



OWG 7 on Sustainable Development Goals
On Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements
January 6, 2014
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9:00- Daily Session of MGs and Co-Chairs

Good Morning Co-Chairs. Thank you for the floor. I am pleased to be representing the Huirou Commission, a global coalition of grassroots women's groups and facilitating NGOs working in 50 countries to eradicate poverty through gender justice approaches. In this session, I am honored to speak on behalf of the Women's Major Group.

To realize sustainable development and collective effort to protect the environment, I would like to emphasize that the new development framework must be grounded in human rights; must reflect a commitment to non-discrimination across its themes; and must surface experiences of people in marginalized groups across goals, target and indicators.

The specific aspects of sustainable development goals must constitute 2 key areas:

1. Participatory, inclusive actions at the local level that can promote and improve gender equality and ensure exercise of women's rights within a sustainable development frame that benefits all.
2. A gendered and people-centred approach must be cross cutting and institutionalized at all levels.

On the theme of Sustainable Cities, we consider inclusive cities--be they large urban megacities, peri-urban or smaller rural townships--will only grow if organized groups of poor women are consciously and formally incorporated in the full range of public decision making associated with planning and strengthening infrastructure, basic services and fostering equitable economic growth in large, mid and small size communities and towns.

In the next twenty years, the desirable outcomes depend upon accelerating participatory, transparent and accountable decentralized local governance: where elected local authorities, public officials, and local citizen groups collectively set priorities for city and township planning and development projects and insure that budgets and contracts are properly determined and managed to achieve the desired results. These steps require new forms of power sharing between national and local governments and public accountability mechanisms that mandate and monitor the active participation of local community groups and insure that the poorest residents and settlements are as actively included as the middle and wealthiest ones.

Settlement focused policy and programming goals must be framed in a manner that recognizes and fosters collaborative public partnerships with existing, women-led self help organizations operating in significant numbers in rural, peri-urban and large urban areas across cities.

In my experience at Huirou Commission I work with federated women's groups and networks leading efforts to improve housing conditions and basic services and formalize tenure; street and small market vendor associations to secure women's livelihoods; make contribution to their community development. We need to remember that their contributions are generally

Member Networks:

Federación de Mujeres Municipalistas de América Latina y El Caribe FEMUM/ALC |
GROOTS International | International Council of Women | Information Center of the
Independent Women's Forum (ICIWF) | Latin American Women and Habitat Network |
Women and Cities International | Women and Peace Network

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invisible.

A SDGs framework for promoting sustainable cities and towns must ensure:

The element of empowerment as it exists on many different levels from the household to neighborhood, village, citywide, regionally, nationally, and internationally. For each type of power and outcome, women need an infrastructure of support that ties individual lives to the greater conditions of urban areas.

A new development framework requires the creation of concrete mechanisms through which multiple stakeholders collaborate with organized groups of women living in poor communities to redistribute opportunities, resources and roles with a view to redressing power imbalances that are at the heart of poverty and inequality.

There is a need to educate citizens about existing policies and programs to enable their active participation in city governance and to bring best practices into policies. Education about roles and responsibilities in taking ownership of the city as a whole and specifically the neighborhood will promote the concept of city sustainability. The time to act is now.

The challenge before us is to not only to improve living conditions of poor communities and that of women living in these communities, by delivering resources and services to them more effectively, but to transform women's status by changing the way in which they are perceived by their families, communities and governments; and by enabling them to claim their rightful place as citizens, change-agents, leaders and stakeholders in development.

Develop a goal for sustainable cities and integrate multiple gender-related targets that promote respect for and exercise of human rights.

-Macroeconomic and fiscal policies to increase equity and redistribution of wealth via progressive tax reforms, social protection are implemented (national to local) that facilitate robust decentralized decision making and public finance systems that catalyze sustainable, inclusive cities

Within a democratic decentralization process, national and local governments have strong incentives to engage and collaborate with grassroots women's organizations and other marginalized groups and other marginalized groups to jointly plan, initiate and scale up development solutions that tangibly improve the quality of life of the poor, especially women in poor communities.

City planning, budgeting and local development processes are required to formally appoint representatives of grassroots women's organizations to play formal public roles in prioritizing, delivering and monitoring local development programs and financial resources are earmarked for these representatives to undertake these roles.

Generate and incentivize decent work locally – with living wages, benefits, accessible in terms of place, schedule, requirements. Focusing on the promotion of green growth or green economy activities will not automatically translate into decent jobs, respect for human rights or poverty eradication.

Pro-poor, gender just settlement and city development can be measured by:



Improved collection of data disaggregated by sex, age, (among others), taking into account the different groups in cities.

Capacity of city/municipal governments is built and national programs require collection according to internationally determined standards that allow for comparison across countries (encourage time use and household surveys to capture the intra-city diversity)

The increasing formal inclusion, legitimation, and support for community-collected data on nature and scale of poverty and informality in communities, townships and cities, especially by municipal authorities.

- a) Percentage of women and men, indigenous peoples and local communities with legal recognized evidence of tenure

The increasing amount of housing and land that poor women and communities control and have secure tenure over as the result of participatory, transparent public decision-making processes

The expansion of essential basic services (water, electricity, sanitation) and public spaces and centers (gardens, parks, recreation, community meeting halls) that are equitably managed and used by community men and women

The existence and application of principles and safeguards to ensure participation and the equitable distribution of resources and opportunities in:

- a) local economic development, housing, infrastructure and transportation planning and projects and
- b) decentralized public health and family support initiatives (clinics, childcare, etc)

Local development projects and capacity building programs draw upon and fund the , knowledge, skills and local expertise of grassroots women's organizations and communities and facilitate the transfer of community womens' effective sustainable development practices across neighborhoods, cities, and regions.

We recommend a sustainable development goals framework that is demand driven and promote sustainable communities and human settlements that encompasses a range of practical and strategies which will determine how women's empowerment and gender-just economic, social and political opportunities will be accelerated in the next decades.

