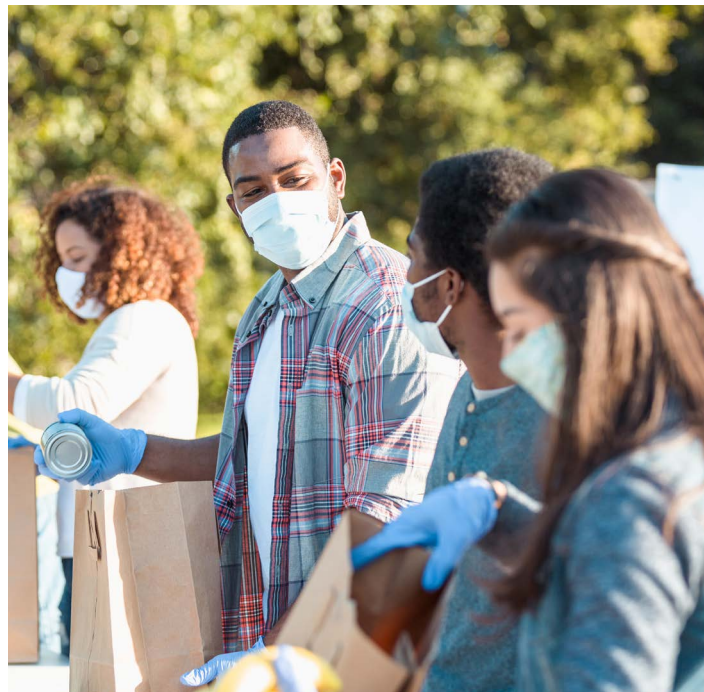Produced by: **Professor Duncan Shaw, Róisín Jordan, Alan Boyd and Dr Jennifer Bealt, The University of Manchester, UK**

The Manchester Briefing COVID-19

International lessons for local and national government recovery and renewal

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 information on our webinar series and three briefings:

Contribute your knowledge to the briefing (via a 30-minute interview) by contacting 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.

Join the conversation
#RecoveryRenewal #Covid19Recovery

Previous briefings. If this is the first briefing you have received and you'd like to access more, they can be found here.

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

Recovery, Renewal, Resilience: The Manchester Webinar Series

Over the coming months, our team, in collaboration with partners, will be running a series of webinars that will explore recovery and renewal from COVID-19. The webinars will mark key dates, discuss the themes emerging and developing through our project and report on key findings, good practice and global learning. Register for our upcoming and watch our most recent webinars:

Upcoming Webinars

29/04/2021, 5pm BST: Recovering from COVID-19

This event is aimed at students and others who are interested in hearing how academic research can have a real world impact through the application of tools, theories and social science

Register: https://tinyurl.com/2mtd2wa9

Past webinars

25/03/2021: One year of COVID-19: Delivering a Green and Just Recovery

Jointly organised by Resilience Cities Network and the World Bank, co-hosted by The University of Manchester, this webinar reflects on the lessons learned since the pandemic struck

Watch: https://tinyurl.com/2jw4cjz9

26/03/2021: Recovery and renewal from COVID-19: A year of The Manchester Briefing

One year since the launch of The Manchester Briefing, this event explores and collates the key lessons and themes that have emerged from around the globe during the COVID-19 pandemic

Watch: https://tinyurl.com/25ftp6hw

07/04/2021: Communities: The new local resilience capability

This webinar asks whether community resilience can be a local and national resilience capability, and explores different models of community action from the US, Chile and the UK to illustrate how this might be achieved

Watch: https://tinyurl.com/7evyj475

Briefing A:

Barriers to co-production of service delivery during COVID-19:
Pace, distance and complexity

"There needs to be a focus on real life people in a pragmatic way or [COVID response and recovery] won't work... [we should] support community initiatives, and improve the focus of funds with real people at the centre"
(Interviewee Ob38)

1. Introduction

During a crisis such as COVID-19 there is a tendency for governments to rely on top-down forms of governance for service delivery. Yet, increasingly it is recognised that effective service delivery during COVID-19 relies on co-production with the public who can assess whether government interventions reflect specific needs and customs due to their lived experiences, appreciation, and awareness of their local context (Miao et al., 2021).

Co-production is a decision-making process between officials and the public that seeks to move beyond mere participation or consultation, and towards active and equal influence (Boyle and Harris, 2009). Co-production requires the involvement of 'officials' who work on behalf of government—whether directly or indirectly, locally or nationally—and are engaged in state-related or state-sanctioned activity (Nabatchi et al., 2017). It also requires 'the public' who participate as: citizens; a recipient of a public service; or a customer (ibid). The public may also include those who do not have statutory rights, but nevertheless, are recipients of goods and services and can therefore contribute to co-production (Strokosch and Osborne, 2016).

To understand why co-production of service delivery has been challenging during COVID-19 we collected 64 interviews with individuals from 21 countries who were experienced in response and recovery. The data revealed three core barriers to co-production:

   a) **Pace**
   b) **Distance (physical and social)**
   c) **Complexity of the context**

Awareness of these barriers can help local government to find a way to co-produce, despite the challenging context of the crisis, which can promote sustainable and inclusive service delivery.

2. Why co-production is important during COVID-19

While governments strive to deliver what the public want or need, it is unclear how this is always determined. Democratically elected leaders should represent the views of their electorate but there is usually a sizeable proportion of the public who feel less represented.

Co-production is a way to bring together a range of knowledge and perspectives to create meaningful and impactful interactions (Boyle and Harris, 2009), especially for those who are vulnerable and may not otherwise have a voice.

Despite the contextual pressure, co-production is especially important during crises when governance tends to rely on trying to find the 'best solution' to complex problems (Chowdhooree et al., 2020). A crisis puts stress on leadership, compliance, and control, and relies on top-down dissemination of service delivery (Chowdhooree et al., 2020). However, while these approaches are useful in a crisis, they can also neglect who is (or should be) involved in decision-making and the consequences of this (Boyle and Harris, 2009). For example, the public relaying their needs to government can become ritualistic (Chowdhooree et al., 2020) because of their limited agency which means that the public have no assurance that final decisions will address their concerns. Also, co-producing with a sub-set of the population may marginalise individuals who are not represented and thereby restrict or neglect benefits for the wider the community.

While difficult to deliver, co-production is more likely when the public have a strong sense that they can make a significant difference (Bovaird et al., 2016), as we have seen during COVID-19. For this, increased communication and engagement of local government with the public is needed during a crisis to ensure diversity of perspectives, knowledge and expertise. This can foster resilient communities that are aware, prepared, empowered, and connected into official structures to help resolve complex social dilemmas. The challenges of top-down governance, and pressures on local governments during a crisis can mean that co-production can be difficult to mobilise. In the remainder of this briefing we explore the barriers to co-production during COVID-19.

3. Data and Methodology

We conducted 64 interviews with individuals experienced in response and recovery, 22 of whom worked closely or directly with local communities (coded in the Finding section as 'C') and 42 officials (coded as 'Ob'). Participants were from 21 countries and were interviewed from 6th April -23rd July 2020. In the Findings section, we report on the data collected from in-depth interviews to establish our framework of co-production.

4. Findings

Our data revealed three main barriers to co-production: pace, distance and complexity, discussed below.

Pace of co-production and the pace of the environment during COVID-19

The enormous **scale** of the COVID-19 pandemic (and those affected by it) unsurprisingly created challenges for pace as the speed of response meant interviewees reported not having time for co-production activities.

> Interviewees stated: **"Everyone has been caught in the headlights"** (Ob51); the situation was "chaotic" (C55); All aspects of life were impacted by the crisis … mental health support was "flooded" (C17)

The scale of the response impacted the **speed of delivery** due to the surge in demands and depleted capacity as a result of the virus (Ob12). Some organisations relied on frameworks that focused on authority (Ob12), which limited the scope of co-production and involvement of the public in addressing their needs. This contradicted claims that organisations had to consider the needs and demands from the most vulnerable and marginalised (Ob4).

Although co-production was difficult, some organisations used co-production to develop **forward planning to meet future needs**. For example, gathering data from online questionnaires disseminated through community groups was used because the "requirement of residents drives the building of services" (C2) and, by collating these views, officials could map growing demands and combat the pace of COVID-19 by planning ahead.

Distance and co-production during COVID-19

Barriers to co-production because of **remoteness** and **accessibility** during COVID-19 were related to a type of service distance. Remoteness was characterised by people being disconnected from services as a result of being vulnerable or marginalised. Accessibility of services was related to social barriers which hindered access to services, physical access issues, and authorities' perceptions of groups as 'hard to reach'. In turn, this hindered opportunities for officials and the public to discuss policy, hold one another to account, and to provide vital situation knowledge.

> Interviewees stated: **"Deprived communities can be hard to access"** (Ob44), such as "those who don't have statutory support" (Ob47); "homeless people [who] aren't in the system" (C43); "the migrant poor" (Ob20); those in social housing who are "neglected" (Ob59) and "not looked after" (Ob20); the "elderly and disabled [who] struggle to get information" (Ob18).

Despite limited co-production, interviewees recognised the importance of collaboration and engagement between officials and the public. They explained that awareness and understanding of various groups' needs could be improved by conducting assessments of the work of voluntary and community groups', alongside increased coordination with these groups to "watch out for service delivery gaps" (C8).

> Interviewees stated: Some services needed to go through "a social transformation [to consider] the proximity of people to services and networks" in neighbourhoods (C43) and, to do this, a policy shift was needed to consider "how community groups can be included more regularly" (C2).

Others stated that organisations needed to find new ways of operating to meet needs through "the decentralisation of services" (Ob41) which would include working at a local level with local people to develop a "more collective support mechanism" (C2) for inclusion of community groups in policy making.

Complexity and co-production during COVID-19

Co-production was challenged by the **technicality** of COVID-19 as a novel disease which was difficult to understand and predict. Interviewees stated that COVID was "something completely different [as] no one has done this before" (C15), that there were "no experts, only sharing experiences" (Ob20), and no "standardised common language for the pandemic" (Ob4). COVID-19 also created complex environments in which to have conversations with the public, for example, around the management of deaths, bereavement, mourning and commemoration (Ob20, C3, C17).

The technical nature of COVID-19 resulted in "small messages" (C3), where the complex science was removed (C8) e.g. the UK slogan "hands, face, space" which encouraged **limited ownership** of policies by the community because "people don't understand the details" (C63).

Interviewees spoke about how they would use networks to help fulfil or support their organisation's delivery, but not about how they consulted or co-designed any of these functions. Interviewees stated "community leaders should have interfaced with the government, but by the time the time [officials needed them] it was too late" (Ob63). Others said that organisations had not included "wider society in planning and response" (Ob31), and another described working in "functional silos" (Ob12) that led to disconnect with communities, when a multi-disciplinary approach was needed (Ob12).

5. Moderating impacts of pace, distance and complexity on co-production

This briefing sheds light on the shape of co-production in a crisis; that events can be too fast for co-production to be a priority, that officials and the public are too distant physically or socially for effective joint participation, and that complexity results in officials expounding simplistic messages about simplistic actions.

This contradicts narratives of participatory action, consultation or co-assessments with a view to improving service delivery. It also highlights the importance of political will as a driving force for co-production, and recognises that officials have more agency, and that the public often have to be triggered or mobilised into co-production roles (Bovaird et al., 2015). This is demonstrated by:

- **Pace:** whether officials believe they have enough time/ prioritise co-production

- **Distance:** if the public are physically or socially close enough to officials

- **Complexity:** how the context officials want the public to understand is being explained

Data from COVID-19 also demonstrated that even when officials had sufficient partnerships with local networks, co-production was still not operationalised as officials were under external pressures that made them feel like they had no time. This can be mitigated by:

- Continuous interaction to help determine what current and future needs are

- Regular information exchanges through large-scale surveys (especially if the pace is fast), sharing information on attitudes and behaviours, and facilitating the public's influence over policies

- Working collaboratively with the public and other partners to understand the urgency of needs, and to use this information to create time for co-production activities. This can provide quality information that can be fed back into service delivery decisions, and can help shape the information disseminated to the public in a way reflects their needs and understanding

- Avoid cursory participation activities and increase awareness raising to reduce complexity

- Clarifying roles and responsibilities, and increasing public agency

Co-production provides an avenue to influence how goods and services are delivered and to build cohesion that benefits wider society (Boyle and Harris, 2009). This increases trust in government information and performance regarding the delivery of goods and services (Bovaird et al., 2016).

Our research suggests that co-production has not always been careful or deliberate, and that stakeholders such as businesses, national government, communities, voluntary organisations, and professionalised bodies run the risk of exclusion, or working in functional, homogenous silos.

Figure 1 provides a broad framework that can be designed into a project's main policy framework to facilitate co-production in preparedness and response. This should consider that officials have more ability to start or end co-production activities, and that co-production should be encouraged before, during, and after a crisis so that it is integrated into the design and delivery of public services (Sorrentino et al., 2018). This promotes the longevity of co-production and encourages constant review of service delivery to ensure programmes are relevant, adaptable and inclusive (Pestoff, 2014).

Figure 1. Moderating impacts of pace, distance and complexity on strategic co-production
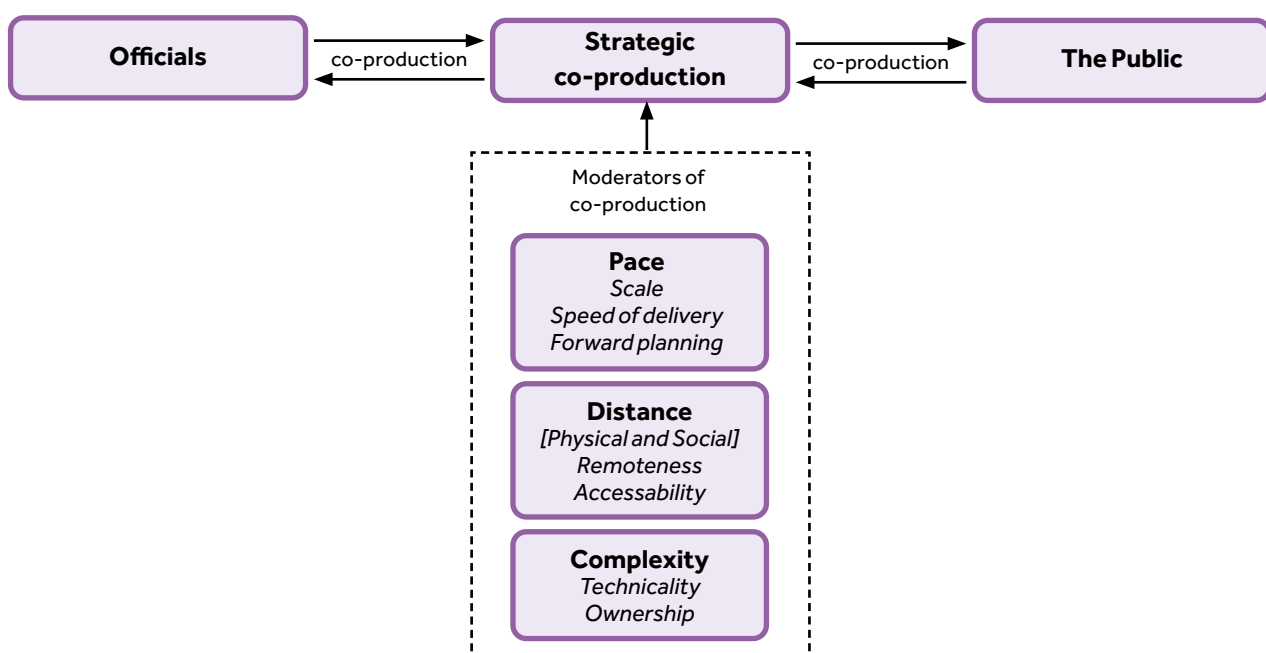
Conclusion

It is widely accepted that effective services require inputs from professionals and users (Bovaird et al., 2015), that the public have important localised knowledge, and that co-production can improve local agency and ownership. Reconfiguring governance so that it is inclusive of the public– whatever the pace, distance or complexity– promotes engaged, responsible and sustainable self-governance that transforms the role of officials from providers of services to enablers. In turn, this creates increased transfer of empirical and practice-oriented knowledge that can help solve, mitigate or prevent complex problems (Steen and Brandsten, 2020). This provides the public with a stake in their service delivery, quality of life, and their future.

This briefing emphasises the required shift in the public's roles as influencers of service delivery, to active designers of public services (Chatfield and Reddick, 2018).

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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 process of recovery and renewal although many also relate to the response phase, and the likely overlap between response, recovery, and renewal.

Table of Contents

Humanitarian Assistance	Actions

Impact on:
Mental health

UK:
https://tinyurl.com/h9w6k5us

South Africa:
https://tinyurl.com/vw538upy

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 services 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

Impact on:
Volunteers

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

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

Economic	Actions
Impact on: *Business regeneration/ rejuvenation* Australia: https://tinyurl.com/3vha724n Rwanda: https://tinyurl.com/yrnmcc3n	**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: o When creating profiles, partner with tourism agencies that have expert knowledge on the needs and priorities of different demographics o 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)

Economic	Actions

Impact on:
Economic Strategy

Morocco:
https://tinyurl.com/4tsvxz7m

UK:
https://tinyurl.com/yptfvy2p

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

Environment	Actions

Impact on:
General environment

Philippines, Myanmar:
https://tinyurl.com/yvaznsb5

Madagascar & Indonesia:
https://tinyurl.com/t8kmdawn

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

Communication	Actions

Impact on:
Targeted communications

Azerbaijan:
https://tinyurl.com/6bxwucny

Australia:
https://tinyurl.com/mb3scymp

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

Governance and legislation	Actions

Impact on:
Planning for recovery
 	
Australia:
https://tinyurl.com/nb9n2sdw
 	
https://tinyurl.com/ft98c97b
	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';
	  o **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
	  o **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:
	  o *Renewal objective*: Increase capacity
	  o *Outcome indicator*: Build community awareness and understanding of potential risks and impacts of emergencies
	  o *Measure*: Proportion of people who understand warnings (tested through risk preparedness exercises with the community)

Impact on: *Learning lessons* UK: https://tinyurl.com/ydz9annt Malawi: https://tinyurl.com/9k24vx2k	**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 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

Briefing C:
The 'attainment gap' and planning 2021 exam year assessments

The effects of the pandemic on the 'attainment gap'

Ongoing research is investigating the impacts of the pandemic on the 'attainment gap', i.e. the learning gap that exists between children from lower socio-economic backgrounds and those from more affluent backgrounds[1] . Although some progress was achieved in closing this gap in the UK between 2011 and 2019, it was reported that in 2019 students from schools in the most advantaged areas were still "2.4 times more likely to go to higher education than those from the most disadvantaged areas"[2] . COVID-19 and school closures have exacerbated this gap and threaten to reverse this previous progress[3] , with digital exclusion having evident effects on learning for the poorest and most vulnerable children[4] . The impact of COVID-19 on attainment is reported to potentially have negative long-term consequences for the labour market, children's future financial earning potential, social mobility[5], and GDP growth[6].

Consider the following lessons and actions to address the attainment gap and support vulnerable children who have lost out on significant learning time:

- Work closely with school leaders, teachers and educational trade unions and charities (e.g. Education Endowment Foundation) to conduct a rapid impact assessment which identifies children who may require targeted support[7]

- Partner and cooperate with official institutions (e.g. national Air Forces), grassroots and civil society organisations to ensure broad distribution of additional learning material and digital resources (e.g. Chile[8]) to vulnerable children to increase their ability to catch up on learning outside of school hours

- Consult with schools and staff to explore the possibility of extending the school day/year to allow for additional learning time[9]

- France allocated funding for additional hours for teachers to support students outside school hours[10]

- Provide funding and resources to implement accelerated education programmes, expand existing summer school programmes or create new, targeted ones:

  - When expanding existing programmes: work closely with schools, youth organisations and charities that operate such programmes to integrate academic learning into the programmes, and to facilitate and support vulnerable children to catch up on learning lost

  - If creating new local programmes: partner with and consult organisations who are knowledgeable and skilled in the operation of such programmes; utilize local facilities such as sports halls and community centres; and recruit volunteers (e.g. retired teachers/university students) to provide tutoring [6] and assist in the design and delivery of targeted educational summer programmes

  - Norway allocated additional funding to school leaders to help vulnerable children to catch up through accelerated education programmes, homework assistance programmes and teacher recruitment[11]

  - Canada will offer targeted summer schools and camps to primary and secondary pupils, "based on parents' and schools' selection of students" who have been identified as requiring additional targeted support. The courses and camps will be designed based on the "needs of the students and their specific institutions"[8]

  - Germany introduced summer schools that were delivered by student teachers, trainee teachers, retired teachers and older students who were specially trained[12]

- Work with national and local school boards to conduct a curricula review with a view to reforming and renewing education:

  - Apply a universal design to curricula, to ensure that

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1 https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/37194/1/Learning-in-Lockdown.pdf

2 https://www.gov.uk/government/news/education-secretary-do-more-for-disadvantaged-students

3 https://www.hepi.ac.uk/2021/02/04/closing-the-attainment-gap-how-disadvantaged-pupils-have-been-impacted-by-covid-19/

4 https://www.cam.ac.uk/stories/digitaldivide

5 https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/lost-learning-lost-earnings

6 https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/McKinsey/Industries/Public%20and%20Social%20Sector/Our%20Insights/COVID-19%20and%20student%20learning%20in%20the%20United%20States%20The%20hurt%20could%20last%20a%20lifetime/COVID-19-and-student-learning-in-the-United-States-FINAL.pdf

7 https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/EEF_(2020)_-_Impact_of_School_Closures_on_the_Attainment_Gap.pdf

8 https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/view/?ref=434_434914-59wd7ekj29&title=The-impact-of-COVID-19-on-student-equity-and-inclusion

9 https://schoolsweek.co.uk/all-ideas-on-the-table-says-catch-up-tsar-as-johnson-wont-rule-out-extending-school-term/

10 https://www.lemonde.fr/societe/article/2020/07/11/a-la-rentree-la-reduction-des-ecarts-entre-eleves-sera-la-priorite_6045947_3224.html

11 http://www.oecd.org/education/policy-outlook/country-profile-Norway-2020.pdf

12 https://bm.rlp.de/de/service/pressemitteilungen/detail/news/News/detail/gemeinsam-machen-wir-sommerschule-rlp-land-und-kommune-machen-sich-gemeinsam-fuer-schuelerinnen-und/

education systems are inclusive and fulfil every learner's potential

- Design flexible and accessible curricula, ensure textbooks are free from stereotypes [8] and establish assessment methods that enable students to evidence learning in a variety of ways[13]

Considerations for 2021 school exams

In addition to focusing attention on the attainment gap, it is important to consider how to improve the quality and credibility of temporary assessment procedures. When last year's senior secondary school examinations were cancelled or postponed due to COVID-19, school systems in different countries implemented a variety of alternative assessment methods. These included teacher assessments (UK, Ireland), previous exam performance (Netherlands, Indonesia, and Pakistan[14]), continuous classwork evaluation (Norway[15]), and more. Education systems considering alternative assessments again for 2021 should consider how best to ensure quality and credibility:

- Take time to review the methods used last year across the world. Identify what has gone well and what could be improved, to ensure that chosen methods accurately represent student ability, and offer high levels of reliability and credibility:

  - To aid reliability of grades, ensure a range of evidence is included, e.g. teacher assessments, continuous coursework performance and mock examination results[16]

  - Involve stakeholders in the review process, including local governments, local school management and teacher committees, student representative groups, and parent council

- Communicate early and clearly with school systems, teachers, students and their families, to ensure that adequate time is given to plan and prepare for alternative assessments

- How to take account of the inequalities in learning during the pandemic, due to issues such as poverty, stress and family conflict, and the resulting impacts on pupil performance[17]

- For teacher assessments; provide guidance and training for teachers to ensure that grades are consistent, equitable and fair[18]

- Consider who will provide grades for children who do not study within a school or college, e.g. home schooling[19]

- Draw on volunteers with the relevant educational qualifications and experience as a resource to schools (e.g. to second-mark teacher assessments)

- Appoint school inspectors or retired teachers to invigilate or moderate the alternative assessment process

- Implement a quality assurance programme for the process, covering both internal (schools) and external (exam board) checks

- Be transparent with those who will take the exams and their families

13 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sJbYhtFEuYI

14 https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=2021011511142211

15 https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/news-and-press/news/norway-responses-covid-19-outbreak

16 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/awarding-qualifications-in-summer-2021/awarding-qualifications-in-summer-2021

17 https://blogs.worldbank.org/education/silent-and-unequal-education-crisis-and-seeds-its-solution

18 https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/assessing-and-monitoring-pupil-progress/improving-teacher-assessment/improving-teacher-assessment/

19 https://www.ibblaw.co.uk/insights/2021-exams-cancelled-how-will-this-affect-your-children