



Office of the UN High Commissioner for
Human Rights
Ms Leilani Farha,
Special Rapporteur on adequate housing
Palais des Nations, 1211
Geneva 10
Switzerland

MINISTRY FOR
FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Rauðarástígur 25, 105 Reykjavík, Iceland
Tel: 354-545 9900, fax: 354-562 2373
external@utn.stjr.is, www.mfa.is

Reykjavík, 7 May 2018
Ref: UTN18040146/51.A.001
VW/vw

Your Excellency,

Re: Questionnaire: Informal settlements and human rights

Reference is made to your letter to my Director-General, Ms María Erla Marelsdóttir, on the above issue, dated 17 April 2018, and the attached questionnaire. Below, find the answers relating to Iceland's official development cooperation.

1. While one of Iceland's main focus with its development cooperation is the provision of basic services to poor and disadvantaged communities, including public health, education and access to water and sanitation, the emphasis is on **rural** areas, not urban areas. There are two examples of Icelandic civil society organisations having received official support for projects that would fall within your definition, but these were small projects.
2. The answer to this question is no.
3. As this is outside its focus area, Iceland does not have such policies.
4. The amount for the two projects was around ISK 54 million, which is around USD 540,000. This is the total for 2013 to 2017, both years included. This is a small fraction of Iceland's ODA; well below 1%.
5. Iceland has not developed a comprehensive human rights policy for its development cooperation operations. However, in 2013, Iceland adopted a policy on gender equality as part of its international development cooperation strategy (see <http://www.iceida.is/media/pdf/UTR-GenderEquality-2013.pdf>).
6. All Icelandic official development cooperation projects and programmes are linked to the goals and targets contained in the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.
7. As stated in the answer to the first question, Iceland has supported two CSO projects relevant to the study. One was in the Mbekweni area of Cape Town in South Africa, aiming to empower women in that area, and the other in Kampala, Uganda, aiming to

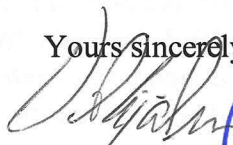
impart skills on slum youths and increase their participation in productive leisure activities. An evaluation report for the project in South Africa is attached to this letter, but the project in Uganda only started in 2016.

8. Physical infrastructure of this type is not a part of the projects. The focus is on human capacity building.
9. Not really applicable.
10. In both projects, local CSO have been involved and through them substantial community consultations were undertaken in order for local communities to participate in project design, selection of beneficiaries and decision making.
11. This has not been a part of projects funded by Iceland.
12. In general, we find with basic services projects that lack of local government involvement seems to be the single largest challenge. This takes various forms, such as lack of capacity and resources, as well as competing demands. Some of the main lessons we have learnt - that I believe apply here - are the following:
 - i. Participation, fostering ownership, good communications, and respectful relations are critical for success.
 - ii. A holistic approach that meets the inter-connected needs of target groups enhances results significantly.
 - iii. Supporting organisational development can empower a CSO in a developing country and improve prospects for organisational sustainability.
 - iv. Fostering good relations, sharing information, and working collaboratively with local authorities is important.
 - v. Long-term commitment - longer than three years - is important for planning and sustainability.
 - vi. It is important to give special attention to the girl child, as in many African countries general discussions about children tend to focus only on boys.

If you need any further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact me (wiiium@mfa.is - tel.: +354 545 8922).

Finally, allow me to wish you every success in your work and I will be most interested in studying your report to the 73rd session of the General Assembly this coming October.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Vilhjálmur Wíium

Director: Bilateral Development Cooperation



Encl.: Evaluation of Enza - Final report