Urban vs. rural divide in information seeking behaviours

The relation between the way people are seeking information during a disaster and living in a rural or urban area remains unclear and ambiguous and should be further researched. People living in urban areas were found to seek for information about a disaster through interpersonal contacts thanks to a variety of technologies such as mobile and fixed phones. They also use face to face interaction and social media (especially urban young people) (American Red Cross 2011). In rural areas, the role of personal contact is also very important. It was found that people in small rural towns tend to use personal contacts and were more likely to use family, friends and knowledgeable acquaintances (Hagar 2010). They give priority to local radio stations (Ryan 2012) and isolated farmers were reported to prefer using technologies where they could "interact and receive an instant response" (Hagar 2010). Radio proved to be massively used in the Aceh Province during the 2004 Tsunami (Romo-Murphy et al. 2011). Christine Hagar (2010) also noticed that when a disaster strikes, it creates a greater attachment to the physical places that are of big value to farmers. Cyberspaces can then offer a "placeless interaction" for the community which is important when farmers are more physically isolated. Online tools enabled people with a strong attachment to their place of living to get emotional support and to create new places for interactions at a local level. Technology use during disasters in isolated areas is then found to be mostly linked to communicating with the community.

Note: See source document for full reference.

Applicable to:

Stakeholders: Socio-economic status

Disaster Phases: Response

Types of Actors Concerned: Non-active citizens

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

Recommendations:

- The use of new technologies (e.g. Bluetooth) can improve communication strategies in disaster management situations
- Use cultural factors to improve the effectiveness of disaster communication

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Source

Deliverable D3.1 "Cultural factors and technologies" (page 44)