

## Geography Essay: Medc and Ledc's Responses to Earthquakes

The effects of an earthquake and the responses to them are different across the world. This usually depends on how wealthy or poor the country is. For example in Medc's which are More Economically Developed Countries they would probably be able to repair damage and help survivors quicker and also in a safer way than a Ledc which is a Less economically developed country could.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> April 2009 in L'Aquila, Italy there was an earthquake which hit 6.3 on the Richter scale. It caused around 290 deaths, hundreds were injured, buildings were damaged or destroyed, thousands of people were made homeless, and a bridge near the town of Fossa collapsed and a water pipe was broken near the town of Paganica. These are only the primary effects.

Aftershocks hampered rescue efforts and caused more damage, fires in some collapsed buildings caused more damage and the broken water pipe near the town of Paganica caused a landslide, these are the secondary effects.

Luckily as Italy is an Medc most of the responses were immediate such as camps were set up for homeless people with water, food and medical care. Ambulances, fire engines and the army were sent to rescue survivors and cranes and diggers were used to remove the rubble. Also international teams with rescue dogs were sent in to look for survivors and money was provided by the government to pay rent, and gas and electricity bills were suspended.

The long term responses were the Italian Prime Minister promised to build a new town to replace L'Aquila as the capital of the new area and an investigation went on to look into why the modern buildings weren't built to withstand earthquakes.

However, Ledc's are not a lucky. On 8<sup>th</sup> October 2005 in Kashmir, Pakistan an earthquake which hit 7.6 on the Richter scale happened. Sadly around 80000 people died mostly from collapsed buildings and hundreds of thousands of people were injured. Also entire villages and thousands of buildings were destroyed, around 3 million people were made homeless and water pipelines and electricity lines were broken, cutting off supply. They are the primary effects.

Landslides buried buildings and people; they also blocked access roads and cut off water supplies, electricity supplies and telephone lines. Diarrhoea and other diseases spread due to little clean water and freezing winter conditions shortly after the earthquake caused even more casualties and meant rescue and rebuilding operations were difficult. These are the secondary effects.

Unfortunately, help didn't reach many areas for days or even weeks but these are the immediate responses, people had to be rescued by hand without any equipment or help from emergency services. Tents, blankets and medical supplies were distributed within a month but not to all areas affected. And international aid and equipment like helicopters and rescue dogs were brought in, as well as teams of people from other countries.

Around 40000 people were relocated to a new town from the destroyed town of Balakot; government money was given to people whose homes had been destroyed so they can rebuild them themselves. Training has been provided to help rebuild more buildings as earthquake resistant. Also new health centres were set up in the area; however these are the long term responses.