



Photograph: Erick Avila. Prensa Libre, Guatemala. 2020

RESPONDING TO THE GLOBAL PANDEMIC

TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT FUTURE

OCTOBER
23 24 25
2020

SPRING CROSS-REGIONAL DIALOGUE 2020

Organized by In cooperation with Supported by



University of the Philippines
School of Urban and Regional Planning



KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY





SPRING

CROSS-REGIONAL DIALOGUE 2020

PREMISE

In July 2019, the SPRING (Spatial Planning for Regions in Growing Economies) Alumni held their first Winter School, an event organized by the SPRING Alumni (LAC) and members of the SPRING International Association of Development Planners (SIADP) in Valdivia, Chile. The theme was Evolving Dynamics, Processes and Linkages to support the achievement of 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals 11 and 13.

In 2020 we continue this endeavour with an online conference about a more pressing matter.

This year the world continues to grapple with the COVID-19 Pandemic and its implications. SPRING Alumni remain committed to yielding opportunities for inter-regional dialogue and the open exchange of ideas, so we understand the new normal by supporting and learning from each other.

The Conference **“SPRING Cross-Regional Dialogue: Responding to the Global Pandemic towards a Sustainable and Resilient Future”** brings together practical experiences and theoretical reflections on planning policies, guidelines and practices. Its main aim is a deeper understanding of how these practices contribute to emerging transformative planning approaches and resilient regional spatial development.

OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE

O1. THE IMPACT : UNDERSTANDING REGIONAL CONTEXT & THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

Recent attention to critical issues such as jolts in economic activity, weak health systems, food insecurity and change in modes of education is leading to growing socio-economic disparities. The pandemic has triggered demands for new, more transformative, soft and adaptive planning approaches. While knowledge and experience about contextual particularities is fostering tailored place-based planning solutions, envisioning future planning in wider regional settings and mediating between views in often contested multi-actor settings is a challenge. The first objective of the conference is a more knowledge-based understanding of the performance of regional planning in the realm of emerging repercussions of COVID-19, shedding light on SDGs 1,2,3,4 & 11. Based on these goals, the first objective of the conference is that speakers from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe will introduce their regional contexts in the form of pre-recorded material on the SPRING Alumni website, a week before the online conference for participants to have a baseline understanding of different contexts.

O2. PLANNING FOR RESILIENCE - LEARNING FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN LIGHT OF SDGS 1,2,3, 4 & 11

The advancement of the COVID-19 pandemic renders regions as important planning arenas for the provision of basic needs, the organization of daily life, and the safeguarding of a resilient economic base. It also underlines that regional spatial development requires strategies that address social, economic, political and societal change coherently.

The best possible strategies to contain the pandemic have ended up putting a pause to economic, educational and other activities requiring close human contact, or in other words the Hammer & Dance method. According to a report released in July 2020 by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, COVID-19 is reversing decades of progress on poverty, healthcare and education. An estimated 71 million people are expected to be pushed back into extreme poverty in 2020, the first rise in global poverty since 1998. Lost incomes, limited social protection and rising prices mean even those who were previously secure could find themselves at risk of poverty and hunger.

After establishing a regional context baseline in O1, the second objective is to learn lessons on how planning for resilience can be supported by involving spatial knowledge, foresight and imagination, while reflecting on SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) 1,2,3,4 & 11. An online conference with workshop sessions concerning the pandemic's assumed effects, and how these reinforced or disrupted prevailing regional spatial development, planning, and governance. The aim of O2 is to gather impacts to propose improvements to continue the 2030 SDG Agenda, and be better prepared for future pandemics in policy making, governance and academia.

O3. TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT FUTURE

The Conference will be concluded with a compilation of relevant innovative strategies that can be implemented to assist countries in achieving the selected SDGs. The ideas shared by speakers and a summary of workshop sessions would be made available in various formats. The documentation is to serve as a reference material and also provide guidance in future pandemics and shocks.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

OCT 18

12:00 CEST

PRE-CONFERENCE MATERIAL AVAILABLE

Available at: <http://springalumnichile.com/>

*Multi-media material sent by the speakers will be uploaded a week before the online conference for participants to view and develop a baseline understanding of different contexts.

OCT

23 24 25

ONLINE CONFERENCE

Day 1

OCT 23

17:00

(UTC + 02:00)

OPENING SESSION TOPIC: BUILD BACK BETTER

The recovery and future of markets, public space and informal economy - Design protocols for governing safe cities and communities.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



WORKSHOP SESSION

2 Simultaneous session of 1.5 hr. - 20 minutes break

Presentation 17:00 hr.
Workshop 17:15 hr.
Conclusion 18:15 hr.

ROOM 1

TOPIC: FOOD SECURITY STRATEGIES

2 ZERO HUNGER



Presentation 17:00 hr.
Workshop 17:15 hr.
Conclusion 18:15 hr.

ROOM 2

TOPIC: CIRCULAR ECONOMY THE WAY TO COMBAT POVERTY

1 NO POVERTY



BREAK 18:30 – 18:50

Presentation 18:50 hr.
Workshop 19:05 hr.
Conclusion 20:05 hr.

ROOM 3

TOPIC: HYBRID SECTORS SYNERGIZING THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM WITH OTHER SECTORS

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



Presentation 18:50 hr.
Workshop 19:05 hr.
Conclusion 20:05 hr.

ROOM 4

TOPIC: THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION PLANNING DIGITAL INNOVATION IN SERVICE DELIVERY

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



Day 3

OCT 25

17:00

(UTC + 01:00)

TOPIC: RESILIENCE AND INCLUSIVENESS IN SPATIAL PLANNING: A POST-PANDEMIC RESOLUTION

(with an overview from multiple contexts)

THE WAY FORWARD

An issue on “Regional Transformative Planning: Responding to the Global Pandemic towards a Sustainable and Resilient Future”

The Conference will be concluded with **a compilation of relevant innovative strategies from the panel and workshop sessions, in the form of a document that can be implemented to assist countries in achieving the selected SDGs.** This will be uploaded on SPRING Alumni website, and other platforms.

FORMAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SPEAKERS

01

You are requested to submit material online in the form of a video/audio clip (1:30 mins), piece of writing (500 words) or photo-series(at least 6) based on the call for concept note (see Objective 1). The material received will be uploaded on SPRING Alumni website and sent via email and social media to speakers and participants of the conference.

The objective of sharing material before the conference is to establish a baseline understanding of experiences from different contexts before convening online for **O2.**

Please send your material at springalumni.chile@gmail.com
by **October 15, 2020, 12:00 hr CEST.**

Your material will be uploaded as pre-entry to the conference
by **October 18, 2020, 12:00 hr CEST.**

02

Please send your presentations for the Workshop sessions (day 1, 2 and 3)
based on the topics (attached later)
by **October 21, 2020 12:00 hr CEST**, at springalumni.chile@gmail.com

- **Your presentation should be pre-recorded and not more than 15 minutes.** The gist of your presentation should consist of areas concerning the pandemic's assumed effects, and how these reinforced or disrupted prevailing regional spatial development, planning, and governance.
- The context of your presentation should be focused on your regional area, however you are free to decide whether the content of your presentations is related to the overall chosen SDG or a sub indicator of that SDG. For example, you can either present on SDG 1, OR you can choose to focus on 1.1.1, 1.3.1, 1.4.1, 1.5.1, 1.5.2, 1.a and/or 1.b.
- The focus of your presentation should be on the topics (defined under conference topic section) in light of the linked SDGs.
- The presentation should have points that lead into the workshop session.
 - * **All session links will be through Zoom. The links will be available and sent before the conference date and will be activated the day of the conference.**
 - * **For the Workshop interactive platforms like Google Polls, Mentimeter, Cryptpad etc. will be used**

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

	OCT 15	SUBMISSION OF MATERIAL FOR O1
	OCT 18	UPLOAD OF MATERIAL OF O1
	OCT 21	SUBMISSION OF PRE-RECORDED PRESENTATIONS O2
	OCT 23 24 25	CONFERENCE DAYS
	NOV 18	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS UPLOAD

For more information, please visit: www.springalumnichile.com
For any queries please email us at: springalumni.chile@gmail.com



BUILD BACK BETTER

For recovery from the COVID-19 crisis to be durable and resilient, a return to ‘business as usual’ and environmentally destructive investment patterns and activities must be avoided. Markets, public spaces and informal economy recovery should be designed to “build back better”. This means doing more than getting economies and livelihoods quickly back on their feet. Recovery policies also need to trigger investment and behavioural changes that will reduce the likelihood of future shocks and increase society’s resilience to them. Central to this approach is a focus on well-being and inclusiveness. Other key dimensions for assessing whether recovery packages can “build back better” include alignment with long-term emission reduction goals, factoring in resilience to climate impacts, slowing biodiversity loss and increasing circularity of supply chains. In practice, well-designed recovery policies can cover several of these dimensions at once, such as catalysing the shift towards accessibility-based mobility systems, and investing in low-carbon and decentralised electricity systems.

Photograph: Diego Sugoniaev/Shutterstock.com



2 ZERO HUNGER



FOOD SECURITY STRATEGIES: SYSTEMS, DISTRIBUTION AND NETWORK MANAGEMENT FOR FUTURE PANDEMICS

The prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity has greatly been experienced during the COVID 19 pandemic. Due to rising unemployment, supply chain disruptions and other responses to the pandemic, such as disruptions to social assistance programs in some countries, predictions suggest a near doubling of food insecurity globally. Empty supermarket shelves alongside food dumping in situations due to lockdowns evidenced the challenges faced by the food supply networks. The pandemic highlights well-known inequities for marginalized food systems employees; as essential workers are exposed to greater risks of contracting the virus in food-processing, agricultural and grocery store settings, but have little choice in accepting these conditions in order to keep these low-paying jobs. How can food be rationed in countries where more than enough is produced or imported to feed the world. How bleak can the picture then be in locations where families did not even have the income in 'normal' times when food was readily available. The food systems of small producing communities and big non-producing cities could not sustain them during the pandemic when lockdown was declared. It was realised that the distribution system and networks are not resilient. Then, how do we manage these interdependencies recognizing that some cities are not self-sufficient; howbeit we need to develop and adopt innovative means to prevent severe or moderate food insecurity in future pandemics. What strategies have been adopted to prevent a future occurrence? Can these strategies also reduce the economic foodprints of the supply chains and food distribution networks?





CIRCULAR ECONOMY: THE WAY TO COMBAT POVERTY

Circular economy upholds the potential of an alternative growth model that could aid in combating poverty. A systemic shift that builds long-term resilience, generates new breed of business models, additional livelihood opportunities, and provides environmental and societal benefits. The global pandemic has posed an unprecedented threat to the current economic scenario disrupting international supply chain and connectivity, which necessitates the creation of a circular model to achieve higher economic autonomy. As a necessary resource saving and recovery model, it provides higher scope to create more out of less. This economic model could aid to fight poverty at local scale by opening up new channels of employment and livelihood options.





HYBRID SECTORS: SYNERGIZING THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM WITH OTHER SECTORS

The COVID-19 crisis has exposed the prevalent weaknesses of health systems in developing regions. Inequality in access to health services, the centralization of secondary and tertiary care, and in general, insufficient infrastructure, equipment and medical personnel are among the factors that limit the ability of countries to face the pandemic. The crisis has also shown that a robust health system is not the only aspect necessary to address a challenge of such dimensions, a systematic approach in which different sectors cooperate is fundamental too. For instance, the difficulty to enforce new regulations and the lack of trust in public services and institutions are socio-political challenges that hinder the implementation of systemic responses to reduce the citizens' exposure to the pandemic.

From a spatial planning perspective, sanitation infrastructure has always been associated with health conditions; and now, avoiding overcrowding to reduce the spread of diseases takes center stage, as the design of settlements and convergence areas, including centralities and transport systems, are questioned and intervened. Similarly, the housing forms, including the size of the units and access to open and green spaces, become fundamental to ensure physical and mental well-being, particularly during periods of lockdown and limited mobility.





THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION - PLANNING DIGITAL INNOVATION IN SERVICE DELIVERY

Pandemics reveal the resilience and weakness of a system. It can also be a catalyst for future innovation. The impact of COVID 19 on urban planning is visible in all sectors; health, mobility, education and employment, in both public and private sectors.

In developing countries organizations, especially the education system, had difficulties adapting to a work from home routine. Among many others, the primary reason for this was that planning systems are not digitized. Transfer of data and sharing of information depends heavily on non-digital mediums. In most technologically developed countries, city authorities could forecast and determine the number of persons allowed in particular public places to control the spread of the virus. However, in other countries this could not be done, and the use of public spaces and institutions were outside the control of city authorities. This is because relevant data is not readily available, and most processes have not been digitised.

Gen Z, the first digitally native generation, is now expecting even more virtual connectivity with friends and learning materials. Most socialization happens at school and students are trying to fill that void. The pandemic has partially amplified an already strong demand and desire to connect with peers. But a gulf is also arising out of a digital divide — there's a link between socioeconomic status and internet connectivity. For lower-income students, loss of access to school buildings and libraries also means they've lost their only chance of using a quiet study space and computer. Even having one computer at home may not be helpful if students need to share it with a parent working remotely. This calls for a reform in the current education system to best handle response systems, and review of the future of education planning.

