

1. The most pressing issue is addressing/acknowledging the urban growth in cities which is due to natural growth, people moving to cities for better opportunities and physical growth of cities absorbing villages- ***This growth is entirely predictable and unstoppable.*** It is anticipated that cities in global south will reach big volumes. Given the fact that this often happens under governments/elites with a tradition of being **anti poor and anti-urban.**

The general reality is that such important changes to the structure of the society and economy **are unplanned and worst case resisted.**

2. The consequences of this failure in planning are evident across cities of all sizes across Latin America, Africa and Asia leading to growth of informal settlements/favelas/slums etc. ***in which the urban poor are systematically excluded from access to the city and services.***

The most glaring failure begins with Urban land markets often captured by political elites- extracting rents from slum dwellers based on their insecurity. This results the poor to settle in poorly located land – adding to long term inefficiency of city structure. Similarly, non formal provision of lower quality services but at a higher cost.

This approach to urban growth is not only inefficient and unsustainable -***But they show exactly how expensive it is to be poor.***

Most governments are spending a great deal of effort to exclude the urban poor. The exact opposite approach is essential to even begin to address inequality. This will remain unless we have alternative urban planning norms and standards that also includes land tenure for poor.

3. Slum Dwellers international is unique that it represents millions of poor neighbourhoods and women in 33 countries. Our goal is to bring SGD, New urban agenda, and Climate change together and we cannot do development investments separately. Because they are all faced by the same poor people who have been in deep neglect of this situation. Social movements such as SDI and others have begun to demonstrate that the poor are key contributors of design and can manage change, they are the first respondents to all challenges as we have seen this in COVID. Today SDI can work in any country and support a peoples federation we are doing in right now in Indonesia, Monrovia and more where no federations operated before. Every country is supported by SDI when demand comes in from governments, cities or residents. The important thing is millions of organised communities now report to each other to produce the agenda for change.
4. Across cities- People have gathered data and evidence with each city where they are to back up their responses. The question is will this be accepted in the spirit of partnership? Given the legitimacy and treated as the bases of the development investments they want to make- Instead of being seen as victims or marginalised rather to be seen as partners to produce agenda for change. We ask this assembly to treat these matters urgently to address the realities of inequality.

I am sure that ambassadors and representatives are here today, encourage your governments to bring us to the table.