



## (RE)SOURCES STATEMENTS TO THE 6<sup>TH</sup> WORLD WATER FORUM

Following the round table organised on the challenges and role of land security to ensure access to water in informal settlement, the (RE)SOURCES think tank would like to make the following recommendations to the international community and water sector stakeholders:

### Noting that:

- The significant growth of developing cities is not being accompanied by the creation of basic infrastructure and developments that are needed to ensure disadvantaged populations enjoy adequate living conditions;
- The share of the unregulated or informal land market in informal settlements aggravates inequalities in access to essential services;
- the two main obstacles to access to water are the cost of the connection to the network and the ban on connecting informal settlements, leading to the development of an informal water market, sometimes connected to organised crime;
- recognition of the right to water as a human right has changed the way in which the problem needs to be posed : Prohibiting the supply of water to informal settlements is no longer acceptable and calls for appropriate responses;
- Urban development lies at the core of democratic debate and relationships between social groups.

**(RE)SOURCES PROPOSES THAT PRACTICAL, PRAGMATIC MEASURES BE TAKEN TO IMPROVE AND CONSOLIDATE ACCESS TO ESSENTIAL SERVICES IN INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS:**

### In local, administrative and political terms:

- **Through the recognition of neighbourhood committees** as playing an institutional role in urban organisation in conjunction with national and local governmental authorities. Through their inclusion in consultation and joint decision-making mechanisms in the planning of infrastructure projects in informal settlements.
- **Through the recognition of the main thoroughfares through informal settlements** as public highways. Such recognition makes it possible to meet the right to a water supply, at the very least by means of public standpipes connected to the network, prior to the connection of individual private plots of land.
- **Through permission being given by governmental authorities** to water services operators to organise water and sanitation services for informal settlements with their residents.
- **Through recognition that a contract for essential services** equates to proof of address for the residents.
- **Through simplified administrative procedures** to make residency in informal neighbourhoods official, giving priority to secure occupation rather than the actual status of the landowner or the accommodation itself.

### In terms of charges and tax:

- **By setting up socially inclusive mechanisms** to promote access to water, sanitation and energy:
  - With progressive charging systems, cross-subsidy between services (electricity charges subsidising water), territories and taxpayers.
  - Through a reform of local land taxes, to release funds to benefit the most disadvantaged, with property taxes in wealthy districts being used to pay for setting up basic services in poor districts.
  - With funding mechanisms from national and international financial backing, such as output-based aid.