

Webinar Follow-Up 1. Background Information

Climate Policy for All Equity and Growth in Light of the Climate Crisis

With Experts

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This webinar is part of
a partnership between
Cities Alliance and the
regional networks:

A discussion on research and policy making in Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC)

There is a current worldwide demand for more effective policy responses to the climate crisis. Increasingly, drastic climate disasters (e.g. heat waves, droughts, cyclones, flooding) put ever larger portions of the world's population at risk. Effective climate policy requires rapidly increasing monetary, political and civil investments and coordination at all levels of decision-making in order to even approach success. At the same time, the widening gap between rich and poor and the uneven distribution of the consequences of climate change on more vulnerable population groups

present a new set of social challenges that policy makers are equally pressed to address.

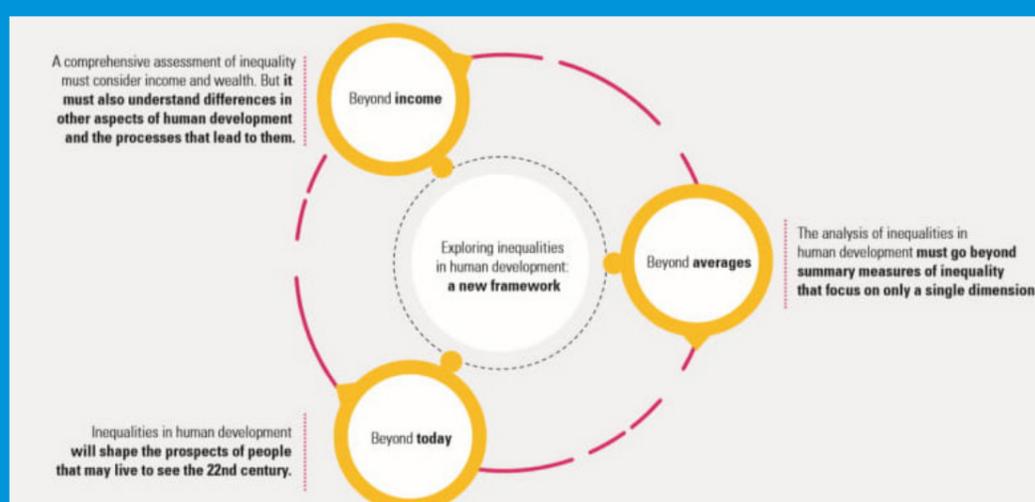
Local and national governments must implement policy responses and programs that take on the climate crisis while still enabling the promotion of economic growth as well as the fight against poverty and inequality. Hence, climate change, economic growth and socio-spatial inequality should and can not be perceived as independent of one another.

The webinar aims at triggering a broader discussion and invites the interested public to commonly reflect on several issues:

- How can the policy making that is required to address the climate crisis be made compatible with demands for increased economic justice and social equity?
- How can and does existing climate policy include or exclude those vulnerable populations most immediately at risk from natural disasters and climate crises and without the necessary means to respond?
- How does the current standard discourse on climate policy integrate the parallel goal of addressing social and economic inequalities in cities?

This webinar is one of a five-part series to evaluate, contextualize and operationalize existing research by Cities Alliance on equitable economic growth in cities of the Global South.

Picture: UNDP-United Nations Development Programme(2019), digital image, Human Development Report 2019, <http://www.hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2019.pdf>



Climate Policy for All Equity and Growth in Light of the Climate Crisis

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Participants and guests of the webinar includes experts on climate change policy and ongoing struggles for social justice with a special focus on the region of Latin America and the Caribbean (L.A.C). As to bring together regional research on public service provision, urban management strategies, local implementation of global agendas, equitable economic development practices and climate challenges facing specific population groups (e.g. women, inhabitants of informal settlements). Researchers and advocates will share their experience working with these topics in the region.

This webinar is taking place in the week following the COP25, the UN global climate summit, which was relocated from the original host city, Santiago de Chile, in part due to large-scale protests about economic and social inequality.

2.1 The topics that we focus on are split into two categories:

Discourse

- Inequality and Climate Policy: (where) does economic growth fit in?

Operationalization

- Field report: L.A.C - Financial, technological, logistical and material resources for equity-focused climate action and policy
- Governance for future? A critical review of national, regional and local governance models as suitable instruments for equity-oriented climate policy
- Strategies for integrating policy making and research to address climate change in Latin American context

2.2 Why L.A.C?:

In Latin America, around three quarters of the population already live in urban areas. The most vulnerable often live in informal settlements, which account for about one fourth of new urban development in cities in the region. Economic and social policies implemented in most Latin American countries in the past decades have reduced the capacity of cities to respond to disasters and to reduce deficits in infrastructure, housing and services. Expected urban growth in many cities in the region will increase social inequality, resource consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

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3.1 Economic growth models and practices in Latin America

Latin American national development models tend to promote and maintain economic growth by means of policies proposed by neoliberalism (Lopez and Vertiz 2015, 155). By closely integrating Latin American economies into the global economy, the neoliberal model has also made them more dependent on, and hence vulnerable to, global economic shifts; this in turn is also linked with increased prevalence of various forms of inequality (ibid, 156). The neoliberal model has restructured the political and economic system and also has created new interest groups, particularly in finance capital and resource-exporting companies (Gwynne and Kay 2000, 154). Extractivism has emerged due to the dominant global actors, driving the region's economies toward greater homogeneity, in particular by assigning Latin American economies to the role of natural resources exporter, regardless of local resistance and differences in national development programs (Lopez and Vertiz 2015, 155).

As injustice and discrimination persist across the global south, Santos proposes a narrowing of injustice and difference — not a removal of difference, but an acknowledgment, a respect, and equality of difference and valorization of diversity (Sousa Santos 2015, p.2). Escobar argues that the neo-liber-

al reforms sheltered the cultural and spatial constructs of the modern nation-state, with all their forms of violence against cultures and places.

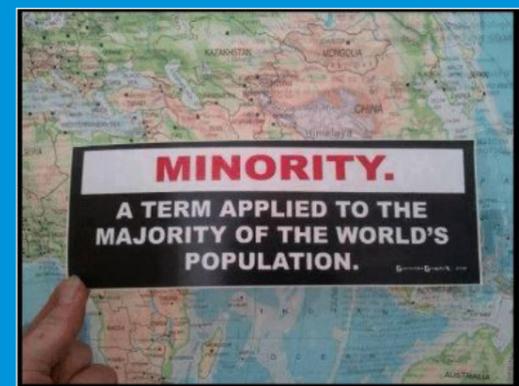
Example: Environmental Sacrifice Zones

The environmental justice movement in Latin America validates the grassroots struggles of residents of places which Steve Lerner refers to as “sacrifice zones”: low-income and racialized communities shouldering an unequal share of environmental harms (Scott and Smith 2017, 1). Places of acute climate deterioration e.g. urban heating points, environmental “sacrifice zones” are often home to vulnerable groups. At the same time, it is often these places of concentrated poverty that lack the resources to invest in infrastructure and public services that might effectively mitigate and adapt to the unfolding effects of climate change.

3.2 Alternate growth models for environmental and social justice

While significant strides have been taken in the direction of counteracting neoliberal dis-embedding, recent economic downturns have unveiled cracks and tensions in the attempt to achieve more profound economic and societal transformations for re-embedding the economy. For example, one of the most significant issues preventing a sustainable restructuring of Latin American economies is the depen-

dency most of these economies have on primary resource export, which makes the development of alternative (local-based) growth models difficult.



Picture: Borrero, A.G. (2016), digital image, Design for the future, innovation and culture sustainability report 2016

a. Majority World: Challenging the rhetoric of democracy

During 1990' Shahidul Alam advocated for a new expression “majority world” to represent the ‘Third World’ and challenged the West’s rhetoric of democracy to define the community in terms of what it has, rather than what it lacks (Alam 2008). In the context for Decolonization, Elizabeth (Dori) Tunstall proposes the methodology of design anthropology as an answer to how one might create decolonized processes of design and anthropological engagement (Tunstall 2013).

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b. Rights to natural resources

The economic expansion by the private and public sectors often neglects the circumstances of people and their needs with respect to the “right to the city”, including the right to nature, given its role in production and sociability (Cardoso et al. 2018, 196). For example, Brazil’s East Amazon, the restructuring process is responsible for the exclusion of the people born in the region who depend on the natural biophysical base for their livelihood, including indigenous peoples, caboclos (the offspring of indigenous and Portuguese peoples), peasants and traditional communities and pushed into urban areas (ibid, 178).

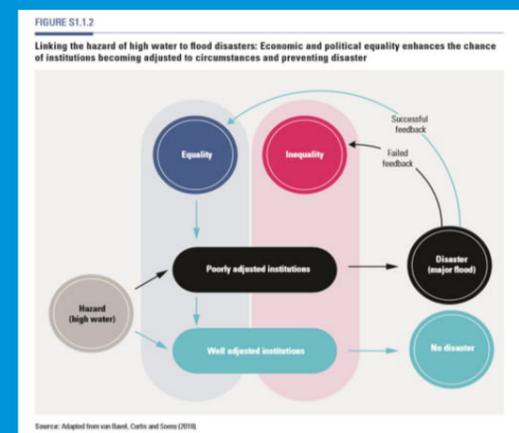
Such large-scale economic policies contradict current data on climate change and are responsible for the degradation of natural resources, with results such as increased deforestation, pollution, the siltation of rivers and the re-

duction of surface water volumes (ibid). Monte-Mor have suggested the concept of extended naturalization with urbanization, where urban merges into nature rather than the latter disappearing or geared towards a virtual version of urban-utopia (Monte-Mor 2018, 201). This discourse also highlights the theoretical notions of the “pluriverse” (Escobar 2017) and “otros saberes” to present the existing discrepancies between modern and traditional scientific learning and codes of embodied and lived knowledge.

3.3 Co-Production of urban spaces: robustness of space

How do the institutional arrangements affect the robustness of social-ecological systems (SESs)? By robustness, Ostrom refers to the maintenance of some desired system characteristics despite fluctuations in the behaviour of its component parts or its environment (Anderies et al 2004, 7). The

key elements of an SES system (defined as a combination of input resources, governance system, and associated infrastructure) are resources, resource users, public Co-Production of urban spaces: Robustness of Spaceinfrastructure providers, and public infrastructures.



Picture: UNDP-United Nations Development Programme(2019), digital image, Human Development Report 2019, <http://www.hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2019.pdf>

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Despite the increased urgency of the climate crisis, an integrated approach to recognizing the unequal burdens of the crisis for those most acutely affected by it is often relegated to the periphery of serious policy proposals. After the COP25 was relocated due to demonstrations in Santiago de Chile against unequal economic and social conditions, it was surprising that discussions of social inequality did not play a bigger role in the conversations and resolutions held at the conference by global players.

This webinar, hosted in the week after the conference, has three main purposes to continue pushing this dialogue:

1. to discuss the ways in which economic growth, equity and the climate crisis are inter-related in the Latin American and Caribbean context,
2. to explore examples of current regional activities (financial, technological, logistical) which represent equity-based ap-

proaches, programs, policies and research-policy interfaces in the context of the climate crisis, and

3. to reflect on how governance frameworks can be used as possible tools for multi-level climate policy in order to address the different inequalities and challenges facing the region.

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What contribution could independent research networks such as N-Aerus, Redeus_LAC and AURI make to the various organisations the speakers represent?

@Nicola

In our case, we would be happy to receive support from external researchers in the energy inclusion program. For example, on the issue of financial instruments for energy solutions for vulnerable households, as well as on the analysis of the population's capacities for the use of digital monitoring platforms. _Nicola

How do these challenges of heterogeneity and governance for implementing climate and social policies look like in other global regions? Another concrete local examples? @Rene, @Moderation

These challenges are indeed quite common. A number of additional illustrative examples can be found in the links on the following page. _Rene

How do the speakers see the challenges in the various regions world-wide? Similarities and differences... @Group

Of course there are differences, in Latin America in general the percentage of electrification is much higher than in other regions such as Africa or Asia. In this sense, the challenges are more on the side of the quality of energy services. For example, in the south of Chile, the main source of heating is wood, and the government has not been able in many years to guide an energy/climate policy to improve its production and distribution chain.

Regarding similarities, at least in our program, we see that today the most vulnerable families feel part of the problem and not part of the solution to global warming. Climate policy must focus on its social equity axis to integrate these population groups as "drivers for change". _Nicola

Does it seem like the programs suggested by Nicola and Marina would have a positive effect in his regions? @Rene

This cannot be categorically neither confirmed nor declined. Policy transfers across geographical regions require a review of the political economy, institutional environment and especially the readiness of the local resource

system to accept and absorb the suggested technologies and consumption patterns. In short: you need to study and try it. _Rene

Regarding the complexity of institutional change in Chile, for instance, taking the case of thermal insulation regulations, and the difficulties for Municipalities, as the case of Renca, in terms of funding and institutional capacity, in which level of governance do you think we can (or is more suitable) to introduce changes? Local or central? @Nicola

I would think that it is more appropriate to make changes at the local level. For example, that a municipality can introduce local codes to increase the thermal requirements of the buildings/housing in its area, which is not possible today. Obviously such a change must be accompanied by capacity building and awareness raising of the private sector, which finally invests in the territory. _Nicola

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Webinar Follow-Up
6. Additional
Information &
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Climate Policy for All

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Here you will find a list of sources and resources on the topic of growth, climate change and Latin America, as well as to further information on projects and collaborations discussed within the webinar.

Sources & Literature

Anderies, J.M., Janssen, M.A. and Ostrom, E., 2004. A framework to analyze the robustness of social-ecological systems from an institutional perspective. *Ecology and society*, 9(1).

de Sousa Santos, B., 2015. *Epistemologies of the South: Justice against epistemicide*. Routledge.

Escobar, A., 2010. Latin America at a crossroads: alternative modernizations, post-liberalism, or post-development?. *Cultural studies*, 24(1), pp.1-65.

Gwynne, R.N. and Kay, C., 2000. Views from the periphery: futures of neoliberalism in Latin America. *Third World Quarterly*, 21(1), pp.141-156.

López, E. and Vértiz, F., 2015. Extractivism, transnational capital, and subaltern struggles in Latin America. *Latin American Perspectives*, 42(5), pp.152-168.

Scott, D. and Smith, A., 2017. "Sacrifice Zones" in the Green Energy Economy: Toward an Environmental Justice Framework. *McGill Law Journal/Revue de droit de McGill*, 62(3), pp.861-898.

COP25

<https://unfccc.int/cop25>

Links from webinar

Cities Alliance - Implementing urban community resilience: <https://www.citiesalliance.org/sites/default/files/prepared-communities-implementing-urban-community-resilience-assessment.pdf>

https://www.citiesalliance.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/Cities%20Alliance_Adressing%20Informality%20in%20Cities_Policy%20Paper_2019%20FV_0.pdf

EBP Chile: <https://www.ebpchile.cl/es>

CEPAL (ECLAC): <https://www.cepal.org/en/work-areas/natural-resources>

UCCRN = Urban Climate Change Research Network: <http://uccrn.org/arc3-2/>

Links from Q&A

https://projects.citiesalliance.org/projects/documents/Implementing_the_Urban_Community_Resilience_Assessment_UCRA_in_Three_Communities_in_Surat_City.pdf

https://projects.citiesalliance.org/projects/documents/Implementing_the_Urban_Community_Resilience_Assessment_UCRA_in_Three_Communities_in_Surat_City.pdf

<https://www.citiesalliance.org/sites/default/files/prepared-communities-implementing-urban-community-resilience-assessment.pdf>

Project websites

<http://habitat-unit.de/en/research/cities-alliance/>

<https://www.citiesalliance.org/newsroom/news/cities-alliance-announces-grant-tu-berlin-equity-services-and>

Network websites

http://n-aerus.net/wp/?page_id=418
<https://www.urbanafrika.net/auri/>
<https://redeuslac.org/>