



## **When developing disaster management protocols and guidelines for citizens it is important to consider both the type of disaster and the cultural factors present in the targeted community**

CARISMAND

To assist individuals to become better prepared for disasters and help the victims of disasters respond and recover more efficiently, one must understand who they are and what they need from their own perspective. To do so, it is essential one must understand and respect their culture. Therefore, disaster management authorities should seek to produce public guidelines that are disaster-specific, because citizens treat natural and man-made disasters differently and cultural-specific, so that they correspond to the needs and expectations of the different cultural groups inside the targeted community.

### **Applicable to:**

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

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

Types of Actors Concerned: [Non-active citizens](#), [Active citizens](#), [Law enforcement agencies](#), [National research bodies](#), [Local authorities](#), [Government](#), [Media](#)

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

**General association with cultural factors:** [Norms/values](#), [Customs/traditions/rituals](#), [Worldviews](#), [Open-mindedness](#), [Individual/collective memory](#), [Local knowledge](#), [Languages](#), [Communication](#), [Livelihoods](#), [Rule of law](#), [Power relations](#), [Attitudes toward authorities](#), [Attitudes toward the media](#), [Attitudes toward environmental issues](#), [Gender roles](#), [Age-related roles](#), [Ethnicity](#), [Educational system](#), [Density of active citizenship](#), [Social networks](#), [Social control](#), [Social exclusion](#), [Access and use of infrastructure/services](#)

### **Implementation steps:**

- A.** Prepare personalized disaster management policies and guidelines for each disaster category, because citizens treat natural and man-made disasters differently.
- B.** Given that post-Communist countries often display a lower level of disaster preparedness, it is important to develop more detailed disaster management policies and procedures for citizens.
- C.** Involve citizens from all cultural backgrounds (including members of immigrant communities) in the planning of emergency and disaster responses, to ensure that practitioners learn early on about their cultural differences and adapt their guidelines and procedures accordingly.
- D.** Carry out research on cultural aspects (e.g. different local traditions, practices etc.) within the targeted community and try to translate that knowledge into operational guidelines on cultural aspects



in disaster management. Related cultural factors: [Norms/values](#), [Customs/traditions/rituals](#), [Worldviews](#), [Open-mindedness](#), [Individual/collective memory](#), [Local knowledge](#), [Languages](#), [Communication](#), [Livelihoods](#), [Rule of law](#), [Power relations](#), [Attitudes toward authorities](#), [Attitudes toward the media](#), [Attitudes toward environmental issues](#), [Gender roles](#), [Age-related roles](#), [Ethnicity](#), [Educational system](#), [Density of active citizenship](#), [Social networks](#), [Social control](#), [Social exclusion](#), [Access and use of infrastructure/services](#)

**E.** Carry out an overall cultural impact assessment of existing disaster management procedures. Cultural impact assessments follow six steps:

**E.1.** scoping (understanding what elements of culture are important to whom, and determining which elements of culture might feasibly be impacted by the proposed development);

**E.2.** baseline conditions (also called “gaining the cultural context” it requires that before examining the likely impacts from a development, one must know the historic, current and trend status of the culture(s) in question, through qualitative and quantitative means);

**E.3.** impact identification and prediction (approaches to cultural analysis and cultural impact assessment, such as cultural landscape assessment, mapping and traditional knowledge work will be reviewed.);

**E.4.** impact significance determination (while making it clear that not all cultural impacts can be mitigated - an issue dealt with further in Step 5 - innovative mitigation examples from negotiated agreements, formal impact assessment processes, community plans and strategies, and a variety of partnerships are examined);

**E.5.** mitigation (use case studies to A examine the reasoning and values by which decision makers determine the significance of cultural impacts); and

**E.6.** follow-up and monitoring (talk about the struggles to effectively ascertain whether mitigations are working, identify some good examples where cultural protections are working (and talk about some ideas for the future).

Each of these steps uses specific tools and techniques.

Related cultural factors: [Norms/values](#), [Customs/traditions/rituals](#), [Worldviews](#), [Open-mindedness](#), [Individual/collective memory](#), [Local knowledge](#), [Languages](#), [Communication](#), [Livelihoods](#), [Rule of law](#), [Power relations](#), [Attitudes toward authorities](#), [Attitudes toward the media](#), [Attitudes toward environmental issues](#), [Gender roles](#), [Age-related roles](#), [Ethnicity](#), [Educational system](#), [Density of active citizenship](#), [Social networks](#), [Social control](#), [Social exclusion](#), [Access and use of infrastructure/services](#)

**F.** Using specialized surveys develop a “cultural map” of the population in the target area. Use this cultural map as a reference document when developing disaster management protocols, procedures and guidelines. Make sure to include aspects such as race, gender, religion, but also opinions toward authorities, attitudes towards disaster, trust in neighbours and authorities, patterns of media use or power distance between people. Related cultural factors: [Norms/values](#), [Customs/traditions/rituals](#), [Worldviews](#), [Open-mindedness](#), [Individual/collective memory](#), [Local knowledge](#), [Languages](#), [Communication](#), [Livelihoods](#), [Rule of law](#), [Power relations](#), [Attitudes toward authorities](#), [Attitudes toward the media](#), [Attitudes toward environmental issues](#), [Gender roles](#), [Age-related roles](#), [Ethnicity](#), [Educational system](#), [Density of active citizenship](#), [Social networks](#), [Social control](#), [Social exclusion](#), [Access and use of infrastructure/services](#)



**G.** Integrate cultural factors into practical recommendations for citizens (e.g. use languages and communication patterns of victims, develop cultural competencies, use cultural brokers and local resources, set-up cultural disaster research archives, implement and study prevention programs across cultures, study cultural variations in loss, grief and bereavement, develop culturally sensitive measures for trauma and mental health, etc.).

**H.** Implement recovery plans which include the need to cater for the different culinary requirements of ethnic groups in the affected community. Related cultural factors: [Ethnicity](#)

## Sources:



[Deliverable 2.1: Report on actors in disaster management](#) - CARISMAND  
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[Deliverable 2.2: Report on systems and processes in disaster management](#) - CARISMAND  
(pdf, 9.2 MB)



[Deliverable 4.1: Mapping risk perception in the context of disasters](#) - CARISMAND  
(pdf, 2.2 MB)



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



[Deliverable 5.3: Report on citizens' reactions and opinions: Citizen Summit 1 \(Romania\)](#) - CARISMAND  
(pdf, 1.9 MB)



[Deliverable 5.4: Report on citizens' reactions and opinions: Citizen Summit 2 \(Malta\)](#) - CARISMAND  
(pdf, 2.4 MB)



[Deliverable 5.5: Report on citizens' reactions and opinions: Citizen Summit 3 \(Italy\)](#) - CARISMAND  
(pdf, 1.8 MB)



[Deliverable 5.6: Report on citizens' reactions and opinions: Citizen Summit 4 \(Germany\)](#) - CARISMAND  
(pdf, 2 MB)



[Deliverable 5.7: Report on citizens reactions and opinions Citizen Summit 5 \(Portugal\)](#) - CARISMAND  
(pdf, 1.6 MB)

[Deliverable 5.8: Report on citizens reactions and opinions Citizen Summit 6 \(The Netherlands\)](#) - CARISMAND  
(pdf, 1.6 MB)



[Deliverable 5.9: Interim synthesised report on citizens' reactions and opinions: Citizen Summits 1 \(Romania\) and 2 \(Malta\)](#) - CARISMAND

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[Deliverable 6.1: Report on European fundamental rights in disaster situations](#) - CARISMAND

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[Deliverable 6.2: Report on fundamental rights in disaster situations in selected national legislations](#) - CARISMAND

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

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[Deliverable 8.1: Report briefing on risk communication models and best practices](#) - CARISMAND

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[Deliverable 8.2: Report on the role of the media in disaster risk communication](#) - CARISMAND

(pdf, 5.6 MB)

## Further reading:

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

Lull, J. (Ed.), *Communication in the Information Age*, London: Routledge, 2001.

Peer Review Risk Assessment Malta 2016, available at [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/sites/echo-site/files/malta\\_peer\\_review\\_report\\_-\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/sites/echo-site/files/malta_peer_review_report_-_en.pdf), accessed on 3 May 2017.

Raška, P. (2015). Flood risk perception in Central-Eastern European members states of the EU: A review. *Natural Hazards*, 79(3).

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<https://toolkit.carismand.eu/a/recommendation-consider-cultural-factors>