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CONCEPT NOTE

REGULAR meeting of THE

Inter-American Council for Integral Development (CIDI)

8 DECEMBER 2020

(Prepared by the Executive Secretariat for Integral Development)

THEME**: Multi Stakeholder Partnerships for Building Resilience to External Shocks**

1. **BACKGROUND**

At the 2020 regular session of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS), member states recognized that the resilience capacities of the region to vulnerabilities such as natural disasters and other external shocks could be strengthened through the establishment of public-private partnerships. Thus, member states requested that the General Secretariat continue to strengthen existing partnerships and developing new ones, with relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society organizations[[1]](#footnote-2)/. In addition, member states adopted a resolution entitled “Toward an Inter-American Business Charter”[[2]](#footnote-3)/ to promote the role of the private sector in the integral development of the Hemisphere.

Member states also recognized that the COVID-19 pandemic not only threatens progress toward eradicating poverty –­an indispensable requirement for sustainable development­­– but that it reinforces the need to urgently design and implement policies, strategies and programs aimed at reducing vulnerability and building resilience to external shocks, including to the adverse effects of climate change[[3]](#footnote-4)/.

2020 has posed so many changes in such fundamental ways that it has forced a reset. It presents an opportunity to rethink the social contract, and to pursue models that push beyond resiliency, not merely to come back to where we were, but to be better. The Americas must transition from vulnerability to resilience in all its dimensions –economic, social, and environmental– and pursue a more inclusive and sustainable development model.

How can the region make this transition? Identifying relevant innovations and understanding that solutions come from all sectors and actors is a starting point. The COVID-19 crisis illustrated that there are real alternatives to the way we work, study, interact, produce, deliver, and pay for products and services. It has accelerated the spread of innovations, driven by governments, businesses, and institutions that have embraced the opportunity to do things differently.

Taking these solutions and innovations to scale to transform our economies and societies calls for a whole-of society approach. It entails leveraging international cooperation, multi-stakeholder partnerships, and solidarity. But a series of isolated initiatives from different actors is not enough. We need build joint initiatives, articulate common needs with solutions, identify ideal partners. The OAS, as a hemispheric forum and honest broker, is called upon to facilitate this process, while it continues working with member states towards the attainment of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The crisis has also generated additional space for multi-stakeholder engagement for building resilience through improved disaster response and recovery. The OAS/SEDI has concrete examples of partnerships that are bringing value to member states in the form of technical assistance, training, and access to tools and services provided in collaboration with the private sector, universities, and other actors. The potential for growth in this area is enormous.

There are many promising initiatives to leverage multi-stakeholder action for development. The [Americas Business Dialogue (ABD)](https://americasbd.org/), led by the private sector and facilitated by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB); the [Connecting Business initiative (CBi)](https://www.connectingbusiness.org/about), driven by the private sector and supported by the United Nations; the World Economic Forum’s [COVID Action Platform](https://www.weforum.org/platforms/covid-action-platform); the [Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data](https://www.data4sdgs.org/); and the Unites Nations’ [Global Compact](https://www.unglobalcompact.org/) and [Partnerships for SDGs online platform](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/partnerships/) are just a few examples.

These partnerships are critical as the “perfect storm” engulfs the Americas. Compounding and overlapping to the health, economic, and social crisis ensued by the COVID-19 pandemic, the region has been hit by a record-breaking hurricane season. The pandemic’s dramatic impact further exposed the region’s deeply ingrained structural weaknesses, including alarming poverty and inequality levels, under-funded social protection systems, high informality rates of the labor markets, low productivity and innovation rates, and poor infrastructure. In turn, the hurricane season is a brutal reminder of our high vulnerability to climate change and increasing natural disasters. Overcoming these obstacles depends on the articulated work of all stakeholders through strong partnerships that can harness expertise, knowledge, funding, and other resources necessary to build back better from the crisis with resilience and inclusion.

“The 2020 Atlantic Hurricane Season takes infamous top spot for busiest on record” announced the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in mid-November[[4]](#footnote-5)/. Hurricane Iota became the 30th named storm in the season, up from an annual average of 12 named storms, and breaking the record set in 2005 for the highest number of tropical/subtropical storms in a single year in nearly 170 years of recorded data.

Iota followed closely Hurricane Eta, threatening to cause catastrophic impacts across portions of Central and South America, as already saturated soils endured heavy rainfall from the storm, potentially leading to flash flooding and mudslides said NOAA’s National Hurricane Center (NHC)[[5]](#footnote-6)/. The “hyperactive” season had been forecasted due to warmer-than-average sea surface temperatures and other oceanic and atmospheric conditions favoring an active hurricane season.

This, in 2020, the year when the COVID-19 pandemic brought the world to a standstill. Facing the threats posed by natural disasters in this scenario is not only challenging, but nearly incompatible. Scientist have cautioned that the inherent incompatibility of strategies to protect the population from hurricane hazards (ie, gathering people in groups through evacuation and sheltering), and effective approaches to slow the spread of COVID-19 (ie, separating people through physical distancing and stay-at-home orders) can exacerbate harm from the pandemic[[6]](#footnote-7)/. In effect, as hurricanes, floods, and mudslides devastated the region, the IFCR warned about additional concerns related to increased coronavirus transmissions given the difficulty to implement prevention measures[[7]](#footnote-8)/.

Our member states and the Organization are presented with a unique opportunity as they face the many challenges of 2020. A crisis this severe helps to align agendas and priorities and can spur political will from many actors to strengthen multi-stakeholder collaboration in pursuit of a more sustainable, resilient, and inclusive future for all of the peoples of the Americas.

1. **RELEVANCE TO OAS MANDATES**

“Fostering development cooperation and partnerships” is one of the strategic lines for Integral Development in the OAS Comprehensive Strategic Plan. (AG/RES.1 (LI-E/16). It establishes the following objectives:

6.1. Foster bilateral, South-South, triangular, and international cooperation in the Hemisphere.

6.2. Foster effective multisector partnerships to assist Member States in meeting the Sustainable Development Goals.

In addition, at the 2020 regular session of the General Assembly, member states approved resolutions recognizing the relevance of multi-stakeholder partnerships to support and strengthen the work of the Organization in the area of development: resolutions AG/RES. 2955 (L-O/20) “Advancing Hemispheric Initiatives on Integral Development: Promoting Resilience” and AG/RES.2954 (L-O/20) “Towards an Inter-American Business Charter.”

1. **PURPOSE OF THE SESSION**

The purpose of the CIDI meeting is to facilitate dialogue amongst member states and present existing partnerships pursued by the Secretariat to support post-COVID recovery efforts and building resilience to face future external shocks. Guiding questions proposed for consideration by panelists and member states delegates are:

* **Resilience to External Shocks:** Considering the region’s inherent vulnerabilities and structural weaknesses, what systems need to be put in place to better respond to external shocks and compounding disasters?
* **Opportunities:** Which financing, cooperation, and partnership opportunities are available for building resilience?
* **The role of the OAS:** What role can the OAS/SEDI play in leveraging multi-stakeholder partnerships for development?
1. **STRUCTURE OF THE MEETING**

The meeting will take the form of a virtual plenary discussion amongst panelists from multi-stakeholder partners that have been critical for expanding the work of the OAS/SEDI to meet emergent needs. Delegations from member states will have an opportunity to share their ideas and reflections during the discussion, guided by the questions proposed above.

Guest panelists include:

* Amazon Web Services (panelist TBC).
* Structuralia (panelist TBC).
* IDB Services (panelist TBC).
1. **OUTCOME OF THE MEETING**

It is expected that the meeting will contribute to provide OAS member states an opportunity to:

1. Further recognize the critical role that partnerships play in reinforcing the work of the OAS/SEDI.
2. Engage in a meaningful discussion on their shared goals and challenges to promote multi-stakeholder partnerships to build resilience and reduce vulnerabilities to external shocks, particularly in the context of the pandemic.
3. Identify concrete steps that they can initiate or continue at the national and regional levels to promote partnerships in the framework of the OAS/SEDI.

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1. . [Advancing Hemispheric Initiatives on Integral Development: Promoting Resilience](http://scm.oas.org/Ag/documentos/Documentos/AG08174E03.docx) (AG/doc.5706/20) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. . Towards an Inter-American Business Charter (AG/doc.5705/20) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. . Ibid. 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. . [2020 Atlantic Hurricane Season takes infamous top spot for busiest on record](https://www.noaa.gov/news/2020-atlantic-hurricane-season-takes-infamous-top-spot-for-busiest-on-record). NOAA. News. Nov 10, 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. . [Hurricane Iota Becomes 2020’s Strongest Hurricane; Threatens Central America](https://www.nesdis.noaa.gov/content/hurricane-iota-becomes-2020%E2%80%99s-strongest-hurricane-threatens-central-america?utm_source=Social%20Media&utm_medium=Twitter&utm_campaign=HurricaneIota-IOD_20201116). NOAA. News. Nov.16, 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. . [Cascading Risks of COVID-19 Resurgence During an Active 2020 Atlantic Hurricane Season](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/343631663_Cascading_Risks_of_COVID-19_Resurgence_During_an_Active_2020_Atlantic_Hurricane_Season). Schultz, James M.; Fugate, Craig; Galea, Sandro (August 12, 2020). Journal of the American Medical Association. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. . [IFRC concerned about impact of Hurricane Eta on coronavirus transmission](https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/2020/11/10/ifrc-concerned-impact-hurricane-eta-coronavirus-transmission/). International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. News. November 10, 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)