



UN Major Group for Children and Youth Initial and Immediate Response to the Zero Draft

UN Major Group for Children and Youth, the formal space for young people to engage in the Habitat III process as mandated by GA Res 67/216 and C.2/70/L.61, would like to congratulate the Bureau and all stakeholders for producing this long-awaited document. Habitat III is the first intergovernmental UN summit after the adoption of the Agenda 2030. Therefore, it is critical to ensure that the New Urban Agenda further reinvigorate the global momentum. In order to improve this draft and carry the highest possible ambition, we would like to convey our reflections on this Zero Draft.

Positives and Additional Improvements

1. Stakeholder Engagement

We welcome that the Zero Draft rightfully addresses meaningful engagement of *all* stakeholders in **all stages of the policy process**. Para 93 captures the essence of our priority areas.. Moreover, we welcome para 94 and its specific reference to “ex ante and ex post community-based assessments”, on the environmental, economic, and social impacts of partnerships. Additionally we believe such a principle should be the starting point of any conversation on PPPs. This can be further operationalized through the inclusion of **Major Groups and other Stakeholders** at local, subnational, and national levels.

2. Internalisation of Externalities

We support this draft’s reference to “**internalisation of externalities as a driver of behavioural change**”. However, it fails to specify a framework for identifying the types of externalities, their system-wide impact, and appropriate interventions to address them. There should be a reference to ecological tax reforms, amongst others.. Para 72 can further be strengthened by specifying the importance for changing the behavioural patterns of the **Private Sector**.

Negatives and Necessary changes

1. General Tone and overlooking of Environment.

While calling for paradigm shift, the Zero Draft falls short in effectively doing so by failing to integrate the three dimensions of Sustainable Development - environmental, economic, and social. Environmental integration is especially poorly articulated; the Zero Draft should clearly stated that the “**economy is a subset of society, which is subset of environment**”. Without articulation of “**Planetary Boundaries**” as a reference to biocapacity and environmental thresholds as caps within which an economy must function, the NUA will fail to achieve sustainability.

2. Speaking of poverty only is a narrow view of social reality

Inequality appears only ONCE. *Leave No One Behind* implies appropriate allocation of responsibilities in proportion to magnitude of impact both between countries and within urban communities and income groups. Structural violence that extracts wealth from the planet and people, concentrating it in the hands of the few, should be stopped. As a first step, we call for addressing “**inequality among and within communities and between different human settlements**” in this document. (Supported by both Pretoria and Mexico Declaration)

3. Lack of mention on Integrated Territorial Development (ITD)

While there is an attempt to capture the essence of ITD, the Zero Draft specifically mention this term. In the April Intergovernmental meeting, there were clear demands by many Member States to introduce this notion throughout this document. We call for **specifically mentioning ITD as a key, indispensable principle** of the NUA.

4. Regressive Follow Up and Review (FuR) Architecture

Without establishing a robust accountability and follow-up mechanism, the shortcomings of Habitat II will only be compounded - especially in the context of increased complexities of cities today. The **High Level Political Forum (HLPF)** is the apex of FuR architecture for a comprehensive, evidence-based sustainable development agenda. The Zero Draft starkly fails to make any reference to the HLPF, it should clearly reference and identify modalities for the FuR of the NUA to feed into the HLPF. Furthermore, a rights-based follow-up process needs to specify the role of **Major Groups and other Stakeholders (MGoS)** in its engagement. This will ensure **designated and protected spaces** for meaningful engagement of rights-holder groups and those critical to the success of sustainable urban development. This will also increase coherence with FuR modalities of the 2030 Agenda.