

# CITIES on the FRONTLINE



Weekly Briefing: May 14<sup>th</sup> 2020

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

Produced by The University of Manchester, UK (Professor Duncan Shaw, Dr Jennifer Bealt, Dr Joy Furnival and Professor Ruth Boaden) in partnership with the Global Resilient Cities Network

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

Each week the [University of Manchester](#) brings together relevant international practices and examples 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 we focus on changing vulnerability, and the connection to recovery. Covid-19 related health risks are front of mind today, yet mental health are already emerging as a critical consideration across frontline workers, volunteers, and people emerging from lockdown. Cyber risks have been heightened as cities and businesses rely more heavily on web-based interfaces, and natural hazard preparation and response may also need to evolve. Planning for recovery should consider how to engage communities and businesses and their perceptions of opportunities and risks, to enable cities to prioritise investment, and embed resilience.

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

**Consider tailoring recovery plans to different communities based on how they have been impacted and their resultant recovery needs.** Identify those most vulnerable and gauge how vulnerability might be increased by another emergency. This includes elderly, those with pre-existing health conditions, migrants and homeless. Consult with organisations representing these groups to develop understanding of how they might be affected by complex emergencies and what measures could be taken. This approach ensures that all of society are considered in the plans and that these vary across regions (e.g. levels of unemployment, age of population). This should develop briefing packs to assess the needs of recovery in a variety of sectors. Source: [https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Covid-19%20Briefing%20Pack%20-%20Who%20are%20our%20most%20vulnerable%20residents .pdf](https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Covid-19%20Briefing%20Pack%20-%20Who%20are%20our%20most%20vulnerable%20residents.pdf)

**Target communication to groups and enable choice of communication mechanisms where possible.** This may help communities feel they have ownership over information rather than simply being told. For particular groups consider:

- Providing parents with skills to handle their own anxieties and help manage those in their children
- Provide information in accessible formats for those with disabilities
- Offer multiple forms of communication e.g. text captioning, signed video, online material suitable for use with assistive technology
- Support the translation of information into the preferred languages for different groups, ensuring that refugees and migrant groups are included
- Adjust information for community perceptions, beliefs and practices

Source: [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/COVID-19\\_CommunityEngagement\\_130320.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/COVID-19_CommunityEngagement_130320.pdf)

**Consider implementation of widespread psychosocial interventions and consider the needs of different groups** (e.g. age, gender, and race). For example, a study in the UK showed that among 24% of 16-24-year-olds said they were finding it extremely difficult to cope with the lockdown. Only 11% of those aged 45 to 75 said they were struggling. While older populations may be more susceptible to the physical impacts of COVID-19, younger people may be impacted more psychologically. Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/health-51873799>

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

**Consider the development of a business task force that can listen to the concerns of local businesses and recognise seasonal impacts.** This may include farming and fishing sectors, tourism, conferences or industries affected by weather conditions i.e. the slowing down of construction in harsh weather. Fluctuations that were traditionally short-term may now have long-term challenges. Preparation should be made to manage change in expenses and revenues beyond the season. This can ensure appropriate measures to recover the economy are developed. This may go hand-in-hand with the development of a resource centre for unemployed people to improve access to support. Considerations should be made to manage citizens' expectations of recovery and employment.

**Consider targeted volunteer recruitment maps.** Managing the quick and safe connection of volunteers to local communities and local services is a key issues in supporting response and recovery. In Sheffield, UK the development of targeted volunteer recruitment maps<sup>1</sup> which flag up community hubs, describe roles and responsibilities in community hubs in the city and the local authority have proven to be central in building credible connections<sup>2</sup>. The results of these efforts can be developed into a community action plan that encourages a city-wide approach to sharing resources, connecting communities and successfully utilising the voluntary sector. This highlights the importance of the voluntary sector and the role volunteerism has played in response and the role it can play in recovery. This provides opportunities to bring the volunteering agenda into the fore for future emergencies to support resilience.

Source: <https://www.vas.org.uk/what-we-do/covid19/>

**Consider how to retain the motivation of volunteers who have not been tasked.** In the UK, the NHS Volunteer Responder scheme had 750,000 registrations but many have not received any task. Untasked volunteers could become disillusioned, lowering motivation and encouraging them to opt out of the scheme. It may undermine their wellbeing as they question their contribution to the crisis response. It may lead to reputational challenges for the tasking organisation, and stop volunteers from registering for future initiatives. If there is spare capacity of volunteers, careful thought is needed to:

- Communicate with, and address the motivation of, volunteers who have not been tasked
- Identify a wider range of tasks that volunteers may be able to support
- Identify a wider range of beneficiaries who need support (e.g. public services)

### **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 prioritisation of environmentally cross-cutting projects during recovery.** This may include retrofitting of building to make them more efficient which supports the green agenda, jobs, economic recovery, and healthier living, while protecting them from other risks such as fire. Projects should then be assessed in terms of their potential to fit the needs of a stimulus, by considering various temporal and sectoral dimensions including:

- The benefits of short-term stimulus and job creation
- Medium-term growth benefits, including the number of permanent jobs created after construction ends
- Long-term sustainability and contributions to decarbonization

Source: <https://blogs.worldbank.org/climatechange/thinking-ahead-sustainable-recovery-covid-19-coronavirus>

**Consider how information systems can help process delivery, avoid delivery bottlenecks to provide timely and relevant information.** In Korea, The Cellular Broadcasting Service enables government agencies to transmit text messages to cell phones through mobile telecom carriers in Korea. This service is particularly useful during an emergency but also builds resilience into the system for the future. Metropolitan and local governments in Korea are equipped with a system that can send messages to their residents without having to receive approval from the Ministry of the Interior and Safety (MOIS). This allows them to make their own locally relevant decisions. Source:

[http://www.undp.org/content/seoul\\_policy\\_center/en/home/presscenter/articles/2019/flattening-the-curve-on-covid-19.html](http://www.undp.org/content/seoul_policy_center/en/home/presscenter/articles/2019/flattening-the-curve-on-covid-19.html)

**Consider prioritising the threat to cyber security given that many services have or will move online.** Hacking may have a cascading effect, for example, a cyber-attack on a trucking company could impact food security. The disruption could affect weekly food deliveries to supermarkets. In turn, the loss of revenue would weaken the business sustainability of distributors and producers. Risks include:

- Hackers crashing Zoom meetings, disrupting conversations of government officials who conduct remote discussions
- False emails from the US Department of Health and Human Services are targeting supplier companies. They request protective equipment described in an attachment infected with malware. (USA)
- A cyberattack on Italy's social security system (INPS) has revealed Personally Identifiable Information to applicants as they were attempting to claim benefits (Italy) Source: <https://www.preventionweb.net/experts/oped/view/71249>

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

**Consider how to engage with specific groups that can advise on vulnerability issues.** In the Asia Pacific region this is around 65% of working women. They, along with other daily wage earners, are the least likely to be able to take preventive measures such as self-isolation or physical distancing. For example, the Vietnam National COVID-19 Plan commits to engaging the national women's association to collaborate with local governments to effectively manage the outbreak. Such collaborations can inform holistic recovery. Source: <https://www.undrr.org/publication/undrr-asia-pacific-covid-19-brief-reducing-vulnerability-migrants-and-displaced>

**Consider making preparations for disrupted food supply chains and the potential of price increases for key commodities alongside reduced economic activity, and people's reduced purchasing power.** *"The lessons from the 2014 Ebola outbreak are clear: while health needs are an urgent and primary concern, we cannot neglect livelihoods or food security aspects...when people's livelihoods are disrupted, that can spark tensions and social unrest".*

- Consider coordinating procurement between government and voluntary sector to anticipate the long-term provision of services i.e. foodbanks
- Consider providing small lots of land to encourage community farms as a way to keep people connected with the environment and land during recovery. This will help embed the importance of the environment in the public mind long term.

**Consider how to plan for the effect of cascading disasters that happen at the same time as Covid-19.**

- Consider establishing exercises and training that will equip responders to deal with cascading disasters and multiple emergencies in the context of COVID-19 to ensure preparedness.
- Consider the development of Standard Operating Procedures to address this risk.
- Consider identifying where to source, pre-position and warehouse resources for disasters that may happen during the response and recovery to Covid-19. This will seek to mitigate the cascading impacts of simultaneous events e.g. PPE and other resources needed if homes flood and people are to be evacuated from their homes and temporarily housed.

## Case Study of the week

**Investment into clean energy that considers sustainability:** COVID-19 has challenged traditional systems and required innovative thinking about how to recover. In the Caribbean consideration is being given to harnessing the power of renewable energies. The Caribbean is vulnerable to a number of natural disasters and so too is its energy infrastructure. COVID-19 has raised questions about the resilience of energy infrastructure if a disaster such as a cyclone were to hit the region during the pandemic and the cascading impacts of this on critical services and well-being. Renewable energy systems are capable of surviving many types of natural disaster and would provide some protection in the case of an additional emergency during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the wider benefits of renewable energy have been considered for recovery in the Caribbean. The benefits include lower costs of energy, more stable energy provision, and increased independence through diversified and local energy sources which would boost the economy and help develop equitable access to power.

Source: Energy news: <http://newenergyevents.com/coronavirus-the-caribbean-is-the-first-domino-to-fall-but-there-is-hope/>

For more international examples please register [ambs.ac.uk/covidrecovery](https://ambs.ac.uk/covidrecovery)  
Join the Coalition of Cities for a Resilient Recovery [here](#)

If you would be willing to contribute your knowledge to the briefing (via a 30-minute interview) please contact [Duncan.Shaw@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:Duncan.Shaw@manchester.ac.uk)

## Useful webinars

Summary of key past and highlight those happening in the coming week that might be useful

Taken place in the past week	Webinar Title	Link to presentation
5.5.2020	Social protection financing in the wake of COVID-19 and beyond	<a href="https://socialprotection.org/discover/publications/webinar-presentation-social-protection-financing-wake-covid-19-and-beyond">https://socialprotection.org/discover/publications/webinar-presentation-social-protection-financing-wake-covid-19-and-beyond</a>
5.5.2020	Addressing Disaster Risk Reduction of multiple hazards during the COVID 19 crisis in Africa	<a href="https://www.preventionweb.net/events/view/71565?id=71565">https://www.preventionweb.net/events/view/71565?id=71565</a>
07.5.2020	Webinar 6: COVID-19: Opportunities for Resilient Recovery	<a href="https://www.undrr.org/event/webinar-covid-19-opportunities-resilient-recovery">https://www.undrr.org/event/webinar-covid-19-opportunities-resilient-recovery</a>
7.5.2020	9th session of Cities in the Frontline: Cities for a Resilient Recovery	<a href="https://bit.ly/3f67ttc">https://bit.ly/3f67ttc</a>
<b>Coming up</b>		
Date	Webinar Title	Link to registration
12.5.2020	Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and the Coronavirus Crisis – Challenges and Responses: maintaining essential health services while responding to COVID-19	<a href="https://socialprotection.org/universal-health-coverage-uhc-and-coronavirus-crisis-%E2%80%93-challenges-and-responses-maintaining">https://socialprotection.org/universal-health-coverage-uhc-and-coronavirus-crisis-%E2%80%93-challenges-and-responses-maintaining</a>
12.5.2020	The Big Rethink: 'The How, What, Where of Work'.	<a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/5815881871167/WN_Cq5x4oyrTwO56GBVizymKw">https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/5815881871167/WN_Cq5x4oyrTwO56GBVizymKw</a>
14.05.2020	10th session of Cities in the Frontline: Migrant and Refugee Sensitive COVID-19 Response and Recovery	<a href="https://wbgevent.webex.com/wbgevent/onsite/g.php?MTID=eb9e217dc07293f9bb43e15e3a03aff87">https://wbgevent.webex.com/wbgevent/onsite/g.php?MTID=eb9e217dc07293f9bb43e15e3a03aff87</a>
19.5.2020	The Big Rethink: 'Decarbonizing the Hard Way'	<a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/3515886042156/WN_FPI4SLxAQWG9IIRUK7CCzw">https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/3515886042156/WN_FPI4SLxAQWG9IIRUK7CCzw</a>
26.5.2020	The Big Rethink: 'Lessons For Greenfield Megaprojects'	<a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/6015886049337/WN_ffwIX4EMQwKV1FaSbTtaEg">https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/6015886049337/WN_ffwIX4EMQwKV1FaSbTtaEg</a>