OEA/Ser.W

CIDI/INF.384/20

9 September 2020

Original: English

CONCEPT NOTE

Regular meeting of

Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI)

29 SEPTEMBER 2020

(Prepared by the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development)

THEME: **Environmental Resilience. Building Back Better: the key to resilient recovery**

**BACKGROUND**

Latin America and the Caribbean is among the 5-most disaster-prone regions in the world. During the past decade (2000-2019), 152 million people in the region were affected by 1,205 disasters, including: 548 floods, 330 storms, 75 earthquakes, 74 droughts, 66 landslides, 24 wildfires, 50 extreme temperature events and 38 volcanic events[[1]](#footnote-1)/.

A major lesson from the region’s experience with unrelenting disasters is that “Building Back Better”­­---defined, as a multi-dimensional approach to disaster resilience that leads to improvements above and beyond the pre-disaster status quo---is more important than the short-term emergency response phase. Several countries have adopted this approach to building their economic, social, and environmental resilience to disasters. However, if effective resilience policies and strategies are to be designed and implemented, a sound, evidence-based decision-making framework will be needed that captures the sources of failures of social and economic infrastructure and the role of scientifically-determined standards, codes, and practices in “building back better.”

Attention must also be given to strengthening the role of citizens and communities in driving resilience. Communities are only as resilient as their citizens are. Helping citizens to distill lessons from their experiences with disasters and to apply this learning to build their resilience to future events is a vital component of a robust resilient culture that can adapt to future circumstances.

**PURPOSE OF THE SESSION**

**The objective of the session is to:**

* To share with member states lessons for “building back better” drawing from the community experience with disasters.
* To facilitate the exchange of experiences, lessons learned and good practices for resilience building between and among member states with a view towards enabling cooperation.

**Structure of the session**

The session will take the form of a plenary discussion among expert panelists from national, regional international institutions with a record of accomplishment on the subject matter as well as from member states. Panelists may be drawn from among the following institutions and agencies:

• The Boulder Center for Resilience (confirmed)

* The National Institute of Science and Technology (NIST)(TBC)
* Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research-IAI(TBC)
* The Secretariat for Integral Development (SEDI)

**Relevance to CIDI**

The OAS Charter mandates CIDI to promote cooperation among OAS member states to achieve integral development and, in particular, to help eliminate extreme poverty. The Charter also directs CIDI to "promote, coordinate and assign responsibility for the execution of development programs and projects to the subsidiary bodies and relevant organizations, on the basis of the priorities identified by the member states, in areas such as economic and social development, including trade, tourism, integration and the environment."

The Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development (PIDS) entrusts the GS/OAS through SEDI-DSD to collaborate with sustainable development authorities of the members states and coordinate with other entities and international organizations. The PIDS establishes strategic actions to ensure that the work of the General Secretariat on sustainable development is aligned with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and that its objectives and results are guided by the SDGs approved by member states and contribute to their attainment.

According to the PIDS, the work of the General Secretariat should contribute directly to supporting member states in their efforts to meet: SDG 11 “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable;” SDG 15, “Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss;” and SDG 7 “Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all;” as well as the interrelated targets of other SDGs on the 2030 Agenda and its crosscutting elements.

**OUTCOME OF THE SESSION:**

It is anticipated that by the end of the session delegations will:

* Provide member states with a clearer appreciation of the typology of disasters and the ways in which multi-level science can use the destruction caused by disasters to inform sound resilience building policies and strategies.
* Produce recommendations on mechanisms that can contribute to the attainment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs as they relate to the Green Blue and Orange Economies.
* Inform and guide the efforts of the Secretariat for Integral Development in positioning itself in supporting the development of environmental resilience the context of the SEDI Strategic Plan, and Inter-American Program for Sustainable Development (PIDS).
* Identify policies that support the sustainable use of resources, and encourage on-going consultation on methodologies, tools and opportunities that create new momentum on resilience building.
* Identify and raise awareness amongst key actors in the Americas about imperatives of environmental resilience.
* Identify the main strategic policy and investment choices that will be needed to build- back- better with respect to infrastructural development, energy, land use, coastal zone management and transportation, among others.

CIDRP02969E01

1. . <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/natural-disasters-latin-america-and-caribbean-2000-2019> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)