

Habitat Professionals Forum (HPF) Statement On COVID-19 Pandemic



Habitat Professionals Forum (HPF)¹ stands for advocacy and knowledge exchange, raising awareness, solidarity and support among professionals in this difficult time, and it is deeply concerned by the growing impacts and unintended social and economic consequences of COVID-19 pandemic crisis, which has revealed the fragility of urban and territorial systems and of our capacity for their management.

Dear Human Settlements Professionals,

The Habitat Professionals Forum (HPF) wishes to recognize and extend gratitude to the front-line human settlement professionals who are protecting, supporting, and leading the world's population during the COVID-19 crisis. With their expertise in built form, land use, economic development, social equity, and environmental stewardship, they are well positioned to help rebuild and inclusively socialize local communities, settlements, cities, regions and territories during the COVID-19 recovery. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the New Urban Agenda provide an effective framework for coordinating with the recovery efforts of professionals. This includes consideration of the challenges contributing to SDGs 3, 1, 6 and 11, and the Domains of Change of UN-Habitat's 2020-2023 strategic plan, particularly Domain of Change 1 (Reduced spatial inequality and poverty in communities across the urban-rural continuum) and Domain of Change 4 (Effective urban crisis prevention and response).

Over the last month, HPF conducted a survey amongst its members on the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on achieving resilient human settlements. Responses received, representing thousands of professionals around the globe, highlighted the need for:

- Efficient and effective healthcare and health-related systems and organizations to serve the inhabitants of cities and territories, particularly low-income and excluded populations.
- Greater research and leadership regarding resilience, local economic development, improvement of the global economic structure, and better understanding of the domain of built environment, spatial form, and public health in relation to the COVID-19 crisis.
- Learning from history and heritage, drawing on traditional knowledge, historic urban systems and culturally-sensitive management approaches to ensure fully informed, resilient and efficient outcomes in the recovery and 'build-back-better' processes.
- Emphasis and attention to the role of technology and smart cities in territorial and urban planning, design, health, communication, with a focus on interactions with and between cities and between citizens, taking into consideration citizen rights, public space and public transport management.
- A review of housing standards, logistic and basic services management, financial support to economic sectors etc., and of the effectiveness and efficiency of urban planning standards and principles (density, urban design, urban system, especially for public transport hubs, commercial centers, slums, confined spaces, etc.).

In response to these concerns, HPF will develop a **Roadmap document** offering guiding principles on how to build resilience, respond, and recover during and after a pandemic, and will:

¹ The Habitat Professionals Forum was founded in 1999 under the auspices of UN-HABITAT as an interdisciplinary partnership of Human Settlement Professionals and UN HABITAT. The Forum was established to promote the delivery of sustainable urbanization and equitable human settlements development. It consists of international associations of human settlements professions which are democratic, non-profit, non-political and non-governmental.

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- Disseminate key messages and solutions through their professional and international networks regarding the impacts of the epidemic and effective response and recovery.
- Invite international networks of public health professionals and of epidemiologists, and organizations of the urban poor and related networks to join the HPF.
- Continue to use technology to mobilize its international networks to activate new concepts and best practices in human settlements and cities facing epidemics and other crises, including climate change.
- Propose to lead a task force by Habitat Professionals that will provide both high-level and context-specific recommendations to city managers, regions and state governments regarding city resilience in the age of epidemics and climate emergencies.

These actions will support the [Campaign “Take Action with Us in Cities and Communities”](#) and the [UN-Habitat Covid-19 Response Plan](#) working to assist cities, regional and national governments in building resilience. They will also complement the just launched [‘Sourcebook on Integrating Health in Urban and Territorial Planning \(UN-Habitat and WHO\).](#)

The HPF encourages and supports all professionals globally to participate, contribute and engage with all the initiatives taken by professional organizations seeking solutions for the pandemic crisis. We trust that you will join us in this process.

PREPARED BY:

Habitat Professional Forum (HPF) MEMBERS

Chairperson HPF DR. MONA S. RADY, International Union of Architects (UIA)

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For more information on HPF’s members and their response to COVID-19:

1. AdP Villas en Development (AdP)
2. African Planners Association (APA)
3. Association of Urbanistic Jurisprudence (AUJ)
4. Commonwealth Association of Architects (CAA)
5. Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP)
6. Commonwealth Association of Surveying & Land Economy (CASLE)
7. Eastern Regional Organization for Planning and Human Settlements (EAROPH)
8. European Association of Geographers (EUROGEO)
9. European Council of Spatial Planners (ECTP-CEU)
10. Global Planners Network (GPN)
11. Iberoamerican Federation of Urban Planners (FIU)
12. International Association for Urban Development (INTA)
13. International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS)
14. International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC)
15. International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA)
16. International Federation of Surveyors (FIG)
17. International Federation for Housing and Planning (IFHP)
18. International Real Estate Federation (FIABCI)
19. International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP)
20. International Union of Architects (UIA)
21. International Water Association (IWA)
22. Metropolitan and Territorial Planning Agencies Global Network (MTPA-gn)
23. Women in Informal Employment Globalizing and Organizing/Inclusive Cities (WIEGO)