CITIES on the FRONTLINE

MANCHESTER 1824
The University of Manchester

RESILIENT CITIES NETWORK

Bi-weekly Manchester Briefing #29– 15 April 2021

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

This week, we consider how addressing gendered economic impacts, ecosystem-based DRR strategies, domestic tourism can play a key role in the response and recovery from COVID-19.

International Lessons

- Ecosystem-based strategies for local DRR and recovery (Philippines, Myanmar, Madagascar, Indonesia)
- Co-producing mental health strategies with service users (South Africa, United Kingdom)
- Community roles during crises (Lebanon)
- Revitalising of domestic tourism (Australia, Rwanda)
- Gendered economic impacts of the pandemic (Morocco, United Kingdom)
- Peer review of recovery and renewal plans (Malawi, United Kingdom)
- Impacts and need assessments (Australia)

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 the need to co-produce mental health strategies with service users. The devastating psychological impacts of COVID-19 and associated measures (e.g. quarantine/social distancing) is widely acknowledged. A recent UK study found that 'expertise-by-experience' can enhance the effectiveness of 'policy design, service development' (and renewal) and 'research'. Consider:

- **Conduct a service user analysis** to identify current and potential service users
- Use this analysis to target service users to involve through consultation when developing mental health strategies e.g. **to gain knowledge and insights on their perspectives and experiences of mental health** services prior to and during COVID-19. For example, investigate COVID-19 impacts on service delivery (e.g. remote provisions via telephone/video calls) and identify the benefits, challenges and opportunities created by these changes
- **Develop a strategy that reflects the insights** and knowledge gained through consultation with users' on their experiences and needs
- **Revise current legislation**, regulation and policy to assess the effectiveness of current frameworks based on knowledge and insights gained from service user experience
- Translate the knowledge gained into visible action by integrating learning from these insights into mental health recovery strategies and renewal initiatives

- Secure and allocate appropriate funding and resources to demonstrate a long-term commitment to co-production of service strategy design, delivery and research with mental health service users, to build trust and increase participation

Sources:
https://tinyurl.com/vw538upy
https://tinyurl.com/h9w6k5us

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

Consider the role of communities during crises. Community members are often the first individuals to respond to a disaster, and are often present to support recovery long after the immediate risks end. Throughout COVID-19, communities have demonstrated how they are part of a local resilience capability. **We have seen them respond on an unprecedented scale, and in a diversity of ways.** This presents an opportunity to increase preparedness for, and resilience to, future crises by recovering and renewing community capabilities. Consider:
- **Encourage dedicated community resilience programmes** and volunteer groups (or formally recognise current groups that are already working to build community resilience):
    - Identify if additional funding is required for these groups to continue their work
    - Support online groups (e.g. Facebook groups) as community resilience initiatives
    - Appoint a liaison to support communities and volunteers
    - Help increase the volunteer capacity and resources available where asked
    - Initiate activities to retain the volunteers from the pandemic, develop targeted recruitment of new volunteers, and convert 'spontaneous volunteers' into organised volunteer roles (see ISO 22319 'Guidelines for planning the involvement of spontaneous volunteers')
- **Establish modular training programmes** to ensure that communities are equipped with the knowledge, skills, abilities, resources and tools that enable them to respond to emergencies and optimise the delivery and achievement of long-term recovery and renewal goals following crises (e.g. CERT, USA):
    - Identify the range of skills that may be required, and when, covering a broad range of potential crisis events
    - Tailor training programmes, by supplementing core community response training with targeted training that reflects geographical factors and the likelihood of certain events (e.g. floods)
    - Ensure training incorporates a variety of learning styles, such as classroom based learning, hands on skills demonstrations (e.g. using a fire extinguisher/first aid), and simulation exercises that replicate disasters
    - Offer classroom based training online, and at times that take family/work commitments into account, to maximise potential engagement
- Develop a training package for emergency responders that educates them on how to manage the potential that volunteers offer during a crisis
- Familiarise emergency responders and volunteers with each other through collaborative training/simulation exercises

Sources:
https://tinyurl.com/2eaxewam

Consider how domestic tourism can aid recovery of the tourism industry. The tourism sector has been severely impacted by the measures to contain the spread of COVID-19. While measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 are likely to continue (e.g. overseas travel restrictions) as restrictions ease, there may be opportunities to pivot and drive additional demand for domestic tourism. Consider:
- **Create domestic tourism profiles** (e.g. Tourism Research Australia) that describe who visitors are, what they want to do, and where potential opportunities lie for different destinations to target and attract new domestic visitors:
    - When creating profiles, partner with tourism agencies that have expert knowledge on the needs and priorities of different demographics
    - Make the information publicly available, so that local governments and tourism businesses can work together to plan recovery and domestic tourism marketing strategies

- **Appoint a local Culture and Tourism liaison**, partner with local tourist operators and businesses, and initiate targeted programmes to attract domestic tourists to local areas
- **Seek funding and resources to support the re-generation or renewal of local tourism and culture businesses** (e.g. heritage sites), e.g. based on knowledge gained from domestic tourism profiles, identify what businesses can do and provide guidance and financial support for them to pivot their offering to maximise their trading potential
- Partner with transport providers (e.g. train operators) and offer discounted fares to encourage domestic travel over the summer months (in line with national COVID-19 guidelines)
- Engage with large corporations and companies to explore the potential of conference style events that bring teams together, in response to the shift towards remote working
- Create promotions, packages and experiences to attract and grow holidays linked to conference-style events, or people who are looking to work remotely in a holiday location (e.g. mid-week offers)

Sources:
https://tinyurl.com/yrnmcc3n
https://tinyurl.com/3vha724n

Consider the gendered economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The UN reported that Moroccan women accounted for just 21% of the country's labour force, with 54% of those working concentrated in the informal sector (World Bank estimates 2019). The impacts of the pandemic on these trends are illustrated in a recent UK report by the Women and Equalities Committee. The report highlights that women were 'a third more likely to be employed in sectors that were "shut down" during the first national lockdown, and thus disproportionately at risk of job loss'. The recommendations set out in this report and a UN Policy Brief prompt thinking as to how recovery strategies can address impacts, mitigate the reinforcement of inequalities and how renewal initiatives can transform the position of women in the labour market. Consider:

- **Review schemes that were introduced to protect jobs** and income to identify inequalities that may have been exacerbated. Integrate knowledge gained from this review into future crisis planning (e.g. integrate an 'Equality Impact Assessment' that will draw on evidence of existing inequalities to inform employment support schemes that may be required during future crises)
- **Ensure women are equally represented in the planning and decision-making processes** for recovery strategies and renewal initiatives
- Identify how the pandemic has had gendered effects on predominantly female run businesses (e.g. closures of businesses such as hairdressers), and if targeted support may be required as part of recovery planning. Repeat this for other communities/groups to identify whether they have been disproportionately impacted by the effects of COVID-19 and containment measures
- **Conduct a gender analysis** on recovery strategies and renewal initiatives to ensure that national and local investment plans will not create unequal outcomes for men and women, and reproduce inequalities (e.g. underrepresentation of women in sectors such as 'science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM)', which have been targeted for investment globally)
- As part of local and national economic regeneration programmes, 'fund training schemes specifically aimed at women' and other minority groups **to increase 'representation and career progression** in the Digital, AI and the Green Economy sectors'
- Review policy and legislation around flexible working to ensure they reflect the positive lessons learned on remote and flexible working during the pandemic
- **Actively support legislation to expand redundancy protection** to protect pregnant women and new mothers
- Recognise that women are not a homogenous groups - review equalities data to ensure that large data sets consider how other factors (e.g. race, class, religion and others) combine to shape the experiences of women in the labour market

Sources:
https://tinyurl.com/4tsvxz7m
https://tinyurl.com/yptfvy2p

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 ecosystem-based strategies for local disaster risk reduction and recovery. The pandemic has demonstrated how human health and environmental health are intertwined. Eco-system based strategies combine 'natural resource management approaches and disaster risk reduction methods (e.g. early warning systems)' to improve prevention and preparedness, reduce disaster impacts on communities and support recovery from disasters. **Local governments can identify ecosystems and increase understanding of their potential role in reducing disaster impacts** (e.g. coastal wetlands/floodplains) and their 'contribution to climate change mitigation and adaption'. In India, 'Wetlands International' works with civil society partners and communities on strategies to reduce disaster risk, e.g. restoring wetlands so that they can act as a natural buffer to floods. Consider:

- **Update and collate information on local natural areas** (e.g. peatlands/wet grasslands) and their current and potential uses for climate change mitigation
- Assess the condition of local eco-systems to determine if actions are required to restore them as degraded environments can drive disaster risk and negatively impact recovery efforts
- When designing community development plans, ensure they consider the potential negative effects on local natural resources
- In Myanmar, a local-level disaster risk reduction policy and planning framework sets out how communities follow 'structural (resilient infrastructure/homes), non-structural (land use planning that integrates ecosystem protection measures) and ecosystem-based (natural resource management) measures, at the household and community level', to reduce disaster risk
- **Develop solutions to address current and future environmental risks,** such as maintenance of green and blue infrastructure through nature-based solutions or protection of the ecosystems (e.g. forest conservation)
- Protect and restore ecosystems to the extent that they offer sufficient adaption and mitigation benefits to current and future risks

Sources:
https://tinyurl.com/yvaznsb5
https://tinyurl.com/t8kmdawn

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

Consider a national narrative for recovery and renewal. Throughout the pandemic, the media has played a critical role in communicating aspects of crisis management, containment and response. A further opportunity may lie in harnessing the current levels of public engagement that have been developed through COVID-19 response to drive a new narrative. Consider the potential for media communications to:

- Support and drive a national recovery and renewal narrative that focuses on the next steps, generates awareness and interest from the public and builds a collective national effort to recover and renew from COVID-19 (as was highly effective for response and the recruitment of volunteers)
- **Clearly communicate who is responsible for recovery and renewal priorities,** what these priorities are and why, and how citizens should be encouraged to participate in recovery and renewal efforts
- Generate public interest in specific topics/recovery areas to encourage donations/funding for organisations that are working to create societal changes that reduce inequalities
- Local government and voluntary organisations can utilize the media to engage the government and public in societal changes that are crucial, through agenda setting, i.e. influencing public interest and the importance placed on certain topics through the deliberate coverage of certain topics/issues. Agenda setting has been found to influence public agendas, spending/funding generation and policies, with the media prompting policymakers to take action and satisfy the public's interest
- Generate funding by mobilising a local and national community of supporters

Sources:
https://tinyurl.com/6bxwucny
https://tinyurl.com/mb3scymp

Consider the actions that follow an Impact and Needs Assessment. Previous issues of TMB have detailed Impact and Needs Assessments (Issue 8, 15 and 32) to collect information about effects, impacts and opportunities from the crisis alongside pre-crisis needs. These can be used to create an overall understanding from which recovery and renewal strategies can be developed and actioned. TMB Issue 9 discussed the recovery actions that can follow an Impact and Needs Assessment, such as recovering operations and preparedness. In light of the most recent lockdown and the updates that may be made to Impact and Needs Assessments, we revisit the discussion on what the next steps could be. Consider:

- **Identify the effects, impacts and opportunities to inform the development of transactional recovery strategies and transformational renewal initiatives.** For example, for the opportunity of 'enhancing community resilience; the local resilience capabilities that have been to active and effective during COVID-19';
  - Transactional recovery: Identify community initiatives that will deliver the strategic priorities of the recovery partnership, increase collaboration, assess the need to fund those using existing resources, and measure their impact on the partnership's performance
  - Transformational renewal: Repurpose community liaison officers to work with selected communities and foster connections, secure seed funding for their self-generated activities, and focus on rebalancing inequalities and other partnership aims
- Review each theme identified through the Impact and Needs Assessment in collaboration with relevant partners to assess the feasibility of achieving the desired effects
- Forecast the capacity and capabilities required to delivery on actions - draw on existing/recruit additional resources
- Identify the duration and effort required to establish and deliver actions
- Assess the impacts that may occur from pursuing recovery actions, compared with not pursuing them
- Specify data for monitoring and evaluating, for example:
  - Renewal objective: Increase capacity
  - Outcome indicator: Build community awareness and understanding of potential risks and impacts of emergencies
  - Measure: Proportion of people who understand warnings (tested through risk preparedness exercises with the community)

Sources:
https://tinyurl.com/nb9n2sdw
https://tinyurl.com/ft98c97b

Consider a peer review process to reflect on recovery and renewal plans. Peer reviews can offer local governments an opportunity to reflect, assess and improve their preparedness for disaster (ISO 22392). This process can also enable collaborative dialogue on recovery and renewal plans, ensure transparent assessment and create value when building local and national resilience. Consider:

- Establish a peer review mechanism to enable external review of review recovery and renewal plans
- Connect local governments to national associations that can facilitate a connecting structure between cities and regions to share lessons, knowledge and insights
- Conduct focus groups/workshops that enable local governments to 'pause and reflect' on lessons learned from their response to COVID-19 and collaboratively discuss recovery and renewal
- Appoint a panel of 'officer and member peers' to review local government plans for recovery and renewal in their communities

Sources:
https://tinyurl.com/ydz9annt
https://tinyurl.com/9k24vx2k

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
25 March	Resilient Cities Network, World Bank: One Year of COVID-19: Delivering a Green and Just Recovery
26 March	Recovery and renewal from COVID-19: A year of The Manchester Briefing
07 April	Communities: The new local resilience capability
	Upcoming
29 April	Recovering from COVID-19
22 April	Resilient Cities Network, World Bank: Launch of R-Cities Chair's Agenda

Produced by The University of Manchester, UK (Professor Duncan Shaw, Róisín Jordan, Alan Boyd, Dr. Jennifer Bealt) 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