# Northumbria Research Link

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# What Next for Disaster Education and Communication?

ZiF-Research Group "Communicating Disaster"
Dealing with the Disasters of Others
Centre for Interdisciplinary Research, Bielefeld University, Germany  26th to 28th January, 2012

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# Overview

1. Driving rationale for *change* in disaster education and communication.

2. Where we have got to with disaster education – some indications based on the UK and other observations.

3. Enduring issues.

4. Contributions and opportunities for disaster education and communication futures?

- *Caveat:* Global variation in current disaster education and communication practices.

# 1. Rationale for change in disaster education and communication

- Underlying demand:
  - Expanded interpretations and representations of disaster = need for rethink of disaster education - its breadth and depth.
  - Dealing with complex disaster risk and emergencies implies formal and informal education that is developmental and adaptive.
- Communication challenges pervade this *dynamic* field – so what is *'appropriate'* disaster education and communication?

# Further rationales

- Risk management, resilience, adaptation, recovery and other aspects of disaster status quo require *wise* disaster education systems.

- Uncertainty awareness – part of education for improving the manner in which disaster knowledge and action can be communicated and implemented.

- Moral imperative to develop disaster education with the young, for survivability of future generations with new strategies.
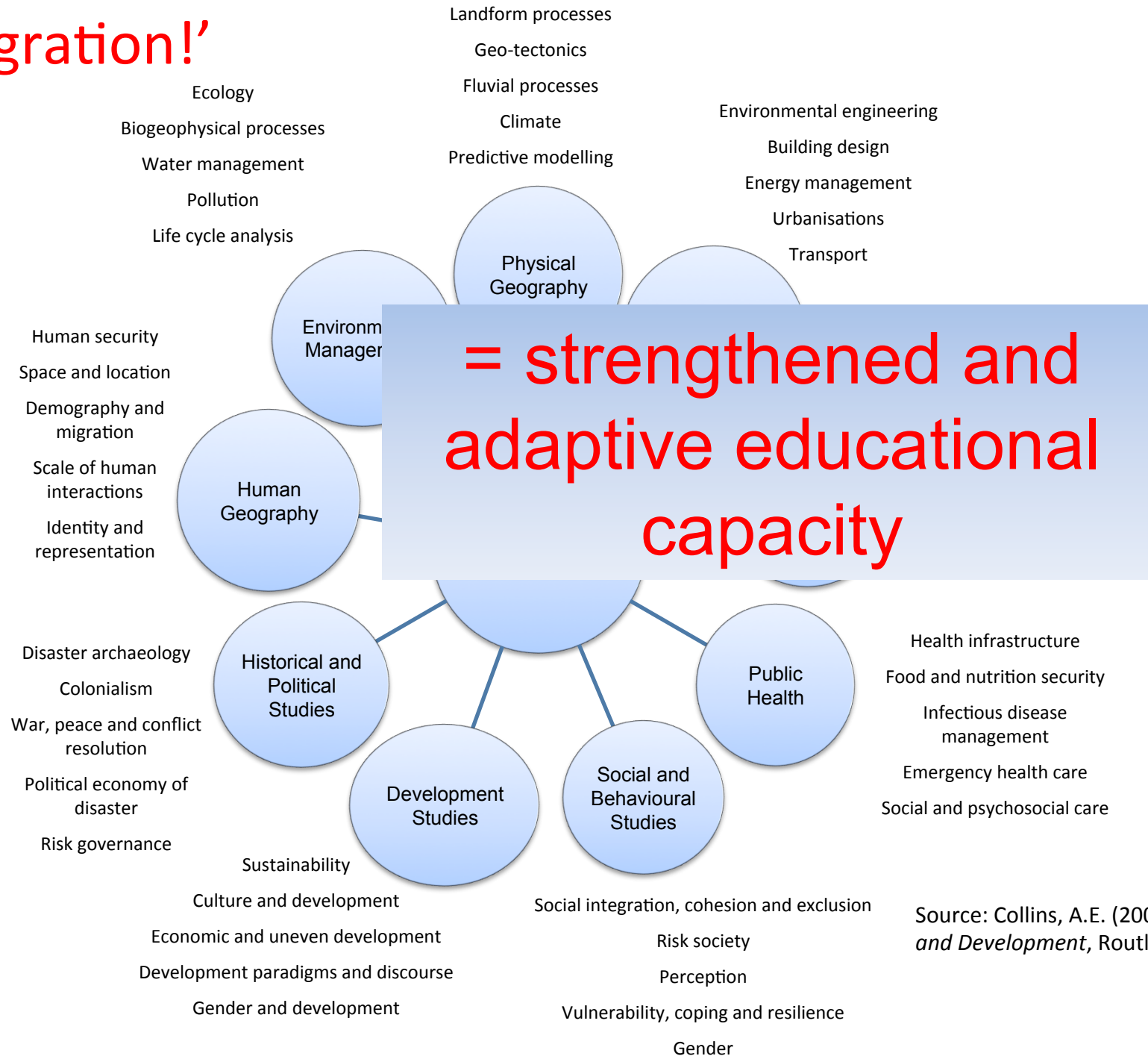
# Disaster Education Engagement

*The manner in which people access, learn, implement, communicate and demonstrate a capacity to deal with disruptive incidents.*

# Disaster Education Interdisciplinary Knowledge Base

- Hard Science

- Soft Science

- Non-Science

- Art - Faith – Culture

- Politics

'Integration!'

= strengthened and adaptive educational capacity

Physical Geography
- Landform processes
- Geo-tectonics
- Fluvial processes
- Climate
- Predictive modelling

Environmental Management
- Ecology
- Biogeophysical processes
- Water management
- Pollution
- Life cycle analysis

- Environmental engineering
- Building design
- Energy management
- Urbanisations
- Transport

Human Geography
- Human security
- Space and location
- Demography and migration
- Scale of human interactions
- Identity and representation

Historical and Political Studies
- Disaster archaeology
- Colonialism
- War, peace and conflict resolution
- Political economy of disaster
- Risk governance

Development Studies
- Sustainability
- Culture and development
- Economic and uneven development
- Development paradigms and discourse
- Gender and development

Social and Behavioural Studies
- Social integration, cohesion and exclusion
- Risk society
- Perception
- Vulnerability, coping and resilience
- Gender

Public Health
- Health infrastructure
- Food and nutrition security
- Infectious disease management
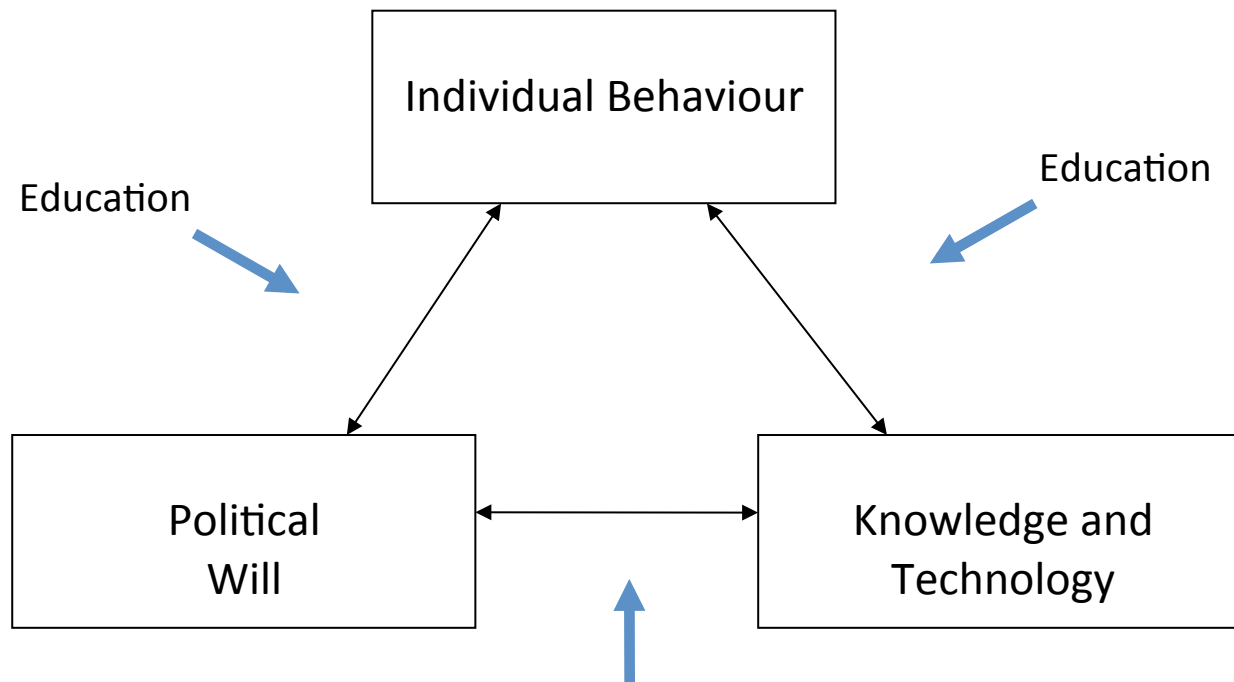- Emergency health care
- Social and psychosocial care

Source: Collins, A.E. (2009) *Disaster and Development*, Routledge p.3.

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# Underlying influences of education on disaster reduction initiatives

Individual Behaviour

Education

Education

Political Will

Knowledge and Technology

Education

**Real, Perceived and Constructed**

Source: Collins, A.E. (2009) *Disaster and Development*, Routledge p.151

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# (Educational) Influences on the Risk Learning Cycle

Measurement

Knowledge/
understanding

Perception

Uncertainty

Stakeholder politics

Knowledge integration

Communication

Risk
Assessment

*Decision
Making*

Disaster
Threat

*Decision
Making*

Risk
Management

Institutional learning

Investment in research

Investment in legislation

Risk reduction

Risk transfer

Risk ownership /
responsibility

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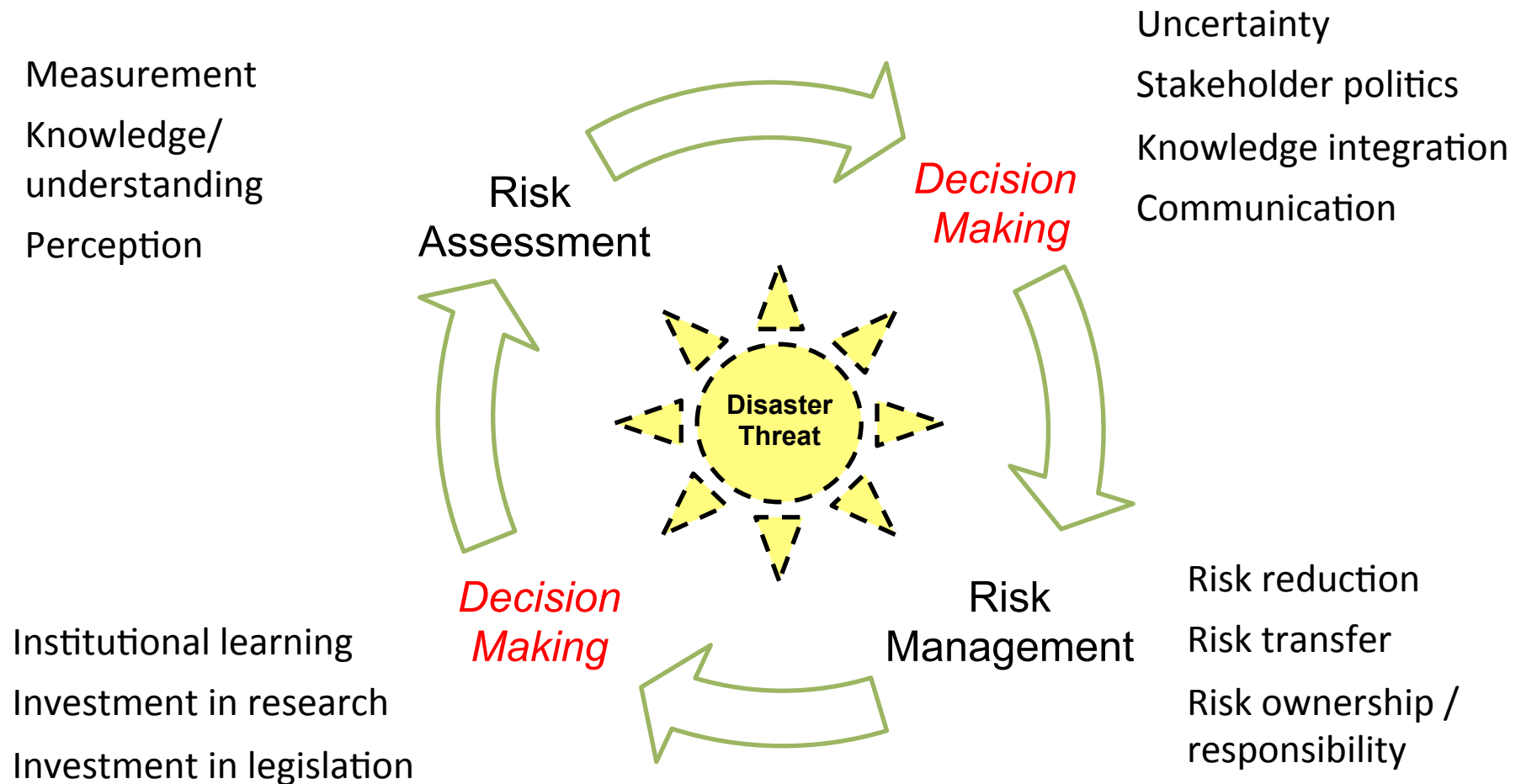
# *Education Gaps:* compensating relationship between disaster impact, uncertainty and risk reduction



**Potential Impact** (vertical axis)

**Uncertainty** (horizontal axis)

Unstable Disaster Threat

Uncertainty reduced, commitment to change neglected

Certainty accompanied by moral and political change

Idealised risk reduction

More stable threat

Uncertainty accepted, vulnerability reduced

Resilience established, uncertainty managed

Source: Collins, A.E. (2009) *Disaster and Development*, Routledge

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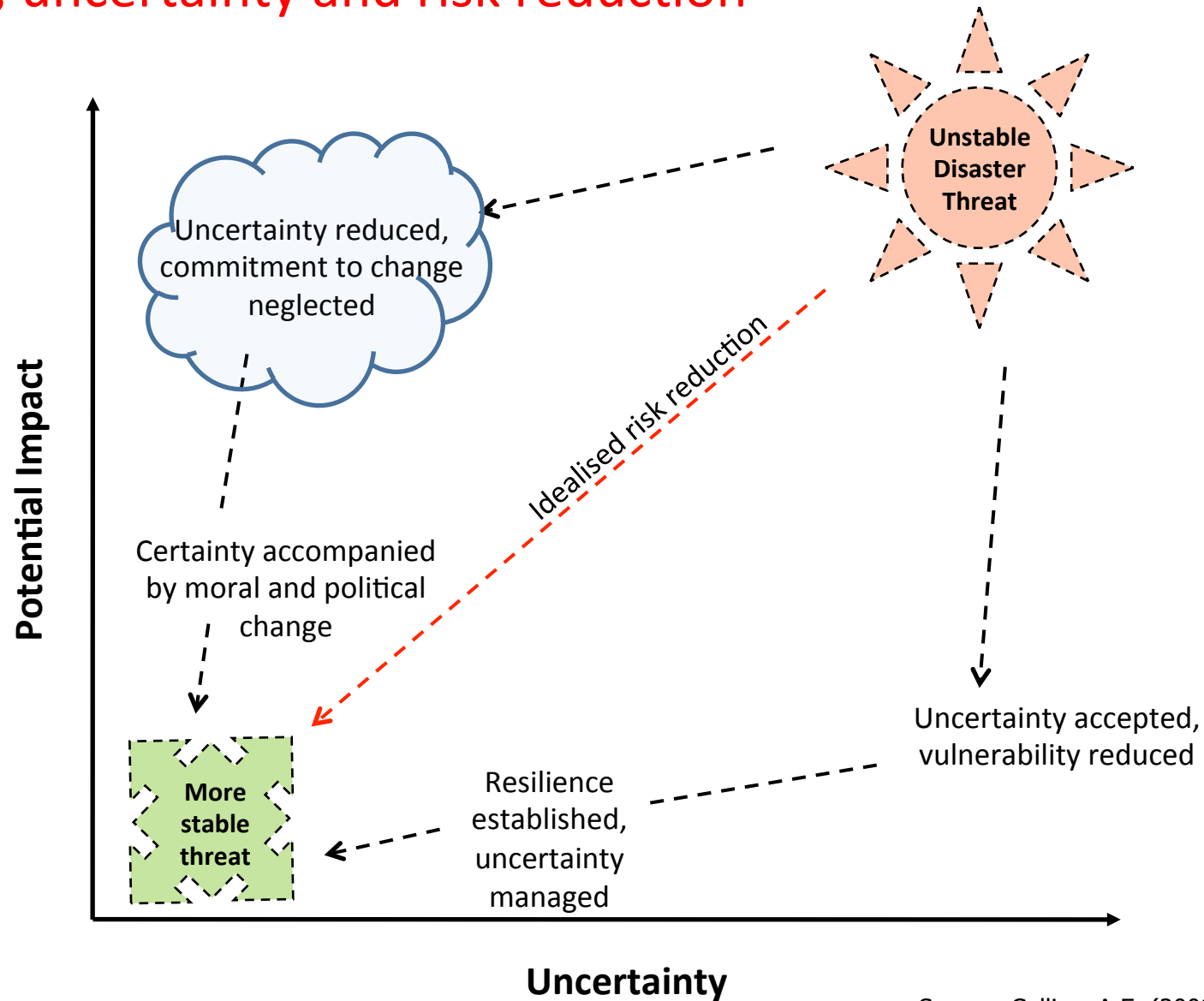
# 2: Disaster Education in the UK Seminar Series

## 2009 – 2010

# Objectives of the UK disaster education seminar series

*To:*

i) Explore conceptual challenges of disaster education

ii) Bring together academics and practitioners – i.e. emergency management specialists, education sector and others interested

iii) Identify disaster education options in the UK and interrelate these wider – i.e. learn from others internationally

# Information Aid?
## The role of the media in responding to disasters

**SOAS** University of London

**JICA** Japan International Cooperation Agency

**Wednesday 30 November 2011**

**Henry Wellcome Auditorium**
Wellcome Collection Conference Centre
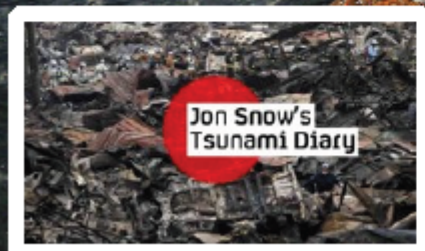183 Euston Road, London NW1 2BE

**8.00pm**
## Seminar and Q&A

**7.00pm**
## Drinks reception

**7.30pm**
## Special screening of
Jon Snow's "Tsunami Diary"

Jon Snow's Tsunami Diary

**Jon Snow**
ITN Journalist
Channel 4 News Presenter

**Wataru Sawamura**
London Bureau Chief
The Asahi Shimbun

**Andrew Collins**
Director, Disaster &
Development Centre
(Chair)

**Please RSVP to Thomas Feeny:**
email: thomasf@jica.co.uk or call (020) 7963 9554

# Some Questions

- What is the pedagogy of disaster in the UK?
- What can be learnt and taught through the educational environment?
- What are the learning prospects of the state, private, corporate and individual disaster risk reduction?
- How do children engage community risk awareness and how does the community engage its children?
- What are the opportunities for adapting school curricula to disaster prevention and response, and what are the boundaries of the topic for UK schools?

# UK progress identified

- Civil Contingencies Act 2004

- Awareness of need for competencies

- Getting a direct link to school curriculum – i.e. safety, health and wellbeing approach (Guidelines for Health Education – Scotland; Fire and Rescue Service Inputs to Schools and School Safety; Community Resilience through Schools – Essex)

- Some recognition of community role (i.e. Pitt Review 2008). More apparent for N. Ireland.

- Recognition of the value of learning tools in disaster education at school level

# UK Disaster Education - Scope of Emergent Points

| 1. Learning Processes | 2. Institutional Development | 3. Tools to Do the Job |
|---|---|---|
| • Appropriate Information<br><br>• Communication<br><br>• Perception<br><br>• Motivation<br><br>• Bringing academics and practitioners together<br><br>• Child centred disaster risk reduction | • Community groups<br><br>• Blue light services<br><br>• School education<br><br>• Evidence based sciences<br><br>• Responsible citizenship<br><br>• Safe communities | • Visual tools (film, drama ..)<br><br>• IT networks<br><br>• Risk registers<br><br>• Competency frameworks<br><br>• Learning plans (and what if...?)<br><br>• Quiz and gaming<br><br>• Risk mapping |

# Challenges Identified – UK Case (i)

- No common understanding of the boundaries of the disasters subject area for schools

- Limited embeddedness of community driven processes

- Media portrayal with limited understanding of risk

- Conflicts between hierarchies

- Difficult to make sense of varied information sources

- Community / individual behaviour and capacity varying with disaster types and contexts  (i.e. contrast Aberfan and Belfast, but now also in relation to England's riots)

# Challenges Identified – UK Case (ii)

- Guidance misfit: i.e. '1$^{st}$ responders' - Moral and ethical drive of public to assist versus 'get out and leave it to the professionals' – education process could accentuate this divide further.

- Rules versus knowledge.

- Differentiated 'vulnerable groups' – children, post-conflict, old, gender, displaced, those outside education system, non-communal people, those 'without resilience', 'survivors', minority groups, the more exposed, and the least able to react to or express risk.

- Collective resilience might need more than education.

- Motivation?

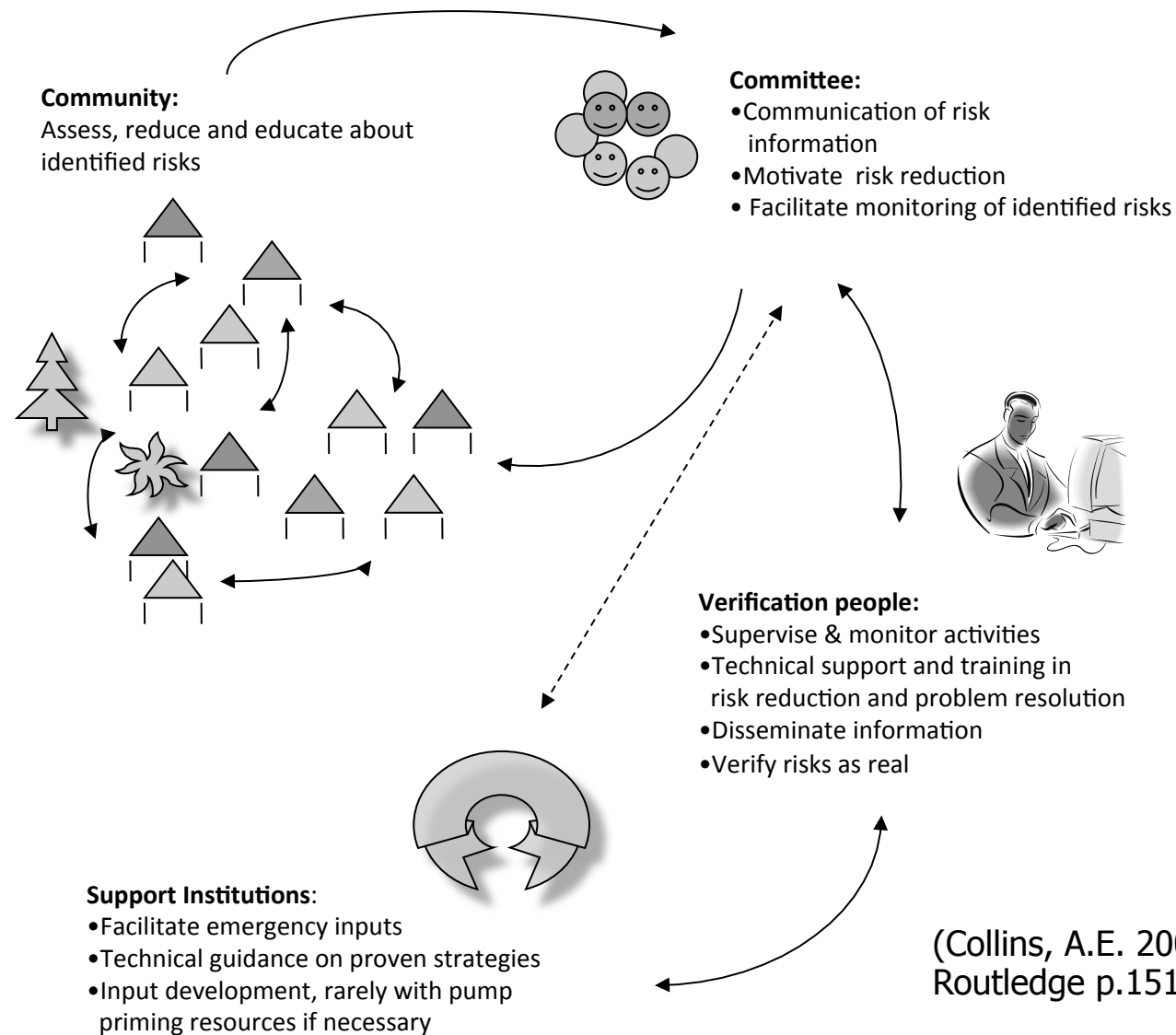# Areas generally considered under-explored in the UK

- The role of children's education in developing community disaster risk reduction.

- Emergency planning through school curriculum (i.e. Considered more advanced in Japan and the US)

- Community risk/development committees approach (i.e. more advanced in the developing world), though some parallel structures quite strong in the UK, such as community watch schemes.

- Disaster reduction education as ongoing development and change (also a global lacuna)

# 3. Idealised Proactive Disaster Education Engagement

- **Strategy to engage civilians**
  - Identify risks, vulnerabilities and hazards
  - Locally owned prevention and response
  - Investment in technology, justice, and recognition of human values in bringing about wellbeing
  - Counteract moral/social downturns in society, with potential economic and environmental benefits for people
- **Benefits of citizen first**
  - Engages knowledge, attitudes and practice
  - Is relatively sustainable
  - Addresses multiple hazards and risks, not just some

# Community Risk Communication Processes

*Additionality: i) systems that can be adapted to multiple risks, ii) improved wellbeing rather than risk control.*



**Community:**
Assess, reduce and educate about identified risks

**Committee:**
- Communication of risk information
- Motivate risk reduction
- Facilitate monitoring of identified risks

**Verification people:**
- Supervise & monitor activities
- Technical support and training in risk reduction and problem resolution
- Disseminate information
- Verify risks as real

**Support Institutions:**
- Facilitate emergency inputs
- Technical guidance on proven strategies
- Input development, rarely with pump priming resources if necessary

(Collins, A.E. 2009 *Disaster and Development*, Routledge p.151)

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# Basics of information for disaster education

- Information for communication
- Information for action
- The right amount of information (cost benefit analysis)
- A sustainable and adaptable use of information
- Participatory information

# Disaster Education engagement ...

- that integrates with local realities,

- for which the users of the education are understood,

- that serves for decision making,

- reflective of changing contexts,

- capable of informing outcomes of decision making,

- and which is continuously evaluated.

# Adaptive disaster education

- the adoption of ideas and actions that extends beyond formal education systems by any part of society leading to adaptive disaster education

# Some Possible Outcomes of Disaster Education and Communication Futures

- Resilience through adaptable social relations and education

- Learning as process rather than for answers

- Professionalism rather than Managerialism

- Capacity to be able to live with uncertainty

- Knowledge not to 'puff up', but education and taking care that builds up.

# 4. *Communicating Disaster* Contribution to Disaster Education

- Constructive tendencies in disaster interpretation render its disciplinary, policy and practice boundaries dynamic

- Better understanding of the nature of disaster communication enriches educative possibilities

- Techniques of disaster communication analysis (soft and hard) improves data interpretation

- Non-linearity in disaster can be expressed and therefore a part of the disaster education experience

# *Communicating Disaster* Contributions to Disaster Education

- Disaster knowledge communication can be non-hierarchical and widely realised

- Visualisation of disaster risk, in context can add significantly to what is communicated and therefore to disaster education – language is also crucial

- Education on its own is insufficient to bring about change – historical and current day evidence

- The media role is extensive and any new disaster education should respond to supporting this link

# *Communicating Disaster* Contribution to Disaster Education

- A consequence of 'grounded' ICT is self or virtual community based disaster education.

- Challenge of operationalsing – what institutional arrangements to facilitate the provision of disaster education.