Use new technologies, such as crowdsourcing to collect information from citizens, as a means to foster community engagement

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Community engagement is a key element to disaster preparedness and resilience. Engaging with communities in the pre-disaster phases helps disaster managers to, better, understand the knowledge and skills of the local people, to efficiently assess local resources (including social capital) and design disaster management plans in accordance with these. For this to occur, it is important that close relationships are built between local authorities and individuals in the community, which should rely on the former's understanding of what are the public's expectation from disaster managers, what re their tolerance and acceptance levels in this field. To collect the opinions of citizens one can either carry out qualitative and/or quantitative research in the field and/or use technological tools such as crowdsourcing platforms.

Applicable to:

Stakeholders: Policy Makers, Disaster Managers, Citizens
Disaster Phases: Prevention, Preparedness
Types of Actors Concerned: NGOs, Local authorities, National research bodies, Non-active citizens, Active citizens
Hazards: Natural hazards, Man-made non-intentional hazards or emergency situations, Man-made intentional hazards

Cultural Map Entries:

- Local communities could use social media to call for support in a disaster situation
- "Angry groups" and empowerment processes
- Power relations in empowerment contexts
- Strength of local authorities in empowerment contexts
- Citizen cooperation for developing software solutions
- Developing innovative technologies for water management
- The EMSC crowdsource earthquakes detector
- The Citizens Observatories collection and utilization of citizen information

General association with cultural factors: Attitudes toward authorities, Social networks

Implementation steps:

A. Develop a strategy for using crowdsourcing in the process of crisis mapping and select an appropriate platform for carrying it out. Related cultural factors: Social networks

B. "Popular" (or "volunteered geographic") information coming from citizens/societal actors in the field should always be filtered, cross-validated and merged with technical information coming from other sources. Related cultural factors: Local knowledge

C. Promote the involvement of members of local communities in the process of crisis mapping and motivate them to, actively, provide information using the dedicated software platforms. Related

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cultural factors: Social networks

D. Use appropriate qualitative and quantitative research methods whenever applicable, as well as suitable combinations of the two types, in order to gather better, exhaustive results on the opinions of citizens on various topics related to disaster management.

E. Networks aimed at increasing citizens' understanding of mechanisms for monitoring and defending against disasters and communicating warning messages to emergency responders and other citizens are established in many prone-to-risk communities. These forms of citizen participation should be supported through public funds/programs so as to enable a more effective reaction in the event of a disaster. Related cultural factors: Social networks

F. Give access to a wide category of stakeholders (i.e., public authorities, citizens, associations, etc.) to view and analyse this information, which should reflect citizens' opinions and perceptions as well as objective assessments of the related environmental aspects.

Sources:

Deliverable 3.2: Report on best and emerging practices of technologies for disaster risk management and their adaptation to different cultural groups - CARISMAND
(pdf, 3.4 MB)

Deliverable 4.2: Report on "risk cultures" in the context of disasters - CARISMAND
(pdf, 1.8 MB)

Deliverable 5.1: Structural design and methodology for Citizen Summits - CARISMAND
(pdf, 1 MB)

Deliverable 7.1: Report on literature review - CARISMAND
(pdf, 2.5 MB)

Deliverable 7.2: Report on linkages between empowerment practices and specific socio-economic and environmental contexts - CARISMAND
(pdf, 1.7 MB)

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

Further reading:

Allen, K., 2006. Community-based disaster preparedness and climate adaptation: local capacity-building in the Philippines. Disasters, 30(1).

Pandey, B.H. & Okazaki, K., 2005. Community-based disaster management: Empowering

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communities to cope with disaster risks. Regional Development Dialogue, 26(2).

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https://toolkit.carismand.eu/a/recommendation-use-of-new-technologies

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