



Importance of considering communication channels used by the elderly, who may not be active on social media

Elderly populations were often perceived by practitioners as having difficulties with some communication channels (e.g., social media) and, instead, were seen to be more likely to receive communication through word-of-mouth or TV, although sometimes small emergencies are not included on local news reports either, presenting additional challenges: “Elderly people are not used to social media, are not used to receive information from other media than a relative’s phone call or the news on TV. They hardly find indication of a small local emergency on the news, though” (G3; R), “We should also consider the elderly population that not always is updated” (G4; R). Of further concern to one practitioner was that some elderly populations were not contactable even through print media, or did not have relatives or friends to provide them with information related to disasters; however, a telephone number for communication with these citizens meant that they could be informed about emergencies or disasters: “We did not reach elderly people. They did not read newspapers, as characters are too small, and we could not reach them through social media. In fact – as there was a telephone number well indicated for any request of information – all the telephone calls we received were of elderly people, out of the working environment, who did not have anyone to ask, such as grandchildren” (G6; R7).

Note: See source document for full reference.

Applicable to:

Stakeholders: [Open-mindedness](#), [Communication](#), [Age-related roles](#)

Disaster Phases: [Response](#)

Types of Actors Concerned: [National civil protection body](#), [Local authorities](#), [Media](#), [Healthcare and emergency services](#)

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

Recommendations:

- [Social media can be a useful alternative communication channel in all stages of disaster management](#)
- [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 D5.11 "Report on Stakeholder Assembly 2 \(Italy\)" \(page 10\)](#)

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