

Natural Hazards Center

University of Colorado Boulder

Social Dimensions of Disaster Recovery

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Themes of This Presentation

- Recovery misconceptions, or how not to think about recovery
- Factors that influence disaster recovery
- Broader social characteristics, conditions, and disaster recovery





What is Recovery?

"... the differential process of restoring, rebuilding, and reshaping the physical, social, economic, and natural environment through pre-event planning and post-event actions." ~ Smith & Wenger 2006

Recovery is not...

- A series of distinct stages
- A return to the status quo that existed before the disaster
- A strict linear process

Pre-disaster Conditions and Trends

- Pre-disaster social and economic statuses, structures of opportunity
- Broader social and economic trends

New
Orleans



Santa
Cruz

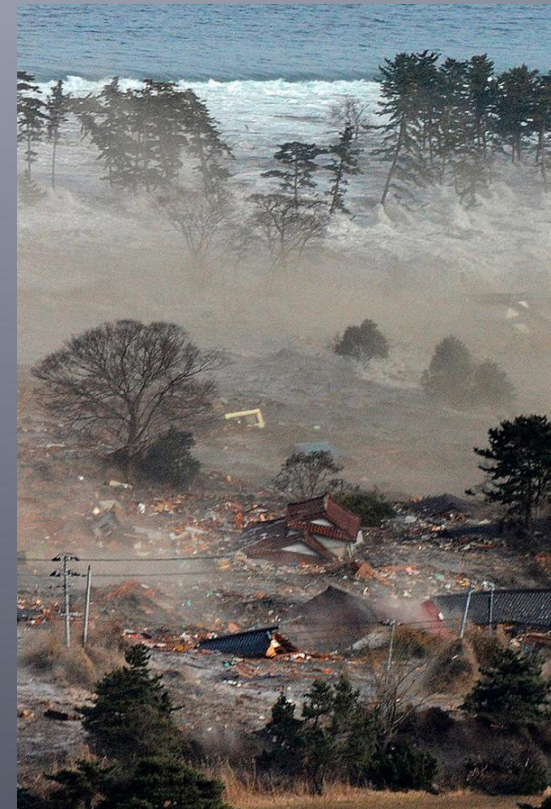
Disaster Impacts

- “Typical” disasters versus catastrophic events
- “Natural” disasters versus technological, toxic disasters



Haiti

Japan



Post-Disaster Response Activities

- Response actions: Do they
 - Contain further life loss, damage, and disruption
 - Address survivors' immediate needs
 - Make the transition to recovery easier
 - Help to build trust

Macro-societal conditions

- Quality of Governance Systems:

Failed, failing, weak states vs. strong, stable governance systems

Pakistan



Institutional Capacity

- Governmental capacity
- Civil society capacity
- Government-civil Society Interactions



Japan

Post-disaster assistance

- Does it help restore social and community capital?
- Is it appropriate: timing, duration, consistent with needs?
- Does it reach all who need it?
- Is it fairly and equitably distributed?

Post-disaster trends, events

- Economic conditions and trends
- Subsequent decisions that complicate recovery: Florida and Hurricane Andres
- Additional impacts, sequential disasters
Haiti: Hurricanes, 2010 earthquake; Indonesia: repeated earthquake impacts; U. S. Gulf region: Katrina, Rita, Deepwater Horizon oil spill



Reactions? Questions?