

Summary of Discussion

**Webinar: Cities and local administrations as actors in Responding to COVID-19 and the role of SSTC**

10 June 2020

**Background:**

United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) and UNDP Seoul Policy Centre (USPC), jointly organized a webinar on "[Cities and local administrations as actors in responding to COVID-19 and the role of SSTC](#)" on 10 June 2020. The webinar brought together city officials from the Global South to share their responses at city level and reflect on the role of South-South and triangular cooperation.

The discussion addressed the following questions: 1) role of cities in responding to COVID-19 in different countries; 2) health and socio-economic measures that have been put in place by the city of the local government; and 3) role and the potential of South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC) in exchanging practices; preparedness of the cities to document and share solutions. The aim of this webinar was to contribute to a global exchange of experiences that could increase understanding of the challenges and solutions, improve the effectiveness of cross-disciplinary responses, and leverage cooperation amongst countries, including through South-South and triangular cooperation.

The session was moderated **Mr. Artemy Izmestiev, Policy Specialist, UNDP Seoul Policy Centre.**

Speakers included:

- **Mr. Jorge Chediek**, Director of UNOSSC & Envoy of the UN Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation, New York, United States (Opening Remarks)
- **Mrs. Anan Atteerh**, Deputy Governor and the Head of the Health Committee of Nablus Governorate, State of Palestine (Panelist)
- **Madam Rohey Malick Lowe**, Lord Mayor, Banjul, the Gambia (Panelist)
- **Ms. Jie Ding**, Deputy Director, Nanjing Municipal Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Nanjin, China (Panelist)
- **Mr. Alessandro Attolio**, Executive Director of Innovation, Territorial Services and Planning at the Province of Potenza, Local Authority, Italy (Panelist)
- **Ms. Laurence Kwark**, Secretary General of Global Social Economy Forum (GSEF), Seoul, Republic of Korea (Panelist)
- **Mr. Stephan Klingebiel**, Director of UNDP Seoul Policy Centre, Republic of Korea (Closing Remarks)

In his opening remarks, **Mr. Jorge Chediek**, highlighted that, for the first time in the last 30 years, we may witness a fall in the global Human Development Index (HDI) because of the effects of COVID-19 pandemic. Given the multiple dimensions of the pandemic i.e. sanitary, health and socio-economic dimension and its effect on interrelations of different physical spaces, be it in the local or national levels. Therefore, the challenge is massive which has to be confronted by the global community as a whole, through the global architecture, by the national governments, by regions and also at the local level- by local authorities. Mr. Chediek expressed his gratitude to the panelists in sharing their experiences in confronting the challenges

of the pandemic. He also added that South-South Cooperation (SSC) has become very relevant and is recognized as significantly important in the architecture of South. SSC, which now not only involves cooperation between States of the South, but also incorporate other actors including local governments, city governments, civil society, the private sector. Taking advantage of technology will allow us to put together such exchanges with sub-national entities, as their responses are more relevant, same as the macro responses that are being put in place.

Mr. Chediek reiterated the UNOSSC commitment to continue supporting such exchanges and the South-South Galaxy which is becoming a repository of good practices and is facilitating the development of partnerships. He thanked the UNDP Seoul Policy Center for their continued partnership in synthesizing such useful knowledge.

**Ms. Jie Ding, Deputy Director from Nanjing Municipal Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Nanjing, China** informed that Nanjing, capital city of China's eastern Jiangsu province, with a population of 8 million, had reported 99 confirmed cases, mostly through people arriving from overseas. The city has had no new local cases since 18 February 2020, and all confirmed patients have recovered and been discharged.

Ms. Ding shared that achievements in fighting against COVID-19 have been periodical and although the prevention and control measures have also been normalized now, the regular practices are in place to guard against important cases and the domestic relapse. The city/local government ensured implementation of early detection, rapid handling and targeted control and effective treatment. The virus testing was expanded to key groups who might possibly be in contact with infected persons. Others also have access to nucleic screening. Prevention measures are still in place at shopping malls, supermarkets hotels, restaurants and other places have been operational. Educational institutions have reopened in an orderly manner.

At the same time, the government continues to provide guidance on Infectious Disease Prevention. As to the containment experience, since the early days of the epidemic, the city had communicated regularly with citizens and the physical distancing measures were put in place to reduce transmission risk achieved through joint prevention and control mechanisms. The Nanjing government strategy for fighting the Coronavirus has centered on the principle of early detection i.e. early reporting, early isolation and early treatment. Community participation has assisted the local government agencies in handling situations more efficiently. Screening measures were imposed in clinics, residential communities or city entrance and the cases were detected and identified in a timely manner.

Laboratory testing also played a very important role in finding and managing symptomatic or asymptomatic cases. Cases were reported through the online direct reporting system of infectious disease. Any confirmed or suspected COVID-19 cases were subjected to thorough contact tracing to identify close contacts. Close contacts were placed in hotels for 14 days quarantine and were subject to medical observation and nucleic acid testing. Suspected Covid-19 cases were immediately sent through dedicated ambulances to designated medical centers for treatment. Once discharged, patients who remained under medical observation for 14 days, were followed up with for another 14 days; a disease management and mortality system, covering the whole period from patient identification to their discharge was established.

She further shared that Nanjing has been actively propelling economic growth in addition to adopting the National Level policies. The city government has announced a 318 million Yuan economic plan to

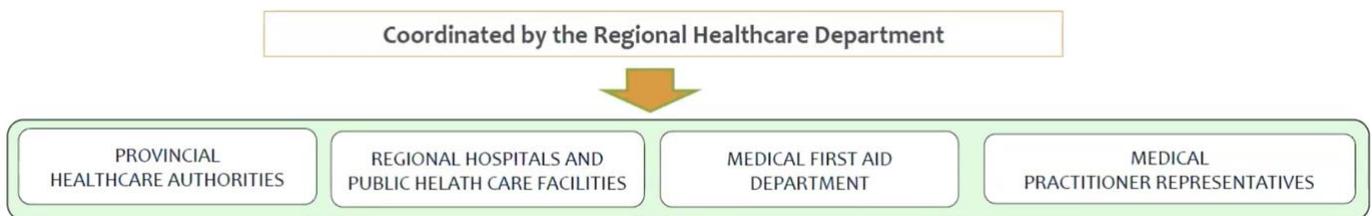
stimulate the local economy. The plan will help boost the consumer spending with vouchers and coupons given out for catering, sports, books and information for travel. To further stimulate the local economy, Nanjing city launched a series of activities to improve consumer confidence and promote the growth of the market and consumption, which included inviting people to attend a government festival, the shopping festival, lantern festival and other leisure activities.

To conclude, Ms. Ding highlighted the importance of the global cooperation in fighting COVID-19. She emphasized that all countries must unite and work together to fight against this disease. Nanjing’s municipal government has provided support to Brunei, and donated anti-epidemic materials, including disposable surgical masks disposable Inspection gloves and medical protective clothing. Nanjing has also provided medical supplies to cities in South Korea to fight against COVID-19.

**Mr. Alessandro Attolio, Executive Director of Innovation, Territorial Services and Planning at the Province of Potenza, Local Authority,** shared experiences of the province of Potenza and Basilicata Region in Italy. He explained the geographical and administrative structure and overview of the health care system, where the regions acquired a direct responsibility for Healthcare Management. The National Health Parliament and Central Government maintain the authority for adopting fundamental health principles by means of frameworks, laws and guidelines whereas the regions define the details of the regulations. This is the main institutional framework for dealing with crisis management. It has two components, i.e. sanitary components and the

**BASILICATA Region**  
(580.000 residents)  
2 Provinces: Potenza and Matera

PROVINCE OF POTENZA	PROVINCE OF MATERA
6.500 sqkm	3.479 sqkm
378.000 residents	200.000 residents
60 residents/sqkm	57 residents/sqkm
Municipalities: 100	Municipalities: 31
Capital City <b>Potenza</b> 67.000 residents	Capital City <b>Matera</b> 60.000 residents



city protection components, activated for this pandemic and both worked together for defining the strategy to be adopted. The two crisis management structures, worked together throughout the crises period, therefore, the different actions were put in place and were coordinated by the same coordination management structure. The Basilicata Region, on mandate from the Ministry of Health established a taskforce on 27 January 2020 for the Management of COVID outbreak. The purpose of the taskforce was to create an operational protocol to identify and define suitable paths to manage access of any suspected cases to the regional health system and to manage communications to media.

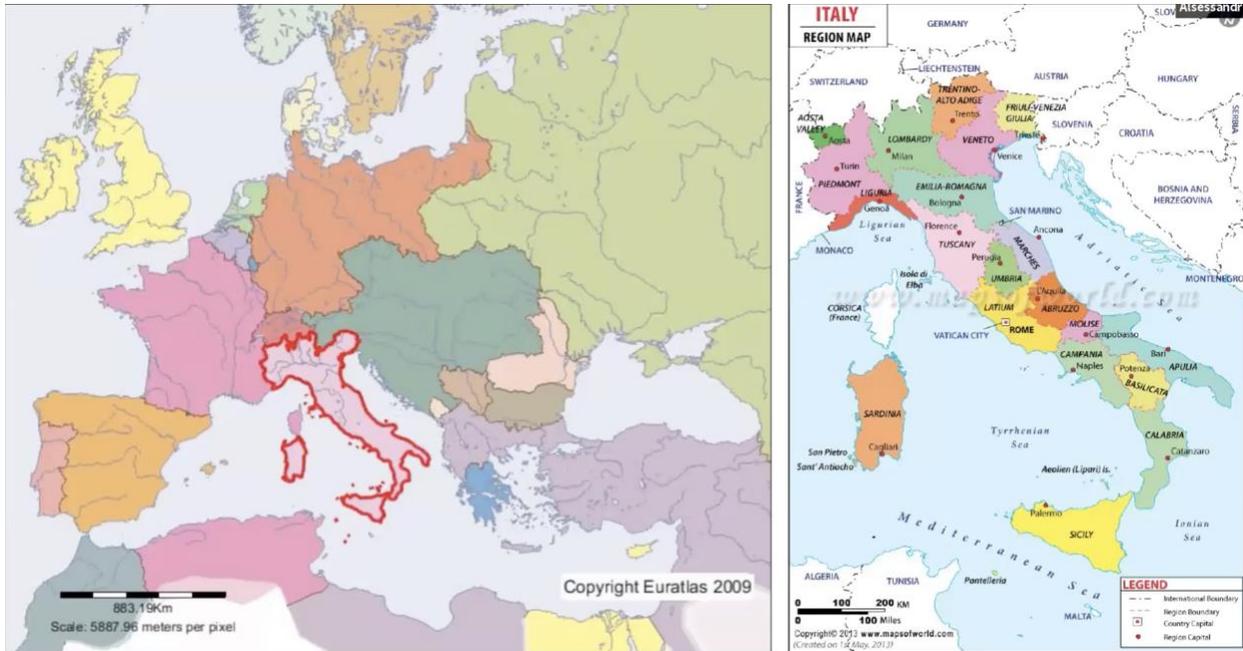


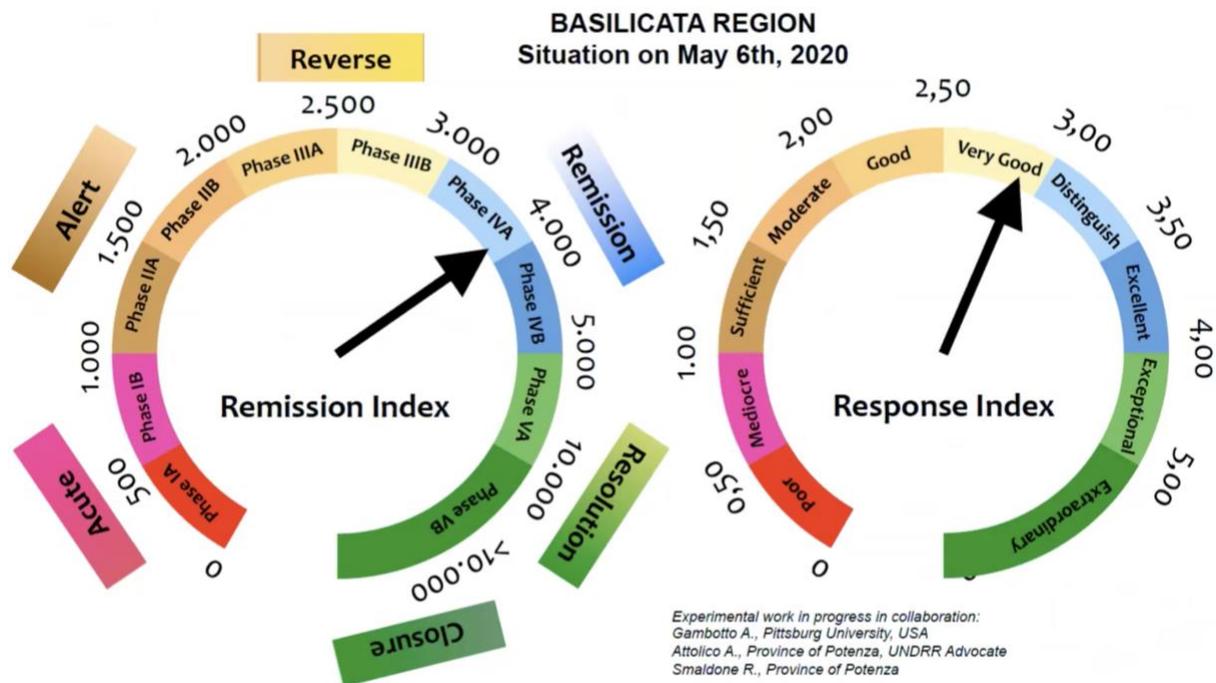
Figure 2: Italy and Basilicata Region

Due to the limited capacity of the sanitary structures in dealing with possible huge numbers, the strategy included specific action for limiting the access to hospitals to only persons with severe infections. A toll-free number was also activated for bringing citizens up to speed with defined operational procedures. In addition, COVID-19 Special Local Healthcare Units (USCO) were set up, aimed at supporting the decentralized System of family doctors for patients who did not require hospitalization. A free mobile app was also launched to help monitor patterns in patients who had been tested positive and in-home isolation. He also explained the four phases of lockdown and -phased information about official actions for limiting/permitting of general activities also the sanctions and penalties in this regard. The Basilicata region was more restrictive than the national government, both in the lock downs and in the openings.

Region	24-feb-2020	3-mar-2020
Abruzzo	0	6
Basilicata	0	1
Bolzano A.P	0	1
Calabria	0	1
Vampania	0	30
Emilia Romagna	18	420
Friuli Venezia Giulia	0	13
Lazio	3	14
Liguaria	0	24
Lombardia	172	1520
Marche	0	61
Molise	0	3
Piemonte	3	56
Puglia	0	6
Sardegna	0	1
Sicilia	0	7
Toscana	0	19
Trento A.P.	0	4
Umbira	0	8
Valle d'Aosta	0	0
Veneto	33	307
<b>TOTALE</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>2502</b>

Figure 3: COVID-19 Propagation from recording of National CP to the first recorded case in Basilicata

Mr. Attolico also presented the COVID-19 infection and response monitoring dashboard – a tool introduced on experimental basis for national and local monitoring to support decision making on COVID-19 emergency management.



He further explained the role of province of Potenza and the main role of the province in COVID-19 Regional Emergency Management i.e. to be in line with the regional emergency management operations. The province assists and coordinates with municipalities in adopting emergency management measures and actions. It is also responsible for the dissemination of relevant information issued by the national/ regional authorities through its institutional communications services, social and virtual platforms. Other responsibilities include education coordination, safety of workers and implementation of smart working, public security, and assistance and orientation support to citizens through a toll-free number.

He further presented the Post-COVID-19 socio-economic programs which is divided into three main blocks. In the short-term, the province is preparing for the next outbreak (Autumn 2020) by increasing hospital and medical treatment capacities, relaunching economic activities, preparing for the new school year, and accelerating support for local authorities, reopening tourism, focusing on economic and social integration, ensuring smart working for public authorities, and the implementation of a national program of serological investigation of SARS COV-2 virus infection.

In the medium-term, some measures have been already put in place by the Basilicata region in order to overcome economic challenges. There are some measures in terms of incentives for implementation of smart-working business plans, tourism packages and support to entrepreneurial activities and small loans to support and strengthen SMEs, professionals and autonomous workers, and national emergency subsidies to families and citizens. A new hospital was built for allowing of 300 extra beds.

Long term investments are currently under discussion for the implementation of a huge multisector national plan for COVID-19 recovery at the regional level. The socio- economic plan will provide for the huge financial investment in many activities/ fields of activities, from the business infrastructure to public administration. It provides an opportunity to innovate in areas of local administration, governance system and cooperation towards improving our health service delivery.

## Long Term

- Implementation of the huge multi-sectorial National Plan for Covid-19 Recovery at the regional level (**Piano Colao**)



**Madam Rohey Malick Lowe, Lord Mayor, Banjul, the Gambia** introduced the demography of Banjul, the Capital City of Gambia and its strategic importance given the presence of 90 per cent of government institutions i.e. the police station, State House and the Parliament. Also, Banjul is a port city, making it a commercial hub with 300,000-400,000 people coming in and out of the city, even though it has about 30,000 inhabitants.

For COVID-19 response and readiness, Banjul set up a well-structured coordinated local plan at the very outset. This included setting up a special COVID-19 response team comprising of civil society organizations, council members, business community and the local health authority to oversee and supervise the responses. The special response team, which served as an apex body and has a supervisory and executive role, also set up a resource mobilization team, which was successful in mobilizing resources using various mechanisms including appealing to citizens on electronic media to donate.

These funds were used to supply rice, food, oil and other essentials in order to comply with the WHO protocol of staying at home, which in the developing countries context has to be ensured by the government. It also helped the taskforce to expedite service delivery in the hospitals and clinics. Through health advocacy, the community was sensitized on making face covers locally, use of sanitizers, hand washing and social distancing. This crisis communication and community engagement was done using the media and traditional communicators and also through caravans, going around the city to reach out to the people about safety measures during this crucial period, led by the Mayor.

Under the health taskforce, the city council embarked upon a fumigation exercise of the main market and public facilities in the city i.e. mosques, churches, schools etc. This was supported by international organizations such as UNDP and civil society together with the mayor's office. A survey of health frontline workers was done, and additional support staff were also recruited to deal with pandemic.

Other measures by Banjul city included: setting up of hand washing stations at strategic areas of the city, establishing a food bank to help the poor and needy during the lockdown, and prioritizing women and children. Measures were also put in place to limit passengers using public transport. To subsidize the effect of loss of earnings for transport owners, the price of oil was also reduced. Schools, mosques and churches were closed to avoid the spread of the virus. Students received tuitions online and radio and TV were used for those without access to the Internet and IT gadgets. Council staff was also encouraged to

work from home where feasible. This caused almost 60% in lost revenue since collections decline due to lack of availability of personnel. Physical distancing was also put in place at the markets, but also backfired due to revenue lost during the lockdown and a lot of vendors, most of whom are woman, were seriously affected.

The Mayor also emphasized the potential of South-South and triangular cooperation for much-needed exchange in practices, preparedness of the cities and to document and share solutions. From the developing countries' perspective, South-South cooperation presents an opportunity for health cooperation. In the search for solutions to COVID-19, there is need for a well-thought-out cooperation initiative in health and related areas. Therefore, a regional health initiative, collective research and development efforts in medicines should be the top priority for now and the future. Medical discoveries, which are important for the survival of people, need to be shared widely and its access should be made available to all, especially to the most vulnerable countries and communities.

In respond to COVID-19, the countries of the South need to strengthen the strategic partnerships through South-South cooperation. Triangular Cooperation can be promoted and monitored as a means of implementation of the SDGs, a relevant and strategic modality for all types of development corporation. Through South-South and triangular cooperation partners involved can share knowledge, learn together, facilitate capacity development cooperation and find creative solutions to development challenges combining efforts based on complimentary knowledge.

She further added that South-South and Triangular cooperation should require a greater political attention and high-level backing, both domestically and internationally. To help SSC & TrC achieve its full potential, the partners involved should communicate its value added based on the respective goals as well as the overall development objective. The Mayor concluded saying that greater visibility and awareness can allow for more South-South and triangular cooperation, through a more systematic collection and analysis of data and all the information on existing projects, including the results.

**Ms. Anan Atteerh, Deputy Governor and the Head of the Health Committee of Nablus Governorate, State of Palestine,** shared the experience of local administration from State of Palestine in dealing with COVID-19. Palestine has a population of more than 5 million, around 3 million residing in West Bank and 2 million in Gaza. To set the context, Ms. Atteerh highlighted the challenges the city is already facing due to the occupation. Gaza city is totally isolated and suffering from a very critical humanitarian situation and West Bank Nablus Governorate, as well, is facing more than 700 total closures according to OCHA. The Nablus Governorate has 400,000 citizens distributed over the city and 58 villages. It also has four highly populated refugee camps facing a very difficult situations which makes it very challenging for local administration to manage and respond to COVID-19. The city is also the economic center and has thousands of students and workers. These barriers/ closures around the city make it difficult for health teams to work efficiently.

In response to COVID-19, Palestine has adopted restricted early measures starting with declaring the state of emergency in early March to facilitating government operations in different fields, with the focus on health and security. This has resulted in effectiveness in combating and containing the pandemic. Palestine is working closely with WHO to ensure continuing to support the implementation in line with the global humanitarian response to the COVID-19.

Ms. Atteerh highlighted the two main reasons for the spread of infection in Palestine: 1) tourism and 2) movement across Israel, due to Palestinian employment, which has high percentage of cases. Tourism

was fully under control due to travel restrictions, and but it was relatively difficult to restrict the movement of thousands of workers going on a daily basis to Israel and it remains an open door for the spread of COVID- 19 as Palestine cannot control its own borders. Generally a strict curfew has been imposed in the State of Palestine, resulting in closing of most of the businesses, schools, universities, social centers as well as canceling gatherings for more than two months to contain COVID-19 and slow the transmission, with exception to pharmacies and groceries.

She further explained that Palestine managed the COVID-19 response through two levels. First, through the national government, which has the National Emergency Committee that plans and issues regulations for health and security at the national level; and second through the local emergency committees, led by local governments. At the local level, the governor's office established a Local Emergency Committee and a activated crisis management cell which led all emergency containment procedures and measures, supported by evidence-based communication campaign. It also encouraged citizens to protect themselves and follow government guidance to contain the pandemic and mitigate the impact and continue to be guided by the local health cluster strategic preparedness and response plan.

With these procedures and efforts to carry out 36,780 tests along with the 14 days quarantine compliance measures, Palestine managed to maintain low rates of virus spread and almost no community transmission. The country had 654 cases out of which 595 recovered and only 90 active cases. The on-going engagement with the EU and UNDRR Programme also contributed which can be seen as combination of resilience accumulated through the process urbanization and planning on the one hand, and more specific action to reduce disaster risk by various actors on the other hand.

The six main sectors were under the cell included were the health committee, security committee, media, economic infrastructure, volunteers and the humanitarian AIDS committee. To communicate with people, given the segregation due to Israeli occupation and the barriers, local emergency committees were formed in every village, district, camp and neighborhood to ensure quick and direct communication between the community at all levels including individuals, institution, NGOs, private sector based on emergency plan.

A 24-hour awareness office and an emergency room hotline have been activated to speed up emergency response and also provide support during the lockdown for psychosocial support and increase the public health awareness, initial symptoms, preventive measures and guiding infected people during the outbreak.

The city health sector remained under equipped and is facing a shortage of resources and the measures could not be taken due to financial crises the country is facing. However, the Governor's office, together with the crisis management team started using resources made available through the private sector, civil society, International Organizations, and the city government managed to establish five health centers during one week, including one facility for testing and one laboratory which also was responsible for sending swabs for testing from the North area to Ramallah. Measures such as health quarantine hotels where the close contact cases and highly suspected COVID-19 cases who were travelers from endemic countries were quarantined, monitoring home quarantine, isolation centers for the asymptomatic cases were put in place. With the help of the community, the local government managed to establish a hospital with ICU and ventilators within one week, with the support and funds from the local society which was then handed directly to the Ministry of Health to overcome shortage of resources.

The city government also ensured that, during the lockdown, it was essential to maintain basic public services, and utilities such as electricity, water supply, waste management, especially the medical and solid waste from COVID-19 centers. The Crisis Management Unit and the operating room not just supported the local municipalities and councils but also, the villages popular committees in refugee camps.

On the socio-economic measures, as the city was under lockdown for more than two months, the crisis cell endorsed the security plan and took measures through relevant committees on food cash transfers, psychological support, personnel hygiene kits and food items etc. The economy and industrial committees effectively inspected the markets during the lockdown to regulate and control prices. Stability of basic health services such as vaccination of chronic disease treatment and other health services also continued as a normal. Factories were encouraged to produce PPEs to overcome the shortage.

The current political situation made it even more challenging, causing high risk for spread of infection, taking into consideration that Israel had more than 18,000 COVID-19 cases and more than 300 deaths. Palestinian workers, working in Israeli markets, made the control and preventive measures very fragile as more than 80% of the cases were from the Palestinian workers in Israel.

Acknowledging the role of South-South and triangular cooperation, Ms. Atteerh highlighted that the challenges like shortage of PPEs and the limited number of swabs for testing were addressed by donations from local and international organizations and Jordan, Egypt and other countries. It illustrated very strong coordination with the local and international organizations, such as coordination mechanisms with OCHA, World Vision, EU for quick response to the emergency health needs and rapid response etc. Countries also helped in bringing back senior citizens, either in Jordan, Egypt or other European countries.

Palestinian citizens in the diaspora, in United States of America, Europe, in some Arab countries, played their part by working closely with health centers, doctors and nurses. In addition to donation, equipment, PPE the most important support was the exchange of experiences and the lessons learnt from each other. Seminars were conducted with doctors in Italy including specialists on virology, epidemiology, preventive medicine for policymakers, politicians and the economic team. She further added that more challenges will be faced due to the Israel annexation of the West Bank but in spite of all of the challenges they are preparing themselves for the second wave.

**Ms. Laurence Kwark, Secretary General of Global Social Economy Forum (GSEF), Seoul, Republic of Korea** talked about Seoul Metropolitan Government measures and initiatives taken to counter the COVID-19 pandemic. In Seoul, a city with 10 million, has 1,029 confirmed cases, out of which 666 were discharged and managed to contain and prevent the COVID-19 outbreak.

Highlighting the negative and severe social economic consequences of COVID-19, Ms. Kwark stated that globally, more than 2.2 billion workers are unable to work and according to the ILO estimate more than 350 million jobs will be lost, which will contribute to the growing unemployment, new poverty and inequality in all of the world.

Seoul Metropolitan Government has already taken several social economic measures in line with the Korean national government. They have dispersed nationwide emergency support for all Korean states for vulnerable students and affected small and medium enterprises. The emergency support is provided with the local currency which can be used only in local areas to boost local economy. This has shown

positive results in the last two months. Seoul also provided a paid sick leave plan to the daily and temporary employees, part time workers as well as for employees when they are hospitalized or when they receive medical checkup.

Metropolitan Government also supported the survival funds for the self-employed and small businesses with the amount of 700,000 Korean won for two months. About 410,000 small and medium enterprises (SMEs), including social solidarity economy enterprise have benefited from this. Another initiative is the retention support for COVID-19 affected SMEs, including social economy enterprise. Through this the employees of SMEs with less than 50 employees can benefit from a retention plan if they want to take voluntary unpaid leaves due to COVIDt-19. To support the art and cultural sector, which is most affected by the covid-19, Seoul is providing 500 performing art groups and cooperatives up to with the 10 million Korean won starting this month.

Ms. Kwark also talked about initiatives taken by other cities that have implemented similar public policies and measures to support social solidarity/ economic enterprise, working in partnership with GSEF. The city of Montreal has implemented financial aid and accompanying measures targeted at the social solidarity economy (SSE) sector such as the reduction of the mandatory contribution to the social economy development fund (SESF) from 20% to 10%, and provision of psychological counseling programs, crisis management and human resource trainings. The social solidarity sector (SSE) is also represented in the committee for economic recovery and included in the economic recovery plan currently being prepared.

In the Nouvelle Aquitaine Region of France, the local government took steps to alleviate short-term cash flow problems faced by SSE entities, in particular, SMEs employing less than 50 employees, through the various loans and support funds. The region is also supporting the sector in a multi-stakeholder approach through organizing a weekly “SSE crisis unit” and, in the long-term, the preparation of a recovery plan towards an ecological, social, economic and cultural transition.

The city of Dakar, from the developing country of Senegal, has been supporting social solidarity sector (SSE) organizations, through, among other initiatives, the re-scheduling of repaying period through Municipal Development and Solidarity Funds (FODEM) and Incubator for the Promotion of Employment through Microenterprise (CEPEM)’s financial levers and through facilitating the access to public procurement opportunities (e.g. order of masks etc.).

The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (UK) is taking a separate initiative which is called Kindred which connects, supports and harnesses local entrepreneurship for social goods. It actively engages local individuals and communities who have ideas to generate community wealth, but who have not yet established as a social trading organization (STO) and who do not consider themselves to be entrepreneurs. It also supports the long-term transfer of assets, for example, unused council buildings or land which are provided from the local authorities with support for the long-term benefit that the thriving social trading organization sector can have on the social economy for this remote region. LCR Cares raises money through crowdfunding campaigns to raise more than 1 million pounds to support community and voluntary organizations.

Ms. Kwark further said that through social solidarity of economic enterprises and organizations working with most deprived and marginalized citizens of the city becomes important in effectively fighting against COVID-19. They are aligned through those public policies and measures developed by cities and local government, enabling citizens to become a very active manager of local everyday living with trust in each

other and expanding those efforts into a more sustainable local civic economy, which is very important in terms of redressing and fighting against the negative impact of social economic impact of COVID-19.

She further emphasized that the importance and effectiveness of the social service sector and the economy to fight against COVID-19 has to be included with focus on three areas: 1) Build stronger social safety net, especially targeting the most vulnerable and poor people; 2) Create a Daily Economic Safety Net; 3) Prevent the average citizen from falling into poverty .

On the potential of South-South and triangular cooperation in responding to COVID-19, Ms. Kwark shared information about developing public policies which could meet the objective of SDGs, not only in terms of SDG3 on good health and well-being, but also, in a coordinated manner, with the SDGs to end poverty (SDG1), create more decent jobs (SDG8) and to reduce inequality (SDG10) and sustainable and human centered city and community (SDG11). She further added that in early June, 42 local governments, together with the leadership of Seoul Metropolitan Government convened the Global Summit on cities against COVID-19, jointly with “Together We Stand”, and established an association: City Alliance Against Pandemic (CAAP). CAAP is actively exchanging ideas on public policies and practices for better cooperation among local governments, not only about how to overcome the health crisis caused by the COVID-19, but also to exchange information on good practices on climate and environment, education, welfare for vulnerable groups and sustainable energy in cities and communities. CAAP has adapted the Seoul Statement which contains the roles and solidarity of the participating local governments and cooperation for effective management and control over the pandemic.

GSEF is also organizing a series of webinars, jointly with the city of Mexico, and are hosting the global social economy forum next year on challenges and strategies for COVID-19, the good practices to ensure descent work, and employment, and the and social, economic, and environmental transition in the post-COVID-19 era.

She also informed that GSEF is currently developing a very small solidarity action with KOICA and others SSE entities to support very informal social economy enterprises in developing countries, mostly in Africa and South Asian countries to preserve their minimum productive activity of those enterprises and these kind of examples could be spread especially with the support of UN Office for South-South cooperation (UNOSSC), as well as through other cities and local governments, to help overcome this global crisis.

**Mr. Stephan Klingebiel, Director of UNDP Seoul Policy Centre, Republic of Korea** highlighted six points in his concluding remarks based on the discussion. First, the relevance of the sub-national level, especially when it comes to urban areas and cities: today a as a majority of people, more than 4 billion people, are living in urban areas, , make it a highly relevant topic.

Second, the cities and urban areas are facing a number of challenges; for instance, when it comes to COVID-19, but cities are also part of finding solutions and these discussions identify a number of solutions that cities are providing i.e. Nablus, Banjul, Nanjing providing examples on how they managing socio-economic recovery strategies in the health sector etc. related to urban areas. Therefore, a focus not just on the national level, but also on urban areas is crucial.

Third, cities and urban areas are increasingly active in transnational cooperation or cross-border cooperation as demonstrated by Nanjing Municipal Center for Disease Control and Prevention or the GSEF joining as part of international networks, which is very important.

Fourth, this kind of transnational corporation is some kind of triangular cooperation and triangular cooperation means different types of countries are involved - such as Italy (OECD) and countries from the global South. We understand that the national level, the regional level and the global level are important, but the sub national level have a very crucial role to play.

Fifth, when it comes to our respective levels, we know that governments and municipalities are important. But at the same time, there are actors beyond the public sphere that are very important i.e. the private sector, academia, civil society organizations, etc. This kind of innovative mixture of actors when taken together can result in triangular cooperation, to a large extent.

Sixth, this kind of Interaction between actors on the sub-national level, actors like UNDP Seoul Policy Centre, UN Office for South-South Cooperation and platform such as South-South Galaxy can continue to facilitate this kind of dialogue to some extent as this kind of matchmaking is not always easy.

In the end, Mr. Klingebiel thanked the speakers for their participation and insightful presentations and UNOSSC for continued partnership in co-hosting such events and knowledge exchange.