



Develop risk assessments methodologies, which consider cultural factors, the manner in which people cognitively process information and which employ a gender perspective

CARISMAND

Attitudes to risk are based upon individual and organisational beliefs, which is why it is important that when developing risk assessments methodologies disaster managers take into consideration cultural factors, but also the specific manner in which people perceive risks – depending on whether they have experienced it before or not e.g. Risk assessments methodologies should always integrate a gender perspective, which should be reflected both in risk assessments protocols, but also in the set-up of early warning systems and educational and training programmes.

Applicable to:

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

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

Types of Actors Concerned: [Non-active citizens](#), [Active citizens](#), [National research bodies](#), [Law enforcement agencies](#), [UN and other international organisations](#)

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

Cultural Map Entries:

- [Emotions, such as fear, influence levels of risk perception](#)
- [Risk perception related to terrorism is different to that related to other man-made disasters](#)
- [Perceptions of terrorism are characterized by the perception of intentionality](#)
- [Optimism bias is less present in victims of nuclear accidents as well as those who are not at any risk of their consequences](#)
- [Trust in nuclear power is often linked to a lower level of perceived risk](#)
- [Females, individuals who are less educated and/or who have a lower income have stronger perceptions of nuclear risk](#)
- [Perceived human interference with nature increases levels of perceived risk](#)
- [Disaster events lower levels of optimism but after a period of time, perceptions of risk decrease](#)
- [The severity of risk consequences influences perceived risk of future disasters](#)
- [Perceptions of safety measures, linked to both national development level and cultural factors](#)
- [Long-term disaster effects in the perception of threats](#)
- [Human perception assesses risk differently to other threat measures in place](#)
- [Risk management is information management which considers the relationship between knowledge and the lack thereof](#)
- [Individuals' definitions of "risk"](#)
- [Global risks are often exogenous and caused by decisions made in core states and areas that influences the periphery of a world-system](#)
- [The greatest challenge in risk societies is the maintenance of ontological security](#)
- [Collective societies and common values are responsible for collective representations of risk](#)
- [The evolution of the culture of risk linked to an uncertain future](#)
- [Citizens' assessment of risk as determined by dominant discourses and broader social, cultural and historical forces](#)
- [The more serious the hazard, the higher the level of perceived risk and the greater the degree of public concern](#)
- [Hyperbolic discounting - the tendency to discount future gains in favour of more immediate rewards](#)
- [The difference in perceptions of risk between experts and non-experts is merely quantitative not qualitative](#)
- [Personal involvement increases citizens' willingness to engage in activities aimed at preserving personal safety](#)
- [Personal experience guides behaviour more than received information](#)
- [Experience with violent life events influences future perception of risk](#)
- [Prior negative experiences influence perceptions of future risks depending on the severity of personal consequences of](#)



[the former](#)

- [When powerlessness is negatively associated with mitigation intentions, victims become reluctant to engage in risk mitigation activities](#)
- [The effect and origin of gender differences in perception of risk](#)
- [The effect of race and ethnicity on perception of risk](#)
- [Higher levels of perceived risk amongst older, less educated or lower-income individuals](#)
- [Optimism bias: the tendency to overestimate the probability of positive events and underestimate that of negative ones](#)
- [Illusion of control: the tendency to overestimate the amount control they have over events](#)
- [Availability bias: recalling particular examples In judging the frequency of events](#)
- [The representativeness bias: the tendency to judge events as more likely to happen because they look representative for the group they belong to](#)
- [The narrative bias: information obtained from others' personal experiences influences risk behaviour more than that presented as a formal description](#)
- [The anchoring-and-adjustment bias: adjusting subsequent information in accordance with a so-called anchor](#)
- [The affect heuristic: the role of the affective states in risk perception](#)
- [Likeability of a stimulus/event lowers perceptions of risk linked to it](#)
- [The effect of immediate emotions on perceived risk](#)
- [The most important cross-cultural factors influencing perceived seriousness \(or magnitude\) of risks](#)
- [The impact and consequences of man-made disasters as compared to natural hazards](#)
- [Many people believe that the frequency and severity of natural hazards are increased by human action](#)
- [Events that provoke positive affect are perceived as more beneficial and safe, while events that are followed by negative affect are perceived as more risky](#)
- [Perceptions of human control over nature/events can be categorised within one of two belief system types: instrumental and ideational](#)
- [People perceive human interference with nature as negative, regardless of its purpose](#)
- [Natural and man-made hazards are perceived differently and elicit different types of emotions](#)
- [Man-made hazards provoke higher levels of concern compared to natural hazards](#)
- [The comparison between natural and man-made disasters according to three important factors influencing risk perception](#)
- [Differences between natural and technological disasters in terms of suddenness, power, destructiveness, predictability and low point of the event](#)
- [Floods are perceived to have predominantly financial consequences while landslides are viewed as life threatening events](#)
- [Risk society refers to an institutional, rules oriented and hierarchical order \(values\), while risk cultures highlight an indeterminate disorder \(norms\)](#)
- [Risk cultures emerge within risk societies](#)
- [Influential and powerful social actors influence levels of perceived risk in situations of real danger](#)
- [Risks and danger as part of the social \(dis\)organization](#)
- [Risk cultures as reflexive communities constructed in the context of the institutional uncertainty of risk](#)
- [Independence and interdependence are culturally interrelated in risk event assessment](#)
- [The ways in which people are used to dealing with risk in everyday life is based on societal values \(culture\)](#)
- [Risk perception amongst individuals with to hierarchical orientations](#)
- [Disaster risk reduction analysed in conjunction with the priorities of people, the needs of people at risk and cultural perspectives](#)
- [The perception of risk is influenced by certain values, beliefs and types of knowledge](#)
- [People's perception and understanding of risk is in accordance with their way of life](#)
- [Risk behaviour is to a large extent socially and culturally learnt, but not determined](#)
- [Higher levels of perceived risk can be expected in individuals with minority status](#)
- [Risk perception includes individual beliefs and thoughts](#)
- [People tend to estimate general risks to be larger than personal ones](#)
- [Human typologies and differences in perceived danger to the individual](#)
- [Concepts of disasters and risk cultures are often linked to cultural geographies](#)
- [For natural hazards linked to geographical location, risk perception tends to decrease as distance from the risk source increases](#)
- [Comparison of risk perception levels and its correlates among communities affected by natural disasters](#)
- [Perception of risk is different across countries](#)
- [In some places, religious explanations for natural disasters are taken into account \(Egypt\), while in others scientific explanations are predominant \(UK\)](#)
- [Fatalistic explanation of natural hazards are predominant may be a major obstacle to risk prevention in some Muslim countries](#)
- [In post-communist member states, the risk of flooding tends to be perceived only during extreme events](#)
- [Central-Eastern European countries place more attention on financial risk reduction measures and disaster mitigation than on prevention measure](#)
- [Lower levels of education and income for vulnerable groups affect perceptions of personal control over public issues](#)
- [Cross-national differences in levels of optimism bias](#)



- [The perception of authorities as more trustworthy is a predictor of lower levels of perceived nuclear risk](#)
- [Values and beliefs, as well as the trust in authorities influence perceived nuclear risk and attitudes toward nuclear power.](#)
- [Education is a significant predictor of risk perception and attitudes towards those phenomena](#)
- [Disasters have a deep impact on public views, including an impact on basic beliefs and values](#)
- [Living in risk areas highlights higher levels of risk acceptance](#)
- [Limited transparency of Chinese government in various social contexts may affect the level of perceived nuclear risk](#)
- [White man effect in risk perception](#)
- [Gender differences in perceived risk from different hazard types](#)
- [Gender differences in perceived nuclear risk](#)
- [Effects of the economic context on perceptions of benefits and dangers related to different economic risks is significant](#)
- [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](#)
- [Values guide individuals to satisfy universal requirements and understand threats](#)
- [Turkish and Israeli women show more negative emotions with regards to perceived risks of terrorist attacks than men in the same countries](#)
- [Institutional preparedness raises levels of citizen concern](#)
- [Demographic and cultural characteristics contribute to the social constructions of risks](#)
- [Experiences of people who have lived in the Gaza region for a longer time influence perceptions of risk which are relatively higher amongst this category than among those recently settled in the area](#)
- [Lower perceived risk of terrorism amongst men linked to a motivation to stay on their land under any circumstances](#)
- [Education and income levels influence the levels of fear](#)
- [Understanding of risks and the necessity of taking preventive measures by people living in risk areas](#)
- [Link between religious beliefs and risk perception](#)
- [Link between religious beliefs and the "illusion of control"](#)
- [Negative emotions correlate with preparedness behaviour](#)
- [Emotional triggers and future risk related behaviours](#)
- [Emotional triggers linked to perceived costs and benefits of adopting particular behaviours](#)
- [Lessening impact of a disaster over time](#)
- [The "fate" factor in disaster perception](#)
- [Citizen perceptions of natural vs man-made causes of disasters](#)
- [Perceived impact of a disaster linked to degree of perceived risk](#)
- [Strong emotional reactions amongst research participants to the topic of terrorism](#)
- [Levels of risk perception amongst citizens in Rome](#)
- [Perception of risk in relation unrelated with previous experience](#)
- ["Denial of risk" present amongst certain social groups](#)
- [Differences in risk-awareness in young vs elderly citizens](#)
- [Citizen perception of risk linked to their knowledge of the area](#)
- [Citizen perception of risk linked to perceived frequency of disaster occurrences](#)
- [The influence of individual wealth on disaster recovery](#)
- [Differences in behaviour amongst different ethnic groups in a disaster is more likely to be linked to a lack of local knowledge rather than to cultural factors](#)
- [Gender differences linked to culture and disaster responses](#)
- [The challenge of considering cultural factors in the immediate response to a disaster](#)
- [Cultural factors to be taken into account when planning for disaster risk reduction](#)
- [Considerations concerning religious and cultural rituals and practices](#)
- [General factors regarding the disaster prevention stage](#)
- [Culture as a barrier in disaster management](#)
- [The concept of cultural rationality in disaster communication](#)
- [The need of organisational cultures to change](#)
- [Fatalism as a risk factor](#)
- [Fatalism as a mechanism when experiencing limited resources and support](#)
- [The potential risk of belief systems of the government and local decision-makers](#)
- [The need of objective risk assessments that take in to consideration all group of the population](#)
- [Challenging risk perceptions and reducing vulnerabilities as a CBDM approach](#)
- [The role of cultural factors in assessing risk](#)
- ["Familiar risks" are more easily accepted than "new and unfamiliar risks"](#)

General association with cultural factors: [Gender roles](#)







Implementation steps:

- A.** Risk assessments should include a detailed analysis both of all vulnerabilities that could lead to a disaster and the preventable impacts, including the root causes and pressures generating and sustaining hazards and processes that could trigger a disaster.
- B.** Cultural factors, e.g. belief systems, perception of risk or propensity to act on risks, should be reflected in the risk assessments. To help communities identify these objectively, one can use external “facilitators” using tools such as the Cannon’s matrix. Related cultural factors: [Norms/values](#), [Customs/traditions/rituals](#), [Worldviews](#)
- C.** Integrate a gender perspective along cultural diversity, age differences, and vulnerable groups issues into disaster risk management policies, plans and decision-making processes, including those related to risk assessment, early warning, information management, and education/training. Related cultural factors: [Gender roles](#), [Age-related roles](#), [Social exclusion](#)
- D.** When designing risk assessments methodologies consider that previous experience with particular disaster type modifies current risk behaviour: prolonged period since the last disaster as well as mild impact of the last disaster leads to underestimation. Recent man-made disasters will influence citizens even when they happened in remote locations.
- E.** Pay additional attention to the communities that are experiencing certain disaster type for the first time as suboptimal behaviours might be expected.
- F.** Use risk comparisons, in which an unfamiliar risk is contrasted with a more common one, to encourage individuals to use their response to the familiar situation as a guide to action in the new one.
- G.** Analyse risk by incorporating social dimensions, including gender, race, ethnicity, social class, and sexual orientation (e.g. understanding the structural factors and institutional interests), when defining whether a phenomenon could be perceived as a risk. Related cultural factors: [Gender roles](#), [Age-related roles](#), [Ethnicity](#), [Social exclusion](#), [Socia-economic status](#)
- H.** Integrate the sociological approach with empirical studies from psychology, to understand the risk perception in its complexity.
- I.** Studying factors (including sociological, structural factors and institutional interests) that influence people’s assessment of risk will help disaster managers design more effective risk mitigation procedures and improve risk communication strategies to encourage risk protective behaviour. Related cultural factors: [Communication](#)
- J.** Compare risk perception across different countries i.e. different systems of government or social groups, to test whether a factor influences risk perceptions.
- K.** Distinguish between personal and general risk perception, to identify more correctly the perception of the risk.
- L.** Research risk, while including the investigation of values and norms, bearing in mind that these guide behavioural responses in disasters.
- M.** Timely manage the extreme level of fear, as this influence citizens’ response behaviour during a disaster.
- N.** Disaster managers should accept and engage with different logics and rationalities that people rely on when faced with risks. Instead of assuming that people are “irrational”, they should instead accept that they have different rationalities.



Sources:

	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 7.3: Report on cultural factors and citizen empowerment - CARISMAND (pdf, 2.4 MB)
	Deliverable 8.1: Report briefing on risk communication models and best practices - CARISMAND (pdf, 2.5 MB)

Further reading:

Bankoff, G., Cannon, T., Krüger, F., & Schipper, E.L.F. (2015). Introduction: Exploring the links between cultures. In F. Krüger, G. Bankoff, T. Cannon, B. Orłowski, & E.L.F. Schipper (Eds.), *Cultures and Disasters: Understanding cultural framings in disaster risk reduction* (pp. 1–17). London and New York: Routledge.

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<https://toolkit.carismand.eu/a/recommendation-risk-assessment-methodologies>