CITIES on the FRONTLINE

MANCHESTER 1824
The University of Manchester

RESILIENT CITIES NETWORK

Bi-weekly Manchester Briefing #21 (26 November 2020)

Cities for a Resilient Recovery: International Lessons on Recovery from COVID-19

This week, we consider how communication, artificial intelligence, sharing learning, and waste management play a role in response and recovery from COVID-19.

International Lessons

- Remote working and reviving local economies (Bermuda, Barbados, Estonia, Georgia)
- Waste and impact on green spaces due to lockdowns (UK)
- Artificial Intelligence and emergency management (Venezuela, Bolivia, Afghanistan)
- The role of music in supporting children's mental health in lockdown (Ecuador)
- Communicating under uncertainty (UK)
- Disseminating learning from COVID-19 (New Zealand, South Korea)

Useful Webinars

Please note the next issue of the briefing will be distributed mid-December, and will resume mid-January after the Christmas holidays.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS

Health and Wellbeing: Everyone living and working in the city has access to what they need to survive and thrive

Consider the vulnerability of those living in (static) mobile homes and the unique challenges they face during COVID-19. Mobile home residents face a number of health and environmental challenges that have been exacerbated during the pandemic. Residents face compounding health issues as mobile homes are difficult to keep warm in winter and cool in summer. Heating and ventilation costs can also create financial burdens which can have negative health impacts – especially as many people living in mobile homes have lower incomes and face job insecurity. This demographic also exposed uncertainty related to site locations and occupancy agreements. In the UK, many mobile home sites are at risk of flooding and storm damage due to their proximity to water. To combat this, residents are normally asked to leave for 6 weeks of the year during storm season. During COVID-19 this creates a number of issues as movement of people during these 6 weeks is a significant infection risk. The UK government has therefore requested that sites remain open for those using mobile homes as their primary residence. Consider:

- Emergency planning for **extreme weather events**/ COVID-19, including COVID-safe evacuation plans
- Increased **community liaison and communication** to share evacuation plans clearly to residents so they are able to prepare and act quickly and safely
- Identify local COVID-secure **emergency accommodation** in case evacuation of residents is needed

- Increase community liaison during periods of **extreme heat** to ensure residents are able to stay safe, especially during periods of lockdown, shielding or quarantine
- Provide **clear information** to residents in **multiple languages** and have multi-lingual community health visitors to ensure health and wellbeing information is translated

Sources:
https://news.azpm.org/p/news-topical-biz/2020/9/2/179637-heat-covid-19-and-isolation-put-mobile-home-parks-at-risk/
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-letter-from-kelly-tolhurst-to caravan-and-park-home-owners

Economy and Society: The social & financial systems that enable urban populations to live peacefully, and act collectively

Consider how music and singing can be facilitated to support child mental health. In Ecuador, efforts have been made to engage children with music to help support their mental health during lockdown and periods where they are away from school. Consider the pressures on children to catch-up with purely academic subjects in light of school closures and online learning, and how to promote mental health and wellbeing through the arts. Consider:

- Inviting children to **send in videos** of themselves singing or dancing to songs that make them feel happy or empowered, and encourage family members to join in
- Editing the videos to **create short films** or creating virtual choirs if the same song is assigned/chosen
- How music and the arts can help **children express their anxieties** and the benefits of this for their mental health and wellbeing
- Establishing n**ew ways to include music** and song safely throughout the school day and how this can also contribute to teachers' continuing Professional Development and their own mental health

Source: https://www.singup.org/blog/article/1438-case-study-singing-for-wellbeing-in-ecuador-during-covid-19/

Consider how remote working may be able to revive local economies. As remote working has become far more common during the COVID-19 pandemic, a number of countries have begun to offer Remote Working Visas where people can work as 'digital nomads'. i.e. live in one country but work remotely in another. For countries offering Remote Work Visas, this has contributed to boosting economies at a time when other industries (such as tourism) are suffering. For companies employing digital nomads it offers the opportunity to pay competitive salaries to those who may be able to reduce their living costs by not working in the same country as their employer. Similar programmes may be considered at a local level, whereby employees can decide to live and work remotely in one city, and be paid by a company in another. Consider the benefits for companies, including:

- Offering flexible working to **help reduce resignations** from staff who are reconsidering their work life in the aftermath of COVID-19 and explore job opportunities overseas
- The **reduced cost of staff** e.g. the London Weighting allowance means employers pay anything between 1-20% more to employees living and working In London compared to other UK regions

Consider the benefits for local economies, including:

- Building **local economies by attracting new residents,** e.g. one study found that 60% of people in the UK have reconsidered their living situation, with many setting their sights on an escape to the coast
- **Rebuilding economies that were reliant** on other industries e.g. tourism as people consider relocating to areas such as the coast - an area hard-hit by a diminishing tourist industry due to COVID-19

Sources:
https://www.onlinevisa.com/news/digital-nomads-visas-covid-19/
https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/london-office-work-brighton-seaside-remote-working-coronavirus-b466141.html

Infrastructure and Environment: The man-made and natural systems that provide critical services, and protect and connect urban assets, enabling the flow of goods, services, and knowledge

Consider the impacts on green spaces as national lockdowns are implemented. Green spaces have become fundamental to people's physical and mental wellbeing through COVID-19, especially during periods of lockdown. Increased use of these spaces requires some adaptations to green space management to ensure the recovery of both people and the environment. Consider:

- Campaigns to make the **public aware** that many green spaces and parks in the UK are **run by local volunteers** – and that the limited funding and capacity means that essential services such as waste collection are limited and the public can help by taking their litter home with them to not cause litter issues
- Campaigns to **boost volunteer numbers** to help the maintenance of green spaces
- **Increased signage** in local green spaces to remind people that they can help protect their local ecosystems in times where green spaces are seeing increased human traffic by:
    - Sticking to paths to avoid disturbing woods and meadows
    - Not disturbing deadwood as this is vital to local ecosystems
    - Not removing anything from the green space
    - Taking litter home

Source:
http://www.fieldsintrust.org/knowledge-base/management-of-green-spaces-during-covid-19

Leadership and Strategy: The processes that promote effective leadership, inclusive decision-making, empowered stakeholders, and integrated planning

Consider how Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be used to support emergency management activities during COVID-19. AI uses computer systems to perform tasks associated with human intelligence. This can be used to help detect and interpret patterns useful for managing emergencies. Explore with AI experts how AI may be used in COVID-19 mitigation, preparation, response, and recovery:

- **Mitigation:** To recognize patterns in the environment to provide early warning e.g. data on compounding factors associated with COVID-19 infection such as urban poverty to provide information on potentially high-risk areas
- **Preparation:** To analyse patterns in natural and social phenomena e.g. impacts of natural disasters on hospital capacity during COVID-19. Run emergency simulations to mathematically model detailed emergency management plans to account for compounding disasters during the pandemic
- **Response and Recovery:** To evaluate situational information from social media, and surveillance cameras to determine where response is needed, and to support coordination of recovery activities e.g. drones can be used to transport PPE, using online information developed by mapping COVID hotspots. In the UK, Windracers (a humanitarian aid transportation company) used delivery drones to fly four times a day to the Isle of Wight, taking just 10 minutes to deliver PPE.

Consider how communications about COVID-19 can respect uncertainty to improve transparency about the disease. The novelty of the COVID-19 pandemic has meant that information about the disease has continually been changing. During the pandemic explicit or implied certainty has led to inaccurate predictions e.g. in death and infection rates. While so little is known about COVID-19 (meaning uncertainty is unavoidable), communicating preliminary or emergent data as certain facts had impacts on behaviours and lives. Consider how acknowledging uncertainty about COVID-19 may:

- Improve the **atmosphere around scientific debate** and build public trust through conveying that evidence and practice could/should change with more information and research
- Improve people's **trust in government authority** as the information they provide is transparent, and in respecting uncertainty are able to acknowledge credible yet conflicting evidence
- Increase **regular evaluation** of pandemic management plans – emergency planner's understanding of influenza viruses has increased dramatically in recent decades, yet, there is very little certainty about the determinants of, and possibilities for, pandemic emergence. This is illustrated by contradiction that: COVID-

19 was largely unexpected, but that there are a large number of influenza pandemic management plans in circulation

Sources:
https://www.bmj.com/content/371/bmj.m3979
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2862331/

Consider how to develop and disseminate learning from COVID-19 at local level. Formal learning from COVID-19 is beginning to take place at national and international levels, to capture rapid dissemination of information and lessons. Similar approaches at local government levels are identifying emerging trends in response and identifying gaps and opportunities for the future e.g. The Ney report on Local COVID-19 outbreaks: Lessons learnt and good practice from Leicestershire's experiences of responding to a local surge in COVID-19 cases. Consider:

- Learning can capture information in cities or regions
- Learning can be undertaken by individual local governments or a consortium through mechanisms such as peer review (see ISO 22392)
- Lessons may be disseminated within a single locale or more widely. They may be between cities or regions or internationally with organisations such as the Resilient Cities Network

Below a few examples of formalised international learning and the key issues addressed to provide consideration for similar pieces of work at local level.

- The UN has developed The Compendium of Digital Government Initiatives in response to the COVID-19 to capture emerging trends **in digital responses** of UN Member States against the COVID-19 pandemic, and provide a preliminary analysis of their main features
- The Health System Response Monitor (HSRM) collects and organises up-to-date information on the **responses of health systems** and also captures wider public health initiatives
- New Zealand's Independent Review of COVID 19 Clusters in Aged Residential Care Facilities which provides lessons on **care facilities for the elderly** and recommendations for improvements
- Korea's COVID-19: Testing Time for Resilience which includes information on **holding elections during COVID-19**
- Consideration of how to learn lessons through debrief, assessing performance and peer review

Sources:
https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/Portals/egovkb/Documents/un/2020-Survey/UNDESA%20Compendium%20of%20Digital%20Government%20Initiatives%20in%20Response%20to%20the%20COVID-19%20Pandemic.pdf
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-covid-19-outbreaks-lessons-learnt-and-good-practice
http://www.mofa.go.kr/eng/brd/m_22596/view.do?seq=9&srchFr=&srchTo=&srchWord=&srchTp=&multi_itm_seq=0&itm_seq_1=0&itm_seq_2=0&company_cd=&company_nm=&page=1&titleNm

USEFUL WEBINARS

Key past and upcoming webinars on how cities are building resilience in the face of the pandemic and other shocks & stresses.

Date	Webinar Title (Click to register or to access materials)
12 November	Resilient Cities Network and the World Bank - Cities on the Frontline Speaker Series: Resilient Leadership
12 November	UNDRR - Local Government Financing for Local Resilience
18 November	Centre for Liveable Cities – Resilient Rotterdam: Green City Lungs for a Green Recovery
20 November	UCLG Africa, UNHCR and PHAP - Creating Inclusive Cities in South Africa Amidst COVID-19
20 November	PHAP – The State of Protection in the COVID-19 Era
24 November	Implications of COVID-19 for Global Value Chains
30 November	Resilient Cities and the World Bank - Cities on the Frontline Speaker Series: Climate Change Governance

Produced by The University of Manchester, UK (Professor Duncan Shaw, Dr Jennifer Bealt) in partnership with the Resilient Cities Network (Femke Gubbels)

What is the weekly briefing on Cities for a Resilient Recovery?

Each week the University of Manchester brings together relevant international practices and examples on recovery from COVID-19. The weekly briefing is curated by the Resilient Cities Network to bring key lessons and examples targeted for resilience officers, emergency planners and other city practitioners. The structure of the briefing follows the City Resilience Framework – specifically the four drivers that cities have been identified as mattering the most when a city faces chronic stresses or sudden shocks - Health & Wellbeing, Economy & Society; Infrastructure & Environment; and Leadership & Strategy.

For more international examples please register @ ambs.ac.uk/covidrecovery
Join the Coalition of Cities for a Resilient Recovery **here**

If you would be willing to contribute your knowledge to this briefing series (via a 30-minute interview) please contact Duncan.Shaw-2@manchester.ac.uk