After the earthquake

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Chile is a country that regularly experiences earthquakes that lead to high levels of destruction in the built environment. The most recent large earthquake occurred on February 27, 2010, with a magnitude of 8.8 on the Richter scale. Many times in history urban and rural areas have experienced devastations and undergone reconstructions. Such renovation processes are often large in scale, something that can negatively affect the quality of the new housing being built, particularly when historic settlements are concerned. Beyond monumental heritage, the emphasis is on housing in historic settlements as these represent a sustainable answer to environmental conditions by using vernacular building techniques. They also physically preserve their inhabitants’ cultural expressions. The photograph shows one such dwelling in San Pedro de Alcántara, a heritage settlement located in the central valley of Chile, which was particularly affected by the 2010 earthquake due to its old age and the lack of maintenance prior to the event.

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