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General Assembly of Partners towards Habitat III (GAP)
July 25, 2016
PrepCom 3 - Surabaya, Indonesia

As co-chair of the GAP Partner Constituency Group for the Grassroots, represented by Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI) and Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO), we thank the member states for the opportunity to support the development of the New Urban Agenda.

We commend the commitments to support for housing, basic services, slum upgrading, and the informal economy within the latest draft of the New Urban Agenda.

We urge member states to acknowledge the role of grassroots communities as engines of urban social integration and inclusive growth, the importance of social dialogue and collective bargaining as important levers of social inclusion and sustainable development.

We, the members of the Grassroots Group call on member states to adopt the Right to the City as a fundamental concept of the New Urban Agenda.

This latest draft pledges that governments will do many things *for* the urban poor, and nothing *with* the urban poor. It lacks any reference to the urban poor as stakeholders and to grassroots organizations of the urban poor as partners in urban governance.

We therefore strongly recommend the addition of “voice and representation” in references to participatory slum upgrading, to ensure “that marginalized communities are included in decision making” and not disproportionately affected by local government plans to expand their revenue base.

We urge member states to re-integrate references to:

- Specific recognition of “grassroots communities” (including organized slum dwellers and informal workers) in the description of “all stakeholders” in par. 42.
- Protection of existing livelihoods in processes of formalization, consistent with ILO Recommendation No. 204

The New Urban Agenda must:

- Strengthen the commitment to prevent forced evictions and consider alternatives to evictions in partnership with organized grassroots communities and slum dwellers.
- Retain and expand the reference to “community-collected” data (par. 142).

We call for stronger references to “multi-stakeholder partnerships” (par. 139) and other participatory processes to include partnerships between government and organized communities of the urban poor:

- Partnerships involving grassroots organizations must be treated as equal in all phases including agreements and process before partnership activities are undertaken. In other words, grassroots organizations must have an equal voice and representation in setting the terms of the partnership.
- Partnership processes must recognize the constraints on partnership faced by grassroots organizations, hence creating an enabling environment for meaningful participation.
- The cost of partnership with grassroots must be recognized and the terms should be made fair and inclusive in order to ensure sustainability.
- Partnership of grassroots organizations and local governments are crucial for a successful New Urban Agenda, including in implementation and monitoring.

Thank you.