CITIES on the FRONTLINE

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The University of Manchester

RESILIENT CITIES NETWORK

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

This month, we consider how social innovation for emergency response, transformation towards hybrid working and addressing core humanitarian issues can play a key role in the response and recovery from COVID-19.

International Lessons

- Communities as a local resilience capability (Oman & Pakistan)
- Employment policy lessons (Philippines)
- Transforming to hybrid working (LAC & UK)
- Covid-19 and food supply chains (Burkina Faso)
- Inclusive disaster resilience (Italy)
- Future priorities for communities (UK)
- Good practice community participation (Tanzania, Pakistan)
- Strategies to address core humanitarian issues (UK)
- Resilience in the SME sector (OECD)
- Equitable and viable city centres (Australia)
- Social innovation for emergency response (Peru & Malawi)
- The inclusion of refugees in social protection (Colombia)

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 lessons learned on the role of communities in local pandemic preparedness and response. There has recently been a new spotlight shone on the impact that communities have had on their local response. A key message from the UK's Integrated Review was the need to build whole-of-society resilience through enhancing capabilities in local resilience (see a recent TMB case study). TMB has often highlighted the renewal of community resilience through building a **Local Resilience Capability** (TMB Issue 30, as well as Briefing A in this current issue). Communities are being seen in a new light in local resilience.

This has been further identified in a paper by the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response, titled 'Centering communities in pandemic preparedness and response'. This paper emphasizes the importance of community involvement in tackling disease outbreaks and advises of the need to:

- Establish **partnerships** to work with communities to design, plan, implement and monitor local and national pandemic preparedness and response, for example:
  - In Sur, Oman, the city government developed an intervention of response in partnership with civil society (e.g. community sports clubs, the Omani Women Association, youth groups and voluntary organisations). These groups supported activities to "arrange, maintain, and supervise" pandemic response activities
- Improve **community engagement** through "clear structures and sustained funding", recognising that continuous effort is needed (not just a one-off effort during crisis). This can help to **develop trust** between communities and official service providers
- Recognise that risk communication is key to community engagement, and one part of local resilience capabilities: **two-way, bi-directional and co-produced communications** are essential to understand needs, communicate responsibilities, and gain feedback (see TMB 37 'Risk communications as part of the Local Resilience Capability')
- Community resilience requires a "**sustainable framework for community empowerment and recovery**", including:
  - "Invest in civic mindedness" to establish a culture of social connectedness and empower communities to take responsibility through co-production to understand risk preparedness, response and recovery
  - Establish partnerships between governments and community-based groups/voluntary organisations/businesses to integrate communities into the planning and leadership of interventions that enhance their local resilience

"Invest in social and economic wellbeing, and in physical and psychological health" to ensure access to health services

Sources:
https://tinyurl.com/2e63x9yv
https://tinyurl.com/6nb4wcvh

Consider "social innovation" in health as a critical component of health emergency response. Social innovations in health and care are "inclusive solutions that meet the needs of end users through a multi-stakeholder, community-engaged process to address the healthcare delivery gap". They concentrate on local community needs and priorities, strive to establish "low-cost solutions" and build upon the pre-existing strengths in a community. This paper produced by the LSHTM demonstrates how social innovation during COVID-19 has mobilised local communities, adapted existing health services at rapid pace and developed partnerships between local government and civil society. Consider the following international examples of social innovations in health during the pandemic:

- Peru mobilised communities by adapting their 'Mamás Del Río' programme which "selects and trains local people as community health workers". This project adapted during COVID to both ensure the "continuity of maternal and neonatal health services" while also educating and training local people on COVID-19 prevention
- Malawi's existing free hotline created by local people to provide health advice was scaled up nationally during the pandemic. The government then capitalised on the capabilities of this local service to "triage people with COVID-19 symptoms, identify and refer people at risk of domestic violence, provide health information to the public and gain a greater understanding of local needs"
- The Philippine's multi-sectoral partnership brings together the "strengths and resources from the private sector, academia, local government and communities". COVID-19 response was strengthened by these partnerships which enabled rapid deployment of a "hunger management campaign, the establishment of a call centre to manage returning resident's and a role out of local testing teams"

Social innovation initiatives have proven a "powerful means of mobilising communities to respond to emergencies that can complement and extend government and private sector responses, and in turn build more resilient communities".

Sources:
https://tinyurl.com/avd6rc3m
London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM)

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

Consider the early policy lessons for employment. Before the pandemic, the Philippines saw a prolonged period of economic growth and job expansion, with employment increasing, and large numbers of people moving from precarious jobs to more secure employment. COVID-19 reversed these gains, as it did in many other countries that experienced positive labour market growth and expansion. The Asian Development Blog offers five global best practices to address lower employment rates which are predicted to persist even after economies begins to grow again (known as "hysteresis in employment after an acute shock"). Consider the early global policy lessons that have supported people to make labour market transitions:

- Evidence shows that wage subsidies have been the most successful mechanism for protecting employment
- Hiring subsidies should replace wage subsidies, to support the **reallocation of displaced workers** into secure employment
- Skills funding schemes (e.g. Kickstart UK) are helping to **upskill the workforce** (e.g. Skillnet Ireland provides local or sectoral networks of at least 30 employers with annual matching grants to fund their short-term training of workers)
- Establish **apprenticeship councils to guide and peer review** changes to "industry-led apprenticeship programs". The changes suggested include:
  - Introducing "progressive salary scales"
  - Extend apprenticeship programmes from "6 months to 2-4 years"
  - Expand apprenticeship programmes into new industries and "service occupations such as legal, finance and communications"
- Provide unemployment insurance to give **income stability** and help people **transition to new employment**. For example:
  - Malaysia has a "national pooled insurance fund" which employers and employees make monthly contributions. The government funds "financing gap" which workers qualify for if they are made involuntarily unemployed

In Chile, employers and employees contribute monthly to "an account in the name of the employee". This is supplemented by the Solidarity Unemployment Fund, which supports employees if they diminish their personal savings accounts. The Chilean scheme doesn't "create contingent fiscal liabilities".

Consider the future of work and how to transform to hybrid working. Working from home became the new normal for various sectors during the pandemic. However, this "pandemic-style" of working from home may not translate smoothly to post-pandemic working. A recent McKinsey survey of 100 executives across various industries and locations found that 90% of organisations intend to adopt **a hybrid model of working** (a combination of remote and on-site working). However, many organisations have only just begun to consider how this new approach will be integrated into organisational practice, resulting in **employees feeling <u>uncertain and anxious</u>**. Consider:

- Be transparent and open from the start with employees. If still in the planning stage, **communicate the uncertainty** of plans for remodelling current working practices
- Be clear on the **current expectations of employees** considering that their personal circumstances may have changed during the pandemic, and they may not be able to make a swift return to the office (e.g. consider a phased-in approach)
- Support and encourage "small moments of engagement", which can include coaching, mentoring and co-working
- **Reimagine the leadership process** in your organisation. Train managers on "remote leadership" and re-evaluate current performance metrics so these represent how employees might succeed when working from home
- Develop **new codes of practice** (e.g. for online meetings) so that employees don't always feel they must be available and don't have to go from one meeting to the next, relentlessly
- Establish **new ways of monitoring and evaluating** employee attendance and productivity, so that employees don't feel they need to be constantly logged into their computers to prove they are working. Focus on the work output, and assess if employees have the tools and skills to succeed, before assessing how many hours they spent logged in
- Pilot a hybrid approach that suits your organisational context and is **tailored to the needs of specific teams and roles** (e.g. evaluate what roles require on-site working)

Develop new ways of **monitoring employee wellbeing**

Consider good practice examples of community participation during COVID-19. TMB Issue 38 discussed the importance of community involvement in tackling disease outbreaks and presented the recommendations set out by the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response. This briefing offers examples of good practice in community participation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Consider:

- Tanzania: local government co-produced infection control measures with business leaders based in markets to **integrate leaders' understanding & knowledge** of the challenges of implementing such measures
- Nigeria: the "community informer model" was employed by local authorities for COVID "surveillance, tracing and monitoring" – **community informers are key trusted individuals** in a community (e.g. faith leaders)
- Pakistan: community volunteers "set up quarantine wards, manufactured and provided free protective suits for medics", and distributed food to vulnerable people
- India: Community **volunteers came together to investigate and identify** unknown ("hidden") COVID-19 fatalities. The volunteer group comprised of expert physicians and data analysts who developed comparisons of official health data and other reports. This encouraged a review of the national death audit process and resulted in improvements in the process so that COVID-19 deaths were accurate and transparent
- USA: Volunteers built a public "Testing Site Locator" app which visualized the geographical location of testing centres to support collection of testing centre-related information and dissemination at the national level. This supported people to locate the nearest available testing centres and also the "health system to plan and distribute centres more effectively"

The pandemic, and previous disasters, have evidenced that **communities play a crucial role when preparing for, responding to and recovering from, crisis**. Communities and civil societies should be "partners early on in the design, planning, implementation, and assessment of preparedness and response efforts on all levels", particularly at the local level. We have covered community participation and co-production with communities in various briefings, see TMB Issue 38; Issue 34; Issue 33.

Consider policies that will support recovery and help to build resilience in the small and medium sized enterprise (SME) sector. Support for SME recovery is critical in the aftermath of COVID-19, as SMEs constitute the backbone of economies across the world and "account for two-thirds of employment globally" (UNCTAD, 2021). COVID-19 has exacerbated existing problems and created new ones for SMEs. The OECD report finds that SMEs are disproportionately represented in sectors of the economy that have been most severely impacted by COVID-19 (e.g. retail, accommodation and food services). "**Constrained cash flows and weaker supply chains**" contribute to SMEs tending to be more financially fragile and more susceptible to supply chain disruptions. Many more examples of the challenges faced by SMEs can be found both in this OECD report and others (e.g. a recent McKinsey report). The OECD report presents 15 lessons on effective policy design, including:

- Prompt delivery of SME and entrepreneurship policy support. This can be supported by **strengthening digital delivery systems** at both the national and local levels
- Develop start-up policies to **drive innovative start-ups for recovery**
- "Ensure **support mechanisms are inclusive** and accessible for vulnerable segments of the SME population" (e.g., minority and women entrepreneurs)
- Focus on the **digitalisation of SMEs and start-ups**, e.g. incentivise/provide targeted financial support/grants (local governments can sign-post local entrepreneurs and SMEs to support services e.g. Business in the Community/FSB UK)

Establish measures to consult with entrepreneurs and owners of SMEs, to understand their needs, their priorities, and co-produce recovery and renewal plans *with* them

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 how COVID-19 could re-shape food supply chains and markets. The pressures placed on the global food system during COVID-19 activated various policy responses across the world to manage supply and demand. Sub-Saharan African countries rely heavily on food imports. This means that international agricultural policy responses to the pandemic in markets on which Africa relies, directly affect the region's food markets. Potential impacts include "commodity price volatility the availability of supplies and farmers' planting decisions". Consider how to address the impacts of COVID and **build food system resilience** for the future with regard to countries that rely on food imports:

- Design more "holistic policy interventions" which tackle bottlenecks in the vast span of "value chain actors" e.g. suppliers and transporters, traders and retailers, to advance resilience of the entire supply chain
- Invest in market infrastructure, e.g. cold storage systems, to strengthen supply chains of perishable goods
- Establish and increase social protections for particularly vulnerable groups e.g. "urban poor, informal workers and resource-poor smallholder farmers"

Advance regional and local trade agreements that enable **greater food market integration** – with the aim of developing resilient domestic and regional food systems, lowering the reliance on importing, and increasing local domestic economic growth

Sources:
https://tinyurl.com/3x7pxjvs

Consider approaches to strengthen inclusive resilience to disasters at local levels. The Sendai Framework Voluntary Commitment (VC) initiative calls for enhancing governance, including local governance, for disaster response, rehabilitation and reconstruction. A recent commitment on the Sendai VC 'Strengthening inclusive Resilience to Disasters, boosting sustainable Development', by the Province of Potenza (PPZ), Italy, is focused on **re-assessing, monitoring and reviewing the level of resilience** of its 100 Municipalities Network. Consider the following objectives and actions in the PPZ commitment:

- Encourage communication between local governments by maximizing on the 'Making Cities Resilient (MCR) Campaign'
- "Share on the development and implementation of comprehensive urban disaster risk reduction plans"
- Showcase the **value that the Human Security approach adds** when implementing the Sendai Framework for disaster risk reduction at local levels
- Highlight local activities that are working to identify and implement innovative measures for disaster risk reduction and are striving to achieve SDGs
- Identify and introduce creative approaches to cooperation on different topics at local levels
- Implement the project using the new Resilience Scorecard through a "**city-to-city peer review,** based on a multi-stakeholder and holistic approach to disaster risk reduction"
- Collect data for a review and evaluation process of the Sendai Framework at the local level through strategic alignment to local indicators
- Share learning based on cities' disaster risk assessments, and design a Resilience strategy
- This project is said to have achieved an "**inclusive approach** to strong community involvement" and developed "a governance-accountability system as a powerful mean for creating the conditions that contribute to change towards resilience".

You can contact the team working on this project to find out more here

Sources:
https://tinyurl.com/637jtame

Consider how to transform public spaces to create more equitable and viable city centres. COVID-19 has seen cities and local areas rapidly change how public spaces are used. In an effort to improve the daily lives and wellbeing of communities during the pandemic cities have implemented changes that were previously thought to be "radical". How these temporary measures can transition to permanent design is a key renewal strategy in Sydney which is focusing on the **vision of a people-centred city** that aims to tackle the various social, health and equity challenges that recovery will bring. Their recent study, based on international best practice and data tracking, explains how to look beyond "basic infrastructure and traffic to create a city that people want to live in,

visit, work and spend time in". Consider the renewal recommendations set out in 'Sustainable Sydney 2050, towards a more attractive and liveable city':

Create 'a city for all'

- Co-produce the planning and design of public spaces with the community and stakeholder groups
- Collect "public life data" and evaluate this data to inform decision-making
- Provide welcome spaces, increase facilities for children, close streets off to traffic at lunch time, expand the use of community buildings and ensure free Wi-Fi across the city – to make public spaces "more attractive for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds"
- Support "public art and creative expression" to engage communities in the design of the city

Build a 'green and cool city'

- Reinforce and drive action in "emissions control, waste, water and greening"
- Expand "tree canopies, biodiversity and the use of shade structures and awnings in public spaces"
- Upgrade transport links between the "city, parklands and the harbour" to improve mobility in and around public spaces

Protect the 'heart' of the city

- Transform the currently "traffic-dominated streets to people friendly streets"
- Capitalise on the "Metro, train and light rail infrastructure as the most efficient modes of transport for people"
- Increase walking space and pathways across the city
- Improve the connection of cycle networks to other transport networks (Metro/train) to promote cycling

The strategy also includes long-terms plans for four new "green avenues" which are "arterial roadways identified for transformation with reduced traffic, increased tree plantings and space for people". A key message in the strategy is that **partnerships between "all levels of governments, businesses and the community" is key to transforming cities**.

Sources:
https://tinyurl.com/yx5h246a

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

Consider strategies to address core humanitarian issues. The British Red Cross recently shared a report '*Communities of Humanitarian Thought: The Case for Change in a Time of Crisis'*. The report considers the next steps on the following prominent humanitarian issues: *Displacement & Migration; Health Inequalities, and Disasters & Emergencies*. The report highlights the **need for real change** for people experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, crisis across various priorities:

- *'Eliminate the gaps in health and social care'*, by employing a person-centred approach to reduce access barriers and prevent people from "falling through the gaps between services". The inequalities in health and social care exacerbated by COVID-19 require a **more integrated approach**, along with investment in care and support at the community level
- *'Ensure humanitarian needs are met in emergencies'*, by clearly **defining the statutory responsibilities** of national government and emergency response organisations, to ensure that they "fully meet the humanitarian needs of their communities"
- Review social protection infrastructure to learn lessons from the pandemic and best practice across the world, e.g. '*Cash-based assistance in emergencies'*, which has shown to deliver a more "dignified response" and enables people to rapidly access the resources they need during crisis
- *'Provide safe and legal routes for people seeking asylum'*, by reviewing domestic policy to ensure that the "end-to-end experience of a person in the asylum system is efficient, fair and humane". The Sovereign Borders Bill presents an opportunity to evaluate and take action to improve the entire system
- *'Uphold international law and principled humanitarian action'*, by committing to humanitarian action and **support for the most vulnerable communities** across the world

Recognise how young people and civil society drive climate action, e.g. the Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change, which strives to amplify youth voices and engage young people in an open and transparent dialogue on climate action

Sources:
https://tinyurl.com/55vt5z3c

Consider the lessons learned from the inclusion of refugees in social protection systems during COVID-19. A current research project, by the Overseas Development Institute, is examining social protection (SP) measures employed during the pandemic in LMICs. The project is producing a series of working papers. One paper examines the inclusion of refugees in government-led SP and the "alignment and integration of cash assistance to refugees and government social protection". The paper evaluates the **effectiveness of social protection responses** across four countries in terms of: "Timeliness; coverage adequacy; and level adequacy (value of benefit)". It also offers the emerging lessons from the study and initial policy recommendations. Consider:

Lessons on the drivers of effective government social protection response
- The maturity of SP systems and pre-existing local and state capacities directly impacted how effectively SP programmes met the needs of refugees during COVID
- Targeting criteria that evaluates **eligibility based on risk of vulnerability** could be more effective, timely and suitable during a crisis rather than traditional criteria such as length of residency or status
- Benefit levels of government systems are unlikely to be sufficient for refugees' needs, as these are typically higher than those of nationals and require very careful consideration. The main challenge identified when setting benefit levels which include refugees during the pandemic is that governments are "faced with two competing objectives: (1) preventing social tension and unfairness between population groups" (by varying benefit levels between refugees and nationals); and (2) "ensuring that everyone can meet their basic needs"

Policy recommendations for protecting refugees during a crisis
- Conduct a national socio-economic survey, to include data on refugees' needs, to develop an overview of the needs of the population across the country. This can enable more effective social protection programme design that **effectively meets the needs of *everyone***
- A review of registration processes can highlight barriers to access for refugees (e.g. in terms of the documents required to register for programmes). Where this is not possible, governments can "draw on international/national/local humanitarian actors' databases of refugee populations" to swiftly target them with support during crisis
- Hosting governments could **consider "integrating refugees into social insurance"** (e.g. those with work permits) which may reduce political or public opposition as those receiving benefits will be contributing to national insurance

Careful consideration of benefit levels and trade-offs between "politically greater acceptability but possibly lower effectiveness" in terms of meeting refugees needs is essential

Sources:
https://tinyurl.com/42rus2f9

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	
24 June	Resilient Cities Network, World Bank: Cities on The Frontline Speaker Serie –Addressing Urban Heat
25 June	A Collective Memory: A webinar examining post pandemic commemoration
7 July	Building the resilience of essential services post-Covid
Upcoming	
08 July	Resilient Cities Network, World Bank & Real Play Coalition: Cities on The Frontline Speaker Series- Reclaiming the Value of Play in Cities
15 July	Resilience First Summer Debate
22 July	Resilient Cities Network, World Bank & University of Manchester: Cities on The Frontline Speaker Series- Building Effective Food Systems for Cities

Produced by The University of Manchester, UK (Professor Duncan Shaw, Róisín Jordan and 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