

Cities on the edge

Bogotá Call to Action

Metropolises in a global storm

A perfect storm is descending on the world's major cities. With the effects of the climate emergency underway and the Covid-19 pandemic not yet over, a succession of interrelated global emergencies is looming over the major metropolises. From our network, Metropolis, the major cities and metropolitan areas issue an urgent warning with this Bogotá Call.

Our economies, still affected by the pandemic, are suffering the full force of the disruption of global economic flows. Climate change is hitting us with more and more frequent extreme events. Food insecurity has become a daily concern for millions of people. The number of internally displaced persons and refugees is at an all-time high.

The effects are evident on our streets, in our neighbourhoods and, above all, for the people living in these areas. A new poverty is growing, often with a woman's face. Women are over-represented in the most affected professions, in the most precarious and unstable jobs, and in family and community care. In addition, violence against women and girls has increased in the pandemic.

Local governments are on the front line of these emergencies, but our resources are stretched to the limit. Public services are still suffering the consequences of the pandemic, and public servants are on the verge of exhaustion. The next rung of the care ladder, families and women, are even worse off, bearing the brunt of these new crises. The carers urgently need support and care themselves. They must be put at the centre of metropolitan governance and crisis management projects.

We, the members of Metropolis, launch from Bogotá this urgent call to action, a warning cry in the face of a complex global emergency. We do so knowing that the future holds more emergencies like this one and that we must prepare ourselves to deal with them.

Our commitment: time for care

In these difficult times, governments in major metropolises have a great responsibility. We must focus on the well-being and future prospects of millions of people, governing with empathy to solve local problems while maintaining a global perspective. At this crucial time, our priority must be to take care of people and the planet and to equip ourselves with the metropolitan-scale capabilities needed to face a future of increasingly frequent and complex emergencies.

Our commitment is:

Caring for people

- Putting care for people at the heart of our economic recovery plans and our day-to-day management.
- Healing the long-term impacts of the pandemic and confinement through public action, especially for children and young people.
- Planning for the future of our cities so people can live dignified, healthy, safe, secure and opportunity-filled lives.

Caring for the planet

- By committing to models of mobility and consumption that have less impact on the planet and people's time and health.
- Reducing the energy footprint of our cities and mitigating their contribution to climate change.
- Restoring the natural environment to reduce environmental risks, better withstand climate stresses and reverse the decline in biodiversity.
- Promoting citizen co-ownership in public sustainability and resilience policies and including nature-based solutions in metropolitan growth.

Enhancing governance capacities

- Seeing people as a source not only of data and information but also of solutions, decisions and, above all, as holders of rights.
- Providing local and metropolitan governments with new knowledge, technology and direct management capacities, essential for facing new challenges and complex emergencies.
- Committing to innovative governance on a metropolitan scale, the most relevant scale for successfully facing current and future events.

Caring for peace

We are united in promoting and building peace in our cities, nations and globally. Metropolitan cities worldwide are suffering the global consequences of the dramatic changes in geopolitics. We stand in solidarity with people and communities in all cities suffering from unjust harm, violence and destruction from war and conflict, particularly in Ukrainian cities. Cities are playing important roles in addressing the crisis with solidarity, promoting talks and communication, welcoming and hosting refugees, and providing relief and assistance, and we will be part of the solution when the time for city diplomacy, reconstruction and reconciliation comes. It is time to revive the deep commitment to peace and dialogue among the global movement of cities and local governments. As an expression of this commitment, we welcome Kiev as a new member of Metropolis, in addition to Makassar and the Metropolitan Authority of Kocaeli.

Metropolis is a safe space for cities to engage with each other towards achieving their interests and promoting peaceful relationships through constructive and shared actions and goals.