Recovery misconceptions, or how not to think about recovery

Factors that influence disaster recovery

Broader social characteristics, conditions, and disaster 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
Disaster Impacts

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

Japan

Haiti
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
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?