
Building Anew: Systematic Approach to Supporting the Urban Poor for the Sustainable Post-COVID World

9 December 2020 (Webinar with interactive discussion)

Background

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the livelihoods of all demographic groups with a cumbersome new normal such as shelter-in-place or stay-at-home orders and social distancing guidelines. For more than one billion urban people living in slums or informal settlements globally,¹ these orders and guidelines aren't just arduous; it is not possible to comply with them. The actions taken to contain the pandemic are unevenly and disproportionately influencing the urban poor in multiple ways, including job loss, rise in prices, loss of remittances, limited rationing of food and other basic goods, limited access to health care services, and disruption to education. Rigorous quarantine measures have brought a large part of economic activities to a standstill, leaving many urban poor without means to make a living. It is greatly feared that the pandemic could generate the new extremely poor people to an extent which our relentless efforts to combat poverty in accordance with the 2030 agenda are to little avail. It is estimated that the pandemic could push about 49 million poors more into extreme poverty in 2020 alone.²

In response to such urgent reality, UNITAR CIFAL Jeju is organizing a virtual dialogue webinar to explore pathways to enhance the livelihoods of the urban poor for the sustainable future. Expanding on the previous online workshop which explored the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the urban poor, this workshop seeks to provide concrete skill sets that could be employed to develop policies and programs to help the urban poor in this difficult time. Through such efforts, governments and societal leaders should strive to build an improved post-COVID world in which more people can enjoy sustainable livelihoods. Specifically, this online workshop will provide insight into 1) ways in which different levels of governing bodies can contribute to support the urban poor, 2) needs assessment and data collection methodology for more informed decision-making and 3) strategies to effectively develop and implement policies.

No single governing entity can function while completely severed from other governing bodies. This has especially been the case in crisis response and will be the case for building a resilient post-COVID world. World Health Organization noted in its strategy report for protecting the urban dwellers from the pandemic that "coordination and coherence in measures across different levels of governance, from national to intermediate (e.g. state)

¹ <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2019/goal-11/>

² <https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/impact-covid-19-coronavirus-global-poverty-why-sub-saharan-africa-might-be-region-hardest>

and municipal / local levels" is essential.³ Local governments play a critical role as "front-line responders" in charge of service provision, infrastructure investment and maintenance, and mobilization of local communities' support.⁴ However, such efforts would not be as effective if national governments cannot complement with measures such as stronger border inspection and control over cross-region movements.⁵ It is also crucial for the national governments to fill in the gaps through coordination across all levels of municipalities.⁶ International organizations can facilitate such cross-level coordination by connecting local communities and organizations to central governments.⁷ One of the modules of this workshop will delve deeper into this interplay between stakeholders at different levels and strategies to maximize the synergy effect.

With the understanding of each stakeholder's role, it would be important to accurately understand the needs of the urban poor. In order for urban development schemes to be successful, the implementors must accurately understand the target population's needs.⁸ They also need to collect baseline data.⁹ And response to the COVID-19 crisis is no exception.¹⁰ However, the implementors cannot use the traditional methods of data collection and needs assessment due to restrictions on travel and in-person contact.¹¹ Moreover, restrictions on movement can also limit people's access to electronic devices, which makes data collection and needs assessment even more challenging.¹² Another module of this workshop will be dedicated to discuss these challenges and new methodologies that are more appropriate in the specific circumstance of the pandemic. Based on these understandings, the participants will have an opportunity to discuss policy development and implementation strategies.

Through this workshop, participants will be equipped with practical knowledge and tools directly applicable in policy-making process that can contribute to building a sustainable post-COVID world. Some of the SDGs related to this workshop are SDG 1 No Poverty, SDG 3 Good Health and Well-Being, SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities and SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals.

Objectives

- To provide a platform for good practices and lessons learned to be shared
- To discuss different strategies to develop policies and programs catering to the needs of the urban poor in the context of the pandemic crisis.

³ WHO. (2020) Strengthening Preparedness for COVID-19 in Cities and Urban Settings: Interim Guidance for Local Authorities.

⁴ UN. (2020) Policy Brief: COVID-19 and Urban World.

⁵ UNCDF, UN-HABITAT, UNECA and UCLG Africa (2020). COVID-19 IN AFRICAN CITIES: Impacts, Responses and Policies.

⁶ UN. (2020) Policy Brief: COVID-19 and Urban World.

⁷ Annie Wilkinson et al. (2020). "Local response in health emergencies: key considerations for addressing the COVID-19 pandemic in informal urban settlements". Environment & Urbanization Vol 32 (2): 503–522. DOI: 10.1177/0956247820922843

⁸ Wahab, H. A., Abu Bakar, S. H. and Islam, M. R. (2016) "Needs Assessment for Poverty Alleviation: A Case of Malaysia". Transylvanian Review 24:5.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Wilkinson et al. (2020)

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

- To share experiences on designing and managing policy strategies intended to better support the urban poor for the sustainable future.

Expected Outcomes

- Better understanding of the due roles of each governing body in concerted efforts to contain the pandemic.
- Better understanding of data collection methods for needs assessment to better address the needs of the urban poor.
- Shared policy strategies to minimize the economic and social impact of the pandemic on the urban poor

Target Audience

- This program is open to government officials, local organization leaders, other professionals and students who have been working and interested in the area related to Sustainable Development Goals pertaining to the livelihoods of the urban poor in the pandemic context.

Application and deadline

Send the filled-in application form to cifaljeju.jitc.1@gmail.com or apply at shorturl.at/gqzG6 by **2 December 2020 (Wednesday)**.

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| Application form | Download from http://www.cifaljeju.org/bbs/board.php?bo_table=sub05_3&wr_id=102 |
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Kindly note that the participants have to attend the prep-session to be held **on 7 December 2020 at 15:00 (Seoul time, GMT+9)**.

Certificate

- UNITAR CIFAL Jeju/JITC will issue a certificate of participation upon the completion of training.

Event type Virtual Dialogue Webinar

Date 9 December 2020, 15:00 pm (Seoul time, GMT+9)

Organizer UNITAR CIFAL Jeju/Jeju International Training Center

Website <http://cifaljeju.org/>

Program Details

- The Zoom meeting will begin **at 15:00 Seoul Time (GMT+9) on 9 December.**

| Schedule | Time | Details |
|---|------------|--|
| 9 December (Wednesday) at 15:00 Seoul Time (GMT+9) | 5 minutes | Welcome Remarks Kyung Hoon SUL, Director of CIFAL Jeju |
| | 20 minutes | Module 1 Efforts to enhance the urban poor livelihoods at different levels of governing bodies |
| | 20 minutes | Module 2 Needs assessment to develop policy strategies for the urban poor livelihoods |
| | 20 minutes | Module 3 Developing and implementing policy strategies to enhance the urban poor livelihoods |
| | 35 minutes | Plenary session including Q&A |

*The above program is subject to change.