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BCRUP TAKES CENTRE STAGE AT WORLD URBAN FORUM 13



BCRUP high level event in progress during the WUF 13

Global leaders and urban stakeholders rally around climate resilience for vulnerable urban communities at the high-level Baku forum.

By John Small & Neema Njiru

The Building Climate Resilience with the Urban Poor (BCRUP) Programme captured global attention at the 13th Session of the World Urban Forum (WUF13) in Baku, Azerbaijan, where policymakers, development partners, urban experts, and community leaders convened to champion inclusive and climate-resilient cities.

Held at the Kenya Pavilion on May 22, 2026, the high-level session themed "From Engagement to Implementation" focused on mobilizing partnerships, investment, and practical action to strengthen resilience among vulnerable urban communities facing the growing impacts of climate change, disasters, and rapid urbanization.

The event brought together representatives from UN-Habitat, the African Union Commission (AUC), UNECA, governments, civil society organizations, and resilience practitioners from across Africa and beyond to exchange experiences, showcase community-driven solutions, and accelerate implementation of sustainable urban resilience initiatives.

The event focused on mobilizing resources and promoting collaborative action aimed at enhancing adaptive capacity for urban poor communities facing the adverse impacts of climate change, disasters, rapid urbanization, and socio-economic vulnerabilities.

Focus on Climate Resilience and Urban Inclusion

Discussions during the session emphasized that climate resilience in cities can only be achieved through people-centered and inclusive approaches that place vulnerable communities at the core of urban planning and development.



Presentations ongoing at the BCRUP high level event during WUF 13

Participants highlighted the growing challenges facing urban populations, particularly those living in informal

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settlements, including flooding, inadequate housing, poor infrastructure, unemployment, and limited access to basic services. Stakeholders noted that these challenges continue to expose low-income communities to heightened climate risks and economic insecurity.

The BCRUP Programme was recognized for promoting sustainable and locally driven resilience solutions through community engagement, institutional strengthening, capacity building, and climate-responsive urban interventions across participating countries.

Experiences Shared Across African Countries

The forum provided an important platform for participating countries to share experiences, lessons, and innovative practices in advancing resilience-building initiatives within urban areas.

Representatives from Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, and the Kingdom of Eswatini highlighted ongoing efforts aimed at improving urban governance, strengthening climate adaptation strategies, and empowering vulnerable communities through inclusive development approaches.

Presenting the BCRUP Programme's implementation journey, Dr. Robert Sangori called for accelerated action towards building climate-resilient cities through locally driven and community-centered solutions. He noted that while urbanization continues to expand across Africa, vulnerable populations living in informal settlements remain disproportionately exposed to climate-related shocks, disasters, and economic instability.



Dr. Robert Sangori, BCRUP Coordinator, delivering his presentation during WUF 13

Other notable contributors included Dr. Arch. Vincent Kitio from UN-Habitat, officials from the African Union Commission, UNECA representatives, country focal points, and urban development experts working on climate resilience and sustainable urbanization initiatives.

Strengthening Partnerships for Sustainable Cities

Stakeholders at the forum called for stronger partnerships in advancing inclusive and climate-resilient urban development.

The discussions aligned with the broader objectives of the World Urban Forum, which continues to serve as the world's leading global platform for dialogue, knowledge exchange, and action on sustainable urbanization and human settlements.

The participation of the BCRUP Programme at the forum reaffirmed the growing importance of locally driven and community-centered approaches in addressing the complex urban climate challenges facing cities across Africa and beyond.

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BCRUP Champions Climate Resilience at Africa Urban Forum II

By John Father Small

Building Climate Resilience with the Urban Poor (BCRUP) Programme played a leading role at the Africa Urban Forum II (AUF II), held from April 8–10, 2026 at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC) in Nairobi, Kenya. The continental forum brought together governments, development partners, urban practitioners, researchers, and civil society organizations under the theme *Housing for All* to discuss sustainable urban development across Africa.



Participants follow proceedings during a session at the Second Africa Urban Forum (AUF II) held at the Tsavo Ballroom, KICC, Nairobi.

As part of the official AUF II programme, BCRUP convened two strategic side events focused on strengthening climate resilience and mobilizing resources for vulnerable urban communities. The sessions attracted high-level participation from government representatives, development agencies, urban experts, and regional stakeholders committed to advancing inclusive and resilient cities.



BCRUP side event panelists during a group photo session at the AUF II, Nairobi.

The main side event, themed *"Bridging Evidence Gaps Towards Building Climate Resilience with the Urban Poor in Africa,"* focused on unlocking sustainable financing solutions and improving coordination mechanisms for urban resilience initiatives. Discussions emphasized the importance of integrated urban planning, collaboration between national and county governments, and leveraging climate finance to support communities most affected by climate change and rapid urbanization.

Speaking during the sessions, participants highlighted the urgent need for African cities to adopt innovative financing models and strengthen institutional capacities to address growing urban challenges. The forum also provided a platform for sharing knowledge, experiences, and best practices in climate adaptation and sustainable urban development.

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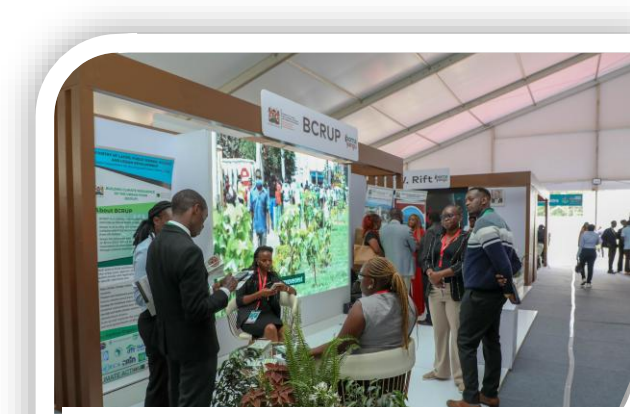
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"Access to decent and affordable housing is a fundamental component of human dignity and essential to building climate-resilient cities for the urban poor."

H.E Dr. William Samoei Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya.

In addition to the side events, BCRUP maintained an active presence throughout the forum through the BCRUP Pavilion, where delegates and participants engaged directly with the programme's initiatives, achievements, and impact stories from across the region. The pavilion showcased how BCRUP is supporting urban poor communities through evidence-based approaches, partnerships, and climate resilience interventions.



BCRUP Exibition booth during the AUF II

A key highlight of the forum was a bilateral engagement involving the Government of Botswana, the BCRUP Regional Coordinator, and the President of AfDAN/FLOCCA. Discussions centered on Botswana's integration into the BCRUP framework as a pathway for unlocking locally driven climate finance and strengthening resilience at the community level. The meeting concluded with plans for inter-ministerial consultations and steps towards formal onboarding into the regional programme.



Group photo after a bilateral meeting with the Botswana delegation during the AUF II

Throughout the three-day forum, BCRUP continued to position itself as a critical regional platform driving conversations and practical solutions on resilient urban futures in Africa. As AUF II concluded, stakeholders reaffirmed the importance of partnerships, sustainable financing, and inclusive urban policies in ensuring that no community is left behind in Africa's urban transformation agenda.

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BUILDING CLIMATE-RESILIENT CITIES STARTS WITH US

By MacJulian Peggy

As cities continue to grow, so do the challenges facing urban communities. Climate change is increasingly affecting urban areas through flooding, inadequate drainage systems, rising temperatures, food insecurity, and growing waste management concerns. Vulnerable communities, especially those living in informal settlements, often experience the greatest impacts.



This is why initiatives such as BCRUP (Building Climate Resilience with the Urban Poor) remain important in shaping sustainable and resilient urban futures.

BCRUP seeks to strengthen climate resilience among urban poor communities through sustainable planning, inclusive governance, and community-centered solutions.

Urban resilience is no longer a future conversation. It is a present necessity.

"Support the implementation of key flagship Urban Resilience Programmes (SURGe, AURP and BCRUP and other initiatives aimed at building climate resilience among Urban Communities across all African Cities and other urban areas."

H.E. Moses Vilakati, AUC Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment

Across many urban areas, climate-related disasters continue to expose weaknesses in infrastructure, housing, sanitation, and urban service delivery. Heavy rainfall causes flooding in residential areas, poor waste disposal blocks drainage systems, and prolonged heat affects health and productivity. These challenges directly affect livelihoods and quality of life for many urban residents.

However, resilience can be built through collective action.

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Communities, institutions, youth groups, policymakers, and development partners all have a role to play in creating safer, cleaner, and more sustainable cities. Proper waste management, environmental conservation, climate-sensitive urban planning, and public awareness are key steps toward reducing climate risks in urban areas.

Young people, in particular, have a unique opportunity to become champions of climate resilience through innovation, advocacy, and community engagement. By participating in clean-up activities, promoting sustainable living practices, and supporting environmental initiatives, youth can contribute significantly to building resilient urban communities.

As we move through May, let us continue promoting awareness of the importance of urban climate resilience and sustainable development. The future of our cities depends on the actions we take today.

Together, we can build cities that are inclusive, resilient, and prepared for the challenges of tomorrow.



"As Africa advances climate resilience and sustainable urban development, collective action and inclusive planning remain essential for building resilient communities across the continent."

H.E. Moses Vilakati, African Union Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment

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AFRICA PUSHES FOR CLIMATE-RESILIENT CITIES AS BCRUP GAINS CONTINENTAL MOMENTUM

Governments, financial institutions and development partners unite in Nairobi to accelerate urban resilience for vulnerable communities

By Neema Njiru

Leaders from across Africa gathered at the United Nations Office at Nairobi (for a high-level technical workshop aimed at accelerating the implementation of the Building Climate Resilience with the Urban Poor (BCRUP) initiative a continental programme designed to transform vulnerable urban settlements through climate-resilient investments.

Held as a side event to the Africa Forward Summit, the two-day workshop brought together National Designated Authorities (NDAs), Green Climate Fund (GCF) representatives, development partners, financial institutions and technical experts from participating African countries.

The workshop focused on reviewing GCF Secretariat comments, refining Country Window Logframes and strengthening institutional coordination frameworks to support climate adaptation efforts in rapidly growing urban centres across Africa.



Stakeholders after the successful BCRUP side event during the African Forward Summit 2025.

Senior government officials emphasized the urgency of transitioning the BCRUP initiative from strategic planning into practical implementation capable of delivering measurable resilience outcomes for vulnerable urban populations. During the opening session, Kenya's Acting Secretary for Urban and Metropolitan Development, Eng. Byron Buyu, stressed the need for interventions that go beyond technical compliance and directly improve the lives of communities exposed to climate risks.



Ongoing proceedings during the BCRUP side event.

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Representatives from UN-Habitat warned that global progress on slum reduction has regressed, reinforcing the urgency for stronger urban climate action and integrated resilience investments.

Kenya's Cabinet Secretary for Lands, Public Works, Housing and Urban Development, Hon. Alice Wahome, reaffirmed the Government of Kenya's commitment to the programme and announced that the initiative aims to mobilize USD 10 billion over the next decade, with the Green Climate Fund expected to contribute approximately USD 2.5 billion through grants and blended financing mechanisms.



Hon. Alice Wahome during the BCRUP side event proceedings at the African Forward Summit 2025.

The workshop further revealed growing continental support for the initiative, with approximately 15 countries having already issued No Objection Letters and eleven countries collectively committing nearly USD 10 million toward implementation activities.

Additional financing commitments were also announced during the sessions. Equity Bank pledged USD 12 million toward implementation support, while the Joint SDG Fund committed USD 3 million in catalytic financing to strengthen programme readiness and implementation.



Ongoing proceedings during the BCRUP side event.

Throughout the discussions, participating countries highlighted the importance of blended finance, institutional strengthening and development of bankable urban resilience projects capable of attracting private sector investment.

Countries including Uganda, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Burundi, Morocco, Eswatini and Guinea Conakry shared updates on progress toward aligning their country submissions with revised GCF requirements.

A major technical session focused on identifying vulnerable urban neighborhoods most exposed to climate risks such as flooding, infrastructure deficits, poverty concentration and livelihood vulnerability. The workshop emphasized the importance of data-driven

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urban vulnerability mapping and learning from previous informal settlement upgrading programmes across Africa.

Financial institutions including Equity Bank and Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB) expressed readiness to support implementation through catalytic financing, feasibility studies, debt financing and structured investment instruments aimed at scaling climate-resilient urban development.



BCRUP side event proceedings during the African Forward Summit in UN Nairobi, Kenya

Development partners also reaffirmed their support for the initiative. UN-Habitat emphasized the importance of community-led implementation approaches and local government engagement, while the Joint SDG Fund announced additional technical support through an upcoming design workshop in Bilbao, Spain.

The workshop concluded with participating countries agreeing to finalize revised Country Window Logframes and updated No Objection Letters within two weeks to accelerate approval of the Regional Readiness Project by the Green Climate Fund.



Participants further agreed that BCRUP would be strategically profiled during upcoming global platforms including the World Urban Forum, UN General Assembly (UNGA 81), COP31 and the African Green Investment Forum in Nairobi to mobilize additional climate financing and position Africa as a leader in urban resilience innovation.

In the closing remarks, participants acknowledged that Africa contributes less than four percent of global greenhouse gas emissions yet remains among the regions most vulnerable to climate impacts including floods, droughts and urban displacement. The BCRUP initiative was described as a transformative continental platform capable of protecting vulnerable urban communities while promoting inclusive and sustainable urban development across Africa.

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Resilient Together Pictorials



BCRUP was featured at the Kenya Stand during WUF13, highlighting Kenya's commitment to climate-resilient urban development.



BCRUP side event proceedings during the African Forward Summit in UN Nairobi, Kenya



Public engagement during the BCRUP side event panel discussion.



The BCRUP team sensitizing AUF II attendees at the exhibition booth.



Stakeholders during an ongoing BCRUP session at the Kenya Pavilion, WUF13.



Engagement during the BCRUP side event at the African Forward Summit 2025.