The Manchester Briefing on COVID-19

International lessons for local and national government recovery and renewal

Twenty-seventh briefing: 8th January 2021

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The University of Manchester, UK

What is 'The Manchester Briefing on COVID-19'?
The Manchester Briefing on COVID-19 is aimed at those who plan and implement recovery from COVID-19, including government emergency planners and resilience officers.

We bring together international lessons and examples which may prompt your thinking on the recovery from COVID-19, as well as other information from a range of sources and a focus on one key topic. The lessons are taken from websites (e.g. UN, WHO), documents (e.g. from researchers and governments), webinars (e.g. those facilitated by WEF, GCRN), and other things we find.

We aim to report what others have done without making any judgement on the effectiveness of the approaches or recommending any specific approach.

This week
We have provided four briefings:
Briefing A: Recovery, Renewal, and Resilience: Our new project to develop guidance for local government
Briefing B: Lessons you may find helpful from across the world
Briefing C: Developing a sustainable pace for 2021
Briefing D: Useful webinars

Please register at ambs.ac.uk/covidrecovery to receive future briefings

Other information
If this is the first briefing you have received and would like to access the previous ones, they can be found here

If you would be willing to contribute your knowledge to the briefing (via a 30-minute interview) please contact Duncan.Shaw-2@manchester.ac.uk

We also produce a blog series which you can access here along with other news about our team and our work.
Briefing A: Recovery, Renewal, and Resilience: Our new project to develop guidance for local government

Introduction

A few months ago we heard that the team had been awarded a substantial grant to research how local governments are approaching recovery and renewal to build resilience. Through this project we will develop a framework for local recovery, renewal and resilience from COVID-19. This week we explain the project because The Manchester Briefing (TMB) will adapt over the coming months to report the findings, frameworks, and guidelines that we develop during the project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>Recovery, Renewal, and Resilience from COVID-19: Informing, supporting and developing guidance for local resilience</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project funders</td>
<td>Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) under project number ES/V015346/1, The University of Manchester, and in-kind contributions from many partners</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>18 months (Jan 2021-June 2022)</td>
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<td>Objective</td>
<td>To work closely with resilience partners in three Local Resilience Forums (LRFs) and several overseas cities to develop a generalizable, theoretically underpinned framework for how recovery and renewal to COVID-19 can enhance local resilience</td>
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| Deliverables | - A theoretically underpinned, practice-tested framework to support thinking about recovery and renewal  
- Briefings on how to implement recovery and renewal for local resilience  
- A searchable database of international lessons for recovery and renewal  
- A self-evaluation methodology to reflect on recovery and renewal practices  
- The Manchester Briefing, case studies, and training products  
- International and national standards having a global impact |
| Project staff | Professor Duncan Shaw, David Powell, Dr Nat O’Grady, Dr Ayham Fattoum, Dr Simos Chari, Alan Boyd, Róisín Jordan, Dr Andrew Mcclelland, Dr Szymon Parzniewski and Dr Jennifer Bealt |

Background to the project

In 2020 we were privileged to spend a considerable amount of time with a number of local resilience partnerships (Local Resilience Forums - LRFs) that were incredibly welcoming and willing to include us in aspects of their response to COVID-19. Our work spanned >20 LAs, response meetings, Recovery Coordination Groups (RCGs), international committees, national groups, and many webinars, focus groups and trainings.

The combination of this work was our identification of topics that were important to the response and recovery by local government. We took these topics, searched for lessons on how other countries were tackling them, and shared those lessons through The Manchester Briefing (TMB). TMB is now issued to 52,000 through a global network of fifteen core partners. We are truly grateful to these partners for their support in globalising TMB.
Describing the new project

Our new project will expand on the work we did in 2020 by seeking to develop a generalizable, theoretically underpinned framework for recovery and renewal, to build resilience through transformational activities and inform and support local governments in the aftermath of COVID-19.

We will develop this framework by working closely with three LRFs and a number of global cities, interviewing internationally recognised recovery experts from across the world to find the best and most thought-provoking lessons, and engaging extensively with local and national government to ensure we cover the whole system e.g. every organisation, service and function. This research will aim to inform decision-making about recovery and renewal from COVID-19.

We will:

- Continue to develop TMB i.e. collect and analyse lessons on recovery and renewal from across the world and the UK, synthesise international lessons, produce expert topic briefings, and write case studies on recovery and renewal
- Develop and test a framework for recovery and renewal, drawing on these lessons, using an action research cycle approach, refining it for different contexts, and analysing how it is exploited
- Develop and test a methodology to assess the impact of the use of the framework
- Disseminate lessons using a wide variety of approaches
- Develop formal international guidance on recovery and renewal for resilience

The project’s perspective on recovery, renewal and resilience

For COVID-19, recovery and renewal may be all-of-society, because everyone in the country has been affected to some extent, and whole system, because every organisation, service and function has been affected. Given that the all-pervading nature of the crisis puts demands on local government to recover on a diversity, scale, and complexity never before encountered, there is an opportunity to develop clear, practically-relevant guidance on recovery and renewal. However, as guidance would need to recognize the many differences between local governments (e.g. local governance, partnerships, recovery governance structures, priorities, inequalities, populations) we need to test our thinking widely – and we will do this by partnering across the UK, with global cities and with international organisations. Thus we will seek to develop, test and improve a framework that is widely appropriate and is theoretically-underpinned and practice-tested.

Research design and approach

Our ‘engaged research’ approach to the project will enable “the discovery, development and mobilization of knowledge to the mutual benefit of community and academic interests” (Beaulieu et al, 2018). We have successfully used this approach in previous studies and the values of social justice and citizenship that characterize the approach underpin our research design. We will draw on action research approaches where we engage (through observation of RCGs, participation in recovery meetings, informal discussions with recovery leads, etc) and intervene (through implementation, strategies, TMB, webinars, training, etc) in the setting (local and national government) to generate ‘actionable knowledge’ (Argyris, 2005). Specifically, we will use a four-stage action research cycle (Lewin, 1945):

1. **Plan** – collect national/international lessons on recovery (see WP1 below). Map these lessons onto thinking (at the time) about recovery by local/national governments to understand their need and provide information in advance
2. **Implement** – share timely lessons in multiple formats/channels, monitoring relevance, feedback and impact (WP4). Work collaboratively with recovery groups in the UK and overseas to test/implement/improve our recovery framework to support their strategies (WP2)

3. **Observe** – monitor implementation of recovery and renewal, supporting local governments, and wider interpretation e.g. for organisations. Interview key actors to understand their lived experiences of recovery and renewal – using the insights to improve our framework (WP2)

4. **Reflect** – consider how to improve our framework by assessing how governments are doing recovery and renewal. Using these insights to re-design the framework and, again, plan for implementation (stage 2), along with developing and testing a method for assessing impact (WP2&3)

The outcome of multiple iterations of this action research cycle applied across various RCGs, experts and countries, will be a stronger framework that has been tested.

**Work and deliverables**

Six interconnected and concurrent work packages (each running Months 1-18) build on our work so far.

**WP1. Collect and analyse lessons on recovery and renewal**

We will scale up our work to collect primary and secondary data that will be the foundation for activities and deliverables in other work packages. This will include identifying lessons and frameworks for recovery and renewal from COVID-19, via interviews with experts, running workshops, focus groups, webinars, and analyzing secondary data.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverables</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Database of lessons for UK recovery and renewal</td>
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**WP2. A framework for recovery and renewal**

We will use the data from WP1 to inform a useable, conceptually and empirically tested, framework for recovery and renewal for resilience. The framework will be planned in modules (guidelines and training materials) to keep ahead of the needs identified through the action research activity. Modules may include: setting up an RCG; maturing RCG structures and modes of operation; impact assessments; recovery action planning; renewal summits and initiatives; monitoring delivery of recovery and renewal; closing down recovery to focus on renewal. Towards project close we will combine these modules into a final recovery and renewal framework for resilience.

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<th>Deliverables:</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Recovery and renewal modules</td>
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<tr>
<td>- An overarching recovery and renewal framework for pandemics</td>
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<td>- Case studies of applying the recovery and renewal framework with partners</td>
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**WP3. Methodology to assess impact**

Using inputs from WP1&2, we will design an evaluation methodology for local government to self-assess the impact of recovery and renewal on local government strategies, and the usefulness of our developing framework. We will observe how this methodology can be applied and, again, improve it in line with feedback to make it a value-added evaluation.

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<th>Deliverables:</th>
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<tr>
<td>- A self-assessment recovery and renewal evaluation methodology</td>
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Case studies of applying the evaluation methodology

**WP4. Disseminate lessons**

We will produce user-friendly sources of lessons and disseminate these throughout the project. This will aim to increase community engagement through the events we will run, and will feed information from those into the iterative development of the recovery and renewal framework (WP2).

**Deliverables:**
- Produce and disseminate TMB
- Deliver open webinars
- Publish academic articles
- Disseminate policy lessons on recovery and renewal

**WP5. Develop formal guidance**

We will use project outputs to develop guidance on recovery and renewal. We will test and enhance our framework internationally with cities across the globe and use this to refine the guidelines.

**Deliverables:**
- Guideline on recovery and renewal
- International Standard and National Standard
- Enhance thinking across countries

**Our team**

Our team has been expanded to address these wider aims. The team brings a wide range of academic and practical expertise in diverse areas that are critical to recovery and renewal for resilience. These include: crisis response/recovery; command and control; health care management and evaluation; local government; complex systems; human geography; volunteer involvement; community resilience; humanitarian logistics; communications and marketing strategy.

**Our invitation**

This is an ambitious project, seeking to further our understanding of recovery and renewal to COVID-19 and resilience. Recovery and renewal needs whole system collaboration so we warmly invite you to collaborate with our project, for example:

- You may wish to sign up for TMB and receive fortnightly briefings on recovery and renewal for resilience at [www.ambs.ac.uk/covidrecovery](http://www.ambs.ac.uk/covidrecovery)
- You may wish to attend some of our webinars, focus groups, or contribute your experiences into our project by participating in a short interview
- You may be part of a local government organisation that may wish to get involved as an RCG, and we would be delighted to discuss this with you
- You may be part of an association that could disseminate TMB through your networks

We have a lot of work to do. Read TMB to track our progress!
Briefing B. Lessons you may find helpful from across the world

We provide the lessons under six categories, with sub-categories for ease of reference. We have selected lessons that are of specific interest to the recovery process although many also relate to the response phase, and the likely overlap between response and recovery.

This week our lessons on humanitarian assistance focus on promoting compassion in organisations and strategies to alleviate period poverty. Economic lessons consider how to manage and mitigate the rise in black markets for negative COVID-19 tests. Infrastructure lessons focus on the role employers may be able to play in supporting COVID-19 vaccination infrastructure. Environmental lessons consider moving from urban planning to social planning designs to accommodate new behaviours as a result of the pandemic, and the health implications of closing public toilets. Communications lessons address how public messages can improve the effectiveness of vaccination programmes, and practical ways of reaching out to older people during winter. Governance and legislation includes lessons on involving young people in recovery to promote sustainable and inclusive initiatives, and strategies to develop a succinct menu or pathway to help guide organisations through recovery and renewal.

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| **Humanitarian Assistance**   | **Consider how to promote compassion in organisations.** All areas of peoples’ lives have been impacted by COVID-19 in a multitude of different ways. Compassion acknowledges that people may be suffering, and promotes sensitivity about the issues affecting people. Compassion during COVID-19 should acknowledge that while everyone has been impacted, they will have been impacted differently. Recognising these differences will help to build transparency and authenticity within the organisations. Consider how to develop a compassionate organisation through:  
  ▪ Creating safe spaces where people can air their concerns and views  
  ▪ Ensure there are processes in place to address legitimate concerns and views  
  ▪ Regularly check-in with those within the organisation to actively enquire about their wellbeing – reducing the expectation and pressure on people to self-mobilise support mechanisms  
  ▪ Anticipate needs e.g. be aware of pressures, deadlines and potential for burnout  
  ▪ Believe people when they say they are struggling and trust that they are doing their best  
  ▪ Consider being transparent about your own struggles, but be aware of establishing boundaries  

  Note that compassion does not lower expectations within the organisation or undermine people’s roles and responsibilities. Rather, it creates a healthier organisational environment that can reduce anxiety, fear and shame. | Canada | [https://www.universityaffairs.ca/career-advice/career-advice-article/profs-teaching-online-need-to-focus-on-increasing-their-compassion-toward-students/](https://www.universityaffairs.ca/career-advice/career-advice-article/profs-teaching-online-need-to-focus-on-increasing-their-compassion-toward-students/) |
**Recovery: Categories of impact**

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| Consider how your organisation can help relieve the burden of period poverty. Period poverty has increased sharply in the UK since the COVID-19 pandemic. Period poverty is defined as the struggle to pay for basic sanitary products on a monthly basis. Reports from one charity state they have supplied almost six times as many menstrual products compared with before the pandemic started. Around one in five people have experienced period poverty in the UK which has a significant impact on hygiene, health and wellbeing. Period poverty has risen as result of self-isolation, loss of income, and loss of access to services which may have provided free sanitary products. Scotland has become the first country in the world to provide free and universal access to period products, and places a legal duty on local authorities to make period products available for all those who need them. Consider how to:  
• Encourage schools, colleges and universities to provide sanitary products for free  
• Encourage businesses and places of work to provide sanitary products  
• Establish programmes where sanitary products are distributed to low-income households  
• Partner with pharmacies to offer free sanitary products to those eligible for free prescriptions  
• Raise awareness of trans, non-binary, and genderqueer people’s rights to access sanitary products and ensure provision to them |
<p>| <strong>Country/Region</strong>    |
| UK                   |
| <strong>Source</strong>           |
| <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/nov/24/scotland-becomes-first-nation-to-provide-free-period-products-for-all">https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/nov/24/scotland-becomes-first-nation-to-provide-free-period-products-for-all</a> |</p>
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| Economic strategy             | Consider strategies to manage and mitigate the rise in black markets for negative COVID-19 tests. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues on, people around the world have been utilising black markets to purchase negative COVID-19 test results to enable them to travel. False negative COVID test certificates have been sold for around $300 USD. Systems which email test results can be easily bypassed by downloading and doctoring documents e.g. changing the date of the test, name and test result. Consider how to manage and mitigate proliferation of false negative test results:  
  ▪ In Hawaii, only results from approved testing partners will be accepted, and they must be transmitted digitally, rather than using emails  
  ▪ Utilising apps that centralize health and lab data and test/vaccination results e.g. CommonPass, trialled by United Airlines and Cathay Pacific Airways | France  
Brazil  
Hawaii  
| Infrastructure               | Consider the role of employers in supporting COVID-19 vaccination infrastructure. Previously, employers in the USA have supported influenza preparedness by providing on-site clinics to administer flu shots for their staff. It may be possible for organisations to use previous arrangements and infrastructure for flu vaccination to support the COVID-19 vaccination programme. If organisations do not have such infrastructure, developing it could help support COVID-19 vaccination programmes and expedite employees return to work. This may be dependent on the type of vaccinations available and requirements for their storage. When a COVID-19 vaccine is widely available and accessible consider:  
  ▪ Making vaccination a part of worksite wellness programmes whereby staff can be vaccinated at an onsite clinic provided by their employers  
  ▪ How employers can provide supplementary support in tackling COVID-19 transmission, alongside the vaccine, through educational material on preventative measures e.g. mask wearing, to promote long-term public health compliance | USA | [https://www.benefitspro.com/2020/11/30/the-employers-role-in-creating-a-covid-19-testing-and-vaccination-infrastructure/?sreturn=20201030150251](https://www.benefitspro.com/2020/11/30/the-employers-role-in-creating-a-covid-19-testing-and-vaccination-infrastructure/?sreturn=20201030150251)  
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<td>Environmental Urban Planning</td>
<td>Consider how cities can shift from urban planning to social planning amid the COVID-19 pandemic. In recent years urban planning has revolved around principles of shared spaces e.g. shared offices, vehicles, city squares and parks, and available transport to help people travel to urban centres so that they can access goods and services. COVID-19 has required cities to revaluate these in light of radically changed human behaviour that relies on distancing from one another. Spaces therefore need to be thought about differently, not just as the physical spaces we inhabit, but as complex realities that can meet a variety of functions. Consider how social planning can: ▪ Relieve loneliness and allow for spending time with friends and family in the open air ▪ Facilitate alternative safe work environments e.g. moving meetings from offices to outdoor spaces ▪ Renovating urban spaces to meet new multi-functional requirements while considering the need for green space Consider also, that social planning may require increased investment in infrastructure and services such as: ▪ Free and reliable WiFi in outdoor spaces to help meet the requirements of spaces as places that can accommodate work ▪ Localising ‘downtown’ areas e.g. ensuring every neighbourhood is serviced with essential shops and services to avoid unnecessary travel</td>
<td>Israel</td>
<td><a href="https://www.jpost.com/opinion/going-from-urban-planning-to-social-planning-amid-the-coronavirus-650531">https://www.jpost.com/opinion/going-from-urban-planning-to-social-planning-amid-the-coronavirus-650531</a></td>
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| Waste management              | Consider the impact of closing public toilets on public health. During the pandemic public toilets have been closed with a view to reducing possible sites of COVID-19 transmission. This has resulted in reported increases in open defecation and urination, which could create another public health crisis. Also, the closure of public toilets can negatively impact people’s wellbeing and mental health as some people may not feel comfortable using outdoor spaces for fresh air and exercise without knowing there is a public toilet available. Consider guidelines on:  
  ▪ The safe opening of public toilets in ‘BS 45005 Safe working during the COVID-19 pandemic – General guidelines for organizations’  
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| Communication                 | **Consider how public messages can improve the effectiveness of vaccination programmes.** Research suggests that the effectiveness of the COVID-19 vaccine will be heavily affected by public attitudes about vaccination. For a highly infectious disease, even a vaccine with adequate efficacy, pace, and coverage may be insufficient to tackle population dynamics (e.g. age and population size) that produce high disease prevalence. Consider public messaging to:  
  - Foster widespread public understanding and enthusiasm for vaccination, while addressing sources of hesitancy for vaccines (generally and for COVID-19)  
  - Promote vaccine acceptance through culturally-sensitive, evidence-based and local communication  
  - Promote the continued need for other prevention practices even after a vaccine becomes available as reducing transmission requires a sustained commitment to public health practices  
  - Ensure that vaccines are understood by all communities, particularly underserved groups for which longstanding disparities in vaccination coverage have been evident | USA            | [https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hlthaff.2020.02054](https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hlthaff.2020.02054)  
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| Targeted communication         | Consider developing clear, practical resources containing key messages for staff and volunteers working with older residents. In Greater Manchester UK, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) Ageing Hub, Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership, and partners launched the *Keeping Well this Winter campaign* to support older residents in the region. The resources are designed to:  
  - Encourage conversations about keeping well during winter using a short film produced by older people, a talking tips guide and booklet to provide clear, practical resources containing key messages for staff and volunteers who have any contact with older residents, their friends or families  
  - Resources are also being distributed directly to older residents through printed copies to avoid digital exclusion.  
  - In addition, to support the promotion and dissemination of this information, a communications toolkit has also been designed for partners and includes:  
    - Leadership messages  
    - Briefings and networks/forums  
    - Internal and external electronic/printed newsletters  
    - Websites and social media accounts  
  - The tips in these resources may be adapted to apply throughout the year and with other vulnerable people. | UK | https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/keeping-well-this-winter/ |
### Recovery: Categories of impact

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| Consider how to involve young people in response and recovery to promote sustainable and inclusive initiatives. In Palestine, officials invited young people to share ideas that they felt could help address the impacts of COVID-19. This has been supported by successful initiatives such as the establishment of a Youth Committee on the Palestinian Water Authority as a means of helping to develop the sector. Members of the Youth Committee were also involved in the 2020 Palestinian National Development Agenda. The Palestinian government and Youth Committee have built on their learning and expertise in these sectors to provide innovative ways of addressing COVID-19. Consider:  
  ▪ Placing Youth Committees at the heart of public awareness campaigns about areas they have been involved in e.g. in Palestine, water consumption and management during COVID-19  
  ▪ Utilise young people in the creation of innovative smart apps, and online information e.g. in Palestine, the "PalWater App," which provides a platform for customers and service providers to communicate. The application also acted as an alarm reporting system where young people could upload live images and their locations to help citizens notify local authorities of real-time issues  
  ▪ How involving young people in COVID-19 recovery and resilience can help to build integrated and sustainable long-term solutions e.g. in Palestine, the water sector initiative is being replicated with the Palestinian Ministry of Social Development to establish more youth committees at the local level. |
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| Planning for recovery         | **Consider developing a succinct menu or pathway to help guide organisations through recovery and renewal.** Developing a succinct plan that details the organisation’s overall strategy for recovery and renewal can help ensure the organisation is working towards the same goal and with the same vision. The plan can be developed with partners and disseminated to relevant parties through local networks. An example of this is the Core Cities UK 10 Point Plan to Leave Lockdown — 10 policy initiatives developed for government to work with cities in exiting lockdown. In brief, the plan considers:  
• Clear and transparent criteria for entering and exiting lockdown  
• Rapid, localised Test and Trace and vaccination  
• Adequate business support packages  
• Extended furlough and self-employment support  
• Sustainable financing of local government  
• Winter support packages for vulnerable people  
• Safe and secure places to live e.g. ban on landlord evictions and return of the ‘Everyone In’ campaign to end rough sleeping  
• Commitment to dialogue with key stakeholders across locally agreed geographies  
• Focused support for education and learning institutions e.g. rapid Test and Trace for all students and staff, reviewing exam timetables  
• Increased local enforcement powers to tackle non-compliance | UK              | https://www.corecities.com/publications/our-ten-point-plan-leave-lockdown  
**Briefing C: Developing a sustainable pace for 2021**

The pace at which some organisations and individuals have been moving during the COVID-19 pandemic has been relentless with many in prolonged ‘crisis mode’\(^1\). The pace, combined with mounting tensions and ever-present uncertainties have taken their toll on individuals and systems, leading to systems being overwhelmed, burnout and fatigue. For some systems, organisation and individuals, the recent holiday period has led to a pause in the relentless pace of COVID-19. This case study raises questions about whether continuing to work in a crisis response mode throughout 2021 is the best option, whether it is feasible, and which operations can be paused to create capacity in overwhelmed systems in order to create a potentially more sustainable pace and nurture resilience in people.

Gradually, people have begun to familiarise themselves with the notion of a ‘new normal’ in which our behaviours and expectations of the world we live in are adapted and changed\(^2\). This new normal came quickly and unexpectedly, and had to cement itself into organisations and individuals during an emergency and, as a result, the pace was rapid. But, as time moves on the new normal has to transition into a new business as usual. This is not a return to normalcy pre-pandemic, but rather a strategy of consistency that adopts COVID-19 learning to substantively address identified shortcomings with a view to facilitating systems, organisations and people to function in a sustainable way, despite the ongoing difficulties and disturbances. This requires:

- The identification of processes to pause or reduce
- The reorganisation of priorities and tasks
- The redeployment of resources\(^3\)

Developing a sustainable pace that will take systems, organisations and individuals through the whole of 2021 might be achieved through analysing lessons learnt and undertaking impact assessments – TMB 17 and TMB 18.

These assessments can help systems, organisations and people to:

- Take stock of their current environment, operations and behaviours to consider whether their pace and activities are fit for purpose and sustainable for 2021
- Take the time to draw on expertise from a whole range of other systems, organisations and people to evaluate their situation
- Take the time to make necessary systematic and sustainable changes to the pace of operations to ensure inclusivity and resilience
- Build relationships and resources beyond an organisation or individual to develop partnerships which may help to reduce pressures and develop a more sustainable pace of operating

In turn, this helps to build approaches for 2021 and the future that can protect systems, organisations, and people, built their resilience and align components of the system (that may unnecessarily be running at a different pace) to increase overall efficiency and resilience.

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**Briefing D: Useful webinars**

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<tr>
<th>Taken place in the past week</th>
<th>Webinar Title</th>
<th>Link to presentation</th>
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**Coming up**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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