# Communicating risks and individual preparedness

The study of Siegriest and Gutscher (2008 - see source document for full reference) has shown that people differed in the description of flood consequences, depending on their previous experiences with floods - people who had a previous experience frequently mentioned negative emotions as an important consequence, while people without experience underestimated emotions such as fear, insecurity and helplessness when trying to imagine the period after a flood (Siegriest & Gutscher, 2008). Providing information on a disaster therefore should not be sufficient but authors advise that risk communicators should help people imagine negative emotional consequences of possible disasters if they aim to increase the level of individual preparedness. Here is also important to note that this study showed that previous particular experience of disasters with severe consequences and experienced negative emotions does not always lead to increased number of precautionary measures. Namely, authors suggested that citizens' doubts about effectiveness also play an important role (Siegriest & Gutscher, 2008).

Note: See source document for full reference.

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**Applicable to:**

Stakeholders: <u>Individual/collective memory</u>, <u>Norms/values</u>

Disaster Phases: <u>Prevention</u>, <u>Preparedness</u>

Types of Actors Concerned: <u>Non-active citizens</u>, <u>Active citizens</u>

Hazards: <u>Natural hazards</u>, <u>Man-made non-intentional hazards or emergency situations</u>, <u>Man-made intentional hazards</u>

**Recommendations:**

- <u>Use local knowledge, collective memory and shared cultural values to improve disaster preparedness, response and recovery</u>
- <u>Inform citizens about the risk they may face and about possible actions and measures, they can take to reduce vulnerability and better prepare themselves</u>
- <u>Use cultural factors to improve the effectiveness of disaster communication</u>

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## Source

<u>Deliverable D4.2 "Report on 'risk cultures' in the context of disasters" (page 66)</u>

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