



COVID-19 RECOVERY ACTION PLAN FOR INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS IN THE ECE REGION

*BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE
CONSTRUCTION, LAND RIGHTS, LAND PLANNING,
INVOLVEMENT OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES*

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*Covid-19 Recovery Action Plan for Information
Settlements in the UNECE Region, WPLA 12th session, May 2021*



Content of the Presentation

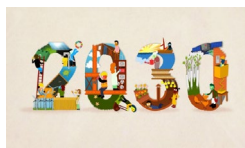
- **Introduction:** facts taken into account to address the specific **new challenges** of COVID-19, the **pre-existing challenges** for the achievement of the SDGs-build back better & achieve greater resilience

**Preparing an action plan for addressing most of SDGs was difficult
difficult to prioritize**

- **Structure:** the format of this doc is build around 9 broad Policy Areas
- **PA 1: Geospatial, Land Rights, Tenure, Resource Allocation and Justice**
- **PA 2: Involvement of Local Communities and Local Action**
- **PA 9: Buildings, Construction and Land Planning**

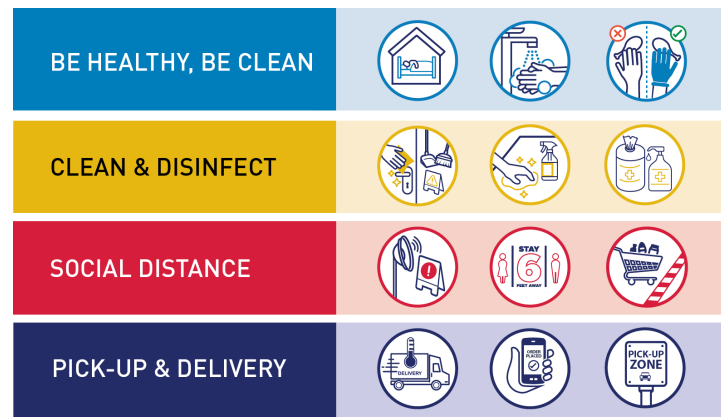
Emergency, short-term as well as intermediate- or long-term Goals, Targets & Actions for building back better are required

- SDG 1 No Poverty; SDG 11 cities and human settlements, SDG 3 good health and well-being; SDG 5, gender equality; SDG 6, clean water and sanitation; SDG 7, Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy; SDG 9, industry, innovation and infrastructure; SDG10, reduced inequalities; SDG 13, climate action; SDG 16, peace, justice and strong institutions; SDG17 global partnership



Facts taken into account for the preparation of the Recovery Action Plan

- So far **few countries** have reported significant **progress within the 5 years** on implementation of the SDGs
- Many projects already face **significant additional delays** due to the Covid-19 situation
- **1.6 billion workers** in the formal or informal economy **are at risk** of losing their livelihoods due to covid-19
- Creation of “**new poor**”, which will soon join those most vulnerable
- Other natural disasters are more or less “localized”, while **COVID-19** is or may exist “everywhere”...and this **requires holistic solutions , BUT**
- At the same time COVID-19 has a higher, “**localized**” **concentration among informal settlement residents** where people are less prepared, basic infrastructures are poor, and where there is a significant lack of reliable geo-referenced data



SDGs, Informal Settlements & covid-19

- **Coronavirus was a test** and sadly even the world's supposedly most advanced nations had too visibly failed; **a global / regional action plan was still missing**
 - Experience within UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management:**
- Availability of reliable and affordable **geospatial and demographic data** in a timely manner is crucial
- Given that more than 50M people live in ISs within UNECE, the question is: “**Who**” and at the same time, more importantly “**where**” are the most vulnerable, those exposed most to the pandemic? and “**how**” to act efficiently and in a timely manner?
- Measures taken by governments to empower people against the pandemic are related to the **good management of land** and therefore **need to be more “localized”**, evidence-based, and fit-for-purpose solutions



COVID-19
RESPONSE



Introduction to PA 1: GEOSPATIAL, LAND RIGHTS, TENURE, RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND JUSTICE (1)



Goal 1. Informal settlements are formalized and brought into the formal markets in a just, efficient, and sustainable manner, allowing for broader socio-economic progress, justice, and the empowerment of the people, especially those in vulnerable and marginalized situations.

Gold-Green-Blue

- Legal informality and covid-19
 - **Houses lack of titles and registration**; lack of legal **empowerment** & lack of **geospatial data**; dead capital, no access to credit; residents suffer evictions, utility shut-offs, gender inequality
 - **Residents work in the informal sector** negative effects on poverty GDP, risk, real estate values, tax revenue, human rights & as they interact with formal sector there is a huge impact on sustainability
 - There is a need for **formalization of titles**, and for developing adequate and **inclusive policies**, institutions, and capacities to prevent informal development in future



Introduction to PA 1: GEOSPATIAL, LAND RIGHTS, TENURE, RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND JUSTICE (2)



- **T 1.1.** The registers and geospatial databases include informal constructions and ownership rights to foster greater socio-economic integration

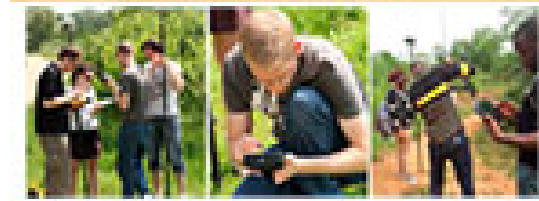
Actions

- *Identify the current coverage*, quality, and scope of the available geospatial data sources & improve it
- *Map and include informal buildings in the geospatial database and made it transparent*; Consider UAVs, crowd sourcing / VGI and smartphone applications as possible low-cost sources of this data
- *Coordinate the local community* along with NGO's to organize mapping volunteers, team leaders, training courses, select open source tools/data and appropriate basemaps & validation methods
- *Supplement existing demographic information* with a wide variety of health statistics for residents (gender, age distributions, disabilities, preexisting health conditions, urban density, health care access, etc.)



FIG Journal

New Trends in Geospatial Information:
**The Land Surveyors Role
in the Era of Crowdsourcing and VGI**



Current work and practice article
The Land Surveying Required Geo-Geo-Science Community
(FIG Commission 3)



Introduction to PA 1: GEOSPATIAL, LAND RIGHTS, TENURE, RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND JUSTICE (3)



- **T 1.2.** Informal constructions are formalized in a fair, efficient, transparent, and inclusive manner, empowering residents, supporting social and economic inclusivity and better pandemic responses

Actions

- *Identify the extent of informal / unregistered* constructions/parcels and the current coverage, of the registration system, tenure types, cadaster, and legal structure for the formal and informal markets.
- *Organize political will* for dealing with formalization and involve local experts, professionals, and community leaders
- *Analyze the existing informality*, classify the constructions & develop cost benefit study; strategy; communication plan. Avoid evictions
- *Prepare the framework* for formalization (areas/zones and categories of buildings eligible for formalization; protected areas; necessary legal actions; title provision/registration process; monitoring; fees & institutions that are involved
- *Prepare the legal framework and carry out a fit for purpose formalization process*

UNECE

Guidelines for the formalization of informal constructions



UNITED NATIONS

Introduction to PA 1:

GEOSPATIAL, LAND RIGHTS, TENURE, RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND JUSTICE (4)



- **T 1.3.** The legal rights and justice systems are efficient and adequate (support sustainable development, foster integration of labor and land markets, be responsive to capital markets, equitable, inclusive, etc.)
- **Actions**
 - *Identify & review the existing legal structures* (laws, policy, procedures, fees, time to process, fairness and case backlog if appropriate) through the lens of human rights & flexibility
 - *Determine legal problems* that may hinder formalization and the integration, human rights and health service provision
 - *Draft a legal strategy* to bridge any gaps to support title provision and registration, formalization & ensure adequate pandemic related health services
 - *Engage the local community* leaders, health providers, stakeholders, professionals, and local government
 - *Build political will & raise awareness* for the legal changes
 - *Understand and prepare for legal and criminal challenges* as it relates to lock downs, partial or full closures, etc.
 - Provide titles, ensure maintenance of geospatial data
 - *Allow for structural improvements* of the formalized constructions and neighborhoods; *Provide incentives* for the residents & the private sector to adopt green & nature-based solutions



Introduction to PA 1:

GEOSPATIAL, LAND RIGHTS, TENURE, RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND JUSTICE (5)



- **T 1.4.** The institutions underpinning land, labor and capital economics and health-safety concerns are improved to better address pandemic threats and foster economic growth, fairness, and inclusivity.
- **Actions**
 -

Introduction to PA 2

INVOLVEMENT OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL ACTION (1)



Goal 2. Local community-based organizations, coordinated with a city-level team, respond to the pandemic in coordination with government ministries, medical, professional, and aid organizations of all kinds

- Raise awareness matters:
 - *local community leaders need to be informed* and involved as much as is reasonably possible to achieve the highest compliance with science-based plans designed to protect both formal and informal communities
 - residents can become involved in safeguarding their community
 - *The COVID-19 crisis* requires short term responses, that sometimes *contradict local customs and/or religious procedures*
 - *Short- & Long-term involvement* of volunteers



Introduction to PA 2

INVOLVEMENT OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL ACTION (2)



- **T 2.1.** Social and community groups are formed to respond to pandemic related threats, engage residents and address the community's very specific needs.

Actions Red and Gold

- *Identify the existing trusted community leaders*, social and faith-based groups, understand their approach to safeguarding the community from pandemic threat.
- *Encourage the creation of local task forces* to identify specific community needs and pandemic related issues
- *Identify, create, or expand the relevant governmental agencies* that are critical in pandemic health response, and community engagement.
- *Develop local community led specific plans* to address possible problems and shortages (basic goods, food, medicine, elderly care, etc.)
- *Assist and organize* the city-wide, and community led groups along with governmental agencies to address and fund these specific community challenge initiatives.
- *Coordinate* these local initiatives with national and international stakeholders.



Introduction to PA 2

INVOLVEMENT OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL ACTION (3)



- **T 2.2.** Local charities, international NGO's and donors are coordinated to respond to the pandemic threats and assist in solving community specific challenges

Actions Red and Gold

- *Identify the donors and charities* that have an interest in assisting in local community pandemic response
- *Engage international NGO's, donors, and other stakeholders* with governmental agencies, as well as the appropriate local groups for effective aid programs
- *Create a plan* to link the variety of NGO's, donors, and their resources with the specific local challenges to limit viral spread, mitigate social harm, and protect human rights.
- *Initiate charity and NGO programs* with appropriate oversight to minimize corruption and waste



Introduction to PA 2

INVOLVEMENT OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL ACTION (4)



- **T 2.3.** Community based information campaigns provide accurate data to informal settlements residents, disseminating such information in a timely manner and in detail appropriate to the local pandemic threats

Actions Red and Gold

- *Identify the methods* to reach the greatest number of committed informal settlements residents
- *Develop urgent community specific plans* to assist in raising awareness, and coordinate with governmental agencies
- *Supply information to local communities* use the appropriate languages
- *Keep societal and political will strong* by a focus on consistent science-based problem solving
- *Minimize unfounded governmental mistrust* by making plans direct and easy to understand



Introduction to PA 9

BUILDINGS, CONSTRUCTION AND LAND PLANNING



Goal 9. Viral risks posed by specific large public facilities, informal homes, and other constructions are eliminated

- Unplanned built environment and covid-19:
 - **Large public facilities** pose significant risks for viral spread in terms of indoor traffic; social distancing procedures; ventilation
 - **Informal substandard housing** are densely populated; lack of services; hygienic measures & instructions are not easily applicable
 - **Accessibility** crowded routes, paths, public spaces



Introduction to PA 9

BUILDINGS, CONSTRUCTION AND LAND PLANNING



- **T 9.1.** Large commercial, educational, and public facilities are safe: hospitals, medical centers, government buildings, schools

Actions Red and Gold

- *Identify, map* the buildings & *analyze*:
 - Which large facilities require *full or partial closure*, when, and for how long)
 - Which have *frequent use* and therefore *long ques* (redesign/standardize procedures, provide list for services by appointment/electronically, provide information about needed documents and procedures)
 - *Modify the use* (increase ventilation, seat spacing, etc)
 - plan for *fully or partially closed schools*. Determine the appropriateness of distance learning & *Ensure appropriate public response* (Schools should close last and open first for several reasons if possible)



Introduction to PA 9

BUILDINGS, CONSTRUCTION AND LAND PLANNING



- **T 9.2.** Sustainable adequate housing for all classes of informal settlement residents

Actions Gold, Green and Blue

- *Understand* the *increased risks* of viral spread due to the specific physical characteristics of Informal housing
- Determine *temporary or long-term adjustments* to the housing stock or social housing
- Identify on the map *spots/buildings* and provide *temporary housing, or quarantine facilities*
- Expand *social housing options* as short term solutions for *homeless* and
- Plan for longer-term *affordable housing*
- Allow for *home access by external doors*, and numerous staircases to limit indoor concentrations of residents and provide excellent ventilation along exterior public walkways (if possible)
- Make simple *adjustments* in how the buildings are used to lower risks for *vulnerable residents*. When Informal housing includes a high percentage of elderly or vulnerable residents, relocation may be considered



Introduction to PA 9

BUILDINGS, CONSTRUCTION AND LAND PLANNING



- **T 9.3.** Roads, foot paths and choke points have lower peak traffic.

Actions Red, Gold and Green

- *Map and study* the movement patterns within informal settlements to *identify where* high-density areas create public risk and road closures or the *addition of new access points* should be considered to mitigate these risks
- *Prepare mapped plans* for *quarantines and lockdowns* in informal settlements understanding that they will be more difficult *to implement, monitor*, more costly for residents, and harder to *enforce* than in formal communities.
- Balance the risk of a pandemic with the existing dangers facing the community. The informal communities are often at greater risk from a variety of *other threats such as fires, floods, air quality, chronic health issues*, etc. *Disaster response* should be enhanced and appropriate for each of these community specific challenges.

