**Climate Policy in Cities without Forced Evictions –**

**Establishing Human Rights Principles in Urban Climate Policies**

Living in informal settlements, especially in danger zones, is in most cases not a voluntary option, but is due to a shortage of available and affordable accommodation. Urban poor depend on measures which protect and improve their homes against the effects of climate change by supporting the measures they already undertake. It is a paradoxical situation: the very people who are particularly badly affected by the impacts of climate change are not recognised as having full rights of citizenship and protected by their communities and society on account of the status of their settlements. Thus they are not the focus of local concern. Internationally, too, their fate has so far been of little importance. Yet climate funding and measures associated with it, have a direct impact on their settlements.

However, adaptation measures are seldom only meant for protection. In most cases the newly created infrastructure also forms part of comprehensive and long-planned overall urban regeneration programmes that could not previously be pushed through politically or could not be financed. Thus protection measures go hand in hand with the construction of expensive housing, shopping centres, promenades and transport infrastructure.

In this way measures to adapt to climate change can even provide a pretext for getting rid of informal settlements. The argument that those infrastructures help to protect nearby residents and urban society as a whole is for many people a convincing one, even if it leads to the removal of settlements – mostly without compensation. This further exacerbates the deprivation in which the occupants live. Protection against natural disasters thus serves as justification for disregarding the basic rights of the urban poor.

Human rights-based urban climate policies should

1. Serve the poorest groups of the population and contribute to poverty reduction. The emphasis must be on asserting the right of the urban poor to housing as well as their rights of abode, and hence their right to a decent life.
2. Comply with binding social, ecological and human rights guidelines to prevent forced evictions. A ban on forced evictions should be a basic requirement to all climate finance including the monitoring of this requirement.
3. Review publicly and internationally financed climate projects with regard to compliance with binding social, ecological and human rights standards, irrespective if the the finance is direct or indirect.

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