

CITIES on the FRONTLINE

Coronavirus Speaker Series: Sharing Knowledge to Respond with Resilience



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WORLD BANK GROUP

#10: Migrant and Refugees Sensitive COVID-19 Response and recovery

Thursday, 14 May 2020

07.30 AM PDT – 10.30 AM EST – 10.30 PM Singapore time



“Mayors Migration Council and COVID-19 Response”

Vittoria Zanuso

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Vittoria Zanuso is the Executive Director of the Mayors Migration Council (MMC), a mayor-led initiative to empower and enable cities around the world with knowledge, connections, and technical support to engage in migration diplomacy and policymaking on migrant and refugee issues. Prior to joining the MMC, Vittoria held multiple positions at the Rockefeller Foundation’s 100 Resilient Cities initiative (100RC), liaising with mayors, senior officials and private sector leaders to address natural and human-made disasters, from climate change to rising global inequality. As a founding staff member of 100RC, Zanuso helped establish a network of 100 cities from the ground up and created the organization’s urban migration practice, leading advocacy campaigns and strategic partnerships with the International Rescue Committee, Brookings Institute, and NYC Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs, among others. Originally from Milan, Italy, Vittoria holds an MPA in International Policy and Management from NYU’s Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service and a BA in Politics from Queen Mary University of London.

Mayors Migration Council and COVID-19

Context of Mayors Migration Council

- Syrian refugee crisis 2015 → first time to talk about urban migration as a resilience opportunity rather than a challenge or a burden shock
- With new shock of COVID-19 mayors / city leaders starting to frame migrant refugees as a resilience asset: the heroes providing food and health care to their neighbours
- Social cohesion is a secret ingredient of a city's ability to recover from known and unknown risks or resilience shocks
- Cities have tight budgets, competing priorities, are being asked to do more or less

Mayors Migration Council

- Led by a group of global mayors
- Mayors asked MMC to warn the international community and arm them with practical tools and resources to make sure that global covered responses are inclusive of migrants and refugees
- MMC compiled a live Resource Guide (launched publicly on May 14, 2020)
- Ask philanthropies and international funds to unlock resources that are directed to cities → leave cities & governments flexible on how to use resources

Goal of Mayors Migration Council

- Talk about response to particular and unique needs of migrant and refugee populations
- Want to ensure resilience practitioners that this populations are not dealt with in silos → every intervention to address their needs benefits other vulnerable groups in the host community!
 - To prevent competition over scarce resources
 - To build lots of cohesion
 - To unlock the resilience dividend
- aware of possible devastating impacts on low income informal settlements in the global South where the majority of refugees and migrants live

“Today we’ll be talking about our cities and responding to particular and unique needs of migrant and refugee populations. We really want to ensure as resilience practitioners, that these populations are not dealt with in silos and that every intervention to address their needs, also benefits other vulnerable groups in the host community to prevent competition over scarce resources and to build social cohesion. That’s because when cities make their plans work for the most vulnerable, they also make them work for all the residents.”

– Vittoria Zanuso