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Build Back Better: Cities at the Frontlines of COVID-19 Impact and Recovery

Cities are not only at the forefront of the COVID-19 pandemic, they are also likely to see lasting changes from it, from their physical form to economic and community structure.

Cities are struggling to provide adequate access to water and sanitation for handwashing needs, healthcare services are being overwhelmed, and public transit systems are drastically reduced. Low-income populations living in informal settlements, informal workers and migrants are facing the brunt of the pandemic due to poor access to services, lost livelihoods and food shortages.

As governments reassess priorities and consider stimulus packages, the imperative for more resilient, inclusive, green cities is greater than ever. Building back better can accelerate both the recovery and resilience of cities. This requires a different approach to how investments are allocated, prioritized and designed, putting cities, settlements and communities at the heart of these processes.

What should national governments and cities invest in now to respond to pressing needs and to become more resilient in the future? How can urban investments reach where they are needed most? WRI Ross Center will bring together key experts to discuss these challenges and the way forward.

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