

Understanding the Scope of Architects in Disaster Risk Reduction: The Case of Bhuj

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Abstract : Predominantly, the conventional role of an architect is to design and construct. However, in a post-disaster scenario, the prevalent role expands and includes many other responsibilities. Agencies collaborating in post-disaster reconstruction face the challenge of building back quickly while requiring them to listen, reflect, develop and deliver as per the needs and requirements of the people. The question of the role of an architect has been extensively discussed in the reconstruction field. Discourses about the role of an architect in post-disaster scenario revolve around the ignorance by the profession, their professional abilities and inabilities. Within this domain, this paper aims at analyzing and recognizing the roles, responsibilities, scope, limitations, skillsets applied and required by an architect while working in a post-disaster situation. Four projects rebuilt after the 2001 Bhuj earthquake in Gujarat, India were examined for this research. Based on the analysis of the case study, areas of intervention of an architect in the various stages of rebuilding were identified. It was reinforced that within the areas of intervention identified, there is a vast gap between the prescribed, the prevalent notion and the performed responsibilities of an architect. This paper brings forth the specific gaps in the rebuilding process while exploring and understanding the relationship between various stakeholders that influence the role of an architect.

Keywords : rebuilding, role of an architect, Bhuj, post-disaster

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