Using Lessons from Earthquakes in Haiti and Chile to Reduce Global Risk

Ms. Melissa Hanlon
Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Partnership Strategy & Stability Operations

Disasters Roundtable of the National Academies
March 1, 2011 -- Workshop
What are the three big messages of the story of the earthquake in Haiti or Chile?

1. Haiti - Confluence of pre-existing vulnerabilities and circumstances with catastrophic earthquake created an environment for a response that was truly unique

3. Chile - Learning to differentiate between the Haiti and Chile responses

4. Conducting multiple simultaneous responses and impact on USG response mechanisms
What were the most surprising outcomes or events in the story of these earthquakes?

1. Haiti - In the beginning, even the most fundamental actions were complicated

2. Haiti - Number of non-traditional partners participating in foreign disaster response

3. Chile - Comparing size/scale of the earthquake relative to the destruction in Haiti
What advice would you offer those in your position for the next earthquake based on your experience in Haiti or Chile?

1. Coordination is key (but you can’t count on access with all critical partners)

3. Even the best laid plans, SOPs, and best practices tend to be revised in the face of large-scale crises

3. Be aware of the difficulty in managing information and public messaging in a fast-moving response