



## PRESS RELEASE

### Up for Slum Dwellers - Transforming a billion lives

#### World Urban Campaign on the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme

#### Call for Action

***“Investing in participatory slum upgrading – putting people and housing at the centre – can contribute to achieving sustainable urbanization, reducing inequalities and making prosperity available for all”,***

**Dr. Clos, SG Habitat III, Executive Director UN-Habitat, USG of the United Nations**

#### Context of participatory slum upgrading

There are an estimated one billion slum dwellers in the world. Urban poverty and inequalities as well as inadequate and unaffordable housing are acknowledged as a universal global challenge by the Sustainable Development Goals - SDG 1 (“End Poverty”) and Target 11.1 (“By 2030, ensure access for all, to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums”) call for action. The slum upgrading target endorsed the “unfinished business” of Millennium Development Goal 7d “Improve the lives of 100 million slum dwellers by 2020”. If no immediate action is taken, UN-Habitat projects an increase of numbers of people living in slums and informal settlements from current estimated 1 billion to 3 billion by 2050. This will account for about 40% of the world population. For example, with an urbanization rate of around 4%, today, 60% of the African urban population lives in slums and informal settlements.

In many developing countries at least 20% of the slum households are headed by women and given the increasing feminization of poverty, women are significantly affected by these dilapidated conditions. Slum dwellers experience constant discrimination and exclusion. This is manifested in limited access to land and property, tenure insecurity and the threat of eviction, lack of decent jobs for youth, high exposure to disease and violence and exposure to impacts of climate change and natural disasters.

Slums are home to a dynamic informal economy with potential for socio-economic transformation. Around 85% of all new employment opportunities around the world occur in the informal economy with limited public investment support. Research indicates that urban areas with a high prevalence of slums pay real economic, environmental and social costs. These restrain the leverage of their human and social

capital and their prosperity. *“It is the transformation of our urban landscapes that will enable us to end poverty, to provide basic services, housing, sustainable transportation, and to create an environment in which not only human rights can be actually delivered but also prosperity be available to everybody”* (Dr. Aromar Revi, Director, Indian Institute for Human Settlements IIHS).

### **The Draft New Urban Agenda**

The Government of South Africa initiated and hosted the Habitat III Thematic Meeting on Informal Settlements that sought to bring the issues of people living in slums and informal settlements into the forefront of the negotiations of the current draft of the New Urban Agenda (NUA). The current draft NUA provides 51 entry points for participatory slum upgrading. It promotes a pro-poor, integrated, inclusive approach to sustainable urbanization. It advocates for urban policies that promote socio-economic transformation for all. It also emphasizes the importance of a participatory approach and multi-governance frameworks giving a voice and influence to people centered decision making. This crystalizes into levers of achieving sustainable urban development comprising of regulatory frameworks, urban planning and financing mechanisms.

One of the effective ways to respond to slums in the ACP regions with the entry points of the draft NUA is demonstrated in the track record of the **Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme (PSUP) launched in 2008**. The programme is a result of continuous policy dialogue initiated by the Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States and demanded by Member States. The PSUP is financed by the European Commission (EC) and implemented by UN-Habitat. PSUP integrates slum dwellers’ priorities into national and city development plans and financing frameworks. The PSUP approach was endorsed by 51 ACP countries by the Kigali Declaration in 2013 and its implementation continues to expand, even in other regions of the world. Evidence has shown that the programme strategically links global and local learning with national policies, with city development plans and most importantly with community priorities including through participatory planning and community-led implementation for job opportunities for marginalized women and youth. Raf Tuts, Programme Division Director of UN-Habitat, puts the PSUP approach in context: *“Slums and informal settlements need to be appreciated as areas within the city that have people, youth and women, with capacities and potential for an increased contribution to the overall city development. The PSUP has demonstrated that focused actions by national and local authorities as well as communities can trigger improved services, housing and infrastructure achieving prosperity for all”*.

*“The PSUP is timely because it has helped raise awareness, promote participation and engage the international community towards urbanization in the New Urban Agenda”*, stated Deputy Minister of Local Government and Rural Development, Mr. Nii Lantey Vanderpuye, while inaugurating the alley paving community project of the PSUP in Ga Mashie, Accra, Ghana. The PSUP Community Managed Funds have created access to opportunities of livelihood improvement for 10,000 women and youth. The Ga Mashie Community Development Committee has introduced a micro-finance service in partnership with a local bank to support small-scale women and youth traders. The microfinance targets poor and lower income households, particularly for women and youth, who are otherwise excluded from the financial systems to access credits, savings and insurance. A woman local trader, Hannah

Doruwah's, proudly states: *"I am now a distributor and supplier of bread to most people who sell porridge and cocoa drink. I have provided employment to five young women who buy from me in bulk to sell. I'm so happy, I came for the loan."*

The Habitat III process and the PSUP provide a global mobilization platform and network for up-scaling participatory slum upgrading. The ACP Secretariat, EC and UN-Habitat are calling for expanded action through the World Urban Campaign *"Up for Slum Dwellers – Transforming a billion lives"*. The Campaign facilitates new diverse partnerships and investment, particularly with the private sector. Stand *"Up for Slum Dwellers"* and join the Campaign under the motto of *"Leaving no-one-behind"*.