



## MINURVI ministerial meeting

Brasilia, August 1 and 2, 2024

### Climate resilience and sustainable growth of human settlements in Latin America and the Caribbean

The phenomenon of climate change and its increasingly severe impacts are becoming more evident each day. Although Latin America and the Caribbean contribute only 10% of global emissions (ECLAC, 2024) <sup>1</sup>, the region is among the most affected due to its geographical location and socioeconomic characteristics. The increasingly frequent and intense extreme weather events jeopardize the progress achieved in development and well-being. Climate change poses a significant threat to sustainable development in the region, exacerbating existing social and economic inequalities amidst over a decade of economic growth stagnation. It is estimated that, in a high emissions scenario, the region's GDP per capita could decrease by between 0.8 and 6.3% by 2030 (ECLAC, 2024).<sup>2</sup>

Solving the challenges presented by the climate crisis involves not only reducing emissions but also protecting people and their environments. Climate resilience refers to the capacity of social and economic ecosystems to cope with extreme events, trends, or disturbances, responding or reorganizing in ways that retain their essential functions, identity and structure, while maintaining the ability to adapt, learn and transform (UNHabitat, 2022)<sup>3</sup>. Achieving this resilience consists of effectively confronting and managing the effects of climate change, preventing them from worsening. This requires the adoption of both mitigation and adaptation measures, keeping the concept of climate justice at the forefront to address the disproportionate impact on vulnerable communities.

Latin America is the most urbanized region in the world, with 81.2% of its population residing in urban areas (UNDESA, 2018)<sup>4</sup>. The significant existing inequality and rapid unplanned urbanization contribute to the greater vulnerability of the most exposed populations. Economic and productive disparities are reflected in territorial segmentation and segregation, making the place of residence highly correlated with the socioeconomic status and the consequent level of vulnerability. In peripheral areas, characterized by insufficient infrastructure, precarious housing, settlements in risk areas, limited access to basic services and social and economic marginalization due to limited economic opportunities, these precarious conditions hinder the capacity for

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<sup>1</sup>Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), The economics of climate change in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2023: financing needs and policy tools for the transition to low-carbon and climate-resilient economies (LC/TS.2023/154), Santiago, 2024 (pg, 19)

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>UNHabitat - Metropolis, Climate Resilience Infographic, 2022, <https://urbanresiliencehub.org/>

<sup>4</sup>Projection for 2020. Source: UNDESA, World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision, 2018, <https://population.un.org/wup/DataQuery/>



adaptation and recovery in the face of climate impacts. This situation is common in Latin America and the Caribbean, largely because many human settlements originated from informality and limited planning. This is inherent to the urbanization process in the region.

Climate resilience presents a multidimensional and fundamental challenge for the sustainable development of human settlements in the region, and requires an integrated and collaborative approach. Climate change is accelerating, and the longer adaptation and mitigation actions are postponed, the more costly the impacts will be and the more complex the solutions. In this context, integrating climate resilience into urban and territorial development policies in the region is essential. This entails promoting integrated urban planning that utilizes prospective scenarios of climate risks and impacts, and simultaneously addresses issues such as land use, housing production and location, green infrastructure and construction, and sustainable mobility. This requires fostering inter-municipal cooperation mechanisms and multi-level alliances for municipal and metropolitan administrative management, the provision of public services and the promotion of local and regional development.

Although cities are a major generator of greenhouse emissions, they are also drivers of climate action and are at the forefront of the search for solutions. Therefore, it is crucial to foster collaboration between local and national governments to mobilize the necessary support for the transition towards urban resilience (UN Habitat, 2024)<sup>5</sup>.

This focus on climate resilience creates significant opportunities for driving economic growth and investment. It is estimated that to meet climate action commitments and achieve a transition by 2030, the region will need an average annual investment equivalent to between 3.7% and 4.9% of regional GDP. In terms of infrastructure, investments equivalent to 3.1% of GDP are necessary between 2015 and 2030. However, in 2020 climate financing reached only 0.5% of GDP (ECLAC, 2023)<sup>6</sup>. While achieving these levels of investment presents great challenges, the cost of inaction is even higher. Promoting climate resilience is an imperative to face the greatest challenge of our times and, at the same time, represents an opportunity to stimulate economic growth through innovation, job creation, and regional integration.

In the field of urban planning, several sectors have great potential to generate a significant multiplier effect in local and regional economies, driving growth, generating employment and promoting more sustainable and inclusive development. Electromobility, for example, presents the opportunity to move towards a clean transportation system by promoting investments in renewable energy generation and distribution, as well as in the production of electric vehicles and associated infrastructure. The circular economy offers an innovative approach and is clearly applicable in the rehabilitation and reuse of land and existing buildings. Construction

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<sup>5</sup>UN Habitat, Local Action for Global Goals: An Opportunity for Enhancing Nationally Determined Contributions, Nairobi, 2024

<sup>6</sup>ECLAC, The economics of climate change in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2023: financing needs and policy tools for the transition to economies with low carbon emissions and resilient to climate change (LC/TS.2023/154), Santiago, 2024



using sustainable materials and incorporating energy efficient technologies involves labor-intensive activities. Water resource management requires substantial investments to achieve more efficient and fair management, and in turn these investments generate green jobs and foster resilience. Finally, these interventions can achieve a coordinating effect in specific territories, especially in informal settlements that urgently need to improve the quality of life of their inhabitants.

Given the critical role that cities play in climate change mitigation and adaptation, it is essential that nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) include a robust urban component with specific and ambitious measures for climate mitigation and adaptation. It is crucial to promote resource mobilization by fostering collaboration with international financial institutions and the private sector to implement these urban strategies within the NDCs. Additionally, establishing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the progress of urban actions included in the NDCs is necessary to ensure transparency and accountability. Promoting the exchange of good practices between cities in Latin America and the Caribbean will accelerate the implementation of climate-smart urban policies.

The in-depth analysis of these challenges for Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as the exchange of national experiences, will be carried out at the meeting of the Forum of Ministers and High Level Authorities for Housing and Urbanism of Latin America and the Caribbean (MINURVI): *Climate Resilience and Sustainable Growth of Human Settlements in Latin America and the Caribbean*, to be held on Thursday, August 1 and Friday, August 2, 2024 in Brasilia.

## Agenda

### DAY 1 | Thursday August 1

- 8:30-9:30      **Accreditation and Welcome Coffee**
- 9:30-10:00    **Welcome and Opening**  
Jader Barbalho Filho, Minister of Cities of Brazil and President of MINURVI  
Dwight Sutherland, Minister of Housing and Land of Barbados and Vice President of MINURVI  
Mauro Vieira, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brazil
- 10:00-10:20   **Climate resilience and sustainable growth of human settlements  
-The Latin American and the Caribbean Context -**  
MINURVI Technical Secretariat:  
Elkin Velasquez, Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean, UN Habitat  
Diego Aulestia, Head of the Human Settlements Unit, ECLAC
- 10:20-10:40   **Extreme climate events in Latin America and the Caribbean**  
*Keynote speakers:*  
Jose Marengo, Climatologist and General Coordinator of Research and Development of the National Center for Monitoring and Alerts of Natural Disasters (CEMADEN)  
Adriana Campelo, National Officer and Regional Coordinator MCR 2030 for the Americas and the Caribbean, UNDRR
- 10:40-11:00   **Cooperation Between Cities for Climate Resilience**  
Larissa Menescal, President of the Research and Planning Institute of Fortaleza, Brazil
- Discussion topic 1**  
**Biodiversity and resilience in the face of climate change in Latin American and Caribbean human settlements**
- The objective of this session is to explore opportunities in the region to foster climate resilience and the integration of biodiversity into human settlements, including informal settlements, as key elements in reducing urban inequality and overcoming climate disasters in cities. Practical cases of urban resilience and green and resilient housing initiatives implemented in areas of high social vulnerability will be presented to combat environmental racism and climate inequalities. A ministerial debate will take place to exchange and share experiences, best practices, and proposals to promote urban biodiversity, address the challenges of climate change, and safeguard and strengthen the quality of housing stock and urban infrastructure and services in cities.
- 11:00-11:20   **Thematic Introduction**  
Tatiana Gallego, Chief of the Housing and Urban Development Division, Interamerican Development Bank

11:20-11:40 **Coffee Break**

11:40-13:30 **Structured discussion: Experiences, Good Practices and Opportunities in the region**

**Moderator:** Tatiana Gallego, Chief of the Housing and Urban Development Division, Interamerican Development Bank

An open debate will take place between ministers and high-level authorities guided by the following questions:

- What are the main challenges faced by cities in Latin America and the Caribbean in adopting nature-based solutions, and what measures can be taken to overcome them and ensure sustainable and resilient urban development?
- What strategies are your ministries implementing to ensure that urban planning includes biodiversity conservation and the creation of green spaces that contribute to climate change adaptation and resilience?
- What strategies can be implemented to integrate biodiversity into informal settlements, thus improving climate resilience and reducing urban inequalities?

**Conclusions topic 1: Biodiversity and resilience in the face of climate change in Latin American and Caribbean human settlements**

Tatiana Gallego, Chief of the Housing and Urban Development Division, Interamerican Development Bank

13:30-15:00 **Lunch**

15:00-15:40 **National Climate Plans: strategies for development and citizen participation and Nationally Determined Contributions**

**Moderator:** Alice Carvalho, Director, Ministry of Cities of Brazil

*Brazil's National Climate Plan*

Yuri Della Giustina, Director, Ministry of Cities of Brazil

*Participation of Civil Society in Brazil's National Climate Plan*

Luís Kolle, Professional, Academic and Research Entities (AEAMSESP)

Rodrigo Lacovini, Pólis Institute

Graça Xavier, Popular Movements (UNMP)

*Nationally Determined Contributions and Cities*

Leta Vieira, Inclusive and Sustainable Cities Programme Coordinator, UN Habitat

## **Discussion topic 2:**

### **Build Back Better: an approach to post-disaster recovery for more resilient cities**

The aim of this session is to delve deeper into the current challenges and to explore opportunities in the region for building safer, more sustainable, and resilient cities post disasters and climate-related shocks. A ministerial debate will take place to exchange experiences, share best practices, and propose strategies on how to build back better. The discussion will be centred on how to improve risk-informed urban planning instruments; how to catalyse investment into critical resilience infrastructure, notably housing, transport, and public assets; and how to improve coordination with the central government for better disaster response and recovery.

15:40-16:00

#### **Thematic Introduction:**

Paula Restrepo Cadavid, Lead Specialist in Urban Development for Latin America and The Caribbean, World Bank

16:00-17:00

#### **Structured discussion: Experiences, good practices and opportunities in the region**

**Moderator:** Emanuela Monteiro and Felipe Montoya, Urban Development Specialists, World Bank

An open debate will take place between ministers and high-level authorities guided by the following questions:

- What are the main gaps identified in the current urban planning instruments that hinder the incorporation of resilience in housing programs for better disaster preparedness, response, and recovery?
- What are some of the best practices identified in the financing of resilient infrastructure and housing?
- What are the current limitations and how can the coordination between central and local government be improved to respond more efficiently to disasters, ensuring the continuity of critical activities and long-term recovery, including the reconstruction of resilient housing?

17:00-17:20

#### **Coffee Break**

17:20-18:20

#### **Structured discussion Continued**

**Moderator:** Emanuela Monteiro and Felipe Montoya, Urban Development Specialists, World Bank

#### **Conclusions topic 2 - Build Back Better: an approach to post-disaster recovery for more resilient cities**

Paula Restrepo Cadavid, Lead Specialist in Urban Development for Latin America and The Caribbean, World Bank

18:20-18:30

#### **Closing Day I**

Jader Barbalho Filho, Minister of Cities of Brazil and President of MINURVI

## DAY 2 | Friday August 2

8:00- 9:15

### **Working breakfast**

World Urban Forum (WUF12)

9:30-9:45

### **Opening**

Jader Barbalho Filho, Minister of Cities of Brazil and President of MINURVI

### **Discussion topic 3**

#### **Land and climate change**

In line with the New Urban Agenda, land use is a fundamental factor in urban planning and climate resilience. Rapid urbanization and unplanned growth have increased cities' vulnerability to the effects of climate change. Proper land use management can mitigate these risks, promote sustainable development, and enhance the quality of life for urban residents. This session aims to discuss strategies and policies for optimizing land use, integrating resilience and sustainability criteria, and addressing cross-sectoral issues and data-driven planning.

9:45-10:00

#### **Thematic Introduction**

Diego Aulestia, Head of the Human Settlements Unit, ECLAC

10:00-11:10

#### **Structured discussion: Experiences, good practices and opportunities in the region**

An open debate will take place between ministers and high-level authorities guided by the following questions:

- How can we integrate disaster risk management into land use planning?
- What changes in urban regulations are necessary to promote resilient land use? How to ensure compliance with these regulations at the local and regional level?

11:10-11:30

#### **Coffee Break**

11:30-12:30

#### **Structured Discussion Continued**

**Moderator:** Elkin Velasquez, Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean, UN Habitat

#### **Conclusions topic 3: Land and climate change**

Elkin Velasquez, Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean, UN Habitat

12:30-13:00

#### **Closing and official photo**

Jader Barbalho Filho, Minister of Cities of Brazil y President of MINURVI

13:00-15:00

#### **Official Lunch**

Hosted by Mauro Vieira, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brazil and Jader Barbalho Filho, Minister of Cities of Brazil and President of MINURVI