

CITIES on the FRONTLINE



Bi-weekly Manchester Briefing #25– 11 February 2021

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

This week, we consider how the safety of pedestrian crossings, reducing food waste, protecting migrants and refugees, and responding to vocal vaccine deniers can play a key role in response and recovery from COVID-19.

International Lessons

- Humanitarian needs of migrants and refugees (Egypt, Switzerland)
- Promoting local tourism post-pandemic (South Africa, Australia)
- Measures for COVID-safe pedestrian crossings (Ireland, Australia, UK)
- Reducing food waste in light of changing habits (South Korea, Singapore, France)
- Social protection measures to support newly vulnerable groups (Indonesia, Morocco)
- Reporting COVID breaches (Singapore)
- Publicly responding to vocal vaccine deniers (WHO, Australia)
- Mourning the loss of those who have died due to COVID (UK, India)

Useful Webinars

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS

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

Consider how to meet the humanitarian needs of migrants and refugees. Migrants and refugees face a multitude of health and safety challenges that have been intensified by the pandemic, such as: losing employment and income; eviction and homelessness; and lack of access to 'safety net' support. In addition, some countries have temporarily suspended issuing residency permits, leaving people with irregular status in their country of asylum and further impacting their access to employment and social services. To support migrants and refugees, consider:

- Participate in **national resettlement programmes** (e.g. SRP UK <http://tinyurl.com/w2ussukj>) to guide preparations, ongoing support and integration of migrants and refugees into local communities
- Establish a working group to enable **collaborative working** between local councils, community groups and related agencies to determine how local authorities can meet legislative requirements of resettlement programmes
- Inform and prepare local communities where migrants and refugees are to be resettled
- Identify registered and unregistered refugee populations in communities
- Conduct **risk and vulnerability assessment mapping**
- Include migrants and refugees in social protection schemes to support those who have lost income generating opportunities

- How systems will protect migrants and refugees from harm, irrespective of their status, with access to essential health and social care
- Agree that **immigration status is not a legitimate basis to deny access to essential public services** (e.g. healthcare, vaccination), and communicate this to public services, migrant and refugee populations, and wider groups
- **Invest in risk communication and community engagement** at local levels to disseminate information in the relevant languages of migrants and refugees
- **Partner with humanitarian actors** to provide services
- Establish humanitarian service points or 'safe spaces' which are not subject to immigration enforcement activities, where humanitarian actors can provide essential services to vulnerable migrants

Sources:

<https://oecd-development-matters.org/2020/08/07/how-covid-19-is-affecting-egypts-migrants-and-refugees/>
<https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/press-release/migrants-and-refugees-least-protected-most-affected-in-covid-crisis-warns-ifrc-president/>
<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/IFRC-report-COVID19-migrants-least-protected-most-affected.pdf>

Consider ways to remember and memorialise those who have died due to COVID-19. Important parts of recovery are mourning the loss of loved ones, and remembering those who have tragically lost their lives through the pandemic. Consider opportunities to memorialise, including:

- Develop a **website dedicated to those who have died** during the pandemic, allowing families to create obituaries, find a network of support, and help those who may feel alone in their grief
- Hold **online memorial services** to enable people to come together and remember loved ones
- Build and **dedicate a memorial** to those who have died, e.g. St Paul's Cathedral in London will build an inner portico at the North Transept and dedicate it as a physical memorial to those who have died due to COVID-19
- **Invite those of all faiths** and none to join in remembering loved ones to offer a safe and inclusive space of refuge, solace and hope
- To ensure appropriate memorialisation, consider:
 - Coproduction of memorialisation options with communities
 - Collaboration with partners that specialise in supporting those who have been affected by bereavement
 - Whether the memorial is to those who have died, those who have been otherwise affected by the crisis, and/or those who have helped in the response to the crisis

Sources:

<https://www.rememberme2020.uk/remember/>
<https://www.thestatesman.com/cities/siliguri/online-memorial-covid-victims-planned-1502948782.html>

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

Consider how existing social protection measures can support people who find themselves to be newly vulnerable. The significant impacts of COVID-19 have created new groups of vulnerable people, such as people on middle-incomes and small businesses owners who have experienced a sudden loss of income and are now financially vulnerable. These new vulnerable groups have not before been targeted for social protection. Consider how other countries have expanded existing systems to support newly vulnerable people, for example:

- Adjust **social protection programmes to give flexibility** that can adjust to changing public health situations:
 - Directly link social protection measures to region-specific health or lockdown measures, e.g. tie social protection policies to tiers/categories in health responses
 - **Establish a trigger system** to rapidly adjust social protection measures to affected areas and groups
- Enable vulnerable people to access the assistance they need:

- Establish a beneficiary database to identify and assess the social protection needs of newly vulnerable people
- **Partner with existing community organisations** to identify vulnerable people, develop community-based targeting, and ensure those who become newly vulnerable are not excluded
- Facilitate vulnerable individuals to self-identify through a registration service, e.g. online application, supported by a means test for verification
- **Expand sources of data** to identify and verify intended beneficiaries, e.g. electricity or bank account data, employer's redundancy data
- **Revise legislation surrounding conditionality requirements**, e.g. loosening conditionality principles of social protection programmes:
 - Morocco transformed 'conditional cash transfer' (CCTs) to 'labelled cash transfer' (LTCs) by removing the conditionality of continued school enrolment for cash transfers - resulting in reduced costs of programme implementation and reported increases in school enrolment and participation of children

Sources:

<https://www.povertyactionlab.org/blog/11-20-20/strengthening-indonesias-social-protection-covid-19-era-strategy-and-lessons-evidence>

<https://www.povertyactionlab.org/evaluation/cash-transfers-education-morocco>

Consider ways to promote and support local tourism post-pandemic. Regional imbalances have created varying levels of economic impact on local economies. Areas that relied heavily on tourism and sport/music events prior to the pandemic are suffering disproportionate levels of unemployment and loss of trade. Consider a targeted local economic recovery strategy to boost tourism post-pandemic in local economies that have been hit hardest:

- Develop **new tourism packages** and make them appropriate for **post-pandemic tourism**, e.g. taking into consideration the potential need for social distancing, for vaccination passports to travel, and for meeting expectations of COVID-safe measures that tourists will have
- Recognise the opportunity to renew approaches to local tourism by adopting a community-centred tourism framework
 - Redefine and reorientate **tourism based on the rights and interests of local communities** and local people
 - **Involve local businesses, tourism boards and the community** in developing targeted strategies to rejuvenate local tourism, that are beneficial to the whole community and geographical area
 - Create **partnerships with local businesses** and the local tourism board to develop a collaborative marketing plan to attract tourism
- Support local businesses in **gaining core health and safety certifications** by offering advice on how to gain certification and who to go to for auditing and certification awards
- Work with **community voluntary groups** to gain certifications such as 'Blue Flag Beach'/'Tidy Towns' to promote environmental and quality standards that will assist in marketing your local area to potential tourists
- Prepare a **targeted marketing strategy** to promote local areas when tourism returns, which communicates how the health and safety of visitors is central
- Collaborate with national tourism organisations (e.g. Visit Britain) and large holiday companies to promote domestic tourism
- Provide advice and **temporary financial support** (e.g. moratoriums on council tax) for local businesses directly involved in tourism (e.g. guest houses, to support their short-term financial viability)

Sources:

<https://www.nationalplanningcommission.org.za/assets/Documents/Review%20of%20Economic%20Progress%20NPC%20Dec%202020.pdf>

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14616688.2020.1757748?needAccess=true>

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

Consider measures for COVID-safe pedestrian crossings to reduce spread of the virus. COVID-19 is thought to spread through shared surface contact which has led to additional cleaning of public transport, public spaces, and other infrastructure. Pedestrian crossings have been targeted for improvement to avoid people having to press buttons and prevent groups of pedestrians forming as they wait to cross. For example, crossings have been reprogrammed to prioritise pedestrians or have been upgraded to touch-less systems to offer a more hygienic alternative to the standard push button. These measures prevent people from potentially contaminating their hands and encourage safe pedestrian behaviour by ensuring that those cautious of waiting near others and touching push buttons don't cross dangerously. Consider:

- **Reprogramme traffic lights to prioritise pedestrians** instead of road vehicles:
 - Change the traffic light default swap preference from vehicles to pedestrians - to reduce the time spent by groups of pedestrians at crossings
 - Minimise the impact of new measures on increased traffic congestion by using traffic detection technology
- Install **touchless technology** to replace buttons:
 - Assess pedestrian crossings to determine the number of **touchless push buttons** required
 - Scope costs from potential suppliers, and assess affordability
 - **Partner with other interested authorities** to conduct a trial, choosing locations where regular site inspection and user behaviour observation can be carried out.
 - Using results from the trial, identify and allocate funding to road and transport authorities to install touch-less buttons
 - Identify the utilisation of pedestrian crossings and develop an installation priority list
 - Include a feedback sound in touchless technology to ensure ease of use for people with vision impairment and other disabilities
 - **Raise public awareness** by fixing infographic signage to pedestrian crossing poles that provide functionality and instructions

Sources:

<https://www.newstalk.com/news/contactless-pedestrian-crossing-buttons-1080335>
<https://www.braums.com.au/news/2020/touch-less-push-buttons-put-control-back-into-the-hands-of-the-public>
<https://www.ianvisits.co.uk/blog/2020/09/27/traffic-lights-being-reprogrammed-to-prefer-humans/>

Consider measures to reduce food waste in the light of changing habits. COVID-19 has strained food producers and distributors (e.g. disrupted food supply chains, problematized crop harvesting, impacted logistics and distribution), and this has impacted the amount of food waste created in the supply chain. COVID-19 has also changed household food waste creation by affecting household income, shopping habits and consumption patterns. The implications are broad. For example, the real cost of food has increased for some vulnerable households, who must purchase from supermarkets that will deliver rather than shop at their usual more affordable shops. Food waste has become an important concern for organisations and households, and some countries are taking strong action. Consider:

- **Charge businesses and families that waste food** (such as in South Korea, where the proportion of recycling food increased from 2% to 95% in 2009)
- **Strengthen partnerships** between **food producers and distributors** and local food initiatives
- Develop **local agriculture** and growing food in and around cities, e.g. Singapore identified **unused spaces** in its cities to create **urban farms** to address supply chain issues cause by COVID-19
- Partner with local **volunteer initiatives that tackle food poverty and food waste:**
 - Ensure voluntary food distribution groups have the necessary **equipment to store nutritious food** and distribute that to the community
 - Set up **community fridges**, e.g. local parishes or town halls to support local groups
 - To ensure **food that is not fit for consumption is recycled** appropriately
 - Support groups in the collection, transportation and redistribution of food
- **Educate households** on:
 - How to store food safely after purchasing

- Safe ways to store and re-use leftovers
- How to correctly recycle food waste
- Recipes on for using leftover ingredients
- How to safely donate excess food
- How to interpret food labels correctly

Sources:

<https://ecopandas.com/south-korea-food-waste/>

<https://www.wired.co.uk/article/city-crops-food-waste>

<https://blog.winnowsolutions.com/4-ways-france-is-leading-the-food-waste-agenda>

<https://www.northwaleschronicle.co.uk/news/19005530.gwynedd-community-food-sharing-efforts-financial-help/>

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

Consider how whistleblowing apps can allow the public to report COVID-19 breaches. There have been well-documented breaches of the COVID-19 rules in, for example, workplaces, shops, public spaces. This has caused frustration and resentment, and made front-line staff question their perceived value and sacrifice. Current enforcement of the rules is led by the authorities, but there is potential for the public to report breaches via whistleblowing apps, which may help to target official enforcement activities. Consider:

- The potential to establish **a whistleblowing app** to collect information from the public on COVID-19 breaches
- Who should initiate and own an app to allow the public to report COVID-19 breaches, including the potential hesitation the public may have to report via Police websites
- Whether reports will be made anonymously by the public
- How to address and mitigate the **potential for malicious or bogus reports**
- What **thresholds** need to be met before action is taken
- How to analyse app data to identify patterns and trends of where, when and what breaches occur
- How to report back on subsequent enforcement actions and outcomes to individual whistle-blowers and to the wider public
- The need to increase capacity to engage, explain and encourage compliance by, for example, staff, trained volunteers, neighbourhood watch, local organisations (see COVID Marshals TMB Issue 28 January 22nd)
- How to **raise public awareness of whistleblowing apps** to ensure that a lack of public awareness does not hinder their effectiveness

Source:

<https://www.todayonline.com/8days/seeanddo/thingstodo/theres-app-you-report-people-breaking-safe-distancing-rules-heres-what>

Consider how to publicly respond to vocal vaccine deniers. The success of the vaccine programme will, in part, depend on how many people accept the vaccine. The prevailing narrative in a country may influence those who are anxious about the vaccine or uncertain about whether they should have it. Often there are vocal groups in support of, and in opposition to, vaccines and those groups are already very active around COVID-19. Governments will be a main facilitator of vaccine programmes so (in collaboration with partners) should consider addressing voices that oppose vaccine programmes. WHO provides guidelines for responding to vaccine deniers, including broad principles for health authority spokespersons on how to behave when confronted. The principles are based on psychological research on persuasion, public health, communication studies, and on WHO risk communication guidelines. The WHO guidelines cover:

- Tactics by vocal vaccine deniers e.g. **skew science, shift hypothesis, censor, and attack opposition**
- Who is the **target for advocating vaccines** i.e. the public are your audience, not the vaccine deniers
- The speaker should represent the well-grounded scientific consensus
- **Verbal and nonverbal skills, and listening skills**
- Do's and don'ts of verbal and nonverbal communication
- **Constructing the argument** to support vaccination

Sources:

<https://thehill.com/policy/international/530744-un-secretary-general-warns-against-vaccinationalism-on-covid-19-vaccine>
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jan/21/covid-north-east-and-yorkshire-vaccine-supply-cut-to-catch-up-lagging-regions>

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)
Previous	
21 January	ODI – Leave no one behind: moving the agenda forward
4 February	Resilient Cities Network, World Bank – Scaling Up Climate Resilience
9 February	British Red Cross – Breakfast briefing Red Cross report: The longest year: life under local restrictions
Upcoming	
15 February	The British Psychological Society – Developing community resilience and social justice practices with young people in the COVID 19 era
17 February	World Federation of Public Health Associations – Building Confidence in COVID-19 Vaccination

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

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

Every fortnight the [University of Manchester](#) brings together relevant international practices and examples on recovery from COVID-19. The bi-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