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Session

Migration, Housing and Cities

IV Latin American and the Caribbean Housing Forum

17th to 21st of May 2021

20th of May 2021 | 15.55h to 16.40h Costa Rica time

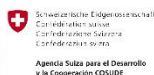
CONCEPT NOTE

IV LATIN AMERICAN AND THE CARIBBEAN HOUSING AND HABITAT FORUM

MIGRATION, HOUSING AND CITIES

MAY 20, 15:55 - 16:40 COSTA RICA (UTC -6)

How can we strengthen the connections between Migration and the Territory through understanding human mobility?



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Key Words

Migration, Housing, Cities, Urban Development, Territory, Informality, Decalogue, Principles, Experiences that Ground Principles in the Territory.

Objective

Through reflection regarding experiences applied at various scales and contexts, the session seeks to strengthen connections between migratory processes and housing production and sustainable cities, deepening in the principles of the "Decalogue to Humanize Mobility in Mexico", and how these can help guide efforts to face pressing challenges.

Context

At present, 3.5% of the world population are international migrants, the highest figure since there are records according to the United Nations (UN, 2019). Migrations constitute a phenomenon widely studied from different approaches and perspectives. However, as a recent work from ECLAC (2018) has suggested, little has been explored and reflected on its links with social protection, in general, and the provision of housing, in particular. In 2015, the New York Declaration and the development of the two Global Pacts have encouraged both nations and cities to focus efforts on the attention of the movement of people in various contexts. States recognize that cities are strongly impacted by migratory flows, and this is evident in how it is integrated into the global social reproduction system in areas that include: (i) the social, referring to configurations of social class systems between origin and destination as well as transnational communities; (ii) the demographic, referring to the complementarity of population regimes between countries of origin and destination in the global demographic reproduction system; and (iii) the economic, essentially with a labour character and with a great potential for remittances. The impacts at the city level are multiple looking at social, spatial and urban issues, so guaranteeing an adequate reception, management and integration of migrants is essential for the provision of more inclusive and equitable urban ecosystems, with capacity to provide opportunities to locals as migrants¹.

For a clearer understanding regarding the pressures that this phenomenon implies both socially and territorially, it is also important to differentiate unforced migration, which responds to the search for a potential for livelihood improvement, and that can be seen in the form of internal migration - such as rural-urban - and international migration; from forced migration, which contemplates Internally Displaced People (IDPs) due to armed conflicts, generalized violence situations, human rights violations, disasters, among others; and Refugees, those who are forced to leave their countries of nationality or habitual residency due to fears of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, belonging to a particular social group or political opinions (UNHCR, 2016).

In this context, Latin America and the Caribbean has been significantly affected by migratory flows in recent years, promoted as a result of economic factors, political crises, violence, disasters, among others. The migratory wave in the region has decanted mainly in Colombia, which welcomed around 1.4 million, followed by Peru with 860,900, Ecuador 330,400, Chile 288.200, Brazil 178,600 and Argentina 145,000, in figures as of September 2019². Likewise,

¹ Based on the report and conclusions of the work desk "Strengthen alliances to improve local migratory response in Latin America and the Caribbean", within the framework of the VI Mayor Forum in Quito, Ecuador, on January 22, 2020, that was part of the agenda of the XII Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) that developed from January 20 to 24.

² Based on the session "The impact of migration in Latin American cities, towards the X World Urban Forum".

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the policies implemented in recent years in receiving countries such as the United States have meant a considerable increase in the figures of returnees to Latin American countries, especially Mexico and Guatemala, also unleashing several crises in transit cities in Central America. Added to this, the social and cultural dynamics of various countries that are experiencing processes of changes both politically and socially, generates tensions between locals and migrants.

Such movements have had severe impacts especially in urban territories characterized by poverty and informality due to the pressure put on them directly and the lack of capacity to access basic services provision systems and the labour market. In this way, there is a need for innovative and inclusive policies and instruments of territorial management and urban planning, understanding that in its comprehensive dimensions these are constituted in the spatial expression of the economic, cultural and environmental policies of cities, with a great relevance for the development of inclusive and sustainable cities. Moreover, the urgent character to address these territorial issues has been exacerbated through the crisis unleashed by the Covid-19 pandemic, which has given visibility of the conditions of habitability that are observed in various contexts in the region, and which have been excelled in precarious conditions not only in terms of access to services, but also to the material and legal precariousness of the conditions in which people inhabit these spaces³.

It is then important to emphasize that these migratory flows also represent a great opportunity for receiving cities, due to the arrival of qualified human capital at different levels, with capacities to contribute to local labour markets both through access to jobs where they can share their experiences, as well as the improvement of skills in various trades. To this is added the integration of professionals who are in a position to contribute to the economic development of these cities.

In addition, the flow of remittances that circulates in several countries in the region currently means a great opportunity to capitalize on initiatives that may have multiplier effects on local economies through the collaboration of various sectors; as well as in the addressing of statistical information of these flows that can contribute to the design of informed public policies, with a great potential for financing the development of the housing sector and the construction of cities at its diverse scales, and with their respective benefits.

In this framework, the opportunities for these migration flows must be adequately capitalized through structured governance mechanisms that promote dialogue not only at the level of government and financial institutions, but also with a strong social component that can focus efforts on the effective integration of migrants and returnees to various territorial contexts safely, both in the medium and long-terms, accompanied by investment mechanisms at both housing and urban level that can respond to pressures that the migrant phenomenon accentuates in cities.

Through the understanding of the migratory context in Latin America and the Caribbean, and guided by the 10 principles of the "Decalogue to Humanize Mobility in Mexico", the session seeks to reflect on viable experiences and focused efforts on grounding these principles in the territory, in addition to understanding how pressing issues can be addressed specifically in each context.

³ See also "Migration in Guatemala: Urban Planning and Housing: Links with Migration and Local Development" in: <https://www.citiesalliance.org/newsroom/events/migration-guatemala-urban-planning-housing-and-local-development>

“Decalogue to Humanize Mobility in Mexico”⁴

DECALOGUE TO HUMANIZE MOBILITY IN MÉXICO

1 APPROACH

National regulatory frameworks and public migration policies must evolve from a bureaucratic and migration control approach to a human rights approach.

7 URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Urban development and specifically urban and territorial planning, and housing policies constitute cross-cutting issues for the short and medium term to attend to people in urban mobility.

2 PARTICIPATION

The integrated approach to migration public policies requires the participation of and dialogue with all stakeholders.

8 VULNERABILITY AND INVISIBILITY

Vulnerable groups such as women, children or the sick are seeing their situation of vulnerability aggravated when they are in a situation of human mobility.

3 THE ROLES OF THE CITIES

Local governments play a central role in proposing, governing and implementing integrated migration policies and can directly influence national policies and regulatory frameworks.

9 THE COVID EMERGENCY

The pandemic has generated a double emergency situation among people involved in migration. Strengthening short-term actions is required to adequately attend to the transit and hosting of migrants in the context of COVID-19.

4 ADEQUATE INFORMATION

A survey and systematization of specific, updated and territorialized information is required in order to substantiate public policies on migration.

10 COMMUNITIES FOR INTEGRATION

The welcome processes require that the communities where migrants arrive have adequate information and tools that support integration processes. It is necessary to work in those communities to promote inclusion and development, taking advantage of the opportunities that the arrival of migrants represents.

5 COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

A community of practice between cities, international organizations and civil society can be an opportunity to share successful experiences.

6 WEAVING NETWORKS

The challenges that cities are facing with respect to migratory flows require inter-institutional alliances, of a sectoral nature, between the different levels of government and with different actors.

#CommunityForIntegration

⁴ Available in <https://www.citiesalliance.org/newsroom/news/cities-alliance-news/mexico-decalogue-inclusion-migrants>

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In the context of this session, it is appropriate to refer to results born from other Housing Laboratory sessions (LAVs), in this case, of the LAVs series "Inclusion of Migrants in Mexico", which were carried out at the end of the year 2020 in the context of the challenges encountered by Mexican cities as a result of migratory processes and those found by migrants within the framework of the global pandemic⁵.

In this regard, the sessions have helped to demonstrate that local governments are those closest to the needs of migrants, and therefore a space of opportunities to advance with the development of more innovative and inclusive public policies for the attention to migrants in transit, returnees, host communities and people who face forced displacement.

In this way, the series has highlighted the opportunity to form a community of practices between cities that can provide an appropriate space to share experiences and accelerate the responses to the needs of migrants, therefore, the "Decalogue to Humanize Mobility in Mexico" very pragmatically illustrates the principles debated and agreed during the sessions as clues to ensure and humanize migration in Mexico, but which also denotes a relevant roadmap for the region as a guide to improve conditions in cities in front of the migratory phenomenon and to strengthen the links that this has with the territory.

For these reasons, the session will seek not only to look into the experiences and efforts in which each country in the region participating in it is realizing, but also on how these principles can guide the next steps to leverage these efforts.

Key Questions

1. What are the main challenges and opportunities presented by the migratory phenomenon in its links with the production of dignified and affordable housing and sustainable cities?
2. How can the principles contained within the "Decalogue to Humanize Mobility in Mexico" help leverage actions that very pragmatically connect migration processes with efforts in housing production and the development of sustainable cities?

⁵ Refer to previous footnote.

Agenda

Based on the guidelines established by the IV Latin American and Caribbean Housing Forum.

LIVE SESSION - Broadcasted through the SwapCard platform for those registered in the Forum

15.55h – 16.05h (10') Introduction to the Session

Introduction to the Temathic: Migration, Housing and Cities

By: Anaclaudia Rossbach, General Manager for Latin America and the Caribbean for the Cities Alliance and a Representative from the Inter-American Development Bank

16.05h – 16.20h (15') First Round of Interventions

Guided Debate: Brief review on experiences that link the pressing challenges of migration with housing and city actions in the territory.

By: Adriana Hurtado Tarazona, Researcher – CIDER, Universidad de los Andes

Participants:

1. Cynthia Loría – Programmatic Manager at AVINA Foundation.
2. Eduardo Aguirre – Former President of the College of Architects of Guatemala and representative of Cementos Progreso.
3. Betzy Revolorio – Representative of the National Commission for Housing of Guatemala (CONAVI).
4. Lucas Gómez García – Manager of Borders in the Presidency of the Republic of Colombia.
5. Melissa Vértiz Hernández – Working Group on Migratory Policy of Mexico (GTPM).

16.20h – 16.40h (20') Second Round of Interventions

Discussion Guided by Key Questions and Issues Arising from the Audience in the Virtual Room.

By: Adriana Hurtado Tarazona, Researcher – CIDER, Universidad de los Andes

Key Questions:

1. What are the main challenges and opportunities presented by the migratory phenomenon in its links with the production of dignified and affordable housing and sustainable cities?
2. How can the principles contained within the "Decalogue to Humanize Mobility in Mexico" help leverage actions that very pragmatically connect migration processes with efforts in housing production and the development of sustainable cities?

CONTINUING SESSION - NOT BROADCASTED - Available to those that are part of and wish to join the Zoom room

16.40h – 17.00h (20') Q&A and Networking

By: AVSI

References

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