

Resourcing for Post-Disaster Housing Reconstruction: The Case of Cyclone Sidr and Aila in Bangladesh

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Abstract : This study investigates the effectiveness of resourcing in post-disaster housing reconstruction with reference to Cyclones Sidr and Aila in Bangladesh. Through evaluating three key theories- Build Back Better approach, Balance Scorecard approach and Dynamic Competency theories, the synthesis of literature, and empirical fieldwork, this research develops a dynamic theoretical framework that moves the trajectory of post-disaster housing reconstruction towards the reconstruction of more resilient houses. The ultimate goal of any post-disaster housing reconstruction project is to provide quality houses and to achieve high levels of satisfaction for beneficiaries. However, post-disaster reconstruction projects often fail in their stated objectives; only 10-20% housing needs are met, with most houses constructed on a temporary rather than permanent basis. A number of scholars have argued that access to resources can significantly increase the capacity and capability of disaster victims to rebuild their lives, including the construction of new homes. This study draws on structured interviews of 285 villagers affected by cyclones to investigate the effectiveness of resourcing in rebuilding houses after Cyclone Sidr in 2007 and Cyclone Aila in 2009. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 key stakeholders in UNDP, Oxfam, government officials, and national and international NGOs. The results of this study show that recovery rate of cyclone resilient houses that can withstand cyclone is very low and majority of the population are still vulnerable. Furthermore, hierarchical regression of survey data and thematic analyses of qualitative data indicate that access to resources, level of education, quality of building materials and income generating activities of the respondents are critical for effective post-disaster recovery. Conversely, resource availability, lack of coordination among participant organisations, corruption and lack of access to appropriate land constituted significant obstacles to livelihood recovery. Finally, this study makes significant theoretical contributions to theories of post-disaster recovery by introducing new variables and measures for evaluating the quality and effectiveness of post-disaster housing.

Keywords : disaster, resourcing, housing, resilience

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