



SPOTLIGHT ON ORGANISATIONS: URBAN ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE

A variety of institutions are tackling environmental challenges through governance mechanisms and initiatives at the city level. Focusing on issues ranging from housing, land policy and slum upgrading, to disaster risk reduction and participatory governance, below is a sample of key organisations and what they can offer to development actors in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.

► United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Unit (*División de Desarrollo Sostenible y Asentamientos Humanos*)

Link: <http://www.cepal.org/dmaah/>

Areas of Expertise: Social development, sustainable development, human settlements, natural resources and infrastructure, economic and social planning

Key activities: Training activities, courses, research, statistical information

ECLAC's Sustainable Development and Human Settlements Unit offers publications and reports about climate change, sustainable development and environmental management in the region. With a large body of publications, reports and statistical information available to download, the unit is a useful resource for those working on urban environmental governance.



► Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Urban and Housing Development Policies Office

Link: <http://www.iadb.org/en/about-us/urban-and-housing-development,6228.html>

Areas of Expertise: Neighbourhood upgrading

Key activities: Financing programme implementation, research

Within the IDB, the Urban Housing Development Policies Office provides national loans for implementing neighbourhood upgrading programmes. It also provides advisory services, capacity development and knowledge dissemination to help policy makers improve the design, evaluation and management of urban programmes. Since many of the urban needs and demands addressed by this office are common to South Asian and African countries, the office's strategies, analysis and evaluation reports will offer useful insights into implementing urban upgrading programmes. Various publications, from books to working papers and policy briefs, can be found on the IDB's publications website.

► Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

Link: <http://www.lincolninst.edu/>

Areas of Expertise: Land policy, land use, land taxation

Key activities: Research, publications, educational programmes

The Lincoln Institute of Land Policy is one of the leading organisations focusing on land use and taxation in the world. It provides educational training programmes like workshops, seminars, and full certification courses to practitioners, policymakers, public officials, and researchers. It also finances research studies on issues related to land markets. The Lincoln Institute's strong educational programme on Latin America has provided high quality knowledge and technical assistance to urban policymakers in the region. With its focus on improving dialogue about urban and environment development, it offers a special opportunity for South Asian and African countries to access and exchange knowledge, either through its online publications and electronic journal, or by participating in seminars and capacity building initiatives.

► United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)

Link: <http://www.cities-localgovernments.org/>

Areas of Expertise: Local governance, city development, gender, decentralisation, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), urban planning, public services

Key activities: Advocacy, networking, communication, knowledge exchange, capacity building

UCLG is an international membership organisation, divided into eight regional sections, composed of members from individual cities and associations of cities from 94 countries. In Latin America, many mayors of the most developed cities are members. The institution promotes local democracy, local autonomy and decentralisation in the development of cities. UCLG generates access to information about issues like progress in decentralisation, action of local government, and effective DRR strategies. Elected representatives and experts from across the world are invited to share experiences and debate about UCLG's core issue areas. It also publishes information online about local networking and exchange, financial cooperation, best practices, awareness campaigns and capacity building.



► The Brazilian Institute for Municipal Administration (*Instituto Brasileiro de Administração Municipal*- IBAM)

Link: <http://www.ibam.org.br/info/internacional/6>

Areas of Expertise: Institutional development, local administration, infrastructure, public services, land use legislation, environmentally friendly development, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

Key activities: Research, capacity building, technical assistance

IBAM works to promote institutional development of the public sector, advising and training local government staff to strengthen their capacity to formulate public policies, improve service provision, and promote local development. Working in Latin American and African countries, it is committed to improving relations between government and society, including through its forum, the 'Municipality Network', with some 4300 members. Though most of their written resources are in Portuguese, such as manuals, practical courses, and academic work, their electronic newsletter is available in English. Overall, IBAM's online publications, information network, and training courses for municipal governments could be useful for South Asian and African public sector actors.

► Network of Social Studies in Disaster Prevention in Latin America (*Red de Estudios Sociales en Prevención de Desastres en América Latina*- LA RED)

Link: www.desenredando.org

Areas of Expertise: Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), disaster risk management, underlying risk drivers, vulnerability

Key activities: Networking between researchers, regional workshops, technical assistance, research, disaster inventory system (*DesInventar*)

LA RED is a network of researchers with a common vision that urban disasters are primarily a result of urbanisation and city growth without quality planning or environmental management, explaining LA RED's specialisation in issues relating to the underlying causes of risk. Since 1992, LA RED has been a key player in the DRR debate, publishing pioneering research, organising workshops, and providing technical assistance to national and international organisations. Their disaster inventory system (*DesInventar*) keeps track of small and large disasters around the world and is a useful resource. Overall, the organisation offers valuable information to South Asian and African actors who would like to better understand how disaster risk is being addressed in Latin American countries.



► International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), Human Settlements Group

Link: <http://www.iied.org/human-settlements/home/about-human-settlements-group>

Areas of Expertise: Sustainable development, climate change adaptation, governance, urban policy, housing finance systems, rural-urban linkages, children and youth

Key activities: Research, programming support through partner organisations, advice to development agencies

The IIED's Human Settlements Group strives to integrate sustainable development concerns into urban policy. They do so mostly by conducting policy research, complemented by technical assistance, seminars and capacity building. The Group works in partnerships with organisations from 20 different countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. They also work closely with other Northern institutions and their staff advise development agencies on work related to urban poverty and the environment. In addition to books and working papers, the Group publishes the journal [Environment and Urbanisation](#), which covers urban concerns in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Their many publications offer a wealth of knowledge for readers in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.

► Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Disasters in Latin America (*Centro de Coordinación para la Prevención de los Desastres en America Latina* – CEPREDENAC)

Link: <http://www.sica.int/cepredenac/>

Areas of Expertise: Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), disaster management, vulnerability reduction

Key activities: Intra-country coordination, knowledge production, technical and scientific support

CEPREDENAC is an intergovernmental agency created by Central American countries to promote DRR projects and programmes in the region, including integrating DRR within development plans and initiatives. The Centre encourages and coordinates international cooperation and information exchange, and provides technical and scientific support relating to mitigation and response to disasters. It also systematises information produced in the region and disseminates knowledge, publications, newsletters, journals, and a database of institutions working on these issues in Latin America, all of which are available on its website.

► The Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR)

Link: <http://www.unisdr.org/>

Areas of Expertise: Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA)

Key activities: Advocacy, networking, communications, global campaigns, monitoring HFA implementation

The secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction is the UN interagency secretariat that coordinates, promotes and strengthens DRR on a global, regional, national, and local level. Its regional offices in Africa, Asia, Latin America, North America, and Europe provide support to actors throughout their regions. They promote the integration of disaster reduction policies into sustainable development and national development agendas. They regularly produce information and educational material, such as the journal ISDR Informs, the online resource [HFA-Pedia](#), and the Global Assessment Reports on Disaster Risk Reduction. The UN/ISDR is an important information source for African and South Asian actors working on DRR.



► National University of Colombia, Institute of Environmental Studies (*Instituto de Estudios Ambientales - IDEA*).

Link: <http://www.manizales.unal.edu.co/idea/>

Areas of Expertise: Sustainable development, Local Agenda 21, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

Key activities: Research, knowledge production, technical and scientific support

IDEA is an interdepartmental research institute committed to research, outreach, and education, aiming to increase national policy and technological capacity for sustainable development and protection of natural heritage. They have been pioneers in supporting local sustainable development and DRR in Colombia, and are a regional reference on these issues as well. IDEA works in cooperation with national and local governments, private agencies, and community groups to support sustainable development through educational and research activities. They publish a newsletter on environmental policy, a journal on management and the environment, and various other publications that can be downloaded online, though most are in Spanish. Their expertise in working with multiple stakeholders and in addressing urban environmental concerns can be useful to others following similar processes in South Asia and Africa.

► ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability

Link: <http://www.iclei.org/>

Areas of Expertise: Sustainable development, local development, water, biodiversity, climate

Activities: Technical consulting, training, distance training, strategic planning, conferences, seminars, networking facilitation and city-to-city exchange

ICLEI is an international association of local governments with members from 70 countries and 1220 local governments around the world, that come together in their joint aim of promoting local sustainable development. ICLEI's focus is local governments because of its belief that the local approach is the best way to achieve sustainability. ICLEI headquarters are in Germany, with many regional offices across the globe. It offers training activities, technical assistance, seminars and conferences, and it carries out research projects. Publications such as manuals, papers, and annual reports are available to download online.

► Latin American Future Foundation (*Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano - FFLA*)

Link: <http://www.ffla.net/new/>

Areas of Expertise: Governance, environment, sustainable development, social-environmental conflicts and prevention, climate change, water governance

Activities: Training, network coordination, political dialogues, forums, research

The FFLA is well known in the region for its work in preventing socio-environmental conflict, promoting multi-stakeholder dialogues for the design of public policies for sustainable development, establishing innovative models of good governance, and capacity building to actors throughout the region. They also maintain an online repository of relevant publications from other organisations as well as their own, all of which will be useful to readers from other regions interested in LA's socio-environmental conflict management and environmental governability experiences.



► Latin American Council of Social Sciences (*Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales* - CLACSO)

Link: <http://www.clacso.org.ar/inicio/inicio.php?idioma=ing>

Areas of Expertise: Climate change, social movements, urban environment

Key activities: Research, knowledge exchange, scholarships, virtual library, research network

CLACSO is an international institution that promotes research, social science education, networking, and knowledge dissemination in the region, with members from 302 research institutions in more than 20 countries. Of particular relevance are its Work Group on Climate Change, Social Movements and Public Policies, and its South-South Collaboration Programme, the latter of which aims to strengthen exchange and collaboration among researchers. This includes an annual research grant competition for which Latin American, African and Asian researchers can apply. With a Latin America-focused social science virtual library of more than 30,000 full texts, some of them in English, the website will be particularly useful to South Asian and Sub-Saharan African researchers.

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FIND OUT MORE FROM [ELLA](#)

To learn more about Latin America's approach to urban environmental governance, read the [ELLA Guide](#), which has a full list of the ELLA knowledge materials on this theme. To learn more about other ELLA development issues, browse other [ELLA Themes](#).



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