TRANSFORMING KNOWLEDGE INTO ACTION
Virtual discussion on the potential gaps

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1. Context/Background
Cities are the challenge of the 21st century, evolving and increasing rapidly the range of urgencies and emergencies. Most of the world’s population inhabits urban environments that overlaps crisis such as covid-19 worldwide outbreak. These extraordinary emergencies give us awareness about vulnerabilities and strengths of our living environment and society. However, beyond the emergent crisis, cities are the major expression of complexity containing many issues related to urgencies such as inequality, accessibility to basic services, marginalization, gender discrimination in city-making, water issues worldwide, among many others. On that note, and going in parallel to emergencies and urgencies, we could highlight the demands from the city. This usually comprises of urban agendas and development goals that cities could aim for. These compromise the understanding of spatial challenges such as urban development, mobility transitions, infrastructural accessibility, and many others.

Therefore, we get the regular topics of daily challenges that every city confronts. Then we add the urgencies defining vulnerability levels. Finally yet importantly, we can aggregate the layer of emergencies what comes to disrupt and modify priorities radically.

However, the question of this session is not about what are those matters and their consequences, but more in the search to see who the key actors are and what role they play on understanding, tackling and acting to challenges, emergencies and urgencies in cities? Planners, designers, developers, researcher, and citizens themselves have such a thick aggregation of challenges (daily + urgencies + emergencies + agendas) that knowledge and expertise among themselves get lost. This decelerates the action capacity of those and makes it difficult for institutions to commit to the global agendas.

Researchers look for answers to support city-makers, and designers struggle in a private market to aim and keep the ethics for a greater good in their proposals. How to connect all these dots? How could we become smarter and more resilient in our field of action to facilitate productive knowledge exchange among diverse actors?

2. Short Description of the session
Cities face challenges, urgencies and emergencies. Researchers aim to support city-makers while designers have ethical struggles in a private market. How could we facilitate productive knowledge exchange among diverse actors? This session will bring together key stakeholders in every step and will promote to produce a roadmap of next steps to link together the gap between knowledge and action.

The attendees will play an important role since each will have to classify their role in this debate. They should define whether they are from either theory or practice. This allocates many different sources of
knowledge: multilateral institutions, funding opportunities, researchers, city making, activists, developers/private market, designers, students, and so on.

The attendees will be part of three question-led discussions, to promote a virtual but interactive session where the gaps on applying theoretical knowledge into practice will be discussed.

In parallel to the discussion, the facilitators of the workshop will make sure to generate a road map of Challenges and Opportunities to transform Knowledge into Action. As wrap up and result of the session, we hope to achieve a set of actions and collaboration with each representative of the table in order to promote next and future steps.

3. Objectives of the session

- Explore the existing relationships of academia and practice within the attendees.
- Explore gaps and intersectional perspectives on transforming knowledge into action
- Develop a roadmap on actions to bridge theory and praxis
- Develop connectivity and aim to map the challenges and opportunities on transforming knowledge into action

4. Format of the session

Due to Covid circumstances. We decided to shift the format to be a virtual debate together with the attendees. We will count with two facilitators, and from there we will hope we can indeed bring attendees to articulate a debate together.

For that, we will raise three main questions (per question could be 10-15 min discussion). Triggering key questions regarding the missing link between theory and practice. The facilitators will provide floor to the attendees, if there are not enough or they are not interacting, then the facilitators will aim to carry this debate based on questions.

This format will be interesting to be adapted depending the circumstances and the clustering of the panel sessions.

5. Programme/Agenda

Irene Luque Martín – Facilitator (Researcher & Practitioner)
Johnathan Subendran (TU Delft) – Facilitator (Researcher) – Post conflict urbanism
Monica Velasco (MVRDV) – Speaker (Practitioner) – Practice coordination
To be confirmed - Zeynep Gunay (ISOCARP) – Speaker (Researcher) – Academic organization
To be confirmed - Ines Sanchez Madriaga (UPM) – Panelist (Researcher) – Gender planning
To be confirmed - Alice Siragusa (JCR-EU) – Panelist (Practice & Researcher) – SDG institutional planning