

Multicultural inclusion in emergencies

RESEARCH TEAM

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Project duration: 3 years

SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS

Australian Red Cross

Background

Multicultural communities form an integral part of our society. More than 29 per cent of people in Australia were born overseas and 50 per cent have at least one parent born overseas. More than 5.5 million people speak a language other than English at home. This diversity is further reflected within multicultural communities themselves, from long established and highly integrated communities, to newly arrived, more isolated vulnerable multicultural communities, and others in between. Research and experience show that multicultural communities are at greater risk of poor outcomes in emergencies and disasters. While progress has been made by the emergency management sector in working with communities, enhanced approaches are needed to improve these outcomes. Multicultural community members and organisations have called for inclusive approaches to better build and enable resilience and ensure that the work of emergency management organisations is inclusive, and takes into account the unique strengths and needs of multicultural communities.

Project description

The project aims to increase resilience and positive outcomes for multicultural communities before, during and after emergencies. It includes the following elements:

- An evidence review to understand the current state of knowledge in Australia and internationally regarding engaging with multicultural communities before, during and after emergencies.
- Establishment of co-design working groups with multicultural leaders and community members with lived experience of emergencies and key emergency management agencies
- Interviews and focus groups with multicultural community leaders and members, emergency management agency representatives, multicultural organisations, policy makers and relevant community services.
- Surveys with additional members of multicultural communities, the emergency management sector.
- Development of an evidence-based and co-designed framework and toolkit to guide inclusion of multicultural communities before, during and after a disaster, tested through workshops with representatives from the emergency management and multicultural sectors and refined based on feedback.

Intended outcomes

Short to medium term outcomes include:

- A strong evidence base and associated framework and toolkit to support effective disaster risk reduction amongst multicultural communities.
- Increased capacity within the emergency management sector to engage with multicultural communities and organisations and to understand their strengths, priorities and needs in emergencies.
- Multicultural community organisations will be linked to emergency management organisations leading to multicultural communities having increased awareness of local disaster risks and increased capacity to prepare for, cope with and recover from disasters.

Longer term outcomes include:

- Increased safety and resilience for multicultural community members before, during and after disasters; strengthened bridging and linking social capital and sense of belonging
- Increased diversity in emergency management sector and engagement and trust between multicultural communities, organisations and emergency management agencies
- Consistent approaches to inclusion by Australian emergency management agencies and organisations

Translation and implementation potential

Anticipated outputs supporting translation of findings into practice include:

- An established community of practice that will provide ongoing advice, and act as an invaluable mechanism for dissemination and for communication between different stakeholder groups
- Policy briefs and a final report and implementation plan including communications and advocacy plans
- Multiple presentations at key conferences, and community and industry events alongside co-presenters from the research co-design groups
- Academic publications in open access, high-ranking international journals to ensure findings are represented in the national and international evidence base
- New networks and methods of communication between multicultural organisations and emergency management organisations
- Plain language reports, in-language infographics and in-language audio-reports with content tailored for the specific audience

Further information

For full project details head to: <https://www.naturalhazards.com.au/research/research-projects/national-framework-and-toolkit-multicultural-inclusion-emergency>

Or contact George.Goddard@naturalhazards.com.au

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