

FIG Working Week- Hong Kong

RICS President's Commission on Major Disaster Management

Dr Diane Dumashie FRICS



RICS President's Commission on Major Disaster Management

- Origins & Impetus - An inconvenient truth!
- Strategic thinking
- Verification - Mind the gap
- Role of the Built Environment Professional
- Building Bridges
- Achievements
- Future issues



Key Facts

- There has been a five-fold increase in disasters from 1975 to 2005
- 2.5 Billion people were affected by disasters in the decade from 1995 to 2005
- 98% of these people were from developing countries
- In 2006 alone there were 395 natural disasters affecting 134.5m people worldwide, causing \$19m worth of damage



Origins of the Commission

Indian Ocean tsunami



- The Indian Ocean tsunami had reached heights of up to 33ft (10m) when it crashed ashore
- When the wave reached the coast, the shallow water caused it to slow from 500mph to about 20mph, and to rear up into a wall of water up to 33ft high
- In Sri Lanka the tsunami was "only" a little less than 4 m in height when it reached the southwestern coast, yet it still had enough power to throw a train off the rails and kill more than 1000 passengers.



Cost of Disasters

- With the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami alone:
- Total damages: \$10.73 billion
- Rebuilding costs: “10.375 billion
- Number of people displaced: 2,089,883
- Number of houses reduced to rubble: 392,544
- Number built or under construction: 46,000



Why the Surveying Profession?

- Land
- Real estate
- Construction
- Environment

... the whole lifecycle of land and property
- 70% of global wealth



President's Commission on Major Disaster Management

- RICS, Founded 1868, Non-profit
- Royal Charter : public interest
- FIG member
- Commission 8, Munich Declaration

.....President's Commission March 2005



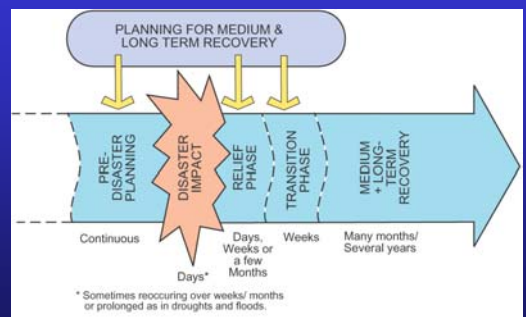
President's Commission on Major Disaster Management

Mission:

“To use the skills and knowledge of RICS members to help communities to strengthen their capacity to mitigate the effects of major natural and man-made disasters affecting the built environment”



Strategic Thinking



Commission Objectives

Provide

- Framework to help the international community bridge the gap between relief and reconstruction
- Forum and bring together international stakeholders to address built environment issues
- Opportunities for RICS members to be directly involved in disaster relief and reconstruction work
- Humanitarian community with a conduit for advice on built environment issues.



Humanitarian Aid Sector

Problems

- A gap exists between emergency relief and longer term reconstruction
- There is a lack of interaction with the private sector
- The NGO's are new to the built environment sector, and are carrying out reconstruction when they may not be the best placed to do so



Mind the Gap! Post-disaster reconstruction and the transition from humanitarian relief



Report Summary

“A gap exists between the humanitarian relief phase, and the permanent reconstruction and rehabilitation of affected households and communities. “

(NB - Dealing with Issues of long-term recovery from natural disasters)



The Causes of the Gap

Stable and secure post-disaster recovery is constrained by:-

- Institutional constraints
- Gaps in communication
- Dispirit organisational needs of immediate response and long term response
- Failures in Management and planning



Main findings:

Why reconstruction following major disasters takes too long

- Global implementation of disaster reduction policies is slow and has been overtaken by the increasing incidence of weather-related natural disasters.
- The funding of recovery from disasters is too inflexible and short term-focused.
- Local government capacity to plan and implement recovery strategies is usually very limited and often incapacitated as a result of the disaster.



**Main findings:
Why reconstruction following
major disasters takes *too* long**

- Small NGOs with the professional skills to deliver high quality, low-cost permanent buildings, working with survivors and making use of local materials and labour, *are often starved of funds.*
- Establishing and restoring property rights can be a major hurdle to reconstruction.
- More effort should be devoted to gathering information from community sources, to complement professional GIS techniques.



**Why there are Funding
Problems**

The funding of recovery from disasters remains overly short-term in its focus, frustrating efforts to plan for a smooth transition from humanitarian relief to long-term recovery.



**Recovery, Risk Reduction and
Development**

The report argues that successful **planning** for disaster relief and recovery is necessarily part and parcel of what should be a larger and permanent disaster management and disaster reduction effort.



Report Conclusions:

- The world needs a better system and to be better prepared for dealing with major disasters.
- International (aid) agencies are geared to a quick response in terms of humanitarian relief..... BUT disasters are also a *development* issue.
- The international community has no strategy for dealing with these longer-term development issues.



**The role of built environment professionals
and the need for inter-disciplinary
collaboration**

- At every stage, the built environment professions have invaluable expertise and a key role to play
- Working in multi-disciplinary teams and with local partners and intermediaries is essential.
- A special and new set of professional skills is required that needs to be shared across all the built environment professions.



**Disaster Management
Surveyors' Key Skill Sets
(1)**

- Geographic information
- Rapid assessment of extent of destruction from “before and after” satellite imagery
- Boundary demarcation and settling boundary disputes
- Dangerous structures
- Assessing structural damage



Disaster Management Surveyors' Key Skill Sets (2)

- Specifying emergency repairs
- Planning and development
- Master planning
- Advice on finance, development controls
- Construction procurement
- Commissioning construction work



Disaster Management Surveyors' Key Skill Sets (3)

- Project management and cost control
- Delivering completed projects on time and within budget
- Building Control
- Ensuring that proper building safety and quality standards are achieved



The Way Forward

“It should be feasible to devise an effective framework for bridging the gap between short-term relief and long-term recovery, drawing on analysis of system failures and successes seen in past disasters.”



RICS Initiative

1: Built Environment Community:

- international involvement
- expertises
- engaging private sector
- one-stop advice centre

2: Coalition of thought:

- Lobby for risk reduction
- Lobby for improved building codes



The Gap Project

- **Phase 1: prove and analyse the gap**
- **Phase 2: design the methodology to produce a means of bridging the gap** (“Designing the Bridge” Salford University)
- **Phase 3: produce toolkit** (“ Bridging the Gap” externally-funded *major* project, delivery 2008)



Phase II- Bridging the Gap

- Process Protocol
- Based on tested construction protocol
- Whole project view
- Early design certainty
- Consistent process
- Process flexibility
- Coordination
- Legacy archive
- Stakeholder involvement/ buy in



UN Special Envoy for Tsunami Recovery

“it is crucial that all stakeholders buy into common standards, approaches and methodologies. All recovery processes would greatly benefit from having a single information structure that can collect, analyse and disseminate information, and that would have buy in from local stakeholders, including government, NGO’s, donors and UN agencies”

Bill Clinton



Achievements to date

- Brought together International stakeholders
- Framework opportunity in Process Protocol
- Building opportunities for surveyor direct involvement
- Advice line, a valuable conduit for humanitarian community



Future Challenges

- Progressing Phase III- Bridges
- Private sector - Involvement



Reconstruction...

Build Back Better!



Thank you

www.rics.org/disastermanagement

