

#BeyondTheOutbreak

Live Learning Experience: Beyond the Immediate Response to the Outbreak

Thematic Session – Covid-19 & Safer Cities - “Reimagining Public Safety in the face of historical inequalities and emerging crisis in Cities”

Thursday 25.06.2020, 15:00 – 17:00 CEST

With more than half of the world’s population under lockdown conditions by early April, COVID-19 has cast a harsh light on inequalities and social distress in urban environments across the globe. Emerging data shows domestic violence has increased in several countries as insecurity, movement restrictions, loss of income, isolation, high levels of stress and anxiety create tensions and strains at home accentuated by the cramped and confined living conditions of lockdown.

In addition, in countries with weak rule of law and existing economic constraints as well, the increase in violence, public unrest, looting and other crime in this COVID 19 phase has been accentuated by overwhelmed governments that resort to stopping civil unrest by all means necessary.

Yet COVID-19 responses have created a crisis in providing public safety, with heavy responsibility falling on security services, while depleting funds and capacities for other important contributors. We need to avoid going back into old emergency paradigms, ignoring the importance of systemic and collaborative approaches. The impact of this emergency approach has been made worse by regulations and restrictions on mobility and the impact of lock downs on economic and social ecologies, including a spike in domestic violence.

If the pandemic is amplifying some of the inequalities and shortcomings of our system, this has been the case, as well, in terms of security. Wherever measures



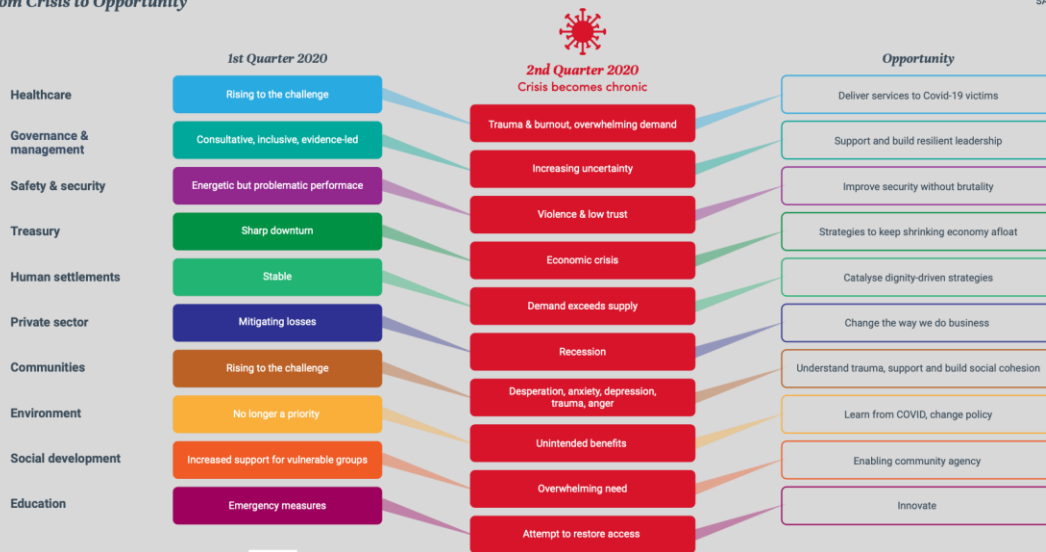
have relied on security forces to enforce COVID-19 regulations we have witnessed a rise in racial profiling, often spurred by the proliferation of opportunistic discourses that frame the more vulnerable communities as the perpetrators. Our territories are now witnessing an increasing mistrust in many public institutions, and this also translates to the security forces that should protect us.

Urgent actions are needed with a multilevel governance of safety approach to achieve safer cities for all inhabitants, and to ensure that trust is regained between our institutions and our communities. Where inhabitants are free from fear of violence, there is greater possibility for people to interaction with and trust public institutions, regardless of their migratory or gender status, thereby fostering inclusion and participation. Similarly, effective, transparent and accountable urban governance is crucial for the creation of safe cities and human settlements.

This COVID 19 time with all its uncertainty must be used to reflect, to respond, but most importantly prepare for the social recovery phase that will include post-traumatic growth in cities and building on the resilience that cities have shown through the pandemic period.

From Crisis to Opportunity

SAFER CITIES



A holistic approach to urban safety and security for all is therefore evidently one of the key accelerated interventions required in post-COVID 19 social recovery response plans.

Dialogue among spheres of government, and among our communities, will make us resilient to conflict. The local and territorial level is critical to rethink, and to reshape the governance systems into more participatory, accountable and transparent ones that respond to the demands of our communities. It is up to the local sphere to listen to the demands of their communities and the civil society who are calling for transformation.

Beyond national governments, Cities and Local Regional Governments will need to formulate and implement robust age appropriate and gender sensitive safety strategies and action plans in collaboration with local communities and stakeholders to support especially the vulnerable communities and reduce the impact of COVID-19 measures.

Connection Details

Time: 25th June 2020 15:00 CEST

Link to the Zoom meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89877570558?pwd=RTZzUE9VZjNpY3JGQUoxb2ptYm40QT09>

Meeting ID: 898 7757 0558

Password: 901437

