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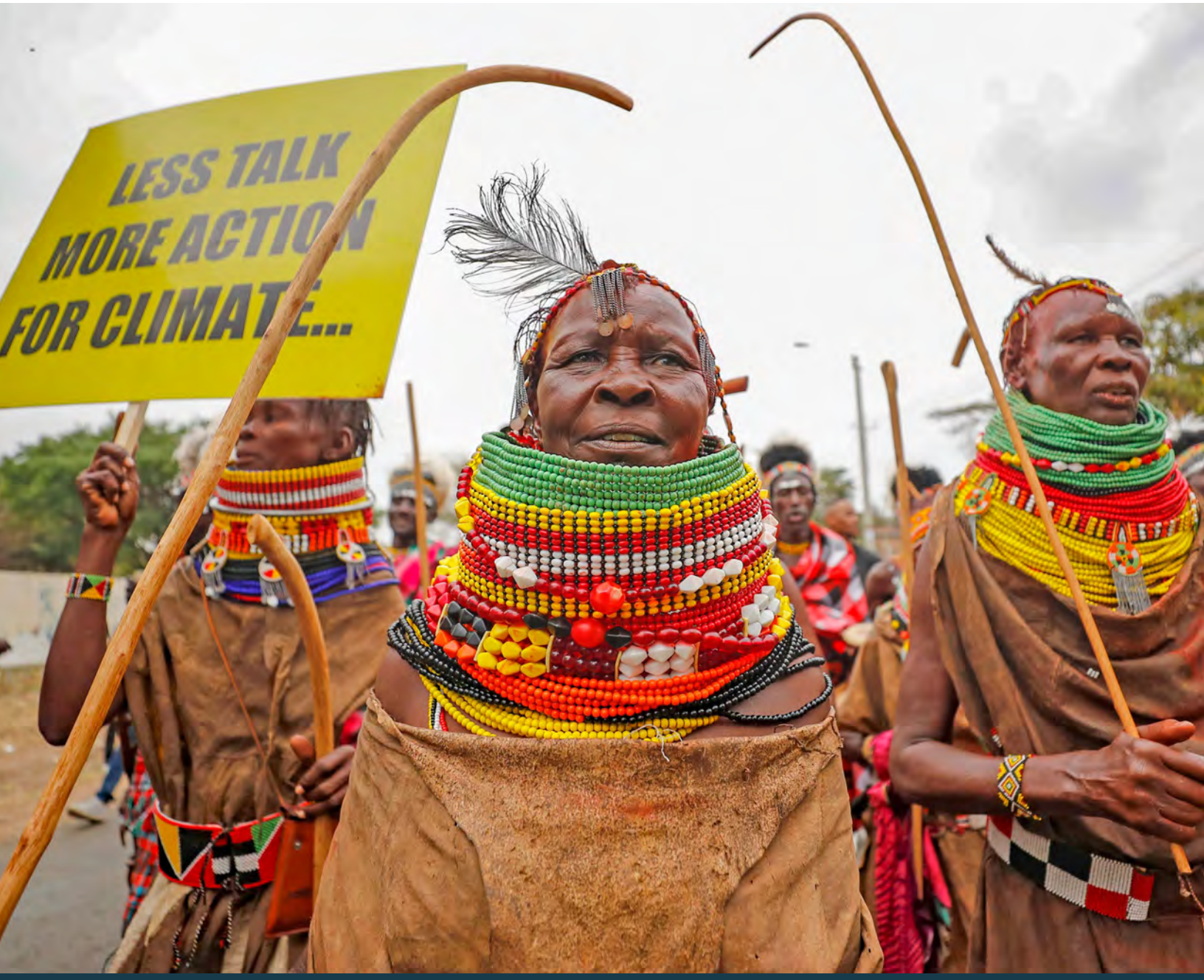

Pragmatic Peacebuilding for Climate Change Adaptation in Cities

By Achim Wennmann

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ABOUT THE REPORT

This report examines how to scale up and speed up climate action by leveraging peacebuilding practice for climate change adaptation. It argues that climate and peacebuilding practitioners need to focus on cities and work together to set the political ground rules for managing climate impact in cities. The report was commissioned by the Climate, Environment, and Conflict Program at the United States Institute of Peace.

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Cover photo: Protesters march to demand action on climate change in Nairobi on September 4, 2023, during the inaugural Africa Climate Summit. The summit brought together heads of state from across the continent to discuss climate adaptation and resilience strategies for Africa. (Photo by Brian Inganga/AP)

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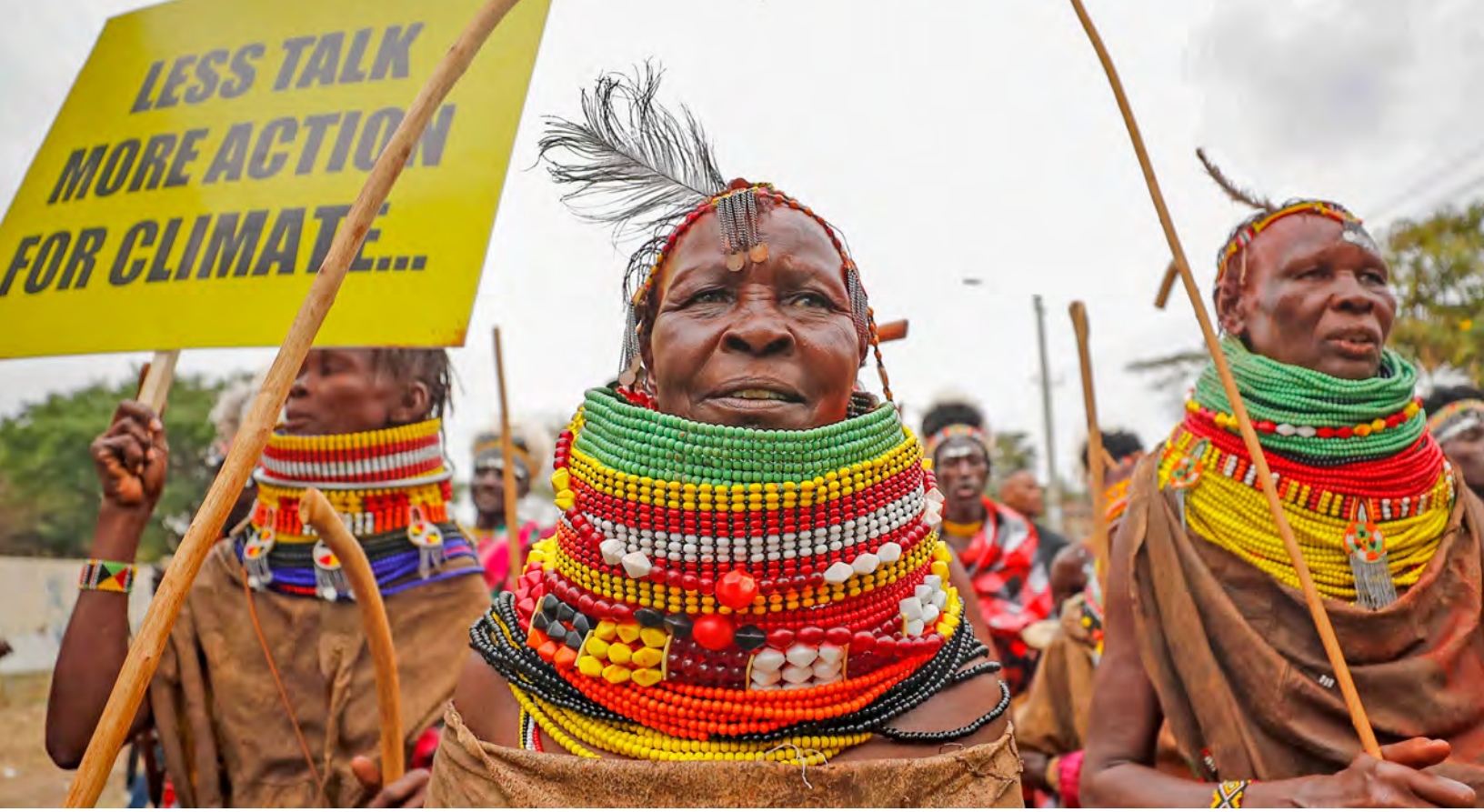

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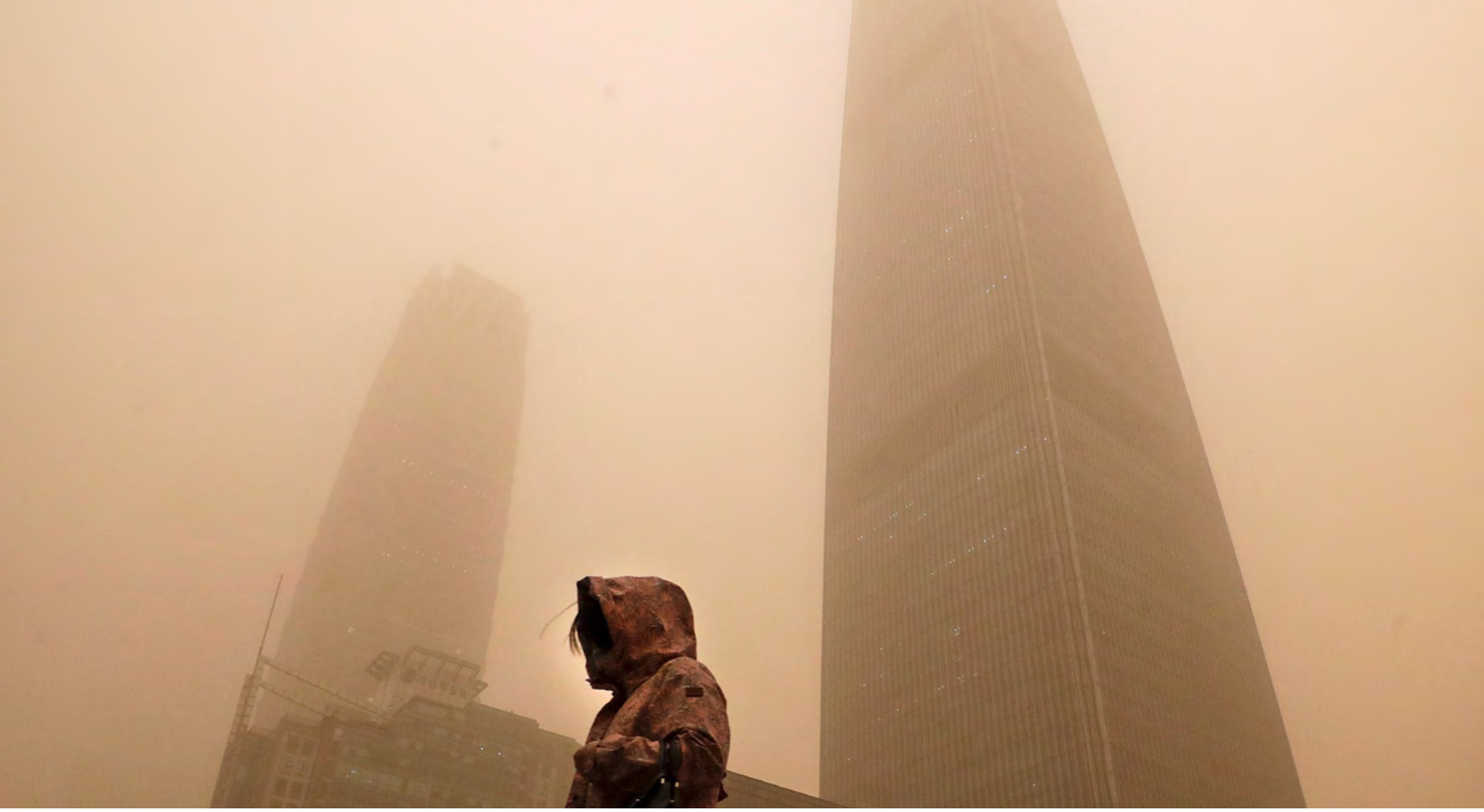
The enormity of the challenge of adapting to climate change demands practical innovation. One potentially valuable step in this direction would be for the climate change community to leverage the insights and practices of peacebuilders, especially those peacebuilders accustomed to working in complex urban environments.

Urban areas have received scant attention in the adaptation community, even though most people live in cities and are likely to witness climate stresses exacerbating political tensions and fueling violence in urban environments. Cities will not be able to "securitize their way out" (i.e., rely on heavier policing and other security measures) when it comes to dealing with climate impact; instead, they need to customize peacebuilding approaches suited to the kind of systemic, transformative change that is required.

This report suggests that the approach known as "pragmatic peacebuilding"—an approach that entails dealing with the de facto realities in specific contexts as a starting point for transformational processes—is particularly useful as a framework for climate action in cities. Working politically across the full spectrum of actors to mobilize competences and capabilities outside the reach of government authorities is a critical element for speeding up and scaling up climate action in cities. Specific measures to activate pragmatic peacebuilding unfold along three lines of work: developing multidimensional programs that respond to urban complexities; strengthening coordination and collective action through instruments such as infrastructures for peace and dialogue "platforms" to facilitate interaction between different capacities and sectors in cities; and working within urban hybrid political orders that build on the legitimacy of trusted individuals and spaces.

In the fight against climate change, climate and peacebuilding practitioners should work together to broker urban political settlements to set the political ground rules for how to handle the coming climate crisis in cities. Political economy analysis will play an important role as common ground between the climate and peacebuilding communities and as an operational priority. Brokering settlements and setting ground rules would require climate change professionals to shift away from government- and institution-focused approaches and toward a more agile way of working through informal channels and with de facto powers that are able to get things done politically in the hybrid political order of cities.



Extreme weather events such as this March 15, 2021, sandstorm that struck Beijing, one of the world's largest megacities, threaten urban infrastructure and livelihoods, particularly of the most vulnerable urban residents. (Photo by Andy Wong/AP)

Introduction

The scientific community is increasingly confident about the impact of climate change over the next two decades.[1] The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) anticipates that "multiple climate hazards will occur simultaneously, and multiple climatic and non-climatic risks will interact, resulting in compounding overall risk and risks cascading across sectors and regions." The IPCC observes that climate change impact is already a reality, especially in cities, where it "has caused impacts on human health, livelihoods and key infrastructure," including through heat waves and air pollution. Overall, the IPCC states that "multiple climate and non-climate hazards impact cities, . . . and sometimes coincide, magnifying damage." Given the evidence of the enormity of the challenges ahead, the IPCC underlines that "worldwide climate resilient development action is more urgent than previously assessed."[2] This assessment is shared by a group of distinguished scientists who have called on "experts in any discipline that deals with the future of the biosphere and human well-being to eschew reticence, avoid sugar-coating the overwhelming challenges ahead and 'tell it like it is.' Anything else is misleading at best, or negligent and potentially lethal for the human enterprise at worst."[3]

In the face of this dire outlook, this report proposes leveraging peacebuilding for climate change adaptation in cities. Climate adaptation efforts to date have been largely focused on incremental change in particular sectors in rural areas. Increasingly, however, the climate change community will need to focus on systemic, transformative change, especially in urban areas.

Fortunately, as it refocuses its attention, the climate change community can learn from and integrate the experience of peacebuilders working in urban areas, whose practice has evolved to tackle the political and social complexity of cities.

The two fields of practice developed predominantly in separate communities, and they remain largely unaware of each other's principles and practices. This report seeks to encourage the cross-fertilization of ideas as both sides reflect on the practical value of joint activities, and it calls on the climate change community to embrace the achievements of peacebuilding as an instrument for climate change adaptation. It calls on peacebuilders to repurpose their conceptual and operational achievements and put them in the service of climate change adaptation. The message to both communities is simple: if climate change adaptation is to be scaled up and gain speed, practitioners need to focus on cities and work across all political constituencies, no matter what political status these constituencies might have. This shift means recognizing the limits of what national, subnational, and city administrations can do alone and seizing opportunities to mobilize state and nonstate competences and capabilities for managing climate impact in cities. It also means complementing the technical level of climate science with a distinctly political way of working to achieve the systemic change called for by the IPCC and climate scientists. Peacebuilding is a way of working that addresses exactly these types of governance challenges, from the global to local levels, and its practical achievements might be the missing link needed to adapt to climate change at greater speed and scale in cities.

The IPCC defines climate change adaptation as the "adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities."[4] This report focuses on climate change adaptation because of the governance challenges it entails in cities and the linkage this challenge provides with the inherently political nature of peacebuilding. The focus on adaptation is not intended to deprioritize climate change mitigation that, for instance, aims to reduce levels of carbon dioxide in cities. The report understands peacebuilding as a field of practice that involves the use of dialogue, trust-building, and consensus-seeking processes to transform, resolve, or manage conflict through nonviolent means.[5] The report is primarily concerned with the projection of peacebuilding research into climate action, although it does acknowledge that the inverse—the projection of climate change research into peacebuilding practice—is equally worthy of a separate research effort.[6]

Among the different strands of peacebuilding, recent research on "pragmatic peacebuilding" is particularly well suited to the needs of the climate change community.[7] Whereas "liberal peacebuilding" (to borrow a term from the academic community) seeks to build a certain type of state or society, pragmatic peacebuilding entails dealing with the de facto realities in specific contexts as a starting point for transformational processes. Pragmatic peacebuilding rests on the literature on the political economy of violent conflict that focuses on the interaction of economic issues and other political interests in shaping conflict dynamics—or how conflict starts, persists, escalates, and ends.[8] This literature took a particular urban turn over the last decade and emphasized the importance of disaggregating space, territory, and agency to find peaceful solutions to conflicts within the complexity of the metropolis.[9] A shared view of climate and peacebuilding practitioners about the importance of political economy analysis might be an important common ground for collaboration across these practice communities, especially when it comes to deciphering the interests of key actors and identifying trade-offs and decision-making points for a proactive climate change adaptation agenda in cities.[10]

THE IMPORTANCE OF CITIES

The report focuses on cities because this is where most people live. More than half of the planet's

population now lives in cities, and this share will increase by 2050, with an annual rise in urban populations of 60 to 80 million people due to population growth and urbanization.[11] Furthermore, urban areas have received relatively little attention from the climate change community, even though they are places where climate stresses are likely to exacerbate social and political tensions. The report starts from the premise that if we want to mitigate the impact of climate change on humanity, then cities are a good place to begin.

The IPCC estimates that 1 billion residents of low-lying cities and settlements will be at risk from coastal-specific climate hazards in the coming decades.[12] And all cities—not only near the coast but also far inland—are going to encounter climate hazards of one kind or another. Worsening living conditions for people in some areas will result in an eventual out-migration of large numbers of people to cities elsewhere; those cities will then face mounting pressures in terms of food and water security and economic stability. Research on the links between climate change, conflict, migration, and urban fragility in Honduras, Jordan, and Pakistan shows that such displacement drives many people into peri-urban geographies that have few services and tend to be more vulnerable to climate impacts.[13]

This report focuses on peacebuilding in cities because it constitutes a rich source of research and practice that can scale up and speed up climate change adaptation. The adaptation community is increasingly speaking about the need for the type of transformational and systemic change called for by the IPCC. In the "Climate Strategy 2022–2030" issued by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), one of the two main strategic objectives is systems change: "Fully addressing the climate crisis requires long-term, transformative changes that affect every aspect of society and will be neither easy nor quick."[14] The need for systemic change is also highlighted in China's climate change policy, which says that China "will promote a comprehensive transition to green and low-carbon economic and social development, bring a fundamental change to its eco-environment by accumulating small changes, and achieve a model of modernization in which humanity and nature exist harmoniously."[15] Both the United States and China are critical to rallying international support for the implementation of the global change agenda, so their recognition of the need for fundamental and transformative systemic change is encouraging, but achieving concrete progress at the city level will depend, in part at least, on seeing the challenge through peacebuilders' eyes.

The IPCC diplomatically notes that the "current committed actions at national scales and globally fall short of expectations," and it appears that the gap between the scale of the problem and the scale of action becomes bigger by the day.[16] In the face of the known climate scenarios, the climate change community worldwide is well aware that it will not be able to undertake systems change on its own, and this is why peacebuilding know-how and activities might become important instruments in the toolbox of climate practitioners, especially when advancing their work within hybrid political orders—a term that describes diverse and competing claims to power that coexist or overlap in the same territory, as further explained below.

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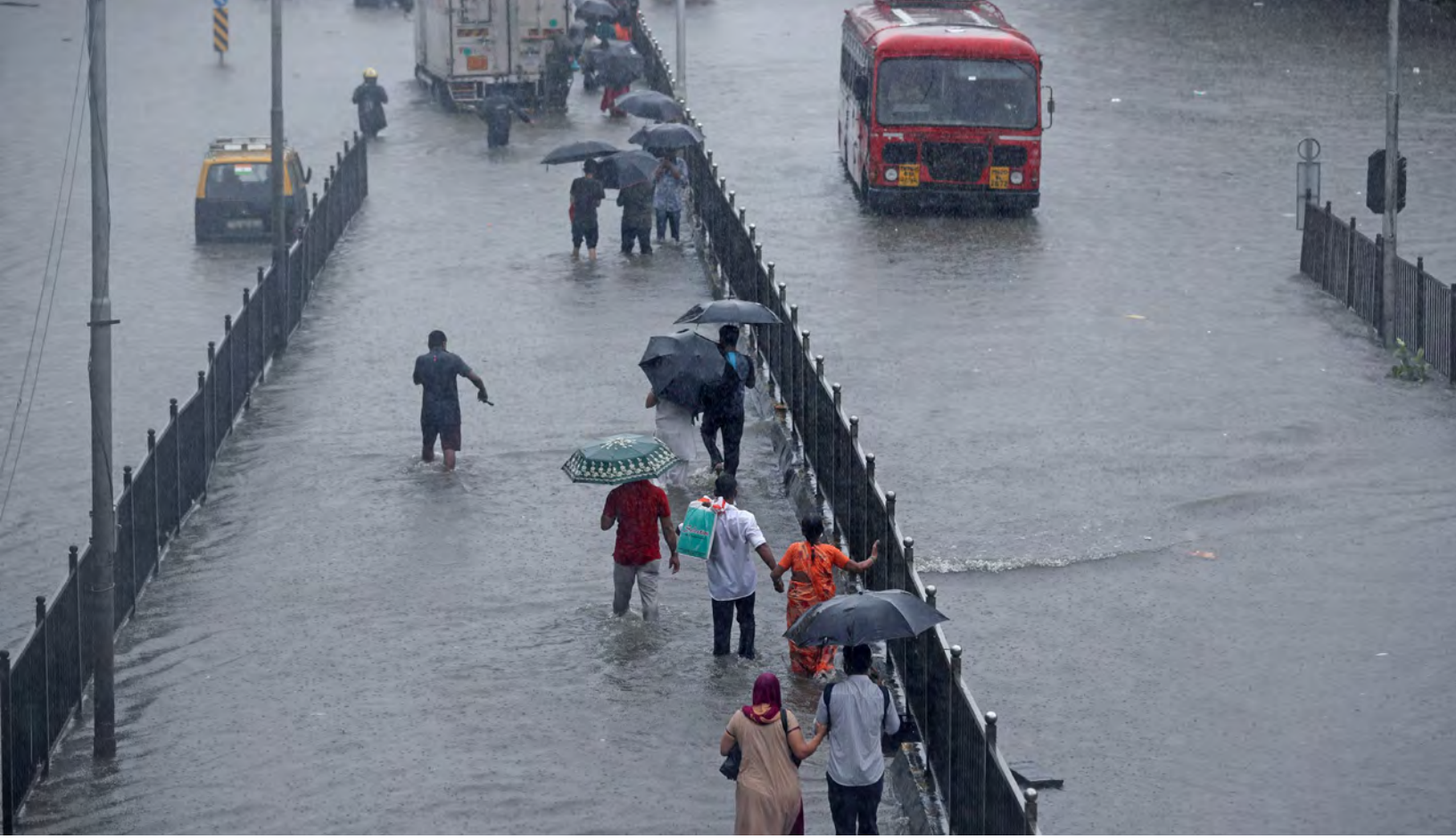
The report develops its analysis over the course of five sections. The first sketches an overview of the global strategic context, and the second reviews standard security-focused approaches as responses to turbulence and insecurity in cities. It argues that with respect to climate change, cities will not be able to "securitize their way out" (i.e., rely on heavier policing and other security measures) when dealing with climate change and that new approaches that are better suited for advancing systems change are necessary. The third section reviews the foundation of peacebuilding practice, and the fourth underlines that, given the hybrid political characteristics of cities, the strand of pragmatic

peacebuilding is particularly useful as a framework for climate practitioners to speed up and scale up their efforts, especially by working politically across the full spectrum of actors needed for climate change adaptation in cities. In the fifth section, the report proposes three practical pathways for peacebuilding for climate change adaptation in cities: developing multidimensional programs that respond to cities' innate complexity; strengthening coordination and collective action through instruments such as infrastructures for peace and dialogue "platforms" that facilitate interaction between different capacities and sectors in cities; and working within urban hybrid political orders through trusted individuals and in trusted spaces. The report concludes by emphasizing the need to engage with the de facto realities of cities and by recommending the negotiation of urban political settlements as a political foundation for climate change adaptation in cities. Overall, the report suggests that climate and peacebuilding practitioners should work closer together to develop urban political settlements that define the political ground rules for how to handle the coming era of climate crises in cities.



People walk through a flooded street during heavy rains in Mumbai on June 9, 2021. As many as 150 million people are currently living in areas that may be below the high-tide line by 2050. (Photo by Rafiq Maqbool/AP)

The Urban Front Line of Climate Change

"We have entered a new era, and it is not a peaceful one," remarked Peter Maurer, president of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) from 2012 to 2022, as part of the first joint appeal in 2015 by the United Nations and the ICRC to states and other actors engaged in armed conflict to respect and protect the principle of humanity.[17] The statement was testimony to the changing strategic landscape that is shaping peace and security dynamics in many parts of the world. Factors influencing this change include population growth and displacement, climate change, environmental stress, geopolitical shifts, technological innovation, rising inequalities and exclusion, and urbanization.[18] These factors are converging into ever more frequent, widespread, and intense crises, "overwhelm[ing] the capacity of the city and national governments to meet the needs of large populations with limited or no access to public services" such as housing, jobs, and infrastructure.[19] The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated these dynamics of change. UN secretary-general António Guterres stated in a speech at the UN General Assembly on September 22, 2020, that "COVID-19 is not only a wake-up call, it is a dress rehearsal for the world of challenges to come. . . . The pandemic has taught us

that our choices matter. As we look to the future, let us make sure we choose wisely."[20]

Within this strategic outlook, cities have become the new front line. Projections of urban development converge in their assessment that rapid urbanization will have a profound impact on political, economic, and social orders for generations to come.[21] Ninety percent of the acceleration of urbanization will be concentrated in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. This will occur in already-large megacities of more than 10 million people, the number of which is projected to increase from 21 in 2010 to 50 in 2050.[22] The prospect of Mumbai with 42 million inhabitants by 2050, Kinshasa with 35 million, and Karachi with 32 million starkly illustrates the challenges of scale when thinking about adequate policy responses in rapidly urbanizing cities.[23] Beyond the megacities, demographic change and urbanization will take place in the many medium-sized cities with fewer than 1 million inhabitants.[24] Cities will also define the promises and pitfalls of urbanization in the years ahead. On the one hand, urban areas are held to be socioeconomic magnets, sites of innovation, and a source of perceived opportunity for many.[25] On the other hand, they are places marked by poverty, inequality, and marginalization.[26]

On top of the pressures emerging from rapid urbanization comes the impact from climate change. The IPCC's 2022 report on climate change adaptation highlights that extreme weather events and regressive impacts on livelihoods and key infrastructures are already occurring and having a particularly significant impact on the most marginalized urban residents. Broken energy, water, and sanitation systems are producing widespread disruption, which will only grow worse if temperatures and sea levels rise, leading to greater intensity of weather events.[27] Coastal cities such as Shanghai, Mumbai, Bangkok, Alexandria, Ho Chi Minh City, and Basra are particularly vulnerable to rising sea levels, and as many as 150 million people are currently living on land that may be below the high-tide line by 2050.[28] Equally vulnerable will be cities affected by other climate-driven events such as droughts or wildfires. These cities will be found across the world, including in economically and politically powerful countries such as China and the United States.[29] One study published in 2018 anticipates that about 1 in 12 Americans will be on the move, leaving the southern and central states for the Northeast and the West.[30] These climate-induced displacements in the United States will

> accelerate rapid, perhaps chaotic, urbanization of cities ill-equipped for the burden, testing their capacity to provide basic services and amplifying existing inequities. It will eat away at prosperity, dealing repeated economic blows to coastal, rural and Southern regions, which could in turn push entire communities to the brink of collapse. . . . As some move, many others will be left behind. Those who stay risk becoming trapped as the land and the society around them ceases to offer any more support.[31]

China will have to contend with a wide array of climate-related impacts, from rising waters in Shanghai to recurring heat waves in the North China Plain, which is a key agricultural region between Beijing and Shanghai and is presently inhabited by 400 million people. The impact is expected to affect China's global standing. As one scholar has argued, "If the 'Chinese century' does indeed start somewhere around 2030, it is unlikely to last long, ending perhaps sometime around 2050, when the impact of global warming becomes unmanageable."[32]

These disturbing scenarios of social rupture and systemic dislocation could easily be multiplied. What should be emphasized is that they have a strong foundation in science brought together by the IPCC and other science-based endeavors.[33] However, the IPCC does not paint an entirely gloomy picture of the future. It also notes that climate change adaptation not only reduces risks and insecurity but can also improve agricultural productivity and food systems, as well as health and livelihoods.[34] Well-designed urban projects can increase resilience within cities to climate change risk while helping to build adaptation capacity in rural places through the maintenance of supply chains and financial flows. As a result of growing public awareness of climate risks,

more than 170 countries, as well as hundreds of major cities, have already incorporated climate adaptation into their policies and planning processes. However, despite the existence of such policies, integrated responses are needed to overcome the institutional, financial, and technological obstacles to their implementation. The current global urbanization trend is a major opportunity for climate-resilient projects, which can be designed to produce equitable outcomes by including marginalized populations. These projects will become ever more important, as climate-induced migration will likely increase marginalization in cities, with many newcomers settling in peri-urban environments, where their social and economic vulnerability will be heightened by the dearth or complete absence of services.[35]

The issue of the scale of the policy response of climate change adaptation in cities deserves particular recognition and is also connected to the sheer number of cities. The United Nations projects that by 2030 there will be 43 megacities with more than 10 million inhabitants, 66 cities with between 5 and 10 million inhabitants, and 597 cities with 1 to 5 million inhabitants; 710 cities will have between 500,000 and 1 million inhabitants, and 827 cities will have populations of between 300,000 and 500,000.[36] Despite the tendency to focus on megacities when discussing rapid urbanization, the fact is that the majority of the world's cities have and will have fewer than 5 million inhabitants. If one considers each city as its own political universe, the 2,243 "urban political entities" with populations of at least 300,000 inhabitants in 2030 will dwarf the number of "state entities"—a mere 193—that form the membership of the United Nations by a factor of 10 to 1.[37] It raises questions about how to scale responses to the impacts of climate change across the entirety of this political landscape.

One example of what such scaling can look like in practice is the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy.[38] Since its launch in 2008, this global coalition of cities has grown into a massive network of over 12,000 cities and exemplifies how cities affirm their influence globally through networks on issues relevant to them. Research suggests that there are currently more than 300 city networks, and these alliances increasingly indicate how "cities are demonstrating their power and influence in an urban world."[39]

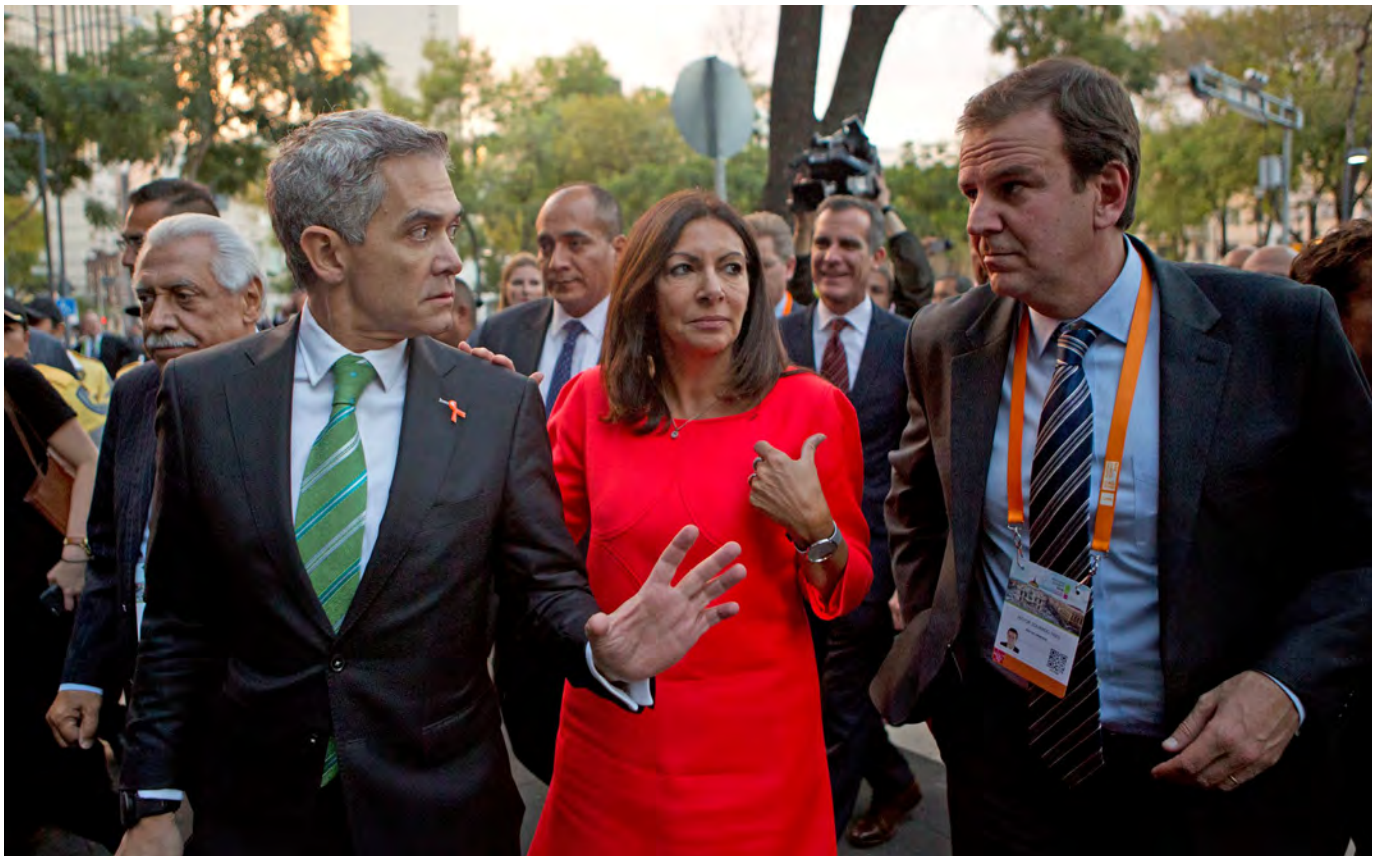
Policy Responses to Insecurity in Cities

The strategic context charted in the foregoing section of this report requires a fundamental rethink of how cities should address their existing and future challenges. Such a reconsideration leads quickly to one inescapable realization: cities will not be able to securitize their way out of the array of interlocking crises facing them; they need to find alternative approaches.

Responses to turbulence and insecurity in cities frequently involve securitized, or coercive, approaches. Labeling them as "anti-crime," "anti-terror," or "zero tolerance" policies—or simply as "emergencies"—politicians tend to transfer the responsibility for dealing with turbulence and insecurity to law enforcement or military communities.[40] In many cases, such responses tend to contribute to spirals of lethal violence, generating more insecurity rather than less. Globally, two-thirds of the 560,000 victims of lethal violence in 2016 were killed outside the bounds of interstate and civil wars. Most died in cities, and these patterns were seen in both developed and emerging economies.[41] Violent criminality and heavy-handed responses not only kill people; they also have significant psychological consequences. Many violence-affected populations in US cities, for instance, suffer rates of post-traumatic stress disorder that are comparable to those experienced by war veterans.[42]

Despite the destructive impact of coercive law enforcement and counterterrorism operations in many cities, they have lost none of their appeal for politicians who wish to demonstrate a proactive agenda against "crime" or "terror." Against the backdrop of rising autocratic governance, strongman leaders reinforce such attitudes at city as well as national levels.[43] For instance, in some Latin American states, politicians have used international support for counterterrorism approaches to strengthen militarized approaches to fighting crime.[44] Many law enforcement analysts and practitioners are well aware of the risks of the exclusive reliance on coercive law enforcement in responding to crime. Simplistic and exclusion-oriented approaches can undermine the legitimacy of law enforcement agencies and reduce the morale of the many officers who joined the service to provide just and fair policing. Some security actors also see that conflict and violence in their cities have become more complex and that the solutions lie beyond their own capabilities.[45]

The need to go beyond law-and-order approaches is underscored when considering the coming climate-induced crises that cities will have to deal with. The multidimensional nature of climate impact means that effective responses are beyond the purview of any single department and that relying on one specific approach—such as using coercive policing to establish law and order—will produce limited results at best. Climate change impact in cities therefore calls for a diversification in the response to urban insecurity and in the instruments used to tackle it. Peacebuilding circles have approached this challenge by describing cities as sick patients that have received too many antibiotics. Seeing cities' deteriorating health, some doctors insist on the application of even more powerful antibiotics. In contrast, others advocate for the use of natural remedies or lifestyle changes to promote healing, measures that are "prescribed to strengthen the immune system from within,



Mayor of Mexico City Miguel Ángel Mancera (left) speaks with Paris mayor Anne Hidalgo and Rio de Janeiro mayor Eduardo Paes as they arrive for the opening ceremony of the C40 Mayors Summit in Mexico City, on November 30, 2016. The summit focused on climate action and inclusive urban growth. (Photo by Rebecca Blackwell/AP)

and this takes time and commitment. Antibiotics, on the other hand, are used when the system is too weak and severe symptoms need to be addressed before healing can take place. Both are sometimes needed, but the continuous use of antibiotics creates dependency and can harm the body."[46]

This analogy is apt to characterize the application of coercive law enforcement that intends to act like antibiotics—or a baton: an exclusive reliance on security approaches harms the city without offering it the opportunity to heal itself. Yet, deployed in the right dosage at the right time, they can reinforce the effect of other measures intended to help cities heal.

At the heart of the contention that alternatives to security approaches are needed lies the recognition of their fundamental assumptions. Security approaches build on distance, separation, and enmity. They seek to expand spatial distance to a source of threat or to build separations—such as walls or fences—for protective purposes. They also assume that security means security from an "enemy." An alternative approach emphasizes the principles of proximity, connectedness, and trust, because only by being close to and linked to a source or threat of insecurity can one build a sense of security and engage with any misperceptions early to assure a peaceful coexistence. In rapidly growing cities, of course, propinquity is a defining feature of life and a characteristic to embrace rather than suppress when seeking solutions to problems such as insecurity, poverty, and climate change. Exploring alternatives to security approaches, therefore, means expanding the strategic toolbox based on the attributes of proximity, connectedness, and trust, all of which are fundamental elements of peacebuilding practice.

Peacebuilding Practice in Perspective

This report proposes a holistic understanding of peacebuilding and emphasizes its foundations in pragmatism that goes beyond achieving either of the two currently dominant views about peace: "inclusive peace" (also referred to as "liberal peace") and "exclusive peace." The holistic framework proposed in this report takes peacebuilding practice outside these two understandings and connects to the diversity of this field of practice focused on a peace that is possible to construct in a specific location in a defined time frame, rather than a normative, aspirational peace that remains elusive. This practice involves the use of dialogue, trust-building, and consensus-seeking processes to transform, resolve, or manage conflict through nonviolent means.[47] For the climate change community, this approach may well be unfamiliar, but it is entirely relevant to that community's practice insofar as it addresses situations whose management require important trade-offs.

Over the last three decades, considerable attention has been paid to the international dimension of peacebuilding practice, especially in its institutionalized form undertaken by the United Nations. This international practice has been dominated by assumptions that set countries on the path toward the achievement of an *inclusive peace*, which entails the pursuit of order, prosperity, and political participation at the same time. The United Nations and other international actors, such as the European Union, have concentrated their efforts on ending armed conflict by reaching peace agreements that are then—in theory at least—implemented through a cocktail of peacekeeping operations and statebuilding and peacebuilding programs.[48] Such international assistance has become guided by the aim of establishing a pathway toward an inclusive peace and focuses on a set of functional components such as constitutions, elections, institutions, and reconciliation mechanisms. Many peace agreements over the last three decades have defined the terms for the trajectory of a postconflict transition and looked to the international community to provide the requisite support to implement them.

Yet academia and practitioners have increasingly pointed to the dysfunctional nature of international inclusive peacebuilding. These critiques have exposed the grandiose and unrealistic ambitions of peacebuilding that seeks to operate on a national or regional scale, often with conflict still raging and effective governance impossible, but lacks the resources and capacities to accomplish its goals. The academic literature also points to a pushback against the type of peacebuilding that is directed by external interveners that are projecting a certain normative agenda on other countries. Many states and societal actors in the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and Latin America are willing to challenge the often paternalistic approaches of "outsiders"—in the form of foreign donors, international organizations, and international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)—attempting to control the peacebuilding dynamics on the ground. These observations illustrate a disconnection between peacebuilding at the grassroots level and the peacebuilding narratives and programs of international organizations and many bilateral donors.[49]

Such pushback has contributed to the development of practices that aim to achieve a more *exclusive peace*, which prioritizes the establishment of order and prosperity

Pragmatic peacebuilding focuses on "what is possible in the shorter term and takes a step back from the high ambitions" to establish order, prosperity, and participation all at once through national-level programming.

but does not require or encourage political participation. Exclusive peacebuilding is a form of conflict management favored by authoritarian state and nonstate actors and is associated with the growing phenomena of one-party states that are providing benefits for a specific group and organized through a dominant political party.[50] Within an increasingly multipolar global order, and amid the multiplication of systems of governance away from democracies, forms of exclusive peacebuilding have become more prominent. For instance, China has advanced its own notion of international peacebuilding under the label "developmental peace," which "prioritizes economic development without introducing change to the local government."[51] Inadvertently or otherwise, Western countries have also shaped the trend toward more exclusive peace by prioritizing the achievement of order through counterterrorism policies that have elevated the importance of elite-focused dealmaking for stabilization.[52]

The form of peacebuilding that can be most useful to the climate change community is neither of the forms just described. Instead, that community can expand its strategic toolbox for managing climate-related stresses in cities by drawing on a more pragmatic brand of peacebuilding. The reason for the recourse to pragmatism is that climate change adaptation in cities will require a willingness and ability to understand and work within the city's full spectrum of political complexity. In response to this complexity, pragmatic peacebuilding emphasizes that "the predominant, state-centric norms [of peacebuilding] are insufficient as guides for international actors" and, in turn, underlines the importance of rethinking the mechanisms and modalities for the co-creation or co-production of more peaceful cities. As an approach, pragmatic peacebuilding represents "constructive and iterative engagement with 'what is' in terms of actors that challenge or complement the sovereignty and monopolies of the state." Pragmatic peacebuilding focuses on "what is possible in the shorter term and takes a step back from the high ambitions" to establish order, prosperity, and participation all at once through national-level programming.[53]

Lessons from Working within Hybrid Political Orders

In the face of the coming wave of change due to climate impact in cities, advancing actionable responses is vital, and the starting point for doing that is to be able to engage in the urban reality *as it is*. Unfortunately, the climate change community has tended to focus on highly government- and institution-centric approaches and on how they should ideally work to advance climate change adaptation, rather than on understanding governance systems as they actually exist, including the full range of their imperfections. The climate change community can draw on the experience of pragmatic peacebuilding. A starting point for tackling the challenges of urban complexity is to better understand the lessons from working within hybrid political orders, as this section explains.

Understanding the complexity in cities is at the heart of the political economy of urban conflict.[54] With its origins in the study of interstate and civil wars, the evolution of this new subfield in political economy research reflects how analysts are adapting to the changing nature of violence and conflict.[55] This scholarship highlights the various nonstate forms of order and governance in conflict-affected and fragile states and draws attention to how certain state functions are performed by nonstate actors—which can range from gangs to private networks, local militias, guerrilla armies, and customary authorities—leaving countries splintered into different zones of autonomy.[56] The actors controlling these zones are likely to create their own problems, but "partly due to their success in providing security, these substate groups often become the most legitimate political authority in areas that they control."[57]

The term "hybrid political orders" has become a common conceptualization to describe this phenomenon. In such orders,

> diverse and competing claims to power and logics of order co-exist, overlap, and intertwine, namely the logic of the "formal" state, of the "informal" societal order, and of globalization and associated fragmentation. . . . In such an environment, the "state" does not have a privileged position as the political framework that provides security, welfare and representation; it has to share authority, legitimacy, and capacity with other structures.[58]

Hybrid political orders emphasize that the Weberian state is just one of many forms of structuring order in a specific territory. The 2011 OECD *Policy Guidance on Supporting Statebuilding in Situations of Conflict and Fragility* underlines that "the majority of states in the global South can . . . be described as hybrid political orders."[59] In the years since this guidance was issued, hybrid political orders have become more common in developed, conflict-affected, and fragile states.

The reality of hybrid political orders is uncomfortable for governments. This is because they emphasize the gap between the de jure sovereignty of the state and the de facto governance by a variety of nonstate power holders at the subnational level. In this way, hybrid political orders focus less on how formal governance by state institutions *should be* and instead emphasize the characteristics of governance systems *as they are*.[60] According to this perspective, the state is not the only provider of security, welfare, and representation; multiple actors

might provide authority, order, and administrative capacity, including transnational networks, strongmen, and traditional institutions. These entities may sometimes compete with one another for the control of a particular segment of the population or patch of territory, but they also may permeate one another through webs of relationships, thereby creating "a different and genuine political order."[61]

Some development assistance circles have started to recognize the importance of hybrid political orders because of the dismal record of statebuilding efforts over the past two decades. "The basic failure" of the statebuilding model in practice has been characterized as "the widespread illusion that state capacity and public organisations can be built by policy prescription from outside or by policy dialogue. . . . State institutions in reality develop on the basis of pressures to respond to demand for governance, of pressures from below as well as from above."[62] The OECD's statebuilding guidance underlines that "the state" is much broader than "the government" and includes "the informal rules, shared understandings and rooted habits that shape political interaction and conduct, and that are at the heart of every political system."[63] Thus, external interveners—be they development agencies, NGOs, investors, peacebuilders, or climate change activists—need to grapple with the de facto political order in the particular substate localities in which they operate. A mining sector manager working in Mongolia made this point bluntly: "While a legal framework must be negotiated with the national government, it is important not to confuse that with the agreement required from directly affected communities and their leaders. You should assume that customary law takes over 15 kilometres outside the capital and act accordingly."[64]

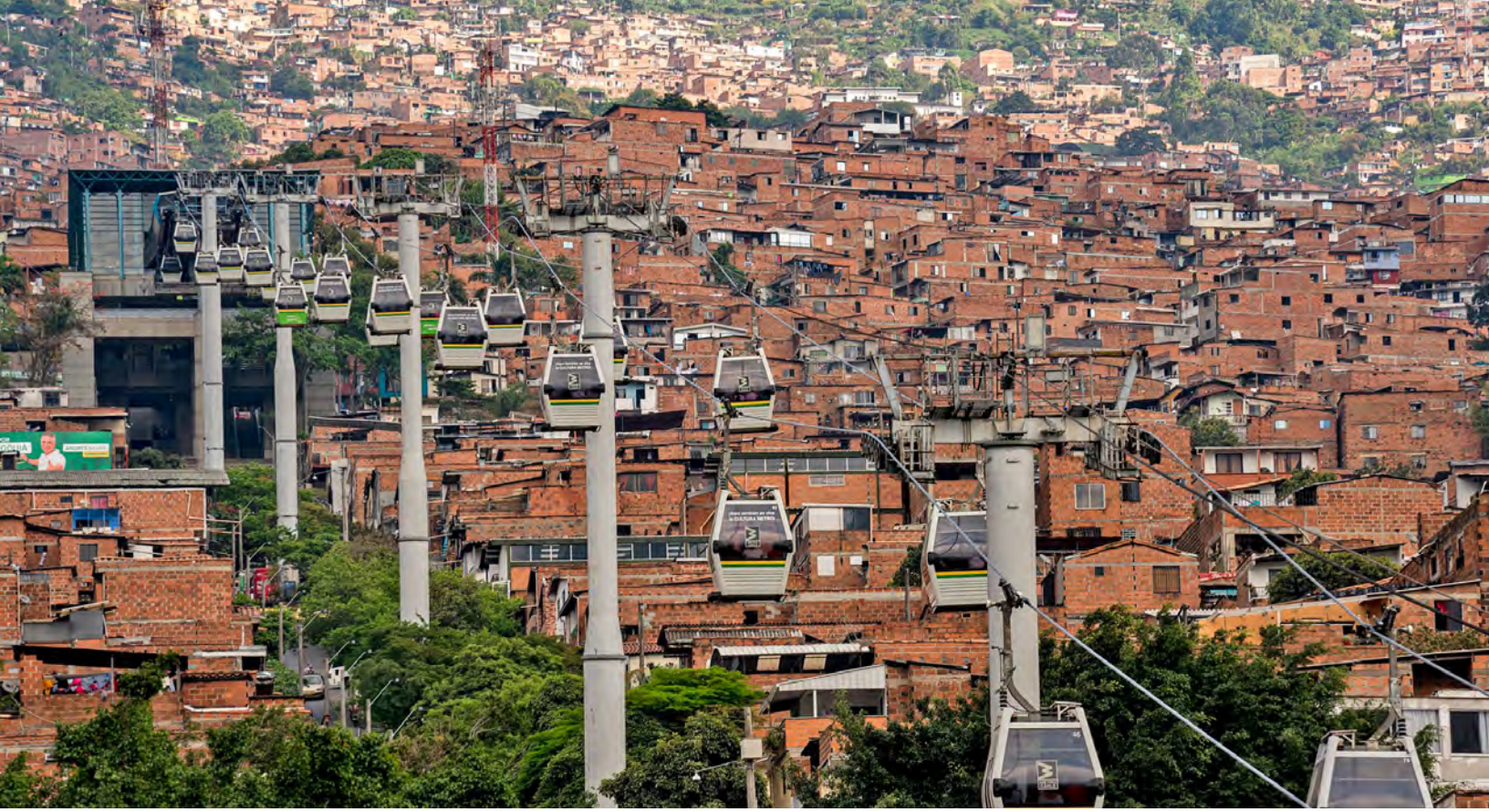
Furthermore, studies of statebuilding in countries such as Afghanistan or Iraq have shown that a state model without linkages to context, political economy, and people's lived experience can undermine reaching the goal of a postconflict peace.[65] Internationally promoted reforms of any kind change local political economies by threatening "the rent-creation that holds the society together and in many cases challenge the very logic on which the society is organised. Not surprisingly, the elite and many non-elites resist, sabotage, or subvert such reforms."[66] Over a decade after this research was published, the near collapse of Afghanistan in the summer of 2021 should finally have woken up international donors to the strategic necessity to diversify modalities for international assistance.

These examples illustrate how important it is to reflect on the de facto nature of governance in an operations context when developing adaptation programs to mitigate climate impact. While the literature on hybrid political orders has been primarily developed to help explain the de facto governance of conflict-affected and fragile states, it also offers a useful conceptual framework to understand de facto governance in cities—which will be the entry point for climate change adaptation measures that go beyond government- or institution-centered cooperation modalities. Cities become hybrid when multiple actors contest power and the control of territory and economic spaces. Under such circumstances, where city authorities cannot manage urban politics and "meet growing urban needs," armed groups often appropriate functions of local authorities.[67] This appropriation creates parallel processes within the space of fragmented sovereignty in cities. The hybrid and fragmented nature of cities "is not destroyed, it is disputed, doubted, and shared with other violent actors."[68]

Conflict zones in the Middle East and North Africa highlight the link between cities, control over territory and populations, and access to resources.[69] Research on so-called urban resources describes "sources of income for armed groups linked to the agglomeration of people and the scarcity of essential goods and services . . . resulting from inefficient urban governance" by the officially recognized municipal authorities.[70] These resources involve sources of income that can be leveraged through violence or

coercion in the areas under the control of local militias. These include, for instance, revenue from extortion of local businesses, charges for security services, and rents from housing or land use. Therefore, militias or insurgents focus on controlling urban zones that have limited state presence but are densely inhabited. Urban resources are an important lens through which to view the political economy of cities because armed actors have become a common sight in many cities and are therefore at the heart of the contestation of the urban hybrid political order. These actors exploit the changing geographies of cities experiencing influxes of voluntary and forced migration. The Somali cities of Mogadishu and Baidoa, for example, are mostly "settlements of displaced people," who "are embedded in varied practices of rent-seeking which contribute to the commercialization of land and housing and lead to further land speculations."[71]

In the quest to find workable approaches for climate change adaptation in hybrid political orders, pragmatic peacebuilding might offer solutions, which the next section explores in greater detail.



Medellín, Colombia, experienced an 80 percent drop in violence between 1991 and 2006 as it implemented multiple urban renewal initiatives. One was a cable car system, shown here on February 2, 2023, that significantly reduced commute times and cost from rural mountain towns. (Photo by Esteban Vanegas/New York Times)

Pragmatic Peacebuilding for Climate Change Adaptation in Cities

The systemic and large-scale impacts of climate change in urban areas, together with the political economy realities of cities just discussed, make a compelling argument for using a pragmatic peacebuilding approach for climate change adaptation in cities. In light of the projected realities of systemic breakdowns of more formal systems, this section of the report examines the utility of pragmatic peacebuilding for advancing climate change adaptation in the hybrid political orders of cities. In order to propose practical pathways for action, this section distills the learning from real-world, practical examples of urban peacebuilding and security practices in different parts of the world.[72]

These practices highlight the practical opportunities that derive from three lines of work: confronting complexity in cities with multidimensional programming, strengthening coordination instruments through infrastructures for peace and dialogue platforms, and finding ways to work within hybrid political orders by relying on trusted

individuals and spaces. Pragmatic peacebuilding in cities draws attention to approaches that work on the basis of connectedness, proximity, and trust between individuals, different segments of society, and divided urban spaces, and that thereby offer an alternative to security and law-and-order approaches.

MULTIDIMENSIONAL PROGRAMS: RESPONDING TO COMPLEXITY

Multidimensional approaches integrate instruments from different policy domains to better respond to complexity and thereby emphasize the importance of collaboration across sectors and institutions. These initiatives might not always be elaborate or neatly planned programs, but each brings together different actors to solve a problem in a way that builds social and political capital during the process of doing the work. That, in turn, will help solve other problems.[73]

The case for multidimensional approaches is based on the need to find responses to ever more complex social or political problems. Solving those problems requires a more collective impact generated through systems rather than a singular impact generated through institutions.[74] Such approaches are holistic and build on the available capacities in a given context that can contribute to climate change adaptation. In the field of violence reduction, multidimensional approaches have achieved significant success. The Colombian city of Medellín, for instance, achieved an 80 percent drop in violence from 1991 to 2006 by implementing various interventions in parallel, including pacification and community policing, improved access to basic services for marginalized communities, changes to the city's built environment, job creation for at-risk youth, promotion of social cohesion, and improved urban governance for security.[75] The result was a remarkable systemic transformation:

> A cable car system, linked to the modern and spotless metro, moves tens of thousands of hillside residents each day, dramatically cutting commuting times to the city center. Futuristic-looking libraries and schools have been set amid the makeshift homes of the underprivileged. And after decades of having to climb hundreds of stairs to their homes, residents of the Comuna 13 district can now ride an escalator 1,300 ft. up. It's not just transport: education, social programs and participatory budgets have all been leveraged to transform the lives of the most underprivileged residents in this city of 2.2 million.[76]

Medellín's case is exemplary for an approach that does not limit itself to a specific policy rationale but fuses different capabilities available in different constituencies into a multidimensional approach. When one looks to climate change adaptation practice, one can see an emerging experience base that works across similar lines. Two distinct cases are hallmark examples of multidimensional approaches that address and integrate climate action, economic opportunities, inequality, and violence: the Urban Agriculture Program of the Municipality of Rosario in Argentina and the Kibera Public Space Project in Nairobi, Kenya. These cases also demonstrate that climate adaptation and peacebuilding in cities produce better results when they create opportunities and reduce inequalities than when they rely on stand-alone security policies.

In the early 2000s, Rosario was suffering both from the effects of a large-scale economic crisis that sent a quarter of its population into unemployment and from the already visible consequences of climate change in the form of floods and wildfires. As a consequence, inequality and urban violence were on the rise. To tackle these intertwined crises, in 2002 the Municipality of Rosario launched the Urban Agriculture Program, which over time evolved from merely providing tools and training to enable local populations to cultivate organic produce into a multidimensional approach to adapt urban infrastructure to farming by repurposing underutilized or abandoned public and private land. The initiative today has around 300 urban farmers, of whom 65 percent are women, producing approximately 2,500 tons of fresh produce based on an "agroecological" approach, which refers to the application of

ecological concepts and principles in farming.[77] The project has clear social and gender dimensions: it includes and empowers marginalized urban dwellers, including women, thus reducing inequalities; it creates opportunities for income generation; and it brings multiple environmental benefits for climate adaptation by restoring degraded soils to absorb more water and reduce flooding risk. It also contributes to climate mitigation by making vegetables and fruits that once traveled more than 400 kilometers (about 250 miles) from rural areas to the city now available to final consumers only a short walk or bike ride away, reducing greenhouse gas emissions for transportation by 95 percent.[78]

Kibera is one of the largest informal settlements in the world and is home to some of the most vulnerable residents of Kenya's capital. Located in the margins of the Ngong River, the area is highly vulnerable to flooding, which is becoming more common and more destructive with climate change. By creating and managing new public spaces, the Kounkuey Design Initiative—a community development and design nonprofit organization—and Kibera's local communities have created the Kibera Public Space Project. The project takes a multidimensional approach, integrating awareness of and preparedness for floods while addressing structural issues of inequality and income generation. The initiative connected the building of physical infrastructure, such as the repurposing of dump sites and construction of new drainage and sanitation networks, with enhancing access to basic social services and business opportunities while adapting to climate change. As of 2021, the project had created 11 public spaces that benefit more than 125,000 residents, with the additional infrastructure projects reducing the risk of flooding for around 8,000 residents.[79]

These examples are a testament to the need to tackle core issues of unequal access to public services and economic opportunities alongside climate adaptation and mitigation, as well as illustrations of the benefits of such multidimensional approaches to communities.

COORDINATION AND COLLECTIVE ACTION: INFRASTRUCTURES FOR PEACE AND PLATFORMS

Multidimensional approaches require strong coordination mechanisms. This is because they combine professional capabilities from different sectors with little collaboration experience across institutions. Moreover, given the complex political nature of coordination, multidimensional approaches require a lot of political acumen to work. While they build on existing functions within the city across different professional communities, they require knowledge and ability to make connections across such functions in mutually supportive ways in order to help cities adapt for climate change. For cities with a chronic lack of capacities and cities under increasing stress due to recurring crises—natural disasters or armed conflicts, for instance—such integrated approaches might be hard to manage. There are, however, cost-effective coordination instruments.

In peacebuilding circles, "infrastructures for peace" are "a form of institutionalizing coordination across local, regional and national levels."[80] They draw inspiration from the experience of South Africa's National Peace Secretariat, established to supervise the implementation of the country's 1991 peace accord. The national secretariat established 11 regional and more than 260 local peace committees, uniting representatives from political organizations, trade unions, businesses, churches, police, and security forces. When possible, issues were managed locally, but management could be quickly escalated to another, higher level of influence if necessary. South Africa's infrastructure for peace was considered "a major breakthrough that helped to create the space for parties to engage in negotiations to decide the political future of South Africa."[81]

Infrastructures for peace can help weave a new political fabric, promote mutual understanding, build trust, solve problems, and prevent violence.[82] This political connectedness and the channels of communication

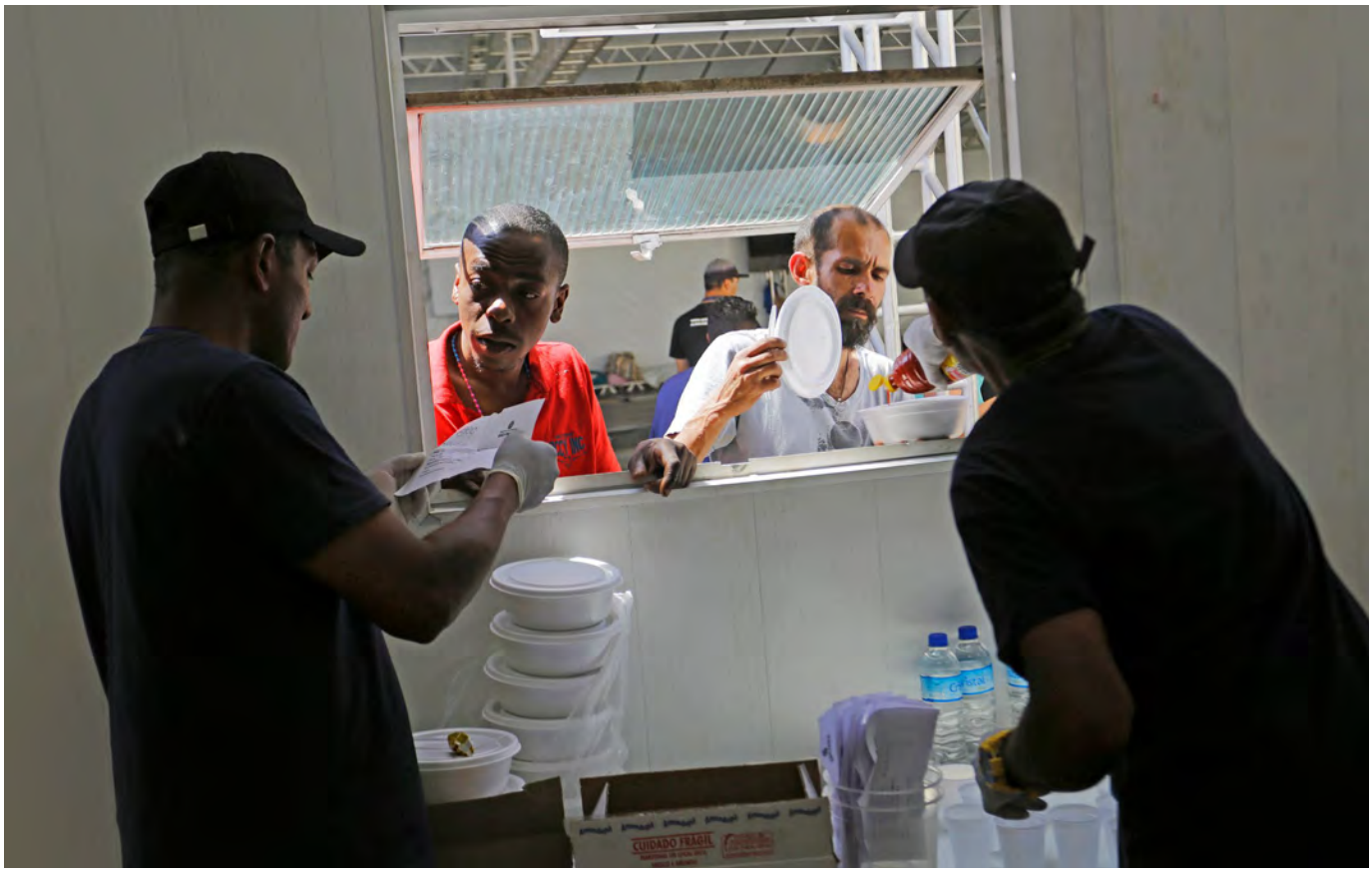
across hybrid political orders are key to finding effective responses to climate change impact in anticipatory terms (much like conflict prevention) and in terms of the response (operating rapidly after a flood or storm, much like first responders). Examples of infrastructures for peace include the National Reconciliation Commission in Nicaragua and the Policing Board in Northern Ireland. In these examples, representatives "from within the conflict settings who as individuals enjoy the trust and confidence of one side in the conflict but who as a team provide balance and equity" analyze conflict risk factors and agree on strategies for intervention.[83] A similar exercise could be envisioned in many settings with respect to climate change risk.

It is important to situate infrastructures for peace within the context of driving collective action processes that stand in contrast to institution- or government-centered approaches. Social innovation research has shown that support to a particular institution can be effective in creating an isolated impact, but it is of limited utility when it comes to generating broader impacts at scale in an interdependent world. Isolated impact approaches are oriented toward "finding and funding a solution embodied within a single organization, combined with the hope that the most effective organizations will grow or replicate to extend their impact more widely." This single organization can be a state, a government department or entity, or a specific private service provider. This research is important for climate change adaptation because climate impacts have systemic roots, and the research confirms that "no single organization is responsible for any major social problem, nor can any single organization cure it."[84]

If climate change adaptation aims to achieve systems change—something that, as noted above, is one of two strategic objectives in USAID's "Climate Strategy 2022–2030"—then institution-centered modes of action might be too limited in scope to attain that ambition, and collective action by multiple actors of various kinds will be required. And such action can be sustained only if its functional components are present. One line of research describes such components as including "a common agenda, shared measurement systems, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and backbone support organizations."[85] Another strand of research emphasizes the importance of shared purpose, open organizational designs, and a network strategy, as well as diplomatic competences that mediate between all actors involved and keep the process focused on achieving the shared purpose. Infrastructures for peace have their place in such collective action processes because they build on designs that include interface spaces (which enable communication between a diverse set of actors), architectures for participation (which regulate divisions of labor and who or what participates where and when in the process), and feedback loops (which nurture learning and identify needs for adjusting the process).[86]

A prospective practice to strengthen the coordination of multidimensional approaches builds on the model of "platforms," which are mechanisms—originally developed in the business world—to facilitate interaction between different capacities and sectors in cities. In business, platforms evolved from the performance of several well-known firms that have excelled in connecting different communities and facilitating transactions between them. Airbnb, Alibaba, eBay, Uber, and Upwork are examples of companies that have applied a platform model to their business strategies. These companies have in common that they facilitate matchmaking and the exchange of goods, services, or social currency, thereby enabling value creation for all participants.[87] However, platform approaches also have to be assessed in light of their tendency to foster power and market centralization, which raises important questions about transparency, the flow of information, and decision-making.[88]

In a similar way that business platforms are reshaping some sectors of industrial economies, platforms could facilitate the coordination of capacities for climate



People get meals on September 6, 2017, from a tent set up by the São Paulo mayor's office. Projects seeking to transform the city's open-air drug market, Cracolândia, depended on close coordination between local and national stakeholders. (Photo by Nelson Antoine/AP)

change adaptation. With their broad availability, human and digital platforms offer an important place for information sharing and for the mapping and activation of different capacities and competences across a city when they are most needed, building on an anticipatory logic or enabling rapid responses after natural disasters have occurred.

The case for strong coordination builds on the many experiences that illustrate what happens when coordination between different actors does not happen. One such experience is the transformation of an open-air illicit drug market—called Cracolândia—in the center of São Paulo. The programming focused on three axes: housing and relocation, work promotion and income generation, and health and social follow-up with a target group. These efforts built on a granular understanding of the territory and the organization of Cracolândia's drug economy. Key to the program's successes were, among other things, high-level political support from the mayor of São Paulo, who was seeking to solve problems and mediate conflicts as the city implemented a shift from a coercive to a public health and human rights–based drug policy. However, coordination across different administrations did not always work. Every heavy-handed security intervention conducted by the police undermined diagnostic and treatment plans of public health professionals and eroded the target population's trust in the program. This example also underlines the importance of astute public communication, which was key as a political strategy to protect the program from adversaries who favored coercive approaches against crime. This political fight fostered coordination and a cross-cutting

alliance involving academics, health and social workers, public defenders, prosecutors, and other groups. The mayor's office invested its political capital into the program because "the future of drug policy in the city was at stake." Ultimately, the program could not withstand the 2018 changes in local and national political leadership, which abandoned the project in favor of more coercive strategies.[89]

This case from São Paulo illustrates that local conflicts are embedded in larger conflict systems, and this is why work at the local level should be connected to relevant dynamics at the municipal, district, national, or international level.[90] Infrastructures for peace and platforms are a response to the need for vertical and horizontal connectedness and offer a rich body of experience that shows how to weave a political fabric at different levels to advance systemic change for climate change adaptation. What is true for peacebuilding is likely true for climate change adaptation: working only at the local level is insufficient to nurture systemic change, given the multiple interdependencies between a locality and its broader political, social, and natural environment.

URBAN HYBRID POLITICAL ORDERS: TRUSTED INDIVIDUALS AND SPACES

Earlier in this report, it was highlighted that many actors are grappling with the practical realities of working with hybrid political orders with programmatic interventions. Governmental donor agencies tend to work with recognized local political authorities. However, they have seen the limits of that approach now that governments at national and local levels are becoming more autocratic, and well-intended aid is being diverted by autocracies to consolidate their power, as has been documented with respect to humanitarian aid in Syria, for instance.[91]

The fact that working within hybrid political orders can be difficult for donor agencies does not mean that such engagement does not happen; it is merely led by a different set of actors that have fewer constraints for engagement. In peacebuilding circles, the trusted individuals leading such engagements are called "insider mediators"; among urban violence reduction professionals, they are called "interrupters" or "transpublics."[92] What these individuals have in common is that they often occupy a space in the middle between major local constituencies; they understand those constituencies' reasoning and histories, including the personal stories of key actors. They enjoy the trust and respect of the community, possess deep knowledge of a local conflict, and have a high level of legitimacy rooted in their social position, personality, and skills. They are frequently associated with churches, trade unions, or business councils. In other words, they are insiders (hence "insider mediators") or they can understand the many different sides and communicate across them (hence "transpublics"). Their special position, skills, and legitimacy allows these individuals to play key bridging roles that can help interrupt cascades of violence and enable a degree of coexistence (hence "interrupters").

A study of two neighborhoods in El Salvador's capital city, San Salvador showed how faith-based organizations (FBOs) operate in gang-controlled urban zones. In this case, two FBOs accepted a gang's control of the territory to gain access to key populations and developed a way of working that is relatively free from gang influences. The FBOs needed to be equidistant from the gang and law enforcement agencies and to accept an unwritten code not to disclose any information about the gang. From the perspectives of the gang, these attitudes translated into a perception of a basic human respect for gang members. In this way, FBOs could earn respect from the neighborhoods and structure a long-term presence and relationship with community members.[93]

Measures to advance climate change adaptation within a hybrid political order should similarly work across the whole spectrum of actors, including unconventional actors such as gangs or neighborhood militias, powerful families holding local economic monopolies, real estate and construction magnates, and private

military security firms. Engaging these mostly hard-to-reach actors requires finding access points. Facilitating this access is exactly where insider mediators play a crucial role. Constructing access to hard-to-reach and politically sensitive actors requires careful preparation, including developing a clear understanding of core partisan interests. It is also important to avoid using negative labels that are frequently attached to specific parties or groups—labels such as "gang," "criminal," or "militia."

Working within a hybrid political order also involves identifying, nurturing, and protecting trusted spaces, which is critical for pragmatic peacebuilding to grow from the bottom up. Such discreet efforts often grow from trusted spaces outward. An anthropologist's experience while conducting research in Nicaragua of an encounter between rival gangs in a market in the middle of Managua's gangland led to the realization that the market area was "nobody's territory." It was therefore not part of the turf war where rival gang members would shoot one another on sight. The market illustrates that even in the most violent places, there can be "spaces of exception" that enable coexistence, interaction, and relationship building.[94]

Establishing and working in trusted spaces require a granular understanding of local realities and, in particular, of the local agency for change. People living in dangerous places do not just wait for violence to stop or peace to arrive but go about shaping the life of their community on a daily basis. They are not just "beneficiaries" waiting for support from national or international actors. This insight from studies on urban violence is important for mobilizing climate action. As climate change impact increases and national and international climate change response mechanisms become overwhelmed, the local-level agency will be the frontline responder. Identifying who is the key driver for change processes within specific neighborhoods is not always easy for outsiders, but local insiders usually know who is best positioned to solve problems and prevent the worst, even in the most challenging settings.

Conclusion: Toward Urban Political Settlements

This report builds on the evidence base that climate change and other mega trends are converging to produce an era of radical uncertainty. Given our current knowledge about the future, the time for complacency is over, and anticipatory action is necessary. This concluding section of the report offers several overarching observations and one big idea to accelerate anticipatory action.

External interveners need to grapple with the de facto political realities in the particular substate localities in which they operate. To successfully scale up and speed up climate change adaptation, they need to be cognizant of the power of the informal and to find ways to constructively engage and work with it. In the first instance, this means finding the courage to step back and change the lens through which external interveners view the world, particularly in their operations environment.[95] It also means listening to actors who shape the politics of substate localities and taking their views seriously, even if they fall outside the bounds of the intervener's own rationality or assumptions. While the importance of political economy analysis is now widely recognized in development and peacebuilding circles, its significance should be elevated to a higher level of priority in strategy development, planning, and operations related to climate change adaptation. Political economy analysis can build a higher degree of groundedness in de facto realities and a common understanding for collaboration between climate and peacebuilding practitioners, and those working in other fields of practice. When it comes to deciphering the interests and power of key actors and identifying trade-offs and decision-making points for proactive climate change adaptation agendas in cities, political economy analysis is a useful compass with which to navigate the politics of hybrid political orders.

Elevating the importance of political economy analysis in climate action will require a shift in attitude for professionals who have until now focused heavily on government- and institution-centric approaches; henceforth, they should become more agile and work informally with de facto powers that are able to get things done politically in the hybrid political order of cities. Connecting to climate and peacebuilding practitioners in cities, therefore, is an important strategic contribution to speeding up and scaling up climate change adaptation in cities. Peacebuilders will highlight that embracing politics starts with understanding "the other" as well as the issues that divide one from and bring one together with this "other." They might also underline the importance of managing processes and of expertise in reaching compromise. Peacebuilders will also note that embracing politics means engaging directly with *all* actors that hold power to affect the outcome of a process, whatever the nature of these actors.

There are many ways in which the climate change community could make use of these observations. There is one idea that has the potential to make a big difference: the negotiation of urban political settlements as a political foundation for climate change adaptation in cities. Political settlements have been defined as "the formal and informal institutional arrangements through which resources (e.g., positions of power within government and informal institutions,

control over natural resources, trade, and licenses) are negotiated and distributed."[96] To respond to the complexity, urban political settlements could involve citywide processes that engage all political stakeholders relevant for city politics to define a common purpose and the political ground rules for managing the coming period of climate impact. These can include rules on the treatment of climate migrants, on the need to commit to dialogue and problem-solving and to refrain from coercion or violence, and on citywide approaches to limit the impact of new profiteers who stand to benefit from breakdowns in existing hybrid political systems and the absence of formal governance and services provision.

There is no longer any doubt that many cities will face significant disruption due to climate change. It is now time to build the political architectures in cities that can enable a more or less orderly approach to managing multiple crises and navigating systemic change. To initiate urban political settlements, it is important to jointly gather and analyze the current knowledge about climate impact in a specific city. Developing a shared understanding of the future, and of differences in views across constituencies, is an essential first step toward finding common purpose to address climate impact. By leveraging such peacebuilding practices, this report has set out a prospective area for operational innovation for climate change adaptation. There are many places to start the work, and those willing to lead the path from idea to action can draw on the research reviewed in this report as a foundation of practice to do so.

Notes

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The enormity of the challenge of adapting to climate change demands practical innovation. One potentially valuable step in this direction would be for the climate change community to leverage the insights and practices of peacebuilders, especially those peacebuilders accustomed to working in complex urban environments. This report suggests that the approach known as "pragmatic peacebuilding"—an approach that entails dealing with the de facto realities in specific contexts as a starting point for transformational processes—is particularly useful as a framework for climate action in cities. The report examines specific measures to activate pragmatic peacebuilding: developing multidimensional programs that respond to urban complexities; strengthening coordination and collective action; and working within urban hybrid political orders that build on the legitimacy of trusted individuals and spaces.

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