

CITIES on the FRONTLINE



Weekly Briefing: June 4th 2020

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

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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 [Global 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 identified as mattering the most when a city faces a wide range of chronic problems or a sudden catastrophe - Health and Wellbeing, Economy & Society; Infrastructure & Environment; and Leadership & Strategy.

Highlights of the week

This week's briefing is focussed on **gender** (mental health and pay), the **livelihood** challenges faced by SME's and ecotourism operators, the **leadership** role that local government can play in supporting the opening up of cities (contact tracing, and preparing for further outbreaks), and the changing demands on our **infrastructure systems** (housing, recycling) that need to be part of a **sustainable and equitable recovery**.

Research in Denmark and China has reinforced a gender lens for enabling wellbeing in recovery, with **women found to be more adversely psychologically impacted by COVID-19 than men**, including evidence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). In Korea, local economies are being supported through an SMEs focussed campaign to encourage consumers to purchase **local products**, and creating a domestic virtual marketplace. In California, citizens are being advised to remain prepared for future lockdown, including information on **'preparedness kits'** for households in case of panic buying or supply chain shortages in the event of a second wave of infection. Is there a need to consider **housing** as one of several 'infrastructures of care'? Safe and adequate housing is a central facet of a population's wellbeing and health. What lessons can we learn from the 'stay at home' policies in relation to access to housing and community inequalities and vulnerabilities.

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

Consider the **differing mental health impacts on men and women**. Research in Denmark and China has demonstrated that women were more adversely psychologically impacted by COVID-19 than men. In China, survey respondents demonstrated evidence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) Consider:

- Mental health services that are tailored for different genders to accommodate a safe space to discuss needs

- Ensuring increased access to mental health services through online systems and telephone calls
- Hand hygiene, mask-wearing and confidence in doctors have been observed to reduce psychological impact.

Source: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7176490/> and <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0889159120305110?via%3Dihub>

Consider how the **gender pay gap and composition of leadership positions** impact wage earners.

- Women are more likely to carry out unpaid work or serve as care givers. The pandemic is likely to negatively impact their livelihoods and dramatically increase their unpaid care work
- Women constitute over two-thirds of workers in the health and social sector globally, placing them on the frontlines of the pandemic response, but with a persistent gender pay gap and fewer leadership positions than male counterparts
- These issues can restrict access to resources, decision making and the ability to take preventive measures. Close consultation is needed with women's organisations i.e. groups for mothers, carers, women's rights, domestic violence

Source: <https://www.undrr.org/publication/undrr-asia-pacific-covid-19-brief-leave-no-one-behind-covid-19-prevention-response-and>

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

Consider **support for small/medium sized enterprises (SMEs)** to help regenerate the economy and livelihoods. In Korea, SMEs are being supported through national campaigns.

- Consumers are encouraged to purchase local products, supporting local vendors selling their products direct to the consumer, and helps consumers who may be able to purchase items at lower prices due to lower overhead costs.
- Corporate buyers are supported by government through virtual meetings to match buyers to supplier SMEs, in consultation with the Korea SMEs and Start-ups Agency and Korea International Trade Association.

Source: http://ncov.mohw.go.kr/en/infoBoardView.do?brdId=15&brdGubun=151&dataGubun&ncvContSeq=2180&contSeq=2180&board_id&gubun

Consider the **impacts of ecotourism based business models on conservation**. The reduction of international travel has had positive environmental effects, but has negatively impacted conservation in developing countries. Consider:

- How the effects of eco-tourism collapse and how to support conservation of the worlds' core ecosystems
- How the economic implications of COVID-19 may impact surges in poaching, illegal fishing and deforestation, and how this can be policed
- The dangers to Park Rangers who protect wildlife, and measures to protect staff from violence.

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/may/05/conservation-in-crisis-covid-19-coronavirus-ecotourism-collapse-threatens-communities-and-wildlife-aoe>

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

Consider **'infrastructures of care' such as housing**. There are lessons to learn from the 'stay at home' policies in relation to inequalities and vulnerabilities. Safe and adequate housing is a central facet of a population's wellbeing and health. Housing for recovery and renewal would benefit from framing as pivotal 'infrastructures of care' for surviving in the present and for reimagining the future. Consider how to create:

- Better living conditions for migrants and people in temporary housing as they are particularly vulnerable. Those living in temporary dwellings have often experienced conflict, disaster and economic hardship
- Comfortable housing at a time when staying at home is pivotal. Ensure additional support is provided to those renting and the homeless to mitigate evictions, overcrowding, unaffordability, and substandard conditions
- Improved urban resilience and physical and mental health through housing. In most cities, mental and physical illness and premature death are disproportionately concentrated in poor communities and ethnic minorities
- More energy efficient low-carbon, innovative and sustainable housing
- More equal financial mechanisms and markets for land and housing that recognises the interdependencies between housing production, land, infrastructure and labour markets
- Avoidances of potential pitfalls of rapid urbanisation which can exacerbate inequalities, segregation, resource depletion, ecological crisis, displacement and migration

Source: <https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/dpublog/2020/04/06/stay-at-home-housing-as-a-pivotal-infrastructure-of-care/>

Consider how to **reduce landfill and maintain recycling projects**. While COVID-19 has had positive impacts on pollution levels, the creation of additional plastic waste from PPE and disposable items is going to landfill. Consider:

- Campaigns on the disadvantages of single-use plastics, and the benefits of reusable containers i.e. water bottles and carrier bags
- Campaigns to educate people and businesses of the environmental impact of non-recyclable takeaway food packaging
- What can be done to mitigate the environmental impacts of increasing medical waste that is contaminated or not economical to recycle PPE for recycling plant workers will be required to reduce waste going to landfill and consideration will need to be given to mitigate the impacts of dropping oil prices limited on the economies of recycling

Source: <https://www.wired.com/story/coronavirus-pandemic-recycling-crisis/>

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

Consider the important **role of local councils in effective track and trace**. Councils maintain crucial services, have set up community hubs, and established local teams for tracing and tracking. Councils provide food and shelter to people at risk, help local businesses stay afloat and have mobilised volunteers and therefore know their communities in depth which can support trace and track. Councils:

- Are naturally placed to respond quickly to the distinct needs, challenges and infection rates of their own area
- Are equipped with their own teams of public health professionals

Source: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/may/05/private-covid-19-tracing-disaster-councils>

Consider advising citizens to **prepare for self-isolation in the event of a second wave** of COVID-19 by creating 'preparedness kits'. California is:

- Advising citizens to remain prepared for a future lockdown - provide information to citizens about 'preparedness kits' that they may still want to keep available (including nonperishable foods, hygiene and cleaning products, basic medical supplies, and entertainment items. Consider providing information on items to purchase based on age or gender
- Advising citizens not to panic buy - if advising citizens to develop 'preparedness kits', provide clear information about how many items are reasonable per household, explain why over-stockpiling is not needed and detrimental
- Advising citizens about lockdown procedures - if advising citizens to develop 'preparedness kits', provide clear information to reiterate lockdown procedures such as social distancing, self-isolation, monitoring of systems, access to services during a lockdown

Source: <https://www.caloes.ca.gov/CaliforniaSpecializedTrainingInstituteSite/Documents/Cal%20OES%20Training%20Bulletin.pdf>

Case Study of the week

Measures to ensure the safe return of pupils to school

The impact of school closures, especially nursery and primary schools, carries high social and economic costs as learning is interrupted, parents are unprepared for home schooling and for the impacts this has on childcare. Working parents may have no choice but to leave children alone when they have to work, or to miss work to take care of their children. This can impact child nutrition, social isolation and increase children's exposure to violence and exploitation. Schools in Denmark, China, Korea and Taiwan, have begun to open. In Korea, the government has incorporated the concept of digital classrooms into current educational legislation to develop a 'future-orientated' approach to online education.

(<https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse/consequences>).

There is an urgency to return pupils to schools to support their health and well-being and to relieve pressures on working families who may be experiencing increased financial hardship as a result of having children at home. It is important that robust scientific evidence is used to make such decisions; a study from Germany found children were as likely to spread coronavirus as adults which suggests caution is required. However, lessons from Denmark, China and Taiwan could provide useful insights into practical adaptation and innovation to support a safe return to school. (<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/30/coronavirus-scientists-caution-against-reopening-schools>).

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@manchester.ac.uk

Useful webinars

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

Past	Webinar Title
04.06.2020	<u>Cities on the Frontline Speaker Series: Waste Management in Crisis and Recovery</u>
28.05.2020	<u>Cities on the Frontline Speaker Series: Unlocking Bogota</u>
21.5.2020	<u>Cities on the Frontline Speaker Series: Towards the Pandemic-Resilient City</u>
14.5.2020	<u>Cities on the Frontline Speaker Series: Migrant and Refugee Sensitive COVID-19 Response and Recovery</u>