



Develop guidelines for disaster practitioners that take into consideration the different needs of and approaches to different ethnical groups

CARISMAND

Whereas ethnicity in itself is not an indicator of specific attitudes, perceptions and/or behaviours, there are mainstream ethnicity-related cultures that are based, e.g., upon shared educational systems, political and historical backgrounds, worldviews, religions, national cultural values and traditions. Such cultural factors require specific communication and behavioural strategies, which should be carefully developed and implemented to improve the situation of all affected ethnical groups in a disaster (Deliverable 7.3).

Applicable to:

Stakeholders: [Policy Makers](#), [Disaster Managers](#)

Disaster Phases: [Prevention](#), [Response](#), [Recovery](#)

Types of Actors Concerned: [Non-active citizens](#), [Active citizens](#), [Red Cross](#), [NGOs](#), [UN and other international organisations](#), [Local authorities](#), [Healthcare and emergency services](#)

Hazards: [Natural hazards](#), [Man-made non-intentional hazards or emergency situations](#), [Man-made intentional hazards](#)

Cultural Map Entries:

- [Ethnically inclusive climates change adaptation strategies](#)
- [Introduction of a colour coding system for risk levels used for warning alerts amongst different actors](#)
- [The use of mobile and computer reporting applications and accessibility for people with special needs in disaster-response situations](#)
- [The effect of race and ethnicity on perception of risk](#)
- [Independence and interdependence are culturally interrelated in risk event assessment](#)
- [Central-Eastern European countries place more attention on financial risk reduction measures and disaster mitigation than on prevention measure](#)
- [People from post-communist countries rely on regional and national authorities for both risk communication and prevention measures](#)
- [People with foreign backgrounds express a higher level of risk than native people](#)
- [Perceived vulnerability within several socio-demographic groups after the Fukushima accident](#)
- [Limited transparency of Chinese government in various social contexts may affect the level of perceived nuclear risk](#)
- [Gender differences in perceived risk from different hazard types](#)
- [Gender differences in perceived nuclear risk](#)
- [Cultural differences in perceived risk of terrorism](#)
- [Higher perceived power and control linked with the leadership position of the US in the world linked to high levels of optimism bias with regards perceived risk of terrorism](#)
- [Turkish and Israeli women show more negative emotions with regards to perceived risks of terrorist attacks than men in the same countries](#)
- [Security values and communication in risk perception](#)
- [Ethnicity as an important predictor of perceived risk related to terrorism](#)
- [Understanding of risks and the necessity of taking preventive measures by people living in risk areas](#)
- [Cultural differences visible in the phases of disaster response and recovery](#)
- [Lack of knowledge of disaster guidelines and procedures found in a study with Bucharest residents](#)
- [Low levels of awareness of appropriate behaviour in a disaster found in a study with Bucharest residents](#)
- [Considerable interest in disaster preparedness information found in a study with Bucharest residents](#)
- [Role of simulation exercises in raising citizen disaster risk awareness](#)
- [High incidence of expectations of a disaster found in a study with Bucharest citizens](#)



- [Infrastructural vulnerabilities perceptions in relation with the degree of preparedness](#)
- [Responsibilities of local authorities and non-governmental organisations in informing citizens on how to act in response to a disaster](#)
- [First aid courses as one way to prepare for a disaster](#)
- [Low awareness of guidelines and disaster procedures amongst citizens in Malta](#)
- [High levels of interest in disaster preparedness information amongst citizens in Malta](#)
- [Citizens' first response in a disaster would be to call family and friends](#)
- [Use of social media not the preferred immediate response in an emergency amongst Maltese citizens](#)
- [Likelihood of using social media to submit information to authorities during a disaster](#)
- [Citizens consider disaster preparedness predominantly the responsibility of government](#)
- [Citizen suggestions for involvement in disaster preparedness](#)
- [Citizen lack of preparedness may be linked to perceived low probability to a disaster happening](#)
- [Citizen lack of preparedness may be linked to perceived cultural traits, such as resourcefulness](#)
- [Fatalism in Maltese culture and disaster preparedness](#)
- [Importance of local experience In dealing with disasters](#)
- [Strong emotional reactions amongst research participants to the topic of terrorism](#)
- [Voluntary citizen support activities in the response phase of a disaster](#)
- [Increase in community cohesion during the disaster recovery phase](#)
- [Vulnerable groups in the Maltese setting](#)
- [Danger in elderly people overestimating their physical abilities during a disaster](#)
- [Foreigners and tourists as vulnerable groups in a disaster](#)
- [The vulnerability of stigmatised groups in case of a disaster](#)
- [Children who are alone at home during a disaster see as a vulnerable group](#)
- [Community cohesion as an important cultural aspect in disasters](#)
- [Shared responsibilities for preparedness measures amongst citizens and authorities](#)
- [Cultural traits and attitudes to disaster preparedness](#)
- [Levels of risk perception amongst citizens in Rome](#)
- [Trust levels in authorities amongst people with a migration background](#)
- [Perceptions of individual preparedness for disaster amongst citizens in Frankfurt](#)
- [National and regional backgrounds influence levels of trust in authorities](#)
- [Perceived relative ease of mobilisation of nomad-type communities](#)
- [Importance of training first responders about religious norms and sensibilities to be considered during a disaster](#)
- [Risk perception in urban vs rural communities](#)
- [Gender differences linked to culture and disaster responses](#)
- [Practitioner perceptions of elderly citizens who overestimate their own abilities during a disaster](#)
- ["Home alone" scenario for children during a disaster less likely in Italy](#)
- [Relationships between Buddhism and disaster recovery](#)
- [Coping mechanisms through experience and collective memory](#)
- [Non-whites in evacuation situations](#)
- [The impact of religion on disaster information needs](#)
- [Women's and minorities' risk perceptions during the preparedness phase](#)
- [Religion and technology use in disaster situations](#)
- [Relationship between community sense and technology use](#)

General association with cultural factors: [Norms/values](#), [Customs/traditions/rituals](#), [Worldviews](#), [Individual/collective memory](#), [Local knowledge](#), [Languages](#), [Livelihoods](#), [Ethnicity](#), [Educational system](#)

Recommendations:

Recommendation 1.A for implementation related to specific communication styles for specific ethnic groups

Adapt communication styles to specific ethnic groups, for example:

A.1. African population groups:

- Expect open and honest communication;
- Are acutely sensitive towards mistreatment and inconsideration;



- Are less forthcoming in seeking help outside their community;
- Disaster practitioners should take into consideration the importance that faith, religion and religious organisations play within the community, and the psycho-social strength derived from it;
- Culturally appropriate training should be provided through the use of community-based organisations;
- Support mechanisms offered by religious organisations should be used;
- The informal support networks established between extended family members, neighbours, co-workers, church members etc. should be used.

A.2. Arab-American and Arab-European population groups:

- Use less personal space and physical closeness to interlocutors (unless of different gender);
- Foster affiliative behaviour and discourse, cordial and no-hurried relations;
- Communications with victims need to adapt to mood, comfort level, setting, pressures and influences surrounding them;
- Use word pictures and imagery;
- Use of metaphors, proverbs, sayings, symbolic and poetic language is appreciated in traditional, conservative environments;
- Respect for figures of accepted authority, the elderly and the wise;
- Respect social status and social divisions.

A.3. Asian-Indian population groups:

- Provide cultural immersion training before actual interventions;
- Communication through family representatives is preferred;
- Non-verbal communication, especially through eyes and face, is an important characteristic (what words fail to convey is told through gestures and body movements);
- Physical touching is not so common;
- When gesturing, make sure to use palms facing down as palms facing up are considered disrespectful;
- Avoid giving and receiving objects with left hand (used for cleaning body parts);
- Not looking at the addressee is a sign of respect;
- Amulets must not to be removed.

A.4. Chinese-American and Chinese-European population groups:

- Communicate with the help of acknowledged figures of authority within the community;
- Focus messages on community resilience and wellbeing;
- Use a restrained tone and talking style;
- Use task-orientated communication.

These are only very broadly defined groups. Identify more specific ethnic groups in your local area and develop, by integrating volunteers from these groups, specific guidelines for communication which are adapted to these groups' specific cultural understandings.

Related cultural factors: [Ethnicity](#)



[Deliverable 5.12: Report on Stakeholder Assembly 3 \(Portugal\)](#) - CARISMAND
(pdf, 1.8 MB)



[Deliverable 8.1: Report on risk communication models and best-practices in disaster management](#) - CARISMAND
(pdf, 2.5 MB)

Recommendation 1.B for implementation related to specific communication styles for specific ethnic groups

Adapting communication styles is not only essential when communicating with different ethnic groups in your home country, but also when deployed for disaster aid in a foreign country. Learn about, practice and drill these skills in advance, i.e., before a deployment abroad. Involve volunteers from different ethnic backgrounds in these drills to ensure that specific needs are well understood and addressed.

Related cultural factors: [Ethnicity](#)



[Deliverable 5.12: Report on Stakeholder Assembly 3 \(Portugal\)](#) - CARISMAND
(pdf, 1.8 MB)

Other recommendations for implementation related to ethnicities - Recommendation 2.A

To ensure social peace and respect of the social identity of disaster victims, include in recovery plans detailed instructions for practitioners and volunteers regarding different basic life requirements of different ethnic groups, e.g., catering, personal hygiene, clothing, medical care, social organisation, treatment of the dead.

Related cultural factors: [Ethnicity](#)



[Deliverable 2.2: Reports on systems and processes in disaster management](#) - CARISMAND
(pdf, 9.2 MB)



[Deliverable 5.12: Report on Stakeholder Assembly 3 \(Portugal\)](#) - CARISMAND
(pdf, 1.8 MB)

Other recommendations for implementation related to ethnicities - Recommendation 2.B

Understanding the role of local identities in the development of discord and violence is an important factor for the prevention of many man-made disasters, e.g., through early detection of radicalisation. Tendencies like increasing marginalisation or ethnic tensions, which may arise in disaster recovery camps or areas that have been struck by a disaster, should be monitored.



Related cultural factors: [Ethnicity](#), [Social control](#)



[Deliverable 5.12: Report on Stakeholder Assembly 3 \(Portugal\)](#) - CARISMAND
(pdf, 1.8 MB)



[Deliverable 7.3: Report on cultural factors and citizen empowerment](#) - CARISMAND
(pdf, 2.4 MB)

Further reading:

A. J. Marsella, J. L. Johnson, & P. Watson, *Ethnocultural Perspectives on Disaster and Trauma*, Hawaii: Praeger, 2008.

Gaillard, J.-C., Clare, E., Ocean, V., Azhari, Dedi, Denain, J. C., Efendi, Y., Grancher, D., Liamzon, C. C., Sari, D. R. & Setiwan, R. (2008). Ethnic groups' response to the 26 December 2004 eruption and tsunami in Aceh, Indonesia *Natural Hazards*(47), 17-38; McAdoo, B. G., Dengler, L., Eeri, M., Prasetya, G., & Titov, V. (2006). Smong: how an oral history saved thousands on Indonesia's Simeulue Island *Earthquake Spectra*(22).

Hansen A, Bi L, Saniotis A, Nitschke M. Vulnerability to extreme heat and climate change: is ethnicity a factor? *Glob Health Action*. 2019;6:21364.

Scott, J. C. (2007). Concept paper: Importance of cultural competency in disaster management. Commissioned "concept paper" for the November 2007 Consensus Building Meeting for the Cultural Competence for Disaster Preparedness and Crisis Response (CCDPCR) project.

Solis, G. Y., Hightower, H. C., & Kawaguchi, J. (1997) *Guidelines on cultural diversity and disaster management for emergency preparedness in Canada*. The Disaster Preparedness Resources Centre and The University of British Columbia.

UN-Habitat. (2007). *Enhancing Urban Safety and Security*. Global Report on Human Settlements 2007. London: UN-Habitat.

This file was generated automatically on: 18.02.2019.

Develop guidelines for disaster practitioners that take into consideration the different needs of and approaches to different ethnic groups
<https://toolkit.carismand.eu/a/recommendation-ethnicity>