

HOUSING PATTERNS AFTER A LANDSLIDE

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Evacuation is a common response to disasters, and many students have looked upon the short term aspects of evacuations [Hultåker, 1976] [Perry, Lindell, and Greene, 1980]. Much less is known about long term consequences.

Studies have shown the importance of family and kin when people decide to evacuate [Bates et al., 1963] [Drabek, 1969] and their preferences for staying with relatives rather than in public shelters [Young, 1954] [Moore et al., 1963] [Haas, 1978]. Families gather to decide if they should evacuate and where they should go. They want to keep together if they leave their homes, and they try to stay with their kin or with friends if they lack relatives. Hultåker [1979] has analyzed some factors affecting the family decision to leave and to stay away from a disaster site. People compare the disaster site with their best alternative available, i.e., they compare their home with their potential place of evacuation. Among factors taken into account are the standard of living, the risk of injuries, the cultural values, and the social norms. Mileti, Drabek, and Haas [1975, p. 12] have indicated the shortage of research on reconstruction following natural disasters. Others, like Cuny [1978], have stressed the need to evaluate housing programs, their efficiency and consequences. There is a need for more empirical studies and for systematic analysis of permanent housing.

The length of time before people can move into permanent houses is of great importance after a disaster. Two out of three necessary houses were constructed within ten months after an earthquake in Turkey, which is a developing country [Mitchell, 1977], but three years were not enough in northern Italy. Four years after the event, Pelanda [1980] characterizes the disaster site of the 1976 earthquake in Friuli as a temporary housing system; so-called temporary housing often becomes permanent [Davis, 1977]. Cuny [1978] has made a summary of difficulties in providing permanent housing after a disaster. He observes that houses cannot be efficiently provided without taking into consideration the process through which houses are normally provided in the society.