

DARING CITIES 2023: A JUST AND EQUITABLE CLIMATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

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Created by ICLEI and the Federal City of Bonn, Daring Cities is a recurring, virtual, action-oriented forum to recognize and empower courageous urban leaders – including mayors and other decision-makers, technical staff, researchers, private sector representatives, and community organizers – to disrupt business-as-usual and shift towards business-as-possible. Daring Cities showcases and catalyzes exemplary local climate action to tackle the climate emergency, including ambitious resilience-building and climate mitigation efforts. For more information, visit: https://daringcities.org/

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In today's world, the impacts of the climate emergency are felt far and wide, but they are not borne equally. Acknowledging these challenges is also about recognizing the disparities they exacerbate.

Across the globe, communities already burdened by systemic inequalities bear the brunt of climate impacts disproportionately. These communities may include, but are not limited to, women, elderly people, children, racialized peoples, LGBTQIA+ people, and migrants, who often face heightened

MULTILEVEL ACTION

CITIES HAVE

RESILIENCE HUB 9

TO BE ON BOARD

is the only solution

vulnerabilities. Moreover, these disparities vary from region to region, demanding tailored solutions that address local realities.

In the rush to combat the climate emergency, there's a risk of overlooking those that are most affected by the climate emergency and making long-lasting policy decisions that can further intensify already-existing inequalities. To forge a sustainable future, we must prioritize just and equitable decision-making to ensure holistic policy development and implementation. This entails not only recognizing the unique needs of each community but also ensuring that policy responses are inclusive and sensitive to their contexts.

As we convened at Daring Cities 2023, we were tasked with pondering how to ensure a just and equitable transition in our climate emergency responses. It was a call to action for all of us to come together, engaging every sector and segment of society. How can we swiftly and effectively implement multilevel climate responses that not only address the urgency of the crisis but also foster a fair and equitable transition to a green local economy?

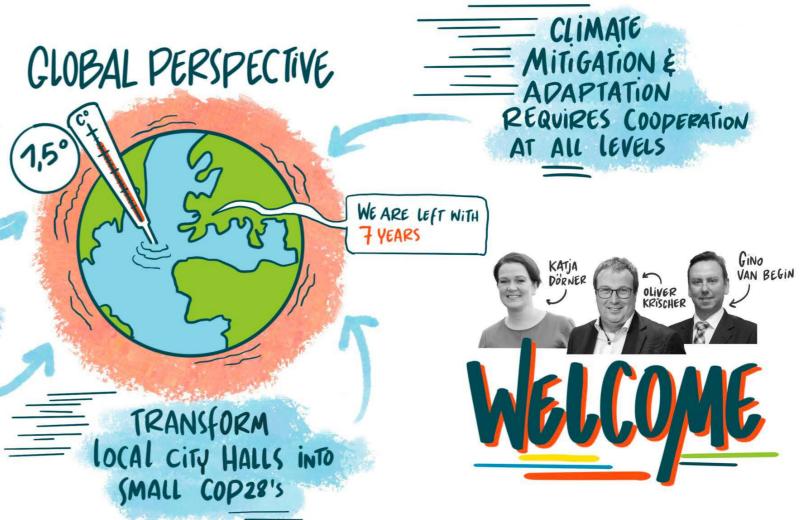
This is our challenge, our opportunity, and our responsibility.

BACKGROUND

Daring Cities 2023 is the fourth iteration of Daring Cities, which has occurred annually since 2020. The heart of the event has always been acknowledging, celebrating, and promoting local climate action. Convened by ICLEI and the Federal City of Bonn, Germany, Daring Cities is designed to empower urban decision-makers – such as mayors, city councilors, administrators, and urban thought leaders, as well as national government representatives, researchers, technical staff, business leaders, civil society decision-makers and community organizers – to lead in the climate emergency.

Many daring cities, towns, and regions are already responding to the climate emergency, but they need support and action from fellow local and regional governments, communities and stakeholders, national governments, and the international community. Their demands have been documented in the <u>Daring Cities 2021: Call for Transformation</u>.

To advance progress on some of these demands, Daring Cities 2023 was shaped in a way that brought local, regional, and national governments together for meaningful dialogues. We also invited national government representatives to engage in significant conversations with local players, highlighting concerns and challenges that prevent a more effective and collaborative dialogue among different levels of government and broader whole-of-society approaches to tackling the climate emergency.



VISUALS BY JOYCE VAN KERCKHOVE @VISUALITYEU



OUR APPROACH: KNOW MORE, ACT BETTER, LEAD TOGETHER

At the event's core lies the acknowledgment, celebration, and promotion of local action. Focusing on a just and equitable climate emergency response, Daring Cities 2023 **applied the Know-Act-Lead approach** to empower participants to:

KNOW MORE

Daring Cities presents and shares the most cutting-edge research and information on the climate crisis and its impact on cities around the world, aimed at creating dialogue between researchers and practitioners.

ACT BETTER

Knowledge alone won't solve the climate emergency. Urban leaders often need valuable insights from other cities' successful climate action examples. Daring Cities provides a platform to showcase these examples, enabling other governments to learn and adapt them locally.

LEAD TOGETHER

From sharing concrete actions to advocating for better collaboration and more ambition, Daring Cities is all about championing the voices of bold leaders tackling the climate emergency.



THREE CORNERSTONES: EXCHANGE - DISSEMINATE - ADVOCATE

Combining the best of in person and virtual interactions, Daring Cities 2023 created a global initiative to exchange knowledge, build capacity, and elevate the voices of diverse stakeholders.

The structure followed three cornerstones - Exchange, Disseminate and Advocate - to guide and empower urban leaders already responding to the climate emergency within their jurisdictions. Simultaneously, it ensured that the key messages and demands of Daring Cities are being heard by those governments and actors outside of the bubble of ambitious local climate action, mainstreaming a multilevel approach throughout climate action planning, policy making and implementation.

CORNERSTONE I: EXCHANGE

High-level participants, technical experts, local and regional government leaders, national government representatives, and other key stakeholders discussed how to effectively collaborate and deliver a multilevel climate emergency response that is both just and equitable. These exchanges featured diverse global perspectives, with compelling insights from daring cities, towns and regions from all over the globe.

Cornerstone I - Exchange was built upon **two key events:**



Daring Cities 2023 Dialogues

Held from 12 to 13 June in Bonn, Germany, alongside the UNFCCC Bonn Talks, this in-person event offered high-level dialogues allowing participants to revitalize partnerships and explore effective collaboration.



Daring Cities 2023 Virtual Forum

Spanning from July to September, these 18 online sessions offered a globally accessible program on solution-oriented discussions, workshops, and technical training. From sharing best practices to deep diving into regional and sectoral insights to tackle the climate emergency, all these sessions are publicly available here.

CORNERSTONE II: DISSEMINATE

During Urban October, a full month dedicated to promoting a sustainable urban future recognized by UN-Habitat, ICLEI championed the key findings and outcomes of the Daring Cities 2023 Dialogues and Virtual Forum. We brought learnings and perspectives from cities and regions to an even wider audience, such as at the MENA Regional Climate Week, the European Cities & Regions week, and the Amazon Regional ICLEI Meeting.

CORNERSTONE III: ADVOCATE

Since the first UNFCCC Conference of Parties (COP) in 1995 to the recent COP28, ICLEI has served as the focal point for the Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) Constituency. This has given more prominence to the voice of cities, towns and regions at the UNFCCC process, coordinating inputs to negotiations, mobilizing delegations, and bridging dialogue between the UNFCCC Secretariat and subnational governments. In this role, we brought the key findings from Cornerstone I to COP28 in Dubai to help guide the climate agenda forward into 2024.

OUR 2023 PARTNERS

Daring Cities is an initiative led by ICLEI, supported by major contributions and support from the Federal City of Bonn, the Federal State of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW), the Foundation for International Dialogue of the Savings Bank in Bonn, and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) of Germany.



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The State Government of North Rhine-Westphalia





DARING CITIES 2023 BY THE NUMBERS



PARTICIPANTS BY ICLEI REGION







ICLEI Member since 2000, the Federal City of Bonn, Germany, stands as a pivotal force in the fight against climate change, hosting Daring Cities annually while marking more than twenty years as a UN stronghold. Over this period, Bonn has evolved into a global sustainability and resilience hub, housing over 20 UN agencies and organizations like ICLEI.

Lord Mayor Katja Dörner currently serves on the ICLEI Global Executive Committee as Co-Chair of the Climate Action and Low Emission Development Portfolio. The City has been constantly working on improving its sustainable performance by adopting local action programs, by successfully establishing forms of cooperation with cities all over the world, and by launching activities that advance sustainable development

Noteworthy collaborations, such as the <u>Bonn-Cape Coast (Ghana) knowledge-sharing initiative</u>, exemplify Bonn's commitment to real-world solutions. Additionally, its <u>Bonn4Future Plan</u> engaged citizens and stakeholders in climate action, contributing to the city's Climate Action Plan for achieving climate neutrality by 2035 and setting a powerful example for other cities worldwide.



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"The Daring Cities 2023 Dialogues at the Bonn Talks has brought together mayors and leaders during the UN Bonn Climate Change Conference, where we focused on just transition, resilience, local participation in the Global Stocktake, and the progress towards the implementation of the 2030 agenda. As ICLEI leaders, we were able to enter an open dialogue with the parties to the UNFCCC and the IPCC."

Katja Dörner | Lord Mayor of the City of Bonn and Co-Chair of ICLEI's Climate Action and Low Emission Development Portfolio

BONN DIALOGUE

For the first time since COVID-19, local leaders and stake-holders met in person in June for the kickoff of Daring Cities 2023, which was held alongside the UNFCCC Bonn Climate Talks (SB58). The opening session placed the just transition at the heart of the climate emergency response and, in so doing, pushed leaders and changemakers to consider how to roll out solutions at all levels that empower communities and present opportunities to civil society in a just and equitable way.





BONN BECOMES A RESILIENCE HUB AT DARING CITIES 2023

Making Cities Resilient 2030 (MCR2030) kicked off in 2020 at the first Daring Cities. Today, more than twenty cities world-wide are recognized as Resilience Hubs, a certification given to cities with proven track records in disaster risk reduction and resilience. At Daring Cities 2023, Bonn was recognized with this certification.

Aligned with the Sustainable Development Goal 11 — "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable"— MCR2030 is a cross-stakeholder global initiative that engages a network of 1,645 cities spanning 85 countries and collaborates closely with twelve core strategic partners such as the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), UN-Habitat, and ICLEI.





RECIFE, BRAZIL: PROMOTING GENDER-RESPONSIVE SOLUTIONS



In May 2022, Recife faced devastating floods and landslides, leaving thousands homeless and revealing a social gap: women, especially those from black communities living on hills and precarious slopes, were the most affected. To address these inequalities, the city launched the **ProMorar Recife**, a six-year program aiming to provide safe housing and infrastructure, with a strong emphasis on gender equity. It includes settlement regularization, prioritizing property titles for women-led households, and training courses for women in productive inclusion and disaster risk management. Intending to benefit over 110,000 residents, Recife's commitment to inclusive climate resilience earned its recognition as a Resilience Node by the Making Cities Resilient 2030, of which ICLEI is part.

"We can not build a resilient city if we don't prioritize gender equality. In Brazilian cities like Recife, where climate impacts hit women hardest, and race exacerbates vulnerability, integrating a gender perspective is not just important but essential."

Maria Eduarda Campos | Housing Innovation, Risks and Policies Coordinator, City of Recife

KEY FINDINGS FROM CORNERSTONE I - EXCHANGE

Hundreds of representatives of cities, towns, regions and other subnationals, and the partners that work with them, have come together throughout *Cornerstone I of Daring Cities 2023. These* gatherings produced a rich set of key findings, which can be grouped into three core pillars: justice and equity, innovative climate solutions, and multilevel action.

JUSTICE AND EQUITY SHOULD BE AT THE CORE OF THE RESPONSE TO THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Acknowledging historical injustices and the ability of all individuals to thrive sustainably, effective climate action demands the empowerment and inclusion of typically vulnerable groups. Addressing age, gender and ethnic disparities require not just technical measures, but also robust community engagement from the outset, as well as clear communication strategies that meet people where they are, contextualizing the narrative in a way that is accessible and that fosters a truly inclusive and equitable transition to a greener future.



VISUALS BY JOYCE VAN KERCKHOVE @VISUALITYEU





CITIES ARE ALREADY PROVIDING INNOVATIVE CLIMATE SOLUTIONS ON THE GROUND

The climate emergency is asking for innovative solutions to create a pathway towards a just and equitable transition. Many cities are already responding through nature-based approaches, community-driven data collection, improved access to climate finance, digitalization for transparent financial systems, and sustainable housing initiatives that emphasize affordable decarbonization.

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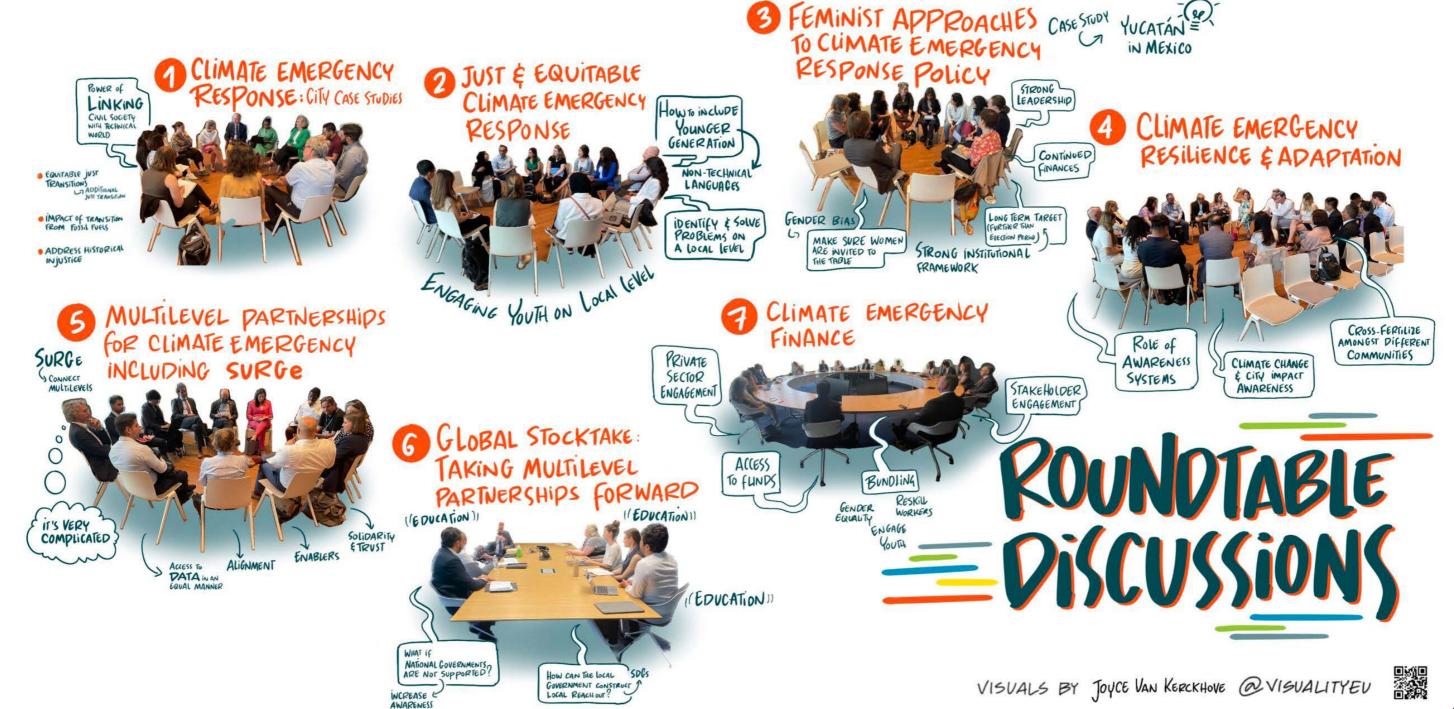
"Nature-based Solutions are invaluable; not only do they protect us from natural disasters, but they also generate green jobs. In Cape Town, we effectively combine these benefits by fostering skill development and empowering people to enter the green economy."

Bongani Mnisi | Spatial Planning and Environment Manager, City of Cape Town

CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA: INTEGRATING NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS INTO THE URBAN LANDSCAPE



Cape Town faced environmental challenges, including migrating dunes that buried city infrastructure and private properties under the sand and severe water scarcity. Instead of heavy machinery, the Hout Bay Dune Rehabilitation Project addressed the sand problem using nature-based solutions like wind net installation and vegetation planting, providing stable dune systems. The project also created temporary employment opportunities and green skills development for local workers. The New Water Programme aims to increase water reliability by developing alternative water supplies through groundwater abstraction, desalination, and water reuse by 2030. Removing alien invasive plants responsible for significant water loss is a key aspect of this program, ensuring a sustainable water supply for Cape Town's future.





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MULTILEVEL ACTION IS THE NEW NORMAL IN THE GLOBAL CLIMATE AGENDA

Today's global climate agenda underscores local engagement and urgent collaboration for a just and equitable climate emergency response. While the UNFCCC has prioritized and strengthened the collaboration of non-party stakeholders through the Marrakech Partnership and the Sharm el Sheikh Adaptation Agenda, other global processes and initiatives like the UN Global Stocktake need further integration and involvement of local perspectives. Multilevel governance is crucial, particularly through South-South connections that can spur innovative pathways to achieving the 1.5-degree scenario.

#MULTILEVELACTIONDELIVERS: TRANSFORMING CLIMATE EMERGENCY ACTION & GLOBAL STOCKTAKE



As part of the Daring Cities 2023 Dialogues, ICLEI and UN-Habitat co-organized a side event held in June during the UNFCCC Bonn Conference (SB58). This event brought together national government climate negotiators, policy advisors, local and regional government leaders, and technical experts to assess the progress of initiatives like SURGe, the first Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate, and the outcomes of the second UN-Habitat Assembly. Additionally, the event discussed the formulation of inputs from local and regional governments for the Global Stocktake.

Daring Cities 2023 Dialogues: Multilevel discussions

Back to back with the Daring Cities 2023 Dialogues, UN High-Level Climate Champion HE Razan Al Mubarak joined local and national leaders during a meeting of the Friends of Multilevel Action during the UN Bonn Climate Change Conference (SB58). "I want to give clear recognition of the importance that cities and subnational governments play in delivery of the Marrakech Partnership, 2030 Breakthroughs, the Breakthrough Agenda and the Sharm el Sheikh Adaptation Agenda," she said.



Delegates from the US, Germany, India, Morocco, Costa Rica, Ivory Coast, Egypt, and UAE met with Daring Cities representatives to discuss the COP28 agenda and key updates. Our mayors and subnational leaders had the opportunity to review an early copy of the <u>UN Global Sustainable Development Report 2023</u>, which acknowledged urbanization as a transformative agenda and the complexities of achieving all SDGs simultaneously.

Daring Cities 2023 Virtual Forum: ICLEI's initiatives on the spot

We hosted a dedicated session to celebrate the 10th anniversary of ICLEI's CityFood Program, together with city representatives from Europe, Africa, and Latin America, discussing strategies for transforming food systems to drive bottom-up climate action.



During another session, ICLEI and the Institute for Human Rights and Business launched the toolkit "Building for Today and the Future: The Role of Local Government in Advancing a Just Transition in the Built Environment." This resource offers six key tools, practical policy recommendations, and real-life city examples to reduce carbon emissions in the construction sector while promoting equity for a just transition.





KEY EVENTS FROM CORNERSTONE II - DISSEMINATE

During Urban October, ICLEI seized various opportunities to connect the outcomes of Daring Cities 2023 with several other relevant events worldwide, amplifying our messages and reaching broader, more diverse stakeholders. Here is a rundown of our engagements:

MENA Regional Climate Week 2023

Riyadh, Saudi Arabia | 8 to 12 October

We brought the spirit of Daring Cities to life across multiple discussions and plenaries, making our collective message resonate in nearly a dozen sessions.

European Week of Regions and Cities

Brussels, Belgium | 9 to 12 October

Our team at the European Secretariat brought the main messages of Daring Cities to the entire event, particularly through the ICLEI event on Local Green <u>Deals</u>, which explored strategies for localizing the European Green Deal.

Amazon Regional ICLEI Meeting

Porto Velho, Brazil | 17 to 19 October

ICLEI's South America Secretariat promoted the essence of Daring Cities in an interview on a regional television broadcaster, ahead of ICLEI's Amazonian meetup.

Regional Climate Week Latin America and the Caribbean

Panama City, Panama | 23 to 27 October

ICLEI led the opening session from track 2 "Unlocking finance for city-scale transformation through multi-level governance." Deep diving into one of Daring Cities' insights, the event explored how effective public-private partnerships can unlock the region's potential to attract private investment in renewable energy, sustainable infrastructure, and carbon projects.

European Climate Stocktake

Brussels, Belgium | 27 October

While the European Climate Stocktake kicked off, Daring Cities' messages echoed throughout the event. In particular, the significance of multilevel governance has been substantiated by all the successful local stocktakes organized by ICLEI Members throughout the year.



ADVOCACY AT COP28 FROM CORNERSTONE III - ADVOCATE

At the UNFCCC COP28, held from November 30 to December 13 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, we collaborated with urban leaders to further the Daring Cities 2023 messages through the Multilevel Action & Urbanization Pavilion, co-convened by ICLEI and UN-Habitat as the global stage for the city climate agenda in the Blue Zone.

Hundreds of mayors, councilors, governors, and local leaders, including over 170 ICLEI Members, advocated for more ambitious climate goals, collaborative action, and funding to support on-theground projects.

ICLEI LEADERS COP28 OUTCOME STATEMENT



Read full statement

Following COP28, ICLEI, represented by local and regional leaders, welcomed the significant outcomes achieved. These include a decisive call to transition away from fossil fuels, the establishment of a global adaptation goal, and the creation of a much-needed Loss and Damage fund.

The outcomes stressed the importance of multilevel action, emphasizing the need for national governments to enable subnational governments in integrated climate actions. The inclusion of local voices and youth, and the establishment of initiatives like the COP28 Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnership (CHAMP) reflect a step forward in aligning global and local efforts to limit global temperature rise. Looking ahead, ICLEI anticipates continued collaboration between cities, regions, and national governments to address the climate crisis effectively.

LGMA COP28 OUTCOMES STATEMENT



Read full statement

The LGMA Constituency, representing cities, regions, and subnationals, hailed COP28's historic inclusion of local governments and stressed the importance of multilevel action in addressing the climate crisis. They celebrated milestones like the CHAMP initiative and substantial climate finance for urban infrastructure. Key outcomes highlighted the inclusion of multilevel action in the UN Global Stocktake and the operationalization of the COP28 Loss and Damage Fund. Looking ahead, they pledge to support CHAMP, advocate for targeted finance, and push for the Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate Change to become a mandated part of the COP agenda, expressing readiness to collaborate further at future COPs.

KIRIBATI: FROM DARING CITIES TO COP28



Watch recording



Read Mayor Barro's intervention

During Daring Cities 2023, Kiribati's engagement was notable for its community-centered approach to resilience, particularly in the capital where innovative methods drawing from traditional knowledge are being used to address climate change and rising sea levels. At COP28, Baraniko Baaro, Mayor of Kiribati's Teinainano Urban Council, intervened at the UN Global Stocktake high-level event on mitigation, on behalf of the LGMA Constituency. He emphasized the importance of collaborative action across different levels of governance and urged national leaders to closely collaborate with local authorities to ensure that commitments result in



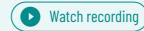
tangible benefits for vulnerable communities, especially those in Small Island and Developing States.

SECOND MINISTERIAL MEETING ON URBANIZATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE

UN-Habitat, the COP28 Presidency, and the UN Climate Change High-Level Champions co-hosted the second <u>Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate Change</u> at COP28. Over 1000 attendees, including 40 Ministers and 200 subnational leaders, convened to discuss aligning local and national strategies and unlocking climate finance for local actions. Subnational leaders emphasized collaboration between local and national levels, committing to support sustainable urbanization across sectors. The meeting highlighted the importance of multilevel cooperation in achieving the Paris Agreement and advocated for mechanisms like CHAMP and local stocktakes.

After the meeting, delegates gathered at the Multilevel Action & Urbanization Pavilion, for a session co-hosted by ICLEI and UN-Habitat, to reflect on operationalizing the Ministerial Meeting, emphasizing youth inclusion and collaboration between national and local governments in addressing climate challenges.

BONN MAYOR KATJA DÖRNER'S CALL AT COP28 MINISTERIAL MEETING



Subnational leaders joined their national ministers on stage during the second Ministerial Meeting on Urbanization and Climate Change at COP28. Among them, Katja Dörner, Lord Mayor of the City of Bonn, Germany, and Co-Chair of ICLEI's Climate Action and Low Emission Development Portfolio, delivered her remarks on multilevel action and extended an invitation to join Daring Cities in 2024.



LOCAL STOCKTAKES

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Under the #Stocktake4ClimateEmergency initiative, more than 20 cities and regions across 18 countries and six continents organized their local stocktakes during 2023, transforming their town halls into "mini-COP venues." These events, facilitated by ICLEI as the LGMA Constituency focal point, served as official subnational contributions to the first Global Stocktake of the Paris Agreement, which concluded at COP28.

As synthesized in the <u>Local Stocktakes Outcomes Report</u>, one common thread of the events was the local climate ambition: Participants assessed their community's climate goals and actively devised strategies for decarbonization, adaptation, and justice. Moreover, they analyzed the alignment of their subnational initiatives with their country's latest Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). Climate justice, both locally and globally, emerged as another critical consideration.

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE, USA: PIONEERING THE LOCAL STOCKTAKE



In May 2023, the City of Concord hosted the first-ever local stocktake event. City departments, NGOs, and residents convened to discuss Concord's goal of reaching 100% renewable energy by 2050. The event underscored the significance of community participation in global climate initiatives and highlighted the necessity for accessible renewable energy solutions. Today, the city continues to engage residents in ongoing climate discussions, recognizing the importance of grassroots action.

The City of Concord's insights were shared at Daring Cities 2023 Virtual Forum during a practical "how-to" webinar. It provided step-by-step guidance for cities, towns, and regions on hosting local stocktake events and raised awareness of available funding to implement them.



"The local stocktake and participation of our state representative allowed us to consider: Where does state and national policy influence our ability to pursue local policy?"

Rob Werner | Council Representative, City of Concord

A noteworthy aspect was the significant involvement of youth in the local stocktakes, facilitated through a partnership with YOUNGO, the youth and children's constituency of the UNFCCC. This collaboration led to three youth-led local stocktakes in Accra, Nairobi, and Kampala, underscoring demands for inclusive planning, adaptive governance structures, capacity building, green job opportunities, and increased financing for youth-led climate initiatives.



"Youth engagement is not a buzzword. When we participate in the local stocktake process, our potential to drive innovation is unleashed: we bring in fresh perspectives and catalyze transformation that we want to see."

Juliet Aluoch Oluoch | Cities Working Group Focal Point, YOUNGO





CHARTING A MULTILEVEL, JUST AND EQUITABLE CLIMATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

The imperative for a just and equitable climate emergency response has never been more pressing in today's rapidly changing world. Daring Cities 2023 revealed that cities are not just at the forefront of climate action—they are the catalysts for global change, boldly embracing their role as drivers of transformation.

Key findings showcased that **justice and equity should be at the core of climate emergency responses**, from empowering those that are most affected by the climate emergency to prioritizing inclusive decision-making processes that leave no one behind.

Building capacity within local and regional governments remains crucial to facilitate a just and equitable transition. While many **cities are already providing innovative climate solutions on the ground,** from scalable approaches for renewable energy integration to nature-based solutions, many others still face challenges in understanding and accessing climate finance.

Daring Cities 2023 underscored that **multilevel action is the new normal in the global climate agenda.** While the UNFCCC has strengthened the involvement of subnational governments, there is a call for further integration of local voices within its processes. Cities, towns and regions need collaborative action across sectors and all levels of governance, from local to national and international, to effectively address the interconnected challenges of climate change.

As we move on from Daring Cities 2023, we carry forward the spirit of our daring cities' leadership and collective action on climate change into 2024, guided by multilevel action, justice, and equity.

ANNEX - KEY FINDINGS FROM CORNERSTONE I: EXCHANGE

Due to systemic inequalities that occur on local, regional, national, and international scales, some communities are disproportionately affected by climate change. These communities may include, but are not limited to, women, elderly people, children, racialized peoples, LGBTQIA+ people, and migrants. Additionally, which communities are disproportionately affected differ across regions, and thus each should be treated uniquely, recognizing that solutions must be adapted to meet the local context.

When responding to the climate emergency with the urgency that it requires, governments can overlook communities that are disproportionately affected by climate change and make long-lasting policy decisions that can further intensify already-existing inequalities. Just and equitable decision-making must be prioritized to ensure holistic policy development and implementation.

Throughout 2023, hundreds of representatives of cities, towns, regions and other subnationals, and the partners that work with them, have come together at Daring Cities 2023 to exchange on best practices, innovative solutions and creative approaches to a just and equitable transformation of our society in the face of the climate emergency. These exchanges have produced a set of key findings from Daring Cities 2023. As we turn our attention to Urban October and COP28, we will use these messages in the coming months and years ahead. We ask our fellow local and regional governments, communities and stakeholders at large and national governments and the intergovernmental community, to engage with and work towards the following key findings.



JUSTICE AND EQUITY SHOULD BE AT THE CORE OF THE RESPONSE TO THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

- 1. In order to have a just and equitable future, we must address existing and historic injustices.
- **2.** At the center of future climate emergency responses should be ensuring the ability of all individuals to lead flourishing lives in a globally sustainable world.
- **3.** Not only are children and youth among the most vulnerable groups to climate change, but they are also often not included in the discussions, or when included, not heard. We need long-term solutions that empower and meaningfully engage young people in addressing the climate.
- **4.** The inclusion and engagement of communities and voices disproportionately affected by climate change should be a key priority in climate emergency response. This should be paired with a robust assessment of climate risks and vulnerabilities with emphasis on those disproportionately affected communities, to show what the specific needs are and identify appropriate approaches for climate action.
- **5.** Local communities must be included from the start in order for adaptation, mitigation and municipal food plans to be successful.
- **6.** Strategies that address gender, ethnicity and age, especially policies addressing climate resilience, improve plans and policies.

- **7.** We need to find the political will to include women and gender considerations in climate action. Women are particularly vulnerable to the effects of the climate emergency, so they should be engaged in the discussions early on, with informed considerations of local and cultural context.
- **8.** Combatting the climate emergency is an opportunity to address energy poverty around the world. We have an opportunity to ensure that the energy transition will be just and equitable, and suitable to the needs of communities.
- **9.** Climate action is about more than technical and implementation action we must also engage our communities with effective communications that meet them where they are and provide a contextualized, compelling narrative for the better world we are creating together.



CITIES ARE ALREADY PROVIDING INNOVATIVE CLIMATE SOLUTIONS ON THE GROUND

- **10.** The climate emergency is asking for innovative solutions to create a pathway towards a just and equitable transition, such as using nature-based solutions that recognize interconnectedness of ecosystems, people, and climate, and can create vital partnerships, jobs and education opportunities.
- **11.** Data collection and data sourcing needs to involve innovative techniques that include community participation. Data should not only be available, but also of good quality, easily accessible, understandable, contextualized and practical for sensible policy-making.
- **12.** Climate finance is a vital part for the just and equitable transition. Local governments have a hard time understanding, mapping, and accessing climate finance, so it is critical to build capacity to access climate finance within local and regional governments. In particular, Small Island Developing States have national debt that makes designing financial instruments challenging and time consuming, but it is worth pushing through those barriers to ensure that the most vulnerable needs are met.
- **13.** Digitalization can aid the response to the climate emergency through a radical transformation of our financial systems. Digitalization allows for transparency, efficiency, and speed to move capital; all vital for a swift climate emergency response.
- **14.** Sustainable housing both in a social and environmental sense should be included in the discussion around a just and equitable climate transition. Cities should look to improve affordable housing stock as an opportunity for decarbonization.



MULTILEVEL ACTION IS THE NEW NORMAL IN THE GLOBAL CLIMATE AGENDA

- **15.** The global stocktake process needs to be localized, and towns, cities, and regions should have a voice in the process. Multilevel governance needs to be part of the implementation and evaluation of the collective progress towards Paris Agreement goals.
- **16.** We urgently need horizontal and vertical collaboration at a greater scale worldwide to deliver just and equitable climate emergency response in our communities.

- 17. Through the Marrakech Partnership and the Sharm el Sheikh Adaptation Agenda, the UNFCCC has prioritized and strengthened the collaboration of non-party stakeholders in the climate agenda. Cities, towns, regions and other subnationals play a vital role in these partnerships, and continued support, professionalization and alignment should be provided by the UN and parties to ensure that the partnerships provide meaningful feedback into the climate agenda.
- **18.** Radical collaboration and trust-based partnerships are essential to address the complex challenges and to amplify impact. Complex challenges, such as climate change, need dynamic solutions.
- **19.** Exchange between communities is necessary to develop innovative approaches. South-south knowledge exchange similar emerging and developing economies learning from each other can chart a new pathway, moving away from a purely Eurocentric model, towards achieving the 1.5 degree scenario.