Technology, gender and social control

The World Disasters Report of 2014 gave an example of how cultural context enabled technology to circumvent cultural barriers that are also likely to be gendered. On Lake Victoria, sudden storms put the lives of fisher folk and others at risk on a daily basis. However, many fisher folk cannot swim and will not take life jackets in the fishing boat. Several cultural reasons are put forward for this. For men in particular, though, the report suggests that they may not want to learn how to swim or use safety equipment, since that can make them look "weak". The Mobile Weather Alert app, which notifies fisher folk of weather conditions via a traffic light system, has gone some way in reversing peer pressure, so that ignoring the app may now make the men look weak.

Note: See source document for full reference.

Applicable to:

Stakeholders: Customs/traditions/rituals, Worldviews, Communication, Gender roles

Disaster Phases: Prevention, Preparedness

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:
- 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 D7.3 "Report on cultural factors and citizen empowerment" (page 40)