
PERSPECTIVES ON PANDEMIC: PEDAGOGIES, PREJUDICE, AND A PARADIGM SHIFT

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ABSTRACT

"Cities have the capability of providing something for everybody, only because, and only when, they are created by everybody." (Jacobs, 1961)

Urban planning, particularly for historic cities, requires extensive community involvement, given a large number of public and private stakeholders. Unilateral top-down decisions of the early 20th century made it clear that community involvement was essential to planning. Understandably, this has been difficult with the ongoing global pandemic. Lockdowns, confinement, quarantine, limited travel, and outright bans on gatherings have made public participation in urban decisions nearly impossible – yet planning for the future has not ceased. Of course, technology is aiding communication, including multiple channels of video conferencing, instant messaging, VoIP or internet phone systems, relay chat, social media, and even email. But these means of communication are no substitute for in-person face-to-face interaction and have raised new and challenging questions – How can community involvement be accommodated? And what other relationships or forms of communication are impacted?

Successful planning also requires forming pedagogical relationships, another problem created by the pandemic. Most often, pedagogy refers to an academic setting or teacher-student relationship. But pedagogy also relates to other relationships necessary for auspicious planning, including the planner-stakeholder and professional-client associations. Frequently, architects, urban planners, and conservators must explain the problems, technical details, results of surveys, and other studies to clients, decision-makers, and stakeholders. Often people are involved in making decisions and are not well versed with urban planning, architecture, or the conservation of historic cities. Another relationship that is has been impacted by the pandemic is peer-to-peer exchange, essential for complex urban planning. This paper will explore various issues and challenges of this new mode of work inter-pandemic. First, there will be an examination of three types of pedagogical relationships: planner-stakeholders, professional-client, and between professionals or peer-to-peer. Second, three examples are included to illustrate the drawbacks and benefits of this new mode of work, specifically related to planning and conservation projects in historic cities. These examples are all drawn from projects executed by various firms during the pandemic and led by the author. Finally, the presentation discusses the disadvantages and advantages of new forms of pedagogy, including removing prejudices. Pre-pandemic, there were many objections to holding virtual meetings or relying extensively on digital communications from stakeholders, clients, and team partners. The pandemic has effectively removed this prejudice against online encounters and subsequently pedagogical relationships, thus accelerating the paradigm shift related to virtual communications.

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PANDEMIC - PLANNING

A brief internet search on the current pandemic and its impact on pedagogy will reveal hundreds, if not thousands, of results featuring numerous conferences, journal articles, and websites. These articles range from teaching guidelines to the use of online technology, such as in *Technology Supported Learning and Pedagogy in Times of Crisis* (Ahmed, 2021) and *Perspectives of Technology Education Teachers during COVID-19* (Code, et. al., 2020). Social media and Facebook support groups also exist, such as *Pandemic Pedagogy* (Schwartzman, 2020). There are also numerous instructor and student surveys such as *Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Field Instruction and Remote Teaching Alternatives* (Barton, D. 2020). Understandably, most attention has been on the traditional teacher-student relationship. However, there are far fewer articles related to the impact of the pandemic on other pedagogical relationships, particularly with a focus on urban planning.

Planning for urban areas, especially in historic cities, must engage and involve local communities, groups, individuals, and stakeholders for whom these places are home. It is no longer acceptable that decisions about the urban environment are planned or executed unilaterally. The noted urbanist Jane Jacobs in her book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities and Downtown is for People*, argued for the people-centered urban planning approach. "There is no logic that can be superimposed on the city; people make it, and it is to them, not buildings, that we must fit our plans" (Jacobs, 1958). In the seminal work "A Pattern Language", Alexander (et al.) states, "We begin with that part of the language which defines a town or community... where each project built or each planning decision made is sanctioned by the community..." (Alexander, 1977). Much earlier, Socrates stated, "By far the greatest and most admirable form of wisdom is that needed to plan and beautify cities and human communities" (Messer, W. 2018).

So, it is clear that planning must involve communities and requires extensive proactive communication – but it must also include developing pedagogical relationships. Community members cannot be expected to understand all the issues of cities and the complex solutions proposed. Modern urban planning is also very technical and involves numerous experts; thus, professional-client or decision-maker pedagogical relationships must also be developed. Finally, planning practice demands a multidisciplinary approach. Therefore peer-to-peer interaction is the third form of pedagogy necessary. These three pedagogical research relationships will be explored in this paper, planner-stakeholders, professional-client, and peer-to-peer. The research methodology followed in this was from first-hand work on the examples described within. The opinions of those involved were collected from working on these projects. The following section will briefly define the pedagogical relationship, address the apparent drawbacks, and uncover the more positive aspects of new means of communication, including removing prejudices related to online pedagogy and the paradigm shift in delivering online resources. Pre-pandemic, there was hesitation and objections to holding online meetings with clients, stakeholders, colleagues, and students. Inter-pandemic, these opinion has changed and is now widely accepted. Three current examples illustrate these drawbacks and benefits associated with urban planning and conservation projects in historic urban environments.

PEDAGOGIES PLANNER-STAKEHOLDERS

The first pedagogical relationship is that of the planner and stakeholders. A critical aspect of community involvement is explaining the existing conditions, issues, and analysis related to urban spaces and planning projects. This situation is especially applicable in historic environments and the project's impacts on historical settings' values, integrity, authenticity, and significance. Often community members are well informed, but knowledge or experience is frequently



Figure-1: Slyline of Durres, Albania from the Ancient Citadel.

lacking or have lived with issues that are taken for granted thus no longer recognized as problems. Individuals may be shopkeepers, bankers, restaurateurs, religious leaders, and professionals. They may not know how to read design drawings, plans, mobility studies, or fully understand the implications of changing complex systems such as cities. Therefore, pedagogy is a crucial component of community involvement. It is essential to teach community members about their environment, describe any proposed project or plans in detail, and share models. This situation is particularly true if the planning projects have some aspect of archaeology, tourism, mobility, or involve the economy.

A recent example of the impacts of the pandemic on the planner and stakeholder relationship is the development of an Integrated Management Plan for the historic city of Durrës, Albania. A project was initiated by the Albanian-American Development Foundation and executed by the international consulting company ARS Progetti to develop an Integrated Management Plan ARS Progetti, S.P.A. *Ambiente Risorse Sviluppo*. This project was begun during the depths of the pandemic in 2020.

Durrës is an ancient port on the Adriatic Sea established by the ancient Greek colonists from Corinth around the 7th century BC. It was an important Roman port and the beginning of the Via Egnatia, a continuation of the Via Appia that started in Rome and continued to Constantinople. In the center of the city is an ancient amphitheater on the Tentative List for World Heritage. There is a tangible sense of place in central Durrës. Before the pandemic, residents enjoyed the numerous outdoor cafés, families visited the newly revitalized waterfront, and shoppers strolled along the main street. There is also a prevalent order to the city imposed by the natural geology— the sea and harbor, and hills defined boundaries. The city center also has a clear urban order, with the port linked to the main square through the strong axis of Bulevardi Epidamn. However, the city remained disconnected from its noble history with scattered, isolated archaeological sites. The historic assets and significant archaeological heritage were primarily ignored or only incorporated in the recent civic improvements or private development as afterthoughts. The 2,000 year-old amphitheater, located just one block from the central urban axis, was obscured with parked cars and encroaching



Figure-2: Left, Palace of King Zog, Right Map of Durrës (Unknown).

buildings, seemingly forgotten behind retail shops, restaurants, and bars. The Integrated Management Plan was created to protect, conserve, and valorize these cultural assets and utilize the archaeological sites as an overlaying urban order. According to Decision No. 169 20.2.2020 on Management Plans in Albania, it is required to conduct stakeholder outreach. "The management plan shall aim at the planning and coordination of the competencies of stakeholders active in the cultural property domain, and at minimizing risks to cultural value, optimizing its enjoyment providing conditions for access, information, preservation, and safeguarding." This decision goes on in numerous articles to state that the plan is subject to public consultation. Consultation shall be conducted with stakeholders, the local community, and other interested groups (businesses, non-profit organizations, or potential donors). It was also against the law for people to gather. Following the Decisions of Council of Ministers, and Orders of Minister of Health and Public Protection based in the Law No. 15/2016 on the prevention and fight of infections and infectious disease stated "As of 8 March the gathering of people in public or open to the public, the organization of meetings, protests, conferences and concerts throughout the territory of Albania is prohibited". The planning team of ARS Progetti was in a dilemma. The creation of an Integrated Management Plan demanded stakeholder consultation, but public gatherings were forbidden. Thus, a series of talks were conducted at the very beginning to collect information, make decisions and eventually build consensus for concepts. Consultations were divided into three distinct groups: institutional, such as the Ministry of Culture, Institute of Archaeology, and Municipality of Durrës; the second was community groups, and the third was professional practitioners. The institutional outreach was initially held in person with key individuals, as permitted by law. Video conference sessions later supported these sessions. The initial face-to-face meetings facilitated the later less personal video conferences. Local expert and professional meetings were also held face-to-face but at a distance during open-air inspections of the city. Large community meetings could not be conducted, so the team adapted a multi-stage approach, first extensive stakeholder mapping (Krupa, et al., 2018). Mapping the Stakeholders: Using Social Network Analysis to Increase the Legitimacy and Transparency of Participatory Scenario Planning, Society & Natural Resources, 2018: to understand the community's needs, then contacting individual leaders. Ideas and issues were discussed before conducting community meetings via video conferencing. Finally, follow-up telephone calls, if time-consuming, were also utilized. But the most effective tool was already in place – the requirement to provide sufficient time for institutional and community stakeholders

to review multiple drafts of the management plan after substantial completion. Issues discussed included blockages of pedestrian passageways between archaeological and cultural heritage sites, valorization of archaeological sites, encroachment into and over areas, and larger projects that impacted the city, such as parking, mobility, and conflicts in the cultural heritage protection measures. And critical for the amphitheater, holding cultural performances. The drawbacks of planning during the pandemic were obvious; widespread direct in-person communication with large groups was impossible. Also, it was recognized that not everyone has access to video conference technology, although efforts were made to contact stakeholders via direct telephone calls. It was also difficult and time-consuming to identify leaders and make personal connections. However, there were some benefits. The online video conference process was more economical, environmentally friendly, and more rapid. One of the most significant benefits was more frequent communication with institutional stakeholders, greater focus during meetings, and less stress, given that scheduling video conferencing is more accessible than long-distance travel. During some video conferences or telephone calls, some individuals were freer to voice their opinions as the online platform offered greater anonymity. There was also online simultaneous translation, and some meetings were recorded –making responses reviewable, a technique not typically used for in-person meetings. There were also more frequent inspections in the city with open-air walking meetings. Unfortunately, social media was not fully utilized, and interaction between different groups of stakeholders was limited.

PROFESSIONAL - CLIENT

The second pedagogical relationship that requires examination is between the professional and the client. Like stakeholders, clients often do not have the time or background to understand all the necessary technical details related to urban physical intervention. This type of pedagogy is especially critical if they are not well versed in conservation principles related to historic cities. Such was the case of emergency interventions at the castle in the center of Gjirokastra in southern Albania. Gjirokastra, the town, and its castle were inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2005. This city "bears outstanding testimony to the diversity of urban societies in the Balkans and longstanding ways of life which have today almost vanished" and "the town planning and housing of Gjirokastra are those of a citadel town..." (UNESCO, 2005) The castle sits above yet in the center of the town on an elongated geological formation with steep sides, which naturally form a defensive barrier. It was here,



Figure-3: The Castle of Gjirokastra, Albania Project video on the Albanian Development Fund Facebook Page ADF, 2020).

understandably, that a series of defenses contributed to the town's safety and growth. Today, it is an impressive structure looming over the town and valley with its sheer masonry walls, towers, and ramparts. From within, the views are sweeping, taking in the entire town, valley, and mountains beyond. However, the castle, despite its significance, is not without its problems. Issues with the underlying complex and often unstable geology have caused numerous structural complications, resident and visitor safety is an issue. The Albanian Development Fund managed this project (ADF) Albanian Development Fund, funded by the World Bank Albania, and it was executed by Cultural Heritage without Borders, Albania and Proskene Conservation and Cultural Heritage Proskene Restoration and Conservation of Cultural Heritage. This project was one part of a more considerable effort for Integrated Urban and Tourism Development (PIUTD) to develop the economy while improving living conditions and mainly focused on urban centers of cultural and natural interest to strengthen tourism. Previous elements of the overall project addressed urban upgrading, street improvements, pedestrian trails, museums, and lighting. This specific project started in late 2019, before the pandemic but continued until March of 2021. Albania, as mentioned earlier, requires stakeholder engagement, particularly for such significant cultural heritage sites. In addition, Gjirokastra, as a World Heritage property, must meet a higher standard. According to the World Heritage Convention, "States Parties [are] to adopt a general policy which aims to give the cultural and natural heritage a function in the life of the community." It is recognized that not all urban areas are World Heritage properties; nevertheless these documents provide a basis for advocating and engaging with stakeholders This requirement includes the participation of local communities and other stakeholders, and the Conventions continues, "Inclusive social development is at the heart of the implementation (...)". States Parties should

"further recognise that full inclusion, respect, and equity of all stakeholders, including local and concerned communities and indigenous peoples, together with a commitment to gender equality, are a fundamental premise for inclusive social development." World Heritage Convention Article 5, policy 6 section 17 Furthermore, the Budapest Declaration "seek[s] to ensure the active involvement of our local communities at all levels in the identification, protection and management..." UNESCO Budapest Declaration on World Heritage WHC-02/CON.202/5 and the Operational Guidelines seek "A partnership approach, underpinned by inclusive, transparent and accountable decision-making, to nomination, management and monitoring provides a significant contribution to the protection of World Heritage properties..." Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention (WHC 19/021, 2019) The ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas encapsulates this in its 3rd Principle, "The participation and the involvement of the residents are essential for the success of the conservation programme and should be encouraged. The conservation of historic towns and urban areas concerns their residents first of all." International Council on Monuments and Sites Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns and Urban Areas (Washington Charter, 1987) Finally, the necessity of involving communities and recognizing the impact on society and the environment has also been recognized by multinational lenders. The World Bank states in their Environmental and Social Framework that community participation and, "where projects are designed and conducted for the purposes of fostering community-driven development" the Bank's Environmental and Social Standards specifically require stakeholder consultation "The borrower will carry out meaningful consultations with stakeholders in accordance with ESS10 in order to identify cultural heritage that may be affected..."

So the project had some of the same issues related to stakeholder pedagogy, as mentioned earlier in the example. However, this was also coupled with the need to develop a greater professional-client pedagogical relationship given the complex technical and philosophical conservation issues such as geology, hydrology, and structural seismic problems. Fortunately, the ADF project manager was well versed in the problems related to conservation but was also managing several projects simultaneously. Thankfully, the initial meetings were held face to face before the pandemic and this facilitated later video conference meetings during the critical second half of the project. Numerous video conference calls were made between the technical team and the client. But most effective was a short video was created that could be copied and reused describing the problems, the technical investigations, and documentation. This video was posted on social media and served as an efficient delivery system of information if only one way. This also had the added benefit of reaching higher-level decision-makers that possibly would not have attended meetings. In addition, the ADF project manager insisted on monthly written updated reports which were helpful not only in informing the client of technical issues, but was also useful intra-team between professionals during their preparation. Incomplete data with limited analysis was also provided to the client before delivery deadlines along with pre-submittal informative meetings, which were particularly effective. In addition, as it became apparent that the pandemic may have an impact on the project schedule, the team developed a COVID-19 protocol. This anticipated any possible illness by key team members and the involvement of possible replacements. Given these measures, the project was delivered on time. The drawbacks to a lack of in-person professional-client meetings echo those of the previous example. While there were numerous virtual meetings with the client, these were of a technical nature and outreach to the community was hampered. It was difficult to read the body language and know if the technical information was being understood. However, the more frequent virtual meetings and the required monthly reports served to fill in for the lack of in-person meetings. There were also more side conversations between experts on various themes than would have occurred without becoming accustomed to frequent video conferencing. To explain the more complex planned interventions, 3D models were created using photogrammetry and laser scanning. There were few, if any, drawbacks between the technical team and the client. In addition, the project was of sufficient length to outlast the first wave of the virus, and limited in-person meetings were held in the late summer of 2020 and client-stakeholder presentations at the end of the project in the spring of 2021.

PEER-TO-PEER

Finally, the last pedagogical relationship to be examined is peer-to-peer. Modern urban planning is a complex process that requires a multidisciplinary approach. Working across boundaries and in an "interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary manner can lead to new insights" (Davoudi 2010: 245) Engineers, landscape architects, mobility experts, and conservators must interact with planners and learn from one another during project execution. Even before the pandemic, this was a daunting process requiring many professional interactions that often occurred during in-person planning exercises or design sessions. Collaboration was also developed following preparations for presentations or design submittals. In addition, young professionals learn implicitly as employees within planning or architectural studios, and the work is typically supported by young, less experienced professionals who learn through interaction and executing projects. Although not quite peer-to-peer, this aspect of pedagogy should not be forgotten as it are the young professionals that carry on the work between generations. The Reflective Practitioner, (Schön 1984) defines "reflective proactive as occurring when skilled practitioners responded tacitly to situations of uncertainty, instability, or uniqueness, through a combination of intuitive knowing-in-action" (Webster, 2008, p. 22). Finally, peer-to-peer pedagogy is also conducted in at professional or academic conferences where information is shared formally in presentations but also informally between conference sessions.

One example to illustrate the need for interdisciplinary (and intergenerational) pedagogy was the development of a Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for the Uganda National Museum. The Uganda Museum was the first built-for-purpose museum and the architect and planner Ernst May's last intact work in East Africa. Land use planning for Kampala is integral to the history of the city and museum. During the initial city planning, the key location and early inclusion of a museum demonstrated the importance of culture in Kampala. Ernst May, their head planner, was a founding member of the professional organization Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) or International Congresses of Modern Architecture . One of the key tenets of this organization was that architecture and, specifically planning, could improve the quality of life. The museum siting and design set the tone for subsequent government and institutional buildings, including the Parliament and National Theatre. The museum welcomes thousands of visitors per month, exposing them to Uganda's rich cultural and natural heritage. However, the museum has suffered from a lack of appreciation, ad hoc changes,



Figure-4: Map of the World Heritage Property of Gjirokastra (UNESCO).



Figure-5: Documentation Created During the Project Planning.

and insufficient maintenance over the years. Understandably, the focus was on its unique collection within and not the building itself. Hence, a comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CMP) was needed.

This project was led by the Uganda National Museum with a grant from the Getty Foundation for keeping it Modern. The museum brought together a multidisciplinary, international team of conservation architects, historians, engineers, curators, and planners, including African Architecture Matters and Adengo Architecture to craft the management plan along with the involvement of institutional and community stakeholders. While the project started in 2019 before the pandemic, it continued throughout 2020, leading to some delays given travel restrictions and the closure of the museum. Fortunately, the multidisciplinary team was already functioning well before the pandemic, mainly due to the rigorous application process for the grant. Thus, the high levels of cooperation of the core team were already well-honed during this process. Unfortunately, some team members became ill during the pandemic, but others within the group could increase their level of participation. In addition, all team members have extensive experience with international projects, so the transition to virtual meetings was without interruption. But, the need for more frequent communication on multiple channels became necessary. In addition, the museum provided strong leadership, given that a senior staff member, Joseph Ssebunya, led the project from inception throughout implementation. Finally, flexibility in deadlines and an extension of the final Conservation Management Plan from the donor was instrumental in allowing additional time for peer-to-peer pedagogical interaction.

One critical aspect of the CMP was dissemination. The symposium Building Beyond Borders, held in November of 2020 and provided a perfect platform at the mid-point in the project. This virtual symposium was designed to bring together academics, practitioners, students, NGOs, and community members to contribute to conservation and active contribution through discussions, presentations, and lectures. The symposium's goals were to architectural practices consider this building beyond borders, not just beyond geographical boundaries, but more importantly beyond cultural, social, intellectual, and professional barriers "Building Beyond Borders Fall Symposium". This symposium was sponsored by the Research Foundation Flanders and the Faculty of Architecture and Arts, Hasselt University in Belgium.

The drawbacks of a lack of face-to-face exchange between peers were obvious. It is impossible for a peer to successfully share if there is no way to interpret body language and there was delay in interaction even with the best video conferencing software. Often the bandwidth between professionals in Africa and Europe only allowed audio transmission. Also, young professionals involved in the project easily became distracted and were often executing multiple tasks or working on other projects. Technology was also a barrier given the frequent interruptions in transmission. But there were some benefits to this form of exchange, and peers became used to communicating more frequently with video conferences and measuring expectations concerning missed meetings. Concerning the conference, had it been held before the pandemic, it is likely there would have been mainly European contributors. Still, given its forced virtual nature, there were many international contributors.

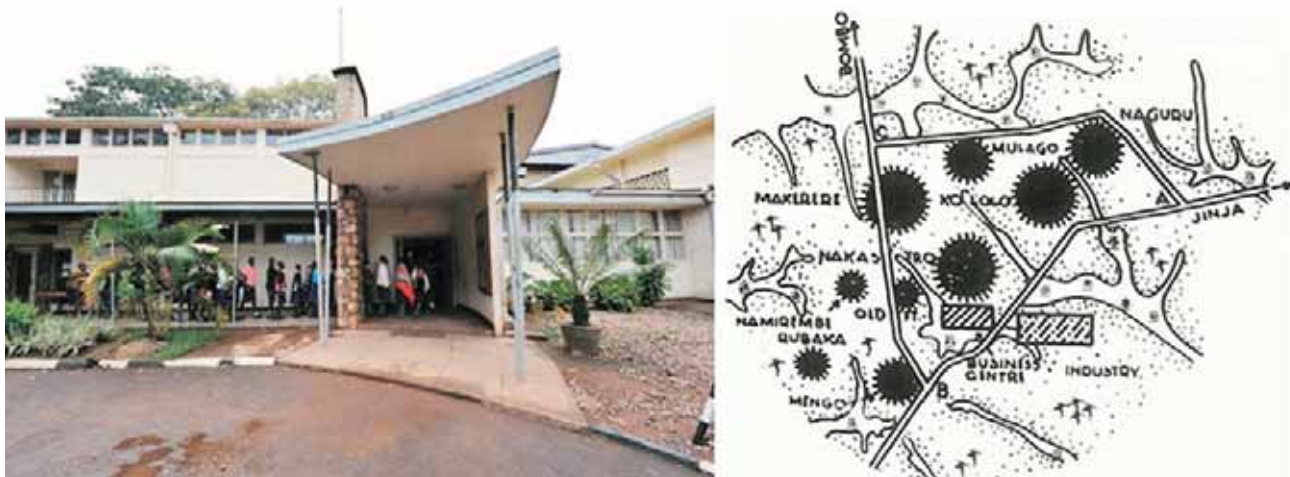


Figure-6: Left, The Uganda National Museum Entry Canopy Planning Right, Kampala with the Museum in Mulago (May, 1947).



Figure-7: Building Beyond Borders Symposium (Research Foundation Flanders, Faculty of Architecture and Arts, Hasselt University, 2020).

PREJUDICE AND A PARADIGM SHIFT- CONCLUSIONS

Planning in a vacuum, particularly for historical sites, is ineffectual and worse without respect for those living and working in these places. It would be sheer hubris for any planning team to assume that they know about local culture sufficiently to make informed decisions without stakeholder involvement. For planning to be fully effective, it must be adopted legally by the recognized authorities, those who enforce the plan, and most importantly, embraced by local communities. A critical component of community engagement is the development of a pedagogical relationship, informing stakeholders about issues, problems, and potential solutions or changes planned for their environment. Two other types of pedagogical relationships that of the professional-client and peer-to-peer, are also essential for effective planning.

In the best of times, the default methods of holding open forums, conducting meetings, extensive travel, and preparing deliverables and presentations were only somewhat effective.

The current global pandemic with social distancing, prohibitions on gathering, and restricted travel made these levels of in-person communication and pedagogy nearly impossible. The pandemic has challenged professional planners as teachers in how they engage with communities, clients, and each other. The teams and projects highlighted in this article had some success in overcoming these barriers either through deliberate actions in response to the pandemic or by trial and error. These include:

- Mapping stakeholders to understand better the communities, their leaders, relationships; thus, more effective in reaching them.
- Comprehending the position of stakeholders and the level of involvement they require from simply being informed to active engagement; thus adjusting the level of pedagogy needed.
- Conducting limited in-person meetings with key individuals before resorting to virtual meetings. This



Figure-8: Stakeholder Mapping Tools Oline Smaply.

- established a baseline relationship, difficult to be developed virtually.
- Holding open-air site visits with clients and other experts. Although less comfortable and less time-efficient than office meetings, it is more effective while on site.
- Developing a contingency strategy with redundancies to react to sudden changes in team members. While difficult, contingencies should incorporate flexibility with deadlines and budgets.
- Utilizing existing regulations, often ignored pre-pandemic, that require stakeholder interaction and sufficient review time.
- Submitting proactively incomplete data or designs while anticipating client needs and stakeholder questions. Although many professionals are reluctant to submit incomplete deliverables, this allows more time for clients and stakeholders to review.
- Using multiple forms and channels of communication. Already such technology was in use before the pandemic but has accelerated. One method or channel is insufficient.
- Realizing that peers in a complex multidisciplinary project may need more time and more frequent communication for successful collaboration. This includes working with young professionals.

Nothing will replace person-to-person interactions. This personal method is the best form of stakeholder, client, and peer-to-peer pedagogy. But the current pandemic has made other forms of interaction more acceptable – effectively removing the prejudices against online meetings, presentations, and teaching. Before, there were lingering prejudices against virtual communication, especially concerning stakeholder outreach, client presentations, team meetings, and pedagogy. Now, this method of interaction and teaching has cemented a paradigm shift. Any bias against virtual communication, presentations, and collaboration has been eliminated. The use of technology has also leveled participation in professional or academic conferences enabling interaction from those from lower-income countries. Finally, the pandemic has reduced or restricted travel making international planning work more environmentally friendly and less expensive.

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