

Adapting Professional Practices for Post-Disaster Reconstruction

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Abstract

This paper explores the potential for professions involved in post-disaster reconstruction to influence the way reconstruction is governed, in order to be more effectively and accountably. Using two well-regarded references to identify policy issues, the paper concludes that crisis situations require that the practice of many professions should differ from normal practice; by gaining special knowledge and skills related to that difference, these professions can contribute to the ongoing professionalization of humanitarian relief. Project managers constitute a critical force in all reconstruction, thus they can have great impact, provided that the profession continues to adapt its practices.

1 Introduction

1.1 Intention

Professions involved in post-disaster reconstruction may have considerable influence on the way reconstruction is governed, making reconstruction more effectively and accountably. Governance of disaster management has advanced greatly since 1990 when UN introduced the decade for natural disaster reduction, and especially since the Indian Ocean Tsunami, which triggered so much international response and academic interest. And yet both practitioners and critics see the need for major changes in the way in which nations and the international community prepare themselves for recovery from future disasters.

The paper uses two references to identify issues of governance of post disaster situations: the World Bank's valuable handbook for reconstructing after natural disasters, *Safer Homes Stronger Communities* (Jha et al, 2010), and CDA Collaborative Learning Projects' *Time to Listen* (Anderson et al, 2012). It then discusses a number of professions involved in reconstruction, noting how their professional practice should adapt under crisis conditions, and suggests changes within the professions that will affect the governance of post-disaster reconstruction. Particular attention is given to project managers, as they have the most opportunity to adapt and have the most opportunity to impact change. Other professions discussed are accounting, quantity surveying (cost engineering), land-use planning, and environmental planning, crisis informatics, building industry groups and politicians.

When these professions develop special knowledge and skills related to the differences needed in disaster reconstruction, they can contribute to the ongoing professionalization of humanitarian relief. While the paper focusses on reconstruction (ie long-term recovery), some of the professions discussed are involved in immediate and intermediate response; further discussion on this topic may deserve coverage of both response and recovery, and inclusion of other professions involved primarily in response.

1.2 Five levels of governance

Humanitarian assistance, being dependent on so many charitable people, appears rather chaotic, but it is in fact governed by the rules, practices and culture of five governing groups that are involved post-disaster from immediate response to recovery. This paper is concerned primarily with the fifth group, professions.

▪ International disaster governance institutions

In 2005 international humanitarian aid agencies formed the Inter-Agency Standing Committee as the primary mechanism for inter-agency coordination and to improve the effectiveness of humanitarian aid through greater predictability, accountability, responsibility and partnership. It involves most UN agencies and many key non-UN humanitarian partners (IASC). IASC has set an ambitious agenda, in which international deliberations on governance of humanitarian efforts will continue to be broadened and deepened.

NGOs involved in humanitarian aid also have umbrella organisations that establish governance guidelines for their members. They largely address response, though have considerable relevance to reconstruction:

- The Sphere Project establishes standards for humanitarian relief services
- SCHR (Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response) has established a Code of Conduct for Red Cross and other HI.
- ICVA (International Council of Voluntary Agencies) represents NGOs on the IASC.
- IFRC (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies) coordinates the humanitarian assistance provided by national societies. Almost 100 Red Cross and Red Crescent societies were present in Aceh after the 2004 tsunami.

▪ Country governance

Most countries have legislation and institutions that govern disaster management, from preparedness to response and recovery, establishing the rights of those who are affected by disaster, and responsibility of government officials and those involved in humanitarian assistance. Some, like USA, have prepared well-developed frameworks for disaster management (FEMA, 2011).

Often other legislation and institutions have processes that constrain reconstruction, such as laws on the environment, land-use, building control, and public financial management, and even laws on the role of elected representatives.

Post-disaster reconstruction depends on the rule of law to assure public trust in contracts and willingness to comply with the law, control of corruption, ability of government to enforce the law, and the ability of the court system to assure justice. Government capacity is often damaged by the disaster, and with so many stakeholders in reconstruction, rebuilding rule of law, creating political stability and preventing violence are of highest priority.

- **International humanitarian institutions**

Each international humanitarian institution (HI) has its own set of rules, practices and culture. The UN family and international development banks have the most developed practices. Amongst the UN family, UNOCHA (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs) takes the lead role in post disaster reconstruction. Many large international HI are NGOs like World Vision, Save the Children Fund, and Islamic Relief, based on strong ethical and faith principles, that increasingly adopt project management and business tools to improve effectiveness and efficiency in reconstruction.

- **National and local HI**

National HI also have their rules and means of working together. HI work mainly in disaster response, but many maintain their support to communities in recovery with reconstruction, social and economic services. Since humanitarian aid depends so largely upon voluntary support, these national and local organisations are critical to determining better ways of governing disaster response.

- **Professions**

People involved in humanitarian aid now consider humanitarian aid itself as a profession. The International Association of Professionals in Humanitarian Assistance and Protection was established in Brussels in 2010 (PHAP). Enhancing Learning and Research for Humanitarian Assistance is an international organisation established in 2009 that recommends recognised professional pathways and progression routes in the humanitarian sector, determining core competencies for professional development, formalising occupational standards for humanitarian work and a system of certification for humanitarian qualifications (ELRHA). We can expect significant development of this new profession in coming years.

Some other professions recognise their role in reconstruction. The Project Management Institute (PMI) in 2005 produced *Project Management Methodology for Post Disaster Reconstruction* (PMI, 2005) and logisticians formed their own Humanitarian Logistics Association in 2005 (HLA). Other professions with significant roles in reconstruction are discussed below.

1.3 Current focus on government and HI

Most national legislation makes government responsible for recovery, with successively higher levels of government becoming involved in larger scale disasters. Also most legislation requires commitments of the HI community to be put into binding agreements. The combination of national laws and agreements with HI are the main instruments of governance of reconstruction, and government with HI the main intervening actors.

1.4 My focus on professions

Many of the outstanding governance issues related to post-disaster management are essentially political and national in nature: who should get a house, the role of local government, and coping with dysfunctional government and the vulnerability of government to dispute of power. International concern for such issues is appropriate under a “responsibility to protect” those affected by crises, as expressed in practical terms in Myanmar where the humanitarian aid community was supported through a special envoy of ASEAN to assist them deal with the military junta. This review, however, focuses the contribution that professions and industrial groups working in humanitarian aid can contribute through their own professional practices.

Taking the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission definition (ACCC), a profession is “a disciplined group of individuals who adhere to high ethical standards and uphold themselves to, and are accepted by, the public as possessing special knowledge and skills in a widely recognised, organised body of learning derived from education and training at a high level, and who are prepared to exercise this knowledge and these skills in the interest of others. Inherent in this definition is the concept that the responsibility for the welfare, health and safety of the community shall take precedence over other considerations.” From this definition, the primary concern of change is the interests of those recovering from disaster.

After the review of the two references mentioned above (sections 2 and 3), this paper discusses firstly the claims of humanitarian aid providers to be a profession (section 4), then the contribution of a number of professions whose changes in professional practices can contribute to a changed paradigm in provision of aid (section 5): *crisis Informatics*, human resource management, accountancy and financial management, quality surveying (cost engineering), logistics, procurement, land-use planning and environmental planning. It also looks briefly at industrial associations, and political parties and parliaments. It concludes (Section 6) with a discussion of the project management profession which, if it adapts its approaches and methods, can provide great improvements to performance of humanitarian aid.

2 Review of WB Handbook *Safer Homes Stronger Communities*

2.1 Introductory comment

The World Bank's handbook for reconstructing after natural disasters, *Safer Homes Stronger Communities*, is a comprehensive and highly commended reference, adhering to a set of guiding principles. Each chapter sets out principles, decisions needed, technical issues, risks and recommendations. It is structured according to the process of response and reconstruction. The first part of the book discusses reconstruction tasks and how to undertake them. It is organised according to a "reconstruction cycle", of (1) assessing impact and defining policy, (2) planning reconstruction, and (3) project implementation. Monitoring is linked with information management in a second part of the handbook. Further parts of the book provide information on World Bank policies and technical references.

The handbook is full of material relevant to policy-makers, though it is arranged more for the project manager. Material on policy issues is covered in different chapters and a chapter-by-chapter review will be needed to find them.

2.2 Assessing Impact and Defining Policy

The first section of the handbook on assessing impact and defining policy is made up of six chapters. The first chapter introduces us to dilemmas in reconstruction, such as the need for urgent action versus the need for well-thought-out solutions, community self-building versus importing outside tradesmen. It warns against compromises in good governance, quality and integration in order to save time, as in the long run, time is not saved, and people risk suffering the consequences of any compromise.

The second chapter looks at assessing damage and setting case-specific policy. It advises policy-makers to take the political economy into account, meaning to consider how people and organisations respond to policies according to their interests and the incentives that the policy creates. Policy needs to attract people to participate effectively in reconstruction, not just set rules and expect people to follow.

The third chapter is on communications, including grassroots communications and community development, inter-agency coordination, and media relations. With the rapid development of what is now called *crisis informatics*, this chapter is already due for revision. Chapters four and five consider the issue of rights to housing, and whether to relocate affected communities or not. This section is loaded with practical wisdom for what is essentially a political agenda.

The final chapter in this section is on reconstruction approaches. The authors prefer owner-driven reconstruction (ODR) where people who lost their shelter are given a mix of resources to organise their own reconstruction. ODR demands a shift of humanitarian

effort from hands-on project management to oversight, governance, and capacity building (p95).

Community-driven reconstruction (CDR) is similar to ODR, with emphasis community control rather than owner control. It is suitable for rebuilding local infrastructure, schools and most other public facilities. It also can be used for the production of building materials, prefabrication of building elements, and distribution. For multi-dwelling housing, rebuilding structures can be community-driven, leaving room for owners some control of individual units. Successful ODR and CDR may require reconsideration of building codes, building inspection capacity, and means for controlling inflation. Although these appear to be in the realm of country governance, we note in the section 4 that professions need to play an essential role in making ODR and CDR work.

“Agency driven” reconstruction, the handbook tells us, is suitable for housing where owner and community capacity to rebuild is lacking, and for larger infrastructure works. Here the handbook recommends the hiring of professional project managers, and quality control through audit (p99).

2.3 Planning Reconstruction

The second section on planning reconstruction is made up of five chapters. The chapter on land use and physical planning starts with the appropriate principle (p109): *“laws, regulations, plans and institutional frameworks (for land-use, physical and environmental planning) should form the basis of reconstruction. If existing instruments are not realistic ... use the reconstruction process as an opportunity to improve them.”*

However, democratic processes of preparing, consulting, deliberating and passing new strategic land-use plans usually take a year or more. Can processes be shortened in the interest of faster reconstruction, and still be participatory? Will local governments that did not prepare appropriate land-use plans before a disaster have the will, sense of urgency and capacity to prepare new plans immediately after a disaster? Such important issues are not conclusively addressed.

The following Chapter 8 (Infrastructure and Services Delivery) points out that reconstruction of housing normally is faster than the reconstruction of infrastructure. Short term interventions to rehabilitate infrastructure, for logistics and essential services, are needed as well as longer term reconstruction of infrastructure “built back better”.

The capacity of government to plan, reconstruct and then operate and maintain infrastructure and facilities is a concern; institutional and financial capacity to operate and maintain should be rebuilt in parallel with the reconstruction. The capacity to manage building approvals, inspections and material testing, is mentioned, calling for streamlining approval processes. Here the handbook recommends that academics, professionals and licensing bodies should be involved in governance within their

disciplines, a point taken up in the final sections of this paper. The issue of the special competences needed in cost engineering and procurement processes is not mentioned. Chapter 9 on Environmental Planning addresses both the restoration of environmental damage caused by the disaster, and the environmental impact of reconstruction. It raises concerns about the capacity of government under existing legal frameworks to assure environmental monitoring and protection, and calls for special efforts to engage the community. Thus the institutional problems in environmental planning are similar to those in the chapter on land-use planning.

Chapter 10 on Housing Design and Construction Technology comments further on the potential need to revise building codes, this time suggesting that reconstruction agencies provide normative guidelines to be used as best practice while building codes are revised. It states that guidelines and codes should be prepared by building industry professionals. It again mentions problems of short-supply of materials and skilled labour, but fails to point out the need for special skills in cost engineering to be aware in advance of such problems.

The small coverage of construction technology in this chapter is confined to housing. A box promotes *universal design*, meaning the standardisation of materials that make better buildings and easier assembly and later demolition. It would have been useful to have a whole chapter on the construction industry, which would include issues of material supply and prefabrication plants.

The following chapter on Cultural Heritage Conservation only contains significant governance issues in regions where there is a lack of legislation and institutions for it.

2.4 Project Implementation

The final section in part 1 of the handbook is on project implementation. Chapter 12 (Community Organizing and Participation) starts with the guiding principle (p183) that “*reconstruction begins at the community level, and a good reconstruction strategy engages communities and helps people work together to rebuild their housing, their lives and their livelihoods.*” Strong leadership is the solution for resisting strong pressure for rapid, top-down, autocratic solutions.

We will contrast this principle with thoughts from *Time to Listen* (discussed in section 3 below). The scale and form of community participation in public affairs after the disaster – by design or by reaction – is incomparable with the scale and form of participation beforehand. The guiding principle referred to above implies much more fundamental change in approach than this chapter suggests. It is the humanitarian aid sector that responds to the community’s disaster and participates in the community’s reconstruction; it is more “humanitarian aid participation” than “community participation”.

The solution for resisting strong pressure for rapid, top-down, autocratic solutions should be written in both country policy and professional practice, so that both

government and professionals facilitate and support communities, and acknowledge and respecting their cultural norms.

Chapter 13 (Institutional Options for Reconstruction Management) stresses the importance of government leadership of reconstruction, and the need for the agency-in-charge to have autonomy, authority and political support. Underrated in the recommendations is the support needed to maximise the involvement of local government, covering local political leaders, representative councils and the public service apparatus.

Chapter 14 (International, National, and Local Partnerships in Reconstruction) calls for partnerships with international agencies and CSO to be formalised in performance agreements, including integrity pacts, performance indicators and reporting requirements. We agree with this arrangement, and add that this has special implications in modern public financial management as discussed below.

A typology of CSOs mentions labour unions and professional and business associations that “may be selected for consultation processes” (p214). The appropriateness and benefits of engaging such organisations in self-government of their members is not mentioned.

Chapter 15 covers mobilizing financial resources and other reconstruction assistance, and tracking information on finances and performance. An important issue raised here is whether national budget laws are flexible enough to allow prompt reallocation of funding when a disaster occurs (p223). It notes that the disaster financial management system should provide flexibility without sacrificing control. Indeed, it would be preferable for any greater flexibility to be exchanged by measures to increase accountability. The performance and reporting agreements mentioned in Chapter 14, in modern public accountability terms, make all agencies that work in reconstruction into “reporting entities” under the control of the agency-in-charge, which itself is a reporting entity reporting to government and the people on performance and compliance of the overall reconstruction. This suggests that post-disaster efforts should have their own accounting standards, budgetary processes, methods for the valuation of assets, and transfer of assets and resources to the recipients, as a component of international public sector accounting standards (IPSAS). There is no discussion of the potential of a Medium Term Expenditure Framework approach to financial management, or the importance of appointing a Chief Financial Officer to be responsible for financial management.

Procurement is barely mentioned here (leaving this important issue to a short reference in Chapter 19 on mitigating corruption and promotion of World Bank procurement guidelines in Chapter 23). An annex on whether or not to procure and distribute materials (p236) includes a short section on bottlenecks in the market for reconstruction goods and services, calling for an effort to understand the market chain where demand exceeding the capacity to supply. It does not take the next step, to advice policy-makers

to employ expertise in reconstruction economics to provide advice on procurement planning, supply bottlenecks and inflation.

This chapter also includes a paragraph on lending and bank services (p230). This important subject, together with insurance which is not mentioned, could have been expanded into a whole chapter. There is no discussion of how the banking system disadvantages those affected by disaster (as they have lost their collateral) compared with those who come in from outside and can easily take over important parts of the economy. There is only a minor consideration of the many ways that banks can become an important local counterpart in the reconstruction process, or that insurance can help provide indemnity and share responsibility for quality assurance.

Chapter 16 (Training Requirements in Reconstruction) discusses the important role of training the community for owner-driven and community-driven reconstruction. Not discussed is on-the-ground training for managers of post-disaster efforts, which is currently the interest of ASEAN and Japanese disaster management agencies, and the growing number of masters' degree programs in disaster reconstruction management, and allied professional fields such as reconstruction law, land-use planning, environmental management and cost engineering.

2.5 Monitoring and Information Management

The second part of the handbook consists of three chapters, on information and communications technology, monitoring and evaluation, and corruption. These are areas of disaster governance that are developing at a rapid rate. Since the handbook was produced, ICT in crisis response is now recognised as a new profession and a field of study, popularly referred to as *crisis informatics*. Much of the scope of popular *crisis informatics* relates directly also to reconstruction, but as yet some information needs and opportunities in reconstruction are not yet within its purview.

The chapter on monitoring and evaluation builds on over a decade of continuous improvement in policies on aid-effectiveness. Governments and humanitarian aid agencies all have their internal oversight systems, with most donors using variations of the Results Framework and the Logical Framework. The handbook points out that there is usually a lack of common indicators and information systems to assure information and reports can be consolidated. A comprehensive evaluation is needed, it says (p270), at the national, sectoral, regional, project and household levels, and should cover impact, effectiveness for those effected, cost-benefit, and proper process. Perhaps the handbook underestimates the gaps that may be created by differences in information systems, and the potential of international public accounting standards to address many of the issues.

The chapter on mitigating risk of corruption starts with a timely reminder (p285) that “*good governance is more than preventing corruption; accountability for the effectiveness of the reconstruction effort should be the overriding goal*”. It includes an

annex (p295) on developing a Governance and Accountability Action Plan (GAAP), a tool developed by the World Bank to involve the public in design, procurement processes and oversight, and guidelines on conducting a construction audit to assure compliance in procurement, contract amendments, payments and accounting.

2.6 Information on World Bank Policies

The third part of the Handbook contains four chapters on World Bank policies that relate to post disaster reconstruction. The first introduces Operational Policies and Bank Procedures (OP/BP) 8.00 entitled “Rapid Response to Crises and Emergencies”, which actually covers both response and reconstruction. The second describes World Bank safeguards and their application in post disaster reconstruction. Safeguards that apply after most disasters are environmental assessments and involuntary settlement.

The third chapter covers World Bank policy on financial management in reconstruction projects. Its objectives here are to improve the financial management in the client country, and to assure accountability to the Bank’s stakeholders and the public in order to maintain their trust. OP/BP 8.00 allows some change of normal financial management procedures in order to expedite reconstruction. Normally the Bank requires full budgeting *ex ante* of Bank funds and any counterpart funding for Bank projects. Under crisis conditions, it permits its project personnel to rely more heavily on *ex post* accounting, along with more intense supervision and more involvement of senior financial management. This means that funds can be approved on the basis of indicative programs, and detailed budgets prepared later (without mention of any detailed budget preparation or approval systems). A combination of public reporting, training and regular interim auditing provides the greater supervision.

The final chapter in this part is on procurement in Bank reconstruction projects. The Bank acknowledges that procurement in reconstruction will be of a scale, pace and complexity far greater than usual. OP/BP 8.00 allows changes to the usual procedures. Shorter-period and simplified procurement plans allow faster response to changes. Greater use of direct contracting, simple shopping and longer contract extensions are permitted for contractors already mobilised and working in emergency areas. Again greater public reporting, more professional resources and more intense oversight are required to offset the risks of greater flexibility in procurement.

2.7 Technical References

The final part of the handbook is made up of four short reference documents. The first is entitled disaster types and impacts, and is a compilation of information on major disasters from 1991 to 2005. The second is a note on including disaster risk management in reconstruction. A matrix of disaster project features makes a comparison between five large reconstruction efforts since year 2000. A final reference is a glossary.

2.8 Concluding comment

While structured more for project managers, the World Bank handbook provides a wealth of information for those setting policy. It is the result of great attention to governance issues in disaster management over the last few decades. The above commentary indicates significant advances in many areas since its publication, such as in the area of *crisis informatics*. We have also identified several areas that could receive more attention, many in the realm of professions and industry, which are discussed further in last three sections of the paper.

3 Review of Time to Listen

Time to Listen, a publication from CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, presents an extraordinary effort to listen to thousands of people “on the receiving end of aid” covering many countries and many types of crises, finding remarkable consistency in views on the good and bad of international aid. The overall finding is remarkable. There is consistent praise for the success of specific projects of humanitarian aid, and at the same time, a more intangible sense of consistent cumulative failure. Projects help restore livelihoods, but aid overall increases dependency and powerlessness. Projects improve security and political stability, but aid increases tensions among groups. The presence of outsiders builds solidarity and collegiality between recipients and benefactors, but overall people felt frustrated, mistrusted and disrespected by the way aid is provided.

Many of the problems expressed by recipients come from the way aid is organised and the procedures of humanitarian agencies:

- Reconstruction starts with “needs assessments” rather than on existing strengths and capacities.
 - More planning leaves less decisions for communities and owners
 - Monitoring and evaluation focuses on delivery of committed outputs rather than progress towards a sustainable society.
- Procedures are often distractions rather than tools that aid predictability and avoid manipulation.
 - They often shift decision-making from field staff to head-office staff who do not know the situation and are not responsible for results
 - Field staff are kept busy filling forms leaving less time for engagement
- Reports compare progress with aid agency plans instead of recipient goals.
 - Designed to be understood by head-office rather by recipient, they exclude the community from the process of reporting, undermining the very intention of the aid
 - Designed to prove performance rather than identify needs for corrective action, they encourage faking

- Not being open-ended, there is little incentive to address wider issues
- International assistance often perceives government as an obstacle to development and bypasses it. The international community, national government and the local community may neglect the legitimate role of local government because they do not know how to change weak, self-serving government to be competent and responsive. But without attention to this issue, governments are often still unprepared to provide services after reconstruction is complete.
- Despite anti-corruption efforts, lack of oversight allows misuse of resources, and also hides poor quality and failures from public attention.
- Funding procedures are increasingly time-consuming, fail to stop corruption and often feed corrupt practices, encourage waste and rarely look for savings once allocations are made.

The respondents to the listening exercise expect that outsiders be committed to working closely with affected communities to assure genuine progress. They want to be informed, particularly about timeframes and funding. They want to understand donor decisions, and want to participate in decision-making. They want to see evidence for real concern for outcomes and careful use of resources.

The book identifies a new paradigm in humanitarian relief:

- Assessing capacity and capabilities of communities to rebuild, and providing them with needed support
- Creating procedures that build civil society not just support project management, and that attract people to lead their own reconstruction, not merely setting rules, procedures and reporting systems expecting people to follow them.
- Working with and respecting governments and local civil society, using the opportunity both to demand and build competence, for the scale and form of government and community engagement before the disaster is incomparable with the appropriate level of participation afterwards.
- Giving external funding a subsidiary role to local capacities and resources.
- Providing information and opportunities to engage in real partnerships. Engagement requires agencies to commit time, access and presence, and resources. People who work in humanitarian aid need specific skills for such engagement.

4 Humanitarians aid as a Profession

Those who have defined careers for themselves in humanitarian aid are striving to formalise themselves as a profession. At the heart of their profession is a dichotomy of accountability that is best balanced by creating a profession. This tension is well expressed by the Swedish CSO ATHA (Advanced Training Program on Humanitarian Action) in their promotion for a coming training program (ATHA):

Humanitarian organizations face an inevitable tension that arises from two separate accountability structures. One framework ... holds organizations accountable to host states and donor states. A second framework ... calls for accountability to individuals affected by hostilities. These two accountability structures create a multiplicity of obligations for humanitarian operators, who must simultaneously respond to the expectations of host state authorities, maintain accountability to donors, and respond to the needs of beneficiaries.

This international effort of humanitarian aid workers to formulate their own profession is welcomed and respected. Most humanitarian aid workers come from another discipline, many of which have much to contribute to humanitarian aid. Most humanitarian aid workers are in fact practicing humanitarian aid using their core professions in new ways, and they can be considered as multi-professionals.

5 Defining professional practice of core professions in crisis situations

5.1 “Crisis Informatics”

While poor information management has been a reason for many failures in post-disaster reconstruction, the progress in the new professional field which is calling itself *crisis informatics* is nothing short of incredible. Obtaining maps and determining boundaries was a mammoth task in Aceh in 2005; maps of impressive detail are now easily available, thanks to advances in technology and international agreements. Efforts in 2005 to use SMS to assist quality assurance in Aceh failed, now social media has had a major impact in crises in the Middle East and elsewhere. We can expect further impressive advances in coming years. The need for the development of more international conventions on standardisation is not far off.

Advances in information technology has also revolutionised banking, but this advance has yet to be used for a major improvements of banking after disasters. This point is raised further below. Use of information technology in both citizen registration and forensic science is a contentious governance issue, but applied to post disaster situations could provide great benefits.

5.2 Human Resource Management

The HR profession already recognises its subset of HR professionals in humanitarian aid, having formed an association and holding international conferences every other year. People In Aid in UK has produced a recent report, on which the following observations are largely based (People In Aid, 2003). Many of the problems of HI are in the realm of HR management: sending the wrong person, not providing professional development to improve performance, a very youthful and mobile workforce, high levels of underperformance and of work-related stress, significant changes in technology and a large impact of such changes on work.

HR problems also exist in the post-disaster construction industry. Many contractors source their labour from outside the disaster area. This can result in three areas of HR problems: migrant labour problems (health, labour rights), relations between migrant labour and local population (mentioned in the handbook) and continuity of work for skilled workers. Post-disaster reconstruction benefits from the creation of a labour market, skills training, and counselling services.

5.3 Accountancy and Financial Management

Perhaps the greatest potential advances in effectiveness, efficiency and accountability can come from the professions of accountancy and financial management. The following are issues and ideas related to reconstruction that deserve their attention.

- **Audit frequency and budget period**

The handbook discussed above cites a WB policy to have more frequent audits to balance more general budget provisions for disasters. The most important function of audits is to compare budgets with actual. The unstated implication is that budgets should be set for shorter periods of time.

- **Probity auditing**

Probity auditing, becoming more prevalent in procurement processes, can also be developed for many financial management decisions from response to reconstruction, where potentially hazardous decisions are made on-the-run.

- **Application of MTEF and performance budgeting to post-disaster reconstruction.**

One of the main causes of delays in reconstruction is the inability of governments and donor agencies to make fast planning and budgeting decisions within their system designed for non-crisis situations. WB resolves this issue by granting greater discretion to planners who proceed to plan and implement without a formal budget. The medium-term expenditure framework (MTEF) approach would seem to be able to provide a better solution, by adopting a short budget cycle, perhaps only three months, and medium-term for as many cycles as is needed for the planned reconstruction. Thus the overall budget gets built up as the definition of performance develops. This budget then would be subject to a simplified approval process agreed by parliament as discussed below.

An MTEF budget defines the performance expected of each chief operations officer (COO). Funding is approved by the chief financial officer (CFO), who expects COOs to continually improve their productivity. In post-disaster reconstruction, a CFO would continually review the productivity of the reconstruction effort before agreeing to allocations for the following period.

- **Consolidated accounts**

Modern public financial management defines reporting entities and systems for consolidating accounts. When government adopts international public sector accounting

standards (IPSAS) and humanitarian agencies adopt equivalent accounting systems, the reconstruction effort can be seen as a “reporting entity”, reporting a consolidation of the efforts of all those involved, while each government agency and HI carrying out reconstruction will also be a reporting entity. The concepts of reporting entity in reconstruction, consolidated reports and accounting standards deserve further development that would considerably enhance accountability of reconstruction.

- **Registration of assets**

One thing is determined early in the reconstruction process, and that is the identity of the owner of assets being rebuilt. This means that a budget framework can be built up from the start, using accrual accounting concepts. There is no need for late transfer of assets from books of providers to the books of recipients. Assets can be put into budgets from the start.

The whole argument of *ex ante* and *ex post* budgeting is based on concepts of budgeting that need no longer apply. It is now time for the profession of accountants to extend the concepts of modern public sector accounting in a way that enables post disaster project planners and managers to operate more effectively, and provides for due process of approval of funding and oversight of its use.

5.4 Built environment professions

Although the purpose of reconstruction is the rebuilding of hope, lives and livelihood, most reconstruction effort relates to rebuilding the physical environment in which people will return to live and love and work, and a majority of professionals come from the built environment: planning, geodesic surveying, architecture, engineering, quantity surveying (cost-engineering), and property management. But the way in which most of these will work will be vastly different to practice under normal conditions.

- **Quantity surveying/cost engineering and procurement specialists**

Repeatedly the WB handbook refers to problems of calculating building material requirements, locating sources of materials and manpower, estimating costs, dealing with inflation, planning means of delivery and schedules, and assuring the quality of construction. Due to excessive demand for materials and skilled workers, normal procurement processes promote inflation. The UK Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors established a Disaster Management Commission in 2004 to promote the use of built environment professionals in recovering from and reducing the risk of disasters (RICS, 2011). They claim their members can help governments address issues such as corrupt accounting and tendering practices, poor workmanship, bad planning and design, and issues with land rights. Some UK and US universities have started to teach courses on post-disaster reconstruction cost engineering.

Cost engineers are amongst the heaviest users of post-disaster information systems, to such a degree that such systems should be designed with cost engineers’ needs in mind, to determine material volumes required by the whole reconstruction effort, to measure market prices in various places. They must conduct research to predict

inflationary trends. They must work closely with logistics to predict and avoid potential bottlenecks. Their advice should be considered of such status that those responsible for reconstruction will heed their advice. Most of these new cost engineering services will require new concepts for fees for services and contract obligations.

▪ **Logistics**

As mentioned in the introduction, logistics professionals working in humanitarian affairs have formed their own Humanitarian Logistics Association. They signed the Marco Polo Declaration (HLA, 2005) which sets out fifteen areas where they hope to better serve the humanitarian effort, about half of potential change the way disaster reconstruction is governed, including seeking efficiency and effectiveness in operations, improving accountability and transparency, leveraging public-private partnership, and setting common standards. Universities in several countries offer masters' degree programs in humanitarian logistics. Logisticians recognise the great differences between the logistics of immediate response and the logistics of reconstruction, both very different to commercial logistics (Holguín-Verasa et al, 2012).

In reconstruction, when logisticians work for individual aid agencies, they often compete with one another rather than help resolve market supply bottlenecks; and efforts to integrate planning of supply are often considered interference, inappropriate or overly bureaucratic. Successful logistical services must be sold to aid agencies, and logistics professionals need to cooperate to assist government and supply-chain industries to optimise the rate of supply of goods and overcome bottlenecks. Humanitarian logisticians combine planning, expediting, advocacy, marketing and training. Further development of Humanitarian Logistics is likely to have a significant impact on the way we plan and organise reconstruction, and gather information.

▪ **Procurement**

The World Bank recognises the need for more flexible procurement methods to expedite reconstruction, including direct contracting, simple shopping and longer contract extensions. Reconstruction procurement specialists should work with cost engineers and logistics to determine procurement methods that assure retention of high-performing contractors, avoid potential inflationary pressures or over-extension of contractor capacity.

Reconstruction procurement specialist can readily be trained to provide probity auditing capacity to assure the integrity of procurement decisions.

▪ **Land-use planning and environmental planning**

The professions of land-use planning and environmental planning face similar problems in post-disaster situations. In the weeks after a disaster many environmental and land-use problems become obvious to professional planners, and they are attracted to rush in with proposals to introduce fundamental changes. But the pressures to expedite reconstruct conflict with the long time-frames in legislation for changing and approving environmental and land-use plans designed to provide the public with due opportunity to participate and respond. Both land-use and environmental planners have developed

many techniques of community participation needing to be adapted to work in post-disaster situations.

John R. Labadie of Seattle Public Utilities states (Labadie p1):

The disciplines of environmental management and emergency management share many of the same concepts, issues, processes, and concerns... Many practitioners in both fields tend to focus more on planning and immediate response and have only recently begun to consider the requirements and opportunities inherent in long-term mitigation and reconstruction...

Environmental professionals can assist in identifying areas of environmental regulation that may be relaxed or otherwise modified for some specified period post-disaster in order to facilitate recovery and reconstruction without compromising long-term environmental quality. Doing this in advance, or at least mandating a policy and procedure for establishing a post-disaster environmental regulatory regime, would be better than either ignoring environmental regulations or frustrating recovery and survivability goals that run afoul of regulatory restrictions.

It would appear appropriate to revise environmental and land-use planning laws to require an immediate assessment of the need for revising current plans and allowing changes to approval processes. Both professions would be enhanced if they promoted such changes in such a way that will help them to work closer to affected communities and the humanitarian movement.

5.5 Industry and business associations

Disasters disrupt the economy of families and entire regions. The rebuilding of the economy has a bias towards large businesses and new businesses that have not lost their capital base, and against small and debt-burdened businesses that have often lost their credit rating. After a disaster a lot of money comes in to the local economy for reconstruction, but much of it is used for procurement from outside the region rather than for helping local commerce and industry to recover. National and local chambers of commerce should become more involved in reconstruction; in order for them to do so in the interests of the local community, appropriate charters and pacts and commitments to principle have to be developed.

With the size of the construction industry being several times greater in reconstruction than in times of even fast economic growth, government will not have – and should not be expected to have – the capacity to regulate all reconstruction. The WB handbook makes little mention of the potential role of construction industry associations in promoting self-governance. Construction industry associations could become major partners with humanitarian aid and government in quality control and assurance, probity auditing, developing improved building codes, assuring equity in labour relations, cooperation, training, and cost control.

The banking industry is highly organised to recover from disasters, making great use of electronic systems to protect their data and investors' assets in case of disaster, and enable them to quickly return to work. These same advances in technology now bring electronic banking even to villages. Although frequently mentioned in commentaries, little practical attention has been given to the role of banking to help reconstruction. Particular attention needs to be given to loan insurance so that banks can provide commercial loans to small and medium businesses that have lost their capital assets despite otherwise good credit records.

The WB handbook makes no mention of indemnity insurance, despite almost all international donor organisations requiring it and perhaps most recipient countries have none available. Disaster reconstruction provides a possible opportunity to link construction supervision, indemnity insurance and property insurance together, providing significant benefits to all parties.

5.6 Political parties and parliaments

It is often forgotten that members of parliaments are elected to represent the community. The professional skills of politicians and how they may be used in reconstruction is normally ignored. It should be expected that members and parties see that they have a rightful place in reconstruction, yet parliamentary procedures on budgeting and oversight often are not appropriate, and place them as watchdogs rather than partners.

6 Project managers

Reconstruction programs are made up of projects. Most humanitarian professionals practice project management, whether they formally recognise it or not.

PMI's Project Management Methodology for Post Disaster Reconstruction (PMMPDR) really only covers relatively small construction works where community and owner participation is limited, leaving much of reconstruction beyond its scope. It addresses individual projects where those affected by crises see a high success rate, and not the accumulative impact where they see failure.

PMI itself has sponsored critique of PMMDR. Steinfort and Walker (2008), reflecting the findings in *Time to Listen*, point out the lack of emphasis on overall goals and the role of community. They also explored tools of humanitarian aid professionals (Steinfort and Walker, 2011) that would enhance both PMMPDR and PMBoK.

The WB handbook illustrates the extent to which the language of project management and the language of humanitarian aid differ. When such a significant proportion of professionals involved in any reconstruction initiative are project managers, and when success of humanitarian aid depends so much on the management of projects, this comes somewhat as a surprise. It would seem that PMI should engage the

humanitarian aid profession in a deliberation to establish common ground and common understandings that will lead to benefits on both sides.

In particular, project managers need the skill to work at two levels, one already emphasised in PMI methodologies that emphasise expeditious completion of agreed outputs, and the other collaboration and advocacy to help recipients of aid to restore their lives, communities and livelihoods.

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