Salford to Bangladesh
Sharing the knowledge

Dr Chaminda Pathirage, a Vice-Chancellor's Scholarship winner, and a Centre for Disaster Resilience (CDR) member, recently visited the Department of Environmental Science and Disaster Management, Patuakhali Science and Technology University (PSTU) in Bangladesh.

Apart from engaging on a number of collaborative research activities in Bangladesh Chaminda's primary aim of visiting was data collection for his VC research project. His project explores means of building resilience for critical infrastructure facilities by capturing and sharing good practices and lessons learned from past disasters. During his visit Chaminda had the opportunity to visit flood and cyclone devastated villages near Patuakhali and to meet up with Government, NGOs and community representatives involved with the reconstruction work and also delivered a guest lecture on the role of CDR to all academic staff members of the University, emphasising the multi-disciplinary nature of disaster management efforts.

Delivering a seminar on 'Building Resilience on Critical Infrastructure' for undergraduate students was also on Chaminda's to do list. This group of students are following a BSc in Disaster Management which is the first bachelors' degree programme in this subject area in south Asia. Chaminda certainly had a busy and full diary during his research visit. A visit which culminated in the inaugural meeting of a further CDR project 'Community Engagement for Risk Erosion in Bangladesh to Enhance LifeLong Advantage (CEREBELLA), a British Council's INSPIRE funded research project between Salford and PSTU.

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The written word

The Centre for Disaster Resilience here at the University, continues its work, building new partnerships, researching into real world issues and embedding research to improve day to day lives in disaster areas.

The practical side of research is essential, but spreading the word and publicising findings and evidence is crucial to further progress. Professor Dilanthi Amaratunga and Dr. Richard Haigh from the Centre have done just this with the publication of their new book; Post-Disaster Reconstruction of the Built Environment: Rebuilding for Resilience' published by Wiley-Blackwell. Dilanthi tells us about the book: "Disasters threaten all parts of the world and they appear to be increasing in frequency, scale and intensity. Despite huge improvements in the emergency response, permanent reconstruction is often uncoordinated, inefficiently managed and slow to begin. International agencies are geared to an efficient response in terms of humanitarian relief, but they are not well versed in the requirements of long-term reconstruction, which is often constrained by lack of planning and poorly coordinated management.

The construction industry is typically engaged in a range of critical activities after a disaster, including provision of temporary shelter in the immediate aftermath and restoration of permanent shelter and public infrastructure once the immediate humanitarian needs have been attended to. Post-Disaster Reconstruction of the Built Environment identifies the challenges that face the industry and highlights best practice to enable the construction industry to address those problems which make an effective response to these unexpected events difficult. Written by an international team of experts including several researchers from School of the Built Environment, Centre for Disaster Resilience, this book will help researchers and advanced students of construction understand the problems faced by communities and the construction industry when faced with a natural or man-made disaster, and identify the planning and management processes required by the industry to mount an effective response".

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