

BRIDGE FOR CITIES 2020

Driving the Decade of Action: COVID-19 and the future of Cities

5 October 2020
Digital Edition

Concept Note



Co-Organizers:



FINANCE CENTER FOR
SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION
南南合作金融中心

Partners:



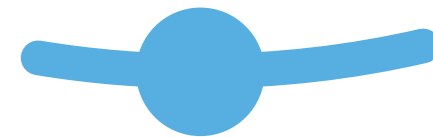


As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to unfold globally, cities are currently bearing the brunt of the crisis. 90 percent of cases reported thus far have occurred in cities. If not addressed effectively, the health and socio-economic impact of the crisis threatens to jeopardize the ambitious goals set out in the 2030 Agenda.

At a time where the Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has just started, the COVID-19 crisis forces policy-makers to think outside the box and identify innovative solutions. To advance such solutions, coordinated actions at all levels of government and by many stakeholders are required, including at the local level.

As pointed out in the recent UN Policy Brief 'COVID-19 in an Urban World', cities and municipalities are home to extraordinary solidarity and resilience. In many countries, cities and regions have core competencies for policy areas underlying the SDGs such as water, housing, transport, infrastructure, land use or climate change. Beyond SDG 11, which focuses on cities and communities, an estimated 65% of the 169 targets behind the 17 SDGs will not be reached without engagement of local and regional governments.

While the socio-economic economic crisis triggered by the lockdown measures has further exacerbated existing challenges in many cities, the authority vested in cities thus provides a unique window of opportunity to Mayors, local representatives and urban stakeholders to build back better and to realize resilient, inclusive, gender-equal and green economic recovery for the advancement of the SDGs.



Find more information on [Bridge for Cities](#) at:

www.unido.org/bridge-for-cities



Conducted for the fifth year in a row, **Bridge for Cities 2020** provides a forum for Mayors and urban stakeholders to discuss and exchange views on relevant experiences, challenges and opportunities. This year's event will place particular emphasis on green, social and technological innovations to respond and recover from the crisis and act as an accelerator for the SDGs, thus also helping to define the future of cities.

Given their key role in the recovery process and in fast-tracking the Decade of Action for the SDGs, the event will focus on the executives of cities and thus feature two Mayors roundtables. Mayors from across the world, both developed and developing countries, will be invited to exchange knowledge, concrete actions and success stories, with the aim to ultimately facilitate city-to-city networking and tangible partnerships. The event will also include a townhall interview with an eminent dignitary, who will prepare the ground by highlighting the opportunities and much-needed innovative urban solutions to respond and recover from the crisis.

The event discussions will be tailored around three major themes:



Inclusive economic recovery: The manufacturing sector has been one of the sectors most affected by the COVID-19 crisis, with the largest decline witnessed in micro, small- and medium enterprises (MSMEs). The sector plays a critical role not only for job and wealth creation, but also in the context of providing essential personal protective equipment (PPE). In many cities, notably in developing countries, economic decline during the crisis has followed income lines, with repercussions on citizens' well-being and access to basic services. The response and recovery measures taken by cities to pursue inclusive growth and job creation are therefore of vital importance to develop livable cities.



Innovative economic recovery: Lockdown and social distancing measures in the trail of the COVID-19 crisis have disrupted our normal ways of living, working, and communicating. Digitalization has proven to be instrumental to overcome some of these difficulties, helping local governments to respond to ever-changing exigencies in terms of governance, social services, commerce, work and health. Promoting behavioural shifts and applying technology-based smart city solutions to managing the effects of COVID-19 are of continued importance to urban economy, even beyond the crisis.



Green economic recovery: Cities are engines for growth, as they are home to the great majority of a country's productive, industrial and manufacturing activities. At the same time, they are paying the highest toll in terms of pollution and environmental degradation and have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 crises. The lockdown measures applied in the great majority of industrialized and other countries have had disastrous consequences on economic growth but a positive short-term environmental impact. This demonstrates that decisive, targeted, collective action can quickly transform the environment but must also be designed to drive sustained recovery. The crisis provides a unique opportunity to expand investments in an equitable green transformation, which will create lasting solutions and reduce the risks of future crisis and mitigate the impacts of climate change.



Tentative Agenda

(Central European Time)

Virtual Exhibition Space for
Bridge for Cities 2020

5
October
Hopin
Platform

11:00 – 11:40
Opening Statements

11:40 – 12:00
Virtual Networking

12:00 – 13:00
Townhall Interview
Innovative economic recovery: Accelerating digitalization for smarter cities

13:00 – 13:15
Virtual Networking

13:15 – 14:30
Mayors Roundtable: Session 1
Inclusive economic recovery: Driving business innovation and job creation for liveable cities

14:30 – 14:45
Virtual Networking

14:45 – 16:00
Mayors Roundtable: Session 2
Green economic recovery: Re-thinking urban development models for sustainable cities

16:00 – 16:15
Closing Remarks





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