

# Connected communities: Networks, collaborations and clusters as engines of local growth

Jul 8, 2025 | 9:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Puerta de Oro - Deep dive room 1 | Barranquilla, Colombia



## DESCRIPTION

Thriving local economies are often underpinned by a dense web of relationships—between and among businesses, governments, education institutes, community actors, and other institutions. Complementing strong economic fundamentals, these relationships form part of the local “soft infrastructure” that can help places build resilience and navigate change. This session will explore different forms of local networks and collaborations, from industrial districts to clusters to co-operative associations, starting from the nearly 400 initiatives registered in ECLAC Platform.

Drawing on more than a decade of experience – the OECD Summer School for Local Development in Latin America, on the ECLAC activity for boosting interaction among initiative of productive articulation in Latin America, and the ICA Americas initiatives for the 2025 UN Year for Cooperatives, the session will focus on how international learnings can inform local development efforts in their region.

## AGENDA

<i>Moderator</i>	<i>Paolo Rosso</i> , International Senior Consultant
<b>09:30-09:35</b>	<b>Welcome and opening of the Event</b>
<b>09:35-09:55</b>	Keynote Speech: <b>Networking and collaboration for local development in LAC</b> <i>Mario Enrique Vargas Sáenz</i> , Director of Valioso Corporación, Colombia
<b>09:55-10:40</b>	<b>Regional Stakeholder Engagement for Greater Local Impact</b> (Engaging with informal sector, Community-based development, PPPs) <i>Jorge Hernando Leal Ussa</i> , representative of Confecop Colombia, Cooperativas de las Américas  <b>Knowledge Sharing &amp; Capacity Building</b> (Entrepreneurial Ecosystems, Education-Industry Linkages, Local community learning platforms)   OECD <i>Alessandra Proto</i> , Head of the OECD Trento Centre for Local Development  <b>Consolidating Participatory Governance Experience for Sustainable and Inclusive Productive Development</b> (Institutionalisation, Internationalisation and Governance)   CEPAL <i>Marco Dini</i> , Economic Affairs Officer of the Division of Production, Productivity and Enterprise Development, ECLAC
<b>10:40-11:20</b>	<b>Fishbowl interactive session - Leveraging collaborative networks for local resilience</b> <i>Natalia Fenizi</i> , Trainer and Strategic Consultant  This interactive Fishbowl exercise will explore practical insights into how local collaboration and networking enhance economic resilience and development. It will actively engage participants by showcasing real-world examples and inviting dynamic discussions.  The session aims to share experiences in managing local networks and collaborative initiatives and to explore innovative models and strategies of industrial districts, clusters and co-operative associations.
<b>11:20-11:30</b>	Reflections and final conclusions

