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The Manchester Briefing COVID-19

Please note, the next TMB will be issued on 31st July 2021

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:

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

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. We will sometimes also share webinars external to our project that we think might be of interest. Register for our upcoming and watch our most recent webinars:

Upcoming Webinars

07/07/2021, 1pm BST: Building the resilience of essential services post-Covid

In the second in the Continuity & Resilience Series our panel will examine the contribution of standards to resilience planning, business continuity, and city resilience to recovering from Covid-19.

Register: https://tinyurl.com/ymeumddy

08/07/2021, 2pm BST: Reclaiming the Value of Play

The 12th session of 2021 Cities on the Frontline series, jointly organized by Resilient Cities Network & the World Bank.

Register: https://tinyurl.com/2nd9htvj

15/07/2021, 3pm BST: Resilience First Summer Debate

Resilience First is delighted to present an Oxford Union-style, virtual debate on the topic of standards. This session asks if our resilience standards are still fit for purpose.

Register: https://tinyurl.com/3s4tp6wa

Past webinars

25/06/2021: A Collective Memory: A webinar examining post pandemic commemoration

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

Watch: https://tinyurl.com/2cus9zc7

07/06/2021: Continuity & Resilience Series: Looking beyond Covid-19

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

Watch https://tinyurl.com/294fxtde

Briefing A:
ISO/TS 22393 - Guidelines for planning recovery and renewal

Introduction

As part of our ESRC funded project on Recovery, Renewal, Resilience we committed to writing the international standard on Recovery and Renewal. We took another step to accomplishing this goal last week when an international ballot voted to accept and publish our international standard 'ISO/TS 22393 - Guidelines for planning Recovery and Renewal'. ISO/TS 22393 provides a framework for how to assess the impacts of COVID-19 on communities, and address these by planning transactional recovery activities and transformational renewal initiatives. This briefing describes the background to our international standard and gives an insight to the content of this guideline.

An ISO standard aims to "give world-class specifications for products, services and systems, to ensure quality, safety and efficiency"[1]. To do this, it collates the latest research findings, expert knowledge, recent experience from experts, and reaches consensus to provide a detailed, informative document that can be applied in different contexts because all the important aspects are considered. An ISO standard often describes best practice and how that can be achieved.

The development of ISO/TS 2239

The development of the information in ISO/TS 22393 began in March 2020 in the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic when our Recovery, Renewal, Resilience team began to identify global lessons on recovery. Our team conducted 64 interviews with experts in risk, resilience and recovery and searched publicly available information for good practices. We analysed all this information to develop an early framework for Recovery and Renewal. That early framework was shared, critiqued, and refined in small group meetings with a range of local and national government recovery practitioners. The framework was also developed and shared through The Manchester Briefing as well as via the global webinars we have run and our local, national and international dissemination activities – all seeking feedback to improve our guideline.

On hearing of our work, the International Standards Organization[2] (ISO) invited our team to write a set of principles and approaches to develop the international standard on planning Recovery and Renewal (now ISO/TS 22393). ISO established a committee around our standard involving a range of countries to help us to further internationalise the good practices contained in the document. ISO also immediately recognised the importance of Recovery and Renewal to the world's ability to react in the aftermath of COVID-19 and fast-tracked ISO/TS 22393 so that it could reach potential users more quickly. This meant that the usual 36 month development time was reduced to 7 months by developing a Technical Specification (TS) which is a particular type of international standard. As part of its contribution to pandemic response, ISO has made 31 of its international standards freely available, including "ISO 22395:2018, Security and resilience – Community resilience – Guidelines for supporting vulnerable persons in an emergency", and we hope ISO/TS 22393 will be freely available.

Our team will continue to learn about Recovery and Renewal over the course of our ESRC-funded project and so will rework ISO/TS 22393 to include all those lessons at the end of the project. However, publishing ISO/TS 22393 now aims to support the world of recovery practitioners as they deal with the aftermath of COVID-19. The virus has created new challenges and opportunities for Recovery and Renewal on a scale that most recovery partners have not encountered before, and this standard aims to support them with insights to good practice.

The scope of ISO/TS 22393

ISO/TS 22393 describes its scope as presenting "guidelines for how to develop recovery plans and renewal strategies from a major emergency, disaster, or crisis (such as the COVID-19 pandemic). The document provides guidelines on how to identify the short-term, transactional activities needed to reflect and learn, review preparedness of parts of the system impacted by the crisis, and reinstate operations to build preparedness. It also distinguishes a longer-term perspective of recovery – called renewal. In describing renewal, the document provides guidelines on how to identify visionary initiatives to address the strategic impacts and opportunities that have been exposed by the crisis and need to be addressed through transformational, ambitious initiatives. While recovery plans should enhance preparedness following a crisis, renewal strategies should enhance resilience. The guidelines cover how, in both recovery and renewal, there is a need to identify scalable activity on people, places, processes, power and partners."

"This document is applicable to those involved in community, local, national and international recovery and renewal including staff from public, private, voluntary, community and social enterprise sectors, among others."

Concepts in Recovery and Renewal

ISO/TS 22393 describes how the impacts of COVID-19 on our communities have been so broad and deep that the term "Recovery" is not suitably descriptive of the full spectrum of what needs to be done in the aftermath of the pandemic. Thus, the standard differentiates between the short-term, transactional "Recovery" needed in communities and the more ambitious, transformational, strategic "Renewal":

- **Recovery** is defined as "operational, transactional, and short-term activity to enhance preparedness following a crisis"
- **Renewal** is defined as "strategic, transformational, systemic endeavour to build resilience following a crisis"

ISO/TS 22393 provides concepts of Recovery and Renewal that include:

- **principles of recovery** i.e. that recovery should: reflect and learn on experiences; assess readiness for other emergencies; reinstate operations impacted by the crisis.
- **principles of renewal** i.e. that renewal should include: people; places; processes; the systemic relationships between people, places and processes
- **resilience partners** in recovery and renewal including: national government and departments; sub-national and local government partners; local communities, including small place-based community organizations and local initiatives; individual organizations; individual members of the public
- **impacts and needs to recover and renew**, examples being the impacts on: humanitarian assistance; economic; infrastructure management; environment; communication and engagement; governance and legislation
- **cross-cutting systemic themes for planning recovery and renewal**, including themes of: the people who are involved in the crisis; the places and infrastructure that have been affected; the processes that have been disrupted; the formal and informal power and influence; the partners and relationships developed during the crisis
- **arrangements to activate recovery and renewal** should be: planned; have governance; include partners; be activated in the early stages of a crisis.

The full Table of Contents is available in Appendix A below. We now describe the substantive sections of the standard and what you would learn from reading it.

Main sections in ISO/TS 22393

Setting up a Recovery Coordination Group

ISO/TS 22393 describes how addressing these concepts should prepare the foundations on which to build a Recovery Coordination Group (RCG) that will arrange the investigations and planning for Recovery and identify Renewal opportunities. It advises that it is necessary to:

- **agree the membership of the RCG**, including: a chairperson with the necessary skills; members who have knowledge and legitimacy to represent a broad range of constituents; project management support
- **agree the RCG's terms of reference** including its scope, terminology, training needs for members, reporting structures into and out of RCG, and its approach to develop a Recovery Plan
- **initiate the work of the RCG** by building a shared understanding of the crisis and having clear criteria for when to initiate and pause the RCG's work

The standard also covers the need to **access the resources** needed for Recovery and Renewal as well as how to **communicate consistently** with interested parties.

Assessing the impacts of the crisis and community needs

One of the first activities that the RCG might commission is an evaluation of the impacts of the crisis and the wider needs of people, places and processes that existed before the crisis hit but can be addressed through Recovery and Renewal. ISO/TS 22393 advises that impacts and needs are identified through an Impact and Needs Assessment (INA) and provides advice on how an INA can be completed, including:

- **identify themes on which to commission an INA**, for example, on the impact and needs around humanitarian assistance, economy, infrastructure, environment, communication and engagement, governance and legislation
- **design and set up the INAs** by agreeing whether one or several thematic INAs will be commissioned, how the results will be used, how information will be collected and analysed, and defining the boundary of the assessment
- a**nalyse and present results from the INA** by categorizing all the impacts and needs to build a general overview alongside specific thematic insights
- **select action areas to recover and renew** by understanding what potential actions to address impacts and needs can be implemented, and will create the biggest improvement for people, places, and processes

The RCG should agree whether to pursue each selected action area as either:

- a **transactional action**, i.e. a limited action to be addressed within a **Recovery Plan**
- a **transformational initiative**, i.e. an ambitious action to be addressed within a **Renewal Strategy**

Developing a Recovery Plan

Establishing the Recovery Plan aims to agree the short-term activities to support people, places and processes that have been impacted by the crisis. ISO/TS 22393 describes two steps in developing the Recovery Plan:

- **identify transactional activity** that aligns with the available resource to reinstate, restore, and renovate parts of the system impacted by the crisis, to maximise the benefit to communities by implementing the Recovery Plan
- **manage delivery of the recovery plan** using a project management methodology and monitoring the outcome of the plan

ISO/TS 22393 provides a number of templates to help build the Recovery Plan that can be adapted by any RCG to support their own context.

Developing Renewal Strategies

Identifying Renewal opportunities is initially the duty of the RCG, analysing insights from the INAs and lessons learned to identify the potential for major ambitious change that is merited in the aftermath of COVID-19. The development of Renewal Strategies requires enthusiasm for a longer-term endeavour to address key challenges that are intractable and not easily defined – so addressing them requires complex arrangements of activities by multiple partners. Initial conversations should be conducted by the RCG, with the potential of those discussions being continued

via a renewal summit, which should:

- **identify transformational initiatives** to implement in the Renewal Strategy, by engaging with important stakeholders in a thoughtful approach, to co-produce a vision for renewal of people, places, and processes
- **consider challenges** to renewal, such as the pressures created by simultaneously responding to any ongoing emergency needs, while also attending to the Recovery Plan, other Renewal Initiatives, other political priorities, financial pressures, and fatigue
- **encourage commitments** from key stakeholders to support transformational Renewal Initiatives that are identified during the Renewal Summit

ISO/TS 22393 states that Renewal should be positive, therefore needs to be embedded in a new narrative of a better future that is not linked to the negativity, loss, and pain of the crisis from which it has been instigated.

Continuous improvement

ISO/TS 22393 puts emphasis on the need to continuously improve the process of planning Recovery and Renewal. It provides guidelines on how to identify lessons through a systems approach to learning lessons using: ISO22392; act on lessons; scenario plan; and exercise future crises.

Conclusion

We believe we were the first team in England to promote Recovery and Renewal from COVID-19 having first advocated the term in TMB Issue 4 (27th April 2020) after having done several presentations in the month before. So, we have had a long journey to develop ISO/TS 22393.

We are very grateful to the vast number of Local Resilience Forums in England that have adopted the Recovery and Renewal agenda, and to national partners for supporting the promulgation of our ideas via various webinars. We are also incredibly grateful to cities in Canada, Chile, Palestine, and in England that are working with us to implement ISO/TS 22393. For example, in Canada we are happy to be supporting their work on INA, lessons learned and contributing ISO/TS 22393 to developing a city framework for recovering in the aftermath of emergencies. In Chile we are developing their first RCG and conducting the early analysis needed to prepare for developing a Recovery Plan. In Palestine we have established their first ever RCG and are conducting their INA and identification of lessons learned – before continuing with the rest of the international standard. In England we are grateful to the many RCGs that have invited us to contribute to their thinking – having assisted at least 10 RCGs on their Recovery and Renewal to COVID-19 using the principles in ISO/TS 22393.

These experiences have been invaluable in providing us with additional insights into the use of the international standard and its appropriateness for different contexts. While sharing some commonalities, these countries are very different. Yet ISO/TS 22393 has proven its transferability to each of their contexts. We are building a sophisticated understanding of the general guidelines that are appropriate in those different countries, and as Recovery and Renewal develops as the pandemic changes. We will integrate additional insights into planning Recovery and Renewal into the next iteration of this international standard.

We have received interest from many more countries across the globe that want to learn about how they can Recover and Renew from the pandemic by applying these international guidelines. We hope to work with new countries that want to implement ISO/TS 22393 so do get in touch at recoveryproject@manchester.ac.uk to find out more.

Appendix A: Table of Contents of ISO/TS 22393

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: *Community participation* UK: https://tinyurl.com/2zx7u9jf	**Consider how COVID-19 has changed people's future priorities for their communities.** The National Lottery Community Fund 'Community Research Project' investigated how people's attitude toward their communities has changed during the pandemic, and identified the priorities for their communities as they emerge from COVID-19. This report demonstrates the opportunity to foster the community resilience realised during COVID as a Local Resilience Capability (LRC). Additionally, the report echoes that although not everyone will want to contribute to building community resilience, there are people who do and they are looking for ways to do so. Consider that: • **"Tackling loneliness and supporting economic growth"** are reported as the most important factors for community wellbeing in the next year. Most respondents felt that the crisis brought out the best in people. This was particularly felt by older generations, with a third of respondents reporting that they now feel more connected to (and supported by) their local community • **"Safe and accessible green spaces"** are key priorities for communities going forward, with 40% of respondents reporting to have used local green spaces more than they usually would • 30% of respondents plan to be more involved in their communities, with the most significant benefits being **people's ability to offer support** to others in their community, and having people willing to help close by if needed
Impact on: *Vulnerable people; Public protection* UK: https://tinyurl.com/u6p2v5yz	**Consider strategies to address core humanitarian issues.** The British Red Cross recently shared a report '*Communities of Humanitarian Thought: The Case for Change in a Time of Crisis*'. The report considers the next steps on the following prominent humanitarian issues: *Displacement & Migration; Health Inequalities, and Disasters & Emergencies*. The report highlights the **need for real change** for people experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, crisis across various priorities: • '*Eliminate the gaps in health and social care*', by employing a person-centred approach to reduce access barriers and prevent people from "falling through the gaps between services". The inequalities in health and social care exacerbated by COVID-19 require a **more integrated approach**, along with investment in care and support at the community level • '*Ensure humanitarian needs are met in emergencies*', by clearly **defining the statutory responsibilities** of national government and emergency response organisations, to ensure that they "fully meet the humanitarian needs of their communities" • Review social protection infrastructure to learn lessons from the pandemic and best practice across the world, e.g. '*Cash-based assistance in emergencies*', which has shown to deliver a more "dignified response" and enables people to rapidly access the resources they need during crisis • '*Provide safe and legal routes for people seeking asylum*', by reviewing domestic policy to ensure that the "end-to-end experience of a person in the asylum system is efficient, fair and humane". The Sovereign Borders Bill presents an opportunity to evaluate and take action to improve the entire system • '*Uphold international law and principled humanitarian action*', by committing to humanitarian action and **support for the most vulnerable communities** across the world • Recognise how young people and civil society drive climate action, e.g. the Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change, which strives to amplify youth voices and engage young people in an open and transparent dialogue on climate action

Communities	Actions

Impact on:
Community participation

Global; Tanzania; Nigeria; Pakistan; India; USA: https://tinyurl.com/2e63x9yv

Consider good practice examples of community participation during COVID-19. TMB Issue 38 discussed the importance of community involvement in tackling disease outbreaks and presented the recommendations set out by the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response. This briefing offers examples of good practice in community participation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Consider:

- Tanzania: local government co-produced infection control measures with business leaders based in markets to **integrate leaders' understanding & knowledge** of the challenges of implementing such measures
- Nigeria: the "community informer model" was employed by local authorities for COVID "surveillance, tracing and monitoring" – **community informers are key trusted individuals** in a community (e.g. faith leaders)
- Pakistan: community volunteers "set up quarantine wards, manufactured and provided free protective suits for medics", and distributed food to vulnerable people
- India: Community **volunteers came together to investigate and identify** unknown ("hidden") COVID-19 fatalities. The volunteer group comprised of expert physicians and data analysts who developed comparisons of official health data and other reports. This encouraged a review of the national death audit process and resulted in improvements in the process so that COVID-19 deaths were accurate and transparent
- USA: Volunteers built a public "Testing Site Locator" app which visualized the geographical location of testing centres to support collection of testing centre-related information and dissemination at the national level. This supported people to locate the nearest available testing centres and also the "health system to plan and distribute centres more effectively"

The pandemic, and previous disasters, have evidenced that **communities play a crucial role when preparing for, responding to and recovering from, crisis**. Communities and civil societies should be "partners early on in the design, planning, implementation, and assessment of preparedness and response efforts on all levels", particularly at the local level. We have covered community participation and co-production with communities in various briefings, see TMB Issue 38; Issue 34; Issue 33.

Economic	Actions

Impact on:
Business regeneration and rejuvenation

OECD: https://tinyurl.com/5et7ehnp

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD): https://tinyurl.com/36b3w4fw

Consider policies that will support recovery and help to build resilience in the small and medium sized enterprise (SME) sector. Support for SME recovery is critical in the aftermath of COVID-19, as SMEs constitute the backbone of economies across the world and "account for two-thirds of employment globally" (UNCTAD, 2021). COVID-19 has exacerbated existing problems and created new ones for SMEs. The OECD report finds that SMEs are disproportionately represented in sectors of the economy that have been most severely impacted by COVID-19 (e.g. retail, accommodation and food services). "**Constrained cash flows and weaker supply chains**" contribute to SMEs tending to be more financially fragile and more susceptible to supply chain disruptions. Many more examples of the challenges faced by SMEs can be found both in this OECD report and others (e.g. a recent McKinsey report). The OECD report presents 15 lessons on effective policy design, including:

- Prompt delivery of SME and entrepreneurship policy support. This can be supported by **strengthening digital delivery systems** at both the national and local levels
- Develop start-up policies to **drive innovative start-ups for recovery**
- "Ensure **support mechanisms are inclusive** and accessible for vulnerable segments of the SME population" (e.g., minority and women entrepreneurs)
- Focus on the **digitalisation of SMEs and start-ups**, e.g. incentivise/provide targeted financial support/grants (local governments can sign-post local entrepreneurs and SMEs to support services e.g. Business in the Community/FSB UK)
- Establish measures to consult with entrepreneurs and owners of SMEs, to understand their needs, their priorities, and co-produce recovery and renewal plans *with* them

Environment	Actions
Impact on: *Planning and use of public spaces* Australia: https://tinyurl.com/yx5h246a	**Consider how to transform public spaces to create more equitable and viable city centres.** COVID-19 has seen cities and local areas rapidly change how public spaces are used. In an effort to improve the daily lives and wellbeing of communities during the pandemic cities have implemented changes that were previously thought to be "radical". How these temporary measures can transition to permanent design is a key renewal strategy in Sydney which is focusing on the **vision of a people-centred city** that aims to tackle the various social, health and equity challenges that recovery will bring. Their recent study, based on international best practice and data tracking, explains how to look beyond "basic infrastructure and traffic to create a city that people want to live in, visit, work and spend time in". Consider the renewal recommendations set out in 'Sustainable Sydney 2050, towards a more attractive and liveable city': **Create 'a city for all'** - Co-produce the planning and design of public spaces with the community and stakeholder groups - Collect "public life data" and evaluate this data to inform decision-making - Provide welcome spaces, increase facilities for children, close streets off to traffic at lunch time, expand the use of community buildings and ensure free Wi-Fi across the city – to make public spaces "more attractive for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds" - Support "public art and creative expression" to engage communities in the design of the city **Build a 'green and cool city'** - Reinforce and drive action in "emissions control, waste, water and greening" - Expand "tree canopies, biodiversity and the use of shade structures and awnings in public spaces" - Upgrade transport links between the "city, parklands and the harbour" to improve mobility in and around public spaces **Protect the 'heart' of the city** - Transform the currently "traffic-dominated streets to people friendly streets" - Capitalise on the "Metro, train and light rail infrastructure as the most efficient modes of transport for people" - Increase walking space and pathways across the city - Improve the connection of cycle networks to other transport networks (Metro/train) to promote cycling The strategy also includes long-terms plans for four new "green avenues" which are "arterial roadways identified for transformation with reduced traffic, increased tree plantings and space for people". A key message in the strategy is that **partnerships between "all levels of governments, businesses and the community" is key to transforming cities.**

Health	Actions
Impact on: *Health systems* UK: https://tinyurl.com/avd6rc3m London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM)	**Consider "social innovation" in health as a critical component of health emergency response.** Social innovations in health and care are "inclusive solutions that meet the needs of end users through a multi-stakeholder, community-engaged process to address the healthcare delivery gap". They concentrate on local community needs and priorities, strive to establish "low-cost solutions" and build upon the pre-existing strengths in a community. This paper produced by the LSHTM demonstrates how social innovation during COVID-19 has mobilised local communities, adapted existing health services at rapid pace and developed partnerships between local government and civil society. Consider the following international examples of social innovations in health during the pandemic:

- Peru mobilised communities by adapting their 'Mamás Del Río' programme which "selects and trains local people as community health workers". This project adapted during COVID to both ensure the "continuity of maternal and neonatal health services" while also educating and training local people on COVID-19 prevention
- Malawi's existing free hotline created by local people to provide health advice was scaled up nationally during the pandemic. The government then capitalised on the capabilities of this local service to "triage people with COVID-19 symptoms, identify and refer people at risk of domestic violence, provide health information to the public and gain a greater understanding of local needs"
- The Philippine's multi-sectoral partnership brings together the "strengths and resources from the private sector, academia, local government and communities". COVID-19 response was strengthened by these partnerships which enabled rapid deployment of a "hunger management campaign, the establishment of a call centre to manage returning resident's and a role out of local testing teams"

Social innovation initiatives have proven a "powerful means of mobilising communities to respond to emergencies that can complement and extend government and private sector responses, and in turn build more resilient communities".

Governance	Actions

Impact on:
Learning lessons

Colombia; Jordan; Republic of Congo; Pakistan; Global:
https://tinyurl.com/42rus2f9

Low- and middle-income countries (LMICs)

Consider the lessons learned from the inclusion of refugees in social protection systems during COVID-19. A current research project, by the Overseas Development Institute, is examining social protection (SP) measures employed during the pandemic in LMICs. The project is producing a series of working papers. One paper examines the inclusion of refugees in government-led SP and the "alignment and integration of cash assistance to refugees and government social protection". The paper evaluates the **effectiveness of social protection responses** across four countries in terms of: "Timeliness; coverage adequacy; and level adequacy (value of benefit)". It also offers the emerging lessons from the study and initial policy recommendations. Consider:

Lessons on the drivers of effective government social protection response

- The maturity of SP systems and pre-existing local and state capacities directly impacted how effectively SP programmes met the needs of refugees during COVID
- Targeting criteria that evaluates eligibility based on risk of vulnerability could be more effective, timely and suitable during a crisis rather than traditional criteria such as length of residency or status
- Benefit levels of government systems are unlikely to be sufficient for refugees' needs, as these are typically higher than those of nationals and require very careful consideration. The main challenge identified when setting benefit levels which include refugees during the pandemic is that governments are "faced with two competing objectives: (1) preventing social tension and unfairness between population groups" (by varying benefit levels between refugees and nationals); and (2) "ensuring that everyone can meet their basic needs"

Policy recommendations for protecting refugees during a crisis

- Conduct a national socio-economic survey, to include data on refugees' needs, to develop an overview of the needs of the population across the country. This can enable more effective social protection programme design that **effectively meets the needs of *everyone***
- A review of registration processes can highlight barriers to access for refugees (e.g. in terms of the documents required to register for programmes). Where this is not possible, governments can "draw on international/national/local humanitarian actors' databases of refugee populations" to swiftly target them with support during crisis
- Hosting governments could **consider "integrating refugees into social insurance"** (e.g. those with work permits) which may reduce political or public opposition as those receiving benefits will be contributing to national insurance
- **Careful consideration of benefit levels and trade-offs** between "politically greater acceptability but possibly lower effectiveness" in terms of meeting refugees needs is essential

Briefing C:
Gender and COVID-19

Featuring a recent blog written by Abbie Winton, Alliance Manchester Business School

A recent TMB (Issue 33) discussed the gendered economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and presented the recommendations set out in the report produce by the Women and Equalities Committee entitled 'Unequal impact? Coronavirus and the gendered economic impact'. This previous lesson explored 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.

The ability to rapidly transition between jobs can support an individual or household to recover from an economic shock, such as the shock delivered by the pandemic. Occupational segregation refers to the unequal distribution of people across and within certain occupations, based on characteristics such as gender or ethnic background[1]. The pandemic has had disproportionate impacts on women's experience of work, particularly BAME women, as they are more likely to work in low-paying and informal segregated roles, making them more vulnerable to the economic impacts of the pandemic. Therefore, gender, racial and ethnic inequalities are at risk of being reinforced, exacerbated or created[2].

This week we spotlight a recent think piece written by Abbie Winton, Alliance Manchester Business School[3], which focuses on gender and food retailing. Recognising how gender segregation is embedded in food retail roles, Abbie looks at how this can change e.g. through improving transport links to enable women to access jobs that are currently located in "hard-to-reach" areas:

Gender and food retailing[4]

Supermarket shopping of old has, perhaps, changed forever with demand for online food retailing soaring during the pandemic, growing 25.5% in 2020 compared to the 8.5% previously anticipated[5]. For most food retailers, trading online has long lacked appeal due to the low margins which it offers[6]. However, the pandemic restrictions prompted retailers to expand their dotcom (online) offering almost overnight to both meet demand and stay competitive during a time when customers were restricted in their ability to do their shopping in-store.

To meet the excess demand all of the major retailers took on additional workers, and today new roles are being created in large numbers in distribution and logistics against a backdrop of slowly dwindling numbers of workers serving on the shop floor. However, also characterising these changes are the historical patterns of gender segregation that persist within the sector, despite men

moving into retail roles in recent years. Therefore, we need to be asking not just what the food retail sector is likely to look like post-pandemic, but who is likely to remain working in it.

Segregation of food retail work

The move online and growing use of self-checkouts in-store have in part helped facilitate a reduction in the need for checkout staff. These jobs have long been disproportionately filled by women who needed the 'flexibility' to manage work alongside caring responsibilities[7].

In contrast, there has already been an expansion of new roles in warehousing, logistics and fulfilment which have traditionally been filled by men and demand hours less likely to suit the needs of the household. For example, an analysis of recent ONS (2021) data shows that 67% of employees working on supermarket shop floors are women, a large proportion of whom are over the age of 45. This figure increases to 70% if you look at checkout and cashier roles specifically.

Female employees from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds (as defined by the ONS) are five times more likely than white male employees to be working in checkout roles. In contrast to this, the gendering of employees working in the wholesale of food production (including the supply of these goods to supermarkets) is vastly male-dominated (men continue to hold 78% of these roles). These figures show the embeddedness of gender, and racial, segregation in these roles.

Considerations for the future

Although there have been some reductions in the occupational segmentation of retail roles in recent years, changing demands mean the future of work in food retail is likely to reflect the pre-existing patterns of segregation within the sector.

To avoid exacerbating these inequalities, measures are needed to ensure women and minority groups are equipped to enter into new roles in logistics and distribution. To avoid exacerbating these gender inequalities, measures are needed to ensure women are equipped to enter into logistics and distribution; for example, employee-led flexible working arrangements. To approve accessibility to these roles, policy changes will be required, in order to prevent women and minority groups being disproportionately impacted by job loss and remove current barriers (e.g. the burden of caring responsibilities) that prevent women and minority groups from transitioning into new roles.

Research has also shown that women are more likely to rely on

1 https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100244561

2 https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7205621/

3 https://www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/abbie.winton.html

4 https://www.alliancembs.manchester.ac.uk/original-thinking-applied/original-thinkers/gender-and-food-retailing/

5 https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/may/05/uk-online-grocery-sales-lockdown-internet-coronavirus

6 https://www.ft.com/content/b985249c-1ca1-41a8-96b5-0adcc889d57d

7 https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1068/a3299

public transport to get to work[8] and thus tend to take jobs that are closer to home and schools. However, distribution centres tend to be located in harder-to-reach areas, making these jobs less accessible to women. Therefore, provisions would have to be made to improve transportation routes to these areas both in terms of accessibility and safety.

Secondly, the 'pick rates' (the rate of items 'picked' by an employee/hours of work[9]) which dictate dotcom work can often be challenging for disabled and older workers to sustain. Reasonable adjustments will be required where necessary to accommodate these groups. Thirdly, employee-led flexible working arrangements and parental leave could allow for an easier transition into this type of work. Therefore, policymakers and businesses should ensure that the jobs which remain do not reinforce the existing inequalities which are endemic to service work and which have been further exacerbated by the current crisis.

This blog is a short extract from an article within 'On Digital Inequalities', produced by Policy@Manchester[10]

Wider points for gender-equal recovery and renewal

We conclude this case study by considering the wider points for gender equality in economic recovery. Three key policy areas have been identified in a recent statement from the London School of Economics and Political Science, the International Monetary Fund, EU Central Bank, the World Trade Organisation, the United Nations and the EU Commission, to ensure that "economic recovery prioritises women and girls, underpins an inclusive future, and ensures the world is prepared to withstand the next crisis"[11]. Consider:

- How recovery stimulus, employment, and social protection programmes will "get directly into the hands of women"
- How to develop more effective public policy, e.g. approaches to close the gender data gaps as a priority and new mechanisms to "improve monitoring, evaluation and data systems"
- How to reduce the "burden of unpaid care work and support better childcare to strengthen women's labour force participation"[12]

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8 https://wbg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/TRANSPORT-2019-1.pdf

9 https://www.hcrlaw.com/blog/warehouse-pick-rates-and-disability/

10 https://www.policy.manchester.ac.uk/publications/on-digital-inequalities/

11 https://www.lse.ac.uk/News/News-Assets/PDFs/2021/Statement-on-Gender-Equality-2021.pdf

12 Ibid.