



Delft University of Technology

The New Urban Normal: Urban Sustainability and Resilience Post COVID-19
TU Delft Urban Thinkers Campus June/July 2020

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The New Urban Normal

Urban Sustainability and Resilience Post COVID-19

TU Delft Urban Thinkers Campus
June/July 2020

Edited by Rocco, Newton, Vergara, Pessoa & Van der Watt

Colophon

The New Urban Normal: Urban Sustainability and Resilience Post-COVID-19

A three-part digital Urban Thinkers Campus organised by
the TU Delft Global Urban Lab
the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment

Delft, The Netherlands, June-July 2020

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globalurbanlab.org



Contents

The Urban Thinkers Campus

The New Urban Normal p.5

Speakers p. 6

Organisation team p. 9

Part #1: Perspectives from the Global South p.10

Pitches p. 14

Roundtable Discussion p.22

Recommendations p. 24

Part #2: The Green New Deal p. 28

Pitches p.32

Roundtable Discussion p.44

Recommendations p. 47

Part #3: Housing in Africa p.50

Pitches p.54

Recommendations p.70

UTC in numbers p.72

Global Urban Lab p.73

The Urban Thinkers Campus

The Urban Thinkers Campus model is an initiative of the World Urban Campaign (WUC) and UN-Habitat conceived as an open space for critical exchange between urban researchers, professionals, and decision-makers who believe that urbanisation is an opportunity and can lead to positive change. It is also intended as a platform to build consensus between partners engaged in addressing urbanization challenges and proposing solutions to urban futures.

WUC is an advocacy and partnership platform to raise awareness about positive urban change in order to achieve green, productive, safe, healthy, inclusive, and well planned cities. Its goal is to place the New Urban Agenda at the highest level in development policies. It is coordinated by UN-Habitat and driven by a large number of committed partners - currently 180 partners and networks - from around the world.

This UTC would not have been possible without the committed support of the World Urban Campaign, UN-Habitat and the Delft Global Initiative.

This is the second Urban Thinkers Campus hosted by TU Delft. The first took place at the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment between 7 and 9 June 2017. The three day event was based on Higher Education for the New Urban Agenda, "EDUCATION FOR THE CITY WE NEED: HOW DO WE TEACH THE NEW URBAN AGENDA?".

We believe that universities have a special role in preparing young professional and critical citizens to face the challenge of making our cities sustainable, prosperous, fair and inclusive. But in order to do so, we are reaching out to stakeholders from the academic and educational worlds, as well as NGOs, companies and government agencies, to discuss how best to teach and learn issues related to and stemming from the New Urban Agenda.

You can read and download the report of the first edition here:

<https://utctudelft.files.wordpress.com/2018/04/utc-2017-exec-report.pdf>

EDUCATION FOR THE NEW URBAN AGENDA

The New Urban Normal

The COVID19 pandemic has exposed several systemic failures and injustices in the way cities are planned and designed around the world. It has also exposed the failings due to lack of planning in most places in the Global South. Careful, inclusive and participatory spatial planning is thought to greatly strengthen the capacity of societies to withstand systemic shocks, as testified by the New Urban Agenda (2016), the Pact of Amsterdam (2016) and the New Leipzig Charter (2020). Integrated affordable housing, for instance, has come to the top of the agenda once again, now propelled by the realisation that slum dwellers (a staggering 1 billion people around the world) and homeless people are particularly vulnerable to health crises and other societal shocks.

The pandemic has been saluted as an opportunity to implement far-reaching transformation of our societies towards sustainability and justice, but little signs of systemic change have actually surfaced. For example, several cities around the world claim they will overhaul public space, take space from private cars, and invest more on green spaces, bicycle paths and quality public mobility. But little has been said about addressing the structural causes of inequality. The champions of the circular economy salute the pandemic as a new dawn for more human-centred capitalism, for the abandonment of exploitation and unfair distribution, and a world where workers can find decent housing, health, work and leisure. But what is actually happening on the ground?

The Indian government has recently foregone all labour protection laws in favour of competitiveness and entrepreneurialism. In Latin America, workers are losing rights and social protection. In the United States, systemic racism has been exposed as the main driver for higher mortality rates among black citizens. The mayor of Louisville in the American state of Kentucky has declared racism a public health crisis. Is COVID19 the dawn of a new world, or the radicalisation of neoliberalism, described by Naomi Klein in her book “The Shock Doctrine”? The signs from the ground are not encouraging.

Despite the lack of public action in many places, or perhaps because of it, grassroots everywhere were mobilised to fight the pandemic as best as they could, with occasional

amazing results. But the actions of grassroots, powerful as they are, must be matched by public action and systemic change. And one of the tools for systemic change is fair and inclusive spatial planning that guarantees the fair distribution of benefits and burdens of development. As one of the participants of this event asserted: we cannot talk about reaching a “new normal”, when most of humanity has never known anything close to normalcy in their daily lives and in the way their cities are managed.

This UTC explores some of these issues by giving a platform to people with knowledge from the ground. It also discusses the many advances being made towards an inclusive green transition, through the European Green Deal and a growing activist movement in the UK.

This event was organised by GUL, the Global Urban Lab of the TU Delft University of Technology, a communication and action platform that brings visibility and articulation to TU Delft staff and students doing work on topics of urbanisation in the Global South.



Women washing clothes, Mumbai. Photo by Roberto Rocco.

Guest Speakers UTC PART #1



Mrudhula Koshy, NTNU, Norway

Mrudhula is a lecturer and doctoral researcher from India currently based at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim. Her research concerns planning for uncertainty in developmental contexts which face unexpected environmental crises due to climate change. In her capacity as an urban designer and planner, she worked at various urbanism offices in The Netherlands regarding long-term initiatives in energy landscapes, urban metabolism, post-fossil energy scenarios and multi-scalar design solutions for transitioning to renewable energy use, circular economy, productive cities and sustainable mobility infrastructure.



Higor Carvalho, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil

Higor is a Brazilian urban planner with master's degrees in Geography from the University Paris 1 Sorbonne and Urban Planning from the University of Sao Paulo, where he is currently a PhD candidate. He has worked as an advisor at the municipality of Sao Paulo and has academic and professional experiences in Latin America, Europe, Africa and Asia.



George Zaborski, Activist, Belarus

George is an Architect and Planner based in Minsk. George was one of the founders of the Minks Urban Platform, which has an active role in Minsk Urban Forum, a very inspirational academic event where we met a few year ago. George is also mentioned in the documentary "Made in BY" (BY being the abbreviation of Belarus). about the most creative minds of Belarus, where young creative entrepreneurs managed to thrive in a country where 80% of the economy is controlled by the government. Today he leads the Gearoge Zaborski studio. And we are happy to have him here and hear a bit about his experience and vision on the urban environment post-Covid-19.



Javier Ruiz-Tagle Vereno, PUC Chile

Javier graduated as an architect and obtained his master at the University of Chile and his PhD from the University of Illinois. His work focuses on themes of residential, housing policies, neighborhood effects, self-management in housing projects, among others. He is currently involved in four research projects where he accumulates the position of Assistant Professor, Institute of Urban and Territorial Studies (Pontifical Catholic University of Chile), Associate Researcher, Center for Sustainable Urban Development (CEDEUS), Principal Investigator, Research Group in Urban Marginality (NIMU).

Guest Speakers UTC PART #2



Sander Happaerts, EC DG Regio, Belgium

Sander (EC DG-Regio) is a policy analyst on sustainable growth at the European Commission's Directorate-General Regional and Urban Policy. He is responsible for environmental and climate issues and works with other Commission services to integrate environmental objectives into cohesion policy investments across the EU.



Robert Magowan, Policy analyst, Activist, UK

Robert writes on green politics and economics. He is formerly Policy Development Co-Coordinator for the Green Party of England and Wales, sits on the Core Group of Green House think tank and is an Activist with Green New Deal UK. He has a Master in Governance and Economics by the University of Leiden.



Julian Siravo, Common Wealth, UK

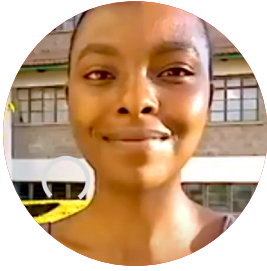
Julian is an Architect and Urban Designer working in the policy and think tank world. He coordinated the design and urban research work of the UK-based Think Tank Common Wealth, a think tank that focuses on developing forms of democratic ownership and transforming how the economy operates and for whom.



Costanza La Mantia, Consultant, Activist, Italy

Costanza is an Architect, Urbanist and Activist, currently the Technical Advisor to Rwanda Housing Authority and Rwandan Minister of Infrastructure, on behalf of the World Bank. She is a Former Researcher at Wits University in Johannesburg, and Former Senior Urban Planner at the UN-Habitat Urban Planning and Design Lab.

Guest Speakers UTC PART #3



Esther Karanja, student University of Kenya

Karanja is an architecture student at the Technical University of Kenya. Esther has a particular interest in the role of architecture and urban planning as a tool for social and economic progress in contemporary society.



Temitope Ogungbamila, NSIS Federation, Nigeria

Ogungbamila is a documentary producer, photographer, video artist, story teller, poet, motivational speaker and aspiring lawyer. She is a member of the Nigerian Slum / Informal Settlement Federation's media team. <https://nigerianfederation.wordpress.com>



ThankGod Dikio, NSIS Federation, Nigeria

Dikio has worked closely with waterfronts communities to provide access to justice for the urban poor, carried out monthly Better Parenting sessions with caregivers, and agitated on providing adolescents with HIV/AIDS prevention information. He is a member of the Nigerian Slum / Informal Settlement Federation's media team.



Caroline Skinner, Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing, SA

Skinner is a Senior Researcher at the African Centre for Cities at the University of Cape Town and Urban Policies Research Director for the global action-research-policy network Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO). For over 15 years, Skinner's work has interrogated the nature of the informal economy with a focus on informing advocacy processes and livelihood-centred policy and planning responses. She has published widely on the topic.



Julio D Dávila, DPU, the Bartlett, UK

Dávila is the director of the Bartlett's Development Planning Unit and is professor of Urban Policy and International Development. Julio is currently involved in debates with scholars and practitioners on the urban impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, with a view to furthering applied policy research. This arises from previous work, including: inter-disciplinary research on urban zoonotic diseases in Nairobi (Kenya); social and urban impacts of transport investments in Medellín and Barranquilla (Colombia), and in Nigerian cities; and the interactions between urban planning and health, as examined in, among others, a co-authored Lancet article.

Organisation team



Anja Van der Watt, UK

Anja is a final year masters student at TU Delft studying Architecture. She is interested in holistic and regenerative architectural practice.



Caroline Newton, Belgium

Caroline is an Architect, Urban Planner and political scientist. She is Associate Professor of Spatial Planning at TU Delft. Her work and research focus on the socio-spatial dimensions of design and critical spatial practices in Europe and the Global South.



Igor Tempels Pessoa, Brazil

Igor is a Postdoctoral Researcher in the department of Urbanism at the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment. He is an expert on participatory planning and design practices.



Luz Maria Vergara d'Alençon, Chile

Luz is a Postdoctoral researcher in the Department of Management in the Built Environment at TU Delft. She is an expert in housing management.



Roberto Rocco, Brazil

Roberto is an architect, urban planner and author. He works as Associate Professor of Spatial Planning at TU Delft. He is an expert in governance, sustainable development and socio-spatial justice. He is a consultant for the Union for the Mediterranean and one of the authors of the UfM Action Plan for Sustainable Urbanisation in the Mediterranean.

Wednesday 17th June 2020 | 18.00-19.00 (CET)

Part #1

Perspectives from the Global South



“Perspectives from the Global South” gave a voice to young scholars from the Global South giving an account on the far-reaching impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on their cities and regions, with a focus on innovative responses from civil society and governments. It aimed at discussing the underlying issues of urban development made explicit by the pandemic and to reflect on the long-term impacts of the pandemic, including the possibility to “build back better” while addressing other emergencies such as climate change, growing inequality, and democratic erosion.

Introductions & summaries

Caroline Newton (TU Delft)
Luz Maria Vergara (TU Delft)
Igor Pessoa (TU Delft)
Roberto Rocco (TU Delft)

Guest speakers

Higor Carvalho (Brazil)
PhD Candidate University of São Paulo, former advisor for the City of São Paulo.

Mrudhula Koshy (India)
Urbanist, PhD Candidate, Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU).

George Zaborki (Belarus)
Grassroots organizer and former member of the Belarusian Urban Forum.

Javier Ruiz-Tagle (Chile)
Assistant Professor, Institute of Urban and Territorial Studies, IEUT, Pontifical Catholic University of Chile.



Fishermen's Village in Mumbai, Photo by Roberto Rocco.



Pitches

Mrudhula Koshy, NTNU



Koshy focused on the successful response to COVID-19 by the State government of Kerala and discussed the main reasons for success. Some of the endogenous positive factors contributing to success were the urbanization patterns in the State: polycentric urbanization spread along the coast, with a series of middle- small sized cities. Religious harmony, high rates of literacy, strong tourism economy, revenues from international remittances, and a socially minded government were decisive factors. The communist government of the State operates in a democratic tradition and has stressed social sustainability and engagement, following the “Kerala model”, a series of reforms which also meant decentralization of the health care and investment in education. The minimum daily number of calories is guaranteed by the state government through distribution of rice for people below the poverty line. The government structure is decentralized with distinction between urban and rural areas. Koshy highlighted the “Kerala paradox”, in which there is social development without traditional economic growth.

Some of the challenges include climate change with sea level rise and high poverty rates. Specific responses to the pandemic included: vigorous testing, tracing of infected people, helping citizens to assess their own risk through communication campaigns, and massive information and communication campaigns that included visual aid and “humour”, as part of storytelling that citizens could relate to. Kerala gave special support for marginalized groups, with an abuse helpline and daily wages paid to informal labourers. There was recognition of institutional limitations, which led the state government to rely on both volunteers and prisoners produce a large number of masks.

The results were largely positive, with the State registering one of the lowest rates of infection and death by COVID-19 per capita in the world (20 deaths in mid-June among a population of 35 million), with Kerala Health Minister, KK Shailaja being praised as an emerging hero in times of pandemic.

Clear and culturally rooted communication strategy, societal mobilization and local community resourcefulness, socially focused government

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Citizens of Mumbai, Photo by Roberto Rocco.

Higor Carvalho, Universidade de São Paulo



Carvalho draws attention to the unique position of Brazil as the country with the second highest infection count in the world after the US (mid-June), with a prognosis to being the country with the highest number of infections and deaths in the upcoming months. Official numbers are underestimated, as the country has a very small rate of testing: only 0,6% of the population. Carvalho attributes the failure of the Brazilian response to the chaotic attitude of the Brazilian Federal government: “the crisis in Brazil is simultaneously a health crisis and a political crisis”.

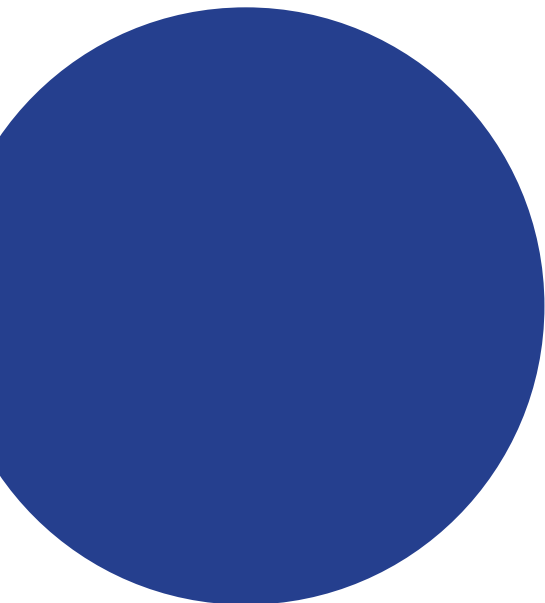
About the specific situation of São Paulo, a city with 11 million inhabitants within its administrative boundaries and around 22 million in its metropolitan area, Carvalho points out that there has never been a real lockdown in the city, but just a flexible quarantine, not respected by many citizens. This happened mostly because low-income working citizens were offered no alternatives or respite. Citizens therefore either risked staying at home and losing their jobs or facing the customarily overcrowded São Paulo transport system, where contamination risks were severe. Therefore, spatial and social segregation are at the center of this crisis. The number of infections is increasing and, besides the crowded public transportation, the impacts of the pandemic are also heightened by housing precarity, with 1.7 million citizens living in informal settlements (slums), as well as more than 24 thousand homeless people living in the streets and more than 80 thousand households in precarious rental housing.

Urban inequality and fragmentation increase the impact of the pandemic, uncoordinated responses from different levels of government result in ineffective and confusing responses on the ground. There is great capacity from local citizens to organize themselves and react.

As in other Latin American cities, the coronavirus was brought into the city by higher income citizens returning from business and holidays trips abroad. Because of that, the epidemic was first concentrated in well serviced central areas. However, as inhabitants in these areas were able to self-isolate and work from home, the greatest number of infections and deaths are now concentrated in areas where precarious housing is prevalent. Shockingly, evictions from citizens squatting private or public land has not stopped during the pandemic and just a day before the UTC, 900 families were evicted from an area they had previously lived in, with no alternative offered for safe sheltering, increasing the number of homeless in the city dramatically.

Lack of access to potable water is also an issue, with 6% of inhabitants without access to running water. Carvalho notes that this situation is not due to lack of good plans and spatial planning, but lack of implementation. In light of the dire situation in the city, citizen solidarity has been crucial to mitigate the effects of the epidemic. In favela Paraisopolis, a slum with 100.000 inhabitants, 420 volunteers (street presidents) were assigned the supervision of 50 households each, checking on possible infections and health emergencies, and in charge of contacting health services. The self-organization of slums dwellers comes in the wake of little response from the authorities.

Carvalho indicates the way from the current dystopia to a possible utopia: In the short term, an urban reform is urgent, i.e., implementing the existing urban and housing plans, transforming empty plots and buildings in central areas into social housing, promoting a diverse housing policy according to the diversity of housing needs, and overcoming the dichotomy between central and peripheral areas. Urban reform should entail a complete reinvention of urban governance, with the right to the city as a central element. For a post-pandemic scenario, Carvalho also invites us to consider the risks of new spatial regulations, which might be used as tools for hygienist policies or to promote new waves of gentrification, since the new urban normal might requires bigger and more open spaces which are not affordable to all.



George Zaborski,

Activist



Zaborski started his talk by reminding the audience about the specific political situation of Belarus, an authoritarian state with a neo-liberal economic orientation. The government of Belarus has completely ignored the pandemic, with unclear results, since the numbers are not transparent. But certainly, negative results in Minsk, a city that has grown from 1 million to 3 million inhabitants in the last few years. There is no real extreme poverty or large numbers of homeless people in the city, but a lot of people live in precarious situations and could easily move into poverty. Quarantine measures were often taken individually by companies or citizens self-quarantining.

One of the main vectors of disease spread is public transportation and a rethink of public transportation must be done to keep it viable and prevent flight to private cars after the pandemic. This rethink of public transport must be accompanied by a rethink of home/working arrangements: in Belarus working at home is not common and people have had to adapt their homes for work very quickly. New housing typologies with home/working arrangements must be sought.

Zaborski highlighted the work of grassroots working groups which in 10 days gathered more than 1000 people working on bottom-up initiatives, including the adaptation of snorkeling masks for use against COVID using three-D printed elements. This “sharing initiative” has found obstacles in copyrights use, which demands a rethink of economic organization in economies post-pandemic.

Grassroots organization in face of governmental inaction, rethink of spaces and mobility after the pandemic, more attention to work/home arrangements, a new economic scenario after the pandemic, where citizen’s initiatives must be supported.



Protest in Minsk, Belarus, 15 August 2020. Photo by Melirius - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=93172546>. (CC BY-SA 4.0)

Javier Ruiz-Tagle, PUC Chile



Ruiz-Tagle started his presentation by showing the street where he lives in Santiago, to show the start of the winter in the Southern Hemisphere and the high number of cars in the street. A chart displaying the evolution of infection rates in several countries shows Chile as one of the countries with highest infection rates per capita, with an accentuated ascendant curve, demonstrating the seriousness of the epidemic in the country. This is clear even in light of the fact that data is also highly politized and cannot be trusted. The number of infections is likely to be even higher and the amount of infections in Santiago Metropolitan area is growing exponentially.

The patterns of spreading of the disease are similar to other cities in Latin America: the upper-classes brought the virus home from China and other trips abroad and then the virus spread to poorer areas of the city. In upper-income neighborhoods, the infection rates decreased thanks to the ability of citizens to self-isolate and work from home; while low income citizens continued to spread the virus because they need to work and move around the city, bringing the virus to their own neighborhoods.

Ruiz-Tagle sees three main issues in Chile's response to the pandemic: first, institutional failure meant that the

Coordination is key, metropolitan governance must be coordinated to face emergencies, data and information must be reliable to enable coordinated action, monocentric metropolises suffer further from extended travel patterns, social inequity has a deleterious influence on how the virus spreads and is controlled, the neo-liberal minimal state does not work in such emergencies as strong public action is needed

quarantine efforts were not coordinated and there were only partial quarantines in a few municipalities [Greater Santiago includes the commune of Santiago proper and 40 other communes with independent administrations, with more than 7 million inhabitants in the metropolitan area]. While high-income citizens could shelter in place, the working class needs to travel large distances between their homes in the outskirts of the city and the few urban centers where employment is concentrated, helping spread the virus even further.

Contact tracing was initially proposed but never really worked. For Ruiz-Tagle, the second failure is a political failure, as the government would not accept accountability and transparency in data collection and dissemination. The strategies to verify cases, and count the number of infections and deaths were not coordinated, influencing the kind of information available to face the pandemic.

The third failure is an economic failure, as no social protection for the urban poor was initially offered and the national government even authorized employers to not pay the salaries of workers who were absent from work. Payments for basic services and loans were not cancelled or postponed. Some small grants were offered but very little relief to poorer workers actually reached them. In summary, the pandemic unveiled social/ urban inequality and exposed the dramatic lack of social responsibility from the Chilean national government, notoriously known for its adherence to neo-liberal economic principles.

All this took place in a context of a severe crisis of political credibility, since the 'social outbursts' of October 2019, when millions of Chileans took to the streets to protest the economic policies of the Chilean government. The scale and scope of those protests put into question neoliberal policies and the resulting growth in inequalities in the country, combined with a serious critique to Chilean political elites.

Roundtable Discussion

The audience asks **whether Kerala's development model is replicable in other Indian States, as Kerala is more dependent on industrial activity and more dependent on foreign remittances.**

Koshy: Not all aspects of the model depend on flow of remittances. The government has a responsibility to distribute resources in a way that benefits then public. This is embedded in the way the government is set up. If basic services are in place, response to the pandemics is more effective.

The audience asks **about the situation of women in poverty conditions in times of Coronavirus.**

Carvalho: the situation of vulnerable women has significantly worsened because of the pandemic, with an explosive rise in domestic violence in Brazil, because of house confinement.

Tagle: the situation of vulnerable women is worsened due to institutional negligence. If women dare to go to the police, they are not taken seriously or not believed. This is a widespread issue.

The audience asks **about the lack of reliable data. How to improve?**

Response: De-politization of data collection, analysis and dissemination is mentioned

The audience asks how is it possible to "flatten the curve" in Latin American cities with their structural problems and inequality?

Tagle: Some Latin American countries are doing very well: Uruguay, Costa Rica, Argentina is doing relatively well, while Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Peru are doing exceptionally badly, because of distrust in governments and the focus those governments have put on saving the economy, rather than saving people. The politicians are the economic elite and they do not really out for other groups. They are just now starting to realize that a health crisis is a danger for the economy, even when lockdown measures are shunned, because the health of workers is essential for a well-functioning economy.

Carvalho: In Brazil the political factor is crucial. The Federal government not only does not care about the health of people, but also use their deaths to promote the erosion of democracy and probably precipitate an auto-coup d'état. The federal government in Brazil is using the pandemics to promote a more authoritarian government, making use of necropolitics (the ability to decide to dies and who lives) as a political tool.

The audience asks: **how should governance strategies between different levels of planning entities change in order to overcome the current situation?**

Multi-level governance and coordination are mentioned as possible solutions.

The audience asks: **given the context of a global fight against climate change, and also how COVID has raised questions about public transportation, should mixed-use developments gain more attention, instead of focusing on individual transport modes?**

Rocco: Puts emphasis the necessity to couple the fights against the pandemic and climate change, and the need to build back better.

Zaborski: We must seek solutions balancing climate and health. Around the world, and also in Belarus, there are issues of zoonosis because of deforestation. While scientists are warning us about climate change, the perception of threat to life is not the same: the virus is a much more visible issue to people. How to make climate change a priority for politicians

Tagle: The idea of district organization fits into this discussion: semi-autonomous districts in the city would allow for better and more intelligent lockdowns without paralyzing whole cities at once.

Newton: The idea of district organization also fits in to the discussion of genius loci and ideas about the “village in the city”.

Carvalho: We need cities where less well-off citizens can live in the well-served central districts of their cities, without the need to make very long commutes between home and work, as is the case in most Latin American cities. Less segregated cities can have a beneficial effect on dealing with the pandemics.

The audience asks Koshy about **physical distancing in Kerala**.

Koshy: The responsibility of people to keep physical distancing was emphasized and people themselves played a role in not overusing public spaces. Public spaces and parks are less numerous in India, which is a huge problem.

Zaborski: the situation in Belarus is unique: most cafes and restaurants tried to stop their activities for a month but were forced to open again by the government. With the summer in the Northern Hemisphere, many young people are in the streets again without face masks. Zaborski ponders that it is not only about clear communication, but also about creating a positive image of those who are contributing to stop the spread of the virus by abiding to the rules.

Recommendations

i. National Governments

(i) Clear coordination and communication strategies, (ii) clear and transparent data collection strategies, including a strategy for dissemination of reliable data, (iii) avoidance of politicization of the response strategy, (iv) national governments must coordinate actions across governance levels and borders: multi-level governance of responses is highly desirable, as most countries have several levels of decision making and geographical administrative borders do not always match life-work and mobility systems, so trans-scalar and cross-administrative borders coordination is crucial. The idea of a minimum state seems laughable in the face of challenges like COVID-19 and the enormous coordinating efforts necessary to deter the pandemic, the enormous efforts in research and dissemination of information, and the funds necessary to sustain vulnerable populations through the pandemic. Further, freezes to rent, loan and mortgage payments and for evictions should be enforced. Most importantly, national governments must harness the knowledge, the creativity and the strength of grassroots movements and civil society organizations to mobilize society to act in coordination. Coordination in urban policy at the national level is greatly facilitated in countries where a National Urban Plan has been elaborated.

ii. Local Authorities

Coordination and clear communication seem to be key issues at all scales, including the local scale. Spatial planning has a special role in adapting cities to the reality of the pandemic and the realities that will emerge post-pandemic, including issues of mobility (public transportation, including slow modes of transportation), new housing typologies that allow for work at home, and polycentric cities that allow for employment in multiple parts of the city, potentially reducing trips. The idea of self-sufficient neighborhoods emerged as a strategy to contain other pandemics: if citizens were able to find employment, leisure, shopping and housing in the same neighborhood, and if neighborhoods were relatively self-sufficient, it would be possible to lock a neighborhood down without affecting all the others. As things stand, neighborhoods in the outskirts of great metropolises of the Global South lack services, employment, green areas, medical facilities and everything else that would make them livable and self-sufficient neighborhoods. The example of Kerala demonstrates there is great value in coordination at the local level, with explicit pro-poor policies and strategic actions like decentralization of health care and education. The high levels of literacy in Kerala have also proved critical for the success of communication strategies by the state government.

iii. Community Leaders

have a crucial role in organizing their fellow citizens for collective coordinated action. As the example of favela Paraisópolis in São Paulo demonstrates, simple organizational measures may have far reaching effects when similar pandemics strike. If anything, community leaders can also organize fellow citizens to put pressure on the authorities and prompt them to take action. The example of Belarus demonstrates there is great potential in innovative digital solutions that help citizens take action.



City of Sao Paulo. Photo by R. Rocco.



Social housing in Sao Paulo. Photo by R. Rocco.



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Wednesday 24th June 2020 | 18.00-19.00 (CET)

Part #2

The Green New Deal



This second UTC instalment gave a voice to a representative from the European Commission Directorate-General Regional and Urban Policy to introduce the newly launched European Green Deal, and to two organisers/activists working in two different UK-based think-tanks dealing with proposals for a UK New Green Deal.

Introductions & summaries

Roberto Rocco (TU Delft)

Luz Maria Vergara d'Alençon (TU Delft)

Igor Pessoa (TU Delft)

Caroline Newton (TU Delft)

Guest moderator

Costanza La Mantia (Italy)

Technical Advisor to Rwanda Housing Authority and Rwandan Minister of Infrastructure for the World Bank.

Guest speakers

Sander Happaerts (Belgium)

Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy for European Commission.

Robert Magowan (UK)

Activist with Green New Deal UK.

Julian Siravo (Italy/UK)

Urban and Design Strategist at Common-Wealth, UK (UK-based Think Tank which focusses on transformation six vital areas of life).



New developments in Mumbai. Photo by Roberto Rocco.



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Pitches

Sander Happaerts, EC DG-Regio



Sander kicked off his talk by explaining the role of DG Regio, the part of the European Commission that deals with regional and urban policy, most specifically with regional or investment policy. Cohesion Policy represents approximately 1/3 of the total EU budget and goes directly to member states in the form of investments in regions and cities. Sander is responsible for making the link between those investments and the EU's environmental and climate policy.

The Green Deal for Europe is one of the six policy priorities from the Von der Leyen presidency at the head of the EU. Its primary objective is to make Europe the first climate neutral continent by 2050. The Commission has initiated a number of strategies, proposals for new legislation and projects to make this climate neutrality a reality. A big part of this effort concerns energy transition. As an example, the EC will give incentives for a big wave of home renovations to make them more energy efficient, alongside a number of initiatives to boost renewable energy, like the hydrogen economy. Efforts are also being made towards a circular economy, with the adoption in March 2020 of a new and very ambitious Circular Economy Action Plan. Alongside these initiatives, there is also the ambition to achieve zero pollution. The Commission is now working towards a new action plan on air quality, noise pollution and soil quality, with the ambition of making the EU pollution-free. In May, the EC has adopted a new biodiversity strategy which aims to make 1/3 of the European territory protected. Moreover, this new action plan has several interesting elements for cities, such as a proposal for each city in the EU to adopt an urban greening plan.

Sander highlights the Biodiversity Strategy, the Farm to Fork Strategy, and the numerous initiatives related to mobility. All these policies must be implemented by member states. A

Integrated development, transition strategies, investment policy, multi-level governance, place-based development strategy, leave no-one behind.

couple of weeks before the UTC, the Commission adopted a [emergency] Recovery Plan for Europe. The EU budget works in 7-year cycles and the next cycle is supposed to begin in 2021 and the new budget proposal is still being discussed by member states. So, the [emergency] Recovery Plan basically responds to the COVID-19 crisis [in an immediate manner] and has three elements.

The first element is the immediate response to the crisis, including support for member states' labour markets and their health sectors. The idea is to fix the damage done by COVID-19, so even in current programs, more funds are being made available. The Commission sees how municipal budgets are going down because of the drop in tax collection from local businesses, affecting for example planned cycle paths or waste management projects. Sander highlights the fact that there are ample funds available, so the main question remains "how are we going to make the green transition happen"?

There is great territorial diversity in the EU. Not all regions in Europe are starting the sustainability transition on an equal footing. For instance, in rich regions of the EU, such as the Netherlands and Flanders in Belgium, a large amount of waste is recycled, while in many EU member states landfilling is still the prevalent. In order to achieve a circular economy in the continent, it is crucial to take this diversity into account. The environmental impacts of climate change are hitting the poorest the hardest. Very often, the poorest neighbourhoods have the highest levels of air and noise pollution. But this is also true at the European scale. Exposure to some pollutants overlaps to a significant extent with the less developed regions of the European Union. Sander reminds the audience about Cohesion Policy that goes principally to European regions that are less developed, so countries like the Netherlands receive little Cohesion Funds. As part of the European Green Deal, the Commission has proposed a new "Just Transition Fund". All these funds are part of Cohesion Policy and are negotiated with European Trading System ETS, European Commission Programs, member states and regions. Each country decides on which funds will be used to make changes on the ground. Cohesion Policy invests in everything ranging from research and innovation, digitalisation, the environment, climate

change adaptation, risk prevention, [and also] in schools and hospitals. But this investment is always place-based, in which regional investment encourages an integrated approach for development. But Cohesion Policy has specific elements for cities as well, including for example the Urban Agenda for the EU (the Pact of Amsterdam), which is the European response to the [UN-Habitat] New Urban Agenda. All this means that when the Commission negotiates programs with members states, it is basically the members states or their regions that decide on the projects to fund.

Sander gives the example of a project in the Netherlands, supported by the University of Twente, which has developed a new membrane that [has the ability to] remove certain pollutants from water. The Cohesion Policy investment helped commercialise this new project, so it can be scaled up. The second example is the Ruhr region in Germany, which is one of the oldest industrialised regions of Europe and where decades of cohesion policy investment has helped the region transition from an old deindustrialised region to a green metropolis.

There are [hundreds] of projects on urban greening, cycling networks, industrial site conversion, although this is not about individual projects but about integrated development. These are the elements of Cohesion Policy that support the Green Deal for Europe. In the Netherlands, for instance, this means support for projects related to water management. The policy is there to support innovation, but also to facilitate the phasing out of unsustainable practices, leaving no one behind. To leave no one behind is one of the key principles of the European Green Deal, and one of the key tasks of Cohesion Policy.



Favela Paraisópolis, Sao Paulo, Photo by Roberto Rocco.

Robert Magowan, Green New Deal UK



Robert kicks off his talk by reminding the audience the concept of Green New Deal is sometimes maligned by its opponents, and that he, Robert, speaking as an activist for Green New Deal (GND) UK, thinks it's important to get the concept right. All three words are important. It must be a "green" new deal, otherwise it's not made for the 21st Century. It must be a "new" deal, otherwise it is the same deal as before, the same terms of the agreement. Without the [word] "deal", it's just one party involved, and not multiple parties, which is crucial. Roberts speaks from a UK perspective and his presentation explains how GND UK goes about its work, but the Green New Deal must be internationally minded as a concept, for obvious reasons. There are recently launched campaigns called Green New Deal for Europe and Global Green New Deal. In the UK, the Green New Deal is an ambitious 10- year national action plan to transform the country's economy, securing a liveable climate and building a more just society. But looking from both a UK perspective and an international perspective, we are living a double crisis: a climate crisis and a crisis in inequality. These issues are huge and underpin much of the political debate around the world. For Robert, there is no time for "tinkering around the edges", as solutions must address those two crises.

Although some of the policies introduced by governments can be seen as "green policies", many fail to bring real benefits to people. That's what the Green New Deal tries to do, and this is also a principle Green New Deal UK tries to follow through its five principles for a GND. The first principle is to totally decarbonise the UK economy in a way that enhances the lives of ordinary people, workers and communities, in order to eliminate social and economic inequality.

The immediate priority is to reduce emissions fast. For Robert, if we had started reducing emission 10 or 20 years ago, we

Economic transformation, mobilisation of youth groups, labour and communities, democratisation, action plan for a carbon free economy, reorganisation of work.

could have stuck to [a reduction of] three percent a year and things might not have been so bad. Right now, we need a seven percent reduction every single year, globally, until 2050. So, rich nations with a history of [high emissions] need to play a bigger part [in climate action].

The second principle of the Green New Deal is to create millions of secure unionised jobs across the UK, guaranteeing healthy livelihoods for all workers. This speaks to the idea of a just transition. This isn't about fetishizing work. It is not about getting rid of people who are working in high-carbon industries. It is about finding a way to put work where it's needed. And there are many places where work is needed. It is also about making sure that work is good quality work, for example by increasing the role of unions and reducing work hours. That was part of the construction of the original Rooseveltian New Deal in the US.

The third principle is to transform our economy so that the financial system serves the needs of people. Our economy must work for everyone with greater democratic participation and accountability.

The fourth principle is to protect and restore vital habitats and carbon sinks, including forests and wild areas, and ensure the provision of clean water, air, green spaces and a healthy environment for all. [<https://ukscn.org/thegreen-new-deal/>] It might be easy when we're trying to transition to a low carbon economy to have the actual green dimension as an afterthought, but it can't be that way. We have these big infrastructure projects that are needed to transition. We need to support the creation of really good unionised jobs working to restore nature.

The fifth principle is to promote global justice by supporting all peoples and countries to decarbonise quickly and fairly, in line with timeframes set out by science. The Green New Deal will ensure the UK does its fair share to tackle climate breakdown – and more – to account for historic emissions and the exploitation of resources and communities, particularly those in the Global South. Originally, US President Roosevelt enacted a Green New Deal in response to the Great Depression. There are solid criticisms to that plan. But in principle, the rolling up of sleeves in government and the identifying of public goods, directing resources towards them are the critical

elements of that deal, and that's why we take inspiration from it. But there were many, many weaknesses in that plan, including institutional racism, the lack of democratization, and that fact that it was material or consumption driven in many ways. So, there is a large amount we can build on that plan, but we don't need to be tethered to it.

In 2008 the idea of a Green new Deal was put forward by economists and thinkers in the UK, including economist Anne Pettifor, Caroline Lucas from the Green party, Larry Eliot at The Guardian and many others, but it did not mobilise people powerfully enough to see it introduced. So, the credit has to go to Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (AOC) for causing a rising movement in the US. A group of activists who picked up the idea in put it front and centre in AOC's plan. That plan stirred imaginations in the UK, and people started to ask "what's our plan"? "where do we fit in all this"? For Green New Deal UK, it is about creating a broad-based coalition: organized youth, organized workers and organized communities in the UK. There has been a really inspiring Youth Movement around the world, like the Sunrise Movement in the US.

These movements have been really powerful in forcing people to take on responsibility as adults for what kind of future we will leave for future generations. People say that what actually matters is council politics [local politics], but hundreds of councils in the UK have declared emergencies and they can act on the climate emergency to make it real [for people]. These are going to be the local matters that people care about in the next 10 years. But how do we get there? We need immense political will. We need to create and sustain this political will.



Small entrepreneur in Kya-Sands, Johannesburg. Photo by Roberto Rocco.

Julian Siravo, Common-Wealth UK



Julian Siravo kicks off his talk by explaining that the Think Tank where he works, Common Wealth focuses on the future of ownership. It has only been around for about one year and Julian has been with them for around 6 months. One of the outputs of Common Wealth during that time was a Blueprint for a Green New Deal, which Julian will explain during his talk. Robert Magowan already explained the GND extensively. Julian highlights the idea that work is important and that reducing the work week is important, both for Common Wealth and for the other Think Tank Julian worked for. Julian goes on to outline the different research streams that Common Wealth sees as important for a Blueprint for a Green New Deal.

The first is about finance and investments, which we can Green Central banking. What it really means is a change in how public investment operates and a domestication of private finance. The second issue is ownership and institutions.

The means rethinking property arrangements, which is a particularly hot issue in the UK. This is about building a 21st century commons, reimagining the company form and really taking the economy from a place of extraction to a place of stewardship. The third issue is green internationalism, which is central issue for Common Wealth (CW), connecting to the talk by Robert Magowan. Partly because of Brexit, but also for other reasons, a Transatlantic connection is really important. CW has been doing a lot of research on just, sustainable and globally coordinated trade, international institutions that are geared towards the benefit of the Global South and a system that embeds solidarity over charity.

New forms of ownership, new forms of work, shorter working weeks, new spatial organisation of cities, creating the 21st century commons, spaces for community life, cities geared towards care, leisure and social life, rather than work and consumption.

Industrial strategies are another issue, along with green jobs and skills also mentioned by Robert Magowan, green industry, entrepreneurship and manufacturing, seeking to democratize innovation. CW has been looking at the works of IIPP, Mariana Mazzucato [Mariana Mazzucato (PhD) is Professor in the Economics of Innovation & Public Value at University College London (UCL), she is the Founding Director of the UCL Institute for Innovation & Public Purpose]. It is about making sure that innovation processes work for all of us. CW has also been working with ecological and social regeneration, and anything to do with biodiversity in nature restoration, with some good research going on on land restoration.

Julian's job has focused on how to visualize some of those projects. He admonishes the audience to go and check the Interactive Rewilding Projects Fund <https://rewildingeurope.com> Another issue is heath, social care and a wellbeing economy, in the intersection of which we find cities. The biggest piece of work Julian has worked on so far is the Green Deal City of 2030. <https://www.common-wealth.co.uk/interactive-digital-projects/green-new-deal> . Julian conceptualizes the Green New Deal City through rethinking scales, and through the concept of sharing. At what scale do we start [to build a New Green Deal City]? For Julian, we need to rethink ownership when talking about urban contexts. This includes understanding what local finance is and what it is supposed to do, what are the parts of the economy and the market that we want to start to pull into processes of public finance.

In CW's interactive visualization, they had anything from housing projects to small markets to retail parks, which would all be part of local social initiatives. This would also include what CW calls *retrofitting revolution* in order to bring down the carbon consumption of each household while at the same time addressing the largest issues of fuel poverty that the UK in particular suffers from. This means getting into the nitty gritty of appliances, heat pumps, solar panels and thinking of those things with a public mindset and another scale of sharing, sometimes municipal and sometimes at the neighborhood scale in public solutions and local logistics. So, anything from last mile cargo or moving some of our urban gearstick into rail and bringing back some ideas like trams for example, which have been left behind. It also involves rethinking the scale of

energy, at which scale energy is owned, produced and boxed. This is something CW has been working on for the city of Glasgow, where they are trying to visualize what a green new deal would mean there. It is about unpacking the complicated issue of pumps for every building and thinking about how [different] ownership structures can help in that direction. It's also about thinking what spaces in our communities can enhance community wellbeing and where we can co-create in order to fight issues of urban loneliness.

On a more general sense, CW thinks that the reorganization of the city will need to be based on re-aggregating and reinventing urban objects and [combating] man made emissions. This also includes rethinking where work is going to take place. One of the new normals that COVID is likely to bring is work from home. For Julian, we ought to be thinking about whether we should work from home, or whether we can think of solutions like *work from community* or *work from neighborhood*. And also think about the effects it will have on the demands that will be placed on ground floors, especially in the UK where so many neighbourhoods are so heavily residential and low in services, which is an issue, according to Julian.

It is also an issue for urban design, since it includes rethinking our urban blocks, as it is about what we can share at the scale of the block. Anything from laundry to food storage and packaging, but also about turning our roofs into social spaces with shared tools and furniture. For Julian, it is about life styles and also connected to the idea of the four-day week. And what are we going to do with our three-day weekends? Are we going to get everyone to go to Barcelona every other week? For Julian, it is really about creating cities that are geared for leisure, for care and for sociality rather than just for work and consumption.



Ownership for a democratic & sustainable economy

— A think tank for the future

Screenshot of the Common-Wealth website. <https://www.common-wealth.co.uk>

Roundtable Discussion

Led by Moderator *Costanza LaMantia*



For Costanza, it is important to listen to three different perspectives. The European perspective, which is about policy structure, orients the action of the member states and is very institutionally focused. And the activist perspective, which is also very important because we need to have pressure from the bottom in order for policies to be implemented. And lastly, the perspective from a think tank that has an advisory role, exploring possible futures and imagining how to turn these policies into concrete actions, from very small to bigger scales. Costanza puts a question to the representative of the European Commission, Sander: In this event today we focused quite a lot in Europe. Europe has an important role as a donor and an important actor in the international scene, so what Europe does has implications elsewhere. Hence, there is a need to be coherent also internationally.

Costanza asks Sander: How is the European Union thinking [about the Green Deal] through its international grants and programs and how they affect developing countries? Sander answers that this is not his area of expertise, and there are others who work with cooperation, aid, and trade.

What he knows comes from being at the table when negotiations being conducted by other services of the European Commission take place. Although he agrees with Costanza's characterization of the Green Deal for Europe as an institutional action, to help member states take decisions and formulate policies, he points out that these initiatives are often accompanied by legal dimension that is very international. And so, it is for the European Green Deal, which also has an international [legal] dimension. Europe aims to be the first climate neutral continent, but this is also because Europe wishes to show the rest of the world that it is possible

MAIN TAKE AWAYS:

Widened political space through activism, internationalism, European soft power, role of institutions, role of think tanks & NGOs.

to be climate neutral and to still have a high-level of well-being.

Despite the many problems Europe faces, it is still the place in the world where there are the highest levels of well-being. This is why Europe is translating its Green ambitions into its trade policy, and into its development policy with a focus on Africa as well [and aiming to influence other countries]. Sander mentions Europe's "neighbourhood policy", which means that some cohesion policy investment goes to candidate countries and neighbouring countries.

Sander highlights the immense power held by Europe through its single market. If Europe adopts new standards for fuel, vehicles, or aviation, for instance [areas that are included in the European Green Deal] standards are automatically applicable to anyone who wants to sell their products to the EU market. It is easy to see that the global market follows EU standards. Costanza draws attention of the audience to the fact that a lot of the issues being discussed in this UTC are reflected/ or have an impact on, our cities. Cycles of production and consumption shape our cities, producing justice or injustice in the access that citizens have to services.

Costanza asks Julian what role a think tank like his can play in advising governments and the private sector [about urban innovation].

Julian answers that one of the most important things they do as a Think Tank is to build new narratives. Think Tanks can also work on building the tools and narratives that can be picked up by activists. Julian thinks Think Tanks must make a compelling case for research, building knowledge freely and independently, being aware that money can kick you in one direction or the other. Keeping independence is really important. Costanza highlights the fact the activists like Robert are trying to build and leverage on activities that create political pressure but are also trying to build knowledge and consciousness about the problems of our times and their possible solutions.

Costanza asks Robert: Do you find value in collaborating with universities or Think Tanks like Common Wealth or do you find yourself more on the position of the other, as the activist on the ground that's always pushing against [institutions] or organizing protests? Or does Robert also have an approach in

terms of creating projects and partnerships with institutions like think-tanks or universities?

Robert answers that activists definitely lean on those organisations. The fact that he has referenced the work of Common Wealth in his own talk demonstrates that there are connections. Many activists in the UK come from a policy minded background and bring that policy mindset to the table. Robert draws attention to a UK-based organisation called New Economics Foundation on which The Green New Deal UK relies on [<https://neweconomics.org>].

According to Robert, a lot of activists come from the NGO network, like Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth. But NGOs rely on the political window being as wide as it needs to be: they can't go outside it, and they cannot widen it, because they need to work with the political reality [of the moment]. They've got their funders and donors to think about, and they have their particular history and their reputation. What activists do is to try to get that political window wider, and then when the political window is wider, organisations can start to move in.

Activists can radicalise their demands in the UK [for instance], which was apparent in 2019. As soon as School Strikes and Extinction Rebellion started to demand for net-zero carbon emissions by 2025, it became much more difficult for Friends of the Earth to demand net-zero carbon emissions by 2040, because it starts to look ridiculous, as it is. For Robert, the role of activism is to create the space into which organisations can move into.

Recommendations

National Governments

The talk given by the representative of the European Commission speaks to the power of collective action and international structures that allow for coordinated action. The authority of the European Union resides not only in its economic strength, but in its ability to conceive policy that is science-based, democratic, accountable and participatory. This has a huge impact on the quality of decisions being taken. This is reflected in a European Green Deal that “leaves no one behind”, bringing together sustainable economic development and social well-being. The European Union, thanks to its coordinated economic policies and common market, has the ability to influence actors across the globe, who are eager to meet its standards of sustainability to be able to negotiate with the bloc. Cohesion Policy is an example of investment policy that aims to promote convergence and redistribution, bringing all the members of the Union to similar levels of development and well-being. Europe is an example because of the seriousness of its intentions to tackle climate change and other environmental problems, based on scientific knowledge and research, and connecting climate action with social justice.

Local Authorities & Community Leaders

The talks given by Robert Magowan and Julian Siravo point towards the importance of a robust civil society, in which citizens are able to “widen the windows” of political discourse and take local governments to account. Local authorities and community leaders benefit from working with each other in partnership and would benefit from harnessing the energy of activists and the knowledge produced by Think Tanks. A vigorous form of public governance in which civil society is heard has the potential to deliver much better results in the form of innovative and better designed policies.

Other Stakeholders

Activists are essential in any society. They lead the way in terms of “widening the window” of politics and trailblazing new issues. As long as there is democratic accountability and respect for the rule of law, activists may inject new ideas into mainstream political debate. Think Tanks are 40 equally important in exploring new issues and exploring knowledge that feeds into the public debate and may help citizens and politicians make decisions and look at innovative solutions. Although this was not a topic explored in this UTC, it is important to highlight that activism and Think Tanks can also be used for illegitimate objectives and for the promotion of private interests. It’s worth emphasising that a robust civil society thrives in places where there is a strong rule of law and democratic accountability and the possibility of open public debate, in which ideas are debated freely.



Polluted beach in Mumbai. Photo by Roberto Rocco.



Wednesday 17th July 2020 | 18.00-19.00 (CET)

Part #3:

Housing in Africa



This third and final event, 'Housing in Africa', focused on future actions and opportunities for positive change on the African continent. It explored the many challenges in governance and capacity in the continent and highlighted the energy of young African activists working with communities on the ground.

Introductions & summaries

Igor Pessoa (TU Delft)
Caroline Newton (TU Delft)

Moderator

Roberto Rocco (TU Delft)

Guest speakers

Professor Julio D Dávila (Colombia/UK)

Director of The Bartlett's Development Planning Unit, University College London (UCL).

Caroline Skinner (South Africa)

Director of Urban Research at Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) and Senior researcher at the African Centre for Cities, University of Cape Town.

Esther Karanja (Kenya)

Architecture student at the Technical University of Kenya.

Temitope Ogungbamila and ThankGod Dikio (Nigeria)

Nigeria Slum/Informal Settlement Federation, and the Justice and Empowerment Initiative (JEI) media team in Lagos and Port Harcourt.



Structures in Soweto, Photo by Roberto Rocco.



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Shine

Pitches

Julio D Dávila, the Bartlett, DPU



FOCUS of the talk: Questioning the assumed link between rapid urbanization and the emergence of zoonotic diseases and enriching this debate by including the effects of structural drivers such as poverty and inequality and their spatial embeddedness.

Julio starts by explaining the context of the findings he is going to present. They are the result of a five year project led by Professor Eric Fèvre and Professor Mark Woolhouse, who has been in the news quite a lot in the UK as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The project is funded by a consortium of UK research agencies, including the Medical Research Council. More information about the project can be found on <http://www.zoonotic-diseases.org/project/urban-zoo-project/>

About eight years ago, the team decided to investigate a number of emerging diseases, about which very little was known. Diseases like Ebola or SARS move from animal hosts to humans. Julio and his team tried to find out how they emerge, reproduce and settle in human populations in cities. It's a hugely complex process.

The team scanned the literature for the last 20 or 30 years, looking at a number of keywords from epidemiology, urban planning, urban agriculture and so on, and came up with quite a vast set of publications. Most of them came from biology, medical sciences or veterinary sciences, rather than urban planning.

They were looking at the background to zoonotic diseases, how they would evolve in parallel with urbanization, particularly with fast urbanization in developing countries.

KEY TAKE AWAYS

Drivers that effect the zoonosis: Poverty and relative disadvantage, movement of people and animals, land-use change and urban and agriculture policies.

Zoonotic diseases are transmitted between vertebrate animals and humans. The term that was first coined by Virchow in the middle of the 19th century.

Examples of zoonotic diseases are: SARS, avian influenza, Ebola and Covid-19. Covid is the most disruptive zoonotic disease in 100 years. The WHO estimates that about 61 percent of all human diseases are zoonotic in origin. So, the challenges we are facing today will not completely go away when Covid is vanquished. Hence, current and future challenges must be tackled through a collaborative effort of many disciplines.

Zoonosis represent 26% of the infectious disease burden in developing countries, whereas it's only 0,7% in developed countries (this is measured in what the epidemiologists call the "disability-adjusted life years").

The first driver for this difference is poverty and relative disadvantage, which expose people to multiple disease burdens. This is manifested within cities through limited access to infrastructure and services, such as fresh water supply and sanitation. It's very difficult for people who don't have access to running water to wash their hands as they are incessantly asked to do by the authorities during the pandemic. Space is a particular dimension of the pandemic that requires our attention. When people live in poor, dense, congested physical environments, there is clearly a double disadvantage and the poor are definitely more susceptible to outbreaks. When the literature talks about urban advantages, it disregards the reality that within cities there is much greater inequality than the inequality between cities and rural areas.

There is an overlap between these zoonosis and co-morbidities. In other words, similar factors induce both non-communicable diseases and multiple forms of zoonosis, like cholera.

Different consumption patterns also have an impact. For example, informal street vendors and associated cooking practices, as well poor food hygiene may lead to disease. This has become very clear in the case of Nairobi.

The second driver is the movement of people, animals and

animal-sourced food products.

As income grows around the world, so grows demand for meat, dairy products, and processed foods based on animal products. Consequently, there is greater movement of animals and people across borders. Thus, there is increased potential for pathogens to move across borders or cross between rural areas and urban areas. Rural and circular migrants also bring new pathogens to cities, pathogens that probably originate in rural wildlife environments. But also temporary migrants to urban areas acquire pathogens that are dormant in cities and for which local populations in isolated rural areas have low immunity.

In the study conducted by Julio, the team looked at e.coli because it's a pathogen, not a virus. Viruses are horrendously difficult to study because they mutate and transform, whereas pathogens have very definite markers and are genetically very stable. So they are easier to follow along very long chains of consumption.

The third driver is land-use changes (with multi-faceted links to the propagation of infectious diseases).

These changes in land-use are definitely crucial because urban sources of consumption are destroying more and more places which have been untouched by human occupation and commerce, consequently disrupting ecosystems and creating all sorts of biological disarray. For example, bats travel across several countries in Asia when their ecosystems are destroyed. These fruit bats infected fruits that were then consumed by humans and this produced an early outbreak of a zoonotic disease about 20 years ago. In 2005, Woolhouse, part of Julio's team, together with other colleagues identified 177 human pathogens that came from land-use changes and agricultural practices.

Rural-urban linkages are quite important. Of course, unplanned and uncontrolled urban growth and the expansion which converts natural landscapes and agriculture land to urban, peri-urban or suburban uses is increasing. The emergence of rapid connections between the central city and more dense urban areas to more less dense outlying areas has enormous impact not only in local livelihoods, but also on the potential for zoonotic

diseases to appear.

The appropriation of spaces that are untouched by human habitation can be hazardous to human health as they are possible breeding grounds for zoonotic diseases that were previously unknown and against which we have little or no resistance.

The fourth driver is urban planning and agriculture policies that seldom cater to disadvantaged populations and more likely contribute to pollution and disease propagation.

The roots of urban planning lie in disease control in 19th century Europe, a doctrine that was transferred to many countries around the world.

To a large extent, urban planning has lost its roots in that public health concern, which was mainly concerned with cholera in European cities and North American cities. There is a need to try and rekindle those planning ideas.

Another significant dimension is urban agriculture, which is crucial for life in many cities, particularly for the poor. In addition, we know that climate change will impact food systems around the world. Unfortunately, there is a certain reluctance amongst urban planners to accept urban agriculture and to integrate it into official planning. Therefore, urban agricultural practices become sort of illegal and informal, and are not part of public planning. This again is another source of potential pathogens. When sewage water is used to irrigate small crops in cities, this is a potential source of diseases. Sanitation in urban environments is an important dimension to incorporate in urban planning.

Caroline Skinner, Women in Informal Employment Globalizing and Organizing



FOCUS of the talk: to outline some important lessons from the current crisis with regards to the informal economy and the need to provide 'space' for it.

Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) has activities and / or partners, many of whom are worker-based movements, in over 90 countries.

Since the crisis started WIEGO has been monitoring the impact of measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 on informal workers, as well as government support measures and uptake from informal workers for some of the support measures that have been put in place. see COVID-19, Informal Workers and WIEGO's Work during this Crisis | WIEGO).

A. **The bigger picture:** WIEGO has worked very closely with the International Labour Organization over the years for a country comparable statistic. The calculations show that two billion people, or 61 percent of the world's workers are informally employed. There is widespread recognition that the measures to curb the spread of COVID-19 have impacted particularly negatively on informal workers. This is because their jobs are precarious and they lack the legal, and social protections that otherwise cushion people in

KEY TAKE AWAYS

COVID-19 has negatively impacted the livelihood of informal workers, especially women. BUT... there are opportunities for transformation: informal work has been recognised as essential in some contexts; in others informal workers have been incorporated into new social protection schemes. There have been innovations that have come from the informal workers.

times of crisis. So, the ILO estimated that 1.6 million of the of the two billion informal workers have been significantly impacted by lock-down measures and or all working in the hardest hit sectors. What WIEGO has been hearing from the ground confirms this. There's been a particularly negative impact for women. Women predominate certain segments within the informal economy and current nationally representative data confirms this gender dimension.

B. Impact: earnings, poverty and food insecurity. During the first month of the crisis the decline in informal worker earnings was 60 percent globally. The ILO highlights that likely the largest expected decline (81%) will be found in Africa. As lockdown measures are being eased, the hope is that earnings will have restarted. The loss of incomes in the informal economy is very worrying. One set of authors have suggested that it will jeopardize three decades of progress in human development. Some are saying even more. And there's a particular dimension around food insecurity. The Food and Agricultural Organisation estimate that more than a quarter of a billion people suffered acute hunger in 2020. We also know that informal distributors and producers are critical to food security and in many contexts, were not able to operate under lockdown despite their important contribution.

On the positive side, there has been a widespread response of cash grants or income grants. The last estimate shows that at least 131 countries grants have been distributed. Amounts are often low. Informal workers access to these grants has been mixed in terms of whether they've actually been able to tap into this support measure. But this can be a basis for pulling informal workers into the Social Security net. This is a critical issue.

C. Urban policy responses: There is a real a new appreciation of informal workers contribution to health care, transport, food distribution and waste systems. Some types of informal work was declared essential (e.g., informal food vendors, people in informal transport and waste recyclers). That said at the same time health concerns have driven further evictions of slum dwellers. And there's a very close correlation between working informally and living informally.

D. Immediate priorities and opportunities for transformation. The rallying call is to minimize health risks and maximize livelihood opportunities. All over the globe there are interesting examples of informal workers adapting to Covid-19 realities. For example, street traders who have developed wash stations and trade practising 2 metre social distancing. This shows that solutions exist, but it does demand a much more creative use of space. During this relief and recovery phase, there are opportunities for transformation. The recognition of informal workers and their contributions to city economies and societies has been at the forefront and the integration of informal work into urban plans is imperative. In addition, social protection needs to be extended to include informal workers. There is a longstanding need to include informal leaders into urban governance. Informal workers don't just want to be meeting local authorities only in times of crisis but should have regular engagements. On the negative side, there are threats of reversal of previous gains. The permanent displacement from sites of work through evictions and privatization. There is a lot of harassment and violence and also deepened discrimination and stigmatisation.

E. Innovation and informality: Informal workers have come up with lots of interesting, innovative solutions. So, it's important to work alongside them.

Esther Karanja, Technical University of Kenya



FOCUS of the talk: the experience in Nairobi and the impact of COVID19 in three distinct urban settings: poor / informal settlements, middle-class neighborhoods and high-end areas.

Of the four main cities in Kenya, Nairobi hosts 63% of the urban population within the country. Also, since COVID-19 first entered the country in March, Nairobi has consistently had about half of all the cases within the country. It has been the epicenter of the pandemic.

One of the crucial contributing factors in preventing COVID-19's spread has been the ability to work from home. However, salaried and wage employees within the country make up only about 48% of the population. And of this 3,3% have salaries. So only this limited percentage of the population is able to work from home. A large percentage of the 4,5 million inhabitants of Nairobi doesn't have that option at all.

60% of Nairobi's inhabitants live in informal settlements and slums. And these are characterized by overcrowding, shortage or an outright lack of essential infrastructure, a housing shortage, shortage of health care facilities, poor sanitation facilities and lack of access to good nutrition. These have proven to be optimal conditions for the spread of COVID-19. As a consequence, six out of ten of Nairobi's residents are vulnerable to the spread of COVID-19.

Within Nairobi, the experience of COVID-19, has been largely different for different individuals, according to where people live and their living conditions.

The three distinct settings are discussed further:

1. Slums and low-income settlements
2. Middle income settlements
3. High income settlements

KEY TAKE AWAYS

Need for a differentiated understanding of the impact of COVID-A9, mitigating role of NGOS, need for leapfrogging.

1. Slums and low-income settlements

Kibera is Nairobi's biggest slum, home to 170,000 people. This is a really large number. Housing in Kibera is substandard at best, healthcare is costly and of poor quality when available.

Drainage and water supply systems are non-existent, making hygiene and sanitation extremely poor, with no access to good nutrition and mortality rates are high. Some of the houses are made out of timber frames and mud.

People shower three or four times a week, with shower costing about ten shillings. Most inhabitants of Kibera make 50 to 100 shillings a day.

So, in the face of COVID-19, when you have to wash your hands for 20 seconds, and several times a day, this has been really fairly impossible in places like Kibera. However to fill this existing gaps, organizations such as UNICEF and SHOFKO have come in and provided interventions which have been successful and have helped prevent the spread of COVID-19.

At the very beginning of the pandemic in Kenya, there was a realization that should COVID-19 enter the slums, the impact would be completely devastating. So NGOs came in quickly and set up handwashing stations, which have been very successful because other interventions are fairly difficult. Social distancing is impossible, because it is an extremely crowded residential area. Masks and PPE's are impossible because they cost money that inhabitants don't have.

Most of the interventions that have been put in place by NGOs have been towards handwashing and provision of mobile medical healthcare services. In addition there has also been food and cash relief to slum dwellers. These few measures have been effective in keeping the residents from the harsher realities of COVID-19.

2. Middle income settlements

The middle income areas, surprisingly, have been worst hit than slum areas. Middle income areas have infrastructure, they have access to water and have fairly okay housing. They have access to sanitation facilities, good nutrition and health care. But the problem with middle income areas is that the infrastructure is just about adequate, meaning that in the face of COVID-19, everything snapped. Water ran out. Electricity ran out. People went for days without any power. The poor

planning of these areas became visible because overcrowding and social distancing do not really go hand in hand.

Another factor that has led to middle income areas being so badly hit is the almost absence of interventions in middle income areas. In slums, people realized there was going to be a problem and people came in and helped. But in middle income areas, people were pretty much left to their own. And when the infrastructure broke down, people became completely vulnerable.

Cases are being registered in Kenya. In Nairobi the numbers show that slums make up a very small proportion of cases within the city, which means most of the cases in Nairobi are cases in middle-income areas.

3. High income areas

High-income areas have been the least affected. Even when in close proximity to some of the areas which have been hit the hardest. Karen, for example, is one of the most affluent residential areas in the city. It is bordered almost immediately by Kibera. And this is not an isolated case. There are affluent neighborhoods next to slums, as the people who work in this high-income areas need to be able to walk to and from work, and therefore live very close by. As a result, there are pockets of slums right next to or even sometimes within high income areas.

However, the impact in high income areas has been negligible. There were about five cases at the very beginning of the pandemic. And those were people who were coming in from abroad. And in the high income areas where there have been consistent cases, it's largely been a factor of negligence (eg. house parties) of the residents rather than a lack of access to any sort of infrastructure. In all, high income areas are well insulated against the spread of COVID-19 and also the impact, the other indirect impacts that come with that spread.

4. Building back better

Building back better in developing countries needs to be approached differently than in developed countries.


In developing countries, like Kenya for example, people are still dealing with basic problems. We don't have easy access to running water, there is no drainage, there are food shortages

...

In more developed countries, the conversation is about a transition to green economies and circular economies. In developing countries, we need to handle the more basic problems quickly so that we can move up to the more complex issues without spending too many decades in between two solutions.

We need to come up with solutions that are more innovative and cheaper than what we've currently been doing. Integrating younger people who have more innovative ideas into planning and provide more innovative, high impact solutions is imperative.

We need to figure out how to diversify our water supply sources to fix the gap between supply and demand. Water has proven to be an indispensable resource, especially when it comes to fighting a pandemic. We need recycling systems for essential resources such as water. We need to create drainage systems in low income areas to improve sanitation.





Publicly financed housing in Addis Ababa, Photo by Roberto Rocco.

Temitope Ogungbamila and ThankGod Dikio Nigerian Slum/ IS Federation



FOCUS of the talk: the grassroots perspective of the pandemic. The stories you will not see on the news, the everyday experiences during the lockdown and the different ways people have been trying to look after and provide for themselves and their community members (collected on <https://www.justempower.org/coronadiaries>).

The Nigerian Slum / Informal Settlement Federation (Federation) is a mass movement of the urban poor, with thousands of members from hundreds of informal settlements in Lagos and rapidly growing in Abuja and other cities. They have come together around the common challenges and collective aspiration to build more inclusive and habitable cities. We are supported by Justice & Empowerment Initiatives – Nigeria (JEI) and affiliated with Slum Dwellers International (SDI), a global network of slumdweller federations.

The media team, ‘media for change’, was created by young community members with the aim to address the wrong (negative) perceptions that middle and rich classes have about the urban poor in Nigeria.

When the media in Nigeria tell stories about the slums, they are not objective and fail to provide the right information (because they don’t want to get on the wrong side of the government). So, it was deemed crucial to tell the stories from a different perspective. From the perspective of the slum dwellers themselves.

The stories have been collected in videos and pictures and they have been shown in exhibitions. The work can also be found on YouTube and Instagram and on the website in ‘the legends of Lagos’.

KEY TAKE AWAYS

It is crucial to include the voices of the urban poor. Visual and social media as important tools for communication and negotiating change.

The stories collected can be about livelihoods, access to water or street trading. But most crucially these stories are always told from a certain perspective.

One of these perspectives is that of people with disabilities. These people are not included in government policies. Telling their stories is an attempt to make their voices heard.

An important action was the exhibition of the work in Freedom Park, because at this moment a direct interaction emerged between the people, their stories and the visitors of the exhibition. The impact of displacement on the dignity of people was discussed face to face.

A very strong story is that of The Legend of the Vagabond Queen of Lagos (<https://www.justempower.org/vagabondqueen>), in which a young mother from a waterfront slum in the city engages in a struggle to save her community from the redevelopment of the area into a luxury condo development. The movie tells her journey from isolated individualism to a being a unifying force in a community that stands to lose everything.

Slum communities need to support each other and it is through this solidarity that we need to fight evictions

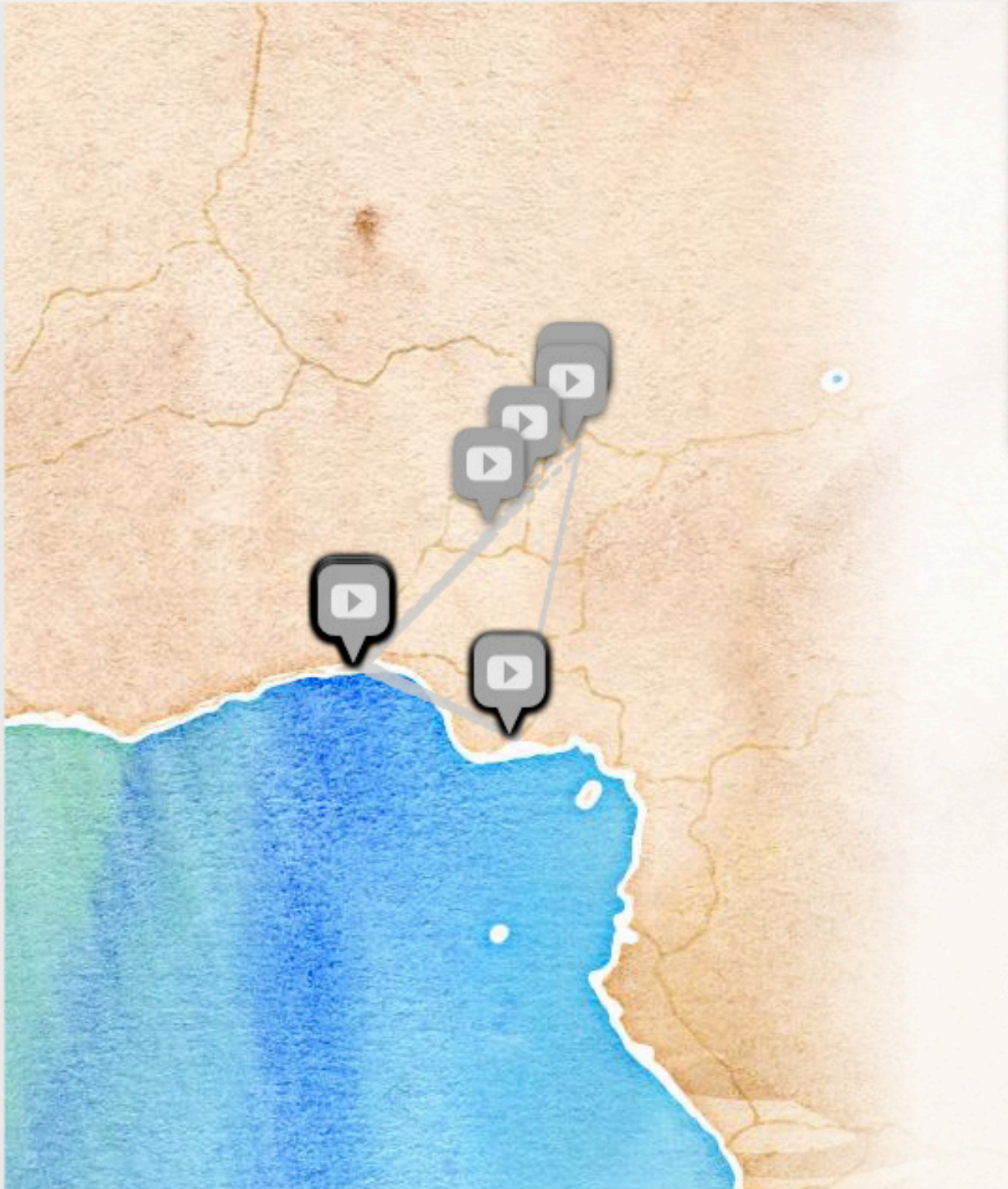
Corona diaries is a way to explain the impact of COVID19 on the urban poor and the slum communities. You will not see these stories in the mainstream media, and even if the mainstream media talks about it it will always be from one perspectives. Often the focus is on the negative aspects of the communities.

It is crucial to show how COVID-19 has impacted education, livelihoods and economic practices in the slums. It is imperative to share how the pandemic is used to further control people who are already in vulnerable conditions (e.g., how the Nigerian police makes people pay high fines because they are not wearing a mask).

Because no one else will tell these stories, the slum dwellers need to tell the stories themselves.

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Screenshot of the Corona Diaries, of JEI (justice & Empower Initiatives), <https://www.justempower.org/coronadiaries>

here we work / who we are



CORONA DIARIES OF THE URBAN DOOR



...ots perspective at a time of pandemic — from
...ytellers of the Nigerian and Benin
...nformal Settlement Federations — telling the
...you won't hear on the news.

...NG // Port Harcourt, NG // Cotonou, BJ

[Start Exploring](#)

<https://www.justempower.org/coronadiaries>

Recommendations

National Governments

- a. A crucial point was not discussed during the debate: mobility.

In addition to all problems mentioned during the session having to do with water and sanitation, one dimension was missing, and that is transport and mobility. We must understand why this is the case. It might have to do with the fact that people are not moving so much during the pandemic. In research on the connections between mobility, poverty and urban planning, it has been noticed that there is a strong relationship between movement and wealth. People who do not travel much inside the city are either very rich or very poor. With a decent formal job, a home office and good internet connections, one can easily work from home during the pandemic. Low-income citizens do not have those privileges. However, in order to get out of poverty, one needs to move, to trade, sell one's labour force, acquire training. One's kids need to go to school, get health care. These things are rarely well distributed inside a city, and they are generally lacking in poorer neighbourhoods. So, mobility and transport need to be included in the discussion about rebuilding after COVID-19.

That's crucial. Looking at public transport systems during the pandemic, we see several examples of profound disruption. In London, the underground has come to a halt, and now carries only about 15 percent of its capacity. The same goes for many cities in Latin America, which often have decent mass transit systems, but where the capacity during the pandemic cannot go above 35 percent, otherwise the infection rates might go up. So, not being able to move is disastrous. And that is where the next inflection of the curve is. How do we get people to move and interact again? The vast majority of people in cities has to move, to trade, to travel to places to make an income.

b. Policies: urban planning policies, land use and other policies need to take into consideration the following aspects:

i. Land-use changes that increase land take for human activities create additional risks for the emergence of zoonosis.

ii. Urban agriculture policies can mitigate the current unhealthy practices in urban agriculture that emerged because of a lacking legal framework. Decent policies also need to ensure healthy sanitary conditions.

iii. Urban policies should reconnect with their historical roots in public health concern.

iv. Informal actors need to be acknowledged as partners in governance practices .

Local Authorities & Community Leaders

a. Civil society and organisations of informal dwellers and workers, next to community leaders are important partners for local governments.

b. An approach that is grounded in solidarity is key for all urban settlements and their inhabitants to come out of the pandemic stronger – together.

Other Stakeholders

a. Informal workers are important partners for innovations that are rapidly and widely applicable. It is worthwhile to look actively for forms of partnership and collaboration.

b. Residents. The work of the Nigerian Slum / Informal Settlement Federation's media team is a good example how voices from below can widen the views of policy makers and other stakeholders.

UTC in numbers

170 PARTICIPANTS

170 PARTICIPANTS OVER THREE ONLINE SESSIONS

MEMBERS OF



GLOBALURBANLAB.ORG

VISIT THE WEBSITE OF THE GLOBAL URBAN LAB TO KNOW MORE ABOUT OTHER ACTIVITIES & DOWNLOAD OUR REPORTS.



THE UTC TOOK PLACE DIGITALLY OVER THREE DIFFERENT EVENINGS IN JUNE-JULY 2020.



13

SPEAKERS

FROM FOUR CONTINENTS

PARTICIPANTS FROM

19

COUNTRIES

17

UNIVERSITIES FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD

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THE GLOBAL URBAN LAB IS THE TU DELFT PLATFORM FOR SUSTAINABLE URBANISATION IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH.

Global Urban Lab

The Global Urban Lab is a communication and action platform, which is part of the TU Delft | Global Initiative. Our goal is to bring visibility and articulation to TU Delft staff and students doing work on urbanisation in the Global South (Low and Middle Income Settings). Next to hosting discussions, lectures and events, the Global Urban Lab predominantly wants to connect and build knowledge: serving as a platform throughout all faculties, schools, and departments for researchers and practitioners to meet, learn and collaborate in a transdisciplinary manner.

Global

In a context of social, political and environmental unrest, there is an urgent need for developing alternative solutions and relations on a global scale. Therefore, the Global Urban Lab wants to share alternative views and knowledge without the traditional Global North centrism, in order to create a positive collaboration between different areas of the planet.

Urban

From a wider perspective, the idea of “urban” includes a broad multiplicity of sites, forms and scales, from the most remote settlements up to global metropolises. This approach sees urbanisation as a process, not as a goal or fixed category, that overcomes and increasingly diffuses the traditional divide between ‘the rural’ versus ‘the urban’.

Lab

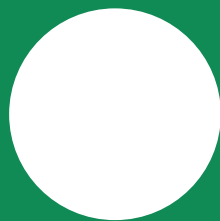
The platform aims to actively seek the connection outside of the academic realm, proposing itself as a space for experimentation and action, informing public, private and civic initiatives of innovative research happening at TU Delft.

globalurbanlab.org



Publicly financed housing, Addis Ababa. Photo by R. Rocco.





Global Urban Lab

<http://www.globalurbanlab.org>

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