



**INCLUSIVE CITIES  
FORUM**



EUROPEAN UNION



**INCLUSIVE  
CITIES**  
COMMUNITIES OF SOLIDARITY

# INCLUSIVE CITIES, COMMUNITIES OF SOLIDARITY FORUM



**Brussels, Belgium  
June 13th, 2024**



## Introduction

On June 13, 2024, Brussels hosted the forum **“Inclusive Cities, Communities of Solidarity: On June 13, 2024, Brussels hosted the forum “Inclusive Cities, Caring Communities,”** a crucial platform for fostering dialogue on the integration of refugees and migrants in urban settings. The forum emphasized the importance of international cooperation, territorial interventions, and the exchange of experiences to achieve this goal.

This meeting takes place in a context of unprecedented demographic growth, with the projection that 70% of the world’s population will live in urban areas by 2050. Migration, both rural-urban and cross-border, plays a key role in this process, with the case of Venezuela being particularly relevant: since 2015, around 7.7 million Venezuelans have left their country, and 84% have settled in Latin American countries.

In this scenario, “Inclusive Cities, Communities of Solidarity” emerges as a joint initiative between UNHCR, IOM, UN-Habitat and

the European Union. This program, which began in 2020 has benefited more than 160,000 people in 10 Latin American cities. Its comprehensive approach, which includes economic integration strategies, use of public space, co-creation, decision-making tools, and strengthening of social actors, has transformed the challenge of migration into an opportunity for urban prosperity.

And cross-regional learning, the forum aimed to establish connections and share experiences with representatives from active human mobility scenarios in Africa, including the Sahel region and the eastern part of the continent.

The event brought together a dynamic audience of international organizations, local decision-makers, community leaders, and human mobility experts. Discussions centered on practical solutions, aiming to identify adaptable approaches for effective integration across different regions.



General overview of the auditorium



## Developed Agenda

Time	TOPIC/SPEAKER/ORGANIZING ENTITY
9:00 AM	<b>Registration</b>
9:30 AM	<p><b>Opening and Welcome</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Francesco Luciani, Head of Migration and Forced Displacement Unit, Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) – European Commission</li> <li>• Elkin Velásquez, Regional director, UN-Habitat</li> <li>• Ana Durán, Deputy Regional Director for Operations- IOM</li> <li>• Marco Formisano, Senior Regional Liaison Advisor for the Americas, - UNHCR</li> </ul>
10:15 AM	Presentation “Pathways to Effective Integration: Results and Impacts of the Inclusive Cities, Communities of Solidarity Project.” Presented by Roi Chiti, Coordinator Andean Countries Hub, UN-Habitat
10:40 AM	Break
11:00 AM	<p><b>Round Table: “Latin American Voices for Integration”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dialogue on Integration Experiences in Latin America based on Community Processes as a Fundamental Basis for City Transformation.</li> <li>• Cintia, Loaiza, Mayor of Surquillo, Lima, Peru</li> <li>• Ricardo Pérez, Mayor of San Luis, Peru</li> <li>• Diego Martín Franco, Vice Mayor of Manta, Ecuador</li> <li>• Juan Bocanegra, Secretary of Planning of the Municipality of San José de Cúcuta</li> <li>• Community Champions ICCS Project: Andreina Briceño from Chaguanas, Trinidad &amp; Tobago; Yasmina Hera de González from Quito, Ecuador; Luis Castillo, Lima Community, Peru; Mónica Hernández from Cúcuta, Colombia; and Diego Peñaranda from Villa del Rosario, Colombia.</li> </ul>

Time	TOPIC/SPEAKER/ORGANIZING ENTITY
12:30 PM	Closing Remarks “Moving Towards the Future: Perspectives on Urban Integration and Human Mobility in Latin America” Presented by: Ana Durán, Senior Advisor for the Americas, International Organization for Migration (IOM)
1:00 PM	Lunch
2:00 PM	<p><b>Policy Roundtable: Global Exchange of Policies on Inclusive Cities and Communities of Solidarity.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jorge Pereiro Pinon, Team Leader Peace and Security, Governance, Migration and Forced Displacement, INTPA</li> <li>• Mayors and City Representatives: ICCS mayors; Silvia García Vetto-razzi, Planning Manager, Municipality of Guatemala; Andrés Segura, Manager of Migration Affairs of Bogotá, Colombia.</li> <li>• International Experts: Dr. Lucy Earle, International Institute for Environment and Development; Florence Lozet, Cities Alliance; Elena Giral, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations - DG ECHO; Mathias Spaliviero, UN-Habitat (West Africa and Sahel); Marco Formisano, UNHCR</li> </ul>
3:30 PM	Closing and Coffee. Elkin Velásquez, Regional director, UN-Habitat
4:00 PM 6:00 PM	Networking Space



## OPENING AND WELCOME

**Adriana Plata, programme specialist at UN-Habitat for the Andean Countries,** opened the forum, acting as the host and providing a brief context of the “Inclusive Cities, Communities of Solidarity “ project, noting that “This project aims to reduce the vulnerabilities of refugees and migrants, as well as increase the resilience of host communities in 6 countries and 10 cities in Latin America and the Caribbean and highlighting that such spaces serve to share the challenges and opportunities identified by the project during its implementation, as well as this opportunity to learn from lessons learned from other experiences related to territorial solutions towards effective integration.



*Adriana Plata, from UN-Habitat, opening the forum.*



*Francesco Luciano during his intervention.*

**Francesco Luciano, head of the Migration and Forced Displacement Unit at DG INT-PA of the European Commission,** delivered opening remarks, expressing gratitude for attendees and highlighting the EU's ongoing support for the project.

Francesco lauded the “Inclusive Cities, Communities of Solidarity” project for its demonstrable progress and unwavering resilience in confronting challenges.

He underscored the project's commitment to extending its operations beyond the formal conclusion to ensure a lasting impact. In this vein, he emphasized the critical importance of continued collaboration among agencies in effectively addressing the complexities of displacement issues.

Shifting focus to the Latin American context, Mr. Luciano highlighted the plight of the 7.7 million displaced Venezuelans scattered throughout the region. He noted that their situation is often overshadowed by global conflicts like those in Syria or Ukraine. Acknowledged the commendable efforts undertaken by local communities in response to the crisis, while simultaneously recognizing the ongoing challenges faced by displaced populations.

The project's role in mobilizing sustainable solutions and fostering continuous integration efforts was further commended. While acknowledging the limitations of any single initiative, appreciation was extended to cities, local authorities, mayors, community leaders, and UN agencies. Their crucial role in integrating migrants, displaced persons, and their unwavering global collaboration were recognized with sincere gratitude.

**Ana Durán, Deputy Regional Director for Operations at IOM,** emphasized international cooperation and the role of executing organizations, like UNHCR, IOM, and UN-Habitat, in the “Inclusive Cities, Solidarity Communities” Project's success. She highlighted their commitment to achieving this

mission within the framework of the 2030 Agenda. By facilitating socio-economic integration, the project strengthens the social fabric of both host communities and migrants. The closing message urged harnessing territorial commitment to ensure inclusivity for all.

**Marco Formisano, UNHCR Senior Regional Liaison Advisor for the Americas,** He expressed appreciation for the event's participation and testimonies. UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, presented on global displacement trends, revealing a staggering 117 million displaced by year-end 2023. The Americas host a significant portion, with roughly 23 million displaced individuals – one-fifth of the global total. Grandi emphasized the importance of inclusion and integration, noting the unique situation in the Americas with minimal refugee camps. He highlighted the “Seeds of Solidarity” initiative, strengthening municipal responses and fostering framework agreements with involved cities. Currently, 70 cities or provinces are part of this network. Formisano concluded by emphasizing the opportunity refugees and displaced persons represent - promoting integration and preventing marginalization.

**Elkin Velásquez, regional representative of UN-Habitat,** championed collaboration between UN agencies, the international community, and especially municipalities and civil society, highlighting it as the project's cornerstone. He emphasized the importance of social cohesion, acknowledging the politicization of migration and displacement. The project's impact revolves around three pillars: effectiveness, sustainability, and innovation. The latter focuses on equal access to basic services and public spaces for both communities and migrants. Velásquez concluded by urging the international community's continued support for similar Latin American and Caribbean projects, underlining the importance of human security and social inclusion for the region's future.





Opening and Welcome participants  
 - Marco Formisano - Elkin Velásquez - Ana Durán - Francesco Luciani -





# Presentation “Pathways to Effective Integration: Results and Impacts of the Inclusive Cities, Communities of Solidarity Project.”

UN-Habitat’s **Roi Chiti, Andean Countries Coordinator**, delivered a key presentation at the forum. He provided a comprehensive overview of the “Inclusive Cities, Solidary Communities” project’s results and lessons learned, focusing on both achievements and future possibilities within the human mobility landscape.

Chiti, emphasized the project’s unique territorial approach, supporting both host communities and displaced populations. This strategy has proven instrumental in fostering integration and improving living conditions for the most vulnerable. He introduced the innovative Urban Inclusion Scorecard, a vital tool for measuring cities’ integration potential. This tool guides local decision-making, ensuring more inclusive and efficient urban policies.

Project outcomes solidify the importance of inclusive urban development. It not only enhances living conditions for vulnerable groups but also leverages diversity as a driver of innovation and social progress. Chiti highlighted how co-creation processes involving local communities and migrants strengthen social cohesion and the urban fabric.

Chiti’s insightful presentation offered a compelling vision of how collaboration and innovation can transform cities into more inclusive and supportive spaces, showcasing both the project’s advancements and the opportunities that lie ahead.



Roi Chiti during his presentation about ICCS.





Marco Formisano presenting the board of local government representatives.  
 - Diego Martín Franco - Ricardo Pérez - Cintia Loaiza - Juan Bocanegra -



Andreina Briceño - Diego Peñaranda - Mónica Hernández - Yasmina Hera - Luis Castillo



Diego Peñaranda, Community Champion Villa del Rosario



Mónica Hernández, Community Champion Cúcuta



Cintia Loaiza, Mayor of Surquillo - Juan Bocanegra, Secretary of Planning of the Municipality of San Jose de Cúcuta



Yasmina Hera, Community Champion Quito



## Round Table: “Latin American Voices for Integration”

This round table, titled “Latin American Voices for Integration”, served as a platform for a methodological note exchange. Mayors and community leaders from across Latin America and the Caribbean engaged in a dialogue centered on the experiences of integration within the region. The discussion focused on the “Inclusive Cities, Communities of Solidarity” project, highlighting its achievements, challenges, and valuable lessons learned.

**Marco Formisano, Senior Regional Liaison Advisor for the Americas at UNHCR**, moderated the panel and began with an insightful introduction emphasizing the significance of human mobility and its impact on host communities. He highlighted the multifaceted benefits of migration, including its contributions to socioeconomic development, GDP growth, demographic regulation, and increased fiscal revenue.

In Peru, the transformative impact of the ICCS project is evident in the experiences shared by **Mayor of Surquillo, Cintia Loaiza**. She underscores the pivotal role of citizen participation and co-creation processes, which serves as cornerstones for enhancing local governance and fostering community well-being. These participatory approaches have effectively integrated the local population with refugees and migrants, where the Venezuelan population amounts to a total of 1.7 million in Peru, 1.4 million residing in Lima, and over 10,000 in Surquillo.

**Luis Castillo, representing a community organization in Lima and a Venezuelan migrant**, further highlighted the importance of collaboration and synergy among project stakeholders, including organizations, local governments, and communities. This multifaceted approach enables a deeper understanding of strengths and immediate needs, as exemplified by the involvement of Sinfonía Perú, an organization that complements and strengthens the project’s efforts towards inclusion.

From an Ecuadorian perspective, **Vice Mayor Diego Martin of Manta** focused his discourse on sustainability. Drawing upon Ecuador’s own experience with emigration, he emphasized the country’s ability to empathize with and address the challenges faced by Venezuelan migrants. Organizations like the Casa de la Mujer, established in Manta and supported by the ICCS project, serve 12,000 women annually, both migrants and host community members, empowering them to achieve economic independence, promote their entrepreneurial endeavors, and generate income for their households.

A migrant’s perspective on integration, **Yasmina Hera**, a Venezuelan migrant living in Quito, shared her personal experiences with the challenges of integration in host countries. She expressed her gratitude for the ICCS project and its collaboration with various organizations, which played a pivotal role in revitalizing and improving public spaces, creating inclusive zones for the entire population and fostering a sense of belonging for all.

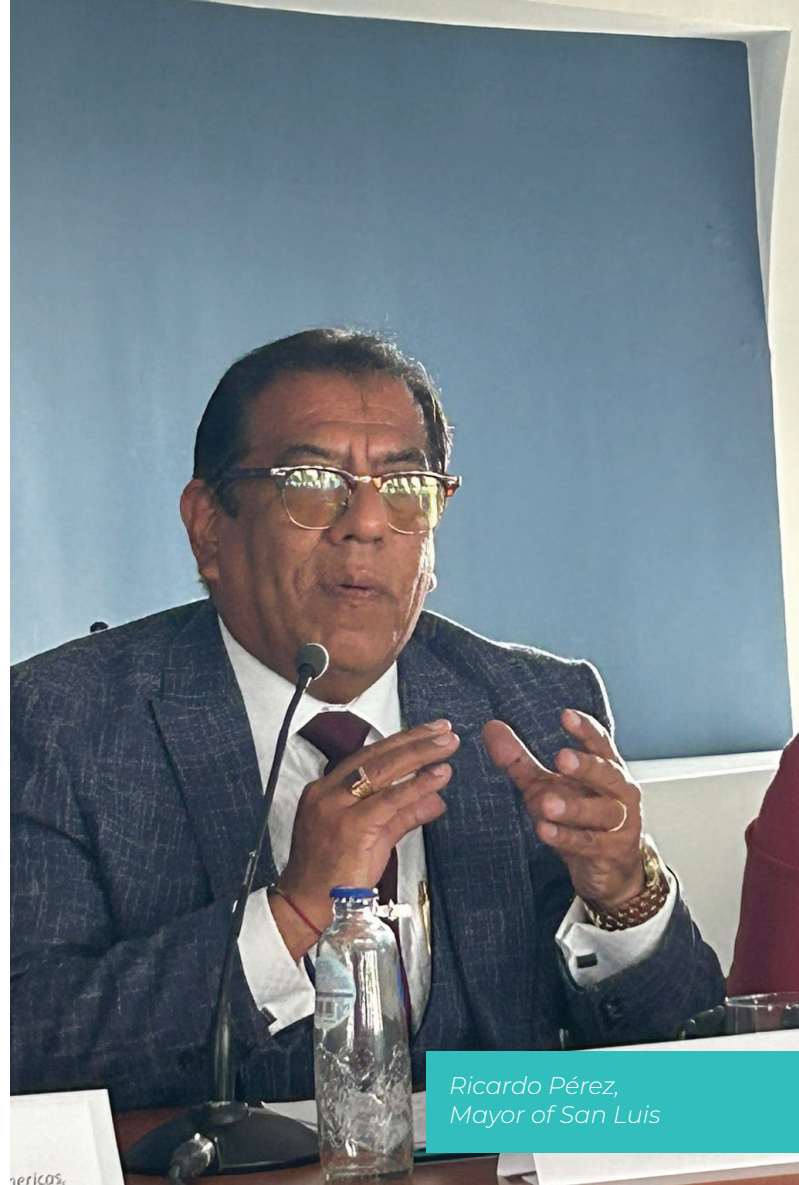
Representing Colombia’s experience, **Juan Bocanegra, Secretary of Planning for the Mayor’s Office of Cúcuta**, a border city with Venezuela, highlighted the stark contrast between the city’s centralized service provision and the vast needs of its population, particularly in the face of a surge in Venezuelan migrants. This disparity fueled a sense of inequality and underscored the urgency for integration efforts. However, the ICCS project, through its co-creation processes and implementation of public space interventions, has effectively addressed these disparities, transforming Cúcuta into a more inclusive city.

Community leaders **Mónica Hernández from Cúcuta** and **Diego Peñaranda from Villa del Rosario** highlighted the ICCS project’s unique ability to foster community trust in neighborhood transformation and





Andreina Briceño,  
Community Champion Chaguana



Ricardo Pérez,  
Mayor of San Luis

collaboration with local governments and organizations. They emphasized the transformative power of recreation and sports, underscoring their role in mitigating hunger and/or drug addiction.

**Andreina Briceño**, a Venezuelan migrant and community representative in Chaguana, Trinidad and Tobago, shared her positive experiences with the ICCS project. She highlighted the transformative impact of the project's methodologies, particularly in the areas of community participation, training, and urban security.

**The mayor Ricardo Pérez of San Luis**, Peru emphasized the vulnerability and lack of services in migrant settlements. He under-

scored the ICCS project's role in not only revitalizing public spaces but also fostering trust, integration, and inclusion, a positive change that had not been seen in over 30 years.

The roundtable discussion concluded with a reaffirmation of the importance of integration as a multifaceted process that requires collaboration among diverse stakeholders, including governments, organizations, and communities. The ICCS project emerged as a beacon of hope, demonstrating the effectiveness of participatory approaches, sustainable solutions, and unwavering commitment to empowering both migrants and host communities.





Ana Durán, representing IOM

## Closing Remarks by Ana Durán

Ana Durán, representing IOM summarizing the morning session's conclusions, emphasized the valuable learning experience gained by all agencies in terms of coordination and collaboration to achieve optimal outcomes for all stakeholders. She highlighted the collaborative nature of the work with local governments and communities, acknowledging the ongoing journey towards addressing all socioeconomic needs, regularization processes, and humanitarian assistance as integral components of true inclusion.

Durán stressed that inclusion permeates everyday life, from food and sports to daily interactions, and that fostering empathy is crucial for harmonious coexistence. She underscored the importance of on-the-ground experiences for local authorities, as they provide direct insights into the nationwide impact of migration. Drawing upon Colombia's example, she highlighted the significance of establishing articulated worktables between actors, which can be replicated at the municipal level across the region.



Group photo after Closing Remarks



## Policy Roundtable: Global Exchange of Policies on Inclusive Cities and Communities of Solidarity.

**Dyfed Aubrey, moderator of the roundtable,** emphasized the morning session's valuable exchange of experiences. Champions of solidarity shared their efforts in integrating Venezuelan refugees and migrants, fostering social cohesion. Their initiatives resonated strongly, offering successful models for other countries.

The afternoon session, Aubrey noted, would delve deeper. UN-Habitat would present insights from Latin American cities like Bogotá and Guatemala City, alongside experiences from West Africa, the Sahel, and East Africa.

### **Andrés Segura, Manager of Migratory Affairs, Bogotá, Colombia:**

Bogotá used a clever Toy Story analogy to illustrate the integration challenge – the initial clash between “migrants and host communities” eventually forming a unified whole. This city champions a progressive public policy for migrant care, focusing on dismantling barriers to integration and facilitating access to essential services. Their approach is both territorial and sectoral, ensuring a city-wide strategy. Bogotá views migration not as a crisis, but as a development opportunity, preparing itself for the dynamic nature of human mobility.

### **Silvia García Vettorazzi, Planning Manager, Guatemala City:**

Vettorazzi tackled the challenges faced by transitory migrants, emphasizing the urgency of acknowledging, attending to, and integrating this often overlooked population. The municipality is actively working to create a more welcoming city. Research initiatives and urban operations aim to improve living conditions in informal settlements. Additionally, the “Prosperous Neighborhood” project focuses on local urban development and fostering participation among residents, including transient migrants.

### **Florence Lozet, Cities Alliance:**

Lozet highlighted her organization's work with the urban poor, encompassing refugees and migrants. Notably, she emphasized the recent emergence of a global urban migration program, only established in 2017. Lozet challenged the perception of migration as a burden on low-income countries, arguing it often strains already stretched city resources. She advocated for a “dual approach,” emphasizing the early involvement of both local and national authorities. Additionally, Lozet stressed the importance of ensuring direct benefits to communities from integration projects, fostering a more positive narrative around social cohesion.

### **Ishaku Maitumbi, UN-Habitat Somalia:**

Maitumbi addressed Somalia's high urban displacement, often driven by climate change. He emphasized empowering local authorities by fostering innovative solutions. This includes private sector involvement and capturing land value to support local efforts. This approach aims to integrate host communities, improve social cohesion, and ultimately create culturally appropriate solutions. Maitumbi stressed developing local financing mechanisms as crucial for effectively addressing the needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs).

### **Matthias Spaliviero, UN-Habitat, West Africa and Sahel:**

Spaliviero shared insights from Burkina Faso and the Sahel, emphasizing dynamic conflict patterns and the need to analyze and prepare for shifting movement patterns. He highlighted the importance of multi-scale territorial approaches and robust spatial monitoring for informed decision-making. Kaya, Burkina Faso, serves as a case study. The city's population tripled due to dis-

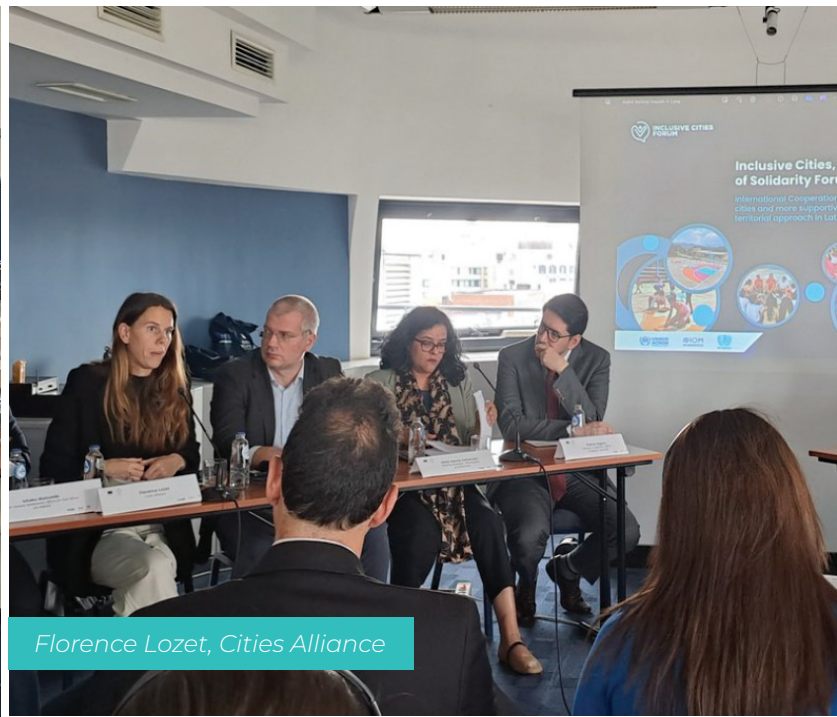




Dyfed Aubrey, moderator of the roundtable



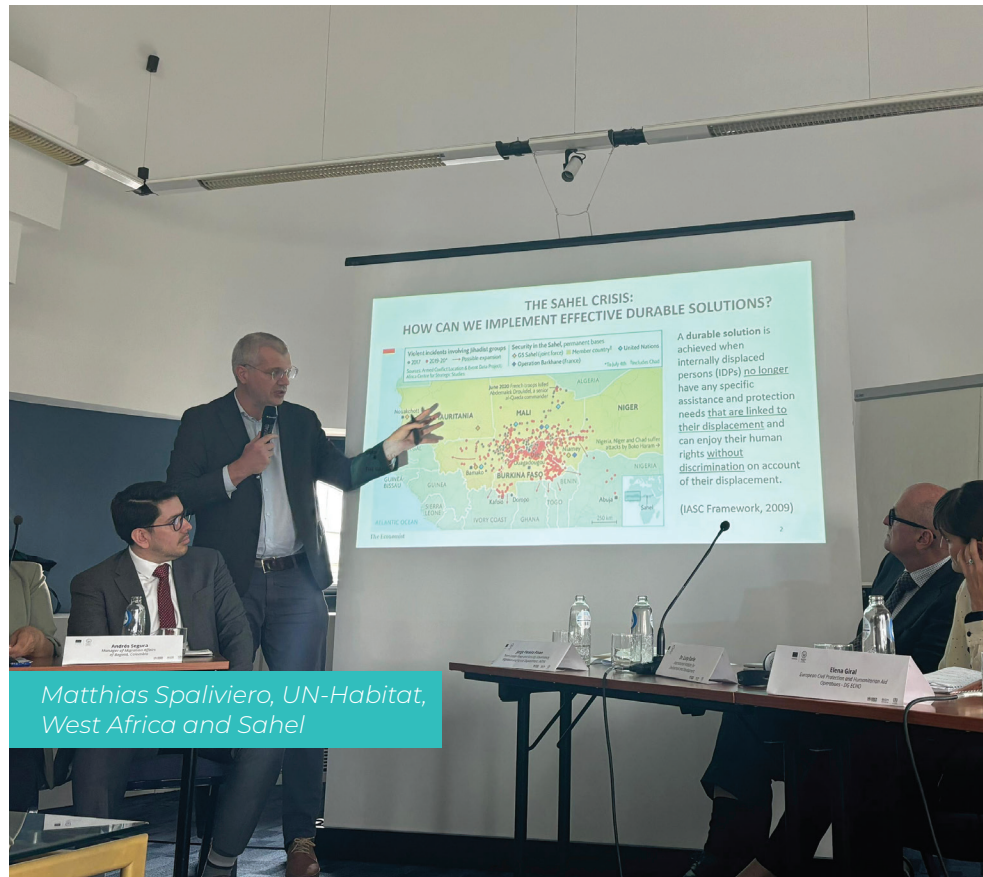
Andrés Segura, Manager of Migratory Affairs, Bogotá



Florence Lozet, Cities Alliance



Silvia García Vettorazzi, Planning Manager Guatemala City - Andrés Segura, Manager of Migratory Affairs, Bogotá



Matthias Spaliviero, UN-Habitat, West Africa and Sahel



placement, prompting the development of stakeholder platforms to enhance municipal coordination.

### **Lucy Earl, Director of Human Settlements, IIED:**

Earl presented key findings from the “Protracted Displacement in an Urban World” research project, drawing on data from over 4,000 surveys conducted in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Jordan, and Kenya. The findings paint a complex picture:

**1. Vulnerability in Cities:** Displaced persons in urban areas often struggle to meet basic needs, lacking self-sufficiency.

**2. Heterogeneity of Experience:** Education levels and circumstances among displaced individuals vary significantly, regardless of their location in refugee camps or cities.

**3. Limited Safety Nets in Camps:** Refugee camps frequently fail to provide a reliable safety net, with high rates of malnutrition and limited access to healthcare.

**4. Challenges of Camp Transformation:** Transforming refugee camps into functional cities is impractical due to their isolation and dependence on artificial economies.

### **Jorge Pereiro Pinon, Team Leader Peace and Security, Governance, Migration and Forced Displacement, INTPA:**

The speaker underscored the urgency of addressing urban displacement in Africa. He highlighted that a staggering 60% of refugees and a remarkable 90% of IDPs reside in urban areas, constituting a third of the total displaced population. He noted the large-scale movements across Africa, with hundreds of thousands migrating annually. These secondary cities, often lacking re-

sources and infrastructure, bear the brunt of the influx. Further compounding the challenge, these areas grapple with decentralization issues and limited fiscal resources.

He advocated for a paradigm shift, moving away from camp-centric responses towards tailored solutions for urban settings. He emphasized the need to differentiate between local communities, displaced persons, and migrants. An area-based approach was championed, highlighting a program’s success in allocating resources directly to municipalities. This strategy demonstrably improved social service coverage and public confidence. The positive outcomes of this approach warrant further investment and expansion to other regions.

### **Marco Formisano, Senior regional Liaison Advisor for the Americas UNHCR**

Formisano pointed to the Americas’ unique situation, with a focus on urban environments and a lack of recent displacement camps.

He highlighted the importance of the Cartagena Declaration +40, a forum that convenes every decade to reassess refugee responses. He emphasized the critical role cities play in providing protection and solutions for displaced populations, serving as the frontline for their needs.

Shifting gears, Formisano stressed the need for centralized mechanisms across regions - Europe, the Americas, and Africa - to facilitate access to essential services like healthcare, education, and employment for refugees and migrants. He championed integration and overcoming barriers to build inclusive communities. Finally, Formisano urged a multi-regional approach with stronger local efforts in urban planning. He concluded by reframing displacement as not just a challenge, but as an opportunity for development that benefits vulnerable communities.



*Jorge Pereiro Pinon, Team Leader Peace and Security, Governance, Migration and Forced Displacement INTPA - Dr. Lucy Earle, International Institute for Environment and Development - Elena Giral, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations - Marco Formisano, Senior regional Liaison Advisor for the Americas UNHCR*



*Ishaku Maitumbi, UN-Habitat Somalia*



*Marco Formisano, Senior regional Liaison Advisor for the Americas UNHCR*

**Elena Giral, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations - DG ECHO**

This intervention highlights the complexities of humanitarian crises, be it natural disasters or conflict. She emphasizes that immediate actions have lasting consequences. The focus should shift beyond just temporary shelter. Long-term planning is crucial, ensuring interventions endure for decades, not weeks. The speech urges cooperation among humanitarian actors, donors, and local authorities to prepare for future crises, transforming emergency responses into sustainable solutions.

The concept of the “nexus” shouldn’t be a mere buzzword, but a guiding principle. It should inform humanitarian action and emergency response. Effective collaboration is key, preparing all actors to face short- and long-term challenges in a coordinated and sustainable manner.



*Silvia García Vettorazzi, Planning Manager, Guatemala City*



## Closing

Elkin Velásquez opened his speech by highlighting the insightful discussions that emerged throughout the forum. He emphasized the first part's immersive exploration of the “Inclusive Cities, Communities of Solidarity” project and the complexities of integration. **Velásquez stressed that successful integration requires a strategic, continuous, and responsive approach built on joint efforts.**

Velásquez, the regional director, highlighted key takeaways from the forum. One was the need for **stronger data collection and utilization**, an area with significant potential. He emphasized IOM's role in acquiring and leveraging data to inform interventions and solutions.

**Multi-level collaboration** was the second point. Velásquez stressed the necessity of collaboration between local and national governments, alongside multilateral organizations, each contributing their expertise and resources.

Third, Velásquez emphasized the importance of **community-centered interventions**. The ICCS project exemplified this approach, leveraging local wisdom and efforts to drive territorial-scale interventions. He explained that while national guidance is valuable, daily life experiences provide a more accurate understanding of community needs and solutions.

The morning session offered insights into territorial-scale interventions, acknowledging the challenges' magnitude. It highlighted the importance of **local-level sustainability and continuity**. Velásquez emphasized that integration cannot be achieved within just four years, underlining the crucial role of local administrations despite leadership changes.



*Elkin Velásquez, regional director UN-Habitat ROLAC.*

He also addressed the importance of **cities developing resilience plans** not just for disasters but for other human security concerns. Velásquez concluded by stating that human mobility, migration, and climate change are driving substantial global transformations and cannot be addressed without considering urbanization issues.

Mr. Velásquez concluded his speech expressing heartfelt gratitude to the dedicated champions of the “Inclusive Cities, Communities of Solidarity” project, representatives from local governments, the European Union, and UN organizations. He emphasized that “Inclusive Cities, Communities of Solidarity” has already established itself as a movement with an inclusive and cohesive perspective, where the collective efforts of local authorities, communities, and national and social organizations result in a common goal: effective integration of Refugees and Migrants with host communities.







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