

RECOVERING FROM CATASTROPHES:

WHAT DOES IT MEAN AND WHAT DO WE KNOW?

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WHAT IS A "CATASTROPHE?"

- **NOT** JUST A LARGE DISASTER
- RAPIDLY OVERWHELMS GOVERNMENTAL ABILITIES TO EFFECTIVELY RESPOND
- DISRUPTS CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT
- BASIC SERVICES AND LIFE-SAFETY RESOURCES ARE UNAVAILABLE

- COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS AREN'T FUNCTIONAL
- OPERATIONAL FACILITIES ARE UNUSABLE
- RESPONSE PERSONNEL ARE DEAD, INJURED, OR NOT AVAILABLE
- ASSISTANCE FROM NEARBY CITIES CAN'T BE EXPECTED
- MASS CARE NEEDS WILL BE IMMEDIATE

A CATASTROPHE IS:

- SOCIETAL DISRUPTION ON A MASSIVE SCALE
- THE SHREDDING OF THE SOCIAL FABRIC THAT PROVIDES A STABLE BACKGROUND AGAINST WHICH PEOPLE LIVE THEIR DAILY LIVES
- WHEN NOTHING CAN BE TAKEN-FOR-GRANTED

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY "RECOVERY?"

- OFTEN DESCRIBED AS AN **OUTCOME**
 - A CONDITION OF "ACCEPTABLE NORMALCY" THROUGH RESTORATION OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT
 - INTERCHANGEABLE WITH: RESTORATION, RECONSTRUCTION, REHABILITATION, OR REDEVELOPMENT

- BUT THIS MISSES ITS SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE
- RECOVERY IS NOT JUST AN OUTCOME, BUT A **SOCIAL PROCESS**
- ENCOMPASSING ALL ASPECTS OF DECISION MAKING AT ALL LEVELS

- RECOVERY IS LESS A TECHNICAL MATTER THAN IT IS A SOCIAL MATTER
- IT INVOLVES THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL VALUES, CULTURAL VISIONS, AND THE DIVERSITY OF SOCIAL GROUP INTERESTS

GREAT HANSHIN-AWAJI EARTHQUAKE

- KOBE/HYOGO PREFECTURE, JAPAN
- JANUARY 17, 1995
- JAPAN'S 6TH LARGEST CITY (1.5 MILLION)
 - SIMILAR TO PHOENIX, ARIZONA
- 6TH LARGEST SEAPORT IN THE WORLD
 - SIMILAR TO SOUTHERN LOUISIANA NOW

- CONSEQUENCES

- 4,600 DIED
- REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS SEVERELY DAMAGED
- UTILITY SYSTEMS DISRUPTED FOR WEEKS-MONTHS
- 300,000 HOMELESS—MANY FOR OVER 5 YEARS
- EXTENDED ECONOMIC DISRUPTION TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR

WHAT DO WE KNOW?

- MITIGATION PLANNING IS AN IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF RECONSTRUCTION
- RE-ESTABLISHING SOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEMS IS VITAL TO EMOTIONAL RECOVERY

- PARTICIPATION IN RECOVERY PLANNING IS REQUIRED FOR A SENSE OF COMMUNITY RENEWAL