Migration and Urbanization Paths: Reshaping the Human Geography of Latin America and the Caribbean

Fernando Murillo

Background paper

December 2014

International Organization for Migration (IOM)
TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. URBAN MIGRATION TRENDS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN ........................................................5
   1.1. Urbanization and migration: Interlinked causes .......................................................................................5
   1.2. Migrant corridors and regional planning .................................................................................................8
   1.3. Migration and urban growth ..................................................................................................................17

2. LOCAL INCLUSION IN URBAN PLANNING ...............................................................................................26
   2.1. Migration and urbanization trends created by the “new economy”: Opportunities for pro-poor policies ..........................................................................................................................26
   2.2. The “right to the city” approach ...........................................................................................................28

3. PUBLIC–PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS FOR SOCIAL HOUSING FOR MIGRANTS .................................................32
   3.1. Remittances to support social development ..........................................................................................32
   3.2. Popular migrant markets fostering local economies .............................................................................36

4. SELF-HELP AND MIGRANT-LED INITIATIVES FOR SOCIAL HOUSING .........................................................39
   4.1. Displaced populations initiating cooperation agreements ......................................................................39
   4.2. The contribution of migrants to development ......................................................................................40

5. CHANGING THE PRACTICE OF EVICTION FROM INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS ..............................................43
   5.1. International efforts to promote intercultural neighbourhoods ................................................................43
   5.2. The new generation of urban planning tools: Focus on human rights ..................................................44

6. GOOD PRACTICES IN UPGRADING SLUMS ..............................................................................................48
   6.1. Participatory frameworks ......................................................................................................................48
   6.2. Promoting the integration of migrants ....................................................................................................50

7. CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES: A COMPARISON BETWEEN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN AND SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA ........................................................................53
   7.1. Urbanization, migration and slum formation ..........................................................................................53
   7.2. Major shifts in policy approaches to dealing with slums ......................................................................57

BIBLIOGRAPHY ..................................................................................................................................................59
LIST OF MAPS

Map 1: Migrant corridors in Latin America and the Caribbean .......................................................... 10
Map 2: Net migration in the region ........................................................................................................ 11
Map 3: Migrant corridor through Central America to the United States ........................................ 12
Map 4: Net migration areas in Central America and the Caribbean ................................................ 13
Map 5: Migration flows in Central America to the United States and to Costa Rica .................... 13
Map 6: Population displacement in Colombia ...................................................................................... 14
Map 7: Internal migration flows to Sao Paulo ....................................................................................... 16
Map 8: Migration corridors to and in Argentina .................................................................................. 17
Map 9: Expansion of Bogota, dominated by displaced populations ................................................. 20
Map 10: Urban expansion of El Alto, Bolivia .......................................................................................... 21
Map 11: International migration trends in the southern part of Buenos Aires .................................. 22
Map 12: Migrant agglomerations in the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires .................................... 22
Map 13: Migrant concentrations by nationality in the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires ............ 23
Map 14: Poverty and migration by neighbourhood in Buenos Aires ............................................. 24

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Classification of countries according to the prevalence of slums ........................................ 18
Figure 2: Types of urban growth resulting from migrant flows .......................................................... 19
Figure 3: “Villa 31” – A high concentration of international and internal migrants ............................. 24
Figure 4: New Andean architecture in El Alto ...................................................................................... 37
Figure 5: Comparative analysis of different neighbourhoods using the compass methodology ......... 46
Figure 6: Urban interventions in Medellin assisting displaced populations ........................................ 49
Figure 7: Cable car connecting La Paz with El Alto, Bolivia ................................................................ 52

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Stages and characterization of urbanization and migration in cities in Latin America and the Caribbean ................................................................................................................. 7
Table 2: Inhabitants of major cities in Latin America ........................................................................... 9
LIST OF ACRONYMS

CABA  Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires
CELADE  Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre
COHRE  Centre on Human Rights and Evictions
DANE  Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadísticas
DGME  Dirección General de Migraciones y Extranjería
DHS  Department of Homeland Security
ICRC  International Committee of the Red Cross
ICT  information and communications technology
INDEC  Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos (Argentina)
INE  Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas
INEC  Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos (Ecuador)
INEGI  Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Geografía
IOM  International Organization for Migration
NGO  non-governmental organization
UN DESA  United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
USAID  United States Agency for International Development
1. URBAN MIGRATION TRENDS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

1.1. URBANIZATION AND MIGRATION: INTERLINKED CAUSES

Latin America and the Caribbean is the most urbanized region in the world, with 80 per cent of its population living in cities, ahead of Asia with 48 per cent and Africa with 40 per cent (UN DESA, 2014). However, when looking at the population to territory ratio, it is the least populated region in the world (World Bank, 2014). Historically, Latin America and the Caribbean has always received migrants, and it is a region where migrants from very different cultures have shaped urbanization trends. From the colonial times of the fourteenth century, when the Spanish, the Portuguese and slaves from Africa began to arrive in Latin America and the Caribbean, until the twentieth century, when the effects of two world wars resulted in large numbers of migrants moving to the region, it became a melting pot of nationalities. However, the trend changed in the middle of the twentieth century, when there was a shift to emigration, especially from certain countries and areas. The reasons for this shift are many, including unemployment, poor salaries, and sociopolitical and environmental conflicts. It is estimated that, in 2010, 28.5 million Latin American and Caribbean citizens (equal to about 4% of the total population of the region) were living outside their country of origin (Pizarro et al., 2014). The main destination of this emigration has been the United States of America, where the majority of emigrants have established their residence, followed by Spain and Canada. Although there has been a great decrease in emigration from the region in the past two decades, there has been an increase in migration between countries in the region.

The country with highest number of emigrants is Mexico (almost 12 million Mexicans live abroad, which is about 10% of the country’s population). It is also a transit territory for emigrants of other nationalities who are moving towards the United States. After Mexico, the countries with the highest number of emigrants in total numbers are Colombia, Brazil, El Salvador, Cuba, Ecuador, Peru, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Jamaica. The case of Brazil is important because, although it is one of the major emigrant-producing countries in Latin America in absolute numbers, emigrants from Brazil represent a very small portion of the country’s total population (0.4%). Their major destinations are countries outside the region (United States, Japan and Spain).

On the other hand, in 1990, countries in Latin America and the Caribbean hosted a total of 7.1 million international migrants (1.3% of the region’s population), a number that has been growing since 2000, reaching 8.1 per cent in 2010 and 8.3 per cent in 2013 (UN DESA, 2014). Costa Rica is the major receiving country in the region, with international migrants making up 9.5 per cent of its population in 2010. Argentina has the second-highest percentage, with 4.5 per cent of its population, or 1.8 million immigrants. Intraregional migration occurs mostly because of geographical proximity, and historical and cultural factors, especially the advantage of having the same language.

Urbanization in Latin America has been growing through metropolitan cities. In the year 2000, the region contained three of the largest cities in the world: Sao Paulo, Mexico City and Buenos Aires. However, these metropolises face the challenge of dealing with expanding slums, where migrants, both international and internal, from different social and cultural backgrounds live.

The socioeconomic and territorial disparities across countries in the region must be highlighted. Countries with a higher level of human development (such as Argentina, Chile and Uruguay) tend to have higher proportions of the population living in cities. Although various research suggests that the recent shift in

1 The total stock of emigrants is calculated by dividing the population born in Latin America and the Caribbean who reside in other regions by the native population who reside within Latin America and the Caribbean.
2 Costa Rica is the exception.
the economic model from industrial development to trade liberalization has enabled rural economies to retain their populations, evidence from censuses reveals that rural populations continue to move to urban areas (Rodriguez, 2011).

The rural population of Latin America and the Caribbean has been shrinking in absolute terms since 1990. Taking into account the fact that the rural population has a positive natural increase, it is clear that there is substantial net rural emigration. This means that the development model has not affected rural emigration.

Latin America, with its vast rural territories, remains a major exporter of agricultural goods and raw materials to the rest of the world. The exports of these resources are administered in large cities, where company headquarters are located, and through an emerging network of intermediary cities across the region. The major economic blocs in the region include the Central American Common Market, the Andean Community (which includes the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru) and Mercosur, which is led by Brazil in partnership with Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay and, most recently, Bolivia and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

The region has seven cities with more than 5 million inhabitants (Rio de Janeiro, Bogota, Lima and Santiago, in addition to Sao Paulo, Mexico City and Buenos Aires). With strong infrastructures, they are centres of investment, and with leading universities, centres of knowledge, which make them attractive to large numbers of migrants.

According to UN-Habitat (2012a), the number of cities in the region has increased six-fold in the last 50 years. About half of the population live in cities of fewer than 500,000 inhabitants, while 14 per cent live in metropolises, reflecting the growing importance of intermediary cities. Improvements in terms of water supply, sanitation and public transportation in intermediary cities on the one hand, and the serious environmental and social problems in megacities on the other, can explain the recent trends in migration to intermediary cities. Although metropolitan cities continue to attract large numbers of migrants, the rate has slowed, and instead migration flows to intermediary cities are increasing.

Such changes contribute to more balanced urban systems in countries in the region. Rodriguez (Rodriguez and Gonzalez, 2006) concludes that: “a) the relative weight of intermediary cities within the urban system is smaller than in other regions, particularly in the developed world; b) this segment of cities is however the most dynamic of the urban system in demographic terms, and its participation has been growing over time in Latin America.” Already between 1980 and 1990, the growth rate of intermediary cities was faster than the growth rate of major cities and faster than the overall urban growth rate. Among intermediary cities, those with the fastest rate of urban growth have been the smaller ones (more than 50,000 and fewer than 500,000 inhabitants). This trend seems to have continued, as shown in the rise of information and communications technology (ICT); with smaller cities having improved access to the global market, significant numbers of migrants from larger cities are moving to these cities, seeking better paid jobs and improved living conditions.

All of these changes in migration trends increase the level of human development in countries. A recognized general trend is the close relationship between urbanization patterns and migration, which has been determined by economic activities. In colonial times, towns were established as commercial and administrative centres, attracting specific social groups who worked as traders or administrators. Industrialization resulted in a demand for more workers in cities and fewer in rural areas, thereby shaping rural–urban migration patterns and giving rise to the phenomenon of the megalopolis, which is restructuring national economies. The shift at the end of the twentieth century to economies being dominated by the service industry created a new profile of migrants, no longer coming mainly from the

---

3 Intermediary cities are considered to be those with more than 50,000 and fewer than 1 million inhabitants.
4 Hereinafter referred to as Bolivia.
5 Hereinafter referred to as Venezuela.
countryside, but from other cities within the same country or abroad. This shift has led to the rise of the intermediary city as the major destination for internal and international migrants. The rise of ICTs has resulted in the relocation of economic activities and has generated a “new economy” based on technology, thereby creating new urbanization patterns and migration flows.

These urbanization and migration patterns and processes differ across countries and areas in terms of economic activities, physical urban structures and demographic movements, and different countries are at different stages. How this complex process emerges defines the various causes of the problems related to socio-territorial segregation, and as a result innovative approaches to urban planning are required. The stages and characterization of the urbanization and migration patterns are summarized in table I.

Table 1: Stages and characterization of urbanization and migration in cities in Latin America and the Caribbean

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Urbanization stage</th>
<th>Dominant urban economic activities</th>
<th>Urbanization pattern</th>
<th>Migration Origin</th>
<th>Main destination</th>
<th>Major planning challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nineteenth century to</td>
<td>Growth of urban fabrics</td>
<td>Commercial and administrative</td>
<td>Towns transformed into cities</td>
<td>International migration and migration from the</td>
<td>Capital cities</td>
<td>Provision of basic infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twentieth century</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>area surrounding the city</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900–1970</td>
<td>Urban expansion</td>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>Metropolises</td>
<td>Rural areas and international migration (due to</td>
<td>Metropolises</td>
<td>Expansion of infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>world wars)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970–2000</td>
<td>Urban networking</td>
<td>Industrial and services</td>
<td>Metropolises and Intermediary cities</td>
<td>Cities (internal and international migration) and</td>
<td>Metropolises and intermediary cities</td>
<td>Relocation of industrial activities; location of services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>rural areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000–2010</td>
<td>Regional corridors</td>
<td>Services plus the rise of information and communications</td>
<td>Small and intermediary cities and</td>
<td>Metropolises (international and national) and</td>
<td>Small and intermediary cities; and</td>
<td>Segregation and fragmentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>technology</td>
<td>metropolises</td>
<td>neighbourhoods within metropolises</td>
<td>neighbourhoods within metropolises</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Elaborated by the author based on data from USAID, 2010.

When towns grow to become commercial and administrative centres, the major challenge is the construction of basic urban services and monuments to recognize national and local identities. From the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries, the economy in the region was essentially rural, involving the export of raw materials to the colonial powers. However, with independence at the beginning of the nineteenth century, most countries maintained the agro-exporter model, developing basic industrial activities supported by infrastructure development, especially railway transport. In the twentieth century, major cities in countries with a higher level of industrialization started to attract rural populations to work in industrial jobs. They left the countryside, also because industrialization meant there were fewer jobs there. In general, this process took place in Latin American and Caribbean cities between the beginning and the middle of the twentieth century. Such urban expansion was supported by welfare policies that subsidized public transport, land and services to help to settle the massive number of rural migrants arriving in the cities. The goal was to build infrastructures to support the economic agglomeration that was fostering industrial development. In their new urban environments, the migrants built their houses and community infrastructures through organizations such as cooperatives and community associations.
At the end of twentieth century, however, due to the rise of the services sector (or tertiary sector) in major cities, together with new environmental laws and the problems associated with congestion, industries were forced to relocate to new areas. As a result, intermediary cities emerged as a better alternative for the development of the services sector, thereby also attracting migrants. Rural–urban flows have tended to be replaced by city-to-city migration, taking place within countries and internationally. This implies a significant change: those arriving in the cities already have an urban background with the habits and knowledge needed to make a living in the tertiary or industrial sector.

International migration started to grow as many families escaping economic and political hardships in their places of origin crossed borders to find a better life in another city. Major planning challenges remained, but there were also the complexities of the economic activities being relocated to new areas, which resulted in an alarming social gap in the region. After 2000, partly as a result of the growth in ICTs, some researchers observed the rise of a new age of urbanization, in which migration trends are not only between cities, but also intra-urban and increasingly international. Migrants were selecting places to live and work based on the available information technology. During this last stage of urbanization, there is the challenge for public policy makers to overcome the idea of the city as a unit, and to think in terms of efficient and equitable city networks. Planning challenges involve finding a holistic approach to dealing with growing socio-territorial segregation and fragmentation, while taking into account economic, social and environmental factors.

1.2. MIGRANT CORRIDORS AND REGIONAL PLANNING

Migration trends in Latin America have recently changed. Historically, North-South migration had been the pattern, when the region attracted migrants from Europe and the Middle East. In the middle of the twentieth century, however, this changed when migrants left the region to go to the United States and to Southern Europe. In recent decades, the region has experienced economic development, which has led to the expansion of industrial activities that are better organized in regional markets, followed by a decrease in unemployment. This has resulted in emigration from the region changing to immigration to the region. Latin America has been following a pattern of greater South–South migration between countries in the region and from other countries in the global South (Texidó et al., 2012).

The Central American Common Market, the Andean Community in the west and Mercosur in the east have emerged as the three major economic blocs in the region. These blocs have developed complementary economic activities, creating attractive jobs and income generation opportunities in the region. In addition, new migration regulatory frameworks with a focus on human rights protection have been developed in most countries, favouring migrants from the region, protecting their rights and facilitating their residence. Taking into account that countries in the region have the same official language (Spanish), except Brazil, and share common cultural values, migration between Latin American countries is shaping new territorial corridors with significant socioeconomic consequences.

The rise of international migrants competing with internal migrants for some jobs is resulting in social conflicts. The increase in environmental stress due to the economic activities in the region, particularly extractive industries, as well as climate change, creates further population displacement. These new trends create completely new scenarios that are reshaping migrant corridors. They are transforming those corridors that have historically defined the socioeconomic structure of the region.

The numbers and percentages of inhabitants in each major city in the region, including natives and internal and international migrants, are presented in Table 2. It is important to understand the ongoing transformation of the region and the growing role of urbanization as a process through which international and internal migrants and native populations meet and develop linkages. Although the percentages of international migrants are still not significant when looking at country populations, the proportion of international migrants in cities is higher. When the microdata are disaggregated by neighbourhood, it can
be seen that some areas have high concentrations of immigrants, who are shaping new urban patterns, structures and dynamics. The table also shows the importance of internal migration in some countries, such as Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Mexico. This means that there is a transformation in urban networks not only in terms of economic activities, but also in terms of cultural ties and linkages between areas and countries.

Table 2: Inhabitants of major cities in Latin America

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Inhabitants Total</th>
<th>Native</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Migrants Internal</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>International</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>Buenos Aires</td>
<td>2,508,373</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>381,778</td>
<td>13.21</td>
<td>742,859</td>
<td>7.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Metropolitan areas excluding Buenos Aires</td>
<td>9,173,856</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>106,374</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>1,353</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Salta</td>
<td>536,113</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14,402</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>1,353</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cerrillos</td>
<td>35,789</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,353</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>1,353</td>
<td>3.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jujuy</td>
<td>265,249</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9,688</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>1,353</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Puerto Deseado</td>
<td>107,630</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8,475</td>
<td>7.87</td>
<td>8,475</td>
<td>7.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>La Paz</td>
<td>758,845</td>
<td>640,224</td>
<td>84.37</td>
<td>106,374</td>
<td>14.02</td>
<td>12,247</td>
<td>1.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>El Alto</td>
<td>846,883</td>
<td>663,345</td>
<td>78.33</td>
<td>179,468</td>
<td>21.18</td>
<td>4,167</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cochabamba</td>
<td>632,013</td>
<td>433,405</td>
<td>68.58</td>
<td>186,355</td>
<td>29.49</td>
<td>12,253</td>
<td>1.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>Bogota</td>
<td>6,725,493</td>
<td>3,998,945</td>
<td>59.46</td>
<td>2,479,007</td>
<td>36.86</td>
<td>31,895</td>
<td>0.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medellin</td>
<td>4,312,139</td>
<td>2,287,548</td>
<td>53.05</td>
<td>1,879,524</td>
<td>43.59</td>
<td>11,29</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>Quito</td>
<td>1,761,867</td>
<td>1,140,290</td>
<td>64.72</td>
<td>575,591</td>
<td>32.66</td>
<td>12,247</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guayaquil</td>
<td>3,645,483</td>
<td>2,884,477</td>
<td>79.12</td>
<td>760,974</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>12,247</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Mexico City</td>
<td>12,634,431</td>
<td>11,524,537</td>
<td>91.22</td>
<td>1055,994</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>16,631</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tijuana</td>
<td>1,276,060</td>
<td>1,023,269</td>
<td>80.19</td>
<td>182,974</td>
<td>7.84</td>
<td>884,83</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The shift in migration trends is directly related to macroeconomics and to the technological facilities now available that help people to settle in cities of different sizes. In some cases, international migrants are more attracted to smaller cities with better jobs, as they can now access the information networks available there; whereas in the past, this connectivity didn’t exist in small cities. Between the 1960s and the 1980s, various policies encouraged internal migration to populated areas with economic potential and to areas strategically located for civil defence (ECLAC, 2007). However, through public and private investments in certain metropolitan areas, recent national policies have encouraged intercity migration, including to intermediary cities. Due to the diversity in the migration corridors, it is necessary to have a variety of policies, programmes and mechanisms that respond specifically to cities according to their roles in receiving, transferring or generating migrants. Economic migrants are encouraged to settle in locations based on national priorities. As a way to promote local jobs and incomes, some policies, which are shared by most countries in the region, offer incentives for businesses to establish industrial activities in undeveloped areas. In the majority of cases, however, such incentives fail to attract private and sometimes even public investments.

Migration flows between cities are more difficult to track than rural–urban flows because of the diverse profile of the migrants. Intercity migration is the most important quantitative flow in the region, an aspect distinguishing Latin America and the Caribbean from the rest of the developing world. Such migration takes place from less attractive cities (from economic, labour and social perspectives) to more dynamic cities that have greater economic opportunities. In addition to the economic attraction, there are the advantages of localization and the availability of communication facilities, which can also be found in
intermediary cities. In addition, the disadvantages of large cities – violence, traffic congestion, high levels of pollution, and increasing living and land costs – make intermediary cities more attractive.

New migrant corridors are shaping the areas around them. Population movements are registered by countries’ customs offices and can be seen in map 1. The first corridor is the Central American corridor, where migrants move in two directions: north through Mexico to the United States, and south to Costa Rica, mostly from Nicaragua.

The second corridor is a result of displaced populations from Colombia moving towards Venezuela and Ecuador, as well as internally displaced populations within Colombia settling in major cities, and people moving from Venezuela to Colombia as a result of the economic crisis. Another branch of this corridor is from Colombia to Ecuador, the use of which has increased as a result of internal migration towards Quito and Guayaquil. Similar patterns can be recognized in Peru, which is experiencing intensive internal migration, predominantly to Lima, although other intermediary cities and other areas, mostly associated with mining activities, are also affected. The same pattern can be observed in Bolivia, where improvements in access to urban services have resulted in neglected native communities moving to La Paz, as well as migrants moving to intermediary cities and areas with economic activities related to mining and oil.

The third corridor, which arose due to the economic activities created through the bloc Mercosur, links the Southern Cone countries. In Argentina – historically a magnet for migrants from Bolivia, Paraguay and Peru – two thirds of the flow along this corridor is to the capital city of Buenos Aires, and one third is to intermediary cities in different areas where new labour opportunities can be found. Chile is attracting major flows in the form of economic migrants from Bolivia and Peru, as well as migrants from other Andean countries. Recently, Brazil has been receiving flows of migrants from various parts of the world (from Europe in the North and from Africa, Asia and the Caribbean in the South).

Source: Elaborated by the author, based on King et al., 2010.
By looking at migration within the region (map 2), it is possible to see that certain areas with outmigration share the same conditions, such as high levels of poverty and a disadvantageous location, while in other areas, a strategic location and migration regulatory frameworks facilitate international migration and attract populations from other locations.

The migrant corridors reflect the fact that, beyond addressing the challenges in reducing the push factors for internal migrants from certain areas, all countries need to act collaboratively to deal with international migrants who now reach more easily than in the past the capital cities and areas within cities where good jobs have been created. In addition, there is the possibility that international migration corridors also encourage internal migration towards attractive cities and areas. This needs to be taken into account in territorial planning, as the tension and conflicts that are created when there is strong competition for jobs can be reduced through preventative measures and an adequate regulatory framework regarding land.

The migrant corridor through Central America and Mexico (map 3) is mostly the result of extreme poverty in certain microregions that are pushing populations to the United States. These migrant journeys involve specific cities, starting with El Progreso in Honduras and ending in Nogales in the United States, and have great demographic, economic and political impacts. Along this journey, migrants settle temporarily in shacks and shelters, shaping the slums and shanty towns along the way. They move as a result of conflicts or poor living conditions in the places of origins (push factors), and because of opportunities in the places of destination (pull factors). These migrants are predominantly low-income workers who live, both during their journey and in their final destination, in very harsh housing conditions, separated from urban structures.
Migrant associations, based on national or ethnic ties, have been created. In cities in Central America, slums inhabited by migrants in transit have developed, where there are extensive networks that include transport services for reaching the United States. Depending on the government policies of the time and on the regulatory controls imposed, these groups either reach the United States or remain in poor living conditions in cities in Central America.

Irregular migrants are especially vulnerable to illegal activities. This situation demands coordinated international action in order to minimize human rights abuses. In 2012, in cases involving the apprehension of irregular migrants (DHS, 2013), 642,000 foreigners were apprehended in the United States, 70 per cent of whom were citizens of Mexico. The Department of Homeland Security removed 419,000 foreign nationals from the United States. The main countries of origin of those removed were Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador. About 230,000 foreign nationals were returned to their home countries without a removal order. In 2010 near San Diego, California, and Tucson, Arizona, 171 deaths occurred when migrants tried to cross the border without proper documents, reflecting the tragedy of these journeys. The border between Mexico and the United States has different levels of porosity, which influences the continuous reshaping of migrant corridors. The migrants seek to avoid border controls, creating a marginalized and illegal demography in Mexican border cities.

With regard to the infrastructures created because of the migrant corridors, development policies and commercial agreements between countries play a large role in either pushing or attracting internal and international migrants (map 4). The policies and agreements especially affect border cities and towns, and shape local economic activities, for which the availability of manpower is essential. This has been the case for the farming industry in areas of Central America, where depopulation has occurred because of better job perspectives in the United States.

---

6 Refers to people with a prior criminal conviction.
Another map of migration flows shows the routes through Central America to the United States and to Costa Rica, the country in the region with the highest percentage of international migrants (map 5), who mostly come from Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama. In Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua, the political violence of the 1970s and 1980s triggered migrant movements to Belize and Costa Rica, as well as Antigua and Barbuda, and Granada.
In addition to political reasons, people move for economic reasons and because of natural disasters. The political situation, violence and economic reasons were behind large numbers of Colombians moving to Costa Rica. Emigration from Haiti to the Dominican Republic, where 64 per cent of foreigners are from that country, should also be noted. At the same time, about 10 per cent of the population of the Dominican Republic has emigrated to other countries, mostly the United States. Because of the growth of the tourism sector and the resulting employment opportunities, the countries of the Caribbean Community have managed to retain some of their populations and are a destination for migrants in the region.

Migration flows within Central America reflect the recent change to South–South migration. Some migrants prefer to move to Costa Rica, believing that they will have more opportunities there, rather than to the United States or Europe. This change implies that these migrants believe that they will have the opportunity to settle permanently in Costa Rica, and eventually overcome the urban segregation and poor living conditions of temporary residence. This trend constitutes a real opportunity for sustainable local integration. Belize and Panama are also attractive destinations for economic migrants from Guatemala and Honduras, but these countries have less economic power to integrate migrants.

Another migrant corridor is the one that resulted from the humanitarian crisis in Colombia. Large numbers of the population fled to Venezuela, which was also attracting economic migrants to work in its oil industry, and to its neighbour Ecuador (map 6). Paradoxically, Colombia has a vibrant mining industry, which contributes to the continuing displacement of people in the area as they are forced off their land due to the expansion of the mines (Ruiz and Castillo, 2014). In addition, recent economic problems in Venezuela have reversed the flow, pushing economic migrants from Venezuela to Colombia (Barón, 2011). Two major cities in Colombia have attracted most of the internally displaced persons: the capital city, Bogotá, and Medellin. This has affected the location of the population, shifting the country towards the typical “macrocephaly” of Latin American countries (ICRC, 2011).

Map 6: Population displacement in Colombia

Source: Elaborated by the author, based on data from www.derechos.org/nizkor/colombia/libros/redes/1.html
Ecuador, which does not have an internal conflict, is also facing rapid urbanization as a result of the displaced persons arriving from Colombia and internal rural groups flocking to the two major cities of Quito, the capital city, and Guayaquil. These cities are attractive mostly because of their strategic locations and the job opportunities to be found there. The internal migration movements can be tracked as they respond to new economic activities found in such industries as mining and oil.

Historically, Peru has been a source of low-income migrants who move abroad, most often to the United States and Europe. Recently, however, migration flows from Peru have shifted towards the South–South pattern. In the last decade, the better performance of the national economy, and particularly the expansion of mining activities, has created several internal migrant corridors towards urban areas, and especially to the capital city of Lima.

A similar transformation in the socio-territorial path is occurring in Bolivia, also historically a source country of poor migrants, who have moved mostly to Argentina, the United States and Spain. They migrated to the major cities of those countries, attracted by opportunities to access social services, education and health. However, as the economic crisis in Europe has led to changes in migration policies of European countries, many Bolivians have returned home, encouraged by the growing welfare system in their country, and wishing to return with their savings in euros. Many are able to afford housing and can begin income generation projects, which are promoted by the Government in its efforts to have its citizens return, as discussed later in this paper.

Brazil is experiencing active migration flows from the north-east and the south to its major cities, including Sao Paulo (map 7) and Rio de Janeiro. Of its international migrants, in the year 2000, 23.0 per cent were from Europe, 21.4 per cent were from Latin America and the Caribbean (excluding Argentina and Paraguay), 16.4 per cent were from Paraguay and 13.2 per cent were from the United States. Brazil is also a destination country for migrants from Bolivia, Peru and other countries in the region, with a particular focus on certain metropolises. According to Baeninger (2004), Bolivians tend to migrate to the metropolitan area of Sao Paulo (in the year 2000, they accounted for 60% of the city’s entire immigrant population). As many Bolivians work in certain fields, such as tailoring, most live in particular neighbourhoods close to markets and the supply of inexpensive materials, thereby shaping the communities around them (Rolnik Xavier, 2011). In addition, some studies on Bolivian immigrants living in the metropolitan area of Sao Paulo show that they live in different locations at different stages of their lives, explaining the high rates of intra-metropolitan migration. Of Bolivians who have lived in the metropolitan area of Sao Paulo, only 20.6 per cent lived there for 3 years or less, 25 per cent lived there for between 4 and 9 years, 16.8 per cent for between 10 and 14 years, 14.4 per cent for between 15 and 24 years, and 23.2 per cent for more than 25 years. According to Cunha (2004), the population began to move from the centre of the city towards the periphery. According to these three authors, Sao Paulo continues to expand from its centre, shaping development both in the centre and in its surrounding municipalities.
A strong economy, together with social improvements and new transport infrastructure, is creating migrant flows along the coast that end in metropolises. Such migration feeds the growing need for labourers in highly industrialized areas, which are competing globally. The attraction of Brazil for international migrants from neighbouring countries is also a growing phenomenon, although there are no clear migrant corridors. The humanitarian crisis in Haiti is shaping migrant corridors in the northern part of the country, which flow south towards metropolitan cities, making this process more and more cosmopolitan.

Chile has experienced significant and sustained economic growth in the last decade, attracting internal migrants who move to different areas, and international migrants, particularly Bolivians and Peruvians, who migrate to areas with mining activities (Aroca, 2004).

As stated earlier, Argentina is the country in the region with the second-highest percentage of international migrants (4.5% of its total population in 2010). They are mostly from Paraguay and Bolivia, but there are also Peruvians, Uruguayans and many other nationalities, creating several migration corridors to and within the country (map 8). There are two main corridors: one from the north and one from the north-east, both of which flow towards the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires. This city is the final destination of these flows, which has the highest rate of international and internal migrants in the country. These two migrant corridors have a demographic impact on intermediary cities along the way, especially in border areas. There is also a third migrant corridor, along which migrants move towards different areas of Patagonia, in the south of the country. New oil exploration and industry in the Patagonian region of Vaca Muerta, which covers part of the provinces of Neuquén, Mendoza and Rio Negro, have created rapid urbanization in Neuquén, the capital city of the province. There has been a rapid increase in migration into the area, which currently has a very limited capacity to provide workers with adequate housing. The provincial government has established a ban on settling in the areas close to where oil is expected to be extracted, resulting in the rapid creation of slums and informal settlements in the city of Neuquén.
Historically, Paraguay and Uruguay have had high emigration patterns, even though both countries have made significant efforts, by facilitating the acquisition of land and housing, to encourage their populations to remain or to return. However, rural populations are being pushed out due to large-scale monoculture activities (for example for soya bean production) and forestry.

1.3. MIGRATION AND URBAN GROWTH

Historically, countries in Latin America have been seen as economically and culturally similar, creating the image of the region as a single entity. This is reflected in important legal changes in migratory regulations, which have become less and less restrictive. It must be taken into account that migration is now more complex and is occurring mostly between cities, and that migrants tend to be more educated and better aware of their rights than in the past. As population movements within cities, as well as between secondary urban centres, have become more relevant, migrants are assuming identities as international citizens and losing their stigma as foreigners. Naturally, this depends on the context of the country, and it can happen that even intra-urban migration results in serious conflicts in communities that perceive migrants, even those coming from nearby municipalities, as dangerous foreigners. A hypothesis that should be explored is whether these conflicts are related to the presence of foreign nationalities rather than the scarcity of certain resources (such as land, water or basic infrastructure) in urban areas where different groups of natives and migrants compete for such resources. Research carried out in slum areas populated by internal and international migrants demonstrates that there are the same social tensions and conflicts among people of the same nationality as there are between migrants and locals, and the conflicts and tensions
are related to land, housing, services (especially health and education) and infrastructure (Murillo and Artese, 2014).

UN-Habitat (2008) proposes different types of classifications for countries based on urban growth and slum percentages (figure 1). The first type concerns countries with a high slum prevalence, leading to “slum cities”. The second type refers to countries that have slums concentrated in the capital and largest cities, the “isolated underclass”. The third type concerns countries in which there is a low or moderate presence of slums, or “poverty at the margins”.

![Figure 1: Classification of countries according to the prevalence of slums](Image)

Clustering slum-countries-cities

1. **Slum cities**: Countries with high overall slum prevalence

2. **Isolated underclass**: Slums concentrated in capital and larger cities

3. **Poverty at the margins**: Low or moderate prevalence of slums

Source: Based on UN-Habitat, 2008.

Traditionally, metropolitan growth has been accompanied not only by densification but also by peripheral expansion. In most cases, migrants who have moved to cities have settled in the peripheries, which has contributed to the pattern of urban sprawl. Economically disadvantaged peripheries are a common trait of large metropolises in Latin America, where high-income populations who can afford their costly urban services live in gated communities, separated from low-income groups who cannot afford but still need to live in the peripheries because of the low cost of land. As a result of city expansion, the older peripheries have gained centrality, becoming suburban towns. The more recently developed peripheries with their gated communities occupy large areas surrounded by low-income settlements that have become denser with poor housing and transport infrastructures. In addition to the social and cultural problems created by sprawl, there are also the negative environmental impacts of these vast spaces being occupied by small, low-density populations, exactly the opposite of what is supposed to occur in a sustainable city. These developments have been facilitated by improvements in communication, and particularly through investments in highways and roads. In the older areas, segregation is scattered and there are significant differences in the public infrastructure and services available in different neighbourhoods.

In general, peripheral expansion is associated with long daily commutes (Torres, 2001). The other feature is the concentration of the economically disadvantaged population in deteriorated areas in the city centre or in the first peripheral ring. These areas have been losing wealthy populations, who leave the neighbourhoods that have become occupied by low-income groups. At the same time, other central areas...
have regained value through the process of gentrification (Ciccollela, 1999). In this complex urban renewal process, migration has created an important real estate market: migrants’ needs are addressed through poor-quality buildings, which require investments to be transformed to meet their needs.

The different migrant corridors briefly described in the previous section determine various categories of urban growth. They are classified into three categories: metropolitan cities, which are the final destination of migration flows; intermediary cities, which act as migrant transfer cities; and small cities in poor regions, where emigration flows begin (figure 2). These three categories depict the role played by cities in providing infrastructure in the migrant corridors, and, at the same time, show how the migrant corridors influence the demographic dynamics of these different categories of urban growth, explaining the processes of rapid urban expansion associated with the migrant flows.

The first category corresponds to the urban growth of metropolises, most of which are capital cities. This category consists of three migrant settlement patterns: (a) migrants live in central locations (in high-density slums), where they take advantage of the available jobs and income generation opportunities resulting from economic agglomeration; (b) migrants live in the first peripheral ring on inexpensive land in slums, which are well served by public transport; and (c) migrants live on small farms in the extreme periphery, where they work in agricultural activities that provide goods for the metropolis.

The second category corresponds to intermediary cities, which generally host migrants in shanty towns surrounding the city, segregated and outside the urban fabrics.

The third category corresponds to small cities that grow as a result of increased economic activities in their hinterland, which attracts migrants. These cities face the problems associated with the proliferation of slums and shanty towns, and the migrants live outside the urban fabric because of a lack of affordable accommodation in the centre of the towns and small cities.

![Figure 2: Types of urban growth resulting from migrant flows](image)

*Source: Figure by the author.*

The first category – metropolises with the three migrant patterns described above (where migrants live in dense, central areas, in peri-urban settlements or in nearly rural settlements on the extreme periphery) – can be found in countries that attract migrants. In the first migrant settlement pattern, if the migration is
internal, the result is neighbourhoods whose inhabitants come from different areas of the country, with differences in ethnicity, as is the case in La Paz in Bolivia and Sao Paulo in Brazil. In capital cities receiving international migrants, such as Buenos Aires in Argentina or San José in Costa Rica, there may be slums located in the centre of the city, as well as peri-urban settlements of migrants, and migrants working in rural areas, providing goods and services to the whole metropolis.

For metropolitan cities with high numbers of displaced people, such as Bogota, it is unclear whether such populations will remain in the city or return to their places of origin. Such transitory and unstable living environments in which people are not sure if they will remain or not create urban patterns with overcrowded conditions (Ruiz and Castillo, 2014). Map 9 presents a typical peri-urban pattern of displacement, which is the case in Soacha municipality in the metropolitan area of Bogota. So far, over 550,000 displaced persons (Camargo and Hurtado, 2013) have settled in different parts of the city of Bogota, predominately in informal settlements, which increases the ongoing phenomenon of segregation. Different researchers show that 45.1 per cent of displaced families live in highly overcrowded areas, defined as more than three persons sharing one room (Ruiz and Castillo, 2014). It has been observed that there is widespread discrimination against displaced persons in terms of their ability to access public services.

In 2009, the net expansion area of the city was of 3,279 hectares: 938 hectares at the southern border and 247 hectares at the western border. There is conurbation with Soacha, which hosts a large number of displaced groups, and for this reason, rapid socio-territorial segregation has been developing. There is partial integration with Mosquera, Funza, Madrid, Kota and Chía. Social housing schemes have played a major role in increasing the segregation process.

Map 9: Expansion of Bogota, dominated by displaced populations
Internal migration for socioeconomic and cultural reasons is part of the first category of migration. This is the case in Bolivia, where the Aymara ethnic group, which was historically neglected by public policies, has experienced significant benefits (including access to social services and income) by moving to major cities, La Paz in particular. This group has moved in large numbers from rural areas to major cities.

In El Alto, a new municipality close to La Paz, there is a concentration of low-income groups from rural areas. Socioeconomic improvements have taken place, including increased access to public health care, education and better jobs, and mixed with the low-income groups are now returnees from Europe, particularly Spain. These returnees are spending their savings on building luxury houses, popularly known by the nickname “Eurocasas” (houses built with euros by returnees). The expansion of El Alto (map 10) is a case of rapid urbanization. Its size has multiplied by 160 in 10 years, which is one of the fastest urbanization rates in the world. In 2003, the urban area of El Alto occupied 115 sq. km; 10 years later its area reached 270 sq. km. Of the 1,200 neighbourhoods across 10 urban districts of El Alto, only about half have approved urban planning. Even though there are a significant number of informal settlements and segregation occurs in different ways, there is no clear pattern of segregation related to migrants. Instead, there is a social mix between different ethnic groups who find in the city a new scenario for developing their survival and development strategies. There are the typical problems related to rapid urbanization, such as traffic congestion, and traditional open markets or fairs that were originally in the countryside are now in overcrowded public spaces in the urban fabric, where vendors are reluctant to accept the formal rules of urbanization.

Map 10: Urban expansion of El Alto, Bolivia

Another example of the first category of growth can be seen in Buenos Aires, which has specific neighbourhoods where international migrants live (map 11). In this city, foreign inhabitants make up 13.2 per cent of the population. The percentage is even higher in those neighbourhoods with a high concentration of immigrants, especially in the southern part of the city, which is historically an underdeveloped area compared with the wealthy northern part.
Migrant agglomerations in certain neighbourhoods can be identified through an analysis of metropolises (map 12).

Map 11: International migration trends in the southern part of Buenos Aires

Map 12: Migrant agglomerations in the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires

Looking at the concentration of migrants in such agglomeration phenomena, it can be observed that certain groups of migrants are attracted to particular areas (map 13). Paraguayans, the major migrant group in Argentina, are concentrated in central areas of Buenos Aires (IOM, 2012) and in the southern districts of the city, such as Nueva Pompeya, Barracas, La Boca, Soldati and Villa Riachuelo. Bolivians, the second-largest migrant group, also live in some of these areas (Murillo et al., 2011). There is also a high concentration of Peruvians in Buenos Aires, located mostly in the neighbourhoods of Balvanera and San Telmo.

Map 13: Migrant concentrations by nationality in the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires

All of these neighbourhoods have grown in the last two decades, predominantly due to the formation of slums that include both internal and international migrant inhabitants. This has resulted in complicated segregation conditions, with migrants and natives sharing space in an area with a serious housing shortage. Migration movements within the metropolis are directly related to migrant modes of transport and housing preferences, as they seek central or peripheral locations. In addition, it has been observed that migrants from rural areas of Bolivia relocate to peri-urban areas in Buenos Aires, where they can set up agribusiness activities, such as growing vegetables to sell in the local markets. On the contrary, migrants with urban backgrounds prefer central locations as they can establish trade and micro-business activities in town. Beyond this, a general trend has been for internal and international migrants to settle initially in the extreme periphery then to move regularly towards a central location.

Such intra-metropolitan migration reveals the search for survival and development of different vulnerable groups, including migrants living in slums and shanty towns. Various studies on poverty and migration have determined that Buenos Aires can be divided into three zones (map 14). The southern area of the city is inhabited equally by the poor and by migrants. The second zone, defined as more migrant than poor, is located in the northern part and in the first metropolitan ring. The third zone, more poor than migrant, is located on the periphery of the city, where migrants initially settle before they begin to migrate towards more central locations.
A well-documented case study on informal settlement growth in Buenos Aires is “Villa 31” (figure 3). Villa 31 is an informal settlement with 51 per cent international migrants, 20 per cent internal migrants and 29 per cent local residents of Buenos Aires (CABA, 2009). Its population rose from 12,204 in 2001 to 26,403 in 2009, representing a case of rapid urbanization.

Figure 3: “Villa 31” – A high concentration of international and internal migrants
The second category of urban growth involves intermediary cities expanding mostly into rural land. Bergesio and Golovanevsky (2013) carried out a study on the large neighbourhood of Alto Comedero in Jujuy, Argentina. In this neighbourhood, just 4 km from the city centre, a non-governmental organization (NGO) called Tupac Amaru built 1,800 houses through self-help for one third of the total population of the city. Alto Comedero has a high concentration of internal migrants from rural areas of Jujuy province, as well as immigrants from neighbouring Bolivia. Although the project is viewed as having positive results overall, there has been criticism that these highly organized social and political grassroots organizations challenge the provincial government and the rule of law. In addition, it has been noted that these projects have problems such as buildings not being constructed according to building regulations, and in some cases they are located in places where there are risks of natural disasters such as mudslides. Like many other intermediary cities, Jujuy is a transfer point for migrants heading towards their possible final destination, in this case, the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires.

The third category of urban growth involves the rapid urbanization of small towns, which face a proliferation of slums and transitory shelters. This type of expansion is the result of new industrial activities demanding workers in places without infrastructure. An example of such a case involves Botnia, a Finnish paper producer that set up a mill in Uruguay. This case is well known, as it resulted in conflicts between Argentina and Uruguay due to the suspected environmental damage caused by the industrial activities. However, the Government of Uruguay was seeking to attract international investment in order to generate employment and income, although it did not ignore the threat of the proliferation of slums. The case of Botnia involved a public–private partnership between the national and local governments and a private investor (Botnia) in Conchillas District. It was agreed that housing for temporary workers would be built on government land in a neighbourhood of Colonia del Sacramento, a major town in the area. The agreement was that, once the construction of the mill was complete, the houses would be transferred to the municipality to be used for social housing. Since the completion of the project, the local government has been allocating these homes to beneficiaries, who are low-income groups from Uruguay. Instead of creating new towns, which would very likely mean that slums would also be created, Uruguay has shown that, through joint efforts, it is possible to prevent slums and create adequate living conditions for all.

As Jansa (2008) explains, empirical evidence demonstrates that there were significant socio-territorial impacts of the Botnia pulp mill project in Uruguay related to internal migration to Fray Bentos (another city that was receiving migrants due to the Botnia project) for formal and informal employment. The assumption about subcontracted migration was that, if expectations of finding employment had led to an influx of workers that exceeded the demand for labour, the Botnia pulp mill project could have created irregular settlements in Fray Bentos. This did not occur because of the infrastructure that was prepared for the Finnish workers in advance and then used to accommodate local workers, especially those unable to afford housing with their own resources.

In Montevideo there appears to be consensus that people living in irregular settlements originate from within the capital itself, from other departments (including the departments in the area bordering Brazil, the department of Maldonado and the department of Río Negro), but the local governments believe irregular settlements are a result of internal migration. Together with the national and local governments, development agencies and organizations operating in Uruguay are seeking other ways to prevent the formation and growth of irregular settlements. During the first half of 2007, IOM Uruguay, in cooperation with United Nations agencies, examined the possibility of addressing the problem of irregular settlements from a migration perspective.
2. LOCAL INCLUSION IN URBAN PLANNING

2.1. MIGRATION AND URBANIZATION TRENDS CREATED BY THE “NEW ECONOMY”: OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRO-POOR POLICIES

The relationship between urbanization and migration described in section 1 must be understood as an evolving process that has different stages. From industrial development to the rise of the service industry and then the so-called “new economy”, dominated by ICT, there has been an important shift as countries in the region have introduced inclusion policies for vulnerable groups. The economic growth and the structural changes that occurred when the economy evolved from being built on agriculture to being built on industry and then to being based on services are irreversible and tend to be self-reinforced. The urbanization process supports the expansion and concentration of markets and thus, a major division of labour, creating the possibility for better incomes. The demographic dimensions of urbanization and migration are related and have an economic dimension. As farming became industrialized and there were fewer jobs, people began leaving rural areas for cities. In addition, the lower demand for farming goods means the demand for workers is also lower, in both the first stage of the process in the industrial sector and the second stage in the services sector in the cities. However, the process of economic development is related not only to increases in productivity, but also to its efficiency and variety, and this is influenced by the capacity of urban centres to support an economy of agglomerations and societal functions with efficiency. A city that is in good shape economically but is congested, polluted and overcrowded is not taking advantage of its agglomeration.

Economies of agglomeration will not work if social services do not reach poor populations. For this to occur, it is essential that the virtuous cycles of agglomeration be taken advantage of. Both internal and international migration have an impact on shaping economies of agglomeration, and when basic social needs are not met, the efficiency of the city as a whole is affected.

Migration occurs because many families are escaping conflicts, or natural or social disasters, or simply wish to seek a better life elsewhere. Trends indicate that international migration will be another irreversible and growing demographic force in the ongoing urbanization process. It has been observed that a densification pattern in central areas, particularly in slums, has been taking place, where different communities of people can network and acquire the know-how to obtain higher-skilled jobs. Intra-metropolitan migration has been strongly linked to the debate on urban primacy, and more specifically on the processes involving the concentration or deconcentration of metropolises and the formation of megalopolises. The social impacts of intra-metropolitan migration, particularly those related to the issue of spatial segregation, are also being discussed.

Research evaluating the effects of migration on Latin American cities shows that, currently, internal migration – which is predominantly between and within cities – is continuing the feminization of cities, as men and women are now equally forced to move because of the lack of employment opportunities in their places of origin (Rodriguez, 2011). Research also shows that internal migration tends to increase the presence of youth, to the detriment of populations below 15 years of age and above 65 years of age in places of origin. This contribution of migration to cities is called the “demographic bonus”, as economically active populations are introduced into the demographic pyramids of cities, to the detriment of other areas. Migration slightly depresses educational levels in general as the majority of migrants receive their qualifications once settled in their destination cities.

Urban expansion that goes beyond cities’ administrative boundaries incorporates other urban settlements in a rapid conurbation process. This has resulted in the creation of huge urban areas, sometimes formalized into a metropolitan area, integrating many municipalities with intensive activities.

---

1 An example of this trend involves Villa 31, a slum in the centre of Buenos Aires, whose inhabitants studied architecture and acquired knowledge to compete in the “new economy”. Similar cases can be found in slums in other Latin American cities.
In greater metropolitan areas, such as those of Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Quito and Guatemala City, UN-Habitat has observed a migration pattern called “concentrated deconcentration”. In this pattern, a part of the city’s population moves from one location in the city to a more central area in the city, and this area continues receiving migrants from other parts of the country. Depending on the case, migration can change the demographic distribution of a city and eventually create territorial disparities. The prevalence of youth among the migrants can increase the active population in receiving areas, while in their places of origin, the level of dependence on social services grows due to the increased proportion of children and the elderly, with the risk of worsening their economic and social problems.

The effect of migration on the ethnic composition of populations in places of destination is another subject of many studies. Cities in countries with a high proportion of indigenous populations that are receiving migrants from these indigenous groups is an example of urban deconcentration and a new type of social segregation.

Nowadays, internal migration is more complex. It involves a multiplicity of places of origin and destination, and there has been a change in the socio-demographic characteristics of migrants. Data limitation is perhaps one of the reasons evidence of new spatial movements between small administrative units and within localities is not being detected. New paradigms in urban and regional planning require the incorporation of a human rights approach. There must be an understanding of the rural–urban linkages created by migration corridors in order to ensure the sustainability of both the urban and rural worlds. The shape of new territorial entities within cities and rural territories points to the rise of new lifestyles that migrants are building in specific areas, whether urban or rural, which are closely linked to new commercial areas that offer income generation opportunities for poor migrants and are supported by intercultural relationships.

A shift in urban planning is required, and it must include new regulatory frameworks to orient real estate markets and take advantage of land capture mechanisms so there can be investment in the development of new infrastructures. Densification is key for the optimal use of land; it is important to avoid physical and social fragmentation. Although these recommendations are critical in achieving more sustainable cities, a significant component tends to be neglected: the social and cultural background of the different categories of inhabitants and migrants influencing the urban growth. Any change to territorial planning implies the need to revisit theories about how societies organize their own territories. The fact that cities in general, and those in Latin America in particular, are becoming more and more intercultural (that is, places where people with different cultural background coexist) must be reflected in urban and regional planning. There is also a need for new approaches to organizing territories occupied by people from different cultural backgrounds.

The debate around sprawl and the compact city tends not to address the fact that, for people coming from rural areas or from cities in other countries, it is very difficult to adapt to high- or medium-density urban life, and it generally takes one generation to do so. Also, the way communities organize themselves is reflected in their territorial patterns. Migration, both internal and international, provides an opportunity to create suitable places where different social groups can satisfy their basic needs at affordable costs. However, to achieve the ideal of intercultural cities – where tolerance flourishes, because it is more convenient for different communities to interact than to compete (as evidence has shown) – specific planning mechanisms are required. Such mechanisms must be able to engage community structures, shaping new partnerships to deal with more complex challenges, including social cohesion, environmental protection, and adaptation and resilience to climate change. Of paramount importance is the participation of the citizens, including migrants, in moving in such a direction.
2.2. THE “RIGHT TO THE CITY” APPROACH

As a highly urbanized region, Latin America and the Caribbean has developed local inclusion policies that are based on habitat interventions inspired by the concept of the “right to the city”. This is a progressive vision that incorporates human rights approaches. For most countries, it has been important to provide citizens with adequate housing, also for migrants, as most countries wish to facilitate their residence and, in some cases, even speed up citizenship procedures. Such consideration for human rights has direct consequences on habitat and urbanization, making migrants, no matter their reason for migration, eligible for social benefits, including housing. Montevideo, the capital city of Uruguay, has for a long time taken a proactive approach to the inclusion of internal migrants by supplying resources for their housing needs. The economic strength of the metropolis makes it a magnet for low-income groups from all over the country, who seek access to public services and a better life in general. By the end of the 1980s, however, this attraction to the city had created an expansive belt of shanty towns and informal settlements, and the local government decided to stop this type of growth. Decentralization policies aimed at giving more power to the lowest level of state administration were put in place, with assistance from grassroots organizations, in order to address local inclusion from different angles, including housing, health, education and urbanization. With a long tradition of urban planning, the city moved towards a more systematic approach to decentralization, including institutionalizing pro-poor policies that target specific groups.

Rural migrants have the advantage of working in rural cooperatives, sharing tools and funding, which they have brought to urban locations in the form of affordable housing cooperatives. Because of the high cost of urban land and infrastructure, such schemes are based on communal land tenure. From the individual successful experiences of some affordable housing cooperatives to a more systematic approach to urban planning and city governance, Uruguay has struggled to find a scheme to guide the development and transformation of the capital city towards a more inclusive model. As explained by Chavez (2005): “The policy most blockaded was precisely decentralization, not only because it displaced the political actors from a political system highly centered on parties, but also because it implied a radical change in the forms of relation between the state and society and because it attacked the clientelistic networks that used to relate the traditional parties to their social grassroots.” The decentralization policies of Montevideo have led to public policies that, through well-structured grassroots efforts, have gone beyond social housing and have resulted in the development of affordable urban development schemes, including those for social services and infrastructure. These policies have been based on different financial alternatives targeting different social groups, complementary to subsidized public works aimed at a more inclusive city. For the poorest groups, the best option has involved cooperative schemes based on shared communal land, as increasing land values have made it nearly impossible to satisfy their housing needs through traditional market mechanisms. For middle-to-low income groups, other alternatives, including renting and soft mortgages for public servants and other specific groups, have been made available. In both cases, the policies have targeted the construction industry, minimizing real estate speculation and redistributing land values among the various social groups. As a result of this process, the city is expanding more inclusively with less segregation and fragmentation. Like Montevideo, Porto Alegre, a city in southern Brazil, has a good reputation for seeking social inclusion through participation and consideration for human rights. The city has used the participatory budgeting model, which is a well-known methodology whereby public resources are invested in social priorities, with special attention paid to ensuring that the poor are well represented and their interests are addressed. Concrete improvements in terms of urban planning contribute to evidence that the participatory budgeting model can work.

The model has four main steps. First, in Porto Alegre, each rural and urban area determined its 13 most important needs, such as basic sewage, housing and urban transport. Second, each area prioritized its needs from 1 to 13. Then, officials from the municipality selected the priority areas for the public

---

2 The Patria Grande programme in Argentina addresses the bureaucracy involved in migrants settling in a new country. Through this programme, the waiting times for migrants to receive proper documentation have been significantly reduced.
investments and determined the allocation of resources for each area. This was done according to a numerical coefficient calculated according to the percentage and the equivalent monetary value of the total budget. Valid lessons regarding social inclusion can be learned from the Porto Alegre experience. The social inclusion of disadvantaged groups, such as internal migrants from rural areas, was achieved through their active representation and their access to benefits. Such representation constitutes a step forward with respect to the traditional participation of vulnerable groups, where they have the chance to express their views and discuss their problems, but they do not necessarily have an opportunity to solve their problems with anything more than their own resources. However, building metropolitan institutions with an inclusive vision, giving grassroots groups a voice and a vote to defend their rights, with the explicit intention to include vulnerable groups, proves to be an effective way to build inclusive policies.

The poor in Lima, Peru, are segregated, and participation and decentralization is the only way forward for their inclusion. The metropolitan territorial structure physically reflects the recurrent wave of liberalization policies that leave clear footprints of segregation, fragmentation and exclusion. The well-known Peruvian scholar Hernando De Soto has proposed a policy for massive land regularization in poor neighbourhoods that would ensure the access of the poor to secure land tenure as the first key step for them to invest in their own habitat and to capitalize on this in order to obtain credit to set up businesses. In his book *El otro sendero* (*The Other Path*), De Soto (1987) argues that the poor cannot build capital in Latin America because under colonization – unlike in the United States – they did not have access to land ownership. His thesis supports the idea that the real problem of the informal economy, through which the poor survive, is that State regulations distort markets.

De Soto’s studies have inspired various interventions in informal settlements surrounding Lima, most of which are overcrowded and built on arid land. The expectation is that, with secure land tenure, poor populations will have access to credit through available mortgage systems, introducing the poor into the mortgage and credit machinery to make their micro-businesses more efficient. De Soto’s research demonstrates that, in Peru, one would need USD 590 and 43 days just to open a basic shop at a street fair, something clearly unaffordable for the poor. His evidence shows that it is necessary to simplify regulations to make the formal registration of businesses easier and more effective. This would result in systematically inclusive policies, thereby providing workers in the informal economy with more opportunities. In terms of housing, the research shows that, to receive permission to build a shack on a modest plot in the outskirts of Lima, a family requires USD 2,156, the equivalent of 56 times a basic wage, once again making this completely unaffordable for the poor. De Soto conducted studies on informal settlement inhabitants, who apart from having all of the economic difficulties mentioned, face discrimination, lack knowledge about the rules and regulations for working in a metropolitan city, and lack political representation to defend their interests.

Many critics of De Soto’s theories suggest that this individualistic approach to development is wrong (Rizzo, 2011; Gravois, 2005). They believe that, instead of pushing for fewer regulatory frameworks that “oppress” the poor, it is necessary to do the opposite. They suggest that more development frameworks are required to enable the poor to progress through subsidies that encourage production and State control of economic activities that ensure that those few rules of the economy really work. According to these critics, the evidence shows that the regularization of the informal settlements in the outskirts of Lima has not changed anything, and even with secure land tenure, there has not been any progress for the poor inhabitants. Taxes on individual plots for poor migrants, who are struggling to access essential public services such as water in very arid areas or income generation opportunities in areas far from the urban fabric, are an enormous cost that they simply cannot afford. The result is that the poor will look for more centralized slums, where even renting informally will be more affordable that having a piece of land in a segregated area, where a supposedly available mortgage means little in setting up a business, and therefore does not have an impact on their struggle to escape poverty.
Regarding this debate, Fernandes (2011), who studied the impacts of regularization on informal settlements in Latin America, emphasizes the importance of presenting alternatives to slum dwellers, rather than using a single approach. Among the alternatives are different forms of secure land tenure, including communal land tenure, as an option for the lowest income groups.

Landaeta et al. (2014) make the case for communal land in Bolivia, where the introduction of the Uruguayan model of housing cooperatives, already successfully introduced in Nicaragua, faces serious problems related to cultural perceptions by different ethnic groups. In Bolivia, when internal migrants move from an area with certain tribes to an area that ancestrally had belonged to other tribes there is resistance to subdividing the land, except in the case of formal urbanization, which follows the rules established by the colonial powers. There has been a “rediscovery” of different land tenure modalities from pre-Colombian times, and the Government of Bolivia has sought to use these habitation schemes that worked in the past but to adapt them to the challenges of a globalized world. A critical step in this regard was to change the name of the country from the “Republic of Bolivia” to the “Plurinational State of Bolivia”, which shows the intention to rebuild the country based on tolerance and diversity.

Another step forward in ensuring the representation of the poor in urban decision-making is the new regulation on participation, which makes it compulsory for any municipality to call for the direct participation of communities in deciding how to allocate resources from the State for their basic territorial organization. This move is strongly influenced by the participatory budgeting model used in Porto Alegre. Critics of the application of this model in Bolivia, however, point out that such “open” participation in fact hides the clientelistic and very opportunistic operation of “pirate” real estate developers, who channel funding from the State to capitalize on land that they sell to low-income groups at higher prices, continuously extending city boundaries (Landaeta et al., 2006).

From a very different perspective, Mexico City is exploring other options for having inclusive policies. The communal ownership of land in Mexico has long been debated, and is part of current efforts to shape approaches to housing for migrants. Internal migration from rural areas to the metropolitan capital is an enormous challenge for average Mexicans. The proliferation of informal settlements has been the rule, rather than the exception, for accommodating low-income groups. Policies that supposedly seek inclusion are in fact increasing the value of the land that was once occupied by informal settlements, but whose inhabitants had been evicted. The value is recaptured through different regulatory mechanisms of compensation through which social housing is provided on the outskirts of the urban fabric, where land is still inexpensive and without infrastructure. In this way, social housing on the city outskirts works as a subsidy that, instead of serving to build a more inclusive city, serves the purpose of expanding speculative formal real estate markets, thereby capturing land value. This scenario of the complete absence of the State regulating land for the poor has had very negative consequences in terms of urban segregation, fragmentation and exclusion.

In Costa Rica, the presence of migrants, particularly those from Nicaragua, who represent 54 per cent of the total international migrant population (Costa Rica, Ministry of Migration, 2012), has a particular social impact on the urban fabric. Informal settlements in Costa Rica, inhabited mostly by Nicaraguans working in such public services as security and transport, greatly contribute to the local economy. However, there are complexities related to governance that also must be taken into account. Although Costa Rica has a good reputation for having a tolerant society, unique in the region, dependence on migrant workers has ignited debates about nationalism and the defence of sovereignty. Such debates take place mostly in San José, the capital city, where shanty towns inhabited by foreigners are in close proximity to wealthy neighbourhoods dominated by natives. This has created a complex scenario of segregation and fragmentation.
Statistical surveys show that such tensions are perceived among the population in general, including natives and migrants. For example, 74.2 per cent of Nicaraguans believe that the relationship is one of economic exploitation. This perception is reflected in the statistics on the population living in shanty towns and those living in poor housing conditions. For example, 7.1 per cent of Nicaraguan heads of households live in shanty towns, while this figure is just 1.2 per cent for Costa Rican heads of households. Regarding those living in poor housing conditions, the figure is 7.9 per cent for Nicaraguans and 1.5 per cent for Costa Ricans. Once again, as in other cases, segregation in slums constitutes the major threat faced by migrants when settling in their recipient cities. Even though these cities offer good employment opportunities, certainly far better than those back home, the advantages are not the same in terms of accommodation. These issues mean the migrants are hesitant to decide to stay permanently, which leads them to live for extended periods in precarious situations, which in turn has negative consequences on the education and emotional stability of whole families.

An interesting case to examine is that of Curitiba, in Brazil. As a model city, especially in terms of sustainability, Curitiba has achieved significant progress in protecting its natural environment and is a pioneer in terms of public transport and planning urban expansion. The results of public policies aimed at sustainable development have been admired internationally because there have been promising indicators of well-being. However, different research that analysed a recent census shows there are segregation trends involving those with higher incomes moving out of the city centre, igniting a typical sprawl process. Such differentiation is a response of higher-income groups, of the same white and Asian origins sharing the same neighbourhoods, confronted by internal migrants, who are Afro-descendants from the northern part of the country. Migrant ethnicities and income levels are closely interrelated in this case (Wojtowicz, 2014), which is a challenge for policymakers. Improvements in citizen’s access to goods and services require additional efforts to combat powerful segregation trends.
3. PUBLIC–PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS FOR SOCIAL HOUSING FOR MIGRANTS

3.1. REMITTANCES TO SUPPORT SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Public–private partnerships are a key tool for using migration in the development of low-income countries. As Sandoval (2007) points out, migration and development could be a vicious circle or not, depending on migrants’ capacity to maintain linkages with their places of origin. According to this author, remittances, when assumed as a public policy to promote local development, give rise to “co-development”, where countries of migrant origin and destination benefit equally by working together. Sandoval makes the point that Latin America is currently facing an intense migratory phenomenon, with a social inclusion perspective inherited from its rich history of continuous cultural exchange after the arrival of Europeans. The scholar, however, queries how such a phenomenon is really influencing the development of the region, and discusses whether there are greater costs than benefits. It can be said that, on the one hand, migration is a result of inequalities in the region and on the other hand, it is one of the factors helping to perpetuate them, considering the human capital lost. Migration is also a direct consequence of the development of societies in transition, one of the main factors contributing to correcting the gap in the modernization of countries of origin. In Latin America, remittances are one of the main benefits of migration for countries of origin, as they support a good number of economies in the region. However, changes in consumption patterns and increases in investment and trade are also the benefits of migration that contribute to poverty reduction. The author provides the example of the introduction of flexible banking in economies encouraged by remittances, as well as the spread of new political and sociocultural ideas that correspond to a higher level of development, such as democracy, accountability in political activities, diverse modalities of participation and a different role of women in society.

As a concept, public–private partnership is a typical result of developed societies finding ways to address their challenges more efficiently. For other societies though, public–private partnerships can be associated, for good reasons, with opportunities for corruption, which can occur when there is a lack of adequate State control mechanisms, giving room to the discrentional use of public resources. Remittances are a sensitive issue, as those sending and those receiving them seek to avoid any possibility of State interference, fearing the risk of being charged taxes. However, there are several organizations that work with people sending and receiving remittances, both individual and cooperative associations. They have established positive relationship with States, collaborating with them to carry out specific actions for the benefit of all. When co-development initiatives are promoted by countries of origin and destination, there is an improvement in the relationship between migration and development, and a dimension of equality between individuals and between cities and countries is introduced. Such a relationship is complex and frequently contradictory; migration can lead to development, but it can also be the cause of further poverty and dependence. In fact it is necessary for governments to design public policies that really tackle these vicious circles and help cities and areas move towards a virtuous circle where they cooperate in co-development programmes, thereby helping to reduce social gaps. The use of collective remittances to support public works is, for the most part, new to the region. Although it is difficult to determine the middle- and long-term impacts, such initiatives are promising and should be taken into account in the development agendas of Latin American and Caribbean countries where the practice of remittances is frequent and the establishment of collective remittances may be encouraged.

The “Two for One” initiative between Mexico and the United States encourages the effective use of remittances to promote local development. Through this initiative, Mexican migrants living in Texas contribute one third of the capital required to carry out improvement work in their places of origin, while the other two thirds is covered by the Government of Mexico.
Similarly, in Argentina, a Bolivian cooperative called Saropalca assists migrants in using their collective remittances more effectively to improve public infrastructures in poor municipalities in their place of origin, a very poor area in Bolivia called Toropalca. The Saropalca cooperative, located in Morón in the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires, has an extensive network of fruit and vegetable producers who use the cooperative system to make their businesses more profitable (for example, by having their own transport to take their products to markets in Buenos Aires, avoiding the use of an intermediary). It provides more than one third of all of the fruits and vegetables for the city of Buenos Aires (Castro Olivera, 2005). The cooperative system is managed by migrants using social practices from their places of origin, including the use of a disciplined cooperative business plan that facilitates the reuse and reinvestment of the capital invested. The social cohesion of this group (the members are from the same place of origin) is one of the reasons they generate profits.

A key question among the cooperative members concerns how they can contribute to the development of their place of origin, as they maintain strong links with their homelands. For instance, most members keep and expand their housing facilities in their places of origin, and they contribute to charitable organizations to help the youth and the elderly, as promoting the welfare of others is an old tradition in the Bolivian communities. However, this is not always articulated in public policies. The cooperative has agreed to help the municipalities of origin by partially funding the building of infrastructure, which generates jobs and other income opportunities, thereby also helping to prevent emigration from their homelands. Studies have been done to determine how such contributions could more effectively help in setting up business opportunities in the migrants’ places of origin. Some specific projects have been identified as strategic in promoting income generation activities in the region, targeting the most vulnerable members of the community. One such project involved building a mill and seed mixer to facilitate rural micro-business activities, incorporating value in their production chain. Other projects related to raising pigs and developing natural fertilizers were implemented but they did not do as well in terms of economic performance and social benefits. Even though they live far from their places of origin, the migrants have been able to link two governments to work in partnership with a private actor (the cooperative) for the benefit of a specific territory – an ayllu, which is an ancestral socio-territorial space from pre-Columbian times. It continues to operate under the political structure in the seven municipalities of Toropalca. Such historical linkages are important when it comes to support for local development. When institutionalized, these forms of ancestral social organizations have benefits in terms of socioeconomic development. But the process is extremely complex and there can be conflicts among different ethnic groups who prefer to work with international organizations such as the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Another example of a positive public-private partnership involves the health care of Mexican migrants in the United States being funded by the Government of Mexico (Llaglararon, 2010). In this regard, Mexican consulates in various cities in the United States established “Binational Health Week”, targeting segregated Mexican communities to offer free health assistance and preventive education through a workshop, a medical examination and insurance references. The Binational Health Week has grown rapidly and now involves the Governments of Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. It has attracted more than 6,500 agencies in 33 states, with debates and workshops promoting healthy behaviours and lifestyles among Latin families. The programme has raised awareness about the risk factors affecting immigrants, about local health resources, and about the challenges and opportunities involved in the bilateral work. The initiative incorporates a private component through the so-called “health window” in which private groups in Mexico and the United States raise funds to support medical treatment for Mexicans living in the United States. The case of remittances in El Salvador is well documented in the literature on the subject. There are reports on several public initiatives that take advantage of the

---

3 The International Organization for Migration provides technical expertise for this project, helping national and local governments in Argentina and Bolivia to work in partnership with the cooperative to optimize remittances.
significant remittances the country receives. However, some research indicates that remittances are not contributing to poverty reduction simply because they are not received by the poorest groups. As Nilson (2005) explains: “There is no evidence showing that remittances have an equalizing effect on income distribution by reaching poor households, since the lower income groups tend to have fewer remittance recipients. The lowest income group has had the smallest increase of remittance receiving households, and there is still a relatively small share of remittance receiving households. The reason for this can be that the cost of migrating is too high.” This observation corresponds with the fact that the poorest and the segregated neighbourhoods in San Salvador do not show improvements due to remittances; in fact such improvement is seen where the middle class lives. Equally, the poorest towns and the rural areas do not have new infrastructure resulting from remittances. It should be noted, however, that remittances encourage people born in El Salvador who live abroad to carry out charity projects in their home country to reduce inequalities there.

The housing programme “Mi País, Mi Casa” (my country, my home), launched by the Government of Paraguay to encourage its citizens living abroad to return home, is a good example of a public policy not only to encourage return, but also to reintegrate returning citizens. The programme is a result of cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Secretary for Return, and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development. Through the programme, Paraguayan living abroad are provided with credits to pay for plots, housing and infrastructure, such as water and sanitation. In this way, the Government seeks to attract investment, which would lead to a repopulation of the areas of the country people left due to stagnant economic conditions. The programme is ambitious, as it aims to provide housing as an anchor for the development process in which migrant communities abroad return home to a safe house and business opportunities, to which they can apply the skills acquired abroad. Although the programme is new, and it is not clear how it will work in practice, there is clearly an intention to take advantage of the migrants’ skills obtained abroad to generate income through business development and to build their habitat back home.

Another good example can be found in Colombia. The project “Mi Casa con Remesas” (my house with remittances) was created by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the framework of the programme “Ahorro Programado para Crédito de Vivienda y Educación: El Fondo Nacional del Ahorro” (savings programme for credit, housing and education: national savings fund), which works through a volunteer savings contract for Colombian citizens abroad. The most innovative aspect of the initiative is that it involves an alliance of institutions, including the International Bank for Development and multiple banks and financial institutions from different parts of the country. The system is based on the mortgages of expatriates in Canada, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States, and the remittances are put into a special fund whose financial sustainability ensures that the families abroad can purchase a house in Colombia. This fact is critical in attracting emigrants to return home without losing their financial capacity abroad. The system itself regulates the financial accountability of the operations, guiding the beneficiaries on the decisions to be made.

In Ecuador, “Plan Bienvenidos a Casa” (welcome back home) is an initiative that coordinates public programmes to encourage Ecuadorians abroad to return home through the use of certain incentives. Different from the others described above, this programme aims to reduce the paperwork needed to return legally, to provide packages to help returnees get back into the labour market, and to provide information on and certification for the skills and qualifications obtained abroad. Returnees are also assisted through the removal of many of the taxes on goods that the returnees bring back home. They are also exempt from paying taxes on tools and vehicles, which is important for micro-entrepreneurs seeking to establish an income generation project in their homeland.

Savings and mortgage credit programmes can be found in the region. One of these is “Mi Vivienda” (my home) in Peru, which works as part of a programme for the native population. Through a special
amendment to a law, a percentage of nationals living abroad, who by sending remittances, can access the benefits of the programme. Interestingly, through this programme, real estate developers work together with public officials in a kind of public-private partnership, targeting social housing markets with a sustainable business approach that incorporates social responsibility from a governmental and private sector perspective.

Also in Peru, “Techo Propio” (my own roof) and “Fondo para Incentivar la Producción ‘El Cucayo’” (fund for incentives for “El Cucayo”) offer incentives for social and financial investments. In addition, “Programa Solidaridad con mi Provincia” (solidarity with my province) promotes fundraising for charitable projects, and municipalities have agreements with NGOs to provide poor migrants with food and housing. Another approach is used in Bolivia. As stated earlier, the changes introduced in European countries (tightening migration rules) and the rise of prosperity at home have led many Bolivians to decide to return home and invest in houses. The phenomenon of the “Eurocasas” has spread to most Bolivian cities and popular neighbourhoods. Some local researchers believe that such investment in building luxury homes is the option chosen not only because of the social prestige but also because it can support other income generation activities (such as rent). This trend has led to the expansion of urban areas by returning families. Design and construction schemes have been set up as a joint effort between the national and local governments, together with a network of citizens living abroad and in the country. Through these schemes, the Government is promoting the return of the expatriate population within a framework of nationalistic policies, even though such returns result in the emerging segregation of returnee neighbourhoods, where luxury housing is flourishing. As mentioned earlier, one of the negative effects of return in Bolivia is growing inequality, which is seen in luxury homes being built in poor neighbourhoods, thereby inflating prices and forcing the poor to leave the area. The Government is seeking to reduce segregation trends, concentrating returnees in expansion areas, and trying to avoid returnees investing in housing. It is instead encouraging returnees to invest in businesses that would provide products or services not available in Bolivia or to create new income generation schemes, thereby introducing opportunities for the whole population. Some researchers are optimistic about the use of remittances in generating local development in countries of the global South. Using a large data set composed of 71 countries, Adams and Page (2005) state that, at the national level, “both international migration and remittances significantly reduce the level, depth, and severity of poverty in the developing world.” They express their optimism regarding remittances as an effective tool to reduce poverty at the household level.

Other researchers are less optimistic about the potential of remittances in helping people escape poverty, arguing that ultimately they either benefit the middle class or create further dependence of the poor. Another criticism, which is based on survey results, is that remittances do not encourage local development through investments in income generation schemes, but rather, they are used for the purchase of consumer goods, such as televisions or furniture, and that there is no concrete impact on the economic development or education of poor families. After looking at countries with a high level of remittances and governmental initiatives, some researchers believe that the strategies involving remittance-led development appear simplistic and naive. However, other researchers (Nijenhuis, 2010) point to the role of “hometown associations” – defined as organizations of migrants who originate from the same municipality or community in a certain country – which collectively attempt to stimulate development in the sending area by raising funds to finance the implementation of projects mainly in the social sphere. In this regard, the government’s experience in supporting already existing community initiatives is an important factor with regard to local development and achieving greater equity, as opposed to remittances in general, which do not include development planning.

Important examples of how remittances impact the urbanization process can be seen in intermediary Central American cities. These cities are experiencing a boom in gated communities for the middle class
and the majority of people with access to migrant remittances (Klaufus, 2010). According to Klaufus, remittances in this context contribute to unsustainable urbanization through the privatization of urban planning. In such a case, the lack of governmental mechanisms to channel remittances towards public well-being is reflected in the absence of adequate regulatory frameworks. Those cases in which regulatory frameworks take care of the natural environment and promote social coexistence make an enormous difference in terms of their final impact. Researchers suggest that, in these cases, the market of existing housing should be made more attractive in order to control urban growth and to prevent an oversupply of new, expensive middle-class homes in the periphery, paralleled by a large number of abandoned houses in the urban core.

3.2. POPULAR MIGRANT MARKETS FOSTERING LOCAL ECONOMIES

Bolivian cities are expanding rapidly, mostly as a result of rural–urban migration. As stated in the previous section, the city of El Alto, a municipality close to the city of La Paz, expanded 160 times in area in just one decade. The city has attracted poor migrants from the high Andean mountains and from other intermediary cities, who together make up 81 per cent of the population, as well as poor inhabitants from La Paz. They find in El Alto an opportunity to purchase a plot and build a shack. Traditional commercial practices in the countryside, such as community markets, have emerged in urban areas, adopting new identities as a result of the interaction among different cultures. The markets of El Alto are a popular attraction, as many products can be bought there, from handicrafts and small industrial items to sophisticated high-technology products at very low prices.

Such markets work under a complex, informal system, regulated by traditional mechanisms of the Aymara and Quechua cultures and with taxes and fees agreed upon through a process of negotiation with the municipality (Municipality of El Alto, 2010). In fact, the popular market constitutes a public–private partnership; the land, typically the streets, and some key infrastructure such as sanitation are provided by the local government, while commissions and cooperatives are in charge of setting up the infrastructure to sell the products. Multiple mechanisms for community agreements and cooperation help to manage the individual and collective business.

The markets in the “ceja” (eyebrow) of El Alto are a good example of a public–private partnership that can offer clues to how an informal market can be an example of how to link displaced communities with their new urban territory, while respecting their particular cultural worldview (Guzman Agreda, 2015). For the Aymara people, the market is known as qhathu, which is a place to experience Pachamama (motherland). The market is located in the open so people there can be in touch with the open sky and the earth. The interaction between buyers and sellers is seen as being not only material, but also spiritual. The market experience involves both buyers and sellers acting in good faith and solidarity, with the seller reducing prices when requested and giving more (yapa) of the item as an expression of friendship. The market “16 de Julio” is seen as a place of recreation in the pre-Columbian era spaces remaining in the overcrowded areas of the city.

Migration to El Alto has been encouraged through many public policies but it has occurred especially because the country’s president is from the Aymara ethnic group. Five hundred years after Spanish conquest, the city was reshaped into urban settlements based on Aymara traditions, where the inhabitants maintain their ancestral lifestyles with a mindset adapted to the urban environment. In these markets, the values of the various ethnic groups are present: ayni, which means reciprocity, helping people or, in government, working together; minka, which means solidarity among sellers; yanquiña, which means bartering or facilitating trade on a fair basis; and januluqa, which means redistribution and assumes that trade may not always be fair, that communities need some rules to ensure that the profits are redistributed to those who did not benefit enough in the process and may face hunger or lack necessities.
In El Alto, people’s lives have been improved as a result of the national policy “good life”, which has been implemented through government-subsidized social infrastructures (such as schools, health facilities and sports clubs), and as a result of the Government’s emphasis on building a plurinational country. The attainment of such national goals in a country historically divided by ethnic rivalries requires strong intercultural linkages, especially with such marginalized groups as poor rural migrants or relocated unemployed mine workers. This melting pot in El Alto has created several trade unions and community associations, which have strong social relevance, a high mobilization capacity and the power of collective action. They use ancient Andean knowledge and traditional practices to build new territories. The phenomenon of emerging territories being built with ancestral practices has spread to a great number of markets and fairs around El Alto. This has occurred simultaneously with the rise of a new social actor, the entrepreneur. Entrepreneurs create various profitable businesses in the context of a growing economy, generating profits that are then reinvested in the same municipality. A new architectural style, with a clear allusion to ancient Andean artistic motifs has emerged, funded by such profits (figure 4). In addition to the markets, new urban projects, which have sometimes been the result of verbal agreements between the municipality and landowners, give rise to new urban typologies. The commercial ground floor of some buildings has multiple uses, such as party rooms or apartments, and the top floor is a “chalet” (or “cholet” as it is called in El Alto, a humourous combination of the word “chalet” and “cholo”, a word referring to the indigenous people).

Figure 4: New Andean architecture in El Alto

These processes are not limited to Bolivia. They have spread to other countries through migrants. The well-known and well-documented case of “La Salada market” in the metropolitan area of Buenos Aires is an interesting example of a replication of an open market in a very different environment, with different cultural rules and political framework. In brief, La Salada went through various stages. Initially, it was a
place of illegal trade operating on the outskirts of the urban fabric of the city. After some time, and as it succeeded in attracting people offering alternative trades and products, the municipalities started to accept it and include it in their fair catalogues. It is now also a cultural attraction. In Mexico, there are similar cases of “spontaneous” markets that, because the sellers have demonstrated their capacity for intercultural dialogue and community mobilization, have been accepted and promoted by the Government and have flourished. La Feria de las Culturas Amigas de la Ciudad de México (the fair of cultural friends of Mexico City) attracts 2.9 million people annually. This event, supported by high-ranking officials, is a result of the high rate of migration to and from the city. Occupying 100 sq. m., it was designed to enlighten the public on the importance of migration in shaping intercultural cities, and there is an audiovisual exposition on the subject.

The case of supermarkets owned by Chinese immigrants is well documented in the specialized literature. There has been a great expansion in the number of supermarkets in Latin America, with the number growing in one decade what would take five decades in the United States. The supermarket share of national food retail in the United States was between 8 and 10 per cent in 1930, and reached 80 per cent in 2000. In Latin American countries, however, the process has been much faster. In Brazil, the numbers have increased the fastest: the figure was 30 per cent in 1990 and 75 per cent in 2000 (an annual increase of 10%), while in Argentina the figure increased from 17 per cent in 1985 to 57 per cent in 2000 (an annual increase of 9%). Guatemala has experienced a lower rate, from 30 cent in 1990 to 35 per cent in 2000. Within this trend, the increase in Chinese supermarkets responded to the opportunity created by Latin American cities to expand business. The Chinese immigrants used the know-how acquired in China, where in the last decades an overwhelming number of supermarkets have opened, at a rate of approximately 30 to 40 per cent per year, which is unique in the world (Hu et al., 2004). These supermarkets have a growing influence in popular neighbourhoods in cities in the region, particularly in the Southern Cone (Argentina, Uruguay and the southern part of Brazil).

Informal retail centres in public spaces are another phenomenon of popular markets led by migrant communities, such as the displaced populations in Bogota or the migrants from northern Brazil in Sao Paulo. However, although such activities are crucial for the migrants’ survival, different studies report that there are many government initiatives to crack down and even evict these groups. The governments claim they are taking such actions due to replanning projects.
4. SELF-HELP AND MIGRANT-LED INITIATIVES FOR SOCIAL HOUSING

4.1. DISPLACED POPULATIONS INITIATING COOPERATION AGREEMENTS

The agreement between the municipalities of San Carlos and Medellin in Colombia is an example of a migrant-led initiative with support from public resources. San Carlos is a small municipality strongly affected by internal conflict, which has caused a massive displacement of the rural population, who moved to Medellin (Municipality of Medellin, 2012). Most displaced populations live together in overcrowded slums in the peripheries of the city. Both municipalities agreed to work together to facilitate large numbers of volunteer returns in the framework of a national plan for reconciliation. To implement this plan, it was necessary to introduce an amendment to a national legal ruling on municipal expenditure in order to allow Medellin authorities to invest resources in another territory, in this case the municipality of San Carlos. The case is relevant as both the municipal and the national representatives involved understood that the “right to return” was of paramount importance to the victims of the conflict, rather than just receiving social housing in Medellin.

As Marmora (1997) correctly advocates, the right to decide where one wishes to live is a basic human right. This is critical when there is a strong relationship to land lost through displacement, as is the case in Colombia. A policy to prevent forced displacement requires the combination of social, political, economic and cultural actors working collectively in removing the causes of displacement, for example by promoting dialogue for peace and finding income generation schemes and support for the most vulnerable populations. The strategy of those involved in the San Carlos project was to insert the process in the public and government agendas and then to bring together key allies to achieve results. Supporting displaced groups to return to their place of origin by offering them housing and assistance to start their own businesses, in a still unstable political setting, was controversial. Representatives from the municipal government of San Carlos understood that the best way to bring back its displaced population was to convince private investors in Medellin to create job opportunities, to subsidize housing and infrastructure, and to repair the roads damaged by the internal conflict. The San Carlos project contributes to the broader discussion on return programmes initiated by displaced populations, who are able to develop a framework for negotiation on multiple levels and whose actions serve as a blueprint for urban and regional planning exercises.

Although this case has shown promising results, the way forward concerning land restitution and return in Colombia is still uncertain. From a human rights perspective, when threats to human life remain in the place of origin, it is not necessarily advisable that displaced populations return. However, these populations have the right to self-determination and the freedom to choose where to live. Their choices must be respected and their right to have their farms and land back cannot be denied. Considering that Colombia is an urbanized country with clear trends towards even greater urbanization, the decision on supporting massive returns to the countryside is not an easy one for the Government or the displaced populations, especially considering that the displaced populations had acquired livelihoods in the cities. It is on this aspect that public policies promoting the right to live in the city are focusing; that is, education, health and other facilities. Improving the living conditions of the displaced populations in terms of overcrowding and unemployment, either in rural or in urban areas, is a critical aspect of designing pro-poor regional and urban policies. Besides social and economic welfare, the issues of identity and dignity must be taken into account. It is not the same for a farmer living in a slum to receive a subsidy to live in an upgraded slum, as it would be for him to receive the same subsidy to modernize his farm and be self-sufficient.
Other countries in the region are also struggling on the one hand to advance the concept of the right to the city by enhancing the living conditions of the poor in cities, and on the other hand to create conditions that ensure that the right to live in the place of one’s own choice is respected even in rural areas. This second struggle also contributes to preventing migration to metropolitan and intermediary cities, one of the most important aspects of regional planning policies aimed at national development.

4.2. THE CONTRIBUTION OF MIGRANTS TO DEVELOPMENT

Through their work, migrants contribute to the development of the host communities in various ways. Typically in Latin America and the Caribbean, migrants develop cooperative schemes for agroindustrial development related to food production on the outskirts of cities. Such operations are based on the agricultural know-how of migrant communities applied specifically to certain products. The establishment of these cooperatives often leads to migrants building their own housing facilities and basic infrastructures, as collectively they are able to generate the resources needed. A brief overview of a case in the region provides insight into how migrant cooperatives work, what the challenges are and what opportunities they provide. In Latin America, both internal and international migrants have the advantage of having the same language spoken in most recipient countries (except Brazil), and of the countries’ physical proximity, which makes it possible to migrants to take their families while seeking more permanent settlement. The typical journey for Latin American migrants involves settling first in overcrowded slums, generally until they find a job and can earn an income, then bringing their family and seeking a more permanent place where they settle together. In this search for better living conditions, migrants use their organizational capabilities to form initiatives for social housing.

Cooperative schemes can be the solution when it comes to employment generation, but they can also be a trap that results in migrants being completely dependent on larger enterprises that abuse their basic human rights. This happens especially when cooperatives are located in rural or peri-urban areas, where State control is limited.

Brazil has one of the highest percentages of migrants from Africa. Historically, migrants arrived from Africa during colonial times to work as slaves and remained after independence from Portugal. Their living conditions were poor when they lived in rural areas and when these groups moved to the cities, where they typically lived in shanty towns and favelas (slums) in different parts of the cities. Rio de Janeiro, a major city on Brazil’s south-east coast with a population of approximately 11.7 million people, contains almost 4 per cent of the country’s total municipal territory (Instituto Pereyra Passos, 2010). The city has grown for a number of reasons, one of which is simply natural increase (the birth rate is higher than the death rate). The population has also grown as a result of urbanization, which is mostly a result of rural–urban migration. In fact, millions of people have migrated from Brazil’s rural areas to Rio de Janeiro, where 65 per cent of urban growth is a result of migration. This is caused by different push and pull factors. Favelas are located on the edge of most major Brazilian cities, and they are found in these locations for two main reasons. First, it is the only land available to build on within the city limits. Second, industry is generally located on the edge of cities; many people need jobs and therefore they live close to the factories. Some of these settlements that are on the edge of the city may in fact be 40 or 50 km from the city centre, along main roads or up very steep hillsides.

The authorities in Rio de Janeiro have taken a number of steps to reduce problems in the favelas, including setting up self-help schemes. Through one such scheme, the local authority has provided residents with the materials needed to construct permanent accommodation, including breeze blocks and cement. The local residents provide the labour. The money saved can be spent on basic amenities such as electricity and water.
Rocinha is a slum with 200,000 inhabitants, a high percentage of whom are migrants of different nationalities. It is distributed across 21 neighbourhoods, but it occupies just 0.86 sq.km. Today, almost all the houses in Rocinha are made from concrete and brick. Some buildings are three or four stories tall and almost all houses have basic sanitation, plumbing and electricity. Compared to simple shanty towns or slums, Rocinha has a better developed infrastructure. It also has hundreds of businesses and shops, including banks and pharmacies, as well as bus lines, cable for television (and a locally based television channel) and, at one time, even a McDonalds franchise. These development factors help to classify Rocinha as a favela bairro, or “favela neighbourhood”.

Even though poor populations are concentrated in the area, there are already clear indications of development that, when consistently supported by the municipality, can lead to a positive circle of socio-territorial inclusion. This favela had been segregated from the rest of society, but during recent decades the situation has begun to change. This has occurred as a result of aggressive public policies with an enabling approach, such as the Favela Bairro programme, through which neighbourhood associations have been provided with financial support to upgrade the area, improve the infrastructure, support land regularization and so forth. The self-help component of the programme must be highlighted because it pursues legitimate community mobilization by allocating resources to those ready to contribute to the enhancement of their living conditions. In addition, the programme seeks to ensure that the cultural identities of slum dwellers are respected, that their living conditions are improved and that they are not forced out of their homes due to their ethnicity or because they are migrants.

Local governments invest significant resources and provide legal frameworks to prevent forced evictions and the cracking down on informal economic activities. Cooperative schemes are difficult to achieve in slums because different communities there compete to access basic resources. Migrant organizations often have an element of self-organization as they are built on solidarity among people from the same country or region. Bolivians, among other nationalities, living in slums have been well documented in this respect. They join cooperative schemes, contributing to the enhancement of their slums and housing, which is key for the success of the governmental programmes.

A case of positive intercultural exchange can be found the city of Viedma, Argentina. There, Bolivians in agricultural cooperatives supply the city with vegetables, which before their arrival had been imported from suppliers at great distances and at high costs. In return, the municipality supports these cooperatives by providing a well-situated market built with public funds where they can offer their products in a comfortable and well-organized environment. However, this municipal decision generated complaints from local neighbours about the fact that the municipality was “promoting immigrants”. Afterwards, there was a debate during which the residents discussed the advantages and disadvantages of migrants occupying roles and running businesses to cover internal market demands. However, most of the people of Viedma felt positively towards the migrants and the fact that they took the lead in organizing themselves into a cooperative to produce lower-cost vegetables that were in demand. The municipality then decided to document and collect evidence of the various contributions of migrants to local development, while pursuing better communication strategies and understanding among the residents.

It is characteristic of migrant groups to organize cooperative schemes in the agricultural sector. Such schemes have provided them with income generation opportunities and jobs, and they have helped locals, especially in remote areas, to generate locally produced food, replacing expensive and unreliable imported food. However, the main criticism of these schemes is that, to fill the demand for agriculture production, migrant groups are sometimes forced to live isolated in peri-urban areas without adequate urban services, especially schools for their children. It is well known that migrant communities put great effort into ensuring that their families grow up in good environments.
There is a record of abuse of migrants in cooperatives hired by enterprises in the agroindustrial sector. As Pizarro (2008) explains, for immigrants vulnerability can mean a lack of actual power. Although national regulatory frameworks protect the rights of migrants and establish clear legal resources, their actual application by public officials and citizens in general tends to be limited. This is due to a combination of ignorance, prejudice and corruption. These facts mean that, even though migrants may know their rights, the full exercise of these rights is in practice limited by cultural intolerance. Cases in Cordoba, Argentina, documented by Pizarro show that, with regard to Bolivian migrants in Cordoba, there have been different perceptions by local residents in different time periods. Initially, about 40 years ago, they were perceived as “good workers” and as people who were able to do difficult manual work in exchange for poor salaries. In the second time period, as the migrants’ rights started to be protected through legislation and they developed their own cooperatives, the migrants were perceived as “gangs” who always moved in groups. Although they were still recognized as being hard workers, it was said that they had “big ambitions” and “tricky attitudes”, as locals believed that they avoided paying taxes. In the third stage, as many members of the cooperatives were clearly being abused by large companies who were paying very low salaries and the migrants were working almost as slaves, public opinion again changed towards the Bolivian workers. As a result of the clear abuses of human rights, local lawyers began to defend their causes and to demand damages, as many migrant workers had become seriously ill as a result of working in unhealthy conditions. The Bolivian workers gained sympathy from the public in general, as they were seen as victims of abuse. This opened avenues of solidarity with worker unions and associations, but medium-sized and large companies hesitated to hire these workers as they saw them as problematic. Research has shown evidence of the rise of slavery in current times in wealthy neighbourhoods of cities such as Buenos Aires, Bogota and Mexico City. In all of these places, apparent economic opportunities attracting migrants have sometimes turned out to be a trap in which the migrants end up working as slaves. Some individuals take advantage of vulnerable migrants seeking jobs, who would accept any situation just to get into the labour market. In their search to settle in their new countries, migrants are regularly forced into human trafficking, drug distribution, prostitution or other illegal activities. Cooperative schemes can empower migrant communities because through them, migrants can earn their incomes independently. Also, many cases of abuse of workers are resolved thanks to the timely intervention of cooperative structures that take legal action; for example, they can open a case with the Public Defender’s Office.

1 A description of a case involving the abuse of migrants can be downloaded from the website of the Public Defender’s Office at www.defensoria.org.ar/publicaciones/pdf/justa01B.pdf
5. CHANGING THE PRACTICE OF EVICTION FROM INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS

5.1. INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO PROMOTE INTERCULTURAL NEIGHBOURHOODS

Some initiatives have created a positive momentum to change the hostile stance of many local governments with regard to informal settlements, particularly those inhabited mostly by international migrants. In addition to the legislative changes on the right to the city, an initiative that deserves recognition is the Immigrant Day celebration, together with others such as Refugee Day. These initiatives attempt to inform citizens about the value of different cultures and the importance of solidarity among cultures. There are also many initiatives that support intercultural cities in Latin America by promoting festivals, movies, fairs and exhibitions. These events reveal the great vitality of the region, which in turn helps to change negative views of migrants in local societies.

In his message to commemorate International Migrants Day 2012, the Secretary-General of the United Nations stated that many migrants who are escaping difficult conditions end up facing even greater difficulties, including human rights violations, poverty and discrimination. However, he emphasized that these migrants had more than fear and uncertainty, that they also possessed hope, courage and resolve to build a better life, and that, with the right support, they could contribute to society’s progress. He also made a plea for better interaction between the different regional actors involved in the formulation and implementation of migration policies (CELADE, 2013).

Other documents released on International Migrants Day 2012 highlight the importance of generating further cooperation between countries of origin and destination, and increasing awareness about the migrants’ situation in order to promote public policies based on existing needs. Furthermore, in the framework of the second High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, the Director General of IOM participated in the event “The importance of regional dynamics to international migration and development”, organized by IOM and the Governments of Peru and the Russian Federation. At the dialogue, it was stated that the discussions were a good opportunity for countries to take action on practical solutions regarding the most important issues related to migration and to establish priorities in each region. In Buenos Aires, an annual festival of films about migrants has been taking place since 2010. It is aimed at enlightening society on the importance of responding to the challenges of immigrants and refugees, who frequently suffer deprivation because of their conditions. Documentaries and other films made from a human rights perspective are presented at the festival to build awareness about the challenges and opportunities created by migration. Although municipal governments are not involved, it is important to highlight the initiatives in countries such as Argentina and Uruguay that have established mobile consulates in slums. The idea behind the mobile consulates is for immigrants to be able to access documentation processing close to their residence.

Furthermore, Costa Rica has developed a series of manuals to help public officials to integrate especially poor migrants into the urban fabric (DGME, 2011). The idea of the manual is to better explain migration law to facilitate the administrative process and to enlighten social workers to help migrants. This is a clear demonstration of a shift in how migrants and their contributions to culture and economic development are perceived. In the region, there is a clear trend involving the promotion of the local integration of migrants, as reflected in several publications, tools and approaches aimed at guiding national and local governments (UN-Habitat, 2010).
5.2. THE NEW GENERATION OF URBAN PLANNING TOOLS: FOCUS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

According to the Advisory Group on Forced Evictions, the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE), the Habitat International Coalition, the International Alliance of Inhabitants, Slum Dwellers International and the Asian Coalition for Housing Rights, the most prevalent causes of forced evictions are those that arise as a result of development (UN-Habitat, 2011). Development-related evictions span a broad range of activities that include: (a) large-scale projects such as hydroelectric dams or mining projects that force people from their homes and off their land, leading to rural–urban migration; (b) city development projects to address increasing urbanization and related infrastructure issues; (c) urban projects to increase the safety and security of inhabitants living in areas deemed by authorities to be dangerous; (d) projects aimed at addressing an environmental concern; (e) city beautification projects; and (f) the hosting of mega events such as the Olympics or World Cup soccer events.

Apart from the above-mentioned development projects, forced evictions also occur as a result of natural disasters, climate change and more recently (particularly in developed countries) economic deprivation, which can be the result of not attending to social priorities and more specifically the global financial crisis. Evictions targeting migrant groups are also frequent, as some sectors in host societies, including local poor people, do not always acknowledge migrants’ right to live in their host countries. This situation is independent of their status as citizens or foreigners, as it can be observed in some countries in the region that even some migrants who have acquired legal status as citizens face discrimination because of their place of origin and are prevented from obtaining good jobs or benefitting from public investments. The houses and businesses of migrants are frequent targets of uninformed local authorities, who can cause significant damage (for example to market stalls or at cultural fairs or celebrations organized by migrants). The eviction of certain migrant groups sets a bad precedent that can lead to the evictions of other groups. For this reason, human rights experts emphasize the importance of not allowing any human rights abuse to take place, even in cases in which such rights are challenged by “normal” local practices. The key is to identify the right legal framework within domestic legislation to prevent human rights abuses, and determining how the national constitution incorporates international treaties, particularly the Geneva Convention.

The issue of eviction has led to the creation of various tools and mechanisms that are used by different groups to prevent eviction through participatory planning. In a report by UN-Habitat (2011), six major groups of tools are identified. The first group is based on legal action. When independent courts are available, communities affected by eviction often use legal mechanisms to challenge an impending eviction. Courts are generally used to challenge the enabling legislation itself, and to seek injunctions to stop the eviction from being carried out while a broader legal case is prepared.

The second group refers to community organization and mobilization. The experience of the Advisory Group on Forced Evictions indicates that community organization and mobilization is the single most important factor in preventing or halting forced evictions and negotiating adequate resettlement.

The third group of strategies relates to international solidarity and support, involving NGOs working in concert with local organizations and movements. In many instances, support from the international community has played a significant role in addressing evictions in the domestic context. Often migrant communities feel isolated in their struggles and NGOs fill the gap, helping to organize and structure the defence of their rights.

The fourth tool is the media. Many migrant communities use the media to communicate with their communities and to fight the abuse targeting migrants. Radio programmes that are presented almost throughout Latin America and the Caribbean give a voice to migrant communities so they can share...
their experiences in their host countries and help each other find employment and acquire proper documentation.

The fifth tool to prevent eviction is through the use of human rights frameworks. International human rights laws and mechanisms contribute to preventing or halting forced evictions. International and regional mechanisms are particularly important in countries where internal mechanisms are inadequate and democracy is compromised.

The sixth way to prevent eviction is to have plans that are alternatives to those proposed by the government. Under international human rights law, States have an obligation to pursue every alternative to forced eviction and thus should consider alternative plans, including those developed by civil society.

A way to promote participatory planning is for local governments to introduce tools so they can work together with communities to determine priorities for action. The “compass” is a participatory methodology employed to collect data from slum dwellers, using key indicators to measure their living conditions, expressed in terms of human rights, community organization, regulations and ongoing public works (Murillo et al., 2010). This methodology aims to produce critical information, validated by low-income communities, including slum dwellers and other residents. It brings together communities and local governments to discuss priorities and to select plans for action. The compass methodology is essentially a tool used to make public policies more effective by incorporating the knowledge and commitment of slum dwellers.

A great advantage of this methodology is that it expresses the results of the participatory diagnosis graphically, reflecting the strengths and weaknesses of a segregated neighbourhood. By using this tool, it is possible to carry out a comparative analysis for policy design (figure 5). Instead of designing public policies based on established global solutions for slums and low-income neighbourhoods, and neglecting differences and particularities, users of the compass methodology take into consideration the differences and particularities to be able to work out a more detailed understanding of poor neighbourhoods and then develop “tailor made” policy responses. Such tailor made responses depend on a diagnosis – that is, a determination of the key factors of poverty and segregation – being identified collectively. Self-generating data on the various aspects of the population’s situation and living conditions (including housing, infrastructure, services and employment) are produced. Afterwards, an analysis is made of the socio-territorial gaps, expressed as human rights deprivation. The target communities discuss their problems and possible ways to address them. Once a consensus is reached, the community agrees on priorities and actions to be taken collectively and individually to upgrade their neighbourhoods. At this stage, the communities work together with the authorities to establish guidelines for designing action plans. Such work, supported by expert teams, is followed by an in-depth discussion on alternative ways to move forward to improve the slums, taking into account the specific needs and opportunities, defining the priorities for pro-poor policies, and empowering the community to play the main role in implementing the plan.

---

2 More information is available from www.youtube.com/watch?v=MjlcTWVxP8U
Different from traditional participatory exercises in which the segregated community seeks to improve its living conditions, the compass approach involves linking communities together and with the local government as a strategic move to achieve more sustainable actions. For instance, a slum may lack water and sanitation, but it may have good access to jobs and income generation activities.

The participatory exercise with the communities and local governments strengthens the sense of community by creating data for planning, which are shared and agreed upon by the different stakeholders. This lays the foundation for taking action to develop a strategy to deal with the lack of infrastructure through a community-led process supported by local authorities.

In this way, the compass methodology generates a fruitful participatory exercise. Different from traditional participatory exercises in which communities play more of a “recipient” role, in this methodology they generate the plans and contribute efforts in their implementation, rather than just waiting for the State to take action. Among the stakeholders are slum dwellers, low-income residents and the beneficiaries of public housing, who are normally segregated in the same neighbourhood. The data are used to produce the north axis of the compass graph, and the improvements in the human rights situation are expressed as a percentage, which allows for a comparison of the situation to that in other neighbourhoods. It is important for the poor to see their strengths and weaknesses, assuming that some factors, such as land tenure, or the availability of drinkable water, sanitation or public transport, are combined key factors behind their poverty. As it is a collective exercise, the results show evidence of the actions that families can take individually (such as addressing overcrowding by building additional rooms with their own resources), of actions requiring community self-organization (such as building green or public areas) and of actions that require the involvement of the municipality to achieve the results (such as building water and sanitation infrastructures).

During the participatory planning discussion, community leaders, empowered by the exercise, are found at the same table with municipal officials, representatives from the private sector, non-governmental partners and other actors interested in being part of the initiative. The participatory planning stage is crucial in the process: when it goes well the result is an “urban pact”, in which community representatives

Figure 5: Comparative analysis of different neighbourhoods using the compass methodology
and the mayor sign an agreement on how all of the stakeholders together will address the issue of slums based on a fair, egalitarian and sustainable approach. As Harvey (2012) states in his publication about the right to the city, the major achievement of the methodology is not only having houses and basic services actually built, but also empowering communities to regain confidence in their capacities to organize themselves and to overcome difficulties.

So far, the compass methodology has been applied in 17 cities in 5 Latin American countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia and Guatemala). In each of these cases, a model for participation was introduced, facilitating dialogue between the low-income groups and the local authorities. The experience has shown that the key for such synergies is to encourage community self-regulation through a combination of public expenditures in terms of housing and infrastructure supply with more flexible regulatory frameworks.
6. GOOD PRACTICES IN UPGRADING SLUMS

6.1. PARTICIPATORY FRAMEWORKS

Slum proliferation is one of the largest challenges facing cities in Latin America and the Caribbean. Although this challenge may seem to be similar across cities, it is important to bear in mind that there are enormous differences in their presence in metropolises, intermediary cities, small cities and rural towns. As slums are being created, intervention strategies must be adequately contextualized. Metropolitan cities are important because their size creates new dynamics and interactions between different demographic, social, political, economic and ecological processes, facilitating wealth generation and investment attraction. As Lopez Moreno (2011) points out, Sao Paulo, Brazil’s largest city, and Bangkok, the capital of Thailand, each host just over 10 per cent of the total population of their respective countries, but both cities account for more than 40 per cent of their country’s gross domestic product (data from UN-Habitat, 2014a). Lopez Moreno states: “Goods and services are generally produced and distributed more efficiently in densely populated areas; but, it is also in these areas that one can see and smell the effects of overcrowding, pollution and unsanitary living conditions that are so prevalent in cities of the developing world. It is also in these large cities that pronounced levels of poverty, social inequality and environmental degradation exacerbate the vulnerability of populations. Big agglomerations with high levels of exclusion, ethnic division, segregation and growing disparities can be more prone to crime, insecurity and conflict.” Lopez Moreno explains that the world’s largest cities, that is, cities of more than 5 million inhabitants, were home to only about 7.5 per cent of the world’s population in 2007 and that they grew at a rate of about 2.2 per cent annually between 2005 and 2010. In fact, very few intermediary cities are well prepared to face such challenges. A study carried out by UN-Habitat (2008) shows that, from a sample of 120 local governments, 70 did not have policies for controlling informal urban expansion resulting from, for example, slum formation, or commercial or micro-industrial activities. In addition to the lack of mechanisms to control the complex process of informal urban expansion, the study reveals that there is a lack of awareness of a critical aspect of the future sustainability of Latin American cities: income inequalities have not decreased in the region. It should be noted that, although efforts have been made, these inequalities have not decreased even in countries experiencing high economic growth rates, such as Brazil and Mexico. There, urban inequalities remain a crucial problem. The Gini Index, which measures income/consumption inequalities, remained at about 0.55 for these countries, unchanged between the early 1990s and 2005 (UN-Habitat, 2008). This unfortunate division between rich and poor constitutes the major handicap in the region, and according to various research, it is also the main cause of insecurity, political instability and social problems.

The good practices in slum upgrading in Latin America are well known globally. Two recent sessions of the World Urban Forum, organized by UN-Habitat, have been hosted in Latin America: in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2010 and in Medellin, Colombia, in 2014. These cities were chosen because of their good policies in integrating informal settlements into the urban fabric while overcoming socio-territorial segregation.

The Favela Bairro programme, which began in the early 1980s as a result of a local government decision to recognize people living in slums as citizens, uses a progressive strategy to regularize small pieces of land where the informal population live in shacks and shelters. The government offers small grants to self-organized groups seeking to improve their habitat. The grants are offered only to those community groups that are ready to contribute labour to building infrastructures. This positive association between the local government and communities has created a “win-win” situation in which the local government achieves concrete results in terms of habitat improvement for low-income groups. In addition, the communities have achieved the tangible results of having land tenure and public facilities, initiating a positive process of improvement.

No less important is the participatory process that the programme encourages, bringing communities and governments together, overcoming the traditional stigmatization that slum dwellers have faced historically.
Internal migration in Brazil is important, particularly in the major cities of Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, where slums serve as poor and inexpensive accommodation for migrants. The critical decision by the local government to accept slums as a legitimate habitat where the inhabitants can live without fearing sudden eviction implies an indirect recognition of the rights of migrants. The positive experience of the Favela Bairrio programme has influenced the approach taken to urban planning, making it more human rights based, which has led to drastic changes in terms of dealing with slums.

A new regulatory framework applied nationally called the “Estatuto das cidades” (statute of cities) established new rules that all municipalities must follow for land management. These rules require regularization instead of eviction, thereby recognizing the right to adequate housing as a basic human right. This programme has influenced development in other countries, particularly in Latin America, where the concept of the right to the city is understood to be a natural expansion of the right to adequate housing. Small interventions in favelas, such as the construction of green areas or proper, safe public stairways, are examples of typical self-help community projects subsidized through the programme. In parallel, new regulations focus on land value capture mechanisms and require a fairer distribution of resources, including more investment in disadvantaged areas, thereby systematically reducing the trend towards segregation.

Medellin is another city strongly influenced by the paradigm of the right to the city (figure 6). Medellin adopted the same approach used in the Favela Bairrio programme to deal with the significant number of displaced persons flocking to the city, who then lived predominantly in slums, giving rise to abusive circles of poverty, segregation, drug trafficking, violence, human rights abuses and the loss of governance. The local government decided to change the situation not only by applying regularization policies in slums, but also by taking it a step further through the funding of major mobility projects. As access to slums in mountainous areas of Medellin is difficult and costly, the government invested in developing a public transport network, including a cable railway and several types of buses and trains. Improving mobility leads to progressive socio-territorial improvements that, as in the case of Favela Bairrio, together with land value capture mechanisms, helps to reduce segregation. Segregation strongly affects slum dwellers’ possibilities to access public services and jobs, as well as their recognition as citizens.

Figure 6: Urban interventions in Medellin assisting displaced populations

Photograph by the author.
Urban intervention schemes have included building public libraries and other public buildings, constructed by well-known architects with high standards of construction, as part of a policy of “the best for the poorest”. Rio de Janeiro and Medellin have acquired international reputations for being cities that use good practices in citywide slum upgrading, and have demonstrated not only the ability to do so with their own vision, but also the capacity to understand the social and cultural complexities of communities with different backgrounds. Countries in Latin America and the Caribbean are very much influenced and inspired by these experiences, and governments are seeking to follow the same path in terms of urban planning approaches based on human rights. The province of Buenos Aires in Argentina recently made an innovative law following this direction, in recognition of the right to secure land tenure. In response to the challenges presented by slums, this law, called “acceso justo al habitat” (fair access to habitat), makes it legal for municipalities to supply public land to settle these populations. In addition, municipalities can introduce changes in their urban regulatory frameworks in favour of disadvantaged groups when land subdivision standards are an obstacle for the poor to achieve secure land tenure. This law applies to international migrants, which again shows the clear intention of governments in the region to work towards human rights achievements.

Despite the positive reactions to this process, there are some criticisms; for example, regularization can be viewed as a way to reintroduce informal populations into formal markets, thereby increasing land value, but not necessarily resulting in development for low-income groups. This process could mean even further segregation, and those groups unable to afford to pay taxes or the cost of formal habitat could be forced out. Also, there have been violent incidents in the southern part of Buenos Aires as a result of successive attempts by low-income groups, including both internal and international migrants, to occupy a public park and to settle in slums on scarce land.

A report on adequate housing highlights human rights abuses in Argentina. Although the country has changed its migrant laws to facilitate citizenship, it fails to prevent conflicts and rivalries between migrants and natives in their search to access housing in the very competitive social housing market (Rolnik, 2011). The disturbing situation in which native communities are living in the areas surrounding the capital cities of the northern provinces of Argentina is a direct consequence of the loss of their ancestral rural land to the expansion of agricultural lands. Through the rapid process of deforestation, native communities become migrants from rural areas, which is a clear case of human rights deprivation. Because native communities have lost their natural habitat in these provinces, new rules related to “environmental justice” are under discussion so they can be compensated. These new rules would acknowledge that their human rights had been violated, and would require an urgent solution introducing measures to protect their natural habitat and to ensure their right to live on their ancestral lands.

6.2. PROMOTING THE INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS

The contribution of migrants to building intercultural cities has, for the most part, not been recognized due to discrimination and misperceptions about migrants. Sometimes, the fact that migrants organize themselves in an effort to perform better and progress in their host cities creates the wrong perception among native populations that migrants works as “gangs”. There are many stories about the illegal activities of migrant associations and their sudden wealth, which hide the real stories of migrants’ sacrifices and loyalty to their new countries. Their contributions to building intercultural cities should not be disregarded as they are a resource for urban sustainability. Migrants bring with them new techniques and knowledge that contribute to their new homes. They contribute to the protection of the environment through different uses of natural resources (such as water, energy and land), and different ways of organizing their use (for example, through cooperatives). The skills and capabilities that migrants introduce to their destination cities and areas are important for survival.
There is a significant difference between internal and international migration in Latin America and the Caribbean. Internal migration takes place within the same country and, to a certain extent, these migrants are more likely to be accepted as part of the country’s culture. However, there is discrimination against internal migrants who have a different ethnic background from the inhabitants of the capital cities. Internal migrants who arrived in Buenos Aires from the countryside were once referred to as “black heads” (*cabecitas negras*), which implies that they were seen as second-class citizens because they originated from other areas of the country.

A key contribution of migrants is that, through their own efforts, they establish rural–urban linkages that did not exist before their arrival. The case of Lujan, a city located on the outskirts of Buenos Aires, provides a valuable example of a rural–urban linkage. In Lujan, migrants from Bolivia have filled the gap left when fruit and vegetable growers abandoned their businesses as, many years before, the area began to focus on agro-industrial activities. The migrants’ role as vegetable and fruit producers for the city, and their local economic development strategies (markets and trade activities).

Moreover, the presence of the families from Bolivia has introduced new religious celebrations and has renewed interest in the traditional pilgrimage to the cathedral, which has resulted in increased numbers of attendees each year. Lujan is an example of a city where different cultures coexist, sharing public spaces and the urban fabric. Although segregation exists in slums and shanty towns, it is not related to migrant groups, but general social gaps. On the contrary, migrants have moved to Lujan because they can practice their religious ceremonies in a tolerant and harmonious atmosphere.

A second example of a positive contribution of migrants to building intercultural cities and rural–urban linkages is the case of El Alto in Bolivia. When it was founded in 1988, the idea was for El Alto to be a “new town” for receiving rural migrants from particular areas, with the intention that they not go to La Paz until they understood what it meant to live in a city. However, El Alto quickly attracted large numbers of internal migrants from all over the country. It has experienced explosive demographic growth of up to 9 per cent per decade, resulting mainly from the expansion of La Paz and continuous rural–urban migration from the rest of the country. However, in recent years there has been a more moderate increase in youth mobility, lower than in previous decades, which indicates a stabilization in urban growth. As stated previously, El Alto, with its deep Andean roots, is a cultural centre for the region. It was built to reflect Andean spatial models, which are based on socio-territorial cells occupied by families that are linked through tribal relationships. Such urban patterns show the influence of rural settings that are very deeply rooted in ancestral customs, habits and beliefs. According to the 1992 national census, 58.7 per cent of the population speaks Spanish, which increased to 61.0 per cent in 2001. The second-most spoken language is Aymara (36.4% in 1992 and 34.5% in 2001). In third place is Quechua (just 4.5% in 1992 and 5.6% in 2001). However, this information must be interpreted while taking into consideration the data on the self-identification of the population. A total of 74.3 per cent of the population self-identified with the Aymara culture, followed by 6.4 per cent with the Quechua culture. This means that, while most of the population speaks Spanish as their main language, and there is a need to interact with the inhabitants of La Paz and in their new urban environment, the migrants maintain their cultural roots. This is also reflected in their folklore, which is expressed in their dances, clothing and lifestyle in general. Their culture is present in the design of their houses, the layout of the city, and their local economic development strategies (markets and trade activities).
The experience of El Alto, in which ancient cultures were adapted to a new urban environment without the inhabitants losing linkages with their rural communities, is a good example not only of intercultural exchange but also of how a community can move forward in terms of local economic development.

The introduction of high technology in mobility reduces the cost and time of transport in a very challenging topography. A good example is the construction of the cable car connecting La Paz with El Alto, which is 4,150 meters above sea level (figure 7). There has been a positive reaction to the innovation, even though this means there is a completely new and sophisticated way of reaching the mountains.

Figure 7: Cable car connecting La Paz with El Alto, Bolivia
7. CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES:
A COMPARISON BETWEEN LATIN AMERICA
AND THE CARIBBEAN AND SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

7.1. URBANIZATION, MIGRATION AND SLUM FORMATION

A comparison of slum upgrading strategies applied in Latin America and the Caribbean to those used in sub-Saharan Africa provides insight into how slum formation is challenging governance and the rule of law in different contexts. It helps to identify specific responses in terms of policy approaches and whether or not they result in the local integration of migrants and displaced populations. Considering the international definition of a slum, it is clear that both Latin America and the Caribbean and sub-Saharan Africa have a large percentage of their populations living in poor conditions, which shapes particular urban growth patterns that affect the socioeconomic development of the regions. According to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (1996), inhabitants of slums lack one or more of the following: (a) secure land tenure; (b) sufficient area to live (not overcrowded); (c) permanent building materials; (d) access to drinkable water and to sanitation; and (e) access to services. The definition has evolved, shifting from the concept of “decent housing” to “adequate housing”, which encompasses a more complete view of habitat. A definition of adequate housing includes other key factors, such as the location of the house in the city or area, access to employment and incomes, environmental threats and security.

Indicators that are used to compare Latin America and the Caribbean with sub-Saharan Africa and the accompanying data are presented in table 3. The table lists factors that influence slum formation, showing the similarities and the differences between the regions.

Table 3: Comparison of the urbanization and migration processes in Latin America and the Caribbean with those in sub-Saharan Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Latin America and the Caribbean</th>
<th>Sub-Saharan Africa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Average urbanization percentage</td>
<td>75.8</td>
<td>34.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Average percentage of international migrants per city</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Average percentage of internal migrants per city</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>65.0*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Percentage of slum dwellers of the total urban population</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>71.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Average slum growth rate</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Proportion of slums in average cities</td>
<td>Low-middle</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Eviction rate</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Social profile of slums</td>
<td>Economic migrants (internal and international), poor; semi-transitory settlements</td>
<td>Displaced populations plus poor and middle class, civil servants; transitory settlements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Major land tenure system in slums</td>
<td>Informal settlements on public and private land</td>
<td>Settlements on communal land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) Major social organizations in slums</td>
<td>Slum associations and cooperatives, community-based organizations and social networks</td>
<td>Tribal and extended familial relationships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Local economic development opportunities available in slums | Employment and micro-businesses | Subsistence economy through cultivation out of town and micro-businesses
---|---|---
Major infrastructure challenges | Lack of sanitation | Lack of water, sanitation, transport and housing
Political meaning of slums | Resistance to market forces; extended political movements to defend slum dwellers under threat of eviction, as covered by the right to adequate housing | Activities tolerated only when inhabitants belong to the same tribal group
Environmental conditions in slums | Very poor | Very poor
Cultural values in slums | Seen as “popular” culture | Reflects cultural diversity of countries
Segregation trends in slums | Very high | Medium
Major intervention modalities | Slum upgrading, micro-planning | Eviction and housing construction

Source: Elaborated by the author, based on UN-Habitat, 2012a and 2014b.

Note: Calculations based on statistics available from censuses in Cameroon, Ethiopia and Kenya, using the indicator “previous residence in the last five years”. Beginning with the differences in the urbanization rate for the two regions, the variation in slum prevalence must be noted. Comparing the urbanization rate, the statistics show that Latin America and the Caribbean and sub-Saharan Africa are actually in very different positions. While Latin America and the Caribbean has already reached a high percentage of urbanization, at 76 per cent in 2000, sub-Saharan Africa has barely reached 35 per cent, although it is expected to reach 54 per cent by 2030, reflecting a very rapid urbanization trend. This fact creates very different challenges for the regions in terms of urban and regional planning. In highly urbanized Latin America and the Caribbean, the challenge of urban poverty is expressed in the many different categories of slums and segregated neighbourhoods that face deprivation and discrimination. Instead, sub-Saharan Africa is still facing the challenges of rural poverty and growing urban slums in major cities across the continent.

The creation of large conurbations that eventually shape “city-regions”¹ is frequent in both Latin America and the Caribbean and in sub-Saharan Africa. There is also a lack of effective mechanisms to produce adequate housing and to control informal occupancy in places inadequate for human settlements, which explains the proliferation of slums. In Latin America and the Caribbean, examples of cities with a high rate of slum proliferation are Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires and Mexico City, all of which have more than 10 million inhabitants and host a significant percentage of slum dwellers. However, in smaller metropolises with between 5 million and 8 million inhabitants, such as Bogota, Lima and Santiago, slum proliferation is associated with internal migration and forced displacement, which contribute to rapid urbanization characterized by the lack of basic services such as water and sanitation. In sub-Saharan Africa, there are two metropolises: Lagos (Nigeria) with between 8 million and 10 million inhabitants, and Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of the Congo) with between 5 million and 8 million inhabitants.

Another indicator was used to analyse the proportion of “slum cities” (cities in which the majority of the urban development corresponds to a slum, with small pieces of the city’s territory working under formal rules), and it was indicated that the region has a high proportion of slum cities. Different sources point to a high eviction rate in sub-Saharan African countries related to slum proliferation, with Zimbabwe having the highest rate in the world (COHRE, 2010).

Migrant influence on urbanization and slum formation processes is paramount. The percentage of international migrants per city varies significantly in both cases. In Latin America and the Caribbean it

¹ A “city-region” is defined by UN-Habitat (2012b) as being “larger scale than large cities, expanding beyond formal administrative boundaries to engulf smaller ones as well as semi-urban and rural hinterlands, and even merge with other intermediate cities, creating large conurbations that eventually form city-regions.”
is estimated to be 1.5 per cent, and in sub-Saharan Africa it is about 4.5 per cent. The percentage is much higher for sub-Saharan Africa because it includes refugees and forced displaced populations, whose numbers are marginal in Latin America and the Caribbean, except in Colombia. Another indicator is the average slum growth rate, as this reflects the trends towards different categories of “slum cities” and the adequacy of ongoing public policies. Considering that the slum growth rate in sub-Saharan Africa is high (4.5%) and that slum dwellers make up 71.9 per cent of the total urban population, it is likely that the problems related to slums will persist in the near future and that they could even escalate. The situation in Latin America and the Caribbean is better, in terms of both the percentage of slum dwellers and the slum growth rate, at 31.9 and 2.1 per cent, respectively. However, once again, when different areas are analysed, it is clear that the region, especially the Caribbean, already has “slum cities”. This is the case in Haiti, for which there is little hope of positive change in the near future as it is facing a serious humanitarian crisis.

Beyond the large differences between the regions in terms of percentages of the population living in urban and rural areas and slum proliferation, there is an ongoing discussion in both regions related to the need for better approaches to promoting low-income groups’ access to rural land for development. Through the use of various incentives and mechanisms, countries in both regions are attempting to prevent rural populations from migrating. Inspired by the concept of the right to the city, Latin America has started to apply a more flexible approach to help slum dwellers to settle in places with better conditions. In both regions, governmental policies promote the networking of cities and rural–urban linkages as a way to foster local economies, attempting to create jobs and income opportunities for low-income communities in rural areas, thereby encouraging them to remain where they live. Encouraging poor communities to remain in their places of origin while assisting those that have already migrated to cities in recognition of the right of free choice is considered in both regions to be a way forward in sustainable development. In this way, governments have attempted to support the development of disadvantaged rural regions. They have established basic social services such as schools and health centres, as well as investment opportunities for development, especially in public transport, which enables the populations to access employment opportunities more easily. In sub-Saharan Africa, such strategies are still not in place, but most governments promote rural development strategies as a way to ensuring the availability of food for the poor, even if this implies that they remain in survival economies.

In both regions, governments are using mechanisms to encourage people, especially the young population, to reside in small and intermediary cities. Some countries in sub-Saharan Africa are also seeking a model in which rural activities are supported by linkages with markets in the cities.

The case of Zambia is important to consider. Since its independence in 1964, it has been a host country to a significant number of displaced populations from neighbouring countries at war. It has welcomed refugees, who have become integrated into the host communities. The key to local integration has been tribal linkages (United States Department of State, 2014). The Government of Zambia, together with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Bank, is aiming to facilitate linkages between the refugee settlements, which are located predominantly in remote rural areas, with markets, which are mostly in urban areas. However, this move is controversial because it means that the former refugees and the economic migrants would be competing with Zambian citizens, which experts agree may trigger greater tensions between these groups. A strategy currently being discussed involves integrating the former refugees through a specific resettlement scheme. The scheme involves providing households with between 5 and 10 hectares so they can carry out farming activities with advice and support from the Ministry of Agriculture. However, this plan has been criticized by different academics because, due to the scatter patterns and remoteness of poor families, as well as the lack of specific linkages with markets in urban areas, it is difficult for these families to access basic social services and to move beyond survival

---

2 Currently, only Angolans and Rwandans are included in the scheme, but it is expected that Burundians, Congolese and Somalis will also be included.
economies (Taylor and Thole, 2015). The Government’s fear is that the local integration strategy may end up encouraging slum formation in major cities, as has already happened in most African capitals. The experience of Latin America and the Caribbean in encouraging linkages between rural areas and intermediary and small cities is ongoing and therefore there is not yet enough evidence to demonstrate the region’s capacity to minimize slum formation.

Although there are some similarities in the social profile of slums in the two regions (for example, both have inhabitants who are economic migrants), in sub-Saharan African countries slum dwellers are predominantly displaced persons, as well as the poor, middle class and civil servants. Semi-transitory settlements are the typical slum pattern in Latin America and the Caribbean; people erect their shelters using bricks and then progressively complete them with plaster and basic infrastructure. Slums in countries in sub-Saharan Africa, however, are dominated by transitory settlements, as seen in the use of non-durable materials, which require constant maintenance. Major land tenure systems in Latin America are dominated by the informal occupancy of land that is progressively secured through different regularization schemes. In sub-Saharan Africa, slums are located mostly on communal and customary land. In this way, displaced populations are provided with housing based on solidarity among ethnic groups, but they are under the constant threat of eviction.

Social organizations in slums also differ between the regions. In Latin America, they operate mostly as a network of NGO alliances of political parties and human right activists, while in sub-Saharan Africa, traditional structures related to tribes predominate. Local economic development opportunities in slums are similar in the two regions in that they offer low-income communities a chance for survival. However, in Latin America and the Caribbean, economic migrants in particular are motivated to look for development opportunities in terms of better jobs and income generation initiatives.

In both cases, there are major challenges related to infrastructure for land tenure, water, sanitation and housing. However, while in Latin America and the Caribbean basic infrastructure has been provided, especially in the areas of water and sanitation, in sub-Saharan Africa, slums are considered to be temporary and therefore no infrastructure is built. As a result, no housing or social services are provided, making slums similar to former refugee camps, where food distribution, schooling and health services had attracted migrants, but where these services are no longer provided. When the emergency situation ended and these services stopped, those living in the former refugee camps sought to create income generation activities (for example, by opening small shops or offering basic services) so they could avoid returning to their places of origin. Under such circumstances, however, governments tend to have harsh policies towards these populations, carrying out eviction campaigns and systematically demolishing the slums in an attempt to control urbanization, especially in capital cities.

Considering that slums are places that require particular support from the State and that politicians can benefit from the support of slum dwellers, slums are a strategic demographic and territorial tool used for social control. Different approaches to urban planning with regard to social control can be found in the two regions. In Latin America and the Caribbean, slums play an important role as a place where political movements are formed. In the 1970s, leftist ideologies calling for revolutionary approaches to equality were developed in the slums and spread through the region. At the time of the military dictatorships, which were found in most Latin American countries, the responses to the challenges of slum proliferation were eviction and the construction of massive, high-density public housing. Once democracies were restored, however, far-reaching changes in the approaches to slums were introduced, and the policy changed from one of eviction to one of regularization. In sub-Saharan Africa, where State structures are not yet fully developed, imposing governmental authority is more important than promoting negotiated agreements. In addition, because different tribes compete to hold political power, particular ethnic groups are often evicted from the slums in a demonstration of political or social power.
7.2. MAJOR SHIFTS IN POLICY APPROACHES TO DEALING WITH SLUMS

In terms of urbanization and slum formation in sub-Saharan Africa, policy approaches seek to stop rapid urbanization. Considering the fact that displacement in Africa follows ethnic and tribal ties, poor migrants will likely move to those cities and metropolitan areas with large populations from their own ethnic background. In this sense, slum upgrading and prevention aimed at creating intertribal linkages and peaceful coexistence through, for instance shared public areas and public education, is key to building peace and prosperity. The high rate of migration in post-conflict countries where large numbers of displaced populations move across regions under complex political conditions (as has occurred in Angola, Sudan and South Sudan during 20 years of civil war) leads to slum formation. This has been the case in Sudan, which had an increase in the percentage of slum dwellers (of the total urban population) from 4 per cent in 1990 to 8 per cent in 2005. The slum population in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is even higher, and it grew by 25 per cent in the same period, increasing from 52 per cent in 1990 to 76 per cent in 2005.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the situation is slightly more encouraging. Today, urban growth is significantly higher than slum growth (2.2% and 1.3%, respectively). This is due to the shift in the approach of many governments. Instead of evicting inhabitants, governments are urbanizing the slums, as a more progressive and human rights approach to urban planning has been taken. There have been improvements in slum dwellers’ access to basic services, such as water and sanitation, which had been denied to informal settlements in the past. Colombia, as a post-conflict country, has a relatively low concentration of slum dwellers. In 2005, just over 1 million people lived in slums, which was equivalent to 17.9 per cent of the total urban population. This figure dropped to 14.3 per cent by 2009. Although these numbers are encouraging, the situation is very different in Caribbean countries, where the percentage of people living in slums remains high. For example, in 2005 in Haiti the figure was 70.1 per cent, and in Jamaica it was 60.7 per cent. In the same year in the Central American countries of Guatemala and Nicaragua, the figures were 42.9 per cent and 45.5 per cent, respectively. These percentages reflect the particular conditions that Caribbean and Central American countries face in terms of slum proliferation.

Taking into account urbanization and slum formation rates, a comparison of slum formation trends and responses in Latin America and the Caribbean to those in sub-Saharan Africa points to the fact that, while in Latin America the debate is focused on how to ensure the right to the city for poor people who already live in cities but fear eviction from strategic locations, in sub-Saharan Africa, the discussion is on how to prevent people from moving to cities. Although some of the approaches to dealing with slums used in Latin America and the Caribbean are starting to be applied in sub-Saharan Africa, there are still enormous differences between the regional approaches.

As D’Cruz et al. (2014) explain, the progress made towards the right to the city in Latin American countries can be explained in terms of the political will to respect human rights. The authors state: “Although there are no statistics available on the contribution of informal settlement upgrading to improved service provision in Latin America over the last couple of decades, it is likely that this contributed significantly to the increasing proportion of the urban population with piped water to their homes, toilets in their homes that are connected to sewers and solid waste collection, which is evident in censuses and household surveys.” In their paper, the authors explain that sub-Saharan African countries lack such political will. However, NGOs such as the Federation of Slum Dwellers have developed mechanisms to engage citizens to lobby for slum dwellers and their needs. Their actions go far beyond the traditional public participation schemes, in which slum dwellers are just passive recipients of aid. The communities become empowered through self-organizing initiatives to improve their habitat. The major goal of these NGOs in sub-Saharan Africa is to open dialogues with national and local governments on practical action that can be taken to improve conditions in slums. Acioly (2007) compares Latin America and the Caribbean with sub-Saharan Africa
from the perspective of the challenge of slum proliferation. He explains that sub-Saharan Africa needs better customary land management, and states that local governments in the region are ill-equipped in terms of well-trained personnel and specific urban planning tools and mechanisms to deal with slums. He points to the low tax base, poor property tax collection and corrupt land management systems as major obstacles to responding effectively to slum challenges. In his view, State bureaucracy, with its intricate system of administration at national and local levels, is a major reason for slum formation. The coexistence of post-colonial administration with customary management, as well as customary chiefs, kings and other structures selling land as “pirates” without following any rules or formal control mechanisms, results in the creation of slums. A major difference between the regions is the fact that, while in Latin America and the Caribbean local administrations have the capacity – provided through their national constitutions and the base of tax revenue – to carry out urban policies targeting slums, this asset is absent or very limited in sub-Saharan Africa. However, it must be noted that Latin America and the Caribbean is facing the challenge of slum densification and growing illegal land subdivision, which risks some countries in the region having an increased prevalence of slums and even slum cities. According to the statistics, the slum growth rate is relatively low in this region, but the percentage is higher for certain cities that attract large numbers of international and internal migrants. The additional complexity that arises from different nationalities living together in the same area should not be underestimated in developing urban planning mechanisms. A key factor in achieving social inclusion is to take into consideration the origin and culture of the populations. In this regard, the dynamics of migrant corridors and new urban patterns that result from migration, as presented in section 1, reveal the role of migration in urbanization and slum formation. In both regions, it is essential that policymakers have the training and research tools necessary to ensure that land policies can prevent the formation of slums.

To conclude this brief comparison, it can be noted that there have already been positive outcomes resulting from the policies identified in Latin America and the Caribbean, particularly those applied in recent decades, in terms of upgrading slums. However, there have also been negative results in terms of rising segregation and the various externalities of the process (such as crime, discrimination and exposure to disasters). In terms of avoiding the proliferation of slums, countries in sub-Saharan Africa have the advantage of social cohesion, which is facilitated through tribal and extended family links, helping people network and build development opportunities. The major weakness is the use of the wrong public policies, which are based on the eviction and persistent forced relocation of slum dwellers, damaging their survival and development perspectives. In this regard, it is important to emphasize the role played by international organizations in influencing governments to carry out more pro-poor policies for the benefit of societies as a whole.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Acioly, C.

Adams, R. and J. Page

Aroca, P.

Baeninger, R.

Barón, J.
2011 Sensibilidad de la oferta de migrantes internos a las condiciones del mercado laboral en las principales ciudades de Colombia [Sensitization of the internal migration supply regarding the conditions of the labour market in the main cities of Colombia]. Documentos de Trabajo sobre Economía Regional, núm. 149, Banco de la República, Cartagena.

Bergesio, L. and L. Golovanevsky

Camargo, A. and A. Hurtado

Castro Olivera, O.

Centre on Human Rights and Evictions (COHRE)


Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) 2007 Anuario Estadístico de América Latina y el Caribe [Statistical Yearbook for Latin America and the Caribbean]. ECLAC, Santiago de Chile.

Gravois, J.  
2005 The De Soto delusion. *Slate Magazine*.

Guzman Agreda, M.  

Harvey, D.  
2012 *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution*. Verso, New York.

Hu, R. et al.  

Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas (INE)  
2010 Resultados censo de población y vivienda 2010 [Results of the population and housing census 2010]. La Paz.

Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos (INDEC)  

Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos (INEC)  
2010 VII Censo Nacional de Población y VI de Vivienda [Seventh national population census and fourth housing census]. Quito.

Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Geografía (INEGI)  

Instituto Pereyra Passos  

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)  

International Organization for Migration (IOM)  

Jansa, V.  

King, R. et al.  
Klauffus, C.

Laglagaron, L.
2010  Protección a través de la integración: Los esfuerzos del Gobierno de México para la ayuda a los migrantes en los Estados Unidos, Instituto para las políticas migratorias [Protection through integration: The Mexican Government’s efforts to aid migrants in the United States]. Migration Policy Institute, Washington, D.C.

Landaeta, G. et al.
2006  Análisis de procesos participativos de diseño e implementación de políticas sociales. Caso de estudio en Bolivia: El sistema SISPLAN [Analysis of the participatory process in the design and implementation of social policies: Case studies in Bolivia – The SISPLAN system]. Fundación Pro-Casha, Cochabamba, Bolivia.

2014  El suelo y la vivienda entre la propiedad estatal comunitaria, social cooperativa y privada. En La vivienda entre el derecho y la mercancía. Las formas de la propiedad en América Latina. Fundación Pro-Casha [Land and housing between the State and community property, social cooperative and private. In: Housing between the right and commodities: The way of real estate property in Latin America]. Cochabamba, Bolivia.

Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)
2013  Reseñas sobre Población y Desarrollo [Population and development review]. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Santiago de Chile.

López Moreno, E.

Mármora, L.

Municipality of El Alto
2010  Análisis de expansión de la mancha urbana [Analysis of the expansion of the urban pattern]. Imprenta de la Alcaldía, El Alto, Bolivia.

Municipality of Medellín

Murillo, F. and G. Artese
Murillo, F. et al.
2010 La Planificación Urbana-Habitacional y el derecho a la ciudad. Entre el accionar del estado, el mercado y la Informalidad [Urban housing planning and the right to the city: Between state actions, the markets and informality]. Ediciones Cuentahilos, Buenos Aires.


Nijenhuis, G.

Nilson, T.

Pizarro, C.
2008 La vulnerabilidad de los inmigrantes bolivianos como sujetos de derechos humanos: experimentando la exclusión y la discriminación en la región metropolitana de la ciudad de Córdoba [The vulnerability of Bolivian migrants as subjects of human rights: Experiencing exclusion and discrimination in the metropolitan area of Cordoba City]. Instituto Nacional contra la Discriminación, la Xenofobia y el Racismo Ministerio de Justicia, Seguridad y Derechos Humanos, Buenos Aires.

Pizarro, J.M. et al.
2014 Tendencias y Patrones de la Migración Latinoamericana y Caribeña hacia 2010 y desafíos para una agenda interregional [Trends and patterns of Latin American and Caribbean migration in 2010 and challenges for an interregional agenda]. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Santiago de Chile.

Rizzo, M.

Rodríguez, J.

Rodríguez, J. and D. González
2006 Redistribución de la población y migración interna en Chile: continuidad y cambio según los últimos cuatro censos nacionales de población y vivienda [Redistribution of the population and internal migration in Chile: Continuity and change according to the last four national population and housing censuses]. Revista de Geografía Norte Grande, núm. 34, Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile, Santiago de Chile, pp. 39–52.
Rolnik, R.

Rolnik Xavier, I.
2011 Entre el centro y las periferias en la región metropolitana de Sao Paulo. La inserción territorial de los inmigrantes en San Pablo [Between the centre and the peripheries in the metropolitan area of Sao Paulo: The territorial insertion of migrants in Sao Paulo]. SSIIM Paper Series, No. 9, SSIIM UNESCO Chair, Venice.

Ruiz, N. and M. Castillo

Sandoval Ruiz, E.
2007 Migración y desarrollo en América Latina : ¿Círculo vicioso o círculo virtuoso ? [Migration and development in Latin America: Vicious circle or virtuous circle?]. Revista Instituto Tecnológico de México, Mexico City.

Taylor, T. and C. Thole

Texidó, E. et al.

Torres, H.

UN-Habitat

United Nations Centre for Human Settlements
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)
2014  

United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
2010  

United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
2013  

United States Department of State
2014  

Wojtowicz, M.
2014  

World Bank
2014  

Websites consulted

  www.eclac.cl/migracion/migracion_interna
  http://themigrantjourney.wordpress.com/about/
  www.avina.net/esp/10891/incontext-38/
  www.derechos.org/nizkor/colombia/libros/redes/1.html
  www.geogonline.org.uk/as_g2popki1.3_3.htm
  http://lasocialinformacion.blogspot.com.ar/
  www.youtube.com/watch?v=MjJcTWVxP8U