



UrbanShift Argentina 1st National-Local Dialogue

Summarised by Pratibha Caleb

Topic of First National-Local Dialogue: Governance platform in Argentina, Challenges of Integrated Urban Planning faced by cities

Level of Representation:

- National government representatives – Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MAyDS), Ministry of Territorial Development and Habitat, Ministry of Public Works, Investment and Foreign Trade Bank, Bank of the Argentine Nation, National University of Salta
- Local government representatives from five cities– Buenos Aires, Mar del Plata, Mendoza, Salta, Ushuaia
- Other Representatives from UN agencies, research institutes and NGOs

Overview

The national local dialogue focused on promoting communication and strengthen coordination between and across levels and areas of government to address climate change, accelerate the implementation of local development priorities and meet the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The thematic topics covered included:

1. **Governance platform in Argentina** – Need to enhance legal and administrative mechanisms to support inter-jurisdictional coordination of climate policies.
2. **Challenges of Integrated Urban Planning** – Need to align national and subnational climate action plans, along with ensuring public traceability and availability of data.
3. **Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency** – Prioritize investments to meet Nationally Determined Contributions, and address economic and social disparities exacerbated by environmental issues

How the National-Local Dialogue Contributed to Existing Policy

National level

As a collaborative effort the national-local dialogue has facilitated enhanced communication and coordination between various levels of government, directly influencing national strategies and policies on sustainable urban development and climate action.



Key Contributions:

1. **Strengthening Governance and Coordination:** The national-local dialogue has promoted a multilevel governance approach, which is crucial for effective climate action and sustainable urban development. By bringing together national and local government representatives, the dialogue has helped align local initiatives with national objectives, ensuring a cohesive and comprehensive approach to policy implementation.
2. **Policy Integration and Co-Creation:** During the dialogue sessions, participants engaged in collaborative workshops to identify challenges, share best practices, and co-create solutions. This participatory approach has resulted in the integration of local insights into national policy frameworks, ensuring that policies are grounded in practical, on-the-ground realities.
3. **Addressing Specific Challenges:** The dialogue has highlighted and addressed specific challenges faced by cities in integrated urban planning. Topics such as governance platforms, renewable energy, and energy efficiency were discussed in depth, leading to actionable commitments and strategies that are now being incorporated into national policies.
4. **Development of a Multilevel Governance Roadmap:** One of the tangible outcomes of the dialogue is the drafting of a multilevel governance roadmap. This roadmap outlines the approach for ongoing communication and coordination between different levels of government, guiding the implementation of urban development projects through a structured and collaborative process. This roadmap is set to be reassessed and refined in future dialogues, ensuring continuous improvement and adaptation of policies.
5. **Enhanced Policy Instruments and Tools:** The dialogue has also contributed to the development and enhancement of policy instruments and tools, such as the National GHG Inventory System and the National Climate Change Information System. These tools are essential for the follow-up, monitoring, and assessment of climate actions, ensuring that policies are not only well-informed but also effectively implemented and tracked.

Local Level

The national-local dialogue in Argentina has significantly contributed to the development and enhancement of local policies. This dialogue has enabled a collaborative and integrated approach to urban planning and sustainable development, which is evident in several key areas:

1. **Strengthened Multilevel Governance:** The national-local dialogue has established a framework for continuous communication and coordination between national and local governments. This structure helps ensure that local policies are aligned with national



priorities and global sustainability goals, thereby fostering a more cohesive approach to urban planning and climate action.

2. **Capacity Building and Resource Allocation:** Through workshops and collaborative sessions, local government representatives have been able to identify gaps in their current project management capacities. This self-diagnostic approach has led to a clearer understanding of the legal, economic, and technical resources needed for local projects. Consequently, local policies have been adjusted to better address these needs, with a focus on securing necessary funding and streamlining regulatory frameworks.
3. **Integrated Urban Planning:** The dialogue has facilitated the creation of integrated urban planning strategies that emphasize sustainability and resilience. For example, the adoption of "ecoMobility" initiatives prioritizes walking, cycling, and public transport over private vehicle use. Additionally, the emphasis on energy efficiency and social inclusion in urban planning helps address both environmental and social disparities at the local level.
4. **Development of Local Climate Action Plans:** Local governments have been encouraged to develop and refine their climate action plans, ensuring these are in line with national commitments and international standards. This includes detailed plans for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, enhancing energy efficiency, and promoting renewable energy use. These localized plans are critical for achieving broader climate goals and are supported by national guidelines and frameworks established through the dialogue.
5. **Enhanced Stakeholder Engagement:** The dialogue has promoted greater involvement of various stakeholders, including civil society, academia, and financial institutions, in the policy-making process. This inclusive approach ensures that local policies are comprehensive and reflect the diverse needs and perspectives of the community. The engagement of these stakeholders has led to more robust and implementable local policies.

Outlook for the Second National-Local Dialogue

The second National-Local Dialogue, scheduled for a date in 2025 will evaluate the progress made since the first dialogue and in which the multilevel governance roadmap being developed by ICLEI's Argentina office will be an essential tool. This dialogue aims to further assess and support actions to be implemented in the short and medium term to achieve tangible results as part of the project.

Reflections on National-Local Dialogue: Key Challenges and Opportunities

The national-local dialogue in Argentina revealed a complex landscape of challenges and opportunities, emphasizing the need for coordinated efforts to achieve sustainable urban



development and climate resilience. Reflecting on these discussions, several key themes emerge:

Key Challenges:

- **Economic and Technical Resource Limitations:** Local governments face significant constraints in terms of financial and technical resources. The disparity between available resources and the ambitious goals of climate action plans poses a critical barrier to effective implementation. The need for sustainable funding mechanisms and technical support is evident to bridge this gap.
- **Alignment and Coordination Across Jurisdictions:** There are varying levels of alignment between subnational climate action plans and national policies. This misalignment often leads to fragmented efforts and inefficiencies. Ensuring cohesive policy implementation across different levels of government requires improved coordination and communication frameworks.
- **Regulatory and Legal Challenges:** The uneven application of existing regulations and the complexity of legal frameworks hinder the execution of local climate initiatives. Streamlining and harmonizing these regulations is necessary to create a conducive environment for local action.
- **Stakeholder Engagement and Participation:** Engaging a wide range of stakeholders, including marginalized communities, in the planning and implementation processes remains a challenge. Effective participation and control by different actors and sectors are crucial for the success of local policies but require deliberate efforts to include diverse voices.
- **Impact of Climate Risks:** Local governments are at the forefront of experiencing climate impacts such as floods, heatwaves, and water stress. Addressing these immediate risks while planning for long-term resilience adds to the complexity of local governance and resource allocation.

Key Opportunities:

- **Strengthened Multilevel Governance:** The dialogue has fostered a stronger framework for multilevel governance, enhancing the collaboration between national and local governments. This structure is crucial for aligning local initiatives with national goals and ensuring a unified approach to sustainable development.
- **Enhanced Policy Integration:** The participatory approach of the dialogue has enabled the integration of local insights into national policy frameworks. This ensures that policies are practical and grounded in the realities of local contexts, leading to more effective implementation.



- **Innovative Urban Planning Solutions:** Opportunities for innovative urban planning solutions, such as ecoMobility and energy efficiency measures, have been highlighted. These initiatives not only address environmental concerns but also promote social inclusion and economic development.
- **Capacity Building and Knowledge Sharing:** The dialogue has facilitated valuable knowledge exchange and capacity building among local government representatives. This collective learning process helps identify best practices and scalable solutions that can be adapted to different local contexts.
- **Development of Comprehensive Climate Action Plans:** Local governments are better positioned to develop comprehensive climate action plans that are aligned with national and international standards. The dialogue has provided a platform for localities to articulate their specific needs and priorities, ensuring that these plans are both ambitious and achievable.
- **Increased Stakeholder Collaboration:** The dialogue has promoted greater collaboration among various stakeholders, including civil society, academia, and financial institutions. This inclusive approach ensures that policies are well-rounded and benefit from diverse perspectives and expertise.

Conclusion

The national-local dialogue has highlighted the multifaceted challenges that local governments face in implementing sustainable urban development and climate resilience measures. However, it has also illuminated significant opportunities for progress through enhanced governance, innovative solutions, and collaborative efforts. Addressing the identified challenges requires sustained commitment, resource mobilization, and a continued emphasis on inclusive and integrated policy-making. The dialogue sets a promising foundation for advancing Argentina's climate and urban development goals through collective action and shared responsibility.