expanding the Means of Implementation and Follow-Up and Review sections to contain fund and resource mobilization strategies that urban poor groups can access and use to partner in NUA implementation and roles they can play, as a key constituency group, in rolling out and monitoring actions in the FUR.**
- 5 Establish policy coherency and synergy between the NUA and Sustainable Goal 5 through commitments and stakeholder references acknowledging that women are half the population and, with girls, constitute the largest number of urban poor residents.** Hence urgent action is required to reverse structural discrimination and advance women's public leadership in improving their living and working conditions and women's collective 'right to the city' world-wide. Moreover, grassroots and other locally focused women's organizations should be positioned as key partners in implementing effective, comprehensive, gender responsive policies and urban development initiatives and reducing gender inequality.¹¹¹

¹¹ 127 on resilience financing; 135, 137 are places to position grassroots groups and 144 should link evidence based urban governance to the engagement of urban poor constituencies

¹¹¹ The substitution of 'people living in "vulnerable situations"' for 'vulnerable groups' is an improvement to prior drafts. However the multiple use of a laundry list approach of 'women and girls, children and youth...' and no mention of grassroots women or the other urban poor groups misrepresents the rationale for inclusion and the urgent priority of redressing structural poverty that is borne by an identifiable subset of urban dwellers - which requires naming and prioritizing them on the stakeholder list.