

# CITIES on the FRONTLINE

## Coronavirus Speaker Series:

Sharing Knowledge to Respond with Resilience



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CITIES  
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## #6: Inclusive Approaches for Tackling COVID-19 in Informal Settlements

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### Farouk Braimah

Executive Director-People's Dialogue on Human Settlements Ghana  
Deputy Chair of Slum Dwellers International's Board

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**Farouk Braimah** is a Social Development specialist with over ten (15) years' experience in supporting the building of social movements for inclusive and sustainable urban development. More than anything else, he specializes in creating pro poor policy and advocacy platforms through harvesting savings, energies and knowledge of the urban poor and slum dwellers into organized federations to deliver land, housing, and livelihoods for sustainable urban development. He is an experienced facilitator of new institutional roles, alternative practices for managing pro-poor initiatives, policy advocacy and urban development analysis.

Currently, Farouk doubles as **the Executive Director-People's Dialogue on Human Settlements** and a Part-Time lecturer with the Institute of Local Governments Studies (ILGS) where he teaches Housing and Neighborhood Development. In the past three (3) years, Farouk serves a Member of the Advisory Board of the Ministry of Zongos and Inner-cities Development. He also, served as **Deputy Chair of Slum Dwellers International's Board** and is a past Chair of Ghana Coalition of NGOs in Water and Sanitation (CONIWAS) a pro poor advocacy and knowledge sharing platform in Water Sanitation and Hygiene in Ghana.

Lately, his research interest is in urban social policy and development with focus on Children and youth in slums. He holds a Masters in Social Policy Studies, from the Centre for Social Policy Studies of the University of Ghana.

# Messages of Hope

## I. Context Situation for Covid19 in Ghana

- Covid-19 is nothing new for the slum (e.g. Cholera) , they always worked in life and health threatening conditions
- Difference: It affects rich & poor, slum & non-slum, politicians & non-politicians = everybody
- Most of the solutions are well known: Overall hygiene protection, strong immune system, healthy food, less stress  
→ protocol does not work with slums
- Question: How can we provide solutions for peculiar needs with having strong deficits in providing sanitation facilities

### Example Situation

- Reported case of 2 people in community in Accra moving freely
- Protocol was: do not walk in slums
- Community is first to respond
- Government could not trace people
- Community organizations did contract tracing to identify cases to break chain of transmission

# Messages of Hope

## I. Context Situation for Covid19 in Ghana

### Challenges

- Challenge: No self-isolation or quarantine possible in slums (3 or 4 people in the same room, share sanitation facilities with 1000 other community members and eat among 1000 of people)
- Challenge: Issues of equity and participation
- Challenge: Urgency, fear and panic
- Challenge: Fake news within community
- Challenge: Deficit in many different public services

### Response

1. Increase social support system → work with city authorities
2. Need certain level of data & knowledge to target response
3. Mapping the structures of community and contact tracing → cwork with community coordinating committees, community volunteers, community reporting center
4. Provided platform for targeting people with disabilities

“Fake news and fear are a real problem in the slums. We have worked to identify fake news and get the communities the right information.”  
– Farouk Braimah

### II. Learnings from Ghana

1. The fight is primarily about hunger, then about Covid19.
2. Community response and management is crucial for going forward.
3. Structures in form of infrastructure need to be build therefore
4. Scale up resources and support of national airforce
5. Modify communication channels that are being used
6. ICT for development has become critical – how to use ICT and to reach out to. people with contactless environment