

DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY IN DISASTER RECOVERY

REFRAMING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR
SUSTAINABLE OUTCOMES

Literature Review

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Recently, some of the worst disasters in Australia's history have led to billions of dollars being spent to rebuild communities. The capacity for these efforts to reshape and revive communities is enormous – but what part have communities played in guiding and directing the rebuilding, and how has long-term planning for sustainability and disaster resilience been incorporated into recovery plans? This review explores the potential for deliberative methods to be used to ensure confident answers to these questions in the future. The review considers (1) the nature of deliberative methods, (2) how current recovery policy frames community engagement, (3) how deliberative methods can support notions of betterment, sustainability and resilience, and (4) how deliberative processes sit within the recovery social setting. The review concludes that deliberative methods provide an effective mechanism for strengthening communities through engagement in decision-making.



newDEMOCRACY



Australian Government
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Deliberative democracy, deliberative methods, community engagement, disaster recovery, betterment, sustainability, disaster resilience

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INTRODUCTION

In the last ten years, Australians have seen some of the worst disasters in our history. Just since the year 2000, fires, floods and cyclones have ravaged our coastal communities and, in some cases, razed regional towns. Thankfully, deaths have been few in comparison to similar disasters elsewhere in the world, but devastation has been high and in some cases communities are still rebuilding and recovering. Billions of dollars have been invested in rebuilding but the level of engagement with communities over how to most wisely allocate and spend these funds has been questionable.

There is a growing movement, in Australia and in other countries such as the United States and New Zealand, that sees disaster-affected communities encouraged to rebuild sustainably and to build back better than before disaster struck, to improve their resilience to disaster in both built and social terms. Most importantly, governments have begun to heed the call of citizens who desperately want to be a part of rebuilding their communities, who don't want to see inappropriate decisions made over their heads, and are on track to improving 'community engagement' in disaster recovery.

These two factors are rolling into a momentum, into a future in which the wisdom of communities is respected and utilized in disaster recovery, where residents are decision-makers alongside government, and where sustainable rebuilding considers the frequency of disasters and climate change. In some cases, communities have reframed their recovery and rebuilding as an era of renewal, directly recognizing the positive aspects and opportunities inherent in the disaster-wrought 'reset' of their community. Indeed, disaster recovery provides a golden opportunity for reshaping communities based on their needs, values and beliefs.

The scenario of rebuilding entire communities calls for good democracy, the kind in which the needs, values and beliefs of all community members are considered and where rebuilding occurs as such. Representative democracy as we know it provides a structure for supporting communities to rebuild, but should not necessarily be the central decision-making mechanism in the state of social upheaval that is disaster recovery. Good democracy in recovery calls for the involvement of community members in making the decisions that will affect their lives in the years following. A good democratic system enables the participation of individuals across the community strata, provides a setting for them to talk through each other's views and

values, to be informed of facts and question experts regarding the issues at hand, and to deliberate on all of these elements together. These points are some of the key tenets of deliberative democracy, which the present review argues is just the kind of good democracy required to support community-driven decision-making in disaster recovery.

The present review evaluates the potential for using deliberative methods in disaster recovery through a discussion of several settings in which deliberative methods are implicated. Firstly, deliberative democracy and deliberative processes are briefly outlined. Secondly disaster recovery, and national and state policies regarding community engagement in recovery, are reviewed and the place of deliberative methods within them is evaluated. Concepts of betterment, resilience, and sustainability in disaster are described and the potential role for deliberative processes to support them is explored. Finally, relevant social considerations and recommendations for using deliberative methods in the social setting that is disaster recovery are reviewed. Throughout, case studies are included to illustrate how deliberative methods have been, or might be, used in recovery processes.

DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY

DEFINING DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY

'Deliberative democracy' is an umbrella term for a number of methods of community decision-making for which deliberation is central. One key proponent of deliberative methods states "deliberation consists chiefly of exchanges about what individuals and groups value, their priorities and personal stories and their relevance to public concerns" (Melville, Willingham, & Dedrick, 2005, p. 42). In slightly fewer words, "to deliberate means to weigh carefully both the consequences of various options for action and the views of others" (Melville, et al., 2005, p. 41). Deliberative methods bring communities together in a space where the sharing of experience, ideas and opinions is a key part of the process, in order for the group to achieve an understanding of all aspects of an issue or problem and resolve common ground that ideally leads to a decision. The three essential elements required for any deliberative process to succeed as a democratic activity are such:

"Influence: the process should have the ability to influence policy and decision making.

Inclusion: the process should be representative of the population and inclusive of diverse viewpoints and values, providing equal opportunity for all to participate.

Deliberation: the process should provide open dialogue, access to information, respect, space to understand and reframe issues, and movement toward consensus." (Carson & Hartz-Karp, 2005)

Examples of deliberative methods and the terms used to refer to the numerous kinds of structured deliberative activities include: deliberative polling, planning cells, citizens' juries, consensus conferences, community panels, study circles, National Issues Forums, National Citizens' Parliaments, 21st Century Town Meetings, and Dialogue with the City (Gastil & Keith, 2005). Key elements by which these deliberative activities differ from each other are in (1) who participates in the deliberation, (2) how the overall activity and component deliberations are organised and facilitated, and (3) the potential influence of the recommendations formed in deliberations for policy and/or decision-making (Nabatchi, 2010). The participants of deliberation may be chosen using random selection from a stratified sample based on a demographic profile of the subject community, or participant group may be self-selected (participants

choose themselves to participate), or participants may be directly invited by the organisers and subsequently choose to take part (Button & Ryfe, 2005). The participants in a deliberative activity may be residents of the community in one case, representatives of interest groups or community organisations in another, business stakeholders in then another (Button & Ryfe, 2005), or a mix of all (not limited to the capacities described here). This review will focus on deliberative methods that involve community residents, sometimes referred to as 'citizens' with the same intention. In Australia, deliberative methods such as Citizens' Juries, community forums and larger-scale deliberative events have been used in varying contexts with general success. Several of these are described as case studies in the present review.

Case Study

RURAL CITY OF WANGARATTA: CITIZENS JURY

Local-level deliberative democracy and issues regarding the environment (Australia)

An exemplary deliberative event occurred in June 2010, when the Rural City of Wangaratta in Victoria partnered with the Department of Sustainability and Environment and the Alpine Shire to hold a Citizens' Jury charged with the question "How can we work together to respond to a varying climate?" A random telephone survey formed a pool of 100 interested residents, from which 20 individuals were selected to form a jury representative of the community demographic, and 18 participated for the entire duration of the jury. Over two and a half days, jurors deliberated based on information provided by expert speakers on climate change and its impact on the region, with the assistance of facilitators experienced in deliberative methods. As described by Fisher and colleagues (2010, July) and Rural City of Wangaratta (2011).

Project summary available here:

<http://www.wangaratta.vic.gov.au/council/community/Deliberative-Democracy.asp>

OR

http://is.gd/ddd_r_wang

Video summary of the Citizens' Jury here:

<http://youtu.be/HJ0CJqvMtk4>

OR

http://is.gd/ddd_dse

EVALUATING DELIBERATIVE METHODS

While there is no systematic research that has evaluated the outcomes of public deliberation against those of other professional or formal methods, there are many positive aspects associated with deliberative processes. Levine, Fung and Gastil argue that “ordinary people have frequently proven themselves to be capable of generating impressive outcomes across a wide variety of political contexts and policy issues” (2005, p. 2). Not only do deliberative methods respect the capacities held by a group of citizens, participation in deliberative methods can increase citizens’ feelings of political efficacy (Nabatchi, 2010). Despite the absence of systematic evaluations, there is no lack of constructive critique of deliberative processes. Indeed, on occasion deliberative methods have been shown dissolve consistency between participants’ attitudes and behaviour, produce decisions that conflict with expert advice and participants’ beliefs, and even sometimes lead participants to “doubt that a ‘correct’ decision exists” at all (Nabatchi, 2010, p. 10). However, this review would argue that outcomes such as these could be minimised or avoided in most cases if deliberative methods are well-organised and well-facilitated according to the elements described earlier in this section.

Further Resources

IAP2 Public Participation Spectrum

<http://www.iap2.org.au/sitebuilder/resources/knownledge/asset/files/36/iap2spectrum.pdf>

OR

http://is.gd/ddd_r_iap2

Australian Citizens’ Parliament

http://www.newdemocracy.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=67&Itemid=90&limitstart=2

OR

http://is.gd/ddd_r_acp

ActiveDemocracy.net

<http://activedemocracy.net>

Journal of Public Deliberation

<http://services.bepress.com/jpd/>

National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation (USA)

<http://ncdd.org/>

Case Study

NEW SOUTH WALES CLIMATE CONSENSUS PROJECT & NSW CLIMATE SUMMIT

Local to state-level deliberative democracy and issues regarding the environment (Australia)

In 2008 the Nature Conservation Council of NSW led the NSW Climate Consensus Project, a deliberative project with a vision for supporting NSW communities to be active in climate change decision-making (Nature Conservation Council of NSW, 2009a). The project began in August 2008 when expert facilitators Lyn Carson and Kath Fisher trained 30 council staff and community educators from local government areas across NSW to deliver deliberative forums on climate change mitigation and adaptation. This training incorporated information about the theory behind deliberative democracy, a range of deliberative processes and their use, methods of recruiting for representativeness, expert speaker selection, and practical training in deliberative facilitation techniques (Fisher, et al., 2010, July).

Twelve local forums were held during October and November 2008 with the involvement of 14 local councils. For each community forum, a group of 20 individuals closely matching the demographic of each local community were randomly selected from each pool of residents who responded to invitations. Criteria for the demographic included gender, age, town/rural residency (for regional locations) and region of birth (Nature Conservation Council of NSW, 2009a). In general, each local forum consisted of an introductory evening session and two full-day sessions (Nature Conservation Council of NSW, 2009b).

Following the series of local forums, the NSW Climate Summit brought together a group of 80 citizens, closely representative of the NSW population, in February 2009 (Nature Conservation Council of NSW, 2009a). Charged with the question ‘how can we work together to respond to climate change’, participants provided recommendations to the state government based on two days of deliberation. The two days included presentations from expert speakers, interactive panel sessions, and small group deliberation.

In order for local councils to participate the general manager or the council’s senior management were required to commit to considering the recommendations of their local forum in their council’s climate change planning and policy initiatives (Fisher, et

al., 2010, July; Nature Conservation Council of NSW, 2009b). The policy structures implicated included climate change adaptation plans, greenhouse gas reduction plans, climate change strategies and climate change action plans. In one case Uralla Council amended all relevant policies, including its Management plan and Vision Statement, in order to realign them with the 40 recommendations of their local forum (Fisher, et al., 2010, July).

Climate Consensus Project Summary Report

<http://www.penrithcity.nsw.gov.au/uploadedFiles/Website/Sustainability/Greenhouse/NSW%20Climate%20Summit%20report.pdf>

OR

http://is.gd/ddd_r_ncc

DISASTER RECOVERY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Disaster: "A serious disruption to community life which threatens or causes death or injury in that community and/or damage to property which is beyond the day-to-day capacity of the prescribed statutory authorities and which requires special mobilisation and organisation or resources other than those normally available to those authorities." (Council of Australian Governments (COAG), 2011, p. 20)

The present discussion of the use of deliberative democracy in a disaster recovery setting necessitates a definition of 'recovery'. As stated by the Australian Emergency Management Institute (AEMI), recovery is "the coordinated process of supporting affected communities in the reconstruction of the built environment and the restoration of emotional, social, economic, built and natural environment wellbeing" (AEMI, 2011, p. 3). The four integrated environments that disaster disrupts and in which recovery activities occur are the social (community and psychosocial), built (infrastructure), economic (business), and environmental (natural; AEMI, 2011). Decision-making in recovery planning and policy development will affect each of these environments. The recovery 'period' is difficult to define as the recovery process is not discontinuous from the past and does not have a specified end date, thereby placing it in the stream of ongoing social change (AEMI, 2011). The period to which the present review refers as 'disaster recovery' is a period of social change that has been magnified or accelerated due to disaster. Recovery is unique in that it is characterised by a state of time compression, in which many normal community functions occur (including business, normal life, governance and construction) but at a vastly increased rate (Johnson & Olshansky, 2011, March, p. 2). The confluence of these factors in the recovery period calls for the use of deliberative methods as a means for facilitating community-led, inclusive and representative decision-making and planning, due to the weight of the issues facing the disaster-affected community and the need to gather residents with differing interests from across the community strata.

NATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR DISASTER RECOVERY

The National Principles for Disaster Recovery outline the elements required in successful disaster recovery and highlight the importance of "using community-led approaches" alongside five other principles (Community and Disability Services Ministers' Advisory Council (CDSMAC), 2009). Deliberative methods directly incorporate the activities and elements of the

community-led approach as detailed in the Principles, such as the following (indicated by quotes):

"Centre on the community, to enable those affected by a disaster to actively participate in their own recovery"

"Seek to address the needs of all affected communities"

"Consider the values, culture and priorities of all affected communities"

Deliberative methods directly involve community members in decision-making, often in a structure that utilises a representative group of residents and encourages them to reach common ground based on a shared understanding of values, opinions, experience and knowledge.

"Use and develop community knowledge, leadership and resilience"

Deliberative methods inform community members about complex issues, such as environmental problems, and support them to make decisions based on this in the context of their personal knowledge, experience, and values. In this sense, deliberative methods enhance community knowledge.

"Ensure that the specific and changing needs of affected communities are met with flexible and adaptable policies, plans, and services."

Deliberative methods, through directly engaging the local knowledge held by residents, are most likely to result in plans and policies that are specific and appropriate for the communities in which they are applied.

"Build strong partnerships between communities and those involved in the recovery process."

Through the act of bringing together community members and recovery planners in the same room, and/or the same process, deliberative methods provide a setting in which partnerships can be made and cultivated. Residents are also more likely to feel personally invested in recovery planning if they are involved in planning processes and structures, thereby increasing the strength of partnerships (Wilson, 2009).

Overall, deliberative methods can be seen to address and support key features of the National Principles for Disaster Recovery.

Case Study

UNIFIED NEW ORLEANS PLAN: COMMUNITY CONGRESS II

Large-scale deliberative democracy in urban planning in disaster recovery (USA)

The deliberative process used to compile the Unified New Orleans Plan (UNOP) following the devastation of Hurricane Katrina in 2005 was the first instance of large-scale deliberative methods used in disaster recovery. The main event, dubbed Community Congress II (CCII) and coordinated by AmericaSpeaks, brought together 2500 New Orleans residents located across five American cities and 15 satellite sites (due to internal displacement). Across the event, residents spoke together about the issues facing New Orleans' recovery and deliberated upon recommendations for rebuilding. Following Community Congress II, community members and attendees wanted to see ongoing engagement in the process. They were concerned that their original plans were not being acted upon and felt that they no longer had involvement in planning the rebuilding process - suddenly they were no longer included. This outcome shows the importance of maintaining the integration of deliberative and participatory methods in community planning and governance. As detailed by Wilson (2009).

AmericaSpeaks uses deliberative methods to engage citizens in public decision-making across the United States
<http://americaspeaks.org/>

STATE RECOVERY PLANS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In the following analysis, community engagement mechanisms in disaster recovery policies at state level are described. New South Wales recovery policy is explored in relative depth to illustrate layered decision making structures in recovery, and to show how deliberative methods may be integrated as a means for community engagement.

The New South Wales State Disaster Plan places local government at the centre of disaster recovery management, citing its integral role in "community engagement, land use planning and development control" amongst the responsibilities of recovery coordination (State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC), 2010, p. 49). In NSW Local Recovery Committees are commissioned as the

decision-making bodies for "priorities, resource allocation and management" (SEMC, 2010, p. 52) at the local level and are responsible for the coordination of activities related to "rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating the social, built, economic and natural environments of the affected community" (SEMC, 2010, p. 52). Local Community Consultation Groups, convened by Recovery Committees, are intended to "enable members of the local community, including people affected by the event and representatives from local organisations, to meet and provide input and guidance to the recovery process" (SEMC, 2010, p. 52). These groups are also tasked with facilitating dialogue between the community and recovery authorities (Emergency Management NSW, 2010, p. 22) and may be given responsibility for developing a recovery action plan (NSW Ministry for Police & Emergency Services, 2011). It is in this area of policy that deliberative methods may be injected, and at the local level the onus for using deliberative methods in practice appears to fall on Recovery Committees.

Community engagement policy in other states such as Queensland and Victoria is less specific, but maintains the principles set at the national level. The Queensland Government funds Community Development Officers under the Community Development and Engagement Initiative to support communities to "identify their recovery priorities, activate recovery projects and assist in preparation activities for future disaster events" (Queensland Reconstruction Authority, 2011b, p. 17). Each Community Development Officer commands \$80,000 in brokerage funds to support activities in their base community, under which activities based on deliberative methods may fall (Local Government Association of Queensland, 2011). The Queensland Local Disaster Management Interim Guidelines call for community engagement and communication in recovery sub-plans but do not go into further detail as to how this should be conducted (Queensland State Disaster Management Group, 2011). In Victoria, municipality-based Community Recovery Committees are charged with representing community views under the State Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan (Office of the Emergency Services Commissioner, 2011).

The NSW Disaster Plan also directs District Recovery Committees to support local structures when a disaster affects more than one local government area, which includes the coordination of local arrangements at a district level (SEMC, 2010). This may have implications for the use deliberative methods in disasters that require community engagement across local government area boundaries.

At the state level, recovery plans provide very little

guidance for how community engagement could, or should, occur at the local level and are limited to suggesting the use of committee-based engagement methods. State recovery policies suggest that methods for community engagement are at the discretion of local governments and local community consultation groups but that engagement should support the National Principles for Disaster Recovery. Deliberative methods suit the imperatives set at the national level, but it is up to local governments to take up these tools in recovery from disaster.

Further Resources

National Principles for Disaster Recovery

http://www.facs.gov.au/sa/communities/pubs/Documents/disaster_recovery/Recovery.pdf

OR

http://is.gd/ddd_r_npd_r

Rebuilding Christchurch, NZ

<http://www.centralcityplan.org.nz/>

BETTERMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

“Can we talk about building simple, practical houses designed to withstand cyclones and storms, houses that bring in their own cooling breezes and actually save money and energy, houses that are designed to remain high and dry above the flood-line?” (Brown, 2011, February 5)

The mantra of the Victorian Government following the 2009 bushfires, ‘we will rebuild’, framed recovery as a process of restoring disaster-affected areas of Victoria to their original state. However, recovery from disaster provides a unique and valuable opportunity for ‘betterment’, for building communities back better than before, and considering principles of sustainability and disaster resilience in the process. The present review shows that the use of deliberative methods can facilitate the achievement of betterment, by supporting community members to understand principles of sustainability and enabling them to envision how their communities might be rebuilt better than before disaster.

BETTERMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

Alongside and incorporated within the argument for betterment, a push for improving environmental sustainability in disaster recovery rebuilding has emerged given the pace of environmental change currently being experienced, and the rising frequency of disaster events (Australian Emergency Management Institute (AEMI), 2011; GreenCross, 2011). In Australia and the United States, GreenCross (USA: ‘Global Green’) are leading the trend for rebuilding disaster resilient, environmentally sustainable housing and other buildings post-disaster. Fisher, Kikken and Croker (2010, July) provide support for deliberative methods as effective means for conducting informed and productive discussions with communities about climate change and other environmental issues, and this review is optimistic that deliberative methods could be used to inform community-wide decision-making that supports not just sustainable building practices, but sustainable building policies in disaster recovery.

Crucially, the National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements recognise the concept of betterment to a limited extent, where betterment “means the restoration or replacement of the asset to a more disaster-resilient standard than its pre-disaster standard” (Attorney-General’s Department, 2011, p. 5). This policy has been highlighted in the media as a means for investing recovery funds wisely, in a fashion that improves environmental sustainability and mitigates the impact of future disasters (Magendanz,

2011, February 7). The concept of betterment is not referred to in the NSW disaster or recovery plans (Emergency Management NSW, 2010; State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC), 2010), nor is it featured in the Victorian Emergency Relief and Recovery Plan (Office of the Emergency Services Commissioner, 2011). However the Queensland Reconstruction Plan incorporates use of the concepts ‘building back better’ and ‘betterment’, with the words used frequently in framing Queensland’s recovery (Queensland Reconstruction Authority, 2011a). Betterment of community assets is an ideal financially supported at the federal level, with growing support at state level and in the community.

Case Study

BALLINA: CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

Local-level deliberative democracy and issues regarding the environment (Australia)

Ballina Shire Council conducted two deliberative events in mid-2010 based on training given to staff in 2009 under the NSW Climate Consensus Project. One, a world cafe-style forum, was attended by 140 residents. Ballina Shire Council chose to use deliberative methods to develop their climate action plan instead of the conventional in-house policy development, Council comment and then public exhibition process, due to the complexity of climate change. The Council anticipated that a deliberative process would provide the context and balance required to consider the range of community members’ views, as well as improved awareness of the Council’s efforts dealing with climate change and support a positive profile for the Council’s handling of complex issues. As described by Acret and McNamara (2010, November).

Organisers’ reflections

<http://www.coastalconference.com/2010/papers2010/Suzanne%20Acret%20full%20paper.pdf>

OR

http://is.gd/ddd_r_bna

Along with the betterment of pre-disaster infrastructure, the less sensational yet crucial tasks of strategy regarding disaster preparedness, response, and long-term recovery must be given due importance relative to immediate disaster response functions (Handmer & Dovers, 2008). Disaster recovery and

rebuilding must be integrated with plans for long-term development, and deliberative methods provide a forum and process for planning to rebuild sustainably (AEMI, 2011, p. 31). By informing members of an affected community about all relevant aspects of recovery and then engaging them in making decisions about moving forward, deliberation can maintain balance and integration in recovery. In rebuilding post-Katrina, many residents had funding to rebuild their homes even before regulations regarding flood-prone areas and housing elevation requirements were complete, and before utilities supply could be returned to properties (Johnson & Olshansky, 2011, March). In this case, some lines of decision-making far surpassed others in terms of speed, and the issue of 'rebuilding' was not approached in a holistic manner. Deliberative methods call for citizens and stakeholders to be brought together to work through issues such as these, in a manner where they can more effectively vision the future of their community and consider the long-term implications of decisions made during recovery.

Case Study

PLANNING FOR PERTH: 'DIALOGUE WITH THE CITY'

Large-scale deliberative democracy and urban planning (Australia)

Spurred by a growing awareness of the lack of sustainability in Perth's metropolitan sprawl, then minister for planning and infrastructure for Western Australia, Alannah MacTiernan, initiated the 2003 'Dialogue with the City' process in an endeavour to engage the entire Perth community in the creation of a new planning strategy for the metropolitan area (Carson & Hartz-Karp, 2005, p. 132). The key deliberative event was a 21st Century Town Meeting held in September 2003 and attended by 1100 residents, who envisioned "their preferred model for the city and specifically how that model could be achieved" (p. 133). Based on the themes and recommendations drawn from this event and all activities prior, one hundred participants from the Town Meeting developed a plan for Perth, which was reviewed by the larger cohort of Town Meeting participants (and the broader community) at critical points in development. The new planning strategy held sustainability at its core, and the entire process looked towards a vision of Perth as the world's most livable city by 2030. At the culmination of the entire process, the Western Australia government accepted the strategy.

Case Study Report

See Hartz-Karp (2005) for a full report

<http://www.activedemocracy.net/articles/jhk-dialogue-city.pdf>

OR

http://is.gd/ddd_r_jhk

Detailed overview of process components

http://www.21stcenturydialogue.com/index.php?package=Initiatives&action=Link&file=dialogue_with_the_city.html

OR

http://is.gd/ddd_r_per

NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR DISASTER RESILIENCE

Resilience is a growing focus of disaster preparedness and response, with its value recognised at a national level by the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience (NSDR; Council of Australian Governments (COAG), 2011). Unfortunately, efforts to build resilience in recovery are often poorly funded and less resourced than the organisations implicated in response, perhaps considering the community, media and political pressures regarding efficient and effective response (COAG, 2011). This section seeks to evaluate the role that deliberative methods might play in building resilience in disaster recovery.

Ideally, resilience builds across each cycle of 'prevention, preparedness, response and recovery' (Gordon, 2004), as illustrated by Aguirre who sees resilience as encompassing all three of the following components in an ongoing process. A resilient community:

"predicts and anticipates disasters; absorbs, responds and recovers from the shock; and improvises and innovates in response to disasters." (2006, cited by AEMI, 2011)

The NSDR further illustrates Aguirre's components by identifying the characteristics of communities that are required for carrying them out, including "functioning well while under stress; successful adaptation; self-reliance; and social capacity" (p. 21). Community assets that should be considered in a discussion of resilience are broad, but can be seen to fit into the following categories of capital: human, social, physical, natural, financial, political (COAG, 2011, p. 5). Each of these forms of capital is implicated in the discussion of community resilience in that they can be considered separately.

The National Strategy for Disaster Resilience (COAG, 2011) calls for several elements in disaster recovery relevant to the use of deliberative methods and which are intertwined with notions of sustainability and betterment. The strategy envisions a whole-of-government community-integrated approach to responding to disaster, and highlights the importance of distribution of responsibility and inclusion of stakeholders. The strategy compels recovery plans to be “developed in partnership with communities” and to consider “long-term local needs”, and to incorporate tools and mechanisms for communities to “manage their exposure to future disasters” (p. 13). If deliberative methods are to be integrated into recovery, then recovery liaison experts who have experience in disaster, such as those provided by the NSW government to local governments, must be aware of the use of deliberative methods in community engagement in decision-making and have the capacity to coordinate the use of these methods in planning structures (COAG, 2011). These recovery liaison experts are provided by the state government to local governments to support strategic decision-making and share experience and knowledge with local governments with little disaster management experience (COAG, 2011). Deliberative democratic methods such as citizens’ juries call for the involvement of representative groups of citizens to hear from relevant stakeholders, thereby supporting the imperative of inclusion, and the nature of deliberative groups as decision-making bodies divests singular organisations of the onus of responsibility for decisions made. Deliberative methods can be, and have been, used to frame urban planning with a long-term view, with a focus on sustainability and resilience, as shown in the case studies.

At an applied level, the NSDR provides many examples of how disaster resilience can be fostered and what it looks like to have done so (AEMI, 2011, p. 23). In a disaster resilient community, there is a general awareness and understanding of the kind of risk the community faces in terms of disaster, and which parts are more vulnerable. Individuals use this knowledge to prepare for disaster, reduce risk, and inform their actions during disaster response. Strong social networks and links between community leaders value the differing strengths of individuals in the community, especially the relationships related to emergency services, and these links support community response during emergency. Considerations for resilience reach as far as land use planning systems, which are implicated as a potential means for reducing the impact of disaster on specific areas. Finally resilience, as defined by the NSDR, means that “a satisfactory range of functioning is restored quickly” (p.6),

community members are aware of the mechanisms and avenues for recovery assistance, and emergency management plans themselves build community resilience over time through their execution. For deliberative methods to be most effective, their use must roll into this resilience-building cycle and acknowledge the principles that foster resilience.

Further Resources

GreenCross Australia ‘Build it Back Green’
<http://builditbackgreen.org/>

Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority (VBRRRA) Guide for Sustainable Rebuilding
<http://archive.wewillrebuild.vic.gov.au/reconstruction/sustainable-rebuilding.html>
OR
http://is.gd/ddd_r_vbrra

Rebuilding Together: Green Housing
<http://rebuildingtogether.org/section/initiatives/greenhousing>
OR
http://is.gd/ddd_r_t

Rebuilding Flowerdale, Victoria
<http://youtu.be/Z4j06VlQZ0k>
OR
http://is.gd/ddd_r_fd
AND
<http://www.extremeweatherheroes.org/rebuilding-green/case-studies/rebuilding-flowerdale-green.aspx>
OR
http://is.gd/ddd_r_gfd

SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS: COMMUNITIES IN RECOVERY

From the moment of impact, or across a period of sustained imposition, disaster changes the face of a community. Social networks experience upheaval and priorities become fluid across time. It is important to consider the unique social setting that is the recovery period following disaster, given that it is remarkably different than what might be considered everyday life elsewhere. The following section attempts to describe the community scene in which deliberative methods would be placed and the implications this has for implementation.

Rob Gordon (2004) provides an essential overview of the flux in connections that community social networks experience during and after disaster. The impact of disaster displaces the normal social system, whereby typical ties are broken in a state dubbed debonding. New ties are improvised based on immediate need, and individuals inside the affected network act based on the extent of their situational awareness, often for survival. Directly following the passing of the threat occurs a stage of fusion, in which networks rapidly reform based on immediate need and physical closeness. This hyperconnected, hyperaware fusion state serves the immediate needs of the network, but post-disaster (following the emergency period) it is important for the community to devolve from this state efficiently, constructively, and positively, ensuring a smooth transition back to pre-disaster (or similar) roles. This devolution is referred to as differentiation, the stage in which roles and relationships from pre-disaster life return and the network regains complexity. However, the aforementioned demographic conditions of a community and other factors such as social inequality, lack of planning and experience, and conflicting opinions can result in conflict, tension and negativity as the community enters the recovery stage. Deliberative methods may serve to contribute in differentiating the fused network in an efficient manner and in preventing cleavage, a kind of extraordinary division and conflict in the community social network based on differences in resources, compensation, losses, experiences, joint tensions and location in the post-response period. The conflict and unnatural differentiation associated with cleavage can be based upon announcements of decisions that benefit some and disadvantage others, or leave them wanting. By investing community members in decision-making post-disaster, in a transparent and representative context, deliberative methods may be a useful means for cultivating a positive community state after disaster.

Case Study

CEDAR RAPIDS FLOOD: 'NEIGHBOURHOOD REINVESTMENT ACTION PLANS'

Large-scale community engagement in urban planning in disaster recovery (USA)

In June 2008 the Cedar River crested at over 30 feet, its highest level in history, resulting in the displacement of over 18,000 residents of Cedar Rapids, Iowa (Rapids, 2011). Over 5,000 homes were impacted, as well as more than 300 city-owned buildings, and the entire downtown core of the 122,000-resident city was inundated (Prosser, 2011, July 28; Rapids, 2011). Just four days after the peak of the flood the city hosted three 'open house' meetings attended by 2,860 people, to create the city's Framework for Reinvestment and Revitalisation - not just a plan for recovery, but also for achieving its vision for a "vibrant urban hometown" that includes sustainable neighbourhoods (Rapids, 2011). In the first five months of the following year more than 1,400 residents participated in the Neighbourhood Planning Process, a series of eight community meetings and workshops in which residents developed ideas and plans for reinvestment to guide redevelopment over the following 10 to 15 years. The planning process across the series of workshops and meetings followed an iterative path, focusing on goals at the first stage, then ideas, scenarios, area plans, and action plans at subsequent workshops (Sasaki, 2009). In May 2009, the city voted unanimously to adopt the Neighbourhood Reinvestment Plan, created in partnership with the community (Sasaki, 2009). A key element that enabled the rapid coordination of community engagement efforts was Cedar Rapids' governance structure, in which community engagement makes up a significant, popular, and valued component, and incorporates a comprehensive vision document developed just six months prior to the flood and that was supported strongly by residents and community organisations (Prosser, 2011, July 28).

'Corridor Recovery' Process Overview
<http://www.corridorrecovery.org/>

In light of the concepts relating to social conditions and structures explored in the preceding paragraphs, there are a number of relevant considerations for the use of deliberative methods in decision-making in disaster recovery, including that deliberative methods may serve to devolve the fusion state efficiently and mitigate cleavage. Deliberative activities and events could aid in clarifying the fusion-differentiation transition by encouraging community members and stakeholders to think in their pre-disaster roles, thereby fostering constructive differentiation. However, 'outsiders' are excluded from networks during the fusion stage (Gordon, 2004), indicating that deliberative methods should begin post-fusion, but the structures implicated in recovery decision-making should prepare deliberative methods in activities that begin during differentiation. Deliberative methods are a direct means for consulting with communities, thereby preventing cleavage based on disagreement and lack of communication between individuals with differing perspectives. Similarly, the 'togetherness' of a recently-affected community with the 'common purpose' mindset in recent memory may prove to support effective deliberation.

In communities affected by disaster, there are several structures in which residents participate that support community social rehabilitation. Recovery planning structures, such as the Victorian Bushfires Community Recovery Committees, play an important role in their prescribed purpose as well as having a social rehabilitative role for communities, however other community organisations are relevant to consider as well. In the Canberra bushfires of 2003 the residents' association was a source for a sense of empowerment and self-determination among residents (Winkworth, Healy, Woodward, & Camilleri, 2003). However, some residents commented that negativity, lack of acceptance, and a focus on blame from some prominent community activists held back progress, impacted children's understanding of the situation, and made some people feel 'stuck' (Winkworth, et al., 2003). These responses provide practical considerations about the state of community networks in the recovery period, indicating community interest in social events and the power that decision-making structures such as a residents' association can have on community attitudes. Deliberative methods of community engagement may be seen to serve similar outcomes as community recovery committees and associations, but in a structured democratic manner.

The Victorian Bushfires Community Recovery Committees jointly published a document detailing lessons learned during the 2009 Victorian bushfires that speaks to the appropriateness of the use of

deliberative methods in disaster recovery (2011). The report's key advice for community planning includes:

*"Take the time to develop a recovery plan properly and engage others.
Be clear about the process used to create your plan and to set priorities. ...
Cater for the different recovery needs of different people in your community."* (p. 3)

The Committees note the importance of their role in sharing the views expressed by the community, across the community. Furthermore, they emphasise the priority of restoring the community's basic needs - "food and water, somewhere safe to stay, essential services etc." - before community planning can begin.

In terms of trust in governance, communities feel greater trust in decision-making when 'linking' social capital exists, where members of the community are personally involved or have access to the decision-making processes of organisations such as government and NGOs (Winkworth, et al., 2003). In one case, a lack of linking to decision makers and intercommunity bridging capital lead to feelings of isolation from surrounding communities, a sense of fatalism, and lack of a sense of control (Winkworth, et al., 2003). By virtue of their nature, deliberative methods with (prior-assured) strong influence on policy would improve linking capital by bringing communities into decision-making processes and closer to individual figures with decision-making power, thereby improving the community's trust in governance.

If deliberative methods are to be incorporated into recovery planning processes, they must be embedded within communications regarding decision-making in recovery (AEMI, 2011). Effective communication is essential in the post-emergency period and deliberative methods should remain transparent and embedded within recovery processes. One Canberra resident, reflecting on her community around the time of the 2003 bushfires, highlights the groups and networks that emerged post-disaster that may become a resource in gathering community involvement in deliberative decision-making (Tilley, 2009, February 11). She notes the women's networks, the school-based family 'buddy system', the social workers and counselors who met with many community members, and the databases of survivors that emerged. The local shopping centre became central in community life, as 'everyone needs to shop', and she recommends this as a point for distributing important information, along with libraries, government offices, community centres, and cultural and religious centres. These considerations in communication and community structures are

relevant in understanding the state of a community in which deliberative methods might be promoted.

The reality of conducting community engagement in disaster recovery is that it occurs within a complex, hot social environment, and deliberative methods would not be immune to this. However as the preceding section has demonstrated, deliberative processes may prove to assist in cooling the hyperconnected community social network following disaster and enabling community members to resume their 'normal' non-disaster roles. Deliberative methods in community engagement are likely to be protective against 'cleavage', given that they are coordinated appropriately, as per the key elements described earlier in this review. There is an opportunity for deliberation to be used within existing recovery decision-making structures such as Community Recovery Committees, given their influential and visible role in recovery, but the opportunity can be expanded further than these committees for deliberative processes to involve the broader community. Deliberative methods facilitate trust in governance, whatever the decision-making structure may be, and

speaking directly to the lessons learned by the Victorian Bushfires CRCs. Deliberative methods must be embedded within recovery and community engagement processes, but the capacity for communities to begin planning recovery given their emotional and social state should be respected.

Further Resources

Lessons Learned by Community Recovery Committees of the 2009 Victorian Bushfires

http://www.redcross.org.au/files/Lessons_Learned_by_Community_Recovery_Committees_of_the_2009_Victorian_Bushfires_v1.0.pdf

OR

<http://is.gd/dddrcrcs>

Strathewen Community Renewal Association

<http://strathewen.vic.au/rebuilding/scra>

Kinglake Ranges, Flowerdale and Toolangi Plan and Design Framework

<http://kftplan.com.au/>

CONCLUSION

Deliberative methods are a means for robustly democratic, carefully considered community-driven decision-making. They are most democratic when they are influential, inclusive, and openly deliberative (Carson & Hartz-Karp, 2005). Deliberative processes have been, and are, being used, in Australia to effectively enable communities to drive decision-making on issues relating to urban planning, the environment and climate change. Similarly, deliberative methods have been used successfully in the United States in disaster recovery settings. Deliberative methods support the community-led approach called for by the National Principles for Disaster Recovery, including supporting partnership and adaptability, using and developing community knowledge, and considering the needs of all affected (Council of Australian Governments (COAG), 2011). In policy, Australian state-level recovery plans focus on committee-based engagement, and the onus for community engagement is ultimately placed upon local government.

'Betterment' of infrastructure is endorsed by the National Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (Attorney-General's Department, 2011) and advocated for within the Queensland Reconstruction Plan (Queensland Reconstruction Authority, 2011a). Deliberative methods can facilitate the achievement of betterment by supporting communities to understand principles of sustainability, and enabling them to envision how their communities might be rebuilt better than before disaster. Rebuilding post-disaster must take on a long-term view. Deliberative methods are a non-political means for facilitating long-term planning for sustainability and disaster resilience, in a manner that best serves the community. Deliberative methods support the building of community resilience in terms of strengthening social networks and partnerships, knowledge sharing, and understanding risk and vulnerability.

Deliberative methods may serve to aid community social networks to devolve efficiently from the hyperconnected, hyperaware emergency response state. Deliberative methods may also serve as a protective mechanism against conflict and division in recovery. Community members feel greater trust in governance and decision-making the nearer they feel, and the more access they have, to the decision-makers themselves (Winkworth, et al., 2003). Deliberative methods ideally apportion responsibility for decision-making to community participants, thereby increasing community confidence in governance.

This review has shown that deliberative methods are an effective means of community engagement in disaster recovery. At a time when Australia is faced with the potential for more frequent and stronger disasters, and other repercussions of climate change, it is essential that mechanisms such as deliberative processes support communities to rebuild for long-term sustainability and resilience.

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