



Improving seismic safety of structures will save the lives of future generations.

resistant construction has become increasingly in the past two decades. In Colombia, for example, the Popayan earthquake (1983) prompted the development of a vocational training program aimed at builders ("maestros"). Techniques to minimize earthquake risk have been incorporated into the technical education curriculum. During reconstruction, Popayan families building their own homes took courses as well.

Upgrading the seismic safety of structures can also be accompanied by a strategy to upgrade the living standards of the occupants. In Mexico City, the government upgraded the pre-disaster housing stock by enlarging the living quarters, adding electric power and running water, and providing sewer hook-ups. Both seismic safety and living conditions were improved in a focused program that was geared to the needs and lifestyles of the occupants

Finally, the reconstruction period can be used to incorporate the social and cultural values into the rebuilding process. the goal of reconstruction should be to strengthen the local community. There is a wide variety of skills, experience, manpower, and institutional capabilities that should be exploited, in a positive sense. In the final analysis, the rebuilding process can be used to coalesce a community, to invigorate institutions that have a role and responsibility in the reconstruction process.

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