

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

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# 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:

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Recovery, Renewal, Resilience: The Manchester Webinar Series

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Lessons you may find helpful from across the world

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Renewal of Community Resilience: Developing a new local resilience capability

Visit our webpage '[Recovery, Renewal, Resilience from COVID-19](#)'



**Contribute your knowledge** to the briefing (via a 30-minute interview) by contacting [duncan.shaw-2@manchester.ac.uk](mailto: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](https://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

### 07/06/2021, 1pm BST: Continuity & Resilience Series: Looking beyond Covid-19

This webinar, in collaboration with the British Standards Institute (BSi) will explore lessons in practice from local government, large organisations, small-medium enterprises and business networks. In this episode we will examine the inter-dependencies between business continuity and resilience planning, and look at how we will move beyond the responses to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Register: <https://tinyurl.com/54j99fx2>

### 10/06/2021, 2pm BST: Cities on the Frontline Series

This webinar will feature perspectives on how to most effectively establish long-term community resilience in cities around the world, and why it is worthwhile for the private sector to help advance leadership and investments in this way.

Register: <http://bit.ly/CommunityRes>

### 25/06/2021, 1pm BST: A Collective Memory: A webinar examining post pandemic commemoration

In this webinar we will consider how we will collectively remember the Covid-19 pandemic, reviewing lessons from history about building resilience through coproduced commemoration.

Register: <https://tinyurl.com/5ywpky5n>

## Past webinars

### 07/05/2021: COVID-19: Resilience Planning & Emergency Management

This webinar, in collaboration with The International Emergency Management Society (TIEMS) explored global experience of Recovery, Renewal, Resilience from COVID-19.

Watch <https://tinyurl.com/6fa2z5ne>

### 29/04/2021: Recovering from COVID-19

In this webinar the panel discusses how academic research can have a real world impact through the application of tools, theories and social science.

Watch: <https://tinyurl.com/338jaawv>

## Briefing A:

# Risk Communications as part of the Local Resilience Capability

## Introduction

This week briefing considers risk communication as part of the Local Resilience Capability (LRC)<sup>1</sup>. Communication is central to LRC as it ensures that communities are aware of risks, more able to recognise risks, prepare for them, and be better informed of how to respond to and mitigate the impacts of risks when they occur. But, communication also allows our communities to share their awareness of changing risks, pinpoint new vulnerabilities, and highlight better preparedness being coordinated locally – all which may inform local resilience partnerships of a changing profile of local risk.

This briefing explores risk communications from three perspectives:

1. The communication of risk before an emergency
2. The communication of risk during an emergency
3. How risk communication could be improved

COVID-19 has been described as a “manifestation of compound, systemic and existential risk” characterised by “uncertainty, complexity and surprise”<sup>2</sup>. The unpredictable and complex nature of the pandemic has caused significant challenges for risk communication from public health systems, national and local governments. Over the last 14 months we have seen a constant shift between response and recovery given the multiple waves of the pandemic, at different times, and in different places, nationally and sub-nationally. We have witnessed concurrent emergencies challenging COVID-19 guidelines (e.g. mass evacuations due to severe flooding/cyclones<sup>3</sup>), and the challenges posed by public demonstrations and protests (e.g. Black Lives Matter, 2020<sup>4</sup>).

Reflecting on the last 15 months, were our risk communication systems able to meet the demands of the pandemic? Our imaginations appear to have fallen short of foreseeing how widespread, prolonged, and recurring the pandemic could be. COVID-19 has pressured response organisations to build trust and communicate transparently and effectively with communities of especially vulnerable people, as well as those who were not previously thought of in this way. However, the risk of COVID-19 being at all our doorsteps has heightened our personal sense of being at-risk, making us more receptive to risk communications.

## The communication of risk through risk registers

### National Risk Registers (NRR)

In the UK, the NRR<sup>5</sup> catalogues potential risks and contributes to the communication of national risks within and beyond local resilience partnerships. Within a partnership, the NRR aids analysis and communication of risk in at least three ways:

- The NRR drives the development of capabilities and capacity against prioritised risks, for example, the National Resilient Capabilities Programme<sup>6</sup>
- The NRR acts as a commissioning tool for resilience partners to (a) identify necessary partnerships to support work on particular risks and (b) communicate risks to engage internal people in focused collaborative working (e.g. elected officials, chief executives)
- The NRR ensures that the risks being communicated within the resilience partnership are up-to-date because it (a) focuses assessment and planning of preparedness, (b) enables emergency plans to be reviewed around risks of concern, and (c) communicates understanding of each risk linked to its likelihood and impact

Beyond a resilience partnership, the NRR aids communication of risk in at least two ways:

- The NRR (as well as local risk registers) focuses risk communication that happens with communities onto specific risks to (a) build community awareness of risks and what they can do to prepare for them, (b) focus local people on the local risks and help them to understand their urgency, (c) identify how local communities have changed in risk, vulnerability, preparedness, and (d) identify the need to enhance resilience and local resilience capabilities to deal with the risks
- The NRR communicates the potential of big issues (beyond local) and brings those into local consciousness to encourage imagination beyond their immediate context

Alone, the NRR provides important insights into the risks that people in the UK face. However, the NRR overlooks the “ambiguity and uncertainties around risks”, those which on occasion catch us by surprise<sup>7</sup>, and does not reflect cascading risks from a combination of risk events. From a risk communications perspective, the NRR requires support from other tools (e.g. warning systems and Local Risk Registers) to strengthen preparedness, prevention and response.

<sup>1</sup> TMB Issue 30, a recent webinar ‘Communities: the new Local Resilience Capability’ and the case study in this briefing (p.13) explore community resilience as a local resilience capability

<sup>2</sup> Mechler R. et al. (2020) Bouncing forward sustainably: pathways to a post-COVID world. Governance for Sustainability. International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis and International Science Council. <http://pure.iiasa.ac.at/id/eprint/16550/1/Background%20Paper%20-%20-%20Governance%20for%20Sustainability.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2020/jun/03/fighting-cyclones-and-coronavirus-how-we-evacuated-millions-during-a-pandemic>

<sup>4</sup> <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt5801/jtselect/jtrights/1328/132805.htm>

<sup>5</sup> <https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/the-national-risk-register-preparing-for-national-emergencies/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/preparation-and-planning-for-emergencies-the-capabilities-programme>

<sup>7</sup> House of Lords ‘Risk Assessment and Risk Planning’. Wednesday 28th April 2021 <https://parliamentlive.tv/event/index/da07ba0d-2ee1-4d93-b645-23c9dadfd07d>

## Local Risk Registers (LRR)

An LRR is the local translation of the NRR to local risks and capabilities. According to the Civil Contingency Act (2004)<sup>8</sup>, the production and dissemination of the LRR is a duty of local resilience partnerships.

An LRR usually communicates a selection of the top risks for a local area and explains the risk, its local presence, how local resilience partners prepare for it, and how the reader of the LRR should prepare themselves. The LRR is typically published online to fulfil the duty. At best, publication aims to unite partners around debate on risks (impacts, likelihoods, preparations) and underpin the commissioning of strategic collaborations with communities. In the best cases, the publishing of a LRR is the mid-part of the risk journey as the activities before and after publication are so critical. Before and after its publication, the LRR pinpoints where conversations about risk likelihood, impact, vulnerability, and preparedness are needed with resilience partners and communities to ensure that plans, resources, and budgets are negotiated. This conversation will include who in the community is particularly vulnerable to particular risks, and what communities should be resilient to.

This raises questions on why the LRR is being published... is it:

- To communicate risks because communities have a right to be informed?
- To put pressure onto communities that they need to prepare for risks?
- To communicate that the resilience partnership is prepared and there are responsibilities on communities to also prepare?
- To give resilience partners a defensible position in case a risk hits?
- To fulfil the duty?

The glib answer is 'all of these', but thought is needed on what is the real aim of sharing the LRR and what are the implications for practice.

LRRs have the potential to equip communities with the basic knowledge they need to understand the risks they face, begin conversations on how to prepare for and respond to risks, and make the risk 'real' as locally contextualised information that people can easily relate to. For this to happen, LRRs need to inform planning and action through cooperation between local authorities and the community. Involving the community in discussions will also help them to understand the reality of available (and absent) resources for an emergency – before the risk occurs, rather than when people are in need.

LRRs do not provide dynamic assessments of risks as they do not harness the intelligence available at the time. The LRR estimates the risk, but the reality of the situation may be different as the LRR's planning assumptions may be wrong or unforeseen consequences may change the risk assessment. False alarms are inevitable, depending on how risk averse is the partnership.

## Risk communication before and during an emergency

### Co-production of risk communication before an emergency

Before an emergency, local risks can be communicated top-down e.g. by publishing an LRR. However, a co-production approach can

also be effective by involving communities as active developers of risk communications, for example, by identifying what communities need to be communicated and how this can be done most effectively. All stakeholders involved in risk reduction need a way to communicate about present, emerging and evolving risks that are understandable to each other and the involvement of the public here seems crucial as co-developers of communications on risks that they co-own.

As we explained in [TMB Issue 33](#), barriers to co-production include three aspects:

- **Pace:** whether officials have enough time to deliver a co-produced understanding of risk and the value of this to understand future service needs
- **Distance:** if the public are close enough to officials terms of their physical distance (i.e. remoteness or accessibility) or social distance (i.e. communities' agency)
- **Complexity:** the level of technical difficulty of the message that officials want the public to understand along with the public's limited ownership of policies

The prominence of these barriers in a particular setting can determine the likelihood of whether co-production is pursued and, if it is, the effectiveness of that endeavour. We now turn to consider the communication of risk during an incident.

### Risk communications top down during an emergency

During an emergency it is often necessary to deliver risk information in a one-way, top-down, authoritative, instructional manner.

For example, on national to local communications, during COVID-19 in the UK there was a central push down of risk information from national government. During the early stages of the crisis this initially happened by the Prime Minister, senior Cabinet Members, and Advisors delivering televised announcements at 5pm daily. It is presumed that close partners co-produced those risk communications, such as healthcare and scientific partners who often appeared at those briefings. Local government often received the information at the same time as members of the public, suggesting they were a more distant partner. Some partners whose importance was only later more fully appreciated were apparently missed (such as adult social care).

On communications to the public, during COVID-19 there was difficulty in risk communication because of the different messages being communicated to different people depending on their health, living and employment situations, and where they lived. The communications firmly placed the risk of contracting COVID-19 as an individual's personal responsibility. Thus, in the early stages of COVID-19, communities were passive recipients of instructions or information which enabled them to make informed decisions about their risk mitigation actions.

During COVID-19, the communication of risk information has been made more difficult by:

- the inconsistency of messages being disseminated from different national and local departments due to the tiered system
- the diversity of people who promoted competing messages, including: officials from other governments, members of the

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/36/contents>

public, government and independent advisers, political and technical expert, lay influencers, media

One school of thought says that, during emergencies, risk communicators should 'blast' the public with the same message. The challenge then, is to find and work with those who ignore the message. This perspective is characterised by communicating:

- The full reality of the risk and associated consequences, and who is responsible for managing it
- The same message across all possible mediums for a prolonged period of time, ideally the full cycle of the event
- That support will be available, however resources may be constrained
- The responsibility of the recipient in mitigating their own risk

### Delayed feedback from recipients

The problem with top-down communications is that it is difficult to understand if the communication is landing effectively because feedback is about community compliance with instruction, which may be delayed. Also, that delay comes because of the numerous ways in which communities now consume information and how that has recently changed. Currently one major challenge is dealing with the "proliferation" of misinformation<sup>9</sup>, especially that on social media, where the governance of information and risk communication is handed to the public and where the definition of what is 'informed' knowledge is unclear. For this reason, it is important to learn and follow good practices which have been found to be effective during emergencies. For example, WHO has worked closely with social media companies to track and combat the spread of misinformation relating to COVID-19<sup>10</sup>.

A relatively new approach to combatting misinformation, namely "social media listening"<sup>11</sup>, involves working with analytics companies to integrate insights acquired from 'social listening' into public health messaging<sup>12</sup>. The UN Global Pulse Team adopts artificial intelligence and big data analysis to apply social listening to identify, track and counter misinformation<sup>13</sup>.

### Good practice public communications

A recent DEFRA report which investigated the meaning of flood risk communication messages to the public found that, during floods, risk communication should be<sup>14</sup>:

- Considerate of the needs of different communities ("audiences")
- Transparent, clear and honest. "Don't assume a little bit of information will scare people as telling the truth about risk and impacts is more likely to lead to action"
- Articulated simply, to ensure a broad audience can understand the risk and its associated impacts, rather than using mathematical language to communicate probability and risk
- Delivered in good time and run full circle of the emergency: before, during and after an incident, including the actions that are required in each phase
- Led by example, e.g. actions that local/national organisations

are taking to demonstrate unity

- Localised, to make the risk relevant to risk communication recipients and the environment in which they live
- Positive and forward thinking, focused on what people can do to prevent, respond and recover

To this we add that risk communications should be:

- Personalised, to increase the probability that people will appreciate it is meant for them
- Communicated visually as well as verbally, to enable an individual to relate to risk at a level and within a context that they can naturally associate with

[TMB Issue 36](#) described 'The risk characterisation theatre' (p.11); a visualisation technique through which risk communication data can be made less abstract for those receiving it.

### Two-way communication of risk during an emergency

Our discussion does not stop at the communication of risk being one-way, top-down from government to communities. As a local resilience capability, risk communication before and during an emergency is a two-way activity.

Communities should be active collaborators in information/knowledge creation. This can include top-down communications to receptive communities as well as community-based communications about changing risks, vulnerabilities, and preparedness being identified by those in communities and 'passed' up to local resilience partnerships for consideration about the changing nature of risk. An example of bottom-up communications is communities being a community-risk surveillance mechanism by collecting and providing information on changing situations of risks, vulnerabilities, and preparedness – such as the Environment Agency's Flood Wardens<sup>15</sup>. This requires strong connections with communities and the nurturing of effective feedback mechanisms/loops. This is key to the LRC and communities being active partners that understand and communicate local changes.

## Conclusion

We conclude with the key issues identified in this briefing, and offer considerations as to how these may be addressed to improve risk communications before and during an emergency.

1. As it stands, there is no evaluation process for what resilience partnerships do about the risks identified through community risk registers. An evaluation process could:
  - Establish the effectiveness of publishing LRRs
  - Support the introduction of a peer review or assessment process to evaluate how the LRR is created and how it informs risk reduction and preventative activities with communities
  - Support the development of risk mitigation strategies and measure the effectiveness of the partnerships and its plans to address the risks

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.preventionweb.net/news/view/77039>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.who.int/news-room/feature-stories/detail/immunizing-the-public-against-misinformation>

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/epi-win/presentations-of-all-speeches/webinar-16-tz-mediameasurement-8-april-2020.pdf?sfvrsn=5af42396\\_2](https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/epi-win/presentations-of-all-speeches/webinar-16-tz-mediameasurement-8-april-2020.pdf?sfvrsn=5af42396_2)

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.unglobalpulse.org/2020/05/using-speech-to-text-technology-to-support-response-to-the-covid-19-pandemic/>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/flood-and-coastal-erosion-risk-management-research-reports/public-dialogues-on-flood-risk-communication>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.kentprepared.org.uk/flood-wardens>



- Understand how risk communications are delivered and their effectiveness
2. Risk communication before an incident is political. As evident with COVID-19, some political leaders across the world initially underestimated the COVID-19 risk, struggled to make timely decisions to mitigate the effect of the virus, and found it hard to communicate risk effectively to the public. Additionally, risk experts and key partners (e.g. social care) appeared to be left out of some key discussions, decision making processes and communications. With this, we suggest considering:
- The credibility of the voice: who is communicating the risk, are the communications evidence based and what are their expertise and/or priorities outside of the risk communication at hand?
  - The consistency of the voice: how variable does the message become when different people are communicating on the same risk at different times?
  - The relatability of the voice: is the voice speaking to *everyone*, does the voice represent *all* of society and can everyone in society *relate* to the voice and the message?

Disconnects between COVID-19 messages delivered by health experts, scientists, political leaders and the media have caused confusion and mistrust amongst the public. A coordinated and joined-up approach to risk communications which are strategic, evidence-led and clearly communicated (including uncertainties) is essential. Key to this is improving how risks are communicated, so that they become 'real' for intended recipients of the message. This brings us to our final point.

3. Visualising the reality of risk is difficult for the public. A pandemic flu, as an event which many have never experienced, meant that people were unable to imagine what would happen or how prolonged it would be. This prompts the following considerations for improving rare or uncertain risk communications:
- Conduct a review on how risk information provided through the NRR and LRRs is communicated to communities and how it is/ can be transformed into preventative and preparative actions
  - Communicate the risks identified in a way that people can relate to them as an actual experience (e.g. people can visualise crime if it is explained as an experience)

Some big issues in risk communications are:

- How to gain strategic clarity of what you want to achieve through risk communications

- The role of LRRs as a commissioning tool to engage partners and communities in reducing risks and vulnerability
- Co-production with communities of risk awareness campaigns and strategies to reduce risk and vulnerability and raise preparedness

What seems clear is that social media will continue to play an important role in official communications as well as creating ambiguity for the public from the unofficial sources that promote their own views.

There is no single correct way to communicate risks but, as this briefing has discussed, there are countless incorrect ways. This briefing argues that two-way communications are central to local resilience capabilities. A combination of top-down and bottom-up risk communications will advance the capability of communities to understand, recognise, prepare for and respond to risk events, and in turn advance risk communications as a Local Resilience Capability. We suggest:

- **Co-production** of risk communications **before** an emergency, by involving communities in the development of risk communication strategies. This can enable all stakeholders to communicate on present, emerging and evolving risks and can enhance both the local government's and community's understanding of risk through sharing knowledge of official response expertise and local knowledge held by local people
- **Two way** (top-down and bottom-up) communications **during** and emergency, which recognises communities as a risk-surveillance mechanism. Communities can collect and communicate critical information on ways in which to prepare, how risk situations are developing as they occur, and inform on who/where in the community might be most vulnerable
- **Co-production** of recovery **after** an emergency, to improve the agency of local communities and their ownership of recovery so that plans and actions meet their needs and priorities, transforming the roles of officials from providers of services to enablers of this Local Resilience Capability. Co-production of recovery can provide communities with a stake and voice in improving their quality of life and future after an emergency and an opportunity to increase their preparedness for and reduce their vulnerabilities to, future risks

## 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.

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## Communities

## Actions

**Impact on:**  
Volunteers

UK:  
<https://tinyurl.com/d6pyakx6>

Canada:  
<https://tinyurl.com/wab6xfmd>

**Consider ways to celebrate the efforts of volunteers.** This week (1-7th June 2021) marks Volunteers Week in the UK, an opportunity to celebrate and thank volunteers and recognise their significant contributions to communities. Volunteers make an immense difference to their communities and have played a key role throughout the pandemic. There are many ways to celebrate and show appreciation for the work of volunteers, consider:

- Say thank you by **recognising their impact in local communities**, by:
  - A thank you email or through social media (you can use the hashtag #VolunteersWeek to join the online community celebrating volunteers this week)
  - Community funded gift baskets which could include vouchers or discounts from local businesses
- Collect stories from volunteers and those that they supported during the pandemic and share them through local newspapers, local radio, social media etc.
- Setting up virtual online gathering of local volunteers and:
  - Distribute awards to volunteers to recognise their efforts
  - Create a space for volunteers to share their experiences of volunteering during the pandemic. This type of event can also introduce local volunteers to each other and create a **greater sense of being part of a local volunteer community**
- Create public displays of recognition (e.g. a park bench dedicated to local volunteers)
- Encourage community involvement e.g. "[The Big Lunch](#)" which is being held on Sunday 6th June
- Allocate a day to celebrate volunteers annually e.g. "[Power of Youth Day](#)" which celebrates the contributions of young people to communities

## Economic

## Actions

**Impact on:**  
Economic strategy

New Zealand:  
<https://tinyurl.com/432snr97>  
<https://www.priorityone.co.nz/projects>

**Consider how previous local development plans can underpin COVID-19 recovery.** Tauranga, in New Zealand, centred their 2018 city plans around four themes:

- "Improving the ability to move around the city
- Resilience and safety
- Increasing environmental standards
- Land supply (for housing and employment) and urban form"

These themes have been carried forward and underpin the council's 2021 recovery from COVID-19 plan. Tauranga's economic recovery projects and activities focus on:

- **Fostering innovation**, through training and courses in partnership with the University of Waikato which aims to harness and drive new opportunities for employment in Tauranga and the Western Bay
- Working with those driving the "Groundswell Festival of Innovation" to highlight local innovation and the "YiA Innovation Awards" to encourage young people towards innovative problem solving and critical thinking
- Seeking "shovel ready" infrastructure projects to generate jobs through projects which will **benefit the Tauranga community socially, economically and environmentally**
- Targeted investment in projects which will support small and medium-sized enterprises to recover, specifically those in the construction industry



## Infrastructure

## Actions

### Impact on:

Urban and rural infrastructure

Global; The World Bank:

<https://tinyurl.com/pvas3jth>

**Consider how cities can build resilient infrastructure.** A 2019 report '[Lifelines: The Resilient Infrastructure Opportunity](#)', published by the World Bank and the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), highlighted the net benefits of investing in resilient infrastructure in developing countries (which could save "\$4.2 Trillion"). Accelerating resilient infrastructure has recently dominated discussions about recovery from COVID-19 across the world and how this can **improve health, education and livelihoods**. The report included five recommendations for advancing resilient infrastructure:

- 'Get the basics right', through regulation and procurement law to improve management and governance to build resilient infrastructure
- 'Build institutions for resilience', to tackle wider "political economy" issues. Identify critical infrastructure assets to inform how resources are allocated
- 'Create regulations and incentives for resilience', to account for disruptions to infrastructure and encourage service providers to go further than just meeting their obligatory standards
- 'Improve decision making', through improved data, tools and skills (e.g. "digital elevation models" which are crucial to informing investment decisions in urban areas)
- 'Provide financing that is targeted and timely', focused on preparedness and prevention to improve resilience and reduce the likelihood of needing to spend billions to recover and renew from the impacts of an emergency

A recent webinar, organised by the World Bank and Resilient Cities Network, builds on this report and discusses resilient infrastructure: what it is, how it can be identified and how cities can advance resilient infrastructure so that it achieve multiple goals. You can watch this webinar [here](#).

## Environment

## Actions

### Impact on:

Living sustainably

Global; OECD:

<https://tinyurl.com/xhfew6jy>

**Consider how to build public support for transformational environmental policies.** The 'Going for Growth 2021: Shaping a Vibrant Recovery' (OECD) report argues that structural policies can deliver a "stronger, more resilient, equitable and sustainable COVID-19 recovery". Key to building resilience will be policies that transform environmental policies to drive the '**Green Transition**'. A challenge which lies ahead will be public perception and acceptability of environmental policies, specifically those which are market-focused (e.g. carbon tax). These have the potential to raise public concerns on the **implications of such policies** for employment security and cost of living - due to their impact on certain sectors (e.g. mining). The report offers strategies that can build public support of environmental policies. To illustrate this, the report uses the change to carbon pricing as an example:

- A **phased-in and transparent approach** (e.g. gradual raising prices) to give households sufficient time to adapt to the change as necessary
- "Revenue recycling", which can fund universal transfer payments, reduce taxes, and provide targeted **support for communities and households** impacted by the change
- Communication with the public and education campaigns on the change, which promote the benefits of carbon pricing and counter misinformation
- Policy naming and branding which does not imply taxation (e.g. "Levy"), to **mitigate the development of mistrust of the change** amongst the public

Environment	Actions
<p><b>Impact on:</b>  <i>Environmental health</i></p> <p>France; Finland; Sweden; Chile;  Global:  <a href="https://tinyurl.com/3maach9f">https://tinyurl.com/3maach9f</a></p>	<p><b>Consider how different countries are stimulating a 'Green Recovery'</b>. CarbonBrief have developed an interactive grid where you can explore and track the progress of how different countries across the world are implementing green recovery and renewal plans which aim to cut emissions in the aftermath of COVID-19. Below, we offer some examples of diverse initiatives from across the world:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">France</a> allocated funding to "<b>promote and support environmental performance</b>" in their food and agricultural sector, e.g. funding to support farmers to adapt their farming systems to lower their impact on the environment. France have also allocated funding to create over 1,000 "eco-responsible restaurants in rural communities", along with investment in "energy efficiency of public and private buildings, social housing, insulation and low-carbon heating"</li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Sweden</a> allocated investment to raise the "energy performance of Sweden's housing stock and to support improvements in rental properties"</li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Finland</a> plan to "phase out oil heating in both households and public buildings" and allocated funding to the "wood construction programme which promotes the use of timber by enhancing industry expertise, developing legislation and building regulations, and providing factual information"</li> <li>▪ <a href="#">Chile</a> have committed to plant trees on 24,000 hectares of land and invest in better fire management as part of its "<b>mitigation and adaptation commitments related to forests and biodiversity</b>". Chile will also have invested in modernisation and irrigation projects for farmers, as part of the COVID-19 budget response</li> </ul>

Health	Actions
<p><b>Impact on:</b> <i>Health systems</i></p> <p>UK: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/ak5mr5xm">https://tinyurl.com/ak5mr5xm</a></p>	<p><b>Consider the challenges generated when reforming public health systems.</b> Public health has taken centre stage throughout the pandemic. Pre-existing fragilities have been exposed, but opportunities for reform and renewal have also presented. The <a href="#">White Paper</a> 'Integration and innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all', recently presented legislative proposals for a health and care Bill in the UK. A recent briefing by the NHS recognises an opportunity for change, which lies in reform of "how population health is prioritised and resourced in the future", to not only recover from the pandemic, but to <b>renew systems</b> so that they prepare for (and protect against) future public health risks by building resilience.</p> <p>The White Paper is a complex and intricate document which is hard to summarise. Discussions of it with a health professional may help to illuminate its main implications for civil resilience. We identify a few lessons from it, but there are others that you may find. We focus on the challenges that lie ahead as part of a restructure of public health functions. Some challenges include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How to <b>retain existing expertise</b>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Taking into consideration that responsibilities will change hands, such as those for health improvement functions, those which Public Health England are currently responsible</li> <li>o Continuing to fulfil local and national leadership responsibilities</li> <li>o Investment to "make up significant shortfalls over recent years"</li> <li>o Ensure effectiveness in health improvement functions moving forward</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ The <b>sustainability of public health services</b> given budgetary pressures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o "Robust and long-term investments in public health services"</li> <li>o Acknowledging the critical role they play in building resilience to crises is crucial</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ The potentially reduced <b>agency and disempowerment</b> of local government and local partners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o By considering that they are positioned most effectively to tailor services and communications to the needs and priorities of the communities they serve</li> <li>o <b>Strategic partnership working</b> between NHS organisations, local government and the voluntary sector is essential to promote empowered and flexible working at the local level</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Ensuring that local authorities are involved in resource discussions to locally distribute health improvement responsibilities</li> <li>▪ Improving the commissioning arrangements for public health services to address the vulnerabilities exposed by funding cuts and resource shortages</li> </ul>

Governance	Actions
<p><b>Impact on:</b> <i>Learning lessons</i></p> <p>Switzerland; Global: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/55vt5z3c">https://tinyurl.com/55vt5z3c</a></p>	<p><b>Consider preventing pandemics through a global reform of pandemic preparedness and response.</b> The Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response recently issued a report calling on the international community to employ a package of reforms to transform the global pandemic preparedness and response system to prevent a future pandemic. The report finds that the current system is unfit to prevent another novel and highly infectious disease from developing into a pandemic. The report recommends a transformational reform of the existing pandemic prevention, preparedness and response system, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Form a “Global Health Threats Council” to ensure <b>political commitment</b> to pandemic preparedness, prevention and response. In the Council: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assign responsibility to key actors through “peer recognition and scrutiny”</li> <li>○ Establish a ‘Pandemic Framework Convention’ in all countries within the next six months</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Introduce an <b>international surveillance system</b> to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Enable the WHO to share information about outbreaks of concern, and</li> <li>○ Rapidly deploy experts to investigate such outbreaks</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Immediate <b>investment in national preparedness</b> by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reviewing current preparedness plans</li> <li>○ Allocating the required financing and resources to ensure readiness for another health event</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Make <a href="#">The Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A)</a> a global platform to transform the current market model to one targeted at <b>delivering global public goods</b> (vaccines, diagnostics, supplies)</li> <li>▪ Establish a funding model for the WHO to increase its agency and financing</li> <li>▪ Develop an “International Pandemic Financing Facility” to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Fund ongoing preparedness</li> <li>○ Enable immediate finance support for response if a pandemic is declared</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Adopt a political declaration which commits to <b>transformative reform</b> of global pandemic preparedness and response</li> </ul>
<p><b>Impact on:</b> <i>Planning for recovery</i></p> <p>Nepal: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/3p2p66vb">https://tinyurl.com/3p2p66vb</a></p> <p>USA: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/h9wthyye">https://tinyurl.com/h9wthyye</a></p>	<p><b>Consider local funding to build community resilience.</b> Local people and organisations are vital to delivering change, however, many face barriers and lack the resources to undertake resilience building activities. In the USA, Community Development Financial Institutions work to promote economic revitalization and community development in low-income communities through ‘values driven, locally informed and locally targeted investments’. Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ That <b>investment in community resilience</b> can mitigate the impacts of shocks and stresses caused by crises and accelerate recovery from crisis</li> <li>▪ When investing in community resilience, it is important to consider the life span of projects to ensure <b>all communities have the opportunity to achieve</b> their resilience goals</li> <li>▪ That all people and communities should have equal access to the ability to build resilience and some may require additional or targeted support</li> <li>▪ Engagement of all stakeholders is critical, to ensure that investment will <b>benefit all people</b> in the community</li> </ul>

## Briefing C:

# Renewal of Community Resilience: Developing a new local resilience capability

*An initial draft of this case study was previously published by LocalGov<sup>1</sup> on their local government network<sup>2</sup>.*

As part of its emergency planning efforts, the UK government identifies and develops capabilities and resources that can be deployed in the event of a civil emergency or disruptive event. Anything from mass evacuation and shelter to telecoms is factored into emergency planning as part of the immediate response to a crisis, but thought is also given to the capabilities needed to recover and renew society in the long term, once the initial impact has passed.

It's vital we understand the fragility and strength of these systems, and learn lessons about where their weaknesses lie for the future.

Despite its devastating impact, we can learn a lot from the COVID-19 pandemic. For many of us over the last year, the support of our community has made us realise that we are not alone.

Just over a year on from the nationwide lockdown - one strength has emerged in particular. Community response, while not yet formally recognised as a resilience capability, rapidly emerged as an important lifeline during the pandemic.

## What makes a community?

Communities are formed from many building blocks and include a wide range of individuals and groups. They also include organisations, SMEs, big business networks, associations, local economic partnerships, and local government.

As we've seen during the pandemic, communities can raise awareness of risks, tackle the cause of problems and identify local needs swiftly. They can also mobilise quickly and harness the skills of individuals to help provide care and support to others.

But community response needs to be coordinated effectively for its power to be fully realised. Many parts of local government work closely with communities to co-develop processes that can help them to understand risks and vulnerabilities better, putting them in an even better place to respond in the future and to be prepared for disruptions. Communities that are aware of hazards will be engaged to spot risks and be on standby for emergencies, with the governance, knowledge, and resources to act safely and effectively if one came along.

It is important that we now work to maintain this approach beyond COVID-19.

## From a local to national resilience capability

During COVID-19, we saw communities respond on a scale that was previously unthinkable. We saw invisible acts of good neighbourliness, donations and the momentum of thousands of mutual aid groups, local businesses finding ways (COVID-secure) to provide essential local services, all while parts of the voluntary sector were organising its own response.

It was impressive to see how swiftly communities rallied together – they were the heart of the response, proving their previously hidden value. Some areas around the UK (such as Essex, and Avon and Somerset) have measured the impact of their community's response by gathering data on registered volunteers, volunteer hours, supported people, services provided, organisations involved, donations received, and deliveries made, to name a few. COVID-19 has shown the importance of communities, and harnessing this data will help them to grow in the future.

The Government's Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy<sup>3</sup>, shines a light on the potential of our communities to mitigate and manage the effects of emergencies. This points to the need to nurture and enhance this local resilience capability to get all the parts of our communities providing resilience and working better before, during and after emergencies. This could spotlight the role of households in enhancing their own resilience, how groups and community networks can prepare and avoid the harshest impacts of emergencies, the role of local and national businesses in strengthening response, and the glue provided by local government to support communities in coming together to support each other. At the University of Manchester we are designing a new, local approach to community resilience – based on capabilities – called Local Resilience Capabilities.

## Closer local government community partnerships

So, what role can local government play in bringing together the sometimes disparate and distant parts of our community to build resilient behaviours and networks? How can we develop community resilience, beyond the presence of a voluntary sector?

Not all communities react in the same way or have the same capacities – some even struggle with the notion of community altogether. This gives local government and resilience partnerships an important position at the heart of community resilience, and they can occupy a supportive, and enabling role to help communities be supportive of the integrated response

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.localgov.co.uk/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.localgov.co.uk/Community-resilience-A-new-capability-for-local-resilience/52338>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/global-britain-in-a-competitive-age-the-integrated-review-of-security-defence-development-and-foreign-policy#:~:text=The%20Integrated%20Review%20is%20a,national%20security%20and%20international%20policy.&text=The%20document%2C%20which%20is%20the,a%20vision%20for%20Global%20Britain>

to local emergencies. Local government may need to remind community leaders of their position as facilitators, identify and support community linchpins to galvanise the progress already made during COVID-19, and identify and remove barriers for community resilience to flourish. Training may also be needed to ensure productive collaborations are possible between community members and emergency services – so that communities can be viewed as part of the solution offered by local resilience partnerships.

While this may sound like the 'usual' community resilience, but it is actually quite different. Local Resilience Capability puts the focus on those capabilities that bring community resilience. Through Local Resilience Capability, LRFs can monitor their progress on building capabilities, understand the activation of capabilities, and be confident that the capability is present when it is needed during times of blue and grey sky. So, while community resilience is vague and difficult to assess whether effort is even making a difference, Local Resilience Capability provides clarity on its purpose, measurement, and progress being achieved. Local Resilience Capability puts quite a different focus on how to build

those capabilities, and the first steps needed to do so. It requires a different range of work patterns (e.g. being community-based, working with communities in the foreground and emergency planning taking a less prominent role). It requires different skills (e.g. facilitating, clearing blockages, engaging partners in community working). It can involve new partners (e.g. universities and other community-facing services in local government).

Many communities have demonstrated before and during COVID-19 that they can be relied upon when asked to deliver emergency response activities. Establishing community resilience as a permanent local resilience capability requires us to sustain what has already been created by communities, local government, small businesses, neighbours, individuals, social enterprises, the voluntary sector, and so many more hidden networks. Renewal is needed to ensure community resilience is here to stay as a local resilience capability.

The University of Manchester is continuing to develop Local Resilience Capability so get in touch to learn more ([duncan.shaw-2@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:duncan.shaw-2@manchester.ac.uk)).