

PRINAU-SICA

**Regional Plan for the Implementation of the
NEW URBAN AGENDA
in Central America and the Dominican Republic**

This document was prepared by the Central American Secretariat for Social Integration (SISCA) with the support of the European Union (EU) through its EUROsociAL+ Programme for Social Cohesion in Latin America, under the leadership of the Central American Council for Housing and Human Settlements (CCVAH) and with guidance from UN-Habitat, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme.

SISCA TEAM

Anita Zetina, Secretary-General

Gloria Yanira Quiteño Jiménez, Executive Director

Gabriella Portillo Chacón, Technical Assistant, Knowledge Management

EUROsociAL+ TEAM

Juan Manuel Santomé, Programme Manager

Sonia González, Coordinator, Democratic Governance Policies Area Bárbara Gómez, Technical Officer in Governance

EUROsociAL+ EXPERTS

Cristina Fernández

Maite Rodríguez Blandón

UNITED NATIONS GUIDANCE

UN-HABITAT

Elkin Velásquez, Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean

Roi Chiti, Regional and Interagency Coordinator

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

We are grateful to the following for their help in reviewing the document:

Cities Alliance/Urban Housing Practitioners Hub (UHPH): Anaclaudia Rossbach, Regional Manager for Latin America and the Caribbean, and Patricia Rodríguez Gryciuk, Sustainable Urban Planning Specialist

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC): Diego Aulestia, Chief, and Fiona Littlejohn-Carrillo, Economic Affairs Officer, Human Settlements Unit, Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division

The work of the technical delegates from the institutions represented on the CCVAH and representatives of government, academia, civil society and the technical bodies of the Central American Integration System (SICA) is very much appreciated.

DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Ana G. Gómez Castillo, Head of Communications and Institutional Image, SISCA

SISCA, 2020. Avenida Roberto F. Chiari y Calle George W. Goethals, Edificio 711, Panama City, Panama.

www.sisca.int

First edition: May 2021

This publication is under copyright. It may be freely reproduced by any means for academic, promotional, advocacy or research purposes, with due acknowledgement of the source. Written permission from the copyright owners is required before reproducing the contents of this publication for any other purpose, for its use in other publications and for its translation or adaptation. This includes any form of storage or distribution on or by means of electronic systems. Applications for permission should be sent by email to info@sisca.int.

Contents

1. PRESENTATION	5
1.1. Regional Plan for the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda in Central America and the Dominican Republic (PRINAU-SICA).....	9
1.2. Context in the SICA region.....	10
2. SUBREGIONAL OBJECTIVES	13
2.1. Overall subregional objectives.....	13
2.2. Specific objectives.....	13
3. MAINSTREAMING OF CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES FOR THE SUBREGION OF CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	14
4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND STRATEGIC OUTCOMES.....	15
4.1. Principle 1: Inclusive, safe and resilient cities.....	15
4.2. Principle 2: Prosperous, sustainable and inclusive urban economies	15
4.3. Principle 3: Urban environmental sustainability and climate action	16
4.4. Principle 4: Effective and democratic governance	16
5. ACTION AREAS	17
5.1. Action Area 1: National urban policies.....	17
5.2. Action Area 2: Urban legal frameworks.....	23
5.3. Action Area 3: Urban and territorial planning and integrated urban design	31
5.4. Action Area 4: Urban economy and municipal finances	39
5.5. Action Area 5: Local implementation.....	44
5.6. Action Area 6: Monitoring, reporting and review mechanisms	51
6. ANNEX 1. Implementation matrix showing PRINAU-SICA action areas and objectives.....	55
7. ANNEX 2. Situation of Central America and the Dominican Republic in figures.....	56

Presentation

In 2016, the SICA member countries, represented by high-level national housing and habitat officials, took part in the Habitat III Conference, at which the New Urban Agenda (NUA)¹ was adopted. The NUA established a new global mandate for the development of cities and human settlements over the next 20 years, with the aim of making cities safer, more inclusive, resilient and sustainable and building a mutually reinforcing link between urbanisation and development. The NUA represents a paradigm shift in the way we understand cities, with a move towards more compact and connected urban centres and giving a prominent role to subnational governments and urban and territorial policy in achieving new global sustainable development and mainstreaming the gender perspective.

The process of implementing the NUA agenda has led to the formulation of national, regional and subregional plans. The CCVAH, as the SICA body responsible for regional policy on housing and human settlements, adopted a decision to prepare the Regional Plan for the Implementation of the NUA in Central America and the Dominican Republic (PRINAU-SICA), drawing on the Regional Action Plan for the Implementation of the NUA in Latin America and the Caribbean (RAP-ECLAC 2018). To facilitate its implementation and coordination with national and local urban agendas, PRINAU-SICA factors in subregional characteristics of Central America and the Dominican Republic, focusing on differential development conditions, the high level of climate risk, resilience-building opportunities and the subregional commitment to mainstreaming and implementing a gender-sensitive vision.

Within SICA, PRINAU-SICA, which contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), can be viewed as a support tool for achieving the goals set out in SICA's Comprehensive Regional Social Policy (PSIR-SICA). As such, it is aligned with the Recovery, Social Reconstruction and Resilience Plan for the SICA area (known as the 3Rs Plan). It also enhances and has links to different strategic SICA instruments that address issues such as risk management, environment and climate change, mobility and logistics, water and sanitation, gender equality and equity, social protection and economic inclusion and that contribute, through efforts in these specific areas of action, to the goal of building inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities.

1. PSIR-SICA 2020-2040
2. Intersectoral Regional Agenda on Social Protection and Productive Inclusion with Equity (ARIPSIP) 2018-2030
3. Central American Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management Policy (PCGIR)
4. Central American Regional Framework Policy on Mobility and Logistics (PMRML)
5. Regional Climate Change Strategy (ERCC)
6. Regional Agro-Environmental and Health Strategy (ERAS) 2009-2024
7. SICA Regional Gender Equality and Equity Policy (PRIEG-SICA)

¹ The Action Framework for Implementation of the NUA, developed by UN-Habitat and adopted in April 2017, sets out five main pillars of action: (i) national urban policies, (ii) urban legislation, rules and regulations, (iii) urban planning and design, (iv) urban economy and municipal finance and (v) local implementation. A very useful roadmap has also been established for the contextualised implementation of the NUA.

The CCVAH acknowledges the scope of its mandate for action on housing and human settlements and has developed PRINAU-SICA on this basis in order to provide Central America and the Dominican Republic with a regionally contextualised guiding framework instrument that supports national urban agendas and strategies, putting housing at the centre of the approach, as the linchpin in the design and construction of inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities. It invites other actors to become involved and contribute to implementing the plan in a coordinated manner, recognising that the pursued goal will require the cooperation of numerous actors from different levels of government and sectors of society, each with their own powers, responsibilities and perspectives.

The plan was developed with the invaluable support of EUROsociAL+ and guidance from UN-Habitat (the United Nations Human Settlements Programme) and was reviewed by the Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Division of ECLAC.

Anita Araceli Zetina
Secretary-General, SISCA

Irene Campos
Minister of Housing and Human Settlements, Costa Rica

President Pro Tempore of the CCVAH
from January to June 2021

MESSAGES FROM OUR PARTNERS

The decision taken by the Central American countries and the Dominican Republic to establish PRINAU-SICA is a major milestone in their efforts to build a new development model in the region embodying a new social contract and to drive a transformation towards a sustainable and resilient future.

The region has agreed to embark on a process of recovery and resilient social reconstruction to overcome the damaging impact of the pandemic. The adoption of PRINAU-SICA, which contextualises the NUA according to the region's priorities, is also crucial to efforts to consolidate the new model at the local and district level. It will facilitate the effective localisation of integrated policies and actions on both social protection and economic development, reducing vulnerability and creating value and opportunities for communities.

PRINAU-SICA has an important role to play in supporting a new generation of urban development and housing policies and programmes in the region's countries. Another key expectation is that it will be a catalyst for a new generation of coherent urban legislation, urban and territorial planning frameworks and effective financing mechanisms that will contribute to ensuring that no one and no territory is left behind.

The CCVAH and SISCA are the architects of this major achievement that we at UN-Habitat have had the honour to support. They must now lead efforts to monitor the process at the regional level and promote the implementation of PRINAU-SICA at country level, including the alignment with the global NUA monitoring and tracking system.

We firmly believe that an approach based on inclusion and stakeholder participation, combined with a regional vision and a strong commitment to multilateral cooperation, as shown by the SICA region in this process, is a prerequisite for success in tackling the challenges that lie ahead and implementing PRINAU-SICA effectively.

Roi Chiti

Regional and Interagency Coordinator, Un-Habitat

MESSAGES FROM OUR PARTNERS

EUROsociAL+ has supported the process undertaken to produce PRINAU-SICA. We congratulate the SICA region on developing this ground-breaking plan, which represents a paradigm shift in the way we understand cities. As catalysts for development, cities must be capable of formulating strategies that provide a comprehensive response to the challenges posed by the novel situation facing us as we usher in the post-COVID-19 recovery phase.

PRINAU-SICA recognises the responsibility of cities to lead a just, green and productive transition, ensuring that the different strands of this triple helix, in constant interaction, move in the same direction. PRINAU-SICA further promotes a shift from the concept of urban renewal to a broader concept of integrated urban development that is based on a multidimensional and multiscale approach to urban issues and assigns a prominent role to intermediate and local governments, urban policy and territorial development plans in efforts to bring about sustainable development.

We need new urban and governance models that result in healthier and more liveable cities and put people at the centre of decision-making. PRINAU-SICA sets out a regional strategy involving a set of differentiated government measures to achieve its goals, showing the way to reducing inequality and increasing social and spatial cohesion in cities. This crisis is a stark reminder that the success of our efforts to build social resilience hinges on us joining forces and working together. PRINAU-SICA has been developed in this spirit, with regional integration at its core.

PRINAU-SICA is closely linked to the 3Rs Plan developed by SISCA with the support of EUROsociAL+ and in partnership with specialised agencies and programmes of the United Nations (UN), namely the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UN-Habitat. The 3Rs Plan is a response to PRINAU-SICA. As such, these two instruments are interlinked, providing the Central American region with a comprehensive, practicable and very powerful strategy and roadmap based on consensus and co-creation. I hope that they will give Central America the momentum it needs to succeed.

Sonia González Fuentes

Coordinator, Democratic Governance Policies Area, EUROsociAL+

1.1. Regional Plan for the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda in Central America and the Dominican Republic (PRINAU-SICA)

Aligned with RAP-ECLAC 2018,² PRINAU-SICA seeks to incorporate the subregion's specific needs and priorities into the NUA. PRINAU-SICA therefore promotes sustainable urban development and establishes socio-spatial conditions that help to build more resilient, equitable and environmentally sustainable societies, driving a shift towards a new urban paradigm that recognises the city as a public good and inclusive urban and territorial planning as the means to achieve this. It establishes the priorities for Central America and the Dominican Republic, based on the framework documents listed above and consistent with everything set out in them. These priorities focus on three main aspects:

- strengthening and refocusing urban and territorial planning and development under the paradigm shift promoted by the NUA, with a view to building inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements;
- reducing socio-spatial inequalities as a paradigm and necessary contribution to achieving inclusive urban prosperity, with special attention to groups of men and women and to regions in vulnerable situations, in all their diversity, and in particular to women, indigenous peoples and those of African descent;
- stepping up mitigation and adaptation measures to address the effects of climate change in cities and regions, incorporating a risk management and resilience-building approach and developing and promoting capacities for mainstreaming gender equality and equity principles into adaptation measures, with a view to ensuring that the specific and differentiated needs of women and groups in particularly vulnerable situations, owing to age, socio-economic status or ethnicity, are addressed.

PRINAU-SICA is coordinated with and enhanced by the objectives and implementation of the 3Rs Plan, which was designed to act as a common regional roadmap with the goal of driving socio-economic revitalisation, increasing the resilience of men and women and helping to reduce social and gender inequalities in the region that have been aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Both PRINAU-SICA and the 3Rs Plan are intended to help achieve the goals and objectives of the PSIR-SICA, the framework instrument that guides PSIR-SICA.

The recent health emergency and the ensuing socio-economic crisis have highlighted the importance of regional integration in achieving a more sustainable and inclusive development model benefiting men and women and prompted efforts to plan a reconstruction process aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America.

This involves coordinating action to promote the social inclusion of people in vulnerable situations by boosting forms of economic growth that meet environmental sustainability criteria.

² RAP-ECLAC was adopted by the region's countries at the Forum of Ministers and High-Level Authorities on Housing and Urban Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (MINURVI) and prepared with the support of ECLAC and UN-Habitat. It seeks to leverage the key role of cities as drivers of sustainable development, contextualising the five characteristic features of urbanisation in the highly urbanised region of Latin America and the Caribbean and facilitating processes for knowledge transfer and sharing among the region's countries, taking advantage of the links between MINURVI member countries and existing mechanisms for collaboration.

PRINAU-SICA was drafted during the pandemic. This shaped its development and vision, and meant that it received input from and was part of other processes undertaken in relation to the social dimension of regional integration to aid social recovery and build community resilience, helping the region's countries to prepare for impacts such as those caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and for any recurrence of natural hazards that affect men and women in different ways.

More specifically, PRINAU-SICA was developed in tandem with the 3Rs Plan for Central America and the Dominican Republic, which consists of a series of projects focusing on three interrelated priority areas of action: Action Area 1 – social protection; Action Area 2 – employability and employment; and Action Area 3 – housing and human settlements, with a focus on informal settlements. Each project mainstreams a gender perspective and analysis, taking into account women's human rights and the principle of equity for equality between men and women in the overall approach and in all proposed actions.

As a result, the preparation of projects under Action Area 3 of the 3Rs Plan – and related projects for employment promotion and social protection – can also be regarded as a mechanism for implementing PRINAU-SICA as the objectives of the two plans are the same.

PRINAU-SICA was developed with the explicit aim of promoting well-planned cities and regions that, together with social protection mechanisms and job creation and employability schemes for men and women, make a decisive contribution to building inclusive and resilient communities that are able to cope with extreme situations, such as those recently experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and Hurricanes Eta and Iota.

1.2. Context in the SICA region

Rapid, unplanned urbanisation

Rapid urbanisation, driven by the growing number of people living in cities³ and increasing urban sprawl, with unplanned, low-density development and the haphazard and poorly controlled expansion of urban centres and conurbations,⁴ has led to serious problems in the Central American region and the Dominican Republic, including a significant increase in the number of informal settlements and people at risk. The impact of these developments is further exacerbated by vulnerability to extreme weather events, which are occurring with increasing frequency as a result of climate change. It is important to stress that gender inequality is closely linked to the risks and vulnerabilities associated with climate change.

This type of rapid, unplanned and spatially dispersed urbanisation exerts great pressure on central and municipal government finances, on basic urban infrastructure and public services and on surrounding rural areas, most of which provide the high levels of agricultural productivity and ecosystem services necessary to maintain food security in human settlements. Planning for urban growth with a focus on more compact and better connected cities and smart expansion that takes up less land and puts less pressure on natural resources would improve sustainable resource

³ Central America is the region with the second-fastest rate of urbanisation worldwide, surpassed only by Africa. The proportion of the region's population living in urban areas is 59%, and this figure is as high as 75% in some countries, such as Costa Rica.

⁴ According to Global Human Settlement Layer (GHSL) data, the total built-up area in the region has tripled in the last 40 years, while population growth remained stable up to 2000, when the urbanised area grew at a faster pace than the population.

mobilisation and help reduce risks associated with vulnerability to weather- and climate-related events and health crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which has highlighted the pressing need to ensure access to essential basic services, including a safe water supply to facilitate compliance with biosafety measures such as handwashing, particularly for people in vulnerable situations, including women, indigenous people and people of African descent.

Spatial rebalancing for increasingly urban societies

There is no question that cities represent a major challenge in the times ahead. While many of the problems the region will face stem from the complex nature of cities, there are also opportunities to improve inclusion and narrow the significantly widening socio-spatial gaps and inequalities between men and women in terms of their enjoyment and exercise of human rights and access to resources, opportunities and livelihoods.

A look at urban development patterns shows that there are 167 urban agglomerations with more than 15,000 inhabitants, of which 72 straddle three or more municipalities. This poses a challenge for interinstitutional management and means that supramunicipal coordination structures are of paramount importance. However, spatial structures of this kind, such as metropolitan areas, which contain over two thirds of the urban population in Honduras and Costa Rica and more than half in Nicaragua, lack the clear planning and management interventions required to ensure their proper development. Few countries in the region have established systems for implementing supramunicipal projects, and those that do lack the necessary management and financing mechanisms or have achieved only very limited impact and often fail to adopt an inclusive approach that would allow social inequalities to be addressed.

In spite of the fact that big cities are home to a third of the urban population, intermediate cities and towns are also experiencing significant growth, causing them to replicate the urban sprawl patterns seen in the region's main cities. A comprehensive and equitable approach therefore needs to be developed as a matter of priority.

In this context, the goal should be to establish a more robust system of cities that links together different hubs based on the functional complementarity of their urban centres and the roles and functions they can play in domestic and regional markets and export chains. In addition to serving as markets and service and storage centres, intermediate cities in particular can develop industries related to food, textile, mining, culture and innovation. They can also establish linkages with rural production areas, leading to equitable job creation and improvements in the standard of living for women and men, regardless of their social background.

In conclusion, the reality facing the region is one of increasingly urban societies which are heavily reliant on national economic strategies with sector-focused policies. Although increasing urbanisation represents a major challenge, it also presents social, economic and environmental opportunities, with the prospect of creating value chains that help not only to improve productivity in urban settings but also to create interlinkages with opportunities in other areas. This leads to a rebalancing that improves everyone's standard of living and lessens the need for internal and international migration from rural to urban areas.

Reducing poverty, inequality and socio-spatial disadvantage

New patterns of production, distribution and consumption, along with structural challenges in urban economies, hinder economic inclusion and universal access to the benefits of urban development. Particularly hard hit are women who live and work informally (over 60% of all working women according to ILO figures for the region for 2018).

The opportunities offered by well-planned sustainable urban development can only be realised if efforts are focused on reducing poverty, inequity and socio-spatial inequalities, the most obvious physical manifestation of which are informal settlements. According to World Bank (WB) estimates for 2018, these are home to 22.5% of the region's urban population. Most slum areas lack basic infrastructure and services, safe and good-quality public spaces, security of tenure and adequate housing.

As the data collected by SICA reveal, great urban policy efforts have been made to reduce the number of people living in informal settlements over the past 15 years. Nevertheless, the figures remain very high, which is why it is crucial to prioritise these areas through inclusive urban planning and comprehensive neighbourhood improvement programmes. These should reinforce and consolidate the effects of policies and measures designed to offer greater social protection and increase employment while also focusing on climate resilience in order to reduce disaster risks in informal settlements.

There have been important advances in recognising the city as a public good, although institutional shortcomings persist in terms of managing sustainable urban development and realising the right to the city⁵ (Cities for All). These deficits need to be addressed through integrated, multi-sector, multi-level efforts.

Climate change and risk management

Problems caused by conditions in the region's cities and the proliferation of informal settlements and slums are exacerbated by the effects of climate change, which is drastically increasing the vulnerability of a growing number of people to extreme weather events, now occurring with increasing frequency and with disparate socio-spatial impacts. Furthermore, there is a strong link between gender inequality and the risks and vulnerabilities associated with climate change. The historical disadvantages faced by women in terms of access to resources and constraints on their exercise of leadership as a right prevent them from participating in and influencing decision-making. This puts them and their communities in a highly vulnerable position in the face of climate change. It is estimated that three out of ten homes in the region are at risk for flooding, landslides or earthquake damage, and this proportion is rising due to unplanned urban and territorial development that rarely includes a risk management approach. Far from improving, this situation continues to worsen, with high house prices due to the failings of a poorly regulated property market forcing an increasing proportion of the urban population to look for locations where prices are more affordable.

⁵ The term 'right to the city' is used throughout this document with the meaning defined in the NUA. It is the ideal of creating cities for all, referring to the equal use and enjoyment of cities by all. It seeks to promote inclusivity and ensure that all inhabitants of present and future generations, without discrimination of any kind, are able to enjoy and inhabit just, safe, healthy, accessible, affordable, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements, with a view to fostering prosperity and quality of life for all. This does not mean that all countries must enshrine the right to the city in their legislation, political declarations and charters

This complex scenario highlights the need for profound changes in the planning, management and financing of urban development so that priority is given to urban areas and slums with high levels of vulnerability. This includes strategies and actions designed to promote urban and community resilience-building and approach comprehensive risk management not just in terms of emergency response,⁶ but also from a prevention, mitigation and equity perspective that includes the mainstreaming of a gender perspective and analysis.

2. SUBREGIONAL OBJECTIVES

2.1. Overall subregional objectives

- Strengthen and refocus urban and territorial planning and development under the paradigm shift promoted by the NUA, with a view to building inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements.
- Reduce socio-spatial inequalities as a social imperative and necessary contribution to achieving inclusive urban prosperity, with special attention to groups of people, in their diversity, who live in particularly vulnerable areas and to some groups of women, indigenous peoples and people of African descent.
- Step up mitigation and adaptation policies and measures to address the effects of climate change in cities and regions, incorporating a risk management approach for climate-resilient, inclusive development and the principle of equity for equality among all people.

2.2. Specific objectives

- Reduce the deficit in adequate housing.
- Promote comprehensive neighbourhood improvement, with special attention to informal settlements.
- Strengthen territorial development planning by mainstreaming gender and urban-rural linkages to increase sustainable local development and spatial cohesion.
- Promote productive, healthy cities with improved quality of life.
- Promote cities that are safe (in all ways) and climate-resilient to reduce multi-dimensional vulnerabilities and risks.
- Promote national urban policies and strategies that strengthen the system of cities as an engine of sustainable and inclusive development.
- Improve urban governance and multi-level coordination, including capacity development.

6. According to the “Central America Urbanization Study”, making cities more resilient is key to reducing the long-term impact of disasters on the population and economies of this region (World Bank, 2018).

3. MAINSTREAMING OF CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES FOR THE SUBREGION OF CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

- Comprehensive approach. Urban and territorial development is a complex, multi-dimensional process. It should include initiatives that facilitate coordination, cooperation and convergence between sectors, functional areas and levels of government and that give prominence to actions where the participation of different civil society organisations and synergies between them add value to the efforts undertaken.
- Integrated approach to environmental sustainability. Implementing an integrated approach to urban and territorial planning consists not only of incorporating environmental considerations into plans and projects, but also of balancing social development, sustained and inclusive economic growth and the sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems.⁷
- Comprehensive risk management approach and community resilience-building. Regional vulnerability to natural hazards, such as droughts, hurricanes, floods and landslides, is increasing as a result of climate change, highlighting the importance of developing policies and measures that address the need to create resilient and inclusive areas and communities.
- Efforts to promote and enforce women's human rights, including measures established in the legal frameworks adopted by the region's countries to empower women of all ages in all areas of development, must be implemented, monitored and evaluated.
- Rights-based approach and promotion of universally accessible and democratically governed common goods.
- The 'caring cities' approach, particularly in relation to needs emerging as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

⁷ United Nations Environment Programme, <https://www.unep.org/regions/latin-america-and-caribbean/regional-initiatives/strengthening-environmental-governance-1>

4. GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

PRINAU-SICA is based on the guiding principles set out in the NUA, adapted to reflect the specific circumstances of the Central American region, with the addition of other priority elements, specifically appropriate governance mechanisms for the objectives, as set out in RAP-ECLAC, the central role of risk management in minimising the effects of climate change, ensuring the effective mainstreaming of the principle of equity for equality between men and women, and the implementation of women's human rights.

4.1. Principle 1: Inclusive, safe and resilient cities

Cities and human settlements that are free of poverty and inequality in all their forms and dimensions, that are free of socio-spatial segregation or exclusion and that guarantee equal rights and opportunities and safe and inclusive access to the city and its economic fabric, ensuring that no one is left behind. A focus on the 'right to the city' and safety as important elements for empowering women to play a leading role in cities.

Subregional principles for Central America and the Dominican Republic: Emphasis on meeting the needs of inhabitants, eradicating inequalities resulting from the discrimination suffered by women or for reasons of ethnicity, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socio-economic status or for any other reason and ensuring that the city, as a macro-level public good, and land, as a scarce and non-renewable resource, fulfil their social and ecological functions and contribute to sustainable and inclusive development.

4.2. Principle 2: Prosperous, sustainable and inclusive urban economies

Well-managed and economically viable urbanisation processes that maximise resource and asset efficiency and the creation of opportunities, ensuring equitable access for women and men; more productive cities and regions; urban economies that make a positive contribution to national development.

Subregional priorities for Central America and the Dominican Republic: Effective regulation of land, ensuring equitable access to opportunities and resources, creating and/or strengthening urban financing mechanisms that provide for the fair distribution of benefits and charges and are incorporated into and contribute to the system of cities, ensuring territorial integration; strengthening urban-rural linkages to promote balanced forms of urban and territorial development that promote the creation of sustainable value chains, contribute to improving urban food systems in human settlements, particularly informal ones, and enhance spatial cohesion. To some extent, a prosperous, sustainable and inclusive urban economy can also help to stem migration from Central America's Northern Triangle countries, namely Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador.

4.3. Principle 3: Urban environmental sustainability and climate action

Planning processes, urban and territorial development patterns and awareness-raising measures that ensure the protection and efficient and sustainable use of natural resources and ecosystems and their services, promoting risk prevention, reduction and management approaches and increasing resilience to the effects of climate change and natural disasters. así como la inclusión.

Subregional priorities for Central America and the Dominican Republic: Special emphasis on the (i) regulation of land use, (ii) controls on urban form and (iii) the protection of and impacts on natural ecosystems, ensuring a comprehensive approach to planning with a focus on the efficient use of land as a resource, based on a study of its characteristics to determine the need for conservation or the potential for sustainable use, taking into account the interdependence of urban and rural areas and promoting spatial balance.

Given the region's specific circumstances, priorities should include improving housing conditions and increasing resilience to extreme weather events, which are occurring more frequently due to climate change, with the aim of mitigating risk in hazard-prone areas and relocating people when mitigation is not possible. Planning should include programmes and regulations that discourage people from settling in environmentally protected or risk-prone areas, and environmental compensation measures should be adopted for areas that consume more raw materials and resources than rural and primary production areas.

4.4. Principle 4: Effective and democratic governance

Inclusive and transparent decision-making processes and public policies that address the challenges faced by cities and regions and guarantee the realisation of the 'right to the city' for all.

Subregional priorities for Central America and the Dominican Republic: It is important to determine what needs and issues have to be addressed in order to reduce existing structural deficits in the subregion. Central to this will be the creation of mechanisms for equitable participation and interinstitutional, multi-sector and multi-level coordination structures. The resulting inclusive processes can then focus on developing informed, evidence-based policies, plans and programmes and corresponding implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation systems.

Efforts will be needed to promote the inclusion of women in decision-making on risk prevention and management, territorial planning and access to climate finance, including green and alternative financing mechanisms to support the actions of civil society groups aimed at implementing alternative energy solutions, circular economy projects and initiatives to protect city ecosystems.

5. ACTION AREAS

5.1. Action Area 1: National urban policies

Regional objective: Design and implement consensus-based, evidence-based and results-based national urban and territorial policies that strengthen multi-sector, interinstitutional and multi-level coordination.

Specific subregional objectives

- Promote mechanisms for interinstitutional, multi-level and multi-sector coordination in urban and territorial planning and management, housing and environment (with an ecosystem vision).
- Strengthen the institutional framework required to achieve integrated, planned, decentralised and participatory urban policy development, implementation and review processes that are coordinated with the social, environmental and economic development strategies and plans of the nations of Central America and the Dominican Republic.
- Create or strengthen the implementation of instruments for urban planning, territorial development and land-use management, coordinating and strengthening risk management and urban resilience measures, including resilience to climate change.
- Establish a more robust 'system of cities' that links together different hubs based on the functional complementarity of urban centres and according to the roles and functions they can play in spatial, socio-economic and environmental dynamics at the country and regional level.
- Strengthen territorial governance by defining government organisational models (decentralisation, deconcentration or centralisation), with a view to delivering services locally and/or complementing those already existing in central areas and development hubs.
- Promote national policies that coordinate and link housing policies and urban and territorial planning policies, with a focus on reducing inequalities and improving land-use efficiency, environmental sustainability, risk management, climate action and resilience.
- Promote inclusive, evidence-based policies and programmes that seek to:
 - contribute to a reduction in informal settlements and slums, neighbourhood improvement and the delivery of basic services, prioritising settlements in areas where risk mitigation is not possible;
 - reduce the qualitative and quantitative housing deficit, based on the seven pillars of the concept of adequate housing.
- Strengthen supramunicipal governance capacities and frameworks, including associations of municipalities.
- Promote the realisation and enforcement of women's human rights at all stages of public policy development and implementation.
- Narrow the digital divide and other structural inequalities.

Eje 1: Políticas nacionales urbanas



Action Area 1: National urban policies	
Aims	Priority areas of action
1.1. Generate evidence-based input with accurate data disaggregated by geographic area, sex and other relevant variables and including georeferencing, wherever possible, to inform urban and territorial decision-making.	1.1.1. Develop capacities and tools to collect, process and analyse current and past data in disaggregated form and make reliable medium- and long-term projections, with geographic disaggregation at all levels and including improved information systems for informal settlements and slums.
	1.1.2. Promote the establishment of transparent, updated, project-based information systems that include data on the implementation of women's human rights (in response to defined objectives and relevant to specific actions).
	1.1.3. Create open access information systems so that the data collected is available to the general public and establish procedures for regular reporting of results.
1.2. Strengthen the institutional and legal framework for urban policies and the provision of adequate housing, incorporating a gender perspective and sustainable urban development as a paradigm and taking into account needs arising in connection with climate change, which has significantly increased vulnerability in the region.	1.2.1. Strengthen political and institutional will at all levels of government with responsibility for promoting sustainable urban development, reducing the housing deficit in quantitative and qualitative terms in urban and rural areas and ensuring access to basic services, particularly water, sanitation and public spaces.
	1.2.2. Create or strengthen relevant institutions and provide them with the technical and policy-making capacities required for the development and oversight of national urban policies, with special attention to women's human rights.
	1.2.3. Develop tools for interinstitutional coordination with a multi-sector, multi-scale, inclusive and participatory approach and a methodological design that includes the implementation and enforcement of women's human rights.
	1.2.4. Develop tools for supramunicipal coordination that promote the management and financing of programmes and projects of common interest with a regional impact and that regulate and plan for urban expansion and conurbation development, with sustainable development as a paradigm of inclusive development.

Aims	Priority areas of action
	<p>1.2.5. Strengthen technical and institutional capacities for the development and evaluation of urban and territorial policies, with special attention to women's human rights at all levels, and of projects that seek to explicitly define functions, responsibilities and resources.</p>
<p>1.3. Develop national urban legal frameworks and regulations.</p>	<p>1.3.1. Create binding legal frameworks that are inclusive, effective, transparent and flexible, promote women's human rights, are aligned with urban policy goals and ensure the participation of communities and other social stakeholders in decision-making.</p> <p>1.3.2. Promote inclusion in legal frameworks and regulations of considerations relating to responsibility for risks associated with extreme weather events, which have intensified as a result of climate change, and for the negative externalities of urbanisation processes.</p> <p>1.3.3. Develop mechanisms to measure progress in achieving the goals of urban policies, establishing them in law to guarantee the continuous review and evaluation of such policies, in accordance with the principle of transparency, current regional frameworks and women's human rights.</p> <p>1.3.4. Create mechanisms to disseminate information on urban and territorial planning processes and their outcomes in order to keep both inhabitants and civil society organisations informed about urban legal frameworks.</p>
<p>1.4. Prioritise actions to achieve sustainable urban development based on local needs and the situated knowledge of communities and ensuring the implementation of the human rights of women and other groups and individuals in vulnerable situations.</p>	<p>1.4.1. Establish a long-term national action framework that allows for adaptation and adjustment to local conditions and changing needs in the medium term, based on an assessment conducted according to the principle of equity for equality between men and women, with equitable public participation and aligned with global agendas and international agreements for sustainable development.</p> <p>1.4.2. Strengthen the technical and financial capacities of local and subnational governments, providing them with tools to enable them to establish and implement local, national and global agendas with equitable public participation and leadership.</p>

Aims	Priority areas of action
	<p>1.4.3. Establish roadmaps outlining the steps to be taken to promote, strengthen and enforce women's human rights and setting explicit goals for specific issues, but with an overarching vision of the region's main urban and territorial challenges, including the housing deficit, land-use management, transport and mobility and the provision of infrastructure, as set out in PMRML, adopted by the Presidents in 2017, and its Regional Master Plan for 2035, currently under development, instruments for the development of connectivity projects based on a sustainable urban logistics approach, public spaces, power supply, information and communication technology (ICT), water, sanitation and waste management, health and education facilities, support for local economic development, job creation and employability measures, environmental sustainability, quality green spaces, all forms of safety and security (urban, food, etc), food sovereignty and the preservation of natural and cultural heritage, taking into account the specific needs of women in all these areas.</p> <p>1.4.4. Promote actions to strengthen transformational leadership, aimed particularly at women to help them exercise their 'right to the city' (Cities for All).</p>
<p>1.5. Strengthen and consolidate multi-sector and multi-level coordination for more agile territorial planning and urban development processes based on sustainability criteria.</p>	<p>1.5.1. Define functions, responsibilities and the resources allocated at all levels.</p> <p>1.5.2. Promote the alignment and coordination of urban and territorial planning processes and sectoral development plans and policies to strengthen territorial management at all levels.</p> <p>1.5.3. Strengthen jurisdictional coordination and consistency in the management, provision and maintenance of basic services, physical infrastructure and social amenities</p> <p>1.5.4. Develop interinstitutional and intersectoral coordination tools and mechanisms that promote partnerships and strategies for cooperation between stakeholders in relation to the design, implementation and financing of policies on infrastructure, services and amenities and to urban improvement and development processes, with special attention to women's human rights.</p>
<p>1.6 Reducir las brechas socioespaciales, con especial incidencia en los asentamientos informales</p>	<p>1.6.1. Promote urban and territorial planning and management instruments for social and environmental justice and territorial rebalancing, based on democratic, participatory and multilevel structures, which establish priorities and incorporate mechanisms to reduce and prevent territorial inequalities in all their dimensions,</p>

Aims	Priority areas of action
	<p>coordinating with sectoral policies (housing, land, mobility and transport, infrastructure, public space, urban parks, energy, water, sanitation, ICTs, waste, socio-economic development, environmental sustainability, health, education, security in all its forms and food sovereignty).</p> <p>1.6.2. Promote policies, plans and programmes that reduce and prevent spatial inequality in all its dimensions, guaranteeing the ‘right to the city’ (Cities for All) and equitable access to land, and that combat urban and territorial socio-spatial segregation.</p> <p>1.6.3. Promote policies, plans and programmes that reduce informal settlements and slums, especially those located in areas where risks cannot be mitigated, establishing plans for the safety of all, providing equitable and accessible public spaces and taking gender considerations into account in the provision of amenities.</p> <p>1.6.4. Promote policies, plans and programmes with a gender perspective that leverage the potential offered by the spatial structure, the system of cities and urban-rural linkages.</p> <p>1.6.5. Promote policies, plans and programmes that foster the development of compact cities and transit-oriented development (TOD) projects and that take into account and include nature-based solutions, with special attention to women’s human rights.</p> <p>1.6.6. Promote policies, plans and programmes with a gender perspective that ensure connectivity within cities, between rural and urban areas and between cities.</p>
<p>1.7. Strengthen democratic governance based on recognition of the leading role communities can play in achieving sustainable, resilient and inclusive urban development that benefits men and women.</p>	<p>1.7.1. Develop inclusive projects with a gender perspective and incorporating a shared vision for sustainable urban development that addresses the socio-economic and environmental context.</p> <p>1.7.2. Promote inclusive and transparent decision-making and policy-making processes through measures aimed at ensuring equal and accessible public participation, with special emphasis on people in more vulnerable situations, such as certain groups of women in their diversity, indigenous peoples and people of African descent.</p>
	<p>1.7.3. Develop platforms that facilitate dialogue and multi-stakeholder participation, promoting the use of ICT and taking into account the difficulties posed by the digital divide, which affects women disproportionately.</p>

Aims	Priority areas of action
	1.7.4. Promote efforts to develop the capacities of urban actors and raise their awareness of their roles, responsibilities and rights in different processes.
1.8. Develop monitoring, reporting, review and accountability mechanisms that generate and report data disaggregated by sex and other prioritised indicators.	1.8.1. Strengthen technical capacities and introduce monitoring, tracking, data updating and reporting instruments, with special attention to women's human rights, with defined functions and responsibilities for monitoring, tracking, data updating and reporting at all levels.
	1.8.2. Develop or improve an autonomous and independent system for monitoring, tracking, data updating and reporting at all levels that periodically provides results disaggregated by sex in an easily understandable form, with special attention to women's human rights.
	1.8.3. Create mechanisms for knowledge transfer and exchange between countries and between cities and regions.

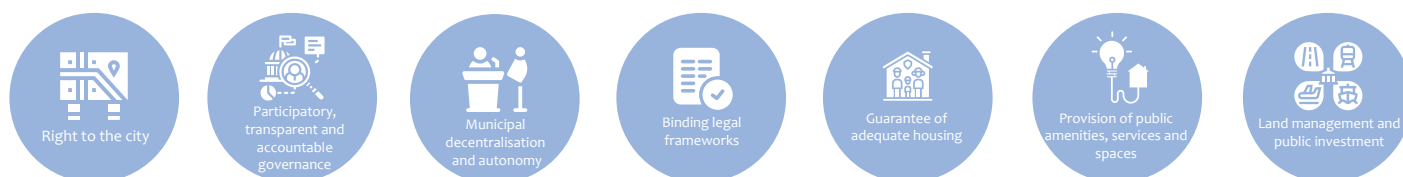
5.2. Action Area 2: Urban legal frameworks

Regional objective: Promote the creation of robust and transparent urban legal frameworks with effective mechanisms and instruments to enforce urban legislation, regulations and policies, including mechanisms for meaningful public participation and monitoring and reporting systems.

Subregional components to be included

- Create interinstitutional and intersectoral coordination mechanisms that ensure the effectiveness and autonomy of subnational entities and support the effective implementation of decentralisation processes.
- Promote legal and institutional frameworks to recover increases in value resulting from the investment of public resources in urban development by means of value capture instruments. This includes strengthening capacities and enabling local governments to use and manage such instruments as a means of generating revenue for economic development and infrastructure.
- Create binding legal frameworks that:
 - guide and coordinate municipal planning, with special attention to women's human rights and taking into account risks exacerbated by climate change;
 - ensure the availability of land that is affordable, well-located, part of a spatially integrated development environment, serviced, safe, accessible, inclusive and free from climate change risks, with a view to reducing the qualitative and quantitative housing deficit;
 - promote neighbourhood improvement and the provision of public services and infrastructure, with special attention to women's human rights;
 - ensure genuinely inclusive and equitable community participation in urban and territorial management processes;
 - promote land preservation for the conservation of natural assets and ecosystems or where located in areas at risk from extreme weather events;
 - promote the protection and conservation of historical and cultural heritage to safeguard it from situations of risk and foster its sustainable use under productivity and urban resilience policies. Some traditional and historic town and city centres have become run down, turning into another manifestation of informal settlements within cities.

Action Area 2: Urban legal frameworks



ACTION AREA 2 – URBAN LEGAL FRAMEWORKS	
Aims	Priority areas of action
2.1. Develop or strengthen the legal framework, including measures aimed at promoting women's human rights, to guarantee the 'right to the city' (Cities for All), establishing a clear definition with binding legal effect and effectively mainstreaming it into the planning system.	2.1.1. Define the 'right to the city', adopt instruments incorporating this definition, establish it as a fundamental right and create binding regulatory instruments and mechanisms that recognise, develop and guarantee the principles of the 'right to the city' throughout urban and territorial planning and management and urban development, with special attention to women's human rights.
	2.1.2. Develop an institutional framework that guarantees and enforces the 'right to the city', with special attention to women's human rights.
	2.1.3. Promote processes that build awareness and provide training in relation to urban legal frameworks and the 'right to the city' for both inhabitants and social organisations.
	2.1.4. Create multi-sector and multi-level partnerships to improve coordination.
2.2. Develop or strengthen legal frameworks that ensure participatory, transparent and accountable governance through binding instruments and mechanisms for public participation in all policy-making and planning stages, and that address issues relating to transparency and to oversight of compliance with the legislation concerning urban and territorial planning.	2.2.1. Promote the effective inclusion of regulatory mechanisms and instruments to encourage public participation in all stages of public policy processes and urban and territorial planning at all levels, with special attention to women's human rights, and put in place specific institutional arrangements to guarantee such participation.
	2.2.2. Define and establish a minimum transparency standard for urban and territorial planning and management instruments and mechanisms (establishing time limits, access to information, submission procedures, etc), with special attention to women's human rights.
	2.2.3. Develop mechanisms that ensure access to legal representation when making administrative or judicial claims in order to enforce the right to access public information in relation to urban and territorial planning and management instruments and processes and accountability for the use of public resources in urban development, with special attention to women's human rights.
	2.2.4. Create spaces and platforms for collaboration between the public sector, the private sector and different civil society organisations.
2.3. Create legal frameworks that strengthen the capacities of subnational government institutions, mainly municipal governments, through fiscal, political and administrative decentralisation strategies.	2.3.1. Develop binding legislation and regulations that stipulate the duties and powers of each level of government in urban and territorial planning and management.
	2.3.2. Develop technical training programmes for subnational governments on urban regulations, human capital management and fiscal decentralisation, including technical assistance

Aims	Priority areas of action
	<p>through international cooperation agencies, with special attention to women's human rights.</p> <p>2.3.3. Promote projects that strengthen the capacity of subnational and municipal governments to effectively implement urban and territorial strategies, with special attention to women's human rights.</p> <p>2.3.4. Develop regional frameworks to facilitate transfers of knowledge and good practice, with special attention to women's human rights.</p> <p>2.3.5. Develop mechanisms for the transfer of technical, administrative, fiscal and management capacities to subnational governments and for fiscal decentralisation processes, with special attention to women's human rights.</p> <p>2.3.6. Promote gender analyses to report on progress in implementing women's human rights and analyses of the results of decentralisation processes.</p> <p>2.3.7. Promote the development of binding plans to guide and coordinate municipal planning in the medium and long term and with special attention to women's human rights, without undermining the autonomy of municipalities, in order to support municipal autonomy in urban and territorial planning and make progress towards the goal of reducing urban inequality, particularly for women in their diversity.</p> <p>2.3.8. Establish a legal framework clearly defining municipal financing mechanisms and transfers from supranational government entities and effectively implement decentralisation processes in urban areas and regions.</p>
<p>2.4. Develop or strengthen legal frameworks with legal and therefore binding definitions for the use and development of urban and non-urban land and associated rights and responsibilities (urban land-use zoning code).</p>	<p>2.4.1. Establish definitions for urban, non-urban and protected land and the rights and duties associated with each, incorporating them into regulatory frameworks, with a view to guaranteeing appropriate and sustainable land use, reducing impacts and ensuring that the required land is available and free from risks associated with climate change and extreme weather events.</p> <p>2.4.2. Establish environmental regulations for urban, non-urban and rural land, including regulations on natural resource management, agriculture, biodiversity conservation and control of emissions, air and water quality and all types of pollution (light, noise, etc) in order to strengthen environmental protection, reduce risks and protect biodiversity, forest and water resources, marine, lake and river environments, agricultural land and agro-ecological practices.</p>

Aims	Priority areas of action
	2.4.3. Strengthen the capacity of subnational governments and sector authorities to manage equitable public participation, evaluate projects, implement and oversee urban and territorial planning processes and make decisions, including training for communities on their rights and duties associated with the process of converting and maintaining all types of land.
	2.4.4. Promote urban legal frameworks that organise and oversee transparent processes for converting non-urban land into urban land in compliance with applicable regulations and that ensure the implementation of criteria for full alignment with broader-scale policies, plans and programmes.
	2.4.5. Establish which independent institutions are responsible for dispute management, mediation and decision-making when disputes arise over land development.
2.5. Develop or strengthen the legal foundations for territorial development plans and for urban plans and binding or complementary mechanisms.	2.5.1. Establish regulations that specify parameters for land classification (urban and rural), define urban boundaries and potential areas for urban, suburban and peri-urban expansion and designate permitted land uses, taking into account information on hazards and risks as a central criterion.
	2.5.2. Establish regulations that clearly distinguish between public spaces and buildable land (alignment), including mandatory zoning regulations and the corresponding instruments, provisions on land use and building intensity parameters.
	2.5.3. Incorporate into regulations binding provisions on the use of equitable public participation mechanisms in urban and territorial planning processes, including legal requirements relating to the timeframe for consultation and submissions, which must be clearly and publicly communicated.
	2.5.4. Design mechanisms for sharing the benefits and charges of urban development fairly among inhabitants and establish them in law.
	2.5.5. Strengthen urban planning regulations in terms of their coordination with environmental regulations on the definition and spatial planning of elements or components of the ecological structures of cities and territories, with special attention to women's human rights.
	2.5.6. Establish a regulatory framework that prevents socio-spatial segregation in urban development, incorporating tools that ensure the equitable provision of amenities and services that are accessible to all, with special attention to women's human rights.
	2.5.7. Establish a regulatory framework that provides for property market control mechanisms to prevent speculative investment and urban dispossession of the most vulnerable social groups, ensuring that women have access to property.

Aims	Priority areas of action
	<p>2.5.8. Create or strengthen institutions that ensure effective protection of areas that constitute environmental, indigenous, Afrodescendant or cultural heritage, agricultural land and high-risk areas.</p> <p>2.5.9. Create or strengthen institutions that control urban and territorial spatial planning processes and the property market.</p> <p>2.5.10. Promote technical training programmes for civil servants involved in urban development on relevant areas of urban and territorial planning, with special emphasis on addressing risks exacerbated by climate change and the implementation of women's human rights.</p>
<p>2.6. Strengthen instruments regulating housing and related urban and territorial planning and management processes, with special attention to women's human rights.</p>	<p>2.6.1. Incorporate into all urban and territorial regulations, policies and programmes the right to adequate, affordable and well-located housing, integrated into an urban environment that is healthy and well-connected to services, with special attention to women's human rights and a focus on reducing the qualitative and quantitative housing deficit, considering the right to housing as the first of rights.</p> <p>2.6.2. Develop regulatory instruments and clear and transparent procedures to ensure land development and the supply of adequate, well-located housing, with an emphasis on social housing, addressing needs based on zoning, developing regulations on residential land use and approving building permits within a reasonable time and in compliance with applicable regulations and public participation requirements, with special attention to women's human rights.</p> <p>2.6.3. Develop regulatory instruments with special attention to women's human rights and clear and transparent procedures to prevent land speculation and preserve the social function of land.</p> <p>2.6.4. Develop regulatory instruments with special attention to women's human rights and clear and transparent procedures to promote the use of empty properties and the renewal of inner city areas for residential purposes as part of urban renewal, regeneration and redensification policies.</p> <p>2.6.5. Develop regulatory instruments with special attention to women's human rights and clear and transparent procedures to promote the improvement of settlements with features of informality, including the development of neighbourhood improvement and urban renewal and regeneration programmes that incorporate at least some of the following components: (i) adequate housing, (ii) mobility, (iii) urban infrastructure, amenities and design, (iv) connectivity, mobility and sustainable transport, (v) environmental management, protection and recovery,</p>

Líneas	Áreas de acción prioritarias
	<p>(vi) public services, (vii) land tenure, (viii) peaceful coexistence and culture of peace, (ix) neighbourhood centres and safe, quality public spaces, including measures to ensure the safety of women and girls, (x) smart, resilient communities, (xi) strengthening of identity, (xii) food security, (xiii) education, training and production, and (xiv) community participation and social ownership of programmes.</p> <p>2.6.6. Develop regulatory instruments with special attention to women's human rights and clear and transparent procedures to protect the right to housing in the event of displacement, involuntary relocation or forced eviction, particularly in urban housing and environments, contributing to the strengthening of identity and urban memory.</p> <p>2.6.7. Develop regulatory instruments with special attention to women's human rights and clear and transparent procedures to promote urban regeneration, neighbourhood improvement and the protection of cultural heritage.</p> <p>2.6.8. Develop regulatory instruments with special attention to women's human rights and clear and transparent procedures to promote programmes for the provision and financing of adequate, affordable and well-located social housing with a variety of tenure options and morphological characteristics.</p> <p>2.6.9. Develop regulations that promote and regulate equal access to adequate, affordable and well-located housing that is well-connected to services (education, health, recreation, shops, transport, public spaces, etc) and employment.</p> <p>2.6.10. Develop regulations that are consistent with regulatory frameworks for the protection of women's human rights and that promote and regulate construction according to criteria for urban and climate resilience, resource efficiency and choice of materials and design suited to the local context.</p> <p>2.6.11. Strengthen public institutions responsible for implementing the right to housing and enforcing regulations and standards.</p>
2.7. Design and promote national legislation and municipal regulations that guarantee adequate provision of public spaces that are equitable, safe and accessible to all and that ensure their protection (public spaces, green spaces and infrastructure, parks, roads, streets, intersections, transit corridors, etc), taking into account the specific needs of women.	2.7.1. Develop or update regulations on standards relating to public space per inhabitant, urban design for adequate, safe, quality public spaces that are equitable and accessible to all, with due regard for the implementation of women's human rights, including gender-specific safety issues, non-discrimination of historically marginalised groups (indigenous people, LGBTI people, older people, people with disabilities, etc) and the conditions required to ensure universal access, with special attention to people with functional disabilities.

Líneas	Áreas de acción prioritarias
Public spaces also include common areas where everyday activities take place.	2.7.2. Develop regulations, with special attention to women's human rights, that ensure the provision of quality public spaces and protect existing ones, establishing specific responsibilities for maintaining and managing such spaces and the institutional arrangements required to implement these processes effectively.
	2.7.3. Establish mechanisms to secure land to create a new supply of public spaces.
	2.7.4. Develop regulations on the use of public spaces for economic purposes, with a specific focus on informal activities and those carried out by women and other groups in vulnerable situations.
	2.7.5. Establish instruments, with special attention to women's human rights, to make an inventory of public spaces, according to their scale, classification and location, as a baseline and input for the development, management and monitoring of policies and plans relating to public spaces. Inventories will preferably be georeferenced maps developed using geographic information systems.
2.8. Establish minimum national standards for universal access to quality basic services and urban infrastructure and amenities.	2.8.1. Develop guidelines that set out minimum standards for guaranteeing equitable and universal access to quality basic services and urban infrastructure and amenities.
	2.8.2. Promote the implementation of efficient and sustainable practices for the provision and management of services that minimise environmental costs and that optimise resource efficiency at the lowest economic cost, including the promotion of renewable energy, water harvesting and reuse, etc.
	2.8.3. Develop a regulatory framework, consistent with legal frameworks for the protection of women's human rights, that establishes binding agreements between different levels of government and urban and property developers covering the minimum requirements established in guidelines on the provision of services for new developments, upgrading and renewal projects and land-use change processes.
2.9. Develop or strengthen regulatory and institutional public value capture instruments that enable governments to capture increases in value (capital gains) resulting from public investment.	2.9.1. Develop a regulatory framework that defines public value capture, allowing governments to capture increases in the value of land and property and reinvest the revenues in projects for the public good, including fiscal instruments and mechanisms, ensuring that the process is transparent.
	2.9.2. Establish a tool for maintaining an accurate, updated and georeferenced property register that reflects the actual situation on the ground, with special attention to women's human rights.

Líneas	Áreas de acción prioritarias
	<p>2.9.3. Promote programmes to strengthen technical capacities and increase knowledge of the land market at all levels of government, with special attention to women's human rights.</p> <p>2.9.4. Develop public awareness and education programmes on the importance of urban rebalancing processes, with special attention to women's human rights (public value capture).</p>



Photo from the Ministry of Housing and Territorial Planning of Panama (MIVIOT), 2021

5.3. Action Area 3: Urban and territorial planning and integrated urban design

Regional objective: Promote forward-thinking urban and territorial planning processes, integrated urban design and participatory instruments and mechanisms able to address the challenges posed by current and future urban and territorial systems.

Subregional components to be included

- Inclusion in planning of criteria relating to:

- risks exacerbated by climate change and environmental vulnerability, monitored in a coordinated manner through intersectoral mechanisms;
- mainstreaming of a gender perspective that includes women's human rights, monitored in a coordinated manner through intersectoral mechanisms;
- multi-dimensional poverty, for example in informal settlements.

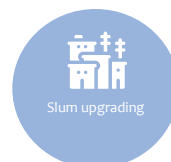
- Inclusion in planning of a territorial development vision with the goal of achieving a balanced system of cities and human settlements and territorial cohesion, supporting other policies that reduce the need to migrate to urban areas.

- Inclusion in planning of a neighbourhood vision that takes into account the specific needs of communities and women and prioritises investments accordingly.

- Prioritisation of the development and implementation of plans and projects aimed at:

- neighbourhood improvement and/or urban regeneration, with special attention to women's human rights and a focus on settlements with features of informality;
- reduction of the housing deficit, with special attention to women's human rights, ensuring the integration of new housing into areas with the infrastructure necessary to guarantee proximity and equitable access to jobs, urban amenities, transport, basic services, health care, education and other social infrastructure.

Action Area 3: Urban and territorial planning and integrated urban design



ACTION AREA 3 – URBAN AND TERRITORIAL PLANNING AND INTEGRATED URBAN DESIGN	
Aims	Priority areas of action
3.1. Develop evidence-based urban planning at the territorial, metropolitan and municipal level to guide sustainable urban development.	3.1.1. Develop capacities and tools, with special attention to women's human rights, to collect, process and analyse data and produce medium- and long-term projections with geographic disaggregation, including geographic information systems that provide meaningful input on the situation of informal settlements and taking into account cultural relevance and the gender perspective.
	3.1.2. Promote medium- and long-term urban development, with links to national development, by developing planning instruments with binding regulatory mechanisms at all levels, with special attention to women's human rights.
	3.1.3. Promote approaches that include comprehensive analysis of population dynamics and social, economic, environmental, spatial and territorial patterns. At urban level, these approaches should determine strategic areas and places of opportunity. At territorial level, they should consider urban and metropolitan systems, conurbations, intermediate cities and the importance of connectivity and natural spaces, taking into account the specific needs of women and ensuring the implementation and enforcement of women's human rights.
	3.1.4. Promote projects that identify strategic areas for redevelopment, urban regeneration and rehabilitation and new urbanisation processes, taking into account the specific needs of women and ensuring the implementation of women's human rights, with special attention to the reasons for converting rural land into urban land.
	3.1.5. Promote community-based planning processes, with special attention to women's human rights, including the following components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear definitions for public participation and binding mechanisms for their implementation in urban planning and design. • Participatory, decentralised and democratic decision-making. • Creation of spaces and platforms for collaboration between the public sector, the private sector and civil society organisations. • Transparent processes guaranteed by ensuring correct access to information. • Promotion of ICT to develop innovative participation methods, taking into account the technology gap and digital divide between men and women.
	3.1.6. Promote transparent procurement and tendering processes for urban and architectural design projects, with a view to enhancing design quality and fostering public participation and the participation of construction sector trade associations.

Aims	Priority areas of action
	<p>3.1.7. Promote strategies, guidelines and programmes for the coordination of different scales of planning.</p> <p>3.1.8. Develop instruments for urban control (against speculation, obstruction or dereliction of duty, etc) and monitoring of the dynamics of formal and informal urban growth.</p>
<p>3.2. Develop instruments and mechanisms for urban and territorial planning and integrated urban design.</p>	<p>3.2.1. Determine responsibilities for the design, implementation and oversight of urban and territorial planning instruments.</p> <p>3.2.2. Promote multi-sector and multi-level collaboration, taking into account, in particular, district and neighbourhood organisation and local power structures, as defined in decentralisation processes, so that it is them that submit priorities for action to the relevant authorities, including those relating to public spaces as places that foster social cohesion.</p> <p>3.2.3. Develop updated georeferenced maps on different scales (territorial, metropolitan, city and neighbourhood).</p> <p>3.2.4. Develop instruments and mechanisms to achieve territorial and sectoral integration and coordinate decisions on all scales.</p> <p>3.2.5. Monitor and measure impacts using quantitative and qualitative methodologies that provide sex-disaggregated input to inform urban and territorial planning and design.</p> <p>3.2.6. Promote technical and administrative training and capacity development for human resources in urban and territorial management on all scales and with special attention to human rights.</p> <p>3.2.7. Create mechanisms for sharing knowledge and good practice between countries, regions and cities.</p>
<p>3.3. Protect and conserve natural ecosystems and historical and cultural heritage (tangible and intangible) through urban and territorial planning and design.</p>	<p>3.3.1. Establish measures that recognise sites of environmental, indigenous, Afrodescendant and heritage importance and their surrounding areas, with a view to protecting and maintaining them.</p> <p>3.3.2. Integrate analyses and strategies for environmental, indigenous, Afrodescendant and heritage assessments into urban planning and design processes.</p> <p>3.3.3. Support programmes and interventions that protect and improve natural ecosystems and green spaces, promoting the sustainable use of natural resources.</p> <p>3.3.4. Strengthen the capacity and resources of institutions concerned with the environment, indigenous and Afrodescendant communities and heritage so that they can ensure compliance with and oversight of regulations designed to protect and promote these areas, striving to ensure that measures to implement such regulations are integrated into urban and territorial planning processes, with special attention to women's human rights.</p>

Aims	Priority areas of action
	3.3.5. Design and implement mechanisms that reduce exposure and vulnerability to climate change and mitigate environmental damage and all forms of pollution.
	3.3.6. Adopt measures and standards on energy and resource efficiency, including the design and implementation of mechanisms and projects that prioritise the use of renewable energy sources.
	3.3.7. Design and implement mechanisms and tools of any kind and scale in order to protect and finance historical and cultural heritage and to conserve and restore heritage buildings and sites, including the protection of traditional building materials and methods, and integrate such mechanisms into urban planning.
	3.3.8. Promote strategies and initiatives that promote cultural expressions and a sense of belonging and identity in neighbourhoods, cities and territories on any scale.
3.4. Promote compact, connected, integrated, safe and inclusive urban form by implementing urban and territorial planning and design instruments and mechanisms, with special attention to women's human rights.	3.4.1. Develop urban design guides that set out strategies and principles to guide the development of public and private spaces according to criteria for sustainability, integration and all forms of safety and security, taking into account the specific needs of women and ensuring that their interests and needs are addressed in the guides, with a view to promoting their human rights.
	3.4.2. Formulate strategies for urban renewal, regeneration and rehabilitation and for neighbourhood improvements that promote economic development, social integration and resource efficiency, with special attention to women's human rights.
	3.4.3. Promote strategies and specific plans that promote local economic development and job creation and that allocate suitable and well-located land for economic activities, with special attention to women's human rights.
	3.4.4. Develop mechanisms to control urban expansion, especially unplanned growth.
	3.4.5. Promote policies, plans and projects that incentivise sustainable levels of urban densification and diverse, mixed and integrated land use, including densification strategies, the provision and improvement of services and infrastructure and the establishment of quality public spaces that are accessible and safe.
	3.4.6. Promote urban interventions that foster socio-spatial integration, inclusive and sustainable urban mobility and safe and healthy urban spaces, with special attention to women's human rights.
	3.4.7. Coordinate urban development and housing policies with territorial development policies to ensure that development is sited across territories in line with compactness criteria.

Aims	Priority areas of action
3.5. Ensure the provision of and equitable access to public urban amenities and services through consistent and coordinated urban and territorial management.	3.5.1. Promote urban strategies and programmes that incorporate an integrated territorial approach, with special attention to women's human rights.
	3.5.2. Develop spaces, tools and/or mechanisms for intersectoral and interinstitutional collaboration and coordination to facilitate the effective provision of public urban amenities and services, with a focus on coordination with social programmes aimed at combating socio-spatial segregation.
	3.5.3. Develop binding guidelines that ensure minimum standards for the provision of services and amenities, with special attention to women's human rights.
	3.5.4. Promote neighbourhood improvement programmes, especially in informal settlements, that promote the active participation of the different stakeholders, such as women, young people, people with disabilities, older people and ethnic groups.
	3.5.5. Promote urban policies and programmes that address accessible and sustainable mobility and spatial integration, with special attention to women's human rights.
	3.5.6. Promote urban policies and programmes that increase employment opportunities and foster local economic development, with special attention to women's human rights.
	3.5.7. Promote urban policies and programmes for networks of public spaces that meet regional, national and international standards in terms of quality and area.
	3.5.8. Reformulate territorial development plans and other major planning instruments to incorporate needs in terms of public urban amenities and services as a central element, taking into account the specific needs of women, ensuring the observance and implementation of their human rights and recognising the strain that the work they have to do puts on them and the importance of establishing and maintaining centres that offer them protection and social support.
3.6. Promote adequate and affordable housing and access to urban land as the cornerstone of urban planning and design.	3.6.1. Promote housing programmes, using fiscal and planning mechanisms, aimed at ensuring access to affordable housing with a variety of tenure options (rent, purchase, surface right, etc) and supporting the socio-economic integration of different groups, with a focus on female heads of household and women in rural areas and with special attention to women's human rights.
	3.6.2. Prioritise housing programmes that address the qualitative and quantitative housing deficit in the region, ensuring the integration of new housing into neighbourhoods with the necessary services and amenities, especially settlements with features of informality, and in all cases providing infrastructure that guarantees proximity and equitable access to jobs, urban amenities, transport, basic services, health care, education and other social infrastructure.

Aims	Priority areas of action
	3.6.3. Ensure the coordination of housing programmes and urban planning, urban regeneration and, as a matter of priority, slum upgrading.
3.7. Develop urban strategies and interventions to improve informal settlements and slums and integrate them into their wider urban context.	3.7.1. Promote policies for priority action to reduce exclusion and marginalisation for social, cultural, ethnic or any other reasons.
	3.7.2. Promote the use of accurate data on informal settlements and slums, to be collected with community involvement and preferably using georeferencing systems, with special attention to women's human rights.
	3.7.3. Promote urban programmes and initiatives aimed at reducing social exclusion through:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood improvement programmes. • Programmes and initiatives that increase connectivity to ensure proximity to jobs, social infrastructure, urban amenities and basic services. • Programmes and interventions that improve the quality and safety of public spaces and green areas. • Programmes for the regularisation of land and property tenure, with an inclusive and multi-ethnic approach and a priority focus on women in rural areas and female heads of household.
	3.7.4. Create or strengthen public participation and participatory design processes and community development initiatives, promoting an enabling environment for local organisations to become equitable spaces for the individual and collective empowerment of men and women.

Aims	Priority areas of action
<p>3.8. Develop projects that promote safe, affordable and universally accessible urban mobility and transport systems.</p>	<p>3.8.1. Support the creation of mechanisms for coordination among different actors and levels of government on urban mobility and transport in accordance with the PMRML and its Master Plan 2035.</p>
	<p>3.8.2. Promote urban and territorial planning policies and strategies that specify a variety of local public transport uses and services, with a view to reducing passenger and freight transport demand and improving resource efficiency, with special attention to women's human rights. Promote policies and strategies that prioritise means of transport not fuelled by petrol or diesel and that help to improve human health and wellbeing (walking and cycling), ensuring that the design criteria for cycling lanes address the safety of women and girls, by incorporating key safe city features, so that cycling is not an exclusive and discriminatory means of transport. Compile evidence on the times when women and girls are most likely to suffer an aggression.</p>
	<p>3.8.3. Promote urban projects that include criteria for sustainable mobility to address the dynamics of urban sprawl by means of multi-modal transport systems on different scales, with mechanisms to discourage the use of private vehicles (moving towards low-carbon urban development).</p>
	<p>3.8.4. Promote initiatives that improve road safety and reduce accidents.</p>
	<p>3.8.5. Promote interventions that ensure access to urban opportunities, effectively linking people, places, goods, services and opportunities of all kinds, with special attention to women's human rights.</p>
	<p>3.8.6. Prioritise investment in space-efficient, low-emission public transport systems that are safe, affordable and accessible, with special attention to the needs of the most vulnerable and incorporating design criteria that address the safety of women and girls.</p>
<p>3.9. Ensure planning for urban and climate resilience through urban and territorial planning instruments and urban design. Develop interventions at the neighbourhood level to promote better and more sustainable livelihoods, such as urban gardens to increased food security, reforestation and river bank cleaning in cities, river basin management and planning of actions with the involvement of community leaders.</p>	<p>3.9.1. Develop criteria for assessing urban and climate resilience, with special attention to women's human rights, based on an understanding of climate change and disaster risk in all dimensions of vulnerability, capacity, exposure of people and property, hazard characteristics and the environment, and relevant to local geographic and social scales.</p> <p>3.9.2. Promote the mapping of all forms of vulnerability and climate hazards, with the community taking a leading role, to provide input for and inform spatial planning, land-use management, risk adaptation and mitigation strategies and early warning and emergency response systems, with special attention to women's human rights and encouraging the participation of women in mapping processes. These will preferably be georeferenced maps</p>

Líneas	Áreas de acción prioritarias
	3.9.3. Create or strengthen early warning and emergency response systems to ensure response capacity and effective recovery at all territorial levels, taking into account the traditional knowledge of women and people from indigenous and Afrodescendant communities.
	3.9.4. Promote community-based governance processes for risk management, incorporating a climate-smart vision.
	3.9.5. Promote urban policies, plans, programmes and interventions for urban and climate resilience and risk management, with special attention to women's human rights, that integrate adaptation and mitigation strategies into urban planning and development and incorporate resilience principles and strategies into urban design, including the promotion of nature-based solutions, green and blue infrastructure and urban and peri-urban agriculture, updating criteria and strategies as required to ensure that they respond to local needs and demands.
	3.9.6. Promote programmes for resilience-building and training in women's human rights, risk management and climate change for communities, particularly in slum and high-risk areas.
	3.9.7. Promote rehabilitation, reconstruction, relocation and mediation programmes, with special attention to women's human rights, in areas that have been hit by human-made or natural disasters, with a special focus on extreme weather events.
	3.9.8. Promote multi-sector and multi-level collaboration on preventing and reducing risk and climate change impacts that exacerbate such situations.

5.4. Action Area 4: Urban economy and municipal finances



Photo from the Ministry of Housing and Human Settlements of Costa Rica (MIVAH), 2021

Regional objective Strengthen municipal finances, intergovernmental fiscal systems and the instruments and capacities required to innovate and develop new and improved financing mechanisms for urban investment.

Subregional components to be included

- Training for subnational governments to enable them to manage their fiscal autonomy and to raise their awareness of financing mechanisms for urban investment, with special attention to women's human rights.
- Taxation designed to achieve the responsible use of subregional biodiversity, promote sustainable resource mobilisation and penalise harm to the environment, taking advantage of local wisdom.
- Promotion of regional value chains, emphasising those with predominantly female participation, to improve territorial cohesion and balance, reducing the need for irregular migration, particularly among young people and women.
- Promotion of the green economy, for example by leveraging the power of the circular economy.
- Proactive support for inclusive training processes for men and women to enable them to acquire the skills necessary for the processing and commercialisation of regional products.
- Proactive support for an agenda that aims to reduce the digital divide, with special attention to women's human rights and with a view to improving access to the digital labour market through training and employment services that are accessible to women, particularly those living in rural areas.
- Effective promotion of the active participation and leadership role of women in their diversity.

Action Area 4: Urban economy and municipal finances



ACTION AREA 4 – URBAN ECONOMY AND MUNICIPAL FINANCES

Líneas	Áreas de acción prioritarias
4.1. Establish intergovernmental fiscal systems to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and equitable distribution of public spending at subnational levels.	4.1.1. Define the spending powers and responsibilities corresponding to each level of government, ensuring that they are clearly set out to avoid any overlaps.
	4.1.2. Define the functions assigned to each level of government and ensure that they can be carried out efficiently. Allocate the necessary resources, taking into account the institutional capacity of subnational governments to perform their functions effectively.
	4.1.3. Develop interinstitutional coordination tools for public spending and the provision of public services.
4.2. Establish or strengthen urban governance systems, with a view to maximising sustainable resource mobilisation, particularly for urban infrastructure and public services.	4.2.1. Develop structures to facilitate coordination between urban planning and local financial planning to ensure spatial and sectoral consistency in urbanisation processes, establishing a long-term vision for urban investment, with special attention to women's human rights.
	4.2.2. Promote flexible, transparent governance structures with appropriate checks and balances that incentivise effective urban and financial planning and management of services and infrastructures through tools such as supramunicipal consortiums (intermunicipal consortiums, associations of municipalities, etc).
	4.2.3. Implement programmes to improve institutional capacities for local, metropolitan and subnational public finance management.
	4.2.4. Develop financing mechanisms for infrastructure development, renewal, adaptation and upgrading.
	4.2.5. Promote the design of innovative financial instruments for urban improvement, with special attention to women's human rights and ensuring community participation, the involvement of women in decision-making, compliance with laws and regulations and resource distribution according to differentiated needs.
	4.2.6. Generate baseline urban information by calculating the indicators used in the City Prosperity Index (CPI) and measuring the share of each municipality in the country's gross domestic product (GDP).

Aims	Priority areas of action
<p>4.3. Promote effective local tax systems that strengthen inclusive and sustainable municipal finances, taking into account the size of government institutions and their ability to perform their functions effectively.</p>	<p>4.3.1. Develop or strengthen the legal and institutional framework for territorial financing based on each country's territorial governance model, putting in place appropriate financial instruments, e.g. imposing a 'charges and benefits' model for urban development and the partial and/or gradual introduction of property tax in countries that do not yet collect it.</p>
	<p>4.3.2. Create a framework for intergovernmental relations to ensure that responsibility for implementing projects is shared through agreements with stakeholders and linkages between public funding and planning/spending functions.</p>
	<p>4.3.3. Create a robust and transparent system (or strengthen an existing system) for equitable transfers of budget funds to municipal authorities from higher levels of government.</p>
	<p>4.3.4. Empower municipalities to pool resources to help them access credit markets – when they require funding to finance their operations, maintenance activities, infrastructure projects or the provision of public services – in those countries where domestic legislation permits the appropriate allocation and assessment of risk and in contexts where there are no legal or constitutional restrictions in this regard, with a view to expanding local debt markets.</p>
<p>4.4. Strengthen or support the design and implementation of an effective and efficient local fiscal and financial framework for inclusive and sustainable economic development, with a focus on equity for equality between men and women.</p>	<p>4.4.1. Strengthen local finance management through equitable budget implementation with indicators to measure outcomes and public participation, auditable accounting systems and reporting on the results of public policies and programmes, including the provision of urban services, and standardise municipal budgets so that they can be compared at least at the national and subnational level.</p>
	<p>4.4.2. Promote medium- and long-term investment programmes that address needs in terms of territorial development, local economic development and job creation, with an emphasis on women, a high proportion of whom work in the informal economy.</p>
	<p>4.4.3. Design and implement effective municipal finance management systems, processes and instruments that ensure transparency and oversight of financial performance.</p>
	<p>4.4.4. Undertake projects that strengthen local capacities to improve municipal finance management.</p>

Aims	Priority areas of action
	4.4.5. Design and implement robust municipal finance management systems, processes and instruments that ensure effective coordination between different levels of government.
4.5. Improve sources of financing for urban investment by introducing new and improved instruments and mechanisms for internal revenue generation.	4.5.1. Incorporate into national and local regulatory frameworks measures that provide opportunities and incentives to increase and diversify the local resource base and ensure the efficient use of these resources, with special attention to women's human rights. Adopt measures to implement public value capture and ensure the fair distribution of urban development charges and benefits in relation to public spending measures and control the end uses of such investment.
	4.5.2. Develop financing instruments associated with participatory and transparent urban planning and development strategies for the purpose of securing revenue for urban investment (public value capture, densification of underused land and updating of the property register to reflect market value), with special attention to women's human rights.
	4.5.3. Integrate investment in urban infrastructure and services and the sources of financing required to cover construction and maintenance into urban and territorial planning, with a focus on TOD projects and mixed urban operations for the regeneration of urban areas and with special attention to women's human rights.
	4.5.4. Promote national and local reforms with a view to providing opportunities and incentives to increase the efficiency of public asset management, improve access to capital markets and mobilise private sector resources.
	4.5.5. Promote urban investment strategies and programmes that foster local economic development and job creation, with special attention to women's human rights.
	4.5.6. Incentivise improvements in access to financing to meet climate change challenges in cities by: i) creating a financial regulatory environment that encourages cities to invest in low-emission, climate-resilient infrastructure; ii) supporting cities in developing frameworks for assessing climate externalities; iii) supporting the preparation of mitigation and adaptation projects; and iv) collaborating with local financial institutions to design infrastructure solutions for cities through climate finance.

Aims	Priority areas of action
	4.5.7. Establish subnational training programmes to facilitate the application, implementation and monitoring of international grants and therefore maximise international funding opportunities.
	4.5.8. Explore and develop additional sources of financing in accordance with the characteristics of the urban services and the required investment.
4.6. Create and implement new and diversified financial instruments at all levels of government to improve access to adequate housing in safe, well-connected neighbourhoods with all the necessary services and amenities.	4.6.1. Create a residential financing system with a gender-based approach that offers a range of affordable solutions to meet all needs, such as cross subsidisation, mortgages, priority financing for social and rental housing and unsecured self-build loans.
	4.6.2. Promote credit mechanisms for developers, contractors and construction material manufacturers, with the possible inclusion of sustainability and gender considerations.
	4.6.3. Promote subsidies for projects that prioritise access to well-located urban land through measures such as slum upgrading and the relocation of high-risk settlements, diverse, inclusive and compact developments and urban rebalancing, regeneration and rehabilitation processes, with special attention to women's human rights.
	4.6.4. Create an institutional framework that coordinates housing production and management based on security of tenure, home improvement grants and support for housing cooperatives, housing rental and room use, with special attention to women's human rights and an emphasis on female heads of household in rural areas.
	4.6.5. Promote cooperative action for neighbourhood organisation, maintenance, improvement and modernisation and repair of homes and surroundings, with special attention to women's human rights.
	4.6.6. Support processes and assets related to the social production of habitat through progressive building programmes, microcredits for home and neighbourhood improvement, the development and commercialisation of new building materials and technical assistance, among other mechanisms, with special attention to women's human rights.
	4.6.7. Promote mechanisms and incentives that facilitate financial inclusion for families that receive remittances and for migrants.
	4.6.8. Promote the use of ancestral construction practices and local sustainable materials.

5.5. Action Area 5: Local implementation



Photograph from the National Housing Institute of the Dominican Republic (INVI), 2021

Regional objective Strengthen capacities and local instruments to guide urbanisation and urban development and promote solid partnerships between the actors and sectors involved in sustainable urban development.

Subregional components to be included

- Training for local urban planners and managers in:
 - sustainable urban development;
 - territorial and urban analysis tools (e.g. geographic information systems) to provide accurate input for decision-making;
 - implementation of women's human rights;
 - management of fiscal autonomy and financing mechanisms for urban investment.
- Creation of interinstitutional and intersectoral coordination mechanisms that ensure the effectiveness and autonomy of local entities and effective implementation of decentralisation processes and community participation mechanisms, especially in the most vulnerable communities.
- Local promotion of instruments to guide planning, with a comprehensive management approach, establishing, as a subregional priority, action to address climate change risks, upgrade slums and reduce socio-spatial inequality, and therefore requiring urgent measures to ensure the observance and implementation of women's human rights and of PRIEG-SICA.

Action Area 5: Local implementation



ACTION AREA 5 – LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION	
Aims	Priority areas of action
5.1. Encourage local communities to play a leading role in civil society and sustainable urban development.	5.1.1. Promote the active, meaningful and equitable involvement of civil society and women's organisations, particularly at the neighbourhood and community level, in planning and decision-making, with special attention to women, indigenous peoples, people of African descent and other groups that are often overlooked.
	5.1.2. Create or strengthen mechanisms for participation and coordination between government institutions and communities, including the use of ICT and inclusive training in this area.
	5.1.3. Support training and the dissemination of information about urban and territorial planning, with special attention to women's human rights and with a view to making inhabitants aware of their role and facilitating the empowerment of communities and women, especially those in vulnerable situations.
	5.1.4. Support awareness-raising, training and dissemination of information about the climate change situation and associated risks and about environmental responsibility, with special attention to women's human rights.
	5.1.5. Promote initiatives that strengthen a sense of territorial identity, community and responsibility (associations, communities, etc.), with special attention to women's human rights.
	5.1.6. Create or strengthen public spaces that can be used for community initiatives and that provide an inclusive, accessible and safe environment, with special attention to women's human rights.
	5.1.7. Develop legal support mechanisms to deal with public complaints concerning urban development, city management and environmental violations, with special attention to women's human rights.
5.2. Strengthen interinstitutional and multi-level cooperation, with the participation of other actors, to guide sustainable urban development in an effective and coordinated manner, with a special focus on strengthening municipal capacities and ensuring the observance and implementation of women's human rights.	5.2.1. Develop tools (guidelines, regulations, etc) and strengthen technical, management, policy-making and financial capacities at the local and municipal level and at any other subnational administrative level to provide leadership in establishing conditions and priorities for urban and territorial planning, with special attention to women's human rights.

Aims	Priority areas of action
	<p>5.2.2. Support the creation of active mechanisms and networks for cooperation between cities and subnational governments to facilitate knowledge transfer, the sharing of experience and the identification of common priorities, with a view to aligning urban development initiatives and with a focus on women's human rights.</p> <p>5.2.3. Activate processes to monitor and evaluate the impact of territorial and urban plans and projects in order to assess achievements and address persistent challenges, providing data disaggregated by sex and taking into account urban and territorial indicators relating to women's human rights.</p> <p>5.2.4. Promote the creation of partnerships between local and subnational governments, public-private partnerships and partnerships with academia, civil society and other sectors, based on a strategic vision with a situated perspective for an effective response to urban, regional and community needs, prioritising women, particularly those from vulnerable groups.</p> <p>5.2.5. Promote the design and implementation of coordination mechanisms involving all relevant stakeholders.</p>
<p>5.3. Establish and strengthen the continuity of medium- and long-term urban and territorial planning processes, with special attention to women's human rights and taking into account climate change and associated risks.</p>	<p>5.3.1. Support the development of mechanisms that raise ambition in planning processes, with special attention to women's human rights, ensuring that they are binding and viable in the long term by allocating resources, signing explicit commitments to comply with plans, programmes and projects in progress and under development and assigning specific roles and responsibilities in the plans, programmes and projects themselves and in monitoring and tracking mechanisms.</p> <p>5.3.2. Promote and support the development of policies and plans that address the needs of specific communities and prioritise investment accordingly at all levels (neighbourhood, local, urban, metropolitan, etc), with special attention to women's human rights.</p> <p>5.3.3. Support the creation of public reporting systems and mechanisms for the recording, systematisation and application of results, ensuring transparency in these processes.</p>
<p>5.4. Promote planning with a comprehensive city and territorial management approach, including the comprehensive, inclusive and participatory assessment of risks associated with climate change.</p>	<p>5.4.1. Promote the incorporation, in new developments, of the concept of adequate housing in an environment conducive to integrated, healthy development, by supporting the following actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop planning instruments that incorporate a gender perspective, legal basis and controls on implementation, that are

Aims	Priority areas of action
	<p>linked to vulnerability and hazard mapping to determine risks (reassessing them in the current context of climate change) and that address the economic, social, environmental and cultural needs of communities and areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the provision of adequate and accessible services, amenities, social urban infrastructure and connectivity with the existing urban fabric, ensuring equitable access to the city and limiting the privatisation of public spaces. • Apply risk and environmental vulnerability criteria, excluding land to be preserved and conserved and land that is not required from the urbanisation process, with a view to safeguarding ecosystems and their functions and avoiding future risks. • Allocate spaces for urban development in line with a comprehensive city- and territory-based vision that excludes from the urbanisation process any land to be conserved for its natural assets or for other considerations, risk-prone land and land not required in order to implement the urban and territorial development strategy.
	<p>5.4.2. Promote the development and implementation of projects, with special attention to women's human rights, focused on the existing urban fabric, such as neighbourhood improvement, urban renewal, restoration of historical and natural heritage and slum upgrading. The following actions are required to achieve this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the creation of mechanisms to control speculation and prevent gentrification. • Support the design of projects for the regeneration and recovery of abandoned and derelict areas to ensure that land is reused when redeveloping the urban fabric and redesigning high-risk areas. • Consolidate and redesign urban areas to achieve appropriate densities, with a view to optimising access to services, jobs, education, health care, amenities and infrastructure and reducing per capita impact in terms of energy use, emissions, water, etc. • Develop land value capture mechanisms and reinvest the resulting revenues in public goods for the city (infrastructure, green spaces, amenities, etc).

Aims	Priority areas of action
	<p>5.4.3. Promote the development and implementation of projects, with special attention to women's human rights, focused on improving the existing urban fabric to enhance efficiency, gender equity and safety. The following actions are required to achieve this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote resource-efficient urban design, with special attention to women's human rights and incorporating criteria and incentives for eco-efficiency. • Promote mixed urban land use to improve the socio-economic balance and increase diversity and variety in urban settings. • Promote equity in terms of connectivity, safety and the quality of infrastructure, services and amenities, especially in slum areas. • Develop equitable mechanisms to provide compensation for relocation, with a focus on settlements where risks cannot be mitigated. • Develop regulatory instruments and other legal mechanisms with real enforcement capacity to control private sector involvement in urban development and ensure full alignment with the model and vision proposed for each territory. • Create instruments that enable intervention over large areas so as to avoid piecemeal development. • Create mechanisms that ensure the alignment of municipal development with supramunicipal visions (metropolitan, associations of municipalities, national, etc).
	<p>5.4.4. Promote the development and implementation of projects for the provision of basic urban services, amenities and social infrastructure, maximising their integration and minimising the negative externalities they can cause, with special attention to women's human rights. The following actions are required in order to achieve this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create mechanisms for dialogue and coordination among key actors for the provision of services, amenities and infrastructure, prioritising slums and settlements with women leaders. • Promote access to public transport and alternative transport options, based on integrated, green and inclusive multi-modal systems that ensure equitable access for all.

Líneas	Áreas de acción prioritarias
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the design of safe, multi-purpose public spaces that offer equitable access to all, with special emphasis on the safety of women and girls. • Promote initiatives, projects, plans and instruments that contribute to improving health and education for all city inhabitants and ensure the effective inclusion of particularly vulnerable groups. • Promote initiatives, projects, plans and instruments that address the efficient use of natural resources, sustainability and conservation of the natural environment. • Promote the preservation and revitalisation of city marine and freshwater areas with due regard for the local economy.
<p>5.5. Ensure that urban projects include strategies and instruments for inclusive and sustainable urban economic development, job creation and livelihood improvements for communities, with special attention to disadvantaged sectors of society, such as homeless people, migrants, people with disabilities and female heads of household.</p>	<p>5.5.1. Promote urban planning policies on effective land-use regulation and the land tenure system to establish infrastructure requirements and define the parameters of urban development, with special attention to women's human rights, fostering coordinated development efforts based on infrastructure investment and designed to achieve a suitable mix of land uses and densities, with the aim of boosting economic and business growth.</p> <p>5.5.2. Promote the formulation of medium- and long-term infrastructure development plans based on a rigorous needs assessment, with special attention to women's human rights and prioritising the most deprived informal settlements and urban areas where risks associated with extreme weather events, which are increasing as a result of climate change, need to be mitigated.</p> <p>5.5.3. Promote the creation of mechanisms for dialogue and coordination with key business actors from both the formal and informal sector in order to understand the challenges they face.</p> <p>5.5.4. Promote the development of active support programmes for the local business community and training programmes, with special attention to women's human rights and a focus on narrowing the digital divide, which mainly affects women.</p> <p>5.5.5. Promote initiatives, projects, plans and instruments that recognise, foster and strengthen the social and solidarity economy as one of the pillars of urban economic development, with special attention to women's human rights.</p> <p>5.5.6. Promote the adoption of an approach to achieve the gradual formalisation of the informal economy, particularly the businesses of female heads of household, including considerations relating to the use of public space and ensuring the equitable involvement of informal workers in the process.</p>

Aims	Priority areas of action
5.6. Establish mechanisms for the transfer of the benefits of public investment to city inhabitants.	5.6.1. Promote the inclusion in planning instruments of an approach that addresses the valuation of ecosystem services and land use in the city.
	5.6.2. Support the creation and implementation of mechanisms (financial, management, etc) for land value capture and reinvestment of the revenues in public infrastructure and services.
	5.6.3. Support the creation and implementation of mechanisms (financial, management, etc.) for the valuation of ecosystem services which prioritise the reinvestment of the resulting revenues in public infrastructure, with a view to promoting the sustainability of critical ecosystems and improving urban air quality, water quality and green spaces.
	5.6.4. Promote systems for the reinvestment of revenues from public value capture, including financing and management mechanisms that ensure transparency, responsibility and accountability in public spending.
	5.6.5. Promote cross-sector circular economy mechanisms to link productive processes at the supramunicipal level.

5.6. Action Area 6: Monitoring, reporting and review mechanisms



Photo from the Ministry of Housing of El Salvador, 2021

Regional objective Strengthen the human, technical and financial capacities of all sectors to monitor progress towards sustainable and equitable urban development for men and women and to monitor, report on and review associated policies, programmes, plans and projects.

Subregional components to be included

- Subregional guidelines that support monitoring and evaluation processes and facilitate knowledge transfer.
- Subregional data collection methodologies to help identify vulnerabilities, prioritise investment and measure impacts.
- The involvement and empowerment of communities and women in data collection processes, especially the most vulnerable sectors of society and women in their diversity.
- Efforts to combat the digital divide and other structural inequalities, promoting the use of free software and with support for training processes.
- Community training in planning, sustainable urban development and climate change.
- Measurement and monitoring of progress in mainstreaming women's human rights into planning, sustainable urban development and climate action processes.

Action Area 6: Monitoring, reporting and review mechanisms



ACTION AREA 6 – MONITORING, REPORTING AND REVIEW MECHANISMS	
Aims	Priority areas of action
6.1. Establish coordinated and collaborative statistical and geographic information systems to collect, manage and analyse data in order to measure and assess urban development.	6.1.1. Promote the use of accurate disaggregated data by supporting projects for the collection, management, analysis and subsequent dissemination of information so that it is available to the public, including mechanisms for updating information disaggregated by sex and other relevant variables, with active and mandatory community participation, and incorporating, to the extent possible, the equitable use of ICT.
	6.1.2. Promote mandatory, active and equitable community participation in processes to generate statistical and geographic information, ensuring that women, in their diversity, play an active and leading role.
	6.1.3. Support projects and tools that include the use of new data sources, disaggregated by sex and geographic area and georeferenced (geographic information system), to identify vulnerabilities, prioritise investment and measure impacts against international standards and recommendations (including the SDGs), with special attention to women's human rights. Examples are urban observatories and projects, plans and programmes that use such data as input.
	6.1.4. Promote multi-sector, multi-level coordination for data collection, maximising synergies between information collection, management and analysis processes, with special attention to women's human rights.
	6.1.5. Strengthen or create national and subnational statistical mechanisms (censuses, statistics offices, land registers and all the information that the institutions involved can provide), with the capacity and autonomy to coordinate actors from multiple sectors and levels and with special attention to women's human rights.
6.2. Build capacities for the collection, management, analysis and dissemination of urban development data and information.	6.2.1. Promote capacity reviews and regularly updated training processes that respond to identified needs, with a focus on digital literacy and special attention to women's human rights.
	6.2.2. Promote training mechanisms (for technical personnel, civil servants and the community) to facilitate data collection, mapping, the construction and analysis of clear, simple and measurable indicators and dissemination of the results, with special attention to women's human rights.

Aims	Priority areas of action
	6.2.3. Support and strengthen national and subnational statistical tools that generate accurate, updated, georeferenced information, disaggregated by sex and other relevant variables, with potential links between CPI calculations and GDP per municipality in the reporting of statistical information.
	6.2.4. Promote the creation of mechanisms and networks for active cooperation between cities and national and subnational governments for knowledge transfer, the sharing of experiences and peer-to-peer learning.
	6.2.5. Define responsibilities for data generation.
6.3. Define a monitoring framework that responds to urban and territorial needs in order to analyse and guide urban development.	6.3.1. Identify existing mechanisms, institutions and capacities for urban development monitoring.
	6.3.2. Support the incorporation of new methodologies, with special attention to women's human rights, and promote the use of new technologies.
	6.3.3. Strengthen technical and management training, including training in the implementation of women's human rights.
	6.3.4. Promote the revision of international definitions, methodologies, standards and recommendations to allow for comparison with the situation of urban areas and territories in other places, with a focus on regional convergence so that urban observatories can be created, with special attention to women's human rights.
	<p>6.3.5. Design and implement a set of clear, simple, relevant, adequate and measurable indicators linked to sustainable urban development goals and other relevant urban and territorial strategies, with special attention to women's human rights. To this end, existing mechanisms, institutions and capacities will need to be identified.</p> <p>Indicators must be sufficiently clear to allow for comparisons between cities and at the regional and international level. They must also be aligned with the indicators proposed by global agendas, in particular, the SDGs, the CPI and nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement. The indicators must reflect the integrated and multi-sectoral nature of urban development in order to identify trends. This includes indicators related to the socio-spatial characteristics of the population, with an emphasis on the expression of multi-dimensional poverty in informal settlements and progress in implementing women's human rights.</p>

Líneas	Áreas de acción prioritarias
6.4. Establish explicit roles and responsibilities for collecting, managing, analysing and disseminating multi-stakeholder and multi-level information.	6.4.1. Identify key actors in urban and territorial development processes.
	6.4.2. Strengthen the role of civil society actors, with special attention to groups in vulnerable situations, including women in their diversity.
	6.4.3. Support the creation of mechanisms and networks for active cooperation between sectors and levels of governance.
	6.4.4. Define roles, responsibilities and reporting deadlines.
	6.4.5. Establish the frequency of the collection, interpretation and application of data, information and indicators.
6.5. Establish a system to inform national and subnational decision-making processes.	6.5.1. Create or strengthen channels with the legal basis to report results, including reviews and monitoring.
	6.5.2. Clearly define criteria for using results to inform decision-making in urban and territorial planning and management, with special attention to women's human rights.
	6.5.3. Explicitly define roles and responsibilities for the submission and receipt of statistical inputs.
	6.5.4. Create or strengthen channels for the coordinated multi-sector exchange of information.
	6.5.5. Create mechanisms for dialogue between actors responsible for data collection and decision-makers in order to adapt methodologies to meet real information needs.
	6.5.6. Create mechanisms for presenting information to the general public in an easily understandable and accessible form and provide for public participation in data analysis to enhance urban and territorial public policy, with special attention to women's human rights.

6. ANNEX 1. Implementation matrix showing PRINAU-SICA action areas and objectives

ACTION AREA 1 NATIONAL URBAN POLICIES	Evidence- and incentive-based	Sustainable urban development as a paradigm	Focused on climate resilience	Gender equity	Based on local needs and planning	Coordinated across sectors and levels	Centred on reducing socio-spatial gaps
ACTION AREA 2 URBAN LEGAL FRAMEWORKS	Right to the city (Cities for All) and to housing	Participatory, transparent and accountable governance (technical committees)	Municipal decentralisation and autonomy	Robust legal frameworks Legal framework focused on housing	Guarantee of adequate and affordable housing	Provision of inclusive public amenities, services and spaces (urban furniture)	Land management and public investment
ACTION AREA 3 URBAN AND TERRITORIAL PLANNING AND INTEGRATED URBAN DESIGN	Binding urban planning instruments and mechanisms	Environmental and heritage protection Urban and climate resilience	Compact, well-connected, integrated, safe and inclusive urban form Territorial development plan	Provision of urban public services and public spaces	Adequate and affordable housing	Slum upgrading	Integrated spaces Urban mobility
ACTION AREA 4 URBAN ECONOMY AND MUNICIPAL FINANCES	Equitable distribution of public spending and investment	Sustainable resource mobilisation	Inclusive and sustainable municipal finances	Local, fiscal and financial framework	Sources of financing for urban investment	Climate-related investment	Facilitating access to adequate housing in rural and urban areas with different tenure and access options
ACTION AREA 5 LOCAL IMPLEMENTATION	Leading role of communities	Institutional and multi-level cooperation	Municipal urban planning Urban regeneration project under housing sector guidelines	Comprehensive management approach	Neighbourhood improvement and service delivery	Inclusive and sustainable economic development	Social benefits of public investment with private sector participation
ACTION AREA 6 MONITORING, REPORTING AND REVIEW MECHANISMS	Statistical and geographic information systems Geographic consulta- tion platform	Input generation with community involvement Strategic planning for inputs	Needs monitoring framework Indicators for monitoring and consultation	Roles and responsibilities Housing and Urban Development Unit with specific roles and monitoring	Coordination mechanisms	Monitoring and evaluation indicators	Public information systems Development and Housing Unit (UDV)

7. ANNEX 2. Situation of Central America and the Dominican Republic in figures

	Urban pop.	Contribution of cities to GDP	Urban pop. in IS* 2014	IS (2010) Agglomeration index	MDI** 2010 Urban pop.	Urban growth 2015	GINI 2016	GINI 2018 (WB)
CENTRAL AMERICA	59%	78%	29%	1 in 4 urban pop.			0.50	
HONDURAS	52%	76%	35%	42.9%	51.7	3.2%	53.7	52.1
NICARAGUA	57.5%	72.6%	45%	43%	57.26		45.7	46.2
COSTA RICA	73%	85%	11%	53%	71.73	2.5%	49.2	48
GUATEMALA	50%	78%	39%	39.5%	49.32	3.4%	52.4	48.3
EL SALVADOR	65%	78%	29%		73.8		43.5	38.6
BELIZE						2.3%		53.3
DOMINICAN REP.								43.7
PANAMA	65%	86%	23%		55.2		51.7	49.2

* IS: informal settlement

** MDI: Municipal Development Index

Source: UN-Habitat calculations 2014. GDP: Gridded GDP project (World Bank)

Percentage of the population living in informal settlements without services, adequate housing or security of tenure

	2000	2001	2005	2007	2009	2014	LAD*
HONDURAS		18.1	34.9			27.5	27.5
NICARAGUA	60	80.9	45.5	45.5			45.5
COSTA RICA		12.8		18.7		5.5	5.5
GUATEMALA	48.1	61.8	42.9	40.8	38.7	34.5	34.5
EL SALVADOR		35.2	28.9				28.9
BELIZE		62		18.7		10.8	10.8
DOMINICAN REP.	21	37.6	17.6	16.2	14.8	12.1	12.1
PANAMA		30.8	23			25.8	25.8

* Latest available data (LAD): Belize – 2014, Costa Rica – 2014, El Salvador – 2005, Guatemala – 2014, Honduras – 2014, Nicaragua

Quantitative and qualitative housing deficit

			DEFICIT		TOTAL	QUALITATIVE DEFICIT		DEFICIT		TOTAL
			QUANTI-TATIVE	QUALI-TATIVE		URBAN	RURAL	QUANTI-TATIVE	QUALI-TATIVE	
Costa Rica 2015	1,462,135	1,436,120	31,759	281,480	313,239	157,629	123,851	2%	20%	22%
El Salvador 2014	1,722,075	1,530,265	245,369	1,143,108	1,338,477	582,985	560,123	16%	75%	91%
Guatemala 2014	3,250,000	2,516,540	733,460	1,542,639	2,276,099	447,365	1,095,274	29%	61%	90%
Honduras 2013	1,881,577	1,838,527	125,784	969,639	1,095,423	397,552	572,087	7%	53%	60%
Panama 2010	912,590	896,098	114,167	370,088	484,255	151,736	218,352	13%	41%	54%
	9,228,377	8,217,550	1,250,539	4,306,954	5,557,493	1,737,267	2,569,687	15%	52%	68%

Source: Vivienda en Centroamérica, Latin American Centre for Competitiveness and Sustainable Development (CLACDS), INCAE Business School. Calculated by the authors based on household surveys and housing censuses (Honduras and Panama).

Qualitative deficit and percentage shares

	CHARACTERISTICS	QUALITY OF MATERIALS			BASIC SERVICES		QUALITATIVE DEFICIT
	Tenure	Roof	Walls	Flooring	No drinking water	No sanitation service	
Costa Rica	11.7	0.5	5.4	1.3	0.4	2.2	20
El Salvador	24	25	24	20	27	8	75
Guatemala	12.6	2.8	22.4	29	9.5	44.4	63
Honduras	6.4	10.7	31.2	23	16.8	25.1	55
Panama	5.4	2.9	6.2	8	4.8	31.1	38

Source: Vivienda en Centroamérica, CLACDS, INCAE Business School. Calculated by the authors based on household surveys and housing censuses (Honduras and Panama).