

URBAN TRANSFORMATIONS AND REAL ESTATE MARKET INTERVENTIONS AS
DISASTER RISK FACTORS IN MEXICO CITY

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SUMMARY

From the beginning of the 20th century to the present day, urban transformations of diverse nature have been observed in Mexico City: new mobility systems, new urban spaces and housing areas, deindustrialization and the increasing construction of shopping centers, to name a few, all derived from changes in public policies for the city focused on re-densification or the construction of housing estates. Nevertheless, in the introduction of new planning measures, important elements have been left aside for the composition of a safe city to reduce vulnerabilities to natural hazards such as floods, landslides or earthquakes. In the case of earthquakes, there are examples of disasters that occurred in 1985 and 2017 in Mexico City, which raise questions about the complex interaction between the interventions carried out jointly by the government and the real estate market in the city and the repercussions that these interventions can have in the increase of disaster risks. Therefore, this work has as objective to analyze the reactions of the government to the reconstruction (1985 and 2017) and the role of the real estate market before and after a disaster to determine if these urban transformations make the city more or less vulnerable. We take as examples concrete urban transformations related to the disasters of 1985 and 2017: expropriation of properties, disappearance of public spaces used after the 1985 earthquake, and the buildings constructed in the last two decades that collapsed in 2017. The results point to a gap between the intentions of an official policy and the action of the real estate market in a context of risk, a gap evidenced by an increase in vulnerability from the loss of public spaces, and in the extreme case, the collapse of some buildings of recent construction. As a proposal, we identify priority areas where the interaction between these actors and certain conditions must be rectified: government, real estate market and risk conditions.

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