

# Salford leads disaster resilience in the Built Environment

The management of disasters and the necessity to manage and rebuild post disaster is difficult in any situation, even more so if the country doesn't have the resources to rebuild its infrastructure with life-enabling speed. Such events have been highlighted in the world's media through the recent earthquake in Haiti. Never has international research and teaching been as vital in the reconstruction of societies post-disaster as it is in today's current climate.

Here at the University of Salford, Professor Dilanthi Amaratunga and Dr Richard Haigh are taking their research work further and leading a new international journal with the aim of creating worldwide beneficial disaster management knowledge. Disaster management and the built environment is a very wide and complex field, and a useful step towards establishing an integrated theory of potential value in a disaster management context is to bring together fragments of research findings that exist. In facilitating this, Dilanthi and Richard, at the Centre for Disaster Resilience in the School of the Built Environment at Salford, have been successful in setting up an academic journal - the International Journal of Disaster Resilience in the Built Environment, which aims to be the leading journal that contributes to the body of knowledge on developing society's disaster resilience through the built environment.

This new journal is published by the Emerald group of publishing, a leading UK publisher and is the only journal to promote research and scholarly activity that examines the role of building and construction to anticipate and respond to unexpected events that damage or destroy the built environment. It aims to develop the skills and knowledge of the built environment professions and other professions working in disaster mitigation and reconstruction, so that they may strengthen their capacity in strategic and practical aspects of disaster preparedness, rehabilitation and reconstruction to mitigate the effects of disasters nationally and internationally.

The journal will contain a mix of academic papers, book reviews, case studies and field studies. It will promote the exchange of ideas between practitioners, policy-makers and academics, and provide a unique forum for novel enquiries into the development and application of new and emerging practices as a source of innovation to challenge current thinking.

In research on disasters and in the actions taken when they occur, there is a tendency to focus on the safety of the people who might be, or are, affected. It is necessary to extend attention to ways and means of securing livelihoods and production. Moreover, it is important to remember that the post-disaster recovery programmes and actions are aimed at building communities, not just building the constructed items better. Thus, they need to be complete and involve the preservation of the society and the culture. Efforts should be made to document, validate, disseminate and promote best practices in disaster management and the built environment. Accordingly, the journal will take a theory development and reflection approach to its scholarship. It is hoped that the journal will, in the longer term, provide a basis for inter-disciplinary collaboration. It encourages a level of interaction within the field that has previously been nonexistent. It is essential that research become involved in current international projects to work with other countries in promoting knowledge and sharing ideas. For example, the centre at Salford is currently involved in a project led by the Sri Lankan Chamber of Construction, Conflict Transformation through Livelihood Development Opportunities in the Construction Sector project, amongst the planned activities is training of construction craftsmen as an initiative for conflict transformation through livelihood development. The centre is also a strategic partner collaborating closely with UNISDR (United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction) and will be collaborating on UNISDR's Resilient Cities 2010 – 2011 initiative.

You can view the journal's inaugural issue at:  
[www.emeraldinsight.com/ijdrbe.htm](http://www.emeraldinsight.com/ijdrbe.htm)

If you would like to know more about Dilanthi or Richard's research or the work of the centre contact them at: [r.d.g.amaratunga@salford.ac.uk](mailto:r.d.g.amaratunga@salford.ac.uk) or [r.d.haigh@salford.ac.uk](mailto:r.d.haigh@salford.ac.uk)

