

Global Disaster Resilience Centre Lecture - Inspired Huddersfield

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Is 2015 a pivotal year for disaster risk and building more resilient communities?

A Global Disaster Resilience Centre lecture

Monday 22 June | 12.30 - 1.30pm | W1/62 (West Lecture Theatres) | University of Huddersfield

The risks and vulnerabilities exposed by natural hazards and disasters are on the rise globally, and the impacts are severe and widespread. Over the past decade, disasters have killed more than 700,000 people, injured 1.4 million and left some 23 million homeless. Since 2005, more than 1.5 billion people were in some way touched by disaster and worldwide economic losses in this period topped \$1.3 trillion.

In March 2015, representatives from 187 UN member States adopted the first major agreement of the post-2015 development agenda, a far-reaching new framework for disaster risk reduction with seven targets and four priorities for action. But reaching these targets will not be easy. Rising population and infrastructures, particularly in urban areas, is significantly increasing disaster risk, amplifying the degree of uncertainty, challenging emergency arrangements and raising issues regarding their appropriateness.

What is becoming equally apparent, however, is the importance of resilience - not only in the structures that humans design and build, but in the way society perceives, copes with, and reshapes lives after the worst has happened: to use change to better cope with the unknown. The notion of resilience is becoming a core concept in the social and physical sciences, and also in matters of public policy. But what does resilience mean? What are the attributes of resilience? What is needed to create a disaster resilient community?

In this public lecture, Professors Dilanthi Amaratunga and Richard Haigh from the University of Huddersfield's Global Disaster Resilience Centre will consider how the scientific and technical community must work with global actors, the public and private sectors, and local communities to ensure that we can meet the expectations of the Sendai Framework in reducing disaster losses and strengthening resilience. Joining Dilanthi and Richard will be Professor Suzanne Wilkinson from the University of Auckland. Suzanne will be sharing her experience of the recovery and resilience building efforts in Christchurch following the 2011 earthquake that killed 185 people in one of the nation's deadliest peacetime disasters.

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