**Civil Society Informal Stakeholder Hearings**

**Stakeholder Platform Lighting Talks**

**Grassroots PCG**

**6 June 2016, New York, NY**

Statement about what the PCG favors in the NUA (1 minute):

We welcome the recognition and recommendations relating to informal settlements, informal workers, the informal economy, the informal sector, and the urban poor included the Zero Draft of the New Urban Agenda, and the recognition of the need for “a radical paradigm shift in the way cities and human settlements are planned, developed, governed and managed” in line with Policy Paper 1 on Right to the City (preamble).

Specifically, we are pleased to see the following reflected in the Zero Draft of the New Urban Agenda:

* A commitment to integrated housing approaches that incorporates access to basic services, infrastructure, public space, transport and livelihood opportunities, with specific mention of importance ofimproving the living conditions of the urban poor, including those living in slums and informal settlements;
* The recognition of urban informality as “a result of lack of affordable housing, dysfunctional land markets, and urban policies”;
* Specific mention of the need to ensure equitable access to services and spaces essential to people’s livelihoods, including the urban poor and formal and informal workers;
* The statement that “we commit to recognize the working poor in the informal economy as contributors and legitimate actors in the economic development process of cities.”
* Emphasis that housing policies should promote equity and provide alternatives to forced evictions and a commitment to promote increased security of tenure.
* The mention of the need for participatory urban planning processes, with some explicit mentions of the urban poor, women, and grassroots organizations. There are also mentions of the General Assembly of Partners (GAP) of which WIEGO and SDI are active members through the Grassroots Partner Constituency Group.

Statement about what the PCG would like the NUA include (1 minute):

**References to the informal economy must capture the wide range of activities and forms of employment that are a part of its makeup.** *The**definition of informal employment should include informal work in formal and informal sector enterprises, self-employed work, own-account workers, and contributing family workers.*

**References to grassroots stakeholders must specify organizations of informal workers, informal settlement dwellers, such as unions, federations and associations***.*

**Strengthen the link between informal livelihoods and informal housing by citing lack of access to decent work as a cause for informal settlements and their growth.** *Informal settlements are also a product of residents’ insufficient access to quality livelihoods that would afford access to formal, quality housing.*

**Strengthen commitment to prevent forced evictions through the institutionalization of collaborative planning towards eviction alternatives in partnership with organized groups of informal settlement and slum dwellers.** *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. Instead, stakeholders must prioritize local partnerships between government and organized communities of the urban poor in order to promote the co-production of in situ, incremental slum upgrading as an effective alternative to evictions and the default approach to dealing with inadequate, unsafe housing, infrastructure and basic services.*

**References to data collection must include and prioritize the use of community-driven data collection.** *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.*

Areas in which your PCG can contribute to the NUA – give a practical example(s) (1 minute):

1. SDI has the Know Your City Campaign, and has the community-generated and disaggregated data needed to understand the urban context;
2. WIEGO has the academic research bridging practical interventions needed to understand the urban context
3. Both SDI and WIEGO are global networks of federations of informal workers/member-based organizations of informal workers quite literally all over the world. These members are already living and working in the communities and cities in which the NUA aims to have an impact, and they are organized.

How we can practically work on implementing the New Urban Agenda:

* Partner with local government to co-assess vulnerability, co-prioritize development needs, and co-design interventions as the basis for city development strategies;
* Organize communities of the urban poor into active citizens and build capacity to negotiate for improved living conditions and livelihood opportunities;
* Partner with local government and other urban stakeholders on implementation of upgrading projects and programs;
* Monitoring progress towards stated outcomes;
* Holding stakeholders accountable to commitments.