



Opportunities during the disaster recovery phase

The recovery phase of a disaster is meant to represent a moment of reflection, re-conciliation and the opening up of new opportunities. Thus, according to sources consulted, best practices in communicative behaviour include publishing of official reports outlining the causes of the disaster and communication of positive messages about recovery and a new beginning. According to the Reich, Bentman and Jackman guide, the post-crisis phase should represent a moment of evaluation and reform, when conclusions about what was successful and what went wrong should be drawn. The authors recommend not only having an internal evaluation but also surveying the target population on the understandability and efficacy of the messages communicated during the crisis. One particular aspect the authors emphasize is the analysis of the relationship with the media as well as of the ways the messages sent were reflected by the said media. Journalists should, according to the authors, also be, if possible, included in reflection process (Reich, Bentman and Jackman, 2011, 36). Ritchie et al (2004) outline for instance the communication stance of the marketing campaigns carried out by the British Tourist Authority in the wake of the 2001 foot and mouth disease outbreak. These featured direct references to the idea that previously affected UK rural areas are now safe to visit and that the British countryside offers excellent vistas and opportunities for relaxation. During the recovery phase, the media can act as the public conscience and as a watchdog. In its first role, mass-media can represent a forum for reflection on what went wrong during the disaster itself or the response to it and on how the community can recover. In its watchdog role, the mass-media can focus on criticizing those that have committed mistakes and on demanding accountability from public institutions. As long as this is done impartially and without miss-representing the evidence, this particular action of mass-media is crucial to democratic accountability. However, in politically polarized media landscapes, accountability can turn into the miss-representation of facts when the goal is to blame already selected individuals or authorities. However, the media can also play a positive role, by sharing the message that the disaster is now behind and normal life can resume.

Note: See source document for full reference.

Applicable to:

Stakeholders: [Communication](#)

Disaster Phases: [Recovery](#)

Types of Actors Concerned: [Local authorities](#), [Military](#), [Law enforcement agencies](#), [National civil protection body](#), [Government](#)

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

Recommendations:

- [Inform citizens about the risk they may face and about possible actions and measures, they can take to reduce vulnerability and better prepare themselves](#)
- [Use cultural factors to improve the effectiveness of disaster communication](#)

Source

[Deliverable D8.2 "Report on the role of the media in disaster risk communication" \(page 82\)](#)



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This file was generated automatically on: 12.02.2019.

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