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Logistics challenges during post disaster responses: A case study of New Zealand.

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Abstract

Background: The frequencies and magnitudes of disasters are on the increase and the tolls cause human misery and physical loss or damage to properties. The Canterbury earthquakes in 2010 and 2011 were not an exception and were extensive with collateral damage to infrastructure especially within the central business district of Christchurch city. Such disruptions necessitate urgency in the distribution of humanitarian needs but very often logistics arrangements fall short of expectations. This study examines the logistics challenges post Canterbury earthquakes. It focuses on the humanitarian activities within the Christchurch suburb.

Method: Primary data were collected from residents (the affected), rescuers and responders using stratified random sampling methodology. Other data are obtained from Council, MCDem and independent agency reports. These data were analysed using quantitative and qualitative tools with a view to meeting the study objectives.

Results: The results of the study shown that the suburbs of Christchurch such as Bexley and Aranui communities were greatly affected during the earthquakes and the initial attention were not on them. They were without flushing toilets while the eastern suburbs were totally forgotten even three months after the disaster while the initial efforts were concentrated on the Central Business District of Christchurch. The logistics challenges such as inadequate transport services, damaged transport infrastructures, high pedestrian traffic on the few access roads, inadequate porta loos and life saving products among other were some of the challenges that made the cushioning of the effects of the earthquakes a very difficult task. Thus the alleviation of disaster impact in the affected areas will remain a great challenge in the field of logistics and disaster as New Zealand is very prone to disasters.

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Conclusion: The study should provide enrich information and knowledge of humanitarian responses in disaster situations. This will enable countries to better cope in future disasters.

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