Spirituality affecting disaster recovery and facilitating empowerment

Koenig (for literature reference see original source document) lists a wide range of disasters where researchers have found that spirituality, also classified by some as philosophical, intellectual or contemplative coping styles, has empowered survivors and helped them recover, or has prevented psychosocial stress altogether. The author goes on to suggest a number of reasons why religion is effective in supporting recovery. Empowerment is central to all of the explanations; for example, it can give the believer a sense of control and strength over themselves and their situation; it can promote hope, optimism, purpose and motivation; it can guide positive decision-making and provide role models; and it can provide a social network. The author concludes that spiritual support needs to be made available post-disaster, and that those affected should be screened for "spiritual needs" and referred to spiritual representatives "because of the potential long-term impact of unmet spiritual needs on mental health". Spiritual support may also provide benefits for non-believers, which any initiative should acknowledge.

Note: See source document for full reference.

Applicable to:

Stakeholders: Norms/values, Worldviews

Disaster Phases: Recovery

Types of Actors Concerned: National civil protection body, Local authorities, Non-active citizens, Government, Red Cross, NGOs, Military, Law enforcement agencies, Healthcare and emergency services, European Civil Protection Mechanism, UN and other international organisations

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

Recommendations:

- Foster the adoption of a culture of disaster prevention and resilience by informing and motivating citizens to take action

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Source

Deliverable D7.3 "Report on cultural factors and citizen empowerment" (page 52)

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