

EERI-NSF Rapid and Research Needs Workshop

Breakout Session Title: Transition and Recovery

Discussion Leaders and Recorders: Franco Montalto (Drexel), Guitele J Rahill (Arkansas State University)

Panel Members: Ayhan Irfanuoglu (Purdue), Rachel Davidson (Univ of Delaware), Liesel Ritchie (UC Boulder), Alka Sapat (FAU), Alexandros Taflanidis (Notre Dame)

Session Overview: The group decided to differentiate itself from the other simultaneous sessions by focusing discussion only on research that could contribute to the development of long-term solutions to Haitian problems (i.e. solutions to the transition and recovery problem, not immediate response and/or preparedness issues). Initially the group tried to brainstorm themes (as opposed to specific research action items), but the approach rapidly shifted to attempts to group the research action items that kept creeping into the discussion into broad categories. The group also spent a considerable amount of time discussing the appropriate role of researchers in Haiti. It was agreed that researchers had an important role to play in helping to inform and promote understanding about the relationship between transition/recovery and unique aspects of Haitian culture, landscape, and history. We listed specific “barriers and facilitators” that could present ripe areas for research, as well as some “additional considerations” for researchers. Finally, the group listed a series of specific research topics.

Barriers to, and Facilitators of Transition and Recovery.

- Technical : Appropriate and efficient technology
- Logistical considerations (i.e. land availability, people moving issues)
- A variety of historical factors including the relationship of Haiti to other governments
- Historical lack of land use or any other concerted form of planning
- Current social/ cultural/ political factors

Additional considerations for researchers:

- Acknowledging the continuum of basic and applied research and specifically how NSF-funded researchers can significantly contribute to development of practical solutions
- Recognizing researchers as Articulators/ Translators/ Disseminators of research findings that can directly inform the Recovery/ Transformation process
- Given the need to contextualize research projects in the local context, how do we foster Haitian Institutional (e.g. govt) support for research?
- The process of development in which transition and recovery is situated. How are our research themes directly and indirectly related to this bigger picture?
- How to facilitate linkages with Diaspora to optimize the Recovery/ transformation process in Haiti and ultimately in other contexts impacted by disasters

Specific research items

- Development of tools to conduct quick post disaster assessment/ evaluation that optimize sustainable long term recovery with reduced risk
- Identification of strategies for reinforcing/ strengthening/ salvaging structures by retrofitting- including development of building standards that mitigate damage and loss of property and life in future disasters

- Identification of locations/ materials, policy solutions for solid structures related to temporary shelters and long term housing, towards restoration of permanent housing
- How to incorporate identified transition challenges to re-housing (governance and coordination, logistics, assessment issues) into action that impact long term transition, and insuring that post recovery level is better than pre recovery conditions (outcomes): *Transformation vs recovery*
- Understanding the relationship between the development process and the recovery/ transformation of post earthquake Haiti
- Defining conceptual framework for understanding feedback loop between different development processes and disaster cycle...*contextualizing recovery* in time/ history
- Contextualizing recovery in terms of grassroots needs and expressed definition of recovery..linking technical issues to social issues