



Garden of Eden, Garden of Resilience: The role of church in disasters.

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Disasters have a profound affect on communities and livelihoods. It is my contention that churches are key civil society institutions that have a strong presence in various cultures and can assist with disaster mitigation and preparedness in local contexts. Helping to reduce communities' risk of disaster and facilitating greater community resilience falls within the boundaries of the church's integral mission.



How can you build the church's capacities to include disaster risk reduction as part of their greater vision?

How can you be aware of cultural assumptions?

Can the church mobilise a community to move towards Greater resilience?

How the church can challenge harmful myths and assumptions that impede development.

Churches can influence and shape values in their communities and wider societies. People's vulnerabilities are interwoven with the complexities of cultural values and belief systems. In fact, the whole concept of what disasters symbolise can mean different things to, and across various cultures. For instance, the church can address common cultural beliefs such as fatalism. Churches are well placed, and in some societies, the *only* existing institutions that can help dissipate harmful cultural myths and assumptions that inhibit progress in disaster mitigation.



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