# *Special Session on:*

# *Cities at Risk in Developing Countries: Urban Growth, Climate, and Natural Shocks in Latin America*

15TH RSAI WORLD CONGRESS
JUNE 9th-12th
2026
QUITO, ECUADOR

## Organizers

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## Purpose and Scope

Rapid urbanization in developing countries has increasingly taken place under conditions of high exposure to climate-related and natural hazards. In Latin America, cities frequently face floods, landslides, earthquakes, hurricanes, heatwaves, droughts, and other extreme events, often in contexts characterized by informal land use, infrastructure deficits, fiscal constraints, and deep socioeconomic inequalities. These factors shape how urban growth unfolds and how vulnerable populations experience and recover from environmental shocks.

This session focuses on urban growth dynamics in developing countries, with particular emphasis on Latin America. We invite contributions that analyze how climate and natural shocks interact with urban expansion, land markets, housing informality, and spatial inequality. Papers may examine both short-run disruptions and long-run development paths, highlighting how institutional capacity, governance, and historical development patterns influence adaptation and resilience.

Transportation systems are a central component of this discussion. In many developing-country cities, transport networks are highly exposed to environmental risks and play a critical role in access to jobs, education, health care, and emergency services. Relevant topics include climate-induced disruptions to road and public transit systems, impacts on commuting and labor market access, the resilience of informal and formal transport modes, and the role of transport infrastructure investment in reducing vulnerability and supporting post-disaster recovery.

Additional topics of interest include migration and displacement, residential sorting, informal settlements, infrastructure provision, local labor markets, public finance constraints, inequality and environmental justice, and the effectiveness of mitigation and adaptation policies in low- and middle-income settings. We particularly encourage empirical papers using spatial, panel, or quasi-experimental methods, as well as studies that combine administrative data, geospatial information, or remote sensing to analyze urban processes in data-constrained environments. By bringing together perspectives from regional science, urban economics, development economics, environmental economics, transportation economics, and disaster studies, this session aims to foster comparative insights on urban growth under risk and to highlight lessons from Latin America that are relevant for other developing regions.

SUBMIT AN ABSTRACT