



**The 3rd SPP online meeting - Post COVID-19 Spatial Planning
(3 February 2021)**

Key Findings and Summary Report

Message from Government of Japan, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism:

Jun Nakahara
**Director-General of National Spatial
Planning and Regional Policy Bureau**

The New Urban Agenda, which was adopted at Habitat III, underscores balanced territorial development. To contribute to achieve this, SPP was established in 2018 jointly by UN-Habitat as an international platform for all stakeholders to share their experience and knowledge on formulation and implementation of national and regional spatial plans. Since its foundation, member countries and international bodies have deepened their ties, shared the experiences and knowledge on design and the implementation of special plans and learned from each other about major challenges in coping with the issues of this organized urban development brought by rapid economic growth.

On the sideline of World Urban Forum, we had the second SPP meeting in Abu Dhabi in February 2020. It's been a year since then and COVID-19 has changed the world like never before. But today, we made it to have the first virtual meeting. Today, many countries are facing challenges due to rapid urbanization and urban density along with population growth. Japan has experienced the population influx in

urban areas after World War II and has revised special plans seven times to realize balanced territorial development and comprehensive growth. And as a result, we were able to not only achieve a strong economic growth, but also narrow the regional gaps. We believe growth has to benefit everyone. Therefore, well-balanced territorial development based on strategic spatial planning is indispensable to ensure no one is left behind in our society. The new coronavirus has impacted particularly on the vulnerable population in urban areas and UN-Habitat and government authorities have been committed in anti-eviction measures to address the challenge. At the same time, discussions are underway about sustainable spatial development taking into account challenges that surfaced during the COVID-19 pandemic. New coronavirus has changed the way we work and the way we live in Japan, but we are committed to develop sustainable territories with post-COVID society in mind so that everyone, including future generation, can enjoy peace and prosperity. Impact of COVID-19 and challenges of spatial planning may vary by country and by region, but we believe it is crucial to share knowledge and experiences and learn from each other. This time, we added a public-private partnership business session on the agenda for the first time to introduce high-quality Japanese infrastructure technology and experiences to contribute to sustainable and comprehensive growth. We'd like to enhance partnership with respective nations and also contribute to their self-sustaining development through high-quality infrastructure projects, including support for spatial planning.

Message from UN-Habitat:

Maimunah Mohd Sharif
Under-Secretary-General and
Executive Director of UN-Habitat

We are most grateful for the continued support of the Government of Japan as spatial planning is a key ingredient towards sustainable urbanization. It has been slightly more than 2 years since I had the opportunity to be in Fukuoka for the establishment of the Spatial Planning Platform in July 2018. I am pleased with its progress. The Japanese experience of spatial planning at various levels is complementary. The full range of spatial planning is reflected in the Japanese experience at national, regional, and municipal levels. While I was a planner, I had firsthand experience of the capacity-building training course organized by the United Nations' Center for Regional Development in Nagoya, Japan. The training has proven useful in my career in Malaysia, both as a Director of Planning as well as a Mayor. Rapid economic growth and urbanization that Japan experienced from the 1960s to the 1980s resulted in governmental efforts to find innovative solutions when faced with challenges, such as growing inter-regional disparities, especially between metropolitan regions and rural regions. The rapid expansion of urban buildup areas also resulted in the deteriorations of the environment. For a nation that has a long history and tradition of sustainable living, the political will to deal with air, water, and solid waste pollution is exemplary. Japan also found itself with a shortfall of adequate and affordable housing. What I learned from the Japanese model is that middle-income countries can avoid these challenges if they keep an open mind. The Spatial Planning Platform provides the opportunity to learn from each other and we can adapt good practices to deal with specific challenges in our own context. Ladies and gentlemen, all of us now share the same challenge of managing the multiple waves of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are all now confined mostly to our homes. In fact, we are the lucky ones. In quarantine, most of us have

been forced to deal with the inequalities in our cities and communities. The pandemic has also exposed and exacerbated free existing inequalities and vulnerabilities. For instance, informal workers who depend on daily wages have been deprived of their livelihood and many of them are women. Children without internet access have lost a year of formal education. It is now widely recognized that COVID-19 is reversing the gains made in poverty eradication and pushing back the target date of the Sustainable Development Goals by a decade. However, there is an opportunity to catch up, but we will need the political will to do the right thing. We must double our efforts to localize the SDGs, focus on how and when to translate policy into practice. The New Urban Agenda 2030 provides the tools that we can use to unlock the transformative roles that sustainable cities and communities can play. While cities are affected by COVID-19 in different ways, they are now actively focused on rebuilding their economies, health, infrastructure, housing, and municipal finances. We cannot hope to rebuild better, greener, and fairer, if we return to the old model. We need a new kind of capitalism and Japan offers one model. Japan's communitarian form of capitalism, one that spread wealth in a more equitable manner and one where economic and spatial policy is more integrated, can offer a lot of lessons to other cities. I strongly urge all of us to focus on the digital transformation of societies. We have been working virtually for nearly a year now. Making teleworking and online service delivery is a new normal. People and economic activities are moving away from expensive and crowded city centers. Spatial planning should provide policy insights and blueprints towards more balanced spatial development. UN-Habitat has been gathering and analyzing data, evidence and good practices to develop a new report titled "Cities and Pandemics: Towards a More Just, Green and Healthy Future" which will be available in March this year and discussion papers are already posted on UN-Habitat website. I can assure you that UN Habitat will continue to provide normative and practical guidance to member countries and cities in such domains.

Agenda and Speakers of Spatial Planning Platform Meeting

(Excerpt from SPP Meeting official website and flyer)

What is SPP?

Recently unplanned development and rapid urban growth is a major issue in a number of countries which has highlighted the need for spatial/territorial planning. The Spatial Planning Platform (SPP) was established by the government of Japan and the UN Habitat in 2018 as a platform, enabling a variety of stakeholders to share experiences and knowledge relating to the formulation and implementation of improved spatial plans. This platform also aims to create a network of stakeholders and to support the formulation and implementation of more effective spatial plans.

Background and Objective of SPP Meeting

Rapid and unplanned urbanization is an issue in a number of countries which has highlighted the increasing need for spatial/territorial planning to achieve more balanced territorial development between different regions and between urban and rural areas as well as to enable sustainable urban development in rapidly growing cities and regions. To meet growing demands and enhance knowledge and experience sharing among countries and cities, the Spatial Planning Platform (SPP) was established jointly by the Government of Japan and UN-Habitat in 2018 to serve as a platform enabling a broad range of governments and stakeholders to share experiences, best practices and knowledge related to the spatial planning and its implementation. The platform also aims to enhance networking of stakeholders and peer to peer learning process. Since its inception, the SPP members have met annually, the first in Fukuoka, Japan in July 2018 and Abu Dhabi in UAE in February 2020.

The 3rd SPP meeting will be held on 3 February via Zoom and will address issues related to “Spatial Planning and COVID-19 Crisis”, “The Roles of Spatial Planning in solving current crisis” and “Spatial Planning and Businesses”. It is aimed to enhance sharing of experiences and good practices in dealing with multiple challenges in the aftermath of COVID-19 socio-economic crisis and guiding Build Back Better and Greener through spatial planning tools and interventions at various territorial levels. Participants will have a chance to deep dive in those issues through discussions among countries and cities, UN, World Bank, donor agencies and the private sector.

The meeting was held online via ZOOM, with English and Japanese simultaneous interpretation.

Date: 3 February 2021

【Opening remarks 15:00~15:10】

Mr. Jun Nakahara

Director-General, National Spatial Planning and Regional Policy Bureau, MLIT, Japan

Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif

Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN Habitat

【Session 1: Spatial planning and the COVID-19 crisis 15:10~16:10】

COVID-19 and the accompanying health response measures, such as lockdowns and social-distancing have impacted people's mobility, economic development, social services and spatial policies. As the effects of the crisis differ across countries and regions, depending on their key industries, population density and poverty levels, long-term policymaking in response to regional impacts is a prerequisite. This session aims to discuss how spatial and regional policy will change following COVID-19 and to establish the role of spatial plans to ensure that “nobody is left behind” in society and within communities.

<Key Questions>

- What are the main impacts of the COVID-19 crisis in your country? Who have been affected primarily? Do you expect the impact to differ between cities and rural areas in your country?
- How will your country mitigate the impact of COVID-19? Have you developed recovery strategies?
- What spatial policy changes do you expect following the COVID-19 crisis?
- What do you think the role of spatial plans will be after the crisis?

<Moderator>

Mr. Atsushi Koresawa

Regional Representative for Asia and the Pacific

<Panelists>

Mr. Toshihiro Odagiri

Senior Planner for National Land Policy, Ministry of Land Infrastructure, Transportation and Tourism, Japan

Ms. Mercedesita A. Sombilla

Undersecretary of the Regional Development Group of the National Economic and Development Authority, Philippines

Dr. Pen Sophal

Secretary of State, Ministry of Land Management and Construction, Cambodia

Dr.-Ing Rattikarn Khambud

Urban /National Spatial Planner, National and Regional Planning Bureau, Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning, Ministry of Interior, Thailand

Prof. Mona Fawaz

Professor/ Urban Planner, American University of Beirut (AUB), Lebanon

Dr. Wilson Kayom

Physical Planning Specialist / Consultant, Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development, Uganda

Mr. Bijay Karmacharya

UN-Habitat Country Programme Manager, Yangon, Myanmar

【Session 2: The role of spatial planning in solving current issues 16:10~17:10】

Spatial and regional plans are crucial for the use, development and conservation of national land. Across SPP countries, a variety of national and regional plans have been formulated and implemented, depending on their natural and socio-economic conditions. Yet, climate change, rapid population growth, urban concentration and the COVID-19 crisis have dramatically changed the basic conditions required to formulate spatial plans. Therefore, it is important for SPP countries and international organizations to share the progression of spatial plans and the challenges they face.

<Key Questions>

- What are the main spatial/regional challenges (urbanization, planning, housing, environment, etc.) that you face in your country and what possible solutions can be applied?
- What spatial/regional plans have you developed in your country?
- What challenges do you face in formulating and implementing spatial plans?

<Moderator>

Ms. Arisa Osawa

Director for National Spatial Planning and Coordination, MLIT, Japan

<Panelists>

Mr. Sengdara Douangmyxay

Director of Urban Planning Division, Department of Housing and Urban Planning, Ministry of Public Works and Transport, Laos

Mr. Padma K Mainalee

Joint Secretary (Urban Development Division), Ministry of Urban Development, Nepal

Mr. Joaquim Langa

National Director of Land and Territorial Development at the Ministry of Land and Environment from Mozambique

Mr. Nobuyuki Kobe

Deputy Director, Team 2, Urban and Regional Development Group, Infrastructure Management Department, Japan International Cooperation Agency

Dr. Gayatri Singh

Senior Urban Development Specialist, World Bank

Dr. Tadashi Matsumoto

Head of Unit, Sustainable Development and Global Relations Cities, OECD

Mr. Yoshinobu Fukasawa

Overseas Business Department Director, Nishi-Nippon Railroad Co., Ltd.

【Closing Session 17:10~17:20】

Ms. Lydia Ogden and Ms. Marion Reinos

Interns, UN-Habitat

Mr. Yasuo Tanabe

Deputy Director-General, National Spatial Planning and Regional Policy Bureau

【Break 17:20~17:30】

【Session 3: Spatial planning and business 17:30~18:30】

Based on the discussion in Sessions 1 and 2, presentations and proposals will be made by Japanese infrastructure companies to demonstrate how they can contribute to solving spatial/regional issues with the use of their technologies and financial strategies. Participants will also have the opportunity to join one-to-one business consultations with companies, using Zoom breakout room.

<Key Questions>

- How can “Quality Infrastructure” assist in overcoming the spatial/regional challenges that SPP countries face?
- What is required to ensure that the formulation and implementation of spatial plans is more effective?

<Quality infrastructure Companies who participated in the breakout room>

Challenge Co.,Ltd

GIKEN LTD.

FUMIN Co., Ltd.

SAKAI HEAVY INDUSTRIES,LTD.

Tokyo Rope International Inc.

TOYO KENSETSU KOHKI CO., LTD.

Atomix Co., Ltd.

Mitsui Bussan Chemicals Co., Ltd.

Nihon Suido Consultants Co., Ltd.

Index Consulting, Inc.

Asia Air Survey Co., Ltd.

ITOCHU Corporation

Fujita Corporation

Internet Initiative Japan Inc.

Kyosan Electric Manufacturing Co., Ltd.

Hitachi Zosen Corporation

Nippon Koei Co., Ltd.

Nishi Nippon Railroad Co., Ltd.

METAWATER Co., Ltd.

Japan International Cooperation Agency

World Bank

More details are available on SPP website: <https://www.mlit.go.jp/kokudoseisaku/SPP/3rdMeeting/>

Acknowledgements

The 3rd SPP online meeting - Post COVID-19 Spatial Planning Key Findings and Summary Report

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Chapter 1

Main message and Four areas

The Third SPP Meeting held on 3 February 2021 revealed huge interest and enthusiasm over spatial planning skills, knowledge, and mutual learning of best practices and lessons learned. In order to capture the diverse and varying interests and needs of countries and those engaged in spatial planning, including related areas such as urban planning, policies, and from both central and local governments, academia, international organizations and more broadly the private sector, this condensed summary report of the SPP Meeting extracting key messages and suggesting “ways forward” was made. The report would also contribute to plan the next Fourth SPP Meeting and to invite new members from other countries.

The Meeting was held amid the COVID-19 crisis and participants were asked to introduce immediate response and measures undertaken by governments. The pandemic exposed long existing problems, vulnerabilities and inequalities within and between cities. It is essential to re-prioritize actions based on SDGs and to accelerate the process of realizing well-planned, managed, financed and sustainable urbanization.

In this report there are four main areas suggested followed by sub items for each area. The four main areas are Spatial Strategy, Infrastructure & housing, Basic Services and Governance.

Spatial Strategy

This area summarizes the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on spatial strategy and how it should further focus on people centered sustainable development in the following four sub items:

- Planning
- Density
- Public Spaces
- Farmland

Infrastructure and Housing

This area focuses on infrastructure and housing which are essential for daily life in safe environment with provision of affordable housing and mobilizing people, goods and information by mobility, logistics and digitalization.

- Housing
- Mobility
- Logistics
- Digitalization

Basic Services

This area discusses basic services which have great influence on health and well-being of daily lives of the people. The pandemic revealed that the most affected are the most vulnerable in the following areas:

- Water
- Medical
- Education
- Employment/Jobs

Governance

This area focuses on coordination and cooperation which are necessary for implementing plans and achieve development goals in a holistic approach.

- Holistic approach
- Agility
- Public Private Partnership
- International Collaboration

*Case studies quoted to each issue are excerpted from the SSP conference presentation materials.

*Quotes were excerpted from the presentations and statements from country representatives/participants during the SPP Meeting.

Chapter 2

Spatial Strategy

Cities continue to be centers of sustainable development but need to be planned and managed well in order to improve quality of life of all residents: The World Cities Report published by UN-Habitat in 2021 states that the world continues to urbanize. There are obvious demographic changes the COVID-19 pandemic experience has caused, though it is too early to know if it will be a lasting phenomenon. It is more likely that the world will further urbanize over the next decade from 56.2 per cent today to 60.4 per cent by 2030. Spatial strategies will need to adapt to such trends with better planning and management of cities.

Planning

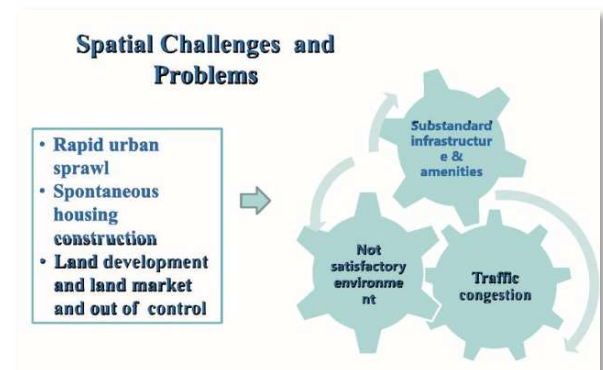
A spatial vision is required for sustainable development of cities where there's no or little spatial planning: In the era of so-called VUCA (vulnerability, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity) a vision should be different from rigid drawing of future urban forms which used to be norms of modern or post-modern planning. It could rather be a narrative of shared images of people's lives, a set of personal stories and image drawings, or a framework plan of major spatial structure including centers, neighborhoods and corridors.

There are more universal issues to be addressed. Firstly, social equity should be highlighted as it is clearly stated in the SDGs that we should "leave no one behind." Addressing sprawl by well-planned urban development to accommodate increasing number of people in urban areas is indispensable. The COVID-19 pandemic revealed that unplanned urban living leaves people vulnerable and that the vulnerable people are the first to be heavily affected by the pandemic and other urban risks.

Separate human habitat and wildlife habitat to avoid contact to reduce possible transmission of diseases: This also contributes to wildlife conservation and biodiversity undisturbed which will lead to sustainable development and the achievement of the goals. Such separation can be planned as part of land use that carefully design relationship between built and natural environment, before considering introduction of facilities, equipment or digital technologies.

Urban patterns also need to be addressed. Shift of human activities from CBDs to suburban centers are observed, yet needs to be monitored if it is a temporal or irreversible trend: In many cities, remote and flexible work style are promoted under the pandemic and those who are able to work remotely moved out of urban areas to suburban area to avoid density. Many service workers are forced to shift back to hometown in suburbs and rural areas as a result of unemployment caused by the pandemic and subsequent response measures such as the lock downs. There seems to be various and complexed reasons for shift in human activities from CBDs to suburban areas and it still need to be observed continuously.

“Develop national land for people to enjoy true richness and to respond to the Risks and Issues Japan is facing.”
Japan



Spatial planning challenges in Laos and possible solutions, Department of Housing and Urban Planning, Ministry of Public Works and Transport, Laos, p.3

Density

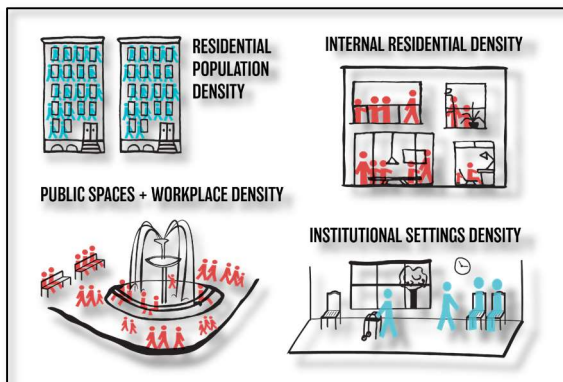
Density remains as the key for urbanization as it will provide easier access to more services and amenities: The COVID-19 pandemic exposed existent and obvious disparity in access to basic services such as food, water, medical services, education and other social services. While such disparity primarily stems from socio-economic status, spatial planning can contribute to solve or mitigate the disparity. Density has partly been seen as a cause for the spread of the pandemic in city areas, however at the same time, it was in the cities where the pandemic was first overcome. The key is the control and management of density. Well

managed density continued to contribute to people's life during the pandemic by providing access to basic services.

“We need to design more carefully for people in both low and high density areas; we need more hygienic housing and more universal design.”

Thailand

Different aspects of density should be further studied in detail: For instance, New York City determines four aspects of density; residential population density, internal residential density, public spaces+workspace density, and institutional settings density. Studies of this kind are in urgent need and cities should also provide data and case studies from their own experience.



What is Density? Different aspects of density, CHPC New York City, 2020
<https://chpcny.org/density-and-covid-19/>

“Planning to allocate pedestrian and bicycle lanes to decrease traffic congestion, also more green spaces to help absorb carbon dioxide and rainwater.

Promoting polycentric for spreading economic activities away from city centers to decrease density.

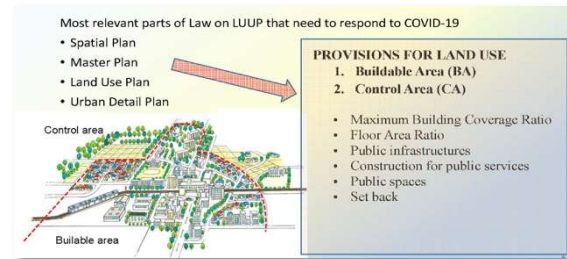
Re-design space to allow physical distancing.”

Cambodia

“Reduce the risks of communities exposed to the threats of natural, health, human-induced disasters by make

vulnerability reduction an integral part of the development.”

Philippines



Spatial plan after Covid-19, Ministry of Land Management, Urban planning and Construction, Cambodia, p.7

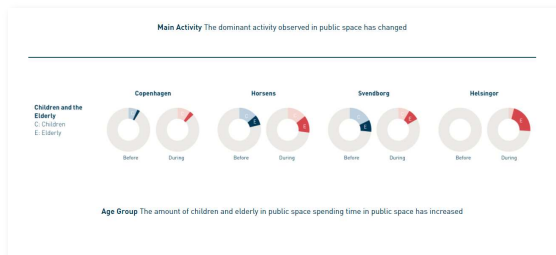
Public Spaces SDGs11.7

Having equal access to safe, inclusive, well-designed and maintained public spaces are basic needs for cities to keep people physically and mentally healthy at any time: COVID-19 pandemic constantly reminded urban residents on the importance of mental and physical health. In urban areas, public space plays an important role to contribute to people's health and well-being in various ways such as a place for sanitation infrastructure, exercising or gathering while keeping physical distance.

Different types of public spaces should be designed in a coordinated manner; from natural settings of mountains or oceans to city center parks to a small playlot or shared green space in the neighborhood.

Design spaces which do not overlook the needs of children, youth and women to enhance outdoor activities and offer safe child-friendly play opportunities: It is important to consider and include their voices and needs in the decision making process of urban planning.

Public space in cities create opportunities for democratic participation, social inclusion and safety that allow the cultural fabric of urban life to flourish.



Public Space, Public Life & COVID 19, Gehl
<https://covid19.gehlpeople.com/>

Farmland

Promoting urban farming and protecting agricultural land in rural areas for food security: Avoiding sprawl and unplanned land consumption will protect natural and agricultural areas which is essential for food security and protection of natural environment. Promoting urban farming is also essential to secure more fresh and healthier choices of food and lifestyles in urban areas which is closer to consumers. Physically being closer to earth and greenery also contribute to promote well-being of citizens and is proven effective especially during lockdowns by COVID-19.

Location of farmland should be reconsidered with residential patterns and smart logistic networks. Having an integrated food distribution system from ‘farm to table’ is one of key elements of city resilience.

“Interventions at various levels such as policy level, city level and operational level are planned. As for policy level, National Urban Policy is in its final stage for approval and the policy includes balanced spatial development as one of the policy themes.”

Myanmar

“The trends of the urban agriculture and herb garden; this will be the trend in the future in the cities because we need to be thankful, when the city locked down, people still have food to consume.”

Thailand



Linking Spatial and Capital Investment Planning, World Bank, p.7

“It is quite important for National Spatial Planning to preserve potential land for agriculture for food security” - Thailand

Chapter 3

Infrastructure & housing

Resilient infrastructure is key to continuity of daily life and businesses in cities. While digitalization is an irreversible trend and plays an important role in infrastructure development, spatial infrastructure remains equally important for people, goods and utilities as lifelines for cities.

Housing

Access to affordable housing is essential to avoid people from concentrating in dense slums and inadequate housing in particular amid the pandemic to realize social distancing: People living in inadequate housing conditions are more likely to be exposed to the threat of viruses and infectious diseases as it often lacks basic infrastructure such as clean water, sewage and other sanitation functions. The risk of being infected is also high as it is impossible to isolate oneself from COVID-19 cases in the neighborhood as they are sharing crowded space. Spatial planning should endorse provision of adequate quantity and quality of affordable housing at appropriate locations.

“Exploring the possibility for introduction of public and private housing and urban renovation programs to curb the existing uncontrolled development.”

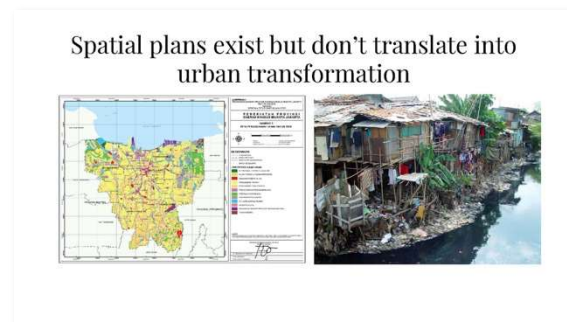
Laos

“There is almost no public housing in Beirut.”

Lebanon

“And about creating housing that is healthy for the environment, like we need to design more and be careful more for the people in the low density, high density and we need to keep hygienic housing and also more universal design about this.”

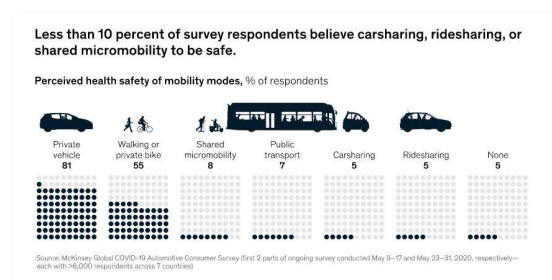
Thailand



Linking Spatial and Capital Investment Planning, World Bank, p.12

Mobility

Spatial planning should include mobility systems to connect urban areas and suburban areas for faster, cheaper, cleaner and safer travel: The importance of connecting urban areas and suburban areas lies in linking constant flow of people, goods, information, social interactions and such. Urban areas will continue to be the center for essential services to accelerate the concept of compact cities or transit-oriented development (TOD). While shared mobility and public transport is currently losing its share amid the pandemic, it should be reviewed and reinforced in a longer term, with anti-virus measures to pursue efficient use of infrastructure and to decrease green gas emissions. Moreover, it is also important to consider multi-functional mobility infrastructure, such as railroads performing both flow of people and logistics by dividing the space and operating hours to vehicles.



Why shared mobility is poised to make a comeback after the crisis, McKinsey & Company, July 15, 2020
<https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/automotive-and-assembly/our-insights/why-shared-mobility-is-poised-to-make-a-comeback-after-the-crisis#>

“Connect settlements and production areas by connecting rural areas and growth centers.”


Philippines

“Reduce reliance on personal vehicles and enhance shared and public mobility services to connect urban and rural areas.”

Thailand

“Improve road condition to reduce traffic jam and road crashes which is highest in East Africa.”

Uganda



NNR in Fukuoka 

Mobility as a Service

- △ My route: APP to search routes and transport modes, purchase tickets
- △ Piloted in Fukuoka
- △ Collaboration of NNR, TOYOTA, JR Kyushu

On-demand Bus

- △ APP to request a bus ride
- △ AI to organize a route to serve ride requests
- △ Pick up at meeting points
- △ Collaboration of NNR and Mitsubishi Corporation



TOD in Japan, NNR, p.10

“The Japan-type TOD; where synergy is leveraged between public transport network and urban development can be useful in some middle income countries where affordable housing and transportation network is in strong demand ”

Nishi Nippon Railroad

Logistics

Spatial planning should improve supply chain sustainability by implementing greener and resilient logistics: Supply chain is vital as a lifeline to maintain the flow of necessities including essential medical supplies and daily food products. People rely more on e-commerce and other home delivery services including food delivery. This trend has existed since before the pandemic and it will most likely continue growing.

Many private sector companies will need to review their production and procurement systems due to significant decrease in demand, and economic activity suspension, while sharp increase in demand in new products such as masks, PPE products and others supporting the new normal ways of life. To respond to such rapid changes, it is necessary to improve the supply chain's visibility, grasp the situation appropriately, review the capacity of the supplier, and adjust to the production volume. Efforts to improve the supply chain's visibility may be required, along with the promotion of digitalization.

“In regards to impact of the pandemic, 63% of the MSMEs experienced disruptions in their operations because of bottlenecks in their supply chain, including delayed operations and delayed logistics.”

Philippines

Digitalization

Data is key to mitigate specific aspects of risk; for mitigation of COVID-19, demographic indicators to track affected individuals and contact tracing will be the key: New technologies can facilitate better monitoring of cities for areas such as water, air, solid waste, infrastructure, energy, traffic and public transportation which will contribute to a better and sustainable environment for cities.

Smart cities must be designed for people. Privacy, equity and finance must be carefully designed around basic human rights.

**“Innovation in planning. Smart cities program in 13 cities which has one city on identity such as “Food green City.” -
*Nepal***

“We would like to develop the database management system in each province and in each city for us in the future, because when we need to solve the problem, we need to have a good and quality data for our country.”

Thailand

“One of the key issues is how to raise capacity of rural service providers, and promote regional development with DX/ICT potential.”

Thailand

“The wide range of data collection and analysis in broad aspect is necessary, such as potential and location in industry, access to global market, social services, road network, natural conditions, disaster risks, and climate change issues.”

- JICA

Chapter 4

Basic Services

It should not be underestimated since spatial planning helps determine access to such services that supports daily lives.

Water

Access to reliable and affordable clean water is basic infrastructure for sanitation which will avoid virus transmission: Washing hands frequently with clean water and soap is basic preventive action against COVID-19, however, for people living in informal settlements or in poverty, it is a luxury to secure clean water for such purposes.

Governments need to ensure everyone has access to sufficient amount of clean water as it is one of the basic human rights. Sewage systems are also important and cost-effective solutions should be examined particularly in congested settlements.

“---Installing washing basin in public toilets and proper drainage in markets and slaughterhouses.”

-Cambodia

“Another key role of spatial planning will be to accelerate, improve access to basic services, especially water and the development of affordable housing and informal settlements upgrading initiative.”

Myanmar

Locational planning of basic services, particularly access to water and public facilities should



Water Treatment Plant in Shwepyithar



SWM project in Htein Bin



Hand-washing station in Shwepyithar

Spatial Planning and Impact of Covid-19, UN Habitat Myanmar, p.8

Medical

Easy access to medical services for residents in both urban and rural areas are necessary especially in time of pandemic when vulnerable communities are most affected:

Unaffordable medical services and transportation barrier will cause inequalities in access to medical services. Spatial planning should accommodate reasonable distribution of clinics and hospitals that are combined with digital system of medical service networks.



Spatial Planning and Impact of Covid-19, UN Habitat Myanmar, p.3

Education

Educational facilities and systems such as schools, kindergartens, and higher education institutions should be updated to continue education during the pandemic: The COVID-19 pandemic affected learners globally at all levels by causing disruption in education. It also created inequality between those with access to internet or computer and those without them.

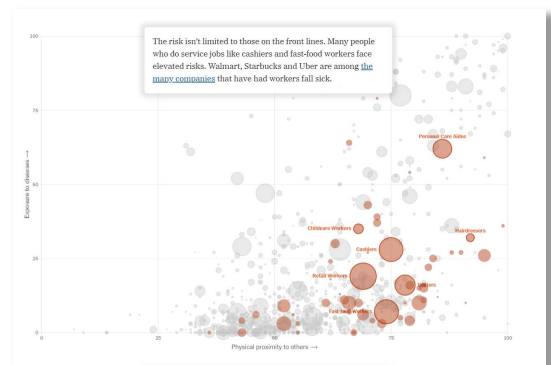
Continuity of education is key for the future of a resilient society. Density in classrooms and other facilities should be carefully managed to avoid overcrowding. Libraries, government offices and other public facilities should be also considered as additional venues for education. Although it may induce additional investment, implementation of distant learning is essential not to deprive students of learning opportunities.

“Children without internet access have lost a year of formal education.”

Maimunah Sharif, Executive Director, UN-Habitat

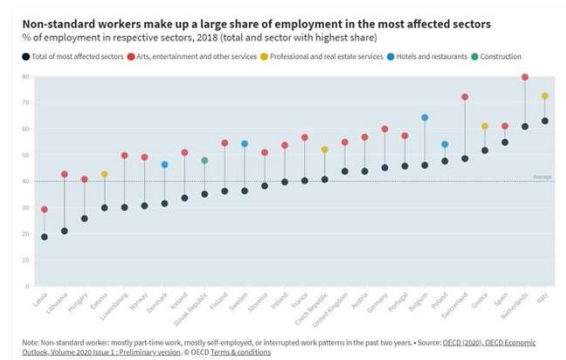
Employment/Jobs

Spatial planning should help secure jobs for people to sustain earning their livings: Risk of being infected varies by the types of work. The term “essential workers” is now widely recognized as those, defined by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), who conduct a range of operations and services in industries that are essential to ensure the continuity of critical functions. Among those, for example, medical and healthcare workers are highly prone to infection risks. Operators of infrastructure need to commute even during lockdown measures to keep cities functioning. Spatial planning could guide future location of essential workers.



The Workers Who Face the Greatest Coronavirus Risk, New York Times, March 15, 2020

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/03/15/business/economy/coronavirus-worker-risk.html>



Note: Non-standard worker: mostly part-time work, mostly self-employed, or interrupted work patterns in the past two years.

[OECD \(2020\), OECD Economic Outlook, Volume 2020 Issue 1 : Preliminary version. © OECD Terms & conditions](https://oecd.org/coronavirus/en/data-insights/impact-of-the-covid-19-crisis-on-non-standard-workers-in-european-oecd-countries)

<https://oecd.org/coronavirus/en/data-insights/impact-of-the-covid-19-crisis-on-non-standard-workers-in-european-oecd-countries>

COVID-19 increased unemployment rate and decreased hours of work of temporary workers which lead to house-hold income decrease:

The lockdown in cities also affected people in different ways. Those who are able to work from home may have kept their jobs and income, however, those who are unable to work from home and for businesses badly hit may have entirely or partially lost their job and income sources.

Spatial planning should help provide protective measures to prevent virus transmission by designing access to and space in workplaces which enables physical distancing. Priority should be given to so-called essential workers to keep cities functioning.

While transportation system may prioritize pedestrian, bicycles and private autos from infection point of view, it could worsen road congestion therefore should be supplemented with digital transformation of work.

“Rural areas need ICT and tech knowledge (education and payment).”

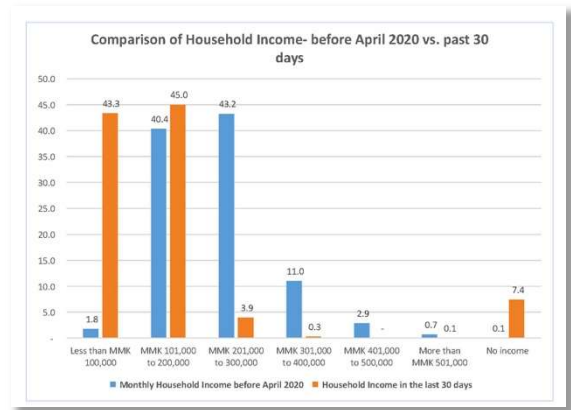
Thailand

“Unemployment rate increased by 5% due to closures and reduction in operations of businesses.”

Philippines

“The main issue is difficulty in sustaining villages and providing all migrants with good job and living condition. In rural area, towns are very small to provide a good job or good social services.”

JICA



Spatial Planning and Impact of Covid-19, UN Habitat Myanmar, p.4

Chapter 5

Governance

Spatial planning could function only upon good governance that meets socio-economic changes as well as technological innovation in cities: Digital technology accelerates transformation of government, finance, human resource development and society as a whole. Spatial planning is no longer a sanctuary of experts, instead it should function as a driver of such transformation of governance.

Holistic approach

Development goals must be integrated with socio-economic and environmental targets and prioritize strategic investment in cities: To tackle such challenges, governments can play key roles in collaboration or co-creation with variety of stakeholders only if they have holistic view towards spatial planning.

Horizontal coordination across different bureaus in local governments -- for instance, planning, transportation, public works, housing, construction, finance, economy and social welfare -- should be improved by stronger leadership of policymakers.

Vertical coordination between local, regional and national governments is also essential. Transfer of financial resources from national to local governments is a key to adequately addressing local needs.

“Often we see plans that are beautifully integrated, but unfortunately, the execution is often very sectoral, fragmented, and uncoordinated”

World Bank

During the lockdown due to COVID-19, there were visible and positive impacts such as improved air quality and reduced greenhouse gas emissions: Meanwhile, these were also temporary only until the economies restarted, which were urgent and high in priority. The pandemic has also generated an increase in the volume of disposable, medical and hazardous waste.

In response to COVID-19, society was made aware of the importance of thinking that the relationship between economic activity and

climate change measures prioritizes both, rather than prioritizing one and sacrificing the other, through an integral manner.

It also became clear that it is essential to promote sound, evidence-based policies and install informed and engaged public support to reduce the damage caused by the pandemic.

Paradoxically, this severe social and economic crisis could serve as a turning point in global efforts to combat climate change and develop national and regional strategies based on the concept of "building back better."

When considering where such public health crisis could come from, environmental degradation - deforestation and other land use changes or intensified agriculture and livestock production - causes a risk of spreading zoonotic diseases caused by pathogens transmitted from animals to humans.

It is crucial to consider the common benefits of environmental improvement and economic activities in all areas; farmland, infrastructure, housing and water, and to seek natural disaster prevention and risk reduction. At all levels, from territorial to regional, updating spatial plans to build resilience by advancing land use planning and connectivity is necessary.

“Multilevel approach and rehabilitation plan for each region.”

Philippines

“Government launched the national response fund to raise over UGX 170 billion from the public through this fund to support efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19.”

Uganda

“Spatial planning and implementation being an integrated part of the city's socio-economic development plan. People and stakeholder involvement in all stages of planning and PPP in infrastructure development.”

Laos

“Multilevel territorial planning system which has national level, provincial level, district level and urban level with specific plan for each level.”

Mozambique



JICA’s Approach on Spatial Planning, JICA, p.3

Agility

Governments should acquire agile approaches to issues: A traditional work cycle of a government is one year in terms of budget, staff reassignments and project implementation, or four years in terms of elections. While spatial planning requires much longer-range vision for making spatial changes in cities, such a long timeframe often fail to meet rapidly changing needs and challenges of the society.

Learning by doing is a new norm also for governments. Plan-Do-Check-Action, or PDCA cycle should be exercised in a shorter timeframe or more frequency with stronger leadership from policymakers, practical tools such as social experiment, deregulation sandbox or special zones can be utilized.

Partnership

To respond to diversified issues, governments should better collaborate with citizens, NGOs, private sector companies or other diverse actors: Binary view where government and private sector often find conflict is obsolete.

Instead, partnership is a new norm in which new value is created through joint efforts.

Forms of partnerships have been diversified: from traditional outsourcing and procurement to Private Finance Initiative (PFI), Public Private Partnership (PPP), concession or privatization. Blended finance should be considered as an option for better management of risks. Political appointment could be introduced as part of human resource development and recruiting particularly in the emerging field of digitalization, finance asset management or public relations.

“I wish to invite governments to consider fostering or promoting some kind of appropriate business environment in which private sector can also work hand in hand effectively with the public sector.”
Nishi Nippon Railroad

International Collaboration

Japan is known for its advanced initiatives in national, regional and urban planning, environment, disaster management and technology based on its experience and commitment to environmental sustainability: Both national and local governments and partner institutions are keenly interested to adapt such technology and know-how as well as to learn from the policies in order to materialize resilient and sustainable cities. There is increasing demand from authorities at regional, city and community levels to learn from these Japanese experiences and technologies, identify potential opportunities and share knowledge for implementing such technology.

The first meeting of the Spatial Planning Platform (SPP) which was initiated by the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT) of the Government of Japan, co-organized by UN Habitat, was held in August 2018. SPP related events were held the Seventh Asia-Pacific Urban Forum (APUF7) held in Penang, Malaysia in October 2019; and participants expressed high interests and expectation to this initiative., The issue of urban and regional planning was also featured in the United Nations Human Settlements Program flagship report “The Future of Asian and Pacific Cities” launched by UN-ESCAP and UN-Habitat in October 2019 and spearheaded the discussions during APUF7.

The second SPP meeting was successfully held in February 2020 in Abu Dhabi at the time of the Tenth World Urban Forum.

The third SPP meeting was held remotely online on 3 February 2021. The turnout was very successful with 250 participants from 20 countries attended.

As spatial planning would vary from city to city, benchmarking and knowledge sharing with cities in other countries are useful: SDGs could serve as a common basis for such international collaboration where planning context greatly vary. Conferences and other forms of knowledge sharing is useful. While COVID-19 will not currently allow real gathering of people, technological advancement and rapid spread of digital meetings could accelerate international collaboration.

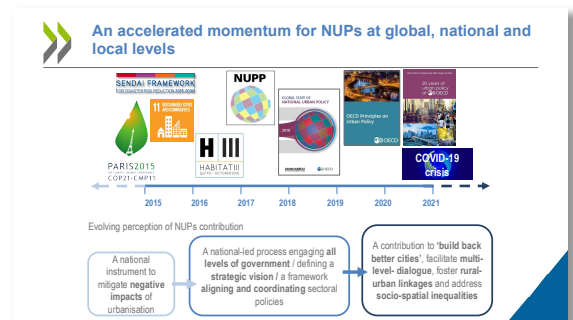
UN-Habitat secretariat remains open for consultation and provides hands-on support for such international collaboration.

“We wish to learn from other countries on how to put the plan into practice, how to monitor progress and how to address and improve when the result did not meet expectations.”

Haiti

“Collaboration with MLIT Japan. Implementation of Standards of Operation on all organizations, schools and companies with guidance of WHO and Ministry of Health.”

Cambodia



National Urban Policy Program -Work plan 2021-2022, OECD,p5