

Mayors for Migrants: Our Multi-Level Call to Action

Climate Change, Cities and Forced Migration: Advancing Knowledge, Action and Collaboration



The Call to Action was established by a majority of votes of the GPM mayors on 18 July 2021.

Local Action

- As mayors, we will lead in building awareness and knowledge. Climate-forced displacement and migration are not yet under serious discussion in our cities. We are all undertaking significant steps to prepare for and adapt to the impacts of climate change. And we are undertaking mitigation actions, some of which are focused on the reduction of carbon and other greenhouse gases, as well as on green and just job creation. Yet awareness must be raised on the intersection of these challenges. Migrants, especially women and youth, can play an important role in making our efforts inclusive, as can intergenerational dialogue.
- To advance such awareness, we must build better data and knowledge about the intersection of climate change and migration. Where appropriate, we will invest in local data collection and engage in evidence-based urban planning that recognizes climate-forced migration and the need for adaptation and resiliency planning. At the same time, we must respect and work with indigenous communities in protecting natural resources and building resilience to climate-change impacts and advance community engagement. In that respect we welcome the Race to Resilience campaign launched at the Climate Adaptation Summit 2021 that aims to catalyse action by non-state actors that builds the resilience of 4 billion people from vulnerable groups and communities to climate risks in urban, rural and coastal areas by 2030.
- Our fellow local leaders have called for raising awareness among local communities regarding the value of cultural assets and heritage, including indigenous and subsistence practices, and protecting them as part of local adaptation strategies. The local leaders that utilize participatory budgeting and planning are better equipped to tap into this local knowledge. These knowledge building efforts must be advanced in collaboration with regional and international networks of mayors and cities, as well as national governments.
- We must harness the potential of urban-rural circular migration to help strengthen vulnerable communities and regional economies, while reducing the impacts on urban infrastructure from climate-forced migration. Such local economic efforts should be part of an overall inclusive departure and arrival policy, based on a development coalition between the local authorities, the market and the commons.
- Addressing climate-forced migration should be recognized at national, regional and international levels, as a credible measure of adaptation, allowing access to funds/grants assigned for climate action and disaster risk management to finance migration-related resilience and adaptation projects, as well as inclusive relocation programs. Artificial policy distinctions should not create barriers to enabling local solutions.

Global Advocacy and Partnerships

- We urge all actors of the international community, particularly governments and international organizations, to advance their policies on climate-forced migration, by taking action locally and engaging in key multilateral fora.
- We welcome the efforts of the Africa Climate Mobility Initiative in harnessing the potential of mobility in the context of the climate crisis and support its engagements to address climate-forced migration and displacement in the continent. In this regard, we reiterate the importance of city perspectives and local contributions to ensure sound policy design and well-informed planning strategies, grounded in local socio-cultural contexts, in support of affected and vulnerable communities. And we welcome the establishment of the C40 Cities - Mayors Migration Council Global Mayors Task Force on Climate and Migration that will include and amplify the voices of migrants and diaspora communities affected by climate change. Recognizing that we strengthen our voice through collaboration, we as the Uniting Mayors Coalition commit to work with the C40-MMC Task Force in partnership to advance these efforts together and harness the power of our joint global advocacy.
- We will continue to collaborate with and support the advocacy work of civil society and expert organizations, including through multi-sectoral partnerships and science-policy collaborations to accelerate effective and sustainable action on climate-forced displacement and migration. In doing so, we will work not only with large initiatives, but also with small coalitions and networks that drive agendas forward from the ground-up.
- We urge the international community to ensure that the nations facing existential threats as a result of the climate crisis are able to re-establish themselves and maintain their sovereignty, collective identity and cultural heritage in a safe and adequate location.
- We will build fiscal capacity by pooling resources from private, public, non-profit, and government partners. We recognize the importance of the private and philanthropic sectors in driving mitigation and adaptation efforts. We need to harness these resources, to address climate-forced displacement and migration. And we will look beyond local and national governments to international institutions, philanthropic non-profits, and private investors to empower local leaders to proactively prepare for climate displacement and migration. Funding should be utilized to finance not only city-wide planning but also community-led projects.
- Regional financial facilities for parts of Africa and Asia must be developed and dedicated to financing adaptation, development and resilience programs to mitigate the impacts of climate-forced migration, as well as extending technical support and assistance to affected countries. As local leaders focused on local governance, we at times require additional capacity to access new funding sources. Supporting administrative capacity in cities is critical to identifying and tapping fiscal resources

Mayors supporting the Call to Action



Mayor Yousef Shawarbeh
Amman, Jordan



Mayor Rohey Malick Lowe
Banjul, the Gambia



Mayor Albano Carige
Beira, Mozambique



Mayor Marvin Rees
Bristol, United Kingdom



Mayor Stephen Benjamin
Columbia, USA



Mayor Mxolisi Kaunda
Durban, South Africa



Mayor Hubert Bruls
Nijmegen, the Netherlands



Mayor Yvonne Aki-Sawyer
Freetown, Sierra Leone



Mayor Mathias de Clercq
Ghent, Belgium



Mayor Marie Angele Meyanga
Afanloum, Cameroon



Mayor Ricardo Rio
Braga, Portugal



Mayor Peter Kurz
Mannheim, Germany



Mayor Philippe Close
Brussels, Belgium



Mayor Geoffrey Ngiriker
Nebbi, Uganda



Mayor Mohamed Sadiki
Rabat, Morocco



Mayor Leoluca Orlando
Palermo, Italy



Mayor Baikuntha Neupane
Vyas, Nepal



Mayor Jan van Zanen
The Hague, the Netherlands



Mayor Tayseer Abu Snienah
Hebron, Palestine



Mayor Jacek Sutryk
Wrocław, Poland



Mayor Landing B. Sanneh
Mansakonko Council, the
Gambia



Mayor Marcin Krupa
Katowice, Poland



Mayor Grace Mary Mugasa
Hoima, Uganda



Mayor Helder Sousa Silva
Mafra, Portugal



Mayor Peter Soulsby
Leicester, United Kingdom



Mayor Dan Plato
Cape Town, South Africa



Mayor Nan Whaley
Dayton, Ohio, USA



Mayor Naseer Ahmad Lilizai
Puli Alam, Afghanistan



Mayor Mihhail Kõlvart
Tallinn, Estonia



Mayor Constantinos Yiorkadjis
Nicosia, Cyprus



Mayor William Peduto
Pittsburgh, USA



Mayor Byamugisha Sentaro
Kampala (Kabale), Uganda



Mayor Erion Veliaj
Tirana, Albania



Mayor Rasamimanana
Honoré Gabriel
Antsirabe, Madagascar



Cllr. Tracy Rawlins
Manchester, UK



Mayor Manuel A. Alculete
Lopes de Araujo
Quelimane, Mozambique



Deputy Mayor Katryn
Habenschaden
Munich, Germany



Mayor Juan María Aburto
Bilbao, Spain



Mayor Óscar Escobar
Palmira, Colombia



Mayor Bpk Emil
Elestianto Dardak
Trenggalek, Indonesia



Mayor Solomon Mguni
Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

Partners supporting the Call to Action



The British Council



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Mayors Migration Council



C40 Cities