



Managing infrastructure assets in times of crisis: what COVID-19 has taught local governments about responsible and transparent procurement

25th May 2021 – 9am EST – 15h CET

Register [HERE](#)

https://undp.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEIcOitrDMqGNNJLgUK2eJdILxtuycn_Xpe

Background

It has now been a year of living through the COVID19 pandemic. Over the past 12 months and counting, local and regional governments have had to adapt quickly to react to a global emergency with little to no precedent, keeping cities and territories going as the whole world came to a halt.

In this context, local, regional and national governments have emerged as “first responders” to keep essential services running, provide safe public spaces, maintain food supply chains, get essential workers to their workplace and protect the most vulnerable. For a crisis whose scope and depth of impact still remains unknown, most governments have found themselves in full “emergency” mode. To adapt to a situation few were prepared for, they had to reallocate budget priorities, often stretching already limited resources and threatening to exacerbate preexisting problems, from humanitarian conflict to climate change.

Those with strategic asset management plans and frameworks in place were better positioned to act in the face of the pandemic and the socioeconomic challenges that have followed. Those who didn’t struggled without this first line of defense provided by well managed infrastructure assets, including hospitals and clinics, medical equipment and other facilities.

The effective management of infrastructure assets is a critical but often neglected and disjointed endeavor for many public administrations. It serves as the crossroads between an unsustainable status quo and a more resilient future. COVID19 has made this reality evidently clear. Poor asset management leads to inadequate, shortsighted responses, largely due to ambiguous and inefficient procurement processes, public-private partnerships and other mechanisms of public administration. Good governance through asset management ensures that governments can

respond swiftly to the urgent needs of the population in times of crisis and even take the opportunity to bounce back better.

Many cities in the world continue to live in a constant state of emergency. We believe it is time to take a step back and analyze current government operations, to learn from past mistakes and to unlock sustainable development through better asset management practices.

This webinar is part of the strategy to bring to the public the latest UN/DESA-UNCDF publication [*Managing Infrastructure Assets for Sustainable Development: A Handbook for Local and National Governments*](#), which offers comprehensive practical guidance on how to effectively manage public infrastructure assets within a coherent and sustainable framework.

From roads and buildings to equipment and natural resources, public infrastructure assets are essential to the delivery of basic public services and even more so in changing urban landscapes. These services face a multitude of risks, whether it's from poor planning, climate change or public health crises. Good asset management practices ultimately ensure that public investments into urban infrastructure will adequately serve present and future generations. Improved asset management also lends itself to sound fiscal management by supporting debt sustainability, fostering creditworthiness and enhancing revenue potential. Consequently, well-planned investments attract further investment.

Objectives

- To share experiences in the management of local infrastructure assets (across health and non-health sectors) during COVID19
- To identify what worked and what didn't regarding procurement processes, public contracts and adaptation of existing PPPs
- To advance recommendations and key lessons on how to manage local assets with transparency and openness during emergency situations; also, to explore how effective asset management can help mitigate the impact – or even prevent the onset – of future public health emergencies at a scale like COVID19 through the coupling of emergency operations plans together with IAM plans

The event wants to find responses to the following questions:

1. What have been the challenges that cities and territories face in the adaptation of PPPs and contracts during the COVID19 crisis to be able to respond to the needs of the people?
2. What have we done wrong? What lessons are we learning?
3. How can we make sure that managing infrastructure assets during emergencies is done in a transparent way? What specific tools and strategies can we use to avoid incurring legal and administrative trouble?
4. How can we assess the lack of investments in sectors that are no longer a priority during the COVID crises? How to make sure we balance long-term with emergency?

Participants

The event is open to the general public, with special focus for civil servants and decision makers working in local and regional governments as national associations of local governments, networks and their partners.

The event will be broadcasted both on Zoom and Youtube.

Zoom participants will need to [register HERE](#)

Proposed agenda

- Introduction by the Moderator
- Case 1 – Talita Schwartz, General Secretary for external oversight, Court of Accounts, Rio de Janeiro State, Brazil – Focus on health assets procurement during the COVID19 crises, challenges, lessons learnt and what can be done better next time.
- Case 2 – Patrick Musoke K. Deputy Director Strategy Management and Business Development Kampala Capital City Authority, Uganda – Focus on urban mobility (for example: how people has moved from mass transport to more individual means as bikes and how local capacities have missed and sometimes fulfilled by private partners)
- Case 3 – Malaga, Spain – Focus on social and cultural assets and how cities have used infrastructure to keep people engaged, specially the more vulnerable and how they have funded such actions)

- Respondent – Expert from UNDESA Handbook pool

Contact person

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