

ISRM

CORONAVIRUS CAMPFIRE

PROJECT

This is the report for the Coronavirus Campfires the ISRM hosted on Thursday 26th March and Friday 27th March.

A total of 26 people attended, from Canada, Dubai, Hungary India, Ireland, Israel, Pakistan, Philippines, Russia, South Africa, Switzerland, UK and US.

LEADERSHIP

There is the need for Leadership. Not just for the now, but to give us a vision of what recovery and the future situation will be.

Leadership needs to spend more time predicting future problems - especially as unintended consequences of the actions that they are taking, that are massively disruptive, highly complex - and of course, unprecedented.

We are still not seeing the necessary rhythm / urgency - for example, testing and PPE for health workers

There needs to be a much better utilisation of resources. Governments are still trying to 'control' the situation, and also to maintain control themselves.

They should be much more a facilitating agency, utilising the resources that are available in multiple sources. As an example, allowing private hospitals to test for Covid-19.

This is just the start of the crisis, but already failing to provide necessary resources.

Lack of crisis communication: What is really happening? What do we really need to do?

'Putting on your shoes whilst running'. We are still trying to work out what to do whilst jumping between multiple stools. Where is the strategy?

This is the biggest crisis in modern times, and there is still no global leadership.

COMMUNITY

We talk about communities, but for many people, their employee is their community.

There has been some work done through that but it has been local and ad hoc. The Annual Trust Thermometer identified employers as source of trusted information.

They really need to be utilised better.

Government should use corporate and commercial organisations as a community network - testing, for example.

Corporation are communities. We are going to see the difference between those that do look after their people and those that don't.

There are pictures all over the world of crowded trains on London Underground. How can that be 'social distancing'?

We will see a massive rise in mental health / depression/ domestic violence / murder / suicide.

This is again something that needs to be managed by and in the community - it cannot be done by a government agency putting out guidance announcements.

There needs to be active support for community activities.

The government is talking about communities and we are all in this together - but after it is over we will see that the banks, financial giants and global corporations will have used this for their own benefit - and screwed a lot of people over to get it.

Hospitals are where people are getting infected and spreading the infections to others.

It is not sustainable to manage this through doctors, nurses (and other staff) and hospitals. It has to be moved into the community. Community engagement and ownership (and volunteerism) needs to be a strategic national resource.

The problem is not the resources, but the management of them. We have seen that in every crisis - including in Kensington and Chelsea post-Grenfell [London tower block fire in which 72 people died, June 2017].

We are looking at the response without considering the recovery. They are part of the same continuum. What we do as part of the response will set the foundation for the recovery, as well as giving us the frameworks and structures to make a smoother transition from one to another.

The response has to be managed at the community level. That includes local testing centred, local community support, local ownership of problems / solutions.

Empowering individuals helps them engage more effectively with what is happening on a general level.

In Fukushima (2011), they had self-testing kits the size of a tooth-brush, at a cost of USD \$20. The children could use it to test the air quality before leaving the house. Surely we can create something similar for Covid-19 detection.

In Hungary, the community is organising support / feed emergency response and hospital staff.

India has a culture of community support, community kitchens, etc, but it is questionable as to how they can support 100s of millions of people.

UK: Call for recall of retired police officers. 'I tried to volunteer, but didn't meet the criteria (I retired after 18 years of service)'.

Increasing need for security in communities as well as facilities, buildings, etc.

FUTURE IMPACTS

School closures are going to have a massive - generational - impact.

There needs to be some serious thinking about what this means, both immediate - learning, knowledge, exams - but also long term.

AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is being massively disrupted. How is it possible to pick fruit and also with the required numbers of people and also maintain social distancing and other measures?

Agriculture does not adapt to our needs. If crops need to be picked, next year's crop needs to be sown, one week either way can be catastrophic.

CYBER THREATS / HOSTILE ACTORS

I'm really worried about cyber attacks and hostile actors. This was the world's biggest problem just two months ago - and now it's as though no-one is talking about it.

GLOBAL RESPONSE / NATIONAL RESPONSE

We need to have a global response. Seriously, why do countries close borders and act as though they are the only ones in the situation?

RESPONSE / RECOVERY

The Response needs to be seen as part of the Recovery.

If it is separate, there will be massive inefficiencies, additional costs and lost opportunities.

Are we looking at how we can create sustainable recovery, using new methodologies, technology.

Recovery is going to be long – years / decades.

The post-crisis recovery is going to be really tough for whole segments of the population.

Post 9/11 and 2008 financial crash, we saw recovery in days / weeks. This is going to be years

The financial markets may be recovering, but for the people it is going to be more like Germany and Japan after WW2. It needed a complete reconstruction of their societies (but look at how they took that opportunity, and what they did with it).

How are families going to sustain themselves? Government direct payments and grants do not cover that.

Government is going to be overwhelmed by the numbers, that can be expected to break down very quickly.

If you are going to do it, speed is one of the critical issues.

Getting people that support six weeks later doesn't help.

The lessons of this is 'If things are done early, they they will also be over earlier'.

We need to get the initial recovery started as soon as possible.

The recovery is going to be generational.

After 9/11, we are still suffering from terrorism in our cities twenty years later, and there is still the fear of what terrorism can do. This could last just as long.

Even now, we are not aware of the magnitude of change that this is going to create. People act as though once this is over, it will all go back to normal.

It feels like both corporations and governments think that it will be 'Back to BAU' (Business As Usual) once this is over. That is not going to happen.

A lot of our structures are either not going to survive, or going to be seen as unfit for purpose after this.

This could be an opportunity to re-set.

Drop in pollution in cities, rise in fish in rivers.

Once this is over, the recovery is not going to be a simple thing. There will be multiple stages – and multiple re-sets.

How do we sustain the lockdown? There are so many 'critical systems' – garbage removal, bread baking, IT maintenance, refuelling transport, supply chains – we can't just 'stop the system'.

These unprecedented financial support packages... Who is going to pay for them? At some stage, that is going to change the whole nature of our tax system.

CITY / COUNTRY DIVIDE

We seem to be concentrating on what is happening in the cities.

What about the poorer areas. The people there may not be aware of Covid-19. They have limited access to news, and even if they knew, what can they do about social distancing?

FAST LEARNING

Covid-19 is big – but it is the same pattern as other natural disasters. Many of the problems facing societies in terms of loss of infrastructure, disruption to lives, failures of supply chains have been seen in other major disasters.

Are people learning from those situations?

Where is the quick learning? Governments in Asia were much more agile because they had the experience of SARS.

Companies / corporations that have Asian offices also seem to be much more agile in recognising the issues and taking significant steps to mitigate the impacts, but also to ensure that they / their personnel are ready to deal with whatever happens.

They have much higher level of understanding about what could happen, and what needs to be done in early stages to get ready for that, even if that is just in having high level discussion – horizon scanning.

GEOPOLITICAL THREATS

Both Russia and China are sending support to other countries – but it looks like it is military based.

Do we trust them?

Do they see this as part of a large geo-political opportunity?

Russia / China / US still see this as geopolitical blame-game / positioning. No cooperation / collaboration there.

Who is going to benefit from companies (both big and small) going bust? It will be like the oligarchs in Russia after the fall of communism (1991).

The big trends recently have been away from global integration to re-stated nationalism. US MAGA (Make America Great Again), UK Brexit, Russia.

THE ECONOMY

Although governments are giving orders, it feels as though they don't really understand the meaning of what they are saying.

'You shouldn't go to work – unless you need to'. What does that mean?

Are builders really critical roles?

On the other hand, it would be much better if there was a way that we could get the economy working as quickly as possible – but in a managed, structured (and evidenced-based) manner.

Financial hardship is existential threat for many people. Genuine despair and hopelessness. People need to work! After that, we can then look at longer-term recovery.

MEDIA

The media has been in incredibly 'shock crisis' mode.

Where are the positive / supportive messages?

UNITED STATES

Really worried about what is happening in the US. They are behind the curve with the rest of the world, and the figures are looking really bad.

If we (US) get situations of city-wide lock-downs, a lot of people are going to see that as an opportunity to do bad things.

For more information on the ISRM Coronavirus Campfire Project, or the ISRM in general, please contact:

 info@theisrm.org