



**Carsten
Bjornsson
: ESRI**

Talking TRANSFORMATION Podcast

TTPod COVID Diary Entry Number 11:

“When the Streets Have No Names”

The importance of addressing as the basis for responsive service delivery and governance

Global Conversations on the
COVID 19 Pandemic

Recorded June 4th 2020

Flatten the Curve!
"Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika"

The ability to track and trace movement of citizens to assist with monitoring and evaluation of COVID-19 has been one of the main responses of governments health authorities globally. Mapping where new infections are occurring, where patients have recovered and who has received – when developed – vaccines is fundamental to an effective health response. However, that mapping implies the ability to place a case “in space” and the credibility of the monitoring system will be determined by the accuracy of the placement.

But what happens when you don't have an address that is recognised by a land, postal or health system? Globally two-thirds of households do not have an address. The implication for most is limited or no delivery services, limited right and lands security. Having or not having an address impacts on civic identity, urban information systems, tax systems, land management, tenure, informal settlement upgrading, and ultimately, the economy. The implications for planning, service delivery and co-ordination are obvious.

Carsten Bjornsson helps us understand these implications. As an experienced GIS expert and land surveyor by profession, he has almost 20 years of service working with [ESRI](#) and is currently their Land Administration Lead. He's also served as Assistant Professor at KVL University in Copenhagen, Denmark

We ask him about some of the fundamentals of addressing – why it's important, how can we go about creating an address and what are the benefits during a crisis response period and more longer term in terms of the land information systems that underpin our property markets and rates and revenue base?

He is no stranger to South Africa and visited Johannesburg last year where his keynote address reflected innovation to support street addressing. We are indebted to him spending time with us and reflecting on the approaches and opportunities that are available.