



UN Major Group for **Children and Youth** the space for children and youth in the United Nations

UN Major Group for Children and Youth
Intervention at the Open-Ended Informal Consultative Meeting for Habitat III
The Transformative Commitments for a Sustainable Urban Development
Public Space, Informal Settlements and Civic Engagement
26th April 2016

Thank you facilitator for giving us the floor.

This statement is prepared by the UN Major Group for Children and Youth and the **Women's Partners Constituent Group**, which are both part of the General Assembly of Partners, have been actively engaged in all regional and thematic meetings, and also serve as Advisory Board Members.

We would like to highlight key components of messages we have been carrying in the context of this conversation.

Answering to the Question 1 on policies.

The need to integrate policies on civic engagement, public space, and informal settlements is clear, as those living in informal settlements are systematically denied access to safe public spaces or any form of civic engagement. Women are most adversely affected in this regard.

There is substantial evidence base that demonstrates the city wide positive impact of slum upgrading through *in situ* slum development with secure land titles or property rights, in addition to strategic preventive, curative and futuristic measures.

In addition, clear provisions to engender the design and monitoring of urban planning for public spaces, transport, and social & physical infrastructure services, while recognizing that violence against women is essential in addressing mobility and safety in cities and human settlements, would further create effective integration.

The thematic content of the NUA (new urban agenda) should include commitments on national policies around this as a specific deliverable.

Answering to the Question 2 on monitoring effectiveness.

The effectiveness of the NUA that delivers for all people is not a function of capacity and resources. Political ambition is a more critical component here. Keeping this in mind.

Achievable and meaningful monitoring and outcomes are a result of appropriate process and thematic content.

It should be implied by now that the process should formally include communities, especially those living in informal settlements with a special focus on women across planning, implementation, monitoring and review.

In regards to effective and meaningful thematic outcomes, the following should be clearly and concretely reflected in the zero draft:

1. A clear articulation for the need for mainstreaming a gender responsive approach with an explicit focus on women's empowerment and their access to safe public spaces and civic engagement mechanisms
2. Recognition and programmatic delivery on the fact that the NUA is a critical vehicle to deliver, operationalise and mainstream the SDGs and Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction for the people living in informal settlements.

Answering to question 3 on implementation principles.

Rights Based and People Centered approaches - Housing is a human right. Informal settlements are an unfortunate outcome of broken policy. There should be no forced evictions or criminalisation of residents.

Gender and Age Responsive approaches - We recognized the fact that that bad policies disproportionately impact women. This can be corrected by engendering and applying a use of youth responsive design and monitoring of urban planning for public spaces, transport, and social and physical infrastructure services recognizing that violence against women is linked to issues of mobility and safety.

Planet Sensitive approaches - The upgradation process should incorporate an ecosystem based approach that builds resilience and encourages climate change adaptation for the communities and transforms the relationship between inhabitants and the natural environment.