

Forestry in Post-COVID-19 Era: Building Bridges instead of Walls



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Creating Future Leaders



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PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- Introduction
- General Overview of COVID-19 Effects
- Forestry Sector Broad Categories
- Impact of COVID-19 on Forestry Sector
- Building bridges in post-COVID-19 Era
- Conclusions/Key Lessons from COVID-19

INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)

- Disease caused by a new severe acute respiratory syndrome
- Symptoms reported include dry cough, fever, tiredness, shortness of breath, headache and general body weakness
- First reported in Wuhan city of China in 2019
- Continued to spread across the world at an unprecedented speed
- Globally, more than 24.2 million cases have been confirmed and more than 826,000 have perished

INTRODUCTION Contd.

- Populations subjected to lockdowns to control spread
- Has triggered economic crisis of serious consequences
- A lot remains unknown about the cause and pattern of spread of the virus
- No potent remedy till date
- COVID-19 remains the first global pandemic in over 100 years
- Crisis has exposed fundamental shortcomings in pandemic unpreparedness, global cooperation and economic safety backup

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF COVID-19 EFFECTS

- Economic Shift (diminished activities, debt build up,)
- Sustainability setbacks (disruption in supply chain)
- Societal anxieties (threat to public health, fake news, conspiracy theories, etc.)
- Social distancing
- Technology dependence (Working from home concept)
- Travel bans (with Airlines worst hit)
- Freedom restrictions/limit to number of gatherings

FORESTRY SECTOR BROAD CATEGORIES

- Forestry education
- Research institutes
- Forestry enterprises (Small, medium and large)
- Government (Ministry, Departments, etc.)

IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON FORESTRY SECTOR

- Walls building within and between sector categories
- Walls are raised between individuals that need to work manually and those that can conveniently work from home
- Forestry education, like other education sectors has been seriously affected through disruption of academic calendar
- Schools in more than 190 countries are closed to slow down spread of the virus

IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON FORESTRY SECTOR Contd.

- Some schools have continued online delivery of education, many schools are yet to wake up to new realities
- Crisis has created walls between learners in poor/rural areas and those in urban areas
- COVID-19 has seen a dramatic increase in teleworking in all walks of life, forestry sectors inclusive

IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON FORESTRY SECTOR Contd.

- A new report has shown that higher paid occupations are more suited to remote working
- Teleworking or Working from Home (WFH) is obviously not for everybody
- Recent realization of possibilities of second or multiple waves of COVID-19 infection necessitate serious consideration on how we get things done in post-COVID-19 era

BUILDING BRIDGES IN POST-COVID-19 ERA

- Bridges may not remove the crisis
- But will create pathways
- Will enable working environment to navigate
- Will enhance new and stronger collaborative opportunities
- They are not one way in value
- Will open up new opportunities
- Should be embraced by all

CATEGORIES OF BRIDGES TO BUILD

- Develop new working ethics that is tailor-made for forestry sectors to safeguard workers from possible infections
- Train staff & learners on virtual technology across forestry sector
- Develop new approaches to conduct examination
- Develop new protocols for conducting laboratory experiments
- Develop new protocols for conducting field data collection, measurements and surveys

CONCLUSIONS/KEY LESSONS FROM COVID-19

- The shock from COVID-19 crisis has been unprecedented and unprepared for
- There is the need for reskilling of workforce in the forestry sectors to face the new realities
- There is the need to share knowledge and experience rather than exploiting the vulnerable
- A lot still need to be learned

APPRECIATION

- To the Convener and Host of this webinar series, who happens to be my teacher and mentor
- Thanks for this opportunity to serve in this capacity and for this initiative
- To all participants, thanks for making time out and for listening