



Turning citizens into critical stakeholders and community representatives

Individual citizens can also become critical stakeholders and community representatives working formally with officials to create tailored disaster plans that take account of cultural differences. Community leaders, for example, can act as gatekeepers to the community, influencing decisions and behaviours internally and externally. Locals who can “read” the environment and have adapted their behaviour and land use patterns over generations, as a result of the local “disaster culture”, can also be useful experts in disaster planning and response. Individuals also have existing capacities that can be nurtured and developed to assist in disasters, particularly in the case of the most vulnerable groups affected by disasters. Local communities possess a wealth of often untapped knowledge, skills, practices and capacities that are unique to their local culture. Disaster managers need to harness these resources to improve the process overall. This is why local disaster prevention plans, in which key citizens or local leaders can and should take part, are important.

Applicable to:

Stakeholders: [Local knowledge](#), [Livelihoods](#), [Gender roles](#), [Age-related roles](#), [Ethnicity](#), [Socio-economic status](#)

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

Types of Actors Concerned: [Non-active citizens](#), [Active citizens](#), [Local authorities](#), [Government](#), [National civil protection body](#), [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](#)

Source

[Deliverable D7.3 "Report on cultural factors and citizen empowerment" \(page 77\)](#)

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