Risk perception in urban vs rural communities

Some practitioners felt that citizens in urban environments did not have as much understanding of the risk of their surrounding environment, and that these citizens delegated the responsibility for their safety to authorities, whilst citizens living in smaller communities were seen as more self-sufficient, and that this trait would be in the community's collective memory: "There is a difference in the effort we need to make to help people from a rural suburb vs. central high-end areas. The first ones need less help than the others, even in the event of snow or flood… this comes from the population's resilience, as poorer people are used to deal with life, and wealthy people are not" (G2; R), "If we look at old studies, we will see that the mountain men are more hard-working, but this is because if they do not chop wood, in winter they will die, or if they do not repair the roof, they will die. A Neapolitan man will go to the port, someone will pass, we will fix the house" (G4; R3). The practitioner, here, suggests that citizens in some urban environments may just wait for help to arrive rather than being proactive in responding to a hazard themselves. "The ability of residents to perceive safety depends on the size of the place where you live in. The urban safety of cities is very strange, in the biggest cities people tend to delegate their safety care to institutions, as risks are higher. Smaller communities are self-sufficient, are like islands, and people take care of themselves and for one another and generations pass on this attitude. I am in touch with the Isola del Giglio people, and the local police and they had to manage the great fluxes of people getting on and off the island. The rescues usually focus on boats, not on people off the boat. At Isola del Giglio, they acted spontaneously opening houses, hotels, and helping the people. Without no protocols. In a big city, this would be much harder to do as operations are on institutions and they get loaded" (G1; R4). In terms of disaster response, practitioners also felt that "in small communities, the way to restoration is faster and more successful than in big cities" (G2; R).

Note: See source document for full reference.

Applicable to:

Stakeholders: Worldviews, Local knowledge, Attitudes toward authorities

Disaster Phases: Preparedness, Response, Recovery

Types of Actors Concerned: National civil protection body, Local authorities, Government, Red Cross, NGOs, Military, Law enforcement agencies, Healthcare and emergency services

Hazards: Natural hazards, Man-made non-intentional hazards or emergency situations, Man-made intentional hazards

Recommendations:

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

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Source

Deliverable D5.11 "Report on Stakeholder Assembly 2 (Italy)" (page 18)

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https://culturalmap.carismand.eu/a/5-11-15-risk-perception-in-urban-vs-rural-communities