

Research Writings

The purpose of the Research Writings is to continuously publish the results of scientific research of the German Red Cross.

The Unit Research in Civil Protection at GRC National Headquarters launched an investigation into research requirements in 2012 spanning the entire organisation and involving all regional branches. During this process, three essential topics were identified as desirable research focuses: **resilience**, **societal development**, and **resource management**.*

The Research Writings address these topics and offer impetuses for the continued strategic development of the organisation.

Also available in English:

The Vulnerable Group “the Elderly and those Needing Care” during Crises, Large-scale Emergencies, and Disasters

Findings and Possible Solutions - Moving toward a Socio-spatial Approach to Civil Protection

* The colours are reflected in the respective cover picture.

Strengthening of Community Resilience - The German Red Cross Disaster Services

Recommendations for Action Based on Research Results

Legal information

Research Publication Series

Strengthening of Community Resilience - The German Red Cross Disaster Services
Recommendations for Action Based on Research Results

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Part 1

Research findings concerning the conditions for sustainable GRC disaster services

This volume of the Research Writings in the German Red Cross (GRC) summarises the results of the project INVOLVE – Initiate Volunteerism to counter Vulnerability.¹

The project arose within the context of needs communicated by the organisation and experiences from field assignments.

In 2012, the needs assessment of the GRC National Headquarters Unit Research in Civil Protection asked the entire association for topics that would contribute to the future topic portfolio and should be more closely examined. The topic “Strengthening the Resilience and Self-Help Capacities of the Population through Disaster Management” was specified as one of the three points of emphasis.

Resilience is a focal point which has been a prominent research and discussion topic in disaster research for some years now. Vulnerability is a concept closely associated with the topic of resilience, which is at times understood as the opposite of vulnerability. In the INVOLVE project, these terms have been assigned the following definitions:

Vulnerability generally refers to the susceptibility to injuries and disturbances. Vulnerable therefore means susceptible to injury or in need of help. Within the context of crises and disasters, those people who are especially susceptible to the negative effects of a crisis or disaster for various reasons are considered vulnerable persons.

¹ The project was funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). In addition to the GRC, the Disaster Research Unit (DRU) at Freie Universität Berlin and the Research Group Intercultural and Complex Working Worlds (FinkA) at Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena were involved in the project.

Resilience describes the ability of individuals and communities to prevent emergencies, mitigate and manage their effects, and recover in a timely manner following a crisis, conflict or disaster (Deutsches Rotes Kreuz, 2014: 6).

The needs survey specifically referred to the strengthening of resilience *through disaster management*. Due to the flood water field assignments in 2013 and later the refugee assistance, the focus shifted to a special service associated with disaster management: disaster services. The high importance of disaster services in handling emergencies was apparent during both assignments.

Definition of disaster services:²

The GRC disaster services serve the purpose of providing help to those who are in an emergency situation, but who do not need immediate acute medical treatment (Deutsches Rotes Kreuz, 2011: 7). Disaster services complement and support welfare and social work services. The aim is to restore the daily living environment as quickly as possible while maintaining or restoring the physical, mental and social well-being of affected individuals. Self-help and self-determination of affected individuals are of first priority and deserve special support (Deutsches Rotes Kreuz 2018: 4).

The purpose of disaster services is to assist people in managing emergency situations and thus promote social resilience. As an aspect of disaster management, disaster services offer a central point of contact for measures designed to promote people's resilience in crises and disasters.

During the survey carried out as part of the INKA³ project, it became clear that many unaffiliated volunteers⁴ were interested in activities that fall within the range of tasks covered by disaster

² The term disaster services was adapted from the American Red Cross. We are aware that terms may vary in other contexts. In this publication, it refers to the German term "Betriebsdienst".

³ "Professional Integration of Volunteers in Crisis Management and Disaster Preparedness" (INKA), research project of the GRC from 2012 to 2015. For more information see: www.grc-research.de/completed-projects/INKA/.

⁴ In general, different characteristics of unaffiliated volunteers can be identified: no formal membership in official disaster management organisations and thus no respective training; fast mobilisation and high amount of volunteers; wide geographical range of mobilisation potential; mobilisation across own social relationships; high scale of sovereignty and self-organisation; the use of social media as a tool for communication and organisation.

services (Deutsches Rotes Kreuz, 2015: 29). This specialised service is therefore a point of contact for new forms of involvement.

The INVOLVE project takes these developments up: the goal of the project is to reduce social vulnerabilities by developing new strategies for disaster management, particularly for disaster services. The necessary empirical research for the project was carried out in three regions that were selected as reference regions for Germany as a whole:

- Large city (Berlin)
- City (Jena)
- Rural area (Elbe-Havel-Land)

The technical terms used in this publication refer to the German context. We are aware that they are not universally applicable.

1

Disaster services within the disaster management system

Disaster services are part of disaster management in Germany. The first step in the project was therefore to analyse disaster management, the operating environment of disaster services as it were. As an example, the three systems of disaster management were investigated in the three reference regions. Special attention was paid to the involved actors as well as their tasks, skills, and relationships to one another. The respective local laws governing disaster management were analysed to this end.

All disaster management measures are under the jurisdiction of the federal states and are regulated by the states in their respective laws (see Millberg, 2010: 7). These are the following laws in the three reference regions:

- Law for Disaster Hazard Defence (Disaster Management Act Berlin – Katastrophenschutzgesetz KatSG)
- Disaster Management Act Saxony-Anhalt (Katastrophenschutzgesetz Sachsen-Anhalt - KatSG-LSA)
- Thuringian Fire and Disaster Management Act (Thüringer Brand- und Katastrophenschutzgesetz ThürBKG)

The disaster management system consists of actors from the governmental and civil societal realms.

1.1 Governmental disaster management agencies

In Germany, the disaster management system corresponds to the federal system of governance (federal level, state level, local/municipal level). As such it is organised into several administrative levels that are activated according to the subsidiarity principle, meaning that the larger organisations on the state level are only activated when the smaller levels are not capable of handling the situation alone. The county administration or urban municipalities comprise the local **disaster management agencies**.

In Berlin, this task falls on the 16 district offices, in Jena it is the responsibility of the city administration, and in Elbe-Havel-Land it is the responsibility of the rural district Stendal. The head

disaster management agency is the respective state's ministry of the interior (see Fritzen, 2010: 10). Some federal states even have mid-level disaster management agencies.

In addition to the city administrations and other government regulatory authorities, the **fire brigade** is another central government actor involved in civil protection.

The **Federal Agency for Technical Relief** (THW) is also a special feature. In accordance with the THW Act (THWG), the THW is a federal agency run by the Federal Ministry of the Interior (Art. 1 Para. 1 THWG) and is therefore a federal organisation. The THW is, however, obligated to provide assistance to the responsible (state) authorities within the framework of administrative assistance in case of disaster (Art. 1 Para. 2 p. 3 THWG), making it also an important government actor in disaster management.

1.2 Civil societal actors in disaster management

Organisations that do not operate within the government or on the market and are often characterised by volunteer engagement are referred to as civil societal organisations (see Krimmer et al., 2013: 8). It has been determined that the number of such organisations has been growing for years: The project "Civil Society in Numbers" identified over 616,000 such organisations (associations, foundations, non-profit GmbHs) in Germany in the year 2012. As a simple measure of civil society in individual regions, the authors define the organisation concentration, meaning the number of organisations per 1,000 residents.

This yielded the following results for the federal states investigated in the research project: in Thuringia (9 organisations per 1,000 residents) and Saxony-Anhalt (8 organisations per 1,000 residents), the organisation density was above average. They are among the federal states with the most organisations. The organisation concentration is lower in Berlin, with 6 organisations per 1,000 residents.

Of the 616,000 civil societal organisations, however, only about 3% could be classified as Civil Protection/Disaster Management organisations and another 3% worked in the healthcare sector. The majority of organisations working in Civil Protection/Disaster Management are active on the municipal level (see Krimmer et al., 2013). Above all, these **aid organisations** should be mentioned as an important part of the civil societal disaster management framework.

In many state laws, specific aid organisations are therefore explicitly listed as part of the disaster management plan.

The **Disaster Management Act Berlin** (KatSG) particularly plans for the assistance of private aid organisations in disaster management. It explicitly names:

- Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund e. V. (Workers' Samaritan Federation)
- Deutsche Lebens-Rettungs-Gesellschaft e. V. (German Life-Saving Society)
- Deutsches Rotes Kreuz e. V. (German Red Cross)
- Johanniter-Unfall-Hilfe e. V. (St. John Accident Assistance)
- Malteser Hilfsdienst e. V. (Malteser Emergency Service)

Similarly to Berlin, the **Disaster Management Act Saxony-Anhalt** (KatSG-LSA) also lists the following organisations as private aid organisations that assist with disaster management (Art. 12 Para. 2 KatSG-LSA):

- Arbeiter-Samariter-Bund e. V.
- Deutsche Lebens-Rettungs-Gesellschaft e. V.
- Deutsches Rotes Kreuz e. V.
- Johanniter-Unfall-Hilfe e. V.
- Malteser Hilfsdienst e. V.

The **Thuringian Fire and Disaster Management Act** (ThürBKG) places special emphasis on the fire brigade. Assistance from other aid organisations is clearly planned for, but none of the organisations are explicitly named.

1.3 Disaster management units

In the three reference regions of Berlin, Thuringia, and Saxony-Anhalt, the government (fire brigade and THW) and civil societal actors work together on disaster management in so-called disaster management units. When this happens, the organisations assign their own members (mainly volunteers) to the disaster management units as helpers and these people are then alerted by the disaster management authorities and can be deployed. Each federal state can control which specialised units are set up and how big of a unit is maintained.

1. Berlin (Regulation Governing Disaster Management Services – KatSD-VO):

- NBC service
- Disaster services

- Fire protection service
- Medical service

2. Saxony-Anhalt (Assembly Ordinance Disaster Management– AufstEriKatS):

- Fire protection
- Medical service
- Disaster services
- NBC
- Water rescue
- Logistics
- Leadership support

The assembly ordinance also clearly states that the specialised services of medical service, disaster services, and water rescue are the responsibility of the private organisations involved in disaster management.

3. Thuringia (Thuringian Disaster Management Ordinance – Thür-KatSVO):

- Leadership
- Leadership support
- Deployment 1 (fire protection)
- Deployment 2 (fire protection)
- Hazardous materials
- Medical service and disaster services

2

Strengthening of community resilience through disaster services - conditions

2.1 Methodical approach

The analysis of the respective disaster management laws is accompanied by qualitative interviews with experts from the disaster management field in the reference regions. The guiding research question here was; under which conditions do the actors in disaster management effectively contribute to the strengthening of resilience. Here, it must be mentioned that only one of the three reference regions analysed had experienced a (formally designated) disaster: Elbe-Havel-Land due to the flood in 2013. In other regions, the experts made reference to experience with large-scale emergencies and other deployments below the disaster threshold. The interviews in Berlin and Jena all took place at the height of the refugee aid situation that began in the summer of 2015 in which all interview partners were involved through various different activities and which they often made reference.

The interviews were performed using outlines that the project partners worked together to compose. These interviews were then transcribed and the content analysed. In March 2016, a joint workshop was held and attended by the project partners in order to consolidate the results of the interviews and assess what these interviews might say about the functionality of the disaster management systems. Furthermore, in addition to the interviews, workshops on the same subject were held with experts from the German Red Cross during the course of several events.

Based on the data collected, three topics were identified that appeared to be of central importance:

- the continuance of voluntary involvement,
- knowledge of various target groups and their specific needs, as well as
- the networking and collaboration of disaster services with other actors.

Once the three central conditions had been identified, the respective current research and organisational statuses of the topics at hand were worked out in collaboration with the project partners.

2.2 Condition 1: Voluntary involvement

Resilience is strengthened when there is a sufficient supply of volunteers.

In Germany, disaster management is handled mainly by volunteer helpers engaged by the aid organisations, the THW, and the volunteer fire brigade.

The experts specified the presence of (sufficient also in the future) volunteers prepared to provide assistance as one of the most important factors for strengthening resilience.

2.2.1 Academic state of the research on involvement in disaster services

On the basis of this finding, the academic state of the research on this topic was determined within the project. This was done based on the following question:

Who gets involved in the disaster services?

Answering this question was particularly difficult, as there is no empirical data specifically for the field of disaster services. There are, however, some (very few) studies on Civil Protection and Disaster Management (CPDM) involvement, which includes disaster services.

Table 1, “Involvement in general and in the field of Civil Protection and Disaster Management” shows the data from the voluntary survey ⁵ on participants in all areas of involvement next to data on participants specifically in the field of Civil Protection and Disaster Management. What should be considered here is that the percentages in CPDM always relate to the group of participants (e.g. 16% of involved persons are women). In the volunteer survey, the percentage refers to the respective population group (e.g. 42% of women are involved).

Involvement quota

The data in the volunteer survey relate generally to the involved persons in Germany. The volunteer survey also recorded the areas in which people are involved. This did not, however, specifically ask about the field of Civil Protection or Disaster Management. The closest aspect to this is the category “accident or rescue services, volunteer fire brigade”. 2.9% of involved

⁵ The German Volunteer Survey (FWS) is a representative survey of voluntary involvement in Germany, that was performed in 1999, 2004, 2009, and 2014.

Who generally gets involved?	Who are the participants in the field of CPDM?
2014: 44% of the residential population 2009: 36% 1999: 34%	2014: 2.9% of participants 2009: 3.1%
46% men, 42% women	84% men, 16% women
People between the ages of 14 and 49: 47%	People between the ages of 20 and 39: 43%-58%
People with a high level of education: 52% School children and university students: 55%	People with a high level of education: 60% People in vocational training: 16%
Employed persons 50%	Employed persons 78%
People without an immigration background	People without an immigration background
Up to 8 hours per month: 58%	Average of 29 hours per month

(Source: Simonson et al. 2016)

(Source: Kietzmann et al., 2015)

Table 1: Involvement in general and in the field of Civil Protection and Disaster Management

persons claimed to be involved in this area, another 2.2% said they were publicly active there (see Simonson, 2016: 110). A similar proportion of 4% is determined by Lange et al. in their study (see Lange et al., 2011: 4). In summary, it can be said that Civil Protection and Disaster Management makes up only a small proportion of the total amount of involved people in Germany. The amount of volunteer hours spent here were, however, above average.

Data gathered in the volunteer survey at several time intervals generally indicates that involvement has tended to increase. It would seem, however, that organisations in the field of Civil Protection and Disaster Management have hardly been able to benefit from these positive developments in civil society (see Hielscher/Nock, 2014: 9).

Sociodemographic factors

Furthermore, the numbers indicate that sociodemographic parameters (such as gender, age, education, etc.) that are generally observed in volunteer involvement have an especially strong effect in the field of Civil Protection and Disaster Management.

For example, considerably more **men** (83.8%) are involved in Civil Protection and Disaster Management than **women** (16.2%) (Kietzmann et al., 2015: 4). Women are clearly underrepresented in this field (see Geenen, 2012). There are also significant differences between the individual organisations in the field of Civil Protection and Disaster Management (see Kietzmann et al., 2015: 5). One aspect they all have in common, however, is that women are especially underrepresented in leadership roles and decision-making positions (see Geenen, 2012).

The **average age** of involved persons in the field of Civil Protection and Disaster Management is 36.1 years. In all of the organisations, the majority (43% – 58%) of involved persons are between the ages of 20 and 39, followed by 40 – 59. The number of involved persons over 60 years of age is very low (no more than 7%) (see Kietzmann et al., 2015: 6). This data is also reflected in the example analyses of a GRC district branch and a THW regional branch (see Enste et al., 2012).

Barely 60% of involved persons in the area of Civil Protection and Disaster Management have an advanced technical college qualification or diploma from a high school for university-bound pupils, another 30% have at least a general certificate of secondary education. This means that almost 90% of the involved persons have at least an **intermediate education** (see Kietzmann et al., 2015: 4).

Over three quarters (77.8%) of all involved persons are employed, 16% are still completing their education or participating in a volunteer service programme. The number of **unemployed persons** is very low, (2.6%) as is the number of retired persons (2.8%) (see Kietzmann et al., 2015: 4).

8.1% of the persons involved in the field of Civil Protection and Disaster Management said they had an **immigration background**. The proportion fluctuates between 6% and 12% in the different organisations (see Kietzmann et al., 2015: 5). The proportion of people with an immigration background is therefore somewhat higher than was presumed in other studies, but remains very low.

If one was to put together a profile of the typical person involved in Civil Protection and Disaster Management, it would be an employed man between the ages of 20 and 39 without an immigration background who spends an average of 29 hours per month carrying out his volunteer work.

2.2.2 Current fields of action in the GRC

During the interviews and workshops, the question was also raised regarding which measures are already being taken in terms of voluntary involvement and have already been proven. The list is not exhaustive, but offers a first glimpse of the current areas of action on the topic of voluntary involvement:

- Recruitment of underrepresented groups (women, seniors, migrants) for volunteer work in Civil Protection and Disaster Management

Example:

Project Protect – Learning and Helping Through Volunteer Work (www.bgz-protect.eu/2/)

- Inclusion of new forms of involvement (e.g. unaffiliated volunteers, digital volunteers)

Example:

Project ENSURE – Enhanced Crisis Management in Urban Regions

(www.grc-research.de/completed-projects/ENSURE/)

Example:

Project K3 – Communication Concepts for Crises and Disasters

(www.grc-research.de/completed-projects/K3/)

- Increasing the flexibility of structures (e.g. reciprocal recognition of qualifications)

Example:

Personnel strategy for GRC stand-by services

Example:

Project INKA – Professional Integration of Volunteers in Crisis Management and Disaster Preparedness

(www.grc-research.de/completed-projects/INKA/)

2.3 Condition 2: Knowledge about target groups and needs

Resilience is strengthened when there is knowledge of the groups requiring assistance and their needs.

In the interviews with the experts, it became clear that disaster management can only strengthen resilience and effectively provide assistance if it adapts to the changing conditions in society. Not only does sociodemographic change affect the potential disaster management volunteers, but it also affects the target groups, and therefore the people affected by crises and disasters.

2.3.1 Academic state of the research on vulnerability and needs in crises and disasters

On the basis of this finding, the academic state of the research on the topic of need for help in crises and disasters was determined within the project. This was also carried out based on two central questions:

- Who needs help when crises and disasters strike?
- What are the needs of the people affected by crises and disasters?

Who needs help when crises and disasters strike?

One goal of the project was to gain a better understanding of vulnerability in the population. In order to develop measures for reducing vulnerability, you first have to get an idea of the distribution of vulnerability. To set up disaster services so that they are capable of facing future challenges, it is important to know the target group that help is being provided to and the needs of this target group.

What are the needs of the people affected by crises and disasters?

In order to answer this question, a (presumably) vulnerable group, refugees living in provided housing, were asked about their needs as an example for the project. The results are shown in Table 2, "Needs of refugees". In addition to the refugees, field workers of the GRC were also asked what they thought the refugees needed. Needs specified by both groups are written in black. Needs expressed only by the refugees are marked in green, and those mentioned only by the field workers are marked in red.

Here it is first apparent that the needs expressed by the refugees correspond to the categorisations of basic, safety, social, and recognition needs developed by Maslow (see Maslow, 1977).

There are, however, discrepancies between the needs expressed by the refugees and listed by the field workers, especially when they go beyond basic needs. This result reveals that it is possible to perceive the needs of another person to a certain degree. A field worker should always keep in mind that the needs they assume an affected person has and the actual needs of one of these people may differ.

Basic needs:		Safety needs:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food • Place to sleep • Hygiene • Clothing • Health care 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security • Private sphere • Fairness • Transparent information on rules • Clear responsibilities • Stability
Social needs:		Needs for recognition:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childcare • Language courses • Contact with family/friends • Contact with Germans/interaction with Germans • Information on Germany (flyer) • Exercise 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of cultural diversity • Meaningful activity • Control over the situation • Process experiences
<p> = Needs listed by field workers and refugees. = Needs listed only by refugees. = Needs listed only by field workers. </p>		

Table 2: Needs of refugees

2.3.2 Current fields of action in the GRC

According to the findings from the interviews and analysis of training guidelines in disaster services, vulnerability and needs assessments are not a standardised part of disaster service activities.

Since 2009, Civil Protection and Disaster Management laws have required the federation to perform nationwide risk assessments on civil protection. The Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance (BBK) has developed and described a unified method for this purpose. It is recommended that such risk assessments be performed on the municipal level (see Bundesamt für Bevölkerungsschutz und Katastrophenhilfe 2015: 15). The analysis should be performed together with the relevant actors. In the interviews and workshops, however, it was reported that the GRC is involved in analyses on the municipal level in very different ways.

2.4 Condition 3: Networking

Resilience is strengthened when actors work together with one another and with other societal actors in disaster management. Working together with others was a decisive topic in the interviews with experts. When this worked, deployments were always successful. Collaboration can occur in all directions: between the various areas of operation in an organisation, between the various actors in disaster management, with other organisations working in the subject area of vulnerability and resilience (such as health, welfare organisations, etc.), as well as other actors from the social arena (e.g. pastors, mayors, etc.).

Figure 1 presents a scheme generalised from this combining the fields and actors involved in the networking concept and reflects their interdependencies.

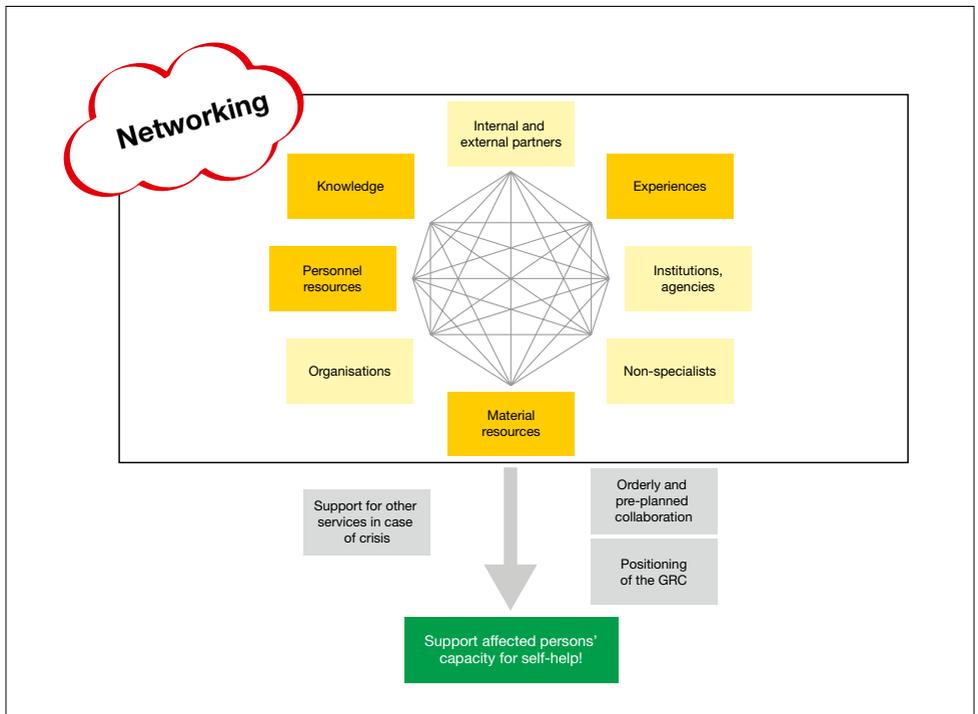


Figure 1: Networking in the social space (Graphic: Gladys Pietz)



Part 2

The viewpoint of GRC field workers: documentation of the four disaster services regional conferences

The second part documents the view of the GRC field workers. To gather this information, the GRC held a total of four disaster services regional conferences attended by 128 field employees.

The information obtained during the first part was presented to participants and this was used to work out the target state (“What do we need in order to be able to provide sufficient aid in the future?”). In the end, participants compared the current status as they know it with the target status they had worked out and used this as the basis for deriving required actions.

First, participants formed groups and reflected on the challenges and capacities of disaster service work within these groups. The generalised scenario of an exceptional situation in which it is necessary to accommodate large masses of people served as food for thought. Execution of group work was organised into the following points with the corresponding issues:

- Through the eyes of the affected person
 - What do I need?
 - How should I be treated?
- Through the eyes of the disaster services (with exclusive focus on disaster services)
 - What are we responsible for? / What can we react to?
 - What do we need for this? (personnel, training, equipment, skills)
- Through the eyes of the disaster services (with focus on the entire GRC)
 - Who else in the GRC is important for us?
 - Who should we work together with?
- Through the eyes of the disaster services (with focus on external actors)
 - Who are other important actors?
 - Who should we work together with?

The express goal was first to get participants to step out of their own disaster service perspective and start by considering only the affected persons and their various needs in order to gain an awareness of the tasks that need to be completed in a crisis or disaster situation. The starting point for consideration was therefore the affected persons and their completely individual and diverse needs. It wasn't until the second step that participants took on the perspective of

the disaster services and considered the previously documented needs from this more familiar perspective.

Based on this preliminary work, participants were then asked to come up with ideas and measures that were as concrete as possible for the future setup and continued development of disaster services. The following questions were used for this:

- Where are there gaps?
- What does this mean?
- What conclusions can we draw from this?
- What do we need?

Taking into consideration the first four questions, participants worked out the target state of the disaster services based on the needs of the affected persons. In the fifth question, participants were asked to compare the current state known to them with the target state they had worked out and identify any gaps while also coming up with ideas to close them.

3

Results – Target State

3.1 Needs of affected persons in crises and disasters



Figure 2: Needs of affected persons

The results show that field workers in disaster services are confronted with a wide variety of needs of the affected persons and that they perceive these in different ways. “You can’t just provide a warm blanket and think everything’s resolved!” is a quote from one of the events which sums up the results well. On the one hand, field workers see a need for material support of affected persons with material provisions (coloured green in the chart). On the other hand, they also listed a lot of immaterial needs ranging from information and respectful interaction, to empathic attention (coloured red in the chart).

3.2 Responsibilities and resource requirements of the disaster services

Participants were asked to take another look at the needs of affected persons collected in the previous round and to consider them from the more familiar perspective of disaster services. The first question was: what are we responsible for? / What can we react to?

Participants started by answering the question of responsibility with work events of the disaster services: flooding, storms, flight, evacuation, moving to safety.

The responsibilities of the disaster services were also limited to acute aid and short-term deployments.

In regard to the tasks of the disaster services in the field, many field workers answered generally with “provide assistance” or “support self-help efforts of affected persons”.

Within this context, many participants reported that they as field workers, (regardless of their responsibilities) are first confronted with all needs and would then have to react to them somehow.

If an analysis is performed of the individual answers relating to tasks, it is clear that disaster service field workers feel responsible for many of the needs. This includes the basic needs, such as:

- Shelter
- Rest/sleep
- Food
- Clothing

- Transport
- Registration

Beyond that, participants also listed advanced care as a task of disaster services. This includes aspects such as:

- Obtaining and forwarding information
- Establishing structures
- Assisting special groups
- Social assistance, problem solving
- Protection of affected persons
- Involvement of affected persons

Participants then listed the resources they believed the disaster services require in order to be able to meet the needs of affected persons in accordance with their responsibilities. The results can be organised into three categories:

- Personnel resources: personnel, characteristics, skills and capabilities, training
- Material resources: material, storage
- Immaterial resources: structures and processes

3.2.1 Personnel resource needs

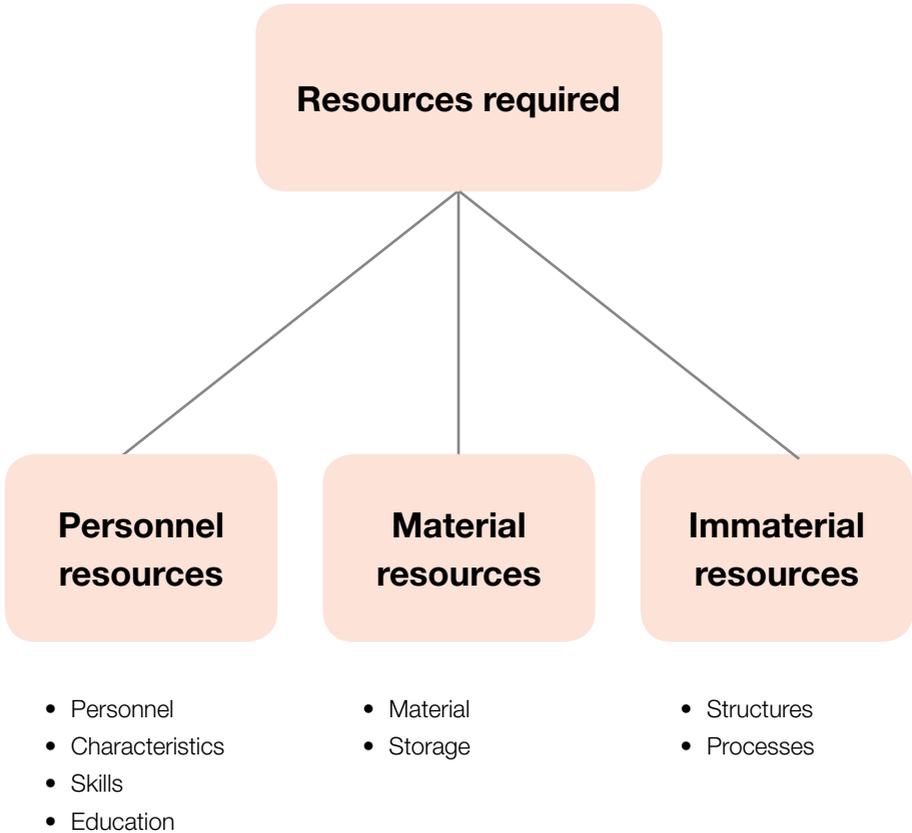
Personnel

The most important resource for disaster services is volunteer helpers who can take on the tasks that need to be done. What is striking is that not only did participants use the term “helper”, but they also used more general terms like “personnel” and “volunteers”. Further answers to this question support this observation.

Participants also made statements about the number of helpers, mainly stating that there should be “sufficient” amounts, in order to set up shifts, for example.

From the participants’ observation that the affected persons have a wide range of different needs that necessitate a large number of deployable helpers, they also concluded that on the one hand, there are well-trained helpers, but on the other, that the disaster services must also seek support beyond that of fully-trained helpers. This means that, in regard to the degree of engagement and training, participants believe there must be a way to involve unaffiliated volunteers in addition to the classic helpers.

What resources do disaster services require?



(Source: GRC disaster services regional conferences 2016/2017)

Figure 3: Resource requirements

Characteristics

Participants also listed characteristics that the field workers should have. One central characteristic is availability and therefore preparedness to work. Answers also indicate which factors affect availability, such as receiving time off of work from an employer, support from one's family, or even health. Other characteristics include flexibility, motivation, and one's own emotional stability (meaning characteristics such as patience and thick skin).

Skills and capabilities

Participants listed specific skills and capabilities as well as professional groups with this knowledge. They thus made it clear that not all skills need to be taught while providing a specific service, but rather that attention should be paid to existing competencies when recruiting helpers. In addition to capabilities such as cooking/preparing food and technical competencies, participants also listed plenty of so-called soft skills. They had the previously collected needs in mind and listed aspects such as communication skills, creativity, and teamwork.

Education

In the previous sections, it became clear that personnel with special characteristics, skills, and capabilities are important resources for disaster services. According to participants, in order to equip volunteers with the necessary skills, training should be offered. Here they provided detailed information on the form and content.

In regard to form, participants affirmed the existing multi-level system: basic training first, followed by more advanced specialised training. Participants were of the opinion that this must be accompanied by regular continuing education opportunities as well as regular practice of the content learned. According to participants, training itself should be structured modularly, like building blocks.

Participants also listed the content they believed should be conveyed in training sessions. When analysing these results, it is important to consider that participants also mentioned the existing basic and specialised training for disaster services, such as the content already available there, as being very important. They also listed additional content that they felt was important (some of which is not already present in the existing training courses).

What also needs to be taken into account is that participants did not say these topics all had to be addressed in training for disaster services, but rather only that there should be training on the subject (e.g. driver training).

3.2.2 Material resource needs

Besides personnel resources such as helpers with specific characteristics, skills, and capabilities, disaster services do of course also need materials in order to be able to meet the needs of affected persons in crises and disasters.

Participants listed quite a lot of material resources, ranging from equipment for food preparation to shelter options through to a storage where all of the necessary supplies are stored and made available.

Equipment for food preparation

Technology

Working supplies

Shelter options

disaster service material

Clothing

Vehicles

Storage

3.2.3 Immaterial resource needs

Many answers from participants cannot be classified under the main topics of personnel resources or material resources. These answers have therefore been summarised in the following under the term immaterial resources and sorted into two categories: structures and processes.

Structures

Regarding structures, participants specified the existence of a clear leadership structure, a general structure of disaster services, a communication structure, and the establishment of standards for deployments as important requirements for functional disaster services.

Processes

In order to provide adequate assistance, participants were of the opinion that there should be planning for disaster services. They listed various options for what such planning might look like: for example, needs plans could be created based on scenarios and this could be accompanied by a search for facilities.

According to participants, systematic data collection and especially the assessment of and reflection upon deployments are another important process.

These two aspects of planning and reflection lead to the third aspect participants found important: knowledge of one's own strengths and weaknesses, in the form of the capability to self-select in order to prevent burning out.

From the viewpoint of participants, the fourth important point is networking within the GRC as well as with agencies and external organisations.

Since information was listed as a very important need of the affected persons and was seen as such by the field workers, disaster services have a great need for resources to ensure that information is distributed.

Another important resource is the securing of financing for disaster services and ultimately recognition of disaster services as important partners.

3.3. Resources in focus: Networking

Participants defined networking within and outside of the GRC as an important resource for disaster services. The goal was to work out a target state for networking: who should we work with within and outside of the GRC in order to be able to provide sufficient assistance in the future as well?

3.3.1 Cooperation partners within the GRC

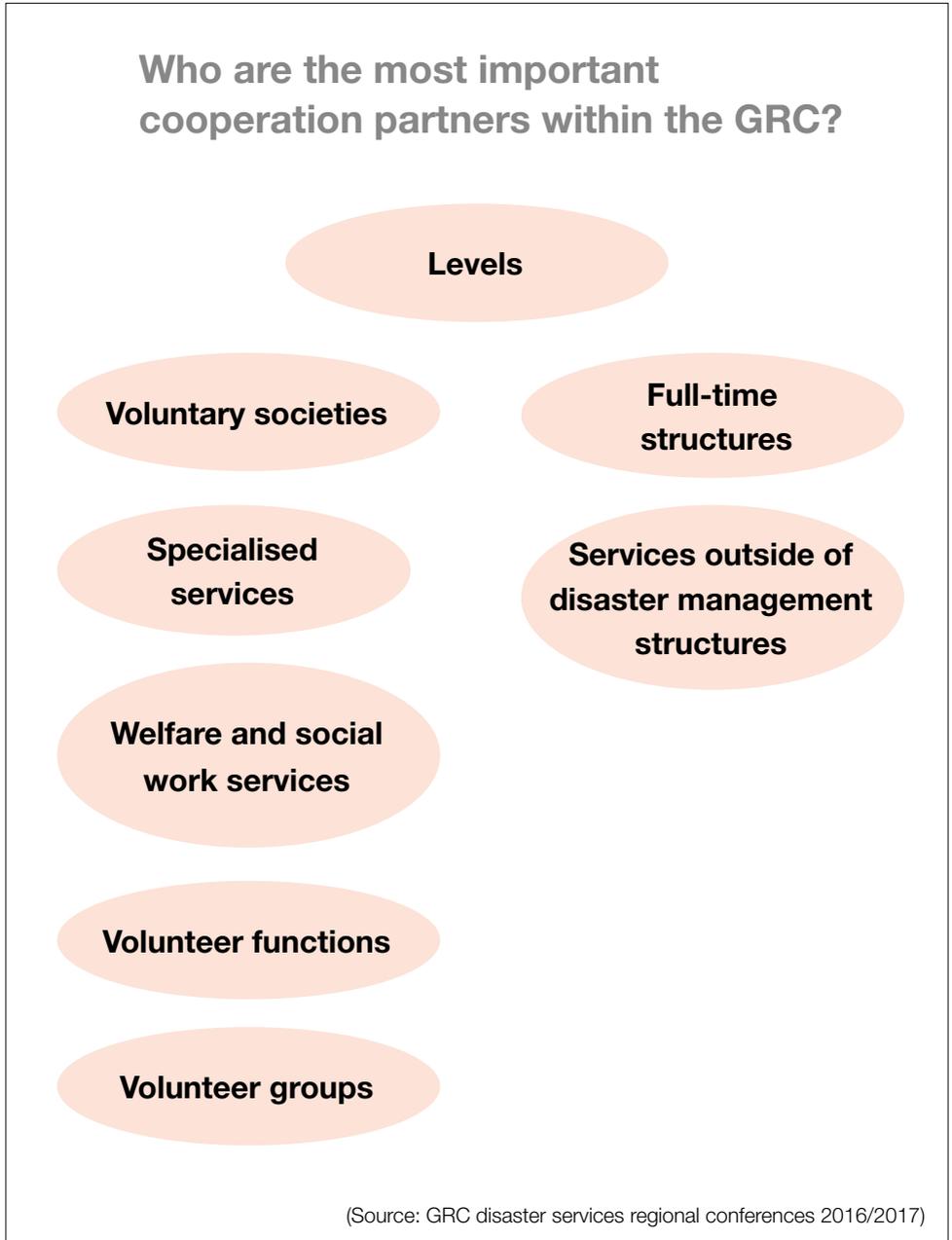


Figure 4: Cooperation partners within the GRC

The question “Who else in the GRC is important for us?” urged participants to consider which other actors within the GRC might be important to the work of the disaster services.

Participants listed all voluntary societies, specialised services, as well as services outside of disaster management structures on all levels of the GRC with their volunteer and full-time structures – in short – the complex system of relief services⁶.

The quote “living the complex system of relief services” therefore summarises the answers to this question very well.

Levels

It was clear that vertical networking and collaboration on all levels of the GRC, from the National Headquarters through to the regional and district branches and local chapters are all seen as very important.

Voluntary societies⁷

Specialised services⁸

Welfare and social work services

Volunteer functions

In terms of volunteering, participants listed all other specialised services in addition to all voluntary societies as important cooperation partners. Furthermore, they also listed services from the voluntary society welfare and social work services (e.g. the clothing store).

Participants also considered nearly all volunteer function holders in the organisation as important partners.

⁶ “The institutions of the German Red Cross combine to form a complex system of relief services. The GRC prepares its entire framework of health and social services to cope with disasters of all kinds” (Deutsches Rotes Kreuz, not dated: 5).

⁷ The volunteers of the GRC are organised in five voluntary societies: stand-by services; water rescue; mountain rescue; welfare and social work; Red Cross youth.

⁸ The GRC stand-by services comprise four specialised services: disaster services; medical service/first responder; management of information/communication technology; technical support and safety.

Full-time structures

Services outside of disaster management structures

The numerous specifications of various full-time structures and functions show that participants seem to deem networking with the tasks of the full-time sector to be important.

From the full-time sector, they also listed numerous services of the GRC such as hospitals, childcare centres, social stations, etc.

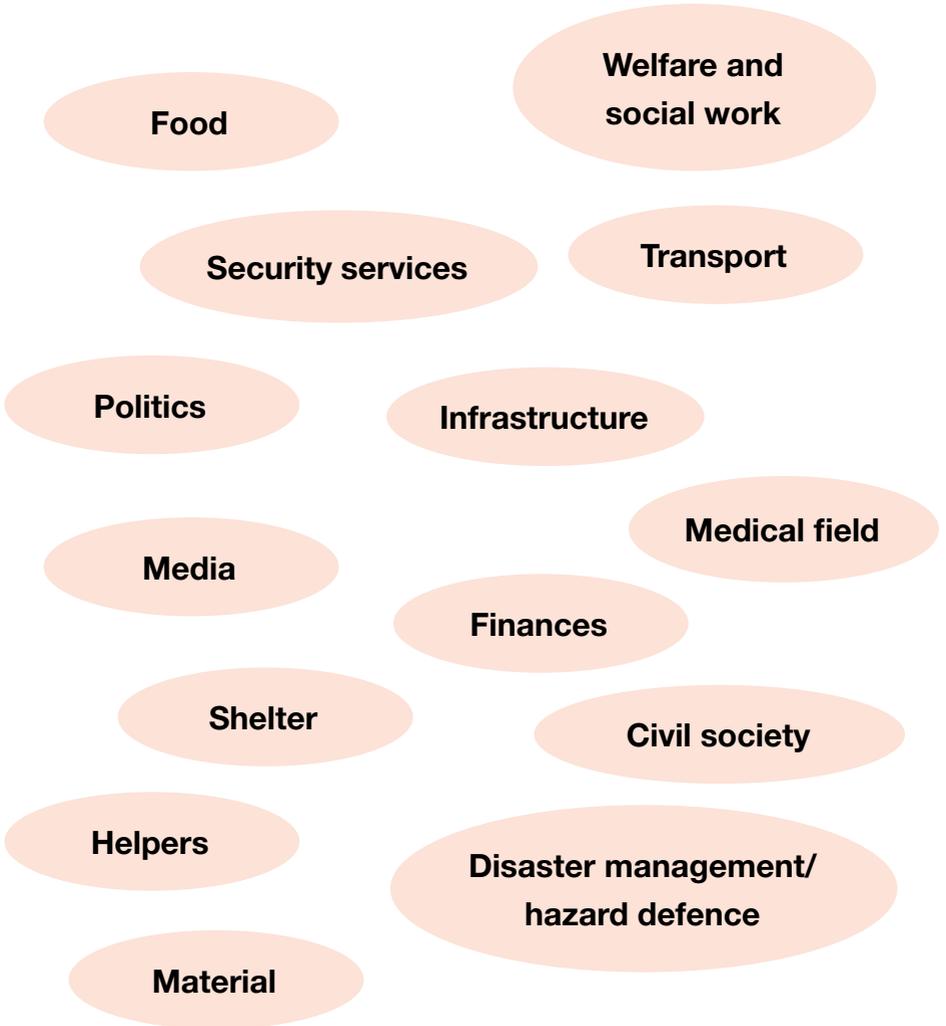
Volunteer groups

Participants also specified the way in which you can get involved in the organisation as a volunteer: as a volunteer worker, spontaneous helper, or sustaining member who provides financial assistance.

Here they also listed (full-time) structures that work with volunteers such as volunteer coordination and volunteer service offices.

3.3.2 External cooperation partners

Who are the most important cooperation partners outside of the GRC?



(Source: GRC disaster services regional conferences 2016/2017)

Figure 5: External cooperation partners

Besides being part of the complex system of relief services within the GRC, disaster services also cooperate with a multitude of actors outside the organisation. Participants specified which external actors might be relevant to the work of disaster services and with whom to potentially collaborate.

Partners from the following areas are named here:

- Food (e.g. wholesale and retail, catering)
- Material (e.g. chemist's shops, home improvement shops, craftsmen)
- Transport (e.g. bus companies, public transportation)
- Health (e.g. doctors, nursing services, midwives)
- Infrastructure (e.g. suppliers and waste disposal companies, cleaning services, telecommunication providers)
- Disaster management/hazard defence (e.g. police, other aid organisations, federal armed forces)
- Civil society (e.g. churches, sports clubs, welfare organisations)
- Shelter (e.g. schools, building managers)
- Media (e.g. press)
- Politics (e.g. agencies, embassies, city administration)
- Security (e.g. security services)
- Finances (e.g. donors, financial institutions)
- Helpers (e.g. spontaneous helpers, employers)
- Welfare and social work (e.g. educators, child care)

4

From the current to the desired state – what do we need to work on?

Last of all, participants were asked to compare the target state they worked out with the current state as they know it and thus identify points that can be improved upon. The results from this question can be summarised in central themes:

Related to personnel resources:

- Helper recruitment
- Education

Related to material resources:

- Material (minimum standards, provisions, financing)

Related to immaterial resources:

- Collaboration in the GRC
- Networking with external organisations
- Public relations work for disaster services
- Information, knowledge, and resource management



Part 3

Recommendations for GRC disaster services to meet future needs

During the course of INVOLVE, the volunteer helpers identified better networking of the disaster services with external actors as an essential area of action. The practice-oriented recommendations developed within the project address this need. These recommendations are made with the goal of preparing disaster services better for the future by considering current and future challenges. Within the context of societal processes of transformation, it is essential to identify new ways of doing business for disaster services in order to continue providing sufficient help to affected persons in crises and disasters and thus strengthening the resilience of the population.

On the one hand, disaster services face the challenge of decreasing interest in getting involved in the form of fixed memberships, which raises the question of how the sufficient availability of volunteers can be guaranteed in the future as well. On the other hand, sociodemographic change (increasing ageing and heterogeneity of society) is changing the target groups receiving disaster services considerably, giving rise to new and different needs during loss events. Considering the multitude of individual needs, disaster services cannot (and should not) provide comprehensive auxiliary supplies.

5

Networking

Having a good knowledge of the (individual) needs of the affected persons as well as establishing good networking and cooperation with external actors will also allow for disaster services to help in a way that meets the needs of affected persons in the future and strengthens their capacity for self-help.

Networking can also serve as an important tool for utilising the skills and resources offered by external actors within the social space required by the disaster services in order to meet the diverse needs of the population with its disaster service work.

The goal of networking is to firmly anchor disaster services as a fixture of aid service networks within the social space.

5.1 Social space analysis as a networking tool

The term 'social space' ("Sozialraum") refers to the social structures present in a local environment, meaning the composition of the residents (and their individual needs and skills), as well as the resources and capacities available on-site. A social space analysis makes it possible to get a comprehensive idea of existing needs on the one hand and the capacities, resources, and skills on the other. Within this context, such an analysis forms the foundation for needs-oriented networking with external actors within the local environment.

The recommendations for future-capable disaster services are presented in the form of an explanatory video and a workshop concept.

The workshop concept is set up for the planning and decision-making level of local GRC subdivisions and includes an outline for practical development and implementation of a networking strategy within the social space.

The explanatory video will be described in more detail below.

5.2 Explanatory video: “Disaster Services of the Future – Networking”

The Unit Research in Civil Protection developed the explanatory video “Disaster Services of the Future – Networking” to make the central findings on networking from the INVOLVE project accessible to the helpers in the disaster services of the GRC in an attractive way and while raising awareness of the issue.

The video demonstrates how networking with external actors in the local environment can form the foundation for successful crisis management. Disaster service helper Tom is used as a representative of a local disaster services unit to demonstrate how disaster services respond to situations.

One example of a situation is a burning house. The residents living in the house – the affected persons – have very diverse social characteristics. This means that in addition to a single mother with two small children and two cats, an older couple and a family with an immigration background are also affected by the event. In the spirit of self-help and neighbourly assistance, the affected persons start putting their skills to work helping each other even before disaster services arrive. This is evidence of their resilience.

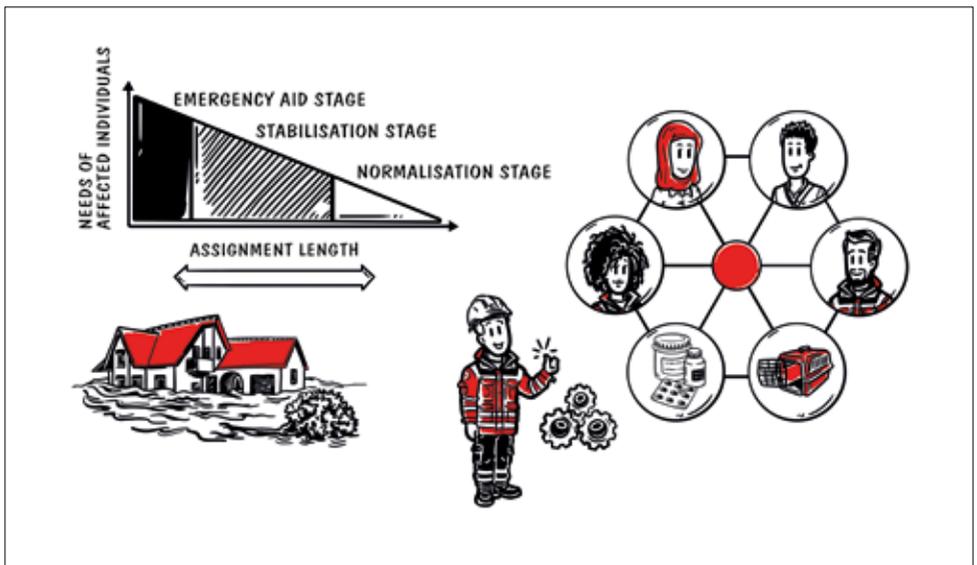


Figure 6: Extract from the explanatory video

Throughout the various deployment phases, the role of disaster services is repeatedly clarified: in the phase immediately following the incident, the focus is on arranging for shelter, food, and psychosocial counselling for the affected persons. Examples are used to show that the residents have very different levels of vulnerability in this situation. During the stabilisation phase, Tom and his team consider the affected persons' individual capacities for self-help on the one hand and their various needs on the other, in order to arrange for additional help through external partners for services that the disaster services cannot provide themselves and to also support the self-help capabilities of the affected persons. In the normalisation phase, once the residents have returned to their residences or are being accommodated in replacement residences, disaster services provide them with tips on who to contact should they experience further problems. This makes it clear that, with pre-planned networking and collaboration with other actors, disaster services can offer efficient and needs-oriented assistance while at the same time lessening their own burden.

The video is available to download from the website of the Unit Research in Civil Protection (also available with subtitles for the hard of hearing):

The video can be found here by navigating to the INVOLVE project subsite:
www.grc-research.de

6

Summary and outlook

The first part summarises the results of the first phase of the INVOLVE project. Firstly, interviews with experts initially identified key topics as to how the disaster services can continue to strengthen community resilience in the future. Here, three topics were identified as central issues: sustained volunteer involvement, knowledge of various target groups and their specific needs, and networking and collaboration of disaster services with other actors. The scientific as well as the organisational status of these topics was illustrated and prepared.

Based on this current status, the Unit Research in Civil Protection held four regional disaster services conferences from November 2016 to February 2017 and the results of these conferences were presented and assessed in part 2. A total of 128 participants utilised previous research results to define a target status by referring to the needs of the affected people, meaning responsibilities and required resources for disaster services. Participants also compared the target state with the current state and derived requirements for action from them.

The results on the target state, as well as on the action requirements as perceived by participants, were prepared and documented.

During this process, the topic of networking and collaboration with external actors in the social space was considered to be of particular importance by the volunteers. Based on the identified action requirements, recommendations for future-capable disaster services was developed within the context of the project that were then presented to the organisation as pilot suggestions for the further integration into the disaster services education and training. This involves an explanatory video with the title “Disaster Services of the Future – Networking” as well as a concept for a workshop for developing and implementing a practice-oriented networking strategy on the local level.

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