



DELTA IN TIMES OF CLIMATE CHANGE II

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE, SCIENCE, CITIES AND BUSINESS
 ROTTERDAM THE NETHERLANDS, 24 – 26 SEPTEMBER 2014

Deltas in Practice, policy-practice sessions	
Deltas in Practice Theme 7: Governance and finance	
DP 7.5 Cross sector collaborations: Using strength in partnerships and design to catalyse change	
Chair	Henk Ovink, Rebuild by Design, Housing and Urban Development, USA
Rapporteur	Peter van Veelen, City of Rotterdam, the Netherlands
Organised by	Henk Ovink, Rebuild by Design, Housing and Urban Development, USA
Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Henk Ovink, Rebuild by Design, Housing and Urban Development, USA • Mary Rowe, Municipal Art Society, USA • Marion McFadden, Department of Housing and Urban Development, USA • David Waggoner, Waggoner and Ball Architects, USA • Bart Parmet, Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment, the Netherlands
Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nancy Kete, Rockefeller Foundation, USA
Session topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This session explores the Rebuild by Design process for delivering regional, interdisciplinary and design-driven solutions
Objective of the session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To discuss the unique structure of the Rebuild by Design process for delivering regional, interdisciplinary and design-driven solutions and the applicability of this setup for other multi-faceted problems
Main conclusions and lessons learnt from the presentations	
<p>Mary Rowe argues for a shift in focus from physical resilience and rebuilding to community resilience. We tend to forget that cities are for and made by people. Enhancing the strength of local communities to deal with changing circumstances is an essential part of resilience planning. Also resilience planning is mainly dominated by experts who tend to neglect the intelligent local knowledge that is present. It is crucial to make room for local improvisation and granular innovation. Rebuild by Design is grounded in combining world class experts with local communities. This has enriched the design process and developed many new local coalitions that continue to this date.</p> <p>Marion McFadden introduces the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) approach in disaster recovery and post-Sandy rebuilding. The HUD disaster recovery framework is based on coupling long-term recovery measures with short-term rebuilding actions. Crucial in this approach is to put expectations and needs of local communities centre stage and build on local commitment of the political landscape. This is challenging for HUD because as a federal authority they do not have the authority to develop local recovery plans. The RBD process, a partnership between Federal, state, and local government, philanthropies, universities, and community groups, filled the gap by providing the best available science and data to the region and creating a forum for collaboration to define the region’s risks and vulnerabilities and propose measures to address them. The infusion of community members most impacted by the storm with a cross-sectoral group of design professionals (including urban planners, architects, and landscape architects) resulted in development of designs that will serve essential flood protection functions during bad weather but also will benefit the communities during good weather, offering incalculable physical and social benefits.</p>	





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Marion also stresses the importance of the language you use in building coalitions. To reach the largest group of supporters, be flexible about the words you use. Many terms are political and can be contested; whereas some may balk at discussions of climate change and managed retreat, they may be comfortable with the notions of mitigating financial risk and protecting critical assets from identifiable threats. A second lesson of RBD is to formalize the goals and roles and responsibilities of new coalitions.

David Wagoner introduces the comprehensive water plan approach of New Orleans (NO) as an example that informed and shaped the RBD process. Key aspects of the NO water plan is that it is integral, adaptable, flexible and continuously seeking to combine water management measures with improving quality of life. The NO Water plan needed to adopt a new perspective in which the natural landscape is the point of departure for interventions in the water system. This also requires to think in a broad systematic way.

Finally it all comes down to place identity. Where do you want to be? By putting this question at the heart of the NO Water plan many opportunities were found that all have support from local communities.

Bart Parmet also highlighted the paradigm shift from a reactive to a proactive flood risk management strategy that formed the starting point of the Dutch Delta Program. This paradigm shift is institutionalised by law and thus has a firm legal base and national funding. This unique situation has contributed to a successful 4 year process based on multi-level governance and active involvement of stakeholders. Bart also stresses the importance of joint-fact finding and developing a common language or semantics.

Main conclusions of the discussion

The panel discussion focussed on the question whether institutionalisation is a step forward in the USA. A proactive approach would request a big change in the US institutional landscape and is probably not expected to happen. However, it is more important to institutionalise on the local level. The question is how to enforce local community groups to put pressure on local authorities.

The discussion then focussed on the question what elements of the US and Dutch approach could be complementary. There is a transition in the Netherlands towards local responsibilities and a growing attention for community engagement. The cultural part of a society is the main driver behind the flood risk approach and is very hard to change. A common challenge is that we have to spend time to teach the new generation about the risks and about living with water.

Main result or conclusion of the session

Bringing together the best minds and world-class experts with local community knowledge is key when developing innovative and successful strategies.

Most exciting insights or outcomes

- Developing a common language is essential within multi-level and multi-sector collaborations
- Institutionalise coalitions, make them official once they are formed
- Define your limitations but do not accept limitations of others as your own

