MICIC — MIGRANTS IN COUNTRIES IN CRISIS

IOM — UN MIGRATION

G 06: COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY WITH MIGRANTS

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WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Migrants need to understand potential risks associated with a crisis, where and how to obtain assistance, and how to communicate their needs. Stakeholders should adapt their communication channels and methods to migrants' needs and capacities, including by addressing language, cultural, technological or other barriers. Communication efforts should consider the diversity of migrants present in a country or area. Women domestic workers may work in isolated conditions and be hard to reach through traditional means. Unaccompanied and separated migrant children, migrants with disability, elderly migrants all have communication needs. Fear of being detected, detained or deported, may inhibit migrants in an irregular immigration situation from accessing official communication channels.

Adapting form and content of preparedness messages and the way in which they are disseminated – for instance by involving and training civil society, health workers or faith-based organizations – can help bridging communication gaps in migrant communities.

Lessons from Hurricane Andrew in Florida (1992)

In August 1992, Hurricane Andrew ravaged Florida and wreak havoc across South Miami-Dade County. The majority of the people affected were of Latin and Haitian origin. Government agencies and emergency actors had systematically disseminated preparedness messages prior to the hurricane's landfalls, but they failed to reach the entire population. Due to linguistic and cultural barriers, non-English speaking persons, and in particular migrants, were less prepared.

Research found that Latino households in Florida placed greater importance on information provided by interpersonal and family networks in comparison to other population groups. They also predominately relied on Spanish-speaking radio stations to receive updates. Failure to translate official warnings and to disseminate them through different media at an early stage limited migrant communities' awareness of the risks and of the preparedness measures to be followed.

ADAPTED AWARENESS-RAISING MATERIALS

HOST STATES, CIVIL SOCIETY

National or local authorities as well as civil society and private sector actors who disseminate emergency preparedness information should adapt messages to reach migrants, keeping in mind differences among and within migrant groups. Translating messages in languages migrants speak, simplifying messages by avoiding jargon and acronyms and adapting them to different literacy levels can be helpful. Including pictures, graphic symbols, video and audio material to convey messages is often more effective than text alone.

"It's an earthquake! What should I do?" Video, Japan

This multilingual prevention video offers step-by-step instructions on how to prepare for earthquakes and tsunamis and what to do when they actually happen. It was produced as a multilingual tool by Sendai International Relations Association in the aftermath of the 2011 Tohuko triple disaster. The video is available in twelve foreign languages.

Fast Facts for Disaster Preparedness Booklet, USA

This booklet aims at helping Chinese residents in San Francisco learn what to do, where to go, and how to prepare before a crisis. Produced by NiCOS Chinese Health Coalition in English and Chinese, it provides a list of emergency contacts, along with a map to a designated area where people can register and receive information and emergency supplies as they become available.

The Disaster Preparedness Guidebook, Republic of Korea

This handbook, which complements text instructions with illustrations, helps migrants be better prepared in case of disasters in South Korea. It is available in the five languages mostly spoken by migrants in the country. It is used as a reference manual and disseminated during emergency trainings for migrants, jointly organized by IOM and the Ministry of the Interior and Safety in several cities.

Multilingual Danger Signs, Italy

Signs in Arabic, English and French, informing migrants about the dangers of crossing the mountains due to the heavy snow were set up in Italy's towns of Bardonecchia and Olux, the main starting points for the trail to France. "Warning, danger of death", reads the sign that tries to explain with simple vignettes what the dangers are: namely freezing, exhaustion, getting lost. Volunteers are trying to help migrants who, sometimes without shoes and gloves, remain trapped in the snow while attempting the crossing.

TRAVEL ADVISORIES

STATES OF ORIGIN

Recognized and mandated agencies in the State of origin can play an important role in communicating preparedness information, early warnings as well as information on any ongoing emergency to their citizens abroad. Migrant groups often trust their home institutions over other sources of information, and might look specifically for information provided by such actors to validate warnings. Consular websites, travel advisories, social media or smartphone applications can be useful to disseminate information to citizens living or traveling abroad.

Travel Aware Campaign, UK

Travel Aware campaign is a joint venture between the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the travel industry to prepare British citizens for safe and healthy travel abroad. The on-going support of 400 campaign partners in spreading key messages on safe travel is an essential pillar for the long-term success and sustainability of the campaign. On a dedicated webpage, citizens can access vital information to prepare their travel and access worldwide helplines.

Chile Goes With You, Chile

The Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs launched the initiative, "Chile va contigo" with the purpose of keeping Chilean travellers informed, and helping them and their families to have a safe trip. The website provides general travel recommendations, including on relevant documentation, insurance and vaccines. It also features a voluntary registration platform for travellers, an invaluable tool that allows to locate and assist Chilean travellers in the case of natural disasters.

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ENGAGING LOCAL ACTORS AND MIGRANT COMMUNITIES

CIVIL SOCIETY

Local organizations may have the best contacts with migrants, including those with irregular immigration status. In emergencies they act as first responders, before national actors arrive. They can help facilitate two-way communication with migrant groups and networks and foster understanding of migrants' needs before and during emergencies. Establishing partnerships and coordination mechanisms with these organizations can help leveraging their strengths.

LISTOS: Disaster Preparedness Education, USA

Listos is a culturally appropriate Spanish language curriculum that uses the strengths and bonds within the Latino community to educate and prepare its members for emergencies or disasters. It uses hands-on teaching methods, is mobile and low tech as well as low cost. Also, it can be adapted to teach diverse vulnerable populations, as for instance the elderly, children and differently abled people. First piloted in 2010 in Santa Barbara County in California, the LISTOS progamme has since been reproduced nationally.

Kentucky Outreach and Information Network (KOIN), USA

The Kentucky Outreach and Information Network (KOIN), initiated by the Cabinet for Health and Family Services, is pushing preparedness responsibilities to trusted people and agencies in local communities, to informal and formal groups as well as to media. KOIN works to build a person-to-person network to communicate with hard-to-reach populations who do not speak English, people with disabilities or those living in remote rural areas. In the event of a public health emergency or natural disaster, trusted communication procedures are established within the community to reach vulnerable groups, including migrants.

SMARTPHONE APPLICATIONS

MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDERS

Knowing which media and other channels the various migrant groups use to access and share information is key to communicating effectively. Modes to communicate can be traditional, or innovative, formal or informal and should include ways for migrants to access information even without revealing confidential information such as their identity, immigration status or location. Mobile applications are a cost-effective, user-friendly, and widely accessible mechanism to supply relevant messages and facilitate two-way communication. Individually, or in partnership with others, stakeholders can develop applications that target migrants information needs. The content and features mobile applications can offer, include SOS messaging to emergency numbers, GPS location and tracking capabilities, maps and navigation including to available emergency services and consular posts nearby.

MigCall App, India

MigCall is a mobile application developed for Indian workers in Oman and other countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. It is available in various Indian languages such as Hindi, Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Bengali and English. The App provides updated helpline numbers in India and in the migrant host country, including for passport services, counselling services, local police and hospitals. MigCall includes a feature to send an SOS messages in an emergency situation and provides GPS locations to the nearest Indian embassy office. The main feature of the App is that once downloaded, it can be used offline in the absence of an internet connection.

MiGuate, Guatemala

MiGuate is a special mobile application utilized by the Guatemalan Ministry of Foreign Affairs to provide consular services and assistance to migrants. The application enables direct contact between migrants and Guatemalan consular agents. To facilitate immediate humanitarian action for migrants in need, the application provides real-time data registration and reporting. Its most important feature is its ability to establish a direct connection with Guatemalan Government call centers and internal databases. The App provides a number of services, including general information on embassies and consulates nearby, contact information in case of an emergency and registry of migrant alerts.
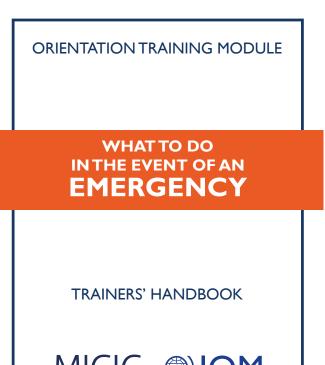
PREPAREDNESS TRAINING FOR MIGRANTS

IOM developed this training module to raise migrants awareness on the main risks they may face in their respective host countries and locations. It provides basic preparedness measures they can take to protect themselves, as well as key emergency-related resources of information and assistance in the host county.

The training primarily targets migrant workers and can be delivered as a stand-alone course as part of broader Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO), Post-Arrival Orientation (PAO) or Cultural Orientation trainings that migrants may receive from different actors in home and host countries.

The training has been developed using a "learner-centred" approach, with the objective to involve participants, facilitate learning and maximize application of newly-acquired knowledge. Each of the five learning sessions is designed to be adapted to specific localities, regions or countries to better reflect the specificities of migrants' context of destination.

The training package—consisting of a trainer's handbook, electronic versions of PowerPoint presentation templates and handouts—is available in English on the MICIC website.

ORIENTATION TRAINING MODULE

**WHAT TO DO
IN THE EVENT OF AN
EMERGENCY**

TRAINERS' HANDBOOK

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BE PREPARED!
BASIC CRISIS PREPAREDNESS RECOMMENDATIONS

Register
Register with your embassy or consulate and update your information when you leave the country, or whenever you change residence, workplace or contact details.

Identify evacuation options
Identify evacuation routes, transportation options, meeting points, official shelters and alternative safe sites in your area.

Share your emergency contacts
Share with your embassy or consulate the contact information of your emergency contacts (e.g. employer, family members): address, email and phone number.

Know your rights
Ask your consulate or embassy for advice on what services you are entitled to receive (by local actors and by your country's representatives) in the event of a crisis.

Get advice on potential crises
When you arrive at your destination, learn about crises that could affect the area, recommended preparedness and response measures, and behaviors that may be risky or forbidden in the country.

Make copies of your documents
Make digital and paper copies of passport and IDs, visas and permits, social security or health service card, your will, evidence of property, residence, and employment, and education and professional certificates in the country. Keep the originals safe.

Subscribe an insurance policy
Explore private and government or workplace sponsored options to get insurance coverage for costs that could be associated with crises (e.g. emergency medical care, repatriation).

Identify useful contacts
Prepare a list of contacts that could be useful in emergencies, for instance of your embassy or consulate, community coordinators, and local emergency response actors and service providers.

Share your travel details
Whenever you are planning to visit particularly risky or remote areas, provide your consulate or embassy your contact information, itinerary and whereabouts. If possible, also share this information with relevant local institutions.

Prepare an emergency bag
With water, food, clothes, money, a hand crank radio, phone and spare batteries, basic first aid supplies, contact information of service providers, maps and personal documents. Keep it in a safe but accessible place at home and at work.

Know your neighbours
Get in touch with other members of your community, and its leaders, representatives and associations. Be familiar with your community's main meeting

Provide updates on your situation
In case of crisis, get in touch regularly with your family, consulate or embassy, or emergency hotline and let them know if you are well and if you need any help.

Participate
Take part in local drills and exercises (e.g. organized by local emergency management entities, workplace, school and consulate), in particular specific events for foreign nationals.

Stay tuned
Identify media and information sources that can be useful in a crisis (such as websites, social media pages, apps of local and home country institutions) and get regular updates.

MICIC

IOM's "Be Prepared!" poster was designed to communicate basic recommendations to migrants to improve their preparedness for multiple crisis scenarios. It is part of a preparedness training toolkit developed to raise the awareness of migrants on disaster risks and emergency preparedness in their host countries.

This poster is available in:

- [Arabic](#)
- [English](#)
- [French](#)
- [Russian](#)
- [Spanish](#)

The Guidelines in Action present implementation examples and tools to support the operationalization of the MICIC Initiative Guidelines to Protect Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict or Natural Disaster. Practices and tools may be relevant for one or more stakeholders. Find more examples of practices in the MICIC Guidelines and in the online Repository of Practices on our website.
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