Role and Nature of Emergent Organizations in Disaster Recovery

Introduction

Natural disasters impact a large section of the population in a region at the same time and often have a profound and lasting impact on their well-being. Disasters are often seen as social disturbances apart from upsetting the status quo in economic and political terms. The mainstream media's impressions of a disaster zone reflect the helplessness of victims and often promote the need for external help either in form of federal financial assistance or resource help from the state and local government. The tendency to label disaster victims as disjointed individuals or households in need of economic, social, and emotional support is overwhelming and impressions that such support can only be effectively organized by external actors or organization is quite prevalent in popular belief. Also, the fact that disasters tend to have differential impacts on communities of different race, ethnicities, and income level (Bolin & Bolton, 1986) tends to underline the general helplessness and feeling of far-reaching inequities regarding disaster recovery.

However, academic studies that have studied the immediate response period and subsequent recovery period have attested to the fact that this is far from the truth. Quarantelli's (1986) detailed assessment of social networks and emergent groups post-disaster has indicated that "people as a whole do not panic" and "instance of looting will be rare". The self-serving behavior that is often associated in the immediate aftermath of a disaster such as looting or price-gouging often occurs in specific points of time and few situations and generally eases out in favor of coordination and mutual cooperation. Auf der Heide (1989) has elaborated on the inconsistencies of the stereotypes with respect to the ground realities post-disaster. In addition, Fischer (1998) has addressed and debunked several disaster myths regarding "victim helplessness" and need for external support and has largely blamed the media for its continued presence in the public consciousness. Quarantelli (1986) elaborates on the fact that pro-social behavior is the dominant characteristic especially during the emergency time of disaster and often this level of cooperative and collaborative behavior is carried over to the recovery

phrase as well. He further adds that, contrary to the popular belief, "if disasters unleash anything, it is not the criminal in us, but the altruistic." Thus, people and households tend to band together after a disaster strikes to mutually help out each other instead of reacting in an anti-social manner that would be construed as depreciative for all concerned. As in the case of hurricane Katrina, eventually voluntary and emergent organizations came to the fore and have been listed as primary sources of seeking help in information gathering, locating the missing people, or getting general help (CNN Katrina, 2005)

But at the same time, disasters exert tremendous social and cultural demands on their victims that necessitate thoughts and actions different from what existed previously. However, the concept of only relying on external help while remaining mere recipients of such aid is largely misleading. In fact, affected people, organizations, and communities are usually the first to help themselves after a disaster impact (Wenger et al., 1987, Stephens, 1997). Disasters, as mentioned earlier are first and foremost social disturbances that present unique social problems that demand immediate and differential response (Kreps and Drabek, 1996). Such a situation often demands that the victims cease normal routine activities and take on additional responsibilities that were hitherto not performed (Auf der Heide, 1989). These additional responsibilities might exert a tremendous strain on individuals and households due to lack of familiarity with disaster response processes, post-traumatic stress, scarcity of information, or even the inability to communicate effectively or handle resources (Auf der Heide,1989). This might lead to the need for emergent organizations that form in the immediate aftermath of disasters so as to help bring together such afflicted individuals and households that might pool resources and information to help themselves. The emergence of new norms (Schneider, 1992) in fact put these afflicted individuals and households in an advantageous position to adapt themselves quickly in accordance to their immediate needs while keeping in mind, their long term recovery plans.

This research paper shall examine such emergent groups and organizations that arise post-disaster and analyze their role and structure in the disaster recovery process.

Literature suggests that such emergent organizations have found to be useful during the disaster response stage and I shall attempt to extrapolate these results to examine if their structures and roles carry over to the recovery stage. The process of emergence, as described later can be best described as ephemeral and fleeting and such emergent organizations can rise quickly and also merge or die out immediately.

The scope of this paper however will be limited to examining the nature of such emergent organizations that have withstood the test of time and have gone beyond fulfilling the immediate and specific needs of a targeted group. I will first define and describe emergent organizations or groups and analyze the reasons and underpinnings of their extent and nature of emergence. I will briefly describe the literature that supports and leads to the organizational change factor and need for public participation in creating such emergent organizations for disaster recovery. I will also describe the typical characteristics of an emergent organization and its significance for a sustained effort for the recovery effort. Finally, I will conclude by describing and analyzing the work of emergent organizations post-hurricanes in the Louisiana region and examine the extent of their influence and usefulness in the long-term recovery efforts of the Gulf Coast.

What are Emergent Organizations?

As mentioned earlier, disasters bring in its wake a need to form partnerships and organizations that adapt to the changed scenario. This might form as an underlying factor brought on by new behaviors that appear after a disaster causing a shift in the way we think and work with the current organizational or community structure. The response and the subsequent recovery process cannot be sometimes matched by generic solutions brought to the disaster scene by external organizations. Also, a gap between victims needs and requirements for a long-term strategy can significantly differ due to misjudged priorities by external funding or relief organizations especially if the disaster strikes in an area for the first time. In such a case, the onus of response and recovery falls on the afflicted community that is expected to rise to the occasion.

Although emergent organizations by nature being extremely informal and inflexible can be defined in various forms in accordance to their duties performed or by the composition of their membership, I will use the definition as proposed by Stallings and Quarantelli (1985):

> "[emergent organizations]…can be thought of as private citizens who work together in pursuit of collective goals relevant to actual or potential disasters but whose organization has not yet become institutionalized"

By this definition, emergent organizations as analyzed in this paper constitute entirely of private citizens who have been directly affected by the disaster and are victims themselves. Also, the core reason behind the formation of an emergent organization is the presence of collective goals that directly relate to the disaster. Although goals can vary from being extremely specific – "to prevent building of a dike through our neighborhood" – to being very broad and general – "to promote the well-being of our community", Quarantelli (1986) suggests that most of the broad and vague goals that generally form the influential factor in emergence are usually related to safety and health; broad factors by themselves. As would be explained later, such broad and vague goals are meant to make the emergent group more appealing to the general population and attract more members that would effectively lend more influential power and make the organization worthy of attention and increase its power to effectuate changes in the long-term recovery process.

Reasons for Emergence

Emergent organizations, as defined above are created within the community and comprise mostly of the private citizens that are directly impacted by the disaster. This may imply a need for sense of control where none exists. Disaster recovery and mitigation literature presupposes the 'two Cs' of disaster prevention, at least the impact thereof – capacity and commitment. The ability of a community to control its own fate depends largely in its need to commit itself to mitigate against disasters and this often boils down to information and resource management. Rubin and Barbee (1985) present a model based on the locally driven choices and characteristics that influence

subsequent mitigation or recovery efforts. Therein, I believe lies the seeds of emergence.

The extent of the three factors – ability to act, reason to act, knowledge of what to do coupled with appropriate political awareness and astuteness leads to the likelihood of emergence. The greater the community's perception of its ability to act, or the knowledge of what to do, and reason to act, the better the chances are that a community might give rise to an emergent organization that would take control of its own recovery efforts as opposed to relying on external support. The nature of political awareness and astuteness can go either ways depending on the nature of the relationship of the community with its political leadership or the general political climate of the region especially after a disaster strikes. For e.g. lack of support from the federal government probably led to the kindling of interest in forming self-serving emergent groups in the aftermath of the hurricane Katrina.
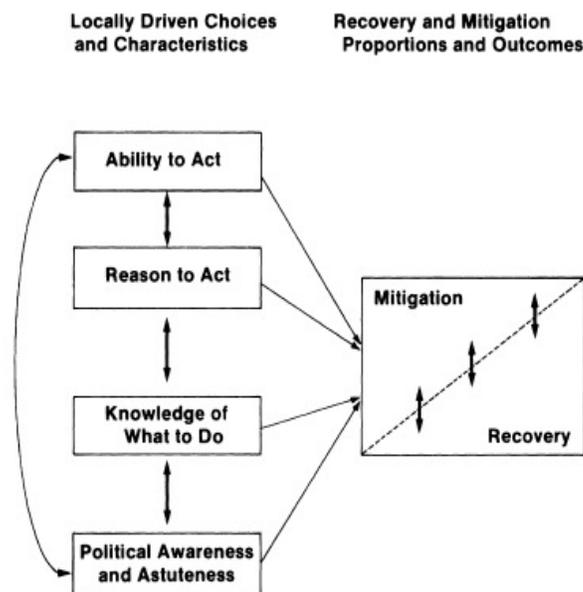

Figure 1: Local Choices leading to Recovery and Mitigation outcomes (Rubin and Barbee, 1985)

Emergence can also be initiated when traditional tasks and structures are insufficient or inappropriate (Stallings and Quarantelli, 1985). This factor is an offshoot of the literature that predicts the types of organizations in a disaster response scenario

according to organization type and types of tasks performed by them following a disaster. Quarantelli (1966) first elaborated on this model that effectively predicts four types of organizations – established, extending, expanding, and emergent – that arise in the aftermath of a disaster.

STRUCTURE

Figure 2: Types of Organizations post-disaster (Quarantelli, 1966)

Established organizations have a fixed and rigid structure and continue to perform their regular tasks even after a disaster strikes. The duties such as damage control and restoring services are similar except at a larger scale. Extending organizations continue to perform same task but instead chose to alter their organization structure in order to perform their duties in an efficient and effective manner. Expanding organizations maintain their original structure but are expected to fulfill additional duties, either on their own accord or upon being specifically asked to. Finally, the type of organization that is the focus of this paper – emergent organizations arise post-disaster either to fulfill a short-term need or to form a collective and informal network of community organizations to direct long-term recovery efforts. Such organizations often fill in the gaps that are left by the other three organizations and have the ability to start from scratch and define its tasks in accordance with the interests of the group members that have formed the organization in the first place.

In addition, the literature suggests that emergent organizations are formed when demands are not met by existing organizations (Auf der Heide,1989). This can be a common problem when generic recovery efforts that do not take into account the social and cultural context of a region are implemented ad hoc. The emergence of organizations can be explained in the inadvertent gap between victims' needs and the inability of the external parties to provide them, intentionally or otherwise. This is often followed up when the community feels it necessary to respond to or resolve their crisis situation (Wenger, 1992) and steps in to form an emergent organization. The structure, task orientation, and responsibilities may not be wholly understood or elaborated but the actual formation of such a group is actually a declaration of protest against unmet demands and need to take control of their future. The incidence of emergent groups, of course, depends upon scope and magnitude of disaster is positively related to emergence (Tierney, 1994) as unexpected and large-scale disasters might leave authorities ill-prepared to handle the subsequent recovery efforts or may end up being delayed by bureaucratic processes that victims can ill-afford to wait out.

Other factors related to emergence include blame assignment (Neal, 1984), socio-economic status of the participants (Wenger, 1992), lack of planning (Scawthorn and Wenger, 1990). Race and ethnicity differences, as elaborated by Wenger (1992) are said to influence emergence especially in order to bridge the social or environmental justice gaps and such organizations often find a willing audience in the disaster area and outside of it. Lack of planning and blame assignment can be attributed to bureaucratic red tape (Drabek and McEntire, 2003) that plagues most established organizations and is more pronounced in government organizations that are on the forefront of organizing disaster recovery. Finally additional factors that might tilt the balance in favor of emergent organizations is the perception of an emergency situation, a supportive social climate, relevant pre-crisis social relationships, the availability of specific resources and the degree of planning before and experience in previous disasters (Quarantelli, 1996).

Finally, the politics/administrative dichotomy as espoused by Woodrow Wilson (2000; 1887) is often used by bureaucrats and so-called experts to reserve authority on

technical expertise that citizens are not considered capable of. Bureaucrats, as explained by Wilson are expected to follow specific behavioral norms of effective and efficient delivery of public services; something that they are not comfortable devolving to the public. Although that dichotomy has been since discredited (Wildavsky, 1974), authorities continue to impose differential bureaucratic norms that ultimately impede the recovery process and lead to increased distrust and thus create emergent groups. The tradeoff between 'good governance' as defined by traditional bureaucratic norms and 'participatory government' as envisioned through inclusive process and increased feedback that results in a greater match for citizen demands is the underpinning to understanding organization emergence for recovery.

Preparing for Recovery

As mentioned earlier, disasters are social disturbances that alter the social and cultural networks that constitute a community. The recovery process is primarily geared toward restoring at least the status quo in terms of social and cultural networks followed by economic and physical rebuilding. The way people deal and adapt with stress, change, and emergencies wrought on by life-altering disasters goes a long way in determining the social environment in the aftermath (Gist and Lubin, 1999). The general assumptions that people take for granted in their community are seriously affected at the individual, household, and community level (Janoff-Bulman, 1992; van den Eynde and Veno, 1999). The recovery process following immediately after the response period incorporates the social and personal networks to avoid a "secondary disaster" (Golec, 1983) as was observed in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, resulting in chaos and mismanagement of assistance. The involvement of the community is therefore extremely important in the recovery process. The recovery process often begins at an individual level and moves up gradually across different levels of the society starting from the household to neighborhood, to community, and finally to affect the larger region.

Emergence of volunteer groups often lies in the idea of self-governance and stepping up to the plate to direct one's future through self-sustained interests. The

genesis of emergent groups probably can be traced to the literature in public participation. Putnam (1993) suggests, "the more civic the region, the more effective the government" and this school of thought recognizes the interlinkages of the citizens of the community and their role in determining not only everyday governance issues but also directing the recovery process in the aftermath of a disaster. According to the model shown above and elaborated on by Berke, Kartez, and Wenger (1993), communities that display a tightly integrated horizontal network i.e. strong linkages within the community supported by an able vertical network i.e. connections to the overarching governing powers be it at the state or federal level are best equipped to result in emergent organizations.

The crux of the emergence phenomenon especially post-disaster and during the recovery planning process is the need to be heard (King & Stivers, 1998) even if it doesn't necessarily result in action. The higher the likelihood of authorities listening to the demand of the population, the lesser the probability that an emergent organization will step in to remedy the situation. However at the same time, even if all demands are heeded, the citizens would still be likely to form an emergent organization purely for the sense of ownership over their futures and to increase satisfaction with the outcomes (Berke & Beatley, 1997).

The incidence of emergent groups that crop up in the immediate aftermath of a disaster include those directly affected, volunteers, emergency search and rescue teams, government agencies. But these behavior and structure of these groups are not included in this paper although they share much in common with recovery emergent groups. The recovery emergent groups are dependent on the response teams to lay down the groundwork for further work and the manner in which they have done their task deeply influences the extent and nature of functions that the recovery emergent groups would be expected to fulfill. Kweit & Kweit (2003) examine two cities where the recovery organizations incorporated citizen participation and extensive feedback initiative throughout the recovery process. The self-evaluation of recovery outcomes by the citizens indicated a positive correlation between the extent of participation and the

level of satisfaction with recovery outcomes. These case studies relied on the premise of collaboration with the government authorities at every level and the increased trust was a byproduct that led to positive evaluations. This creation of trust or the lack thereof forms the pivotal factor between government organizations and emergent organizations that ultimately influence recovery efforts.

Structure and Composition of Emergent Organizations

As noted earlier, recovery post-disaster can be different for individuals and households and any recovery, if any is influenced by each person's social experiences and social networking linkages (Wiggins and Schwartz, 2002). The extent of posttraumatic stress in the immediate aftermath of a disaster in addition to preexisting social isolation due to lack of adequate social networking can undermine help-seeking behavior even when available and thus adversely affect subsequent recovery process (McFarlane and Yehuda, 1996). The nature of community in which an individual or households exist prove to be an influential factor in determining nature and structure of emergent organizations. Individual identities are formed in part due to complex system of bonds ranging from strong to weak within the community and ancillary dimensions such as culture, locality, religion, class or political affiliation affect degree of social proximity and strength of attachment of an individual to the community (Woelfel and Fink, 1980).

The recovery process according to the literature also can be differential for different race, ethnicities, and income groups (Bolin & Bolton, 1986). Also, it can be summarized that the level of social networking and opportunities inherent in such linkages also are different for different groups of people that can adversely impact the recovery process. For e.g. a wealthy neighborhood banded together and successfully lobbied the government to move the construction of a dike for flood mitigation away from their neighborhood however a neighborhood of low income households in New Orleans Ninth Ward have so far been unsuccessful in restoring their pre-disaster neighborhood structure both physically and economically.

The disaster response literature regarding emergent groups (Bardo 1978; Tierney & Goltz, 1997; Drabek, 1987) have lent us an insight into the structure and characteristics of emergent groups. For the purposes of recovery, I plan to use the framework of these characteristics in order to select certain functions which I think might be pertinent for emergent groups in the recovery phase. Quarantelli (1986) had proposed an extension of the old DRC typology – established, expanding, extending, and emergent groups – by elaborating on the system complexity that emphasizes emergent behavior. This extension of the typology focuses on the constantly changing nature of emergent groups that tend to either collapse or merge with associated groups in order to survive or fulfill their basic objectives.

Wenger (1992) proposed a Type V or supraorganizational structure that represents a systemic response to the four traditional typologies. Such an organization forms a colluding point or an umbrella organization to coordinate between the four organizations in order to facilitate the recovery process and remain faithful to their individual goals at the same time. Quasi and structural emergence, as proposed in a later study by Quarantelli (1996) are common threads that emergent organizations share with extending and expanding organizations that have to deal with change in duties or structures respectively. The recovery process often demand extraneous duties on part of organizations that have to adapt efficiently and quickly to fulfill their task or risk being relegated to the fringes of the recovery process. Most of the emergent groups readily adapt to such changes as not doing so would mean their demise and hence the basic premised under which they were founded i.e. to represent the interests of the community would not be served. This is explained by task emergence (Quarantelli, 1996) when the organization accepts an unfamiliar task with no drastic change to its structure. However at the same time, it is understood that emergent organizations are fleeting and ephemeral in nature and can be merged with each other or attached to an umbrella organization if its interests would be served better. This would happen under the assumption of sharing knowledge and transferring skills across a broad spectrum

thus moving the scope of the emergent organization from beyond the niche community to a larger region. Specialization and compartmentalization of skills occur in that event.

On the other hand, the process also can work in a reverse order i.e. an emergent group forms between existing organizations to facilitate coordination and manage resources among them. This category – interstitial category (Peacock, 1991) – fulfills the unmet needs and requirements of organizations that are unable to spread thin in order to meet specific or specialized needs of the community. The more diverse the community, the more varied its needs and demands are going to be. Hence the emergence of interstitial organizations is more likely to occur in such cases.

Now, the composition and characteristics of a typical emergent group has been studied extensively by Quarantelli (1986) and Neal & McCabe (1984). Emergent groups link different parts of the community together and such linking is often beneficial to the tasks at hand (Dynes, 2005). However within all this diversity, we can still list out some general characteristics that help us understand emergent groups better. Such an understanding will help the authorities in dealing with emergent organizations in a more organized and understanding manner. Since membership of an emergent group is almost always voluntary, the range of members can vary from around a dozen to several thousand people (Quarantelli, 1986).

The estimate of membership can tend to be on the higher side since no formal procedures are maintained to keep a track of membership. Quarantelli (1986) elaborates that there are generally three kinds of members in a typical emergent group – "small active core, somewhat larger supporting group of people, and a greater number of primarily nominal supporters." The tasks also are accordingly divided upon these groups of people with the active core of members doing the bulk of the work but they are also the most motivated and more interested in seeing the objectives of the group fulfilled. They also tend to be early joiners and similarly tend to remain in the group for a longer period of time. This composition of the emergent group membership can be likened to the Participation Inequality or the 1% rule in today's social media i.e. 1% of users create content, 10% interact and participate with content, and the rest 89%

merely view the content (Nielsen, 2006). This is a given in any voluntary or social organization and is more pronounced in the flexible and fluid organizational hierarchy of an emergent group. Among other characteristics of an emergent group membership, the ones that may persist across for the recovery process are that emergent groups might gradually attract non-member participants who although may not officially be a part of the group but may lend expertise, information, and resources (Quarantelli, 1986). The people who might do this are likely to be public officials, technical professional, media personnel who might be acting on their own volition due to non-economic reasons.

Since emergent groups are deeply entrenched in the community, the social networks and community ties are especially evident in the membership of the organization. Membership in the emergent group may tend to reflect these linkages by aligning on social class position, social experiences, racial and ethnic similarities, political ideology, and faith-based commonalities. However, all of the members are more likely to be property owners since it lends a greater sense of ownership and accords a higher level of responsibility toward the recovery process. The differences in the composition of an emergent group can also influence the effectiveness and nature of its functionality. For example, emergent groups from a higher social class or neighborhood are more likely to approach the political process in an efficient manner and utilize their pre-disaster political and social connections to achieve their objectives than their counterparts from a relatively lower social class (Neal & McCabe, 1984). However, further analysis has shown that this gap closes as both groups tend to get the same information however the intensity of effort and advantage in getting a head start affect future workings of the organization.

However, emergent organizations on account of being less hierarchical and informal also tend to have a greater incidence of conflict that is visible outside the group. The broad strategies of umbrella organizations may clash with the pointed and specific goals of individual emergent groups due to lack of adequate attention, real or perceived. The informal working style of emergent group may not necessarily agree with

the strict bureaucratic process of governmental or organized groups leading to conflicts or disengagement. Such conflicts also can cause a delay in collaborative or cooperative partnerships and hence lengthen the recovery process. Since emergent organizations are formed on basis of certain common characteristics of members such as race, income level, or social class, these differences may manifest to greater conflict of interests when emergent groups work with each other. Finally, also emergent organizations pride themselves on informal and innovative frameworks to achieve their objectives, these may quickly get institutionalized and be inflexible to change for new incoming members and subsequent recovery processes that almost always take a long period of time as opposed to the response process.

Now, I will offer examples of and elaborate on the two emergent groups – Louisiana Family Recovery Corps and Louisiana disaster Recovery Foundation – that participated in the recovery process post-hurricane Katrina and hurricane Rita.

Louisiana Family Recovery Corps

The emphasis on household recovery has been paid little attention in disaster literature and most of the recovery efforts have been focused on physical restoration and economic recovery in hopes that the effects will trickle down to individual households and ultimately help them recover. Even when households are the focus of recovery, we have observed that there are disparate rates of recovery between different ethnicities, races, and more obviously, income groups (Bolin & Bolton, 1986). As if in response to this growing divide, Louisiana Family Recovery Corps (LFRC) was established in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina to focus exclusively on families.

The LFRC was established an independent non-profit organization "designed to coordinate and deliver comprehensive humanitarian services to displaced Louisiana residents within the State of Louisiana, and to reach out to displaced Louisianans wherever they might be temporarily sheltered across the country to assist them in returning to Louisiana" (LFRC, 2006). The LRFC through its specific focus on households and families is better able to address direct concerns of residents who have been displaced by the disaster. This group emerged from the initiative by Gov. Kathleen

Branco who issued an executive order to direct the recovery process after the hurricanes. The LFRC was one of the three organizations that emerged from this initiative (LRA, 2006); the other two being the Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) that handled the physical rebuilding and Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation (LDRF) that coordinates fundraising efforts and enables the state to harness resources for the recovery process. Although initiated by the Governor's office, the establishment and funding of these organizations is completely independent and carried on by voluntary and private means. Since they serve to address the direct concerns of the residents and afflicted people in order to fill the gap of unmet needs in the recovery process, they are considered to be emergent organizations. As we will see in their description of their duties and structure, that they fit the role of emergent organizations more than government groups.

In LFRC's mission statement (LFRC, 2006), the organization's primary goal is oriented toward providing the missing link between in disaster recovery by directly addressing the needs of the people. Their primary organizational functions consist of connecting, coordinating, and communicating comprehensive humanitarian assistance. As described above in the roles and duties of emergent organization, the communication structure and reinforcement of the social networks that exist pre-disaster can be effectively tackled by such emergent groups that arise from within the community and direct their efforts toward alleviating communication channels between different groups in order to achieve common goals. The main focus of this organization is to create a one-stop resource for all displaced families and centralize household recovery services. This would greatly avoid duplication of recovery efforts that otherwise the government would be expected to fulfill. The LRFC's thrust in provision of services is in "obtaining housing, connecting utilities, finding child care, employment assistance, household necessities, child care and transportation have to families". As pointed out, these services would be typically handled by the Red Cross during smaller disasters but when large-scale disasters like Hurricane Katrina strike, the demand for such specific and personalized services can be overwhelming even for Red Cross's

trained personnel. Thus, emergent organizations such as LRFC step in and fill this gap, thus also providing for greater resident satisfaction and positive evaluations of recovery efforts. But at the same time, partnerships and collaboration with other voluntary organizations such as Red Cross, Office of Youth Development, and other faith and community based organizations is not ruled out as such connections and partnerships can provide for effective resource management and provide a learning curve for individuals that might not be trained in recovery processes but have the willingness to do so. So far, according to LRFC's website, they have assisted more than 4,000 families and 14,000 individuals in recovery planning and providing vital resources post-hurricane.

One of LRFC's key functions is the focus on children and youth as part of their long-term strategy planning. Adhering to that goal, the LRFC has developed summer camps for more than 8,000 school-aged children in areas where traditional services had been disrupted due to the hurricane. They also provided more than 16,000 school uniforms to children to tide over their immediate requirements toward education and school recovery. The LRFC, in its role toward being an emergent group provides overall services that also include mental health care. They provide increasing access to crisis counseling services and assist people with emotional recovery. These counseling services are often manned by the community itself in the spirit of finding help within the community and helping one another to foster greater social networking.

Finally, LRFC has developed from being a single organization with targeted goals to being a more broad-based 'umbrella organization' that serves multiple interests and communities but still remain within its purview of family recovery. Thus, in its spirit of being aggregation of smaller and focused citizen networks/organizations, LRFC also seeks long-term goals that cater to a wider audience. Having the support of a wider audience also gives LRFC enough leverage and resources to better manage their recovery delivery services. For e.g. they are able to use the International Rescue Committee case management model that lets them assess the required needs and identify resources leaving time to verify service delivery to the extent of almost three or

four times a week. One key aspect of the LRFC is their intent and ability to reach out to displaced families outside the state and help them ease their recovery process back in their pre-disaster location, if they so desire.

Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation

The second emergent organization that I will present is the Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation (LDRF) which was another organization created by Gov. Blanco's executive order. As in the case of LRFC, this organization also emerged in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina but to ease recovery process and avoid duplication, LDRF addresses the fundraising and planning for long-term outcomes in Louisiana's recovery process. According to their website (LDRF, 2006), the emergent organization is "wholly independent, governed by an independent board of directors whose members hail from all affected areas of the state". This aspect of membership within the community significantly underlines the emergent criteria of LDRF since the members of the organization will be primarily responsible for drafting their own recovery plan and accordingly direct the continual process. The funding of LDRF also comes mainly from common folk who have vested interests in seeing their communities and neighborhood recover to the pre-disaster levels, if not better. However, since fundraising is an important function of this organization, communities are reaching out and obtaining funding from private grants and organizations such as Bush-Clinton Katrina Fund, Annie E. Casey Foundation, and the Ford Foundation that provides monies for philanthropic reasons or to spur community recovery. Such funding would typically not be available if a government agency or established organization was involved as they are perceived to be well-funded and resourceful.

Another aspect that differentiates LDRF from other emergent organizations is the emphasis on inclusive practices and planning recovery process in accordance to social and environment justice perspective. As the media highlighted, impact of the disaster in Louisiana and more specifically New Orleans along the racial and ethnic lines was especially pronounced and exposed the underbelly of segregated American cities. In addition to incorporating socially and economically inclusive policies in funding and

assisting local communities, LDRF seeks to encourage residents to control their recovery processes by being involved in the decisions that might impact their future living conditions. This aspect, as mentioned in the LRFC criteria gives the community a better ability to assess their recovery outcomes and leads to positive feedback instead of pleading helplessness.

The LDRF not only conducts fundraising activities and policies pertaining to streamlining the recovery process but also empowers the local community organizations that might themselves be emergent to develop a local recovery plan. The LDRF supports such nonprofit organization and community development corporations that have emerged post-disaster that are engaged in economic development, housing, land use planning, education, and health care. So as you observe, the direction of assistance is still local and specific so that the benefits directly accrue to the households and individuals that have been impacted by the disaster. The criteria for providing grants are broad ("relief, recovery, and betterment") and leave ample scope for smaller organizations to adapt and restructure their recovery processes to deal with local conditions.

Token gestures such as honoring local community leaders with a "Louisiana Organizers Renewal Award (LORA)" helps build confidence and further motivate local communities to participate in their recovery efforts. These awards are also accompanied by a cash reward that goes toward the recovery efforts. Exposure to the national and international media such as sponsoring a town hall meeting with popular television and radio host, Travis Smiley helps in actively recruiting people from within the community and increase chances of participation for recovery efforts.

Conclusion

The phenomenon of emergence while not being specific to disasters has played a pivotal role in disaster response and through this paper I have tried to extend that role of emergent groups to long-term disaster recovery. Emergent groups, be it for emergency response or disaster recovery are inherently community-based and reflect the need for the citizens directly affected by the disaster to control their own destiny

and mold their future living environment. As described above, emergence is inspired by unmet needs and a lack of understanding or attention to immediate demands of the residents pertaining to long-term recovery. Every community, whether it has had the experience of being in a disaster or not, develops an inherent capability of responding to emergencies and in turn sustaining that capability for a longer period. The media often tries to highlight the supposed helplessness of disaster victims but research has shown that even the badly affected victims in a disaster are able to band together to achieve consensus on their recovery process. Such a process was also seen in the aftermath of hurricane Katrina where emergent prosocial behavior was observed contrary to the negative impression in the mainstream media (Rodríguez & Quarantelli, 2006)Of course, this recovery phase follows an intense response period that also involves the larger community or external organizations. This attribute of learning to cope can be explained by inherent social capital that exists in the community even before a disaster strikes (Dynes, 2005). Understanding the nature and extent of social networking and strength of community ties helps in predicting the emergence of groups or organizations in the event of a crisis such as a natural disaster.

The key to creating or formation of an emergent group is in harnessing activist citizen groups for disaster recovery efforts. Such participation can be envisioned as totally voluntary and altruistic in nature at first before actually formalizing into an organized effort. Even when emergent groups get organized, the hierarchy is not strict and traditional organizational principles or bureaucratic red tape is largely avoided. Most of the functioning and task assignment is informal and proceeds on the willingness of participants and their ability to allocate time and resources for the recovery effort. The more the citizens are invested in their community, the stronger the emergent behavior is likely to be leading to intensified and dedicated efforts toward recovery. The resilience of the community will be tested and enhanced in case an emergent group takes charge.

Also, the chances of an emergent group arising in a community are dependent on the horizontal and vertical integration (Burke, et al., 1993). Communities with

stronger horizontal and vertical ties are best qualified to handle their own recovery efforts through voluntary organizations. In such a scenario, different organizations emerging to handle different tasks that they are best suited to handle is not unusual. In fact, in the early stages of emergences, splintering of the recovery effort by targeted efforts by specific emergent organizations is largely a positive and efficient outcome. These organizations can later collaborate to share resources, skill, funding, and personnel under an 'umbrella' organization as shown by the case studies of Louisiana Recovery Family Corps and Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation.

The underpinnings of emergent groups are in citizen participation and are slightly impeded by now-discredited ideas of politics/administrative dichotomy. It is mainly due to the distrust of traditional bureaucrats and public officials who are unwilling to devolve responsibility or are hesitant to listen to citizen needs and demands regarding recovery efforts. But in recent time, due to activist groups, citizen participation has gained momentum and this is often carried over during disaster recovery. Rubin & Barbee's (1985) model of local choice pertaining to ability and reason to act within the constraints of political environment and institutional frameworks best addresses the emergent factors of recovery groups. In addition, the knowledge of what to do is provided from the pool for resources or from what is now a popular term, 'wisdom of the crowds'. This model in conjunction with the task/structure model of four basic organizations defines the role of emergent organizations for recovery.

Finally in regards to the structure of an emergent organization, it finds common attributes in both content creation and evolving voluntary organization. The membership is mostly voluntary with differing levels of participation i.e. a small active core, supporting nominal group, and a larger funding circle of basic and ideological supporters. Some problems might exist in recovery operations since some emergent groups might organize on basis of income group, race, or ethnicities and their priorities or objectives might clash causing conflict with other emergent organization. But it is often seen that under a common umbrella organization, smaller groups tend to find commonality and stick to broader goals while internally striving to achieve their specific

goals. Also in terms of economic efficiency, smaller local groups might have an advantage in managing funds and allocating resources. A recent GAO report on Hurricane Katrina showed massive mismanagement of funds by FEMA, the federal agency responsible for recovery efforts (US GAO, 2006). Such incompetence can be attributed to lack of social connection or understanding of the rapidly evolving conditions on the disaster site. Regular updates, as done by Louisiana Family Recovery Corps in implementing the International Rescue Committee case management model that allows them to follow up on a regular basis thus avoiding wasteful spending.

In conclusion, the trends for emergent groups are growing in recent disasters and it is likely to continue in the spirit of continual feedback and activist citizen participation. Emergent organizations are also becoming more organized and established in order to facilitate the recovery process in an organized manner. The government, as in the case of Louisiana is instrumental in aiding the process in order to make it as democratic as possible. It is vital to understand the implicit characteristic of emergent groups so that government agencies can work in a better manner to achieve outcomes that are not only effective and efficient but also socially inclusive and fair to all concerned.

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