

Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Earthquake Preparedness for Immigrants and Refugees in Iceland

Supplemental Materials

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Survey

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Earthquake Preparedness Survey

Thank you for participating in this survey about earthquake preparedness in Iceland! The purpose of this survey is to better understand the experiences of natives and non-natives to Iceland before and during earthquakes. Your information will be kept confidential, unless you decide to contact us for a follow-up interview or focus group.

Background Block

Select which answer applies to you:

- Icelandic Citizen or Permanent Resident
- Visiting
- Extended Stay

If you are visiting or on an extended stay, select which answer applies

- I am here for education/university
- I am here for a vacation
- I am here on a work visa
- I am here for asylum or as a refugee
- Other

If you are visiting or on an extended stay, what is your country of origin?

If you are an Icelandic citizen or permanent resident, select which answer applies

- Born in Iceland
- Immigrated from another country

If you immigrated from another country, what is your country of origin?

Earthquake Block

If you are an immigrant or visiting, did you have any prior knowledge about the natural disasters in Iceland?

- Yes
- No

Have you felt an earthquake in Iceland?

- Yes
- No

If you have experienced an earthquake, how did you feel?

- Very Calm
- Mostly Calm
- Indifferent
- Mostly Stressed
- Very Stressed

How prepared do you feel to handle an earthquake?

- Very unprepared
- Somewhat unprepared
- Neutral
- Somewhat prepared
- Very prepared

Where have you received information about earthquakes in the past? *Check all that apply*

- Iceland Red Cross
- Friends or family
- Social media
- Icelandic Meteorological Office
- Multicultural Information Center
- Civil Protection Department Mass SMS/text alert
- New in Iceland Website
- Travel guides
- Other, please specify

What kind of information or resources would have helped or will help you be more prepared for an earthquake? *Check all that apply*

- Knowledge of earthquake statistics in Iceland
- Understanding of what to do in the event of an earthquake
- Better understanding of how to help others
- Supplies to aid in preparation
- Emotional or psychological support
- Information about financial resources
- Places to go for support
- Places to go for shelter
- Other

How would you like to receive information about earthquakes? *Check all that apply*

- Social Media
- Text/SMS
- Poster
- Newspaper
- Magazine
- Website
- Other

What is your preferred language for receiving information?

- Icelandic
- English
- Polish
- Danish
- German
- Spanish
- Portugese
- French
- Other

Conclusion Block

Would you be comfortable meeting with our team in person or on Zoom to speak further about your experience? If so, enter your contact information below.

Is there anything else you would like us to know?

Results

1. Select which applies:

	%
Icelandic Citizen or Permanent Resident	94%
Visiting	4.3%
Extended Stay	1.7 %

2. If you are visiting or on an extended stay, select which answer applies

	%
I am here on a work visa	36%
I am here for asylum or as a refugee	36%
I am here for a vacation	27%
I am here for education/university	0%
Other	0%

3. If you are an Icelandic citizen or a permanent resident, select which answer applies

	%
Born in Iceland	93.6%
Immigrated from another country	6.4%

4. If you are an immigrant or visiting, did you have any prior knowledge about the natural disasters in Iceland

	%
Yes	58.3%
No	41.7%

5. Have you felt an earthquake in Iceland?

	%
Yes	98.4%
No	1.6%

6. If you have experienced an earthquake, how did you feel?

	Born in Iceland	Not born in Iceland
Very Calm	26%	6%
Mostly Calm	47%	29%
Indifferent	17%	35%
Mostly Stresses	8%	18%
Very Stressed	2%	12%

7. How prepared do you feel to handle an earthquake?

	Born in Iceland	Not born in Iceland
Very Unprepared	5%	11%
Mostly Unprepared	5%	11%
Neutral	23%	22%
Mostly Prepared	39%	28%
Very Prepared	28%	28%

8. Where have you received information about earthquakes in the past?

	%
Icelandic Meteorological Office	70%
Friends or Family	67%
Social Media	62%
Civil Protection Department Mass SMS/text alert	26%
New in Iceland Website	26%
Icelandic Red Cross	14%
Multicultural Information Center	1%
Travel Guides	0%
Other	25%

9. How would you like to receive information about earthquakes?

	%
Text/SMS	73%
Website	52%
Social Media	41%
Newspaper	17%
Magazine	3%
Poster	2%
Other	14%

10. What kind of information or resources would have helped or will help you be more prepared for an earthquake?

	%
Understanding of what to do in the event of an earthquake	68%
Knowledge of earthquake statistics in Iceland	35%
Better understanding of how to help others	30%
Places to go for shelter	26%
Supplies to aid in preparation	22%
Places to go for support	13%
Information about financial resources	8%
Emotional or Psychological support	6%
Other	18%

Interviews

Organizations Represented in the Interviews:

Icelandic Meteorological Office

The IMO is a government agency run under the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources as Iceland's national weather service. The organization, along with sending up to date weather reports to other organizations and to the general public, focuses on volcano and earthquake monitoring, more specifically seismology. They control different websites that the public can use not only to get general information about the weather, but also to see a live feed of the earthquakes occurring on the island.

Multicultural Information Center

The MCC is an organization under the Ministry of Welfare that aims to provide information and aid to those moving in and out of the country. The MCC website includes a plethora of information to specifics about the immigration and emigration process to information about the everyday culture and different administrations in Iceland. They are also combining with the organization New in Iceland that works under the Ministry of Social Affairs. New in Iceland also works directly with immigrants and refugees, mainly those entering Iceland, by offering free and confidential services to those who may be seeking more aid and more information as they are settling in.

Icelandic Red Cross

The Icelandic Red Cross, with locations all over Iceland, works in the fields of disaster services, migrants, health projects, clothing projects and more. They provide many resources

online and in person for these populations to utilize in order to feel more comfortable in their transitions. The Red Cross provides these services in order to aid the populations in Iceland that may need more support from financial matters, to additional assistance during the resettlement process.

Civil Protection Department

The Civil Protection is run under the Ministry of Justice with all national level responsibilities being directed towards the National Commissioner of the Icelandic Police. The NCIP runs a Department of Civil Protection and Emergency Management which is responsible for handling daily provisions for civil protection matters, which includes providing resources to those threatened by natural hazards.

Transcript:

Icelandic Red Cross Interview Transcript:

Lasya

Oh well, we.

Sam

Yeah, you could.

Sam

I mean, I can, I can describe our project it's going to,

Lasya

Do that, yeah.

Sam

Be a little weird with the Zoom because we're in the same room using one mic. Uhm, so it's a, it might not show our faces like it normally does. But our project is focused around evaluating the information that immigrants and refugees get in Iceland about earthquakes. Earthquakes are natural hazards which can be mentally taxing for people as well as physically dangerous, so we just want to kind of evaluate the systems that are in place now for communicating that information to those specific groups of people. So, you know, we recognized that you work at the Red Cross, focused around refugees and immigrants, so that's why we reached out to you.

Red Cross Representative

Can you say that again? The last thing.

Sam

Oh, we noticed that your work at the Red Cross focuses on leading the refugee and immigrant team, so that's why we have reached out to you.

Lasya

So we just wanted to ask some questions about that, so we can get started if that's OK?

Red Cross Representative

Yep.

Lasya

Uh, well, what does your team do at Red Cross in Iceland?

Red Cross Representative

We have a definition of tasks because I'm at the head office and then we have teams or project managers in the process who actually carry out or implement the program they support itself. So they would be the ones who were in direct contact with the clients or the participants, as we usually call them, the refugees that are receiving support for us, and they're volunteers. So we have, what kind of information [inaudible]. Well, up till recently, at Ukraine they were residing in the in the capital area, [inaudible] which is near to the airport. That is because 3 municipalities, [inaudible], they usually have an agreement with the with the Directorate of Immigration on social support and housing through to asylum seekers, when they start to seek asylum. So therefore most of them were actually settled down after they got the protection or the asylum, they were settling down in those communities. It's only the [inaudible] groups, as they are usually called in Iceland, that are invited directly from the from the government, directly from the second country, or host second host country. Invited directly to us and they have been placed or resettled in various places in the countryside, and then for the first few years, they come. But now we have like, well, the system was a little bit overwhelmed. In general, people are settling anywhere where they have acquaintances, like family members from Ukraine that were living in Iceland and so on, 2/3 of all asylum seekers this year were from Ukraine. So it's quite a new situation, and I would say the whole reception system was in the process of being changed when this happened, and the new system wasn't really up and running. The [Inaudible] reception system. So this was, it was a tricky time and the whole, I think, the whole [Inaudible] were working on this reception, but [inaudible] it's a very hectic situation at the moment. So we're slowly working ourselves out [inaudible]. And so the team, my team, I work at the head office and then they implement those support programs in in the in the branches. I work all around those things, but the biggest program is in the capital area.

Lasya

OK, we can go to the next question then. So how do you communicate with the people you are helping and what do you think would be the best way to connect/provide resources to immigrants and refugees?

Red Cross Representative

We are mainly communicating with the refugees, that is asylum seekers who are having their case in the process, and the refugees that have received asylum. And we are, more or less, mainly communicating with them for the first year or so, maybe for the first two years, and then it phases out. So we communicate with them on Facebook pages, like announcement and information pages. Not so much through the website, but sometimes it happens. But if we have like a special announcements or special information that needs to be sent that we use an SMS, like a mass SMS to the group.

Lasya

And has that changed at all with the issues in Ukraine, the way you communicate with them?

Red Cross Representative

I wouldn't say that yet, it should definitely have changed, or it should be more like formalized. We're kind of, we were in a bit of chaos before the summer, then we have the summer holidays and so many of our staff and volunteers had covid for the last few weeks. So we're just now getting back to, back on track, and we're reviewing and revising things according to the situation as it is now. So it's a problematic issue at the moment, but I don't know how familiar you are with the overall system on the reception of refugees in Iceland, are you in any way?

Sam

We received a bit of information in our previous meetings with the Meteorological Office and the Multicultural Information Center, but other than that we don't know the specifics of how the process happens.

Red Cross Representative

You fell out, you received information from where?

Lasya

The Meteorological Office and the Multicultural Center.

Red Cross Representative

So the multicultural center is like a central role in contacting all the people that get protection in Iceland and should be giving them an interview and offering them a place in the municipality. But since this, the mass flight from Ukraine started, they have been, they haven't been able to handle the number of people that have been coming through and mind you, the system is pretty small, so it's not like, it's maybe not that easy to scale up the work in the very short time. And also because it was being transferred from one ministry to another, so that was all happening in the same time, very bad timing actually, so that also delayed things a lot. So the overall responsibility is being moved from one Minister to another and the whole, not only this, the [inaudible] is being moved. The whole ministries were being reorganized. So there was a lot of moving [inaudible] from one to another, and people, you know, had to move to the ministry and the roles and then the programs weren't really clear, where it was supposed to be housed, so that on top of everything else.

So we haven't been able to kind of get the perfect information or put enough information on the variables of the people, where they actually moved to. So, that information link kind of fell down or has been missing in the past few months. And also on top of what I've already said, the Red Cross had the legal assistance, had to do with the legal assistance to asylum seekers, until 1st of May, yeah the first of May and then it was moved to individual lawyers outside, just many private individual lawyers. So we all got the information on the on the contact details of all applicants, and we brought the protection in Iceland from our team of lawyers before and after this, that change and the change of the phrase and the mass influx of the Ukrainians and the new set up of the reception in general with the National Center, these changes were all happening at once that the middle link of information was very bad. We haven't really got the oversight yet on where people are, so in order to actually contact them in a situation like this. I could tell you I mean, earthquakes is one kind of natural hazard or disaster ,and with the volcanic outburst both this year and last year, in near to populated areas, even though people are not in danger or the villages themselves are not in danger, it's still quite near and the earthquakes are usually happening around those volcanic areas. And of course we had the COVID outbreak two years ago, three years ago, so then we were really pressing for the, when COVID started, for example, it was clear that it was not part of the overall warning system to warn people in different languages. So we haven't had any huge natural

disasters for quite a long time that requires that everyone is informed and everyone has access to the same information. And the society has really changed dramatically in a very short time since we had like [inaudible] 2% of the population where [inaudible], whereas it's now up to 60%, so quite a change of situation and circumstances in society. And then the Civil Protection system or the mass warning systems hadn't been updated to accommodate that change. So when COVID started we were quite worried about that, both ways because we are working with the refugees, people that are actually coming out of a psychologically difficult situation, and coming into this uncertainty again. When you move to a country like Iceland, I mean, you are safe and you can relax a little bit and then this happens, "what? What's now?" So we experience that the people were, people who didn't speak Icelandic languages were seeking information from their home countries, which was not at all applicable to Iceland, and maybe yeah, some of it's fake news, or mention about the spread of the virus and [inaudible]. So, we were thinking we must do something very urgently to get the correct information to those people. And there's a lot of uh, in a situation like with COVID, there's a lot of, I would say, very fertile ground for all kinds of misinformation and all kinds of conspiracy theories, and people who believed one thing didn't believe another. Some wanted to take all the vaccinations etc etc. So, I think in general, the biggest lesson was that we were, the civil protection alarm system was not taking into account that we have a totally different population now. But with the help of the Red Cross, we initiated contact with the multicultural center and some NGOs, some of them because municipalities passed for translations of the of the most crucial information into different languages. But it took some time to get this and we were like, you know, they were, you know, getting a slap on the hands, he was alone here. We're trying to do our work and we're crying out for, if you want the warning system and you want everyone to be part of it, then you need to reach everyone, and we cannot just excuse yourself with, you know, "they'll just have to find out" or somehow. They didn't, so it was quite, It was kind of a battle to have this and this and getting the acceptance of this fact that we need to get the word to these people who are not understanding Icelandic and at the time there was kind very little information on their local national broadcasting. A company that came in English or in Polish, which we have the biggest immigrant group, the one biggest immigrant group, 1/3 of all immigrants in Iceland actually come from Poland. So now they have, it's been growing steadily since then that they actually have news in English and in Polish. I think that like the COVID information was translated into [inaudible] different languages, but you can look it up, it's COVID.IS. So it was the most frequent languages or the most frequently spoken languages among the immigrants that was translated. But still, they only translated like the basic information and didn't really keep it going and keep it alive with new news in in those languages. So it was accountable, yeah, I mean we are good at emergency help, I mean we're quite used to natural disasters, earthquakes, stormy weathers, landslides, different things. And we're good at organizing, but we need to take into account that we have a whole new system. So I think it was a big lesson to learn. Regarding the earthquakes recently, the huge earthquakes before the volcanic outbreak last year, people of course were near in that area, near to the epicenter, were quite worried and it was like disturbing. It was going on in [inaudible], at the moment. We try to get information out from our little media channels, but these mostly reach refugees and we try to like advocate for the officials or the authorities to provide this information in more languages than Icelandic. I think that's kind of the answer to this.

Sam

Yeah, can you, you mentioned the civil protection alarm system.

Red Cross Representative

OK.

Sam

Can you talk more about that? Like you said, there were some mass SMS alerts, like how does all that work?

Red Cross Representative

I should actually connect you with a colleague of mine, because it's like a national system run by the authorities, it's actually under the offices of the state police, and the Red Cross is a role in that system, within that system, to provide for like a mass care center. A center or place for people who can't reach their home or lose their home, or they can come and reside in a mass care center for the first hours or days or more, what it takes to get them into a proper housing. So my colleague [inaudible], he's the contact person for that and overseeing that. So he could tell you all about the mass care and the role of the Red Cross in there and the overall system, he knows that in and out. But this is like yeah, civil protection. We don't have any army in Iceland, so this is like built up from the, by the police force, the administration and municipalities, the rescue squads which volunteer, NGOs with hundreds of volunteers, and then with the Red Cross with our volunteers. The administrative part of it involves the police, they have the system, and the social care system with the social services. So it's more or less all involved in one way or another with a specific settlement. And they have their, in case of a big event, they set up, like would you call it in English? Management center, due to coordinate and organize the whole thing. We have our representatives there and take part in it, through those manager centers.

Lasya

So could you talk a bit more about the Red Cross role in connecting immigrants and refugees to native Icelanders? Or how the guiding friend system works?

Red Cross Representative

We are mostly working with refugees, not that much immigrants.

Lasya

OK.

Red Cross Representative

'Cause we just don't, I mean, we don't have the manpower or the resources to conduct big programs for immigrants in general. So we have this social connection program, as we call it, to do like, enable social connection between the new newly arrived and the local society, so we offer guiding friend or language buddy to the refugees, if they wish so. Not everyone has a need for that or they have some other connection, so they're not really in need for that, but it's just like speeds up building a new social network in a new home and then you get to know things about the culture, about the society, about the community, and how things work, and how the system works, plus questions you need to know, et cetera, et cetera. [inaudible] practice Icelandic with them. It's been going on since forever, this program, some sort of type of this program been going on since 1956 when we first started to receive immigrants in Iceland. And it used to be called like a support system, so we connect one family with an Icelandic family, but as we are having more numbers we adapted to that so it's usually, you know, one person to person. But it's proved to be quite useful and valuable for people and from the feedback we get from surveys among our users and it's usually, I guess, the highest positive score that to get to know someone who really cared about you and was there for you when you need it. [inaudible] to get their answers to some questions. Perhaps someone there would have also done both, connect with you but also help you with connecting with other things where you want to [inaudible]. This is like an informal part of the reception system, more like outside the working hours. The social worker is supposed to assist people with housing and then get a work permit and find a job or find their way through the educational system etc. And then this is like additional

[inaudible] and prevent isolation, provide psychosocial support etc etc. It has proved that is a valuable, yeah, in increasing quality of life and increase well-being or like mental well-being of people.

Mikayla

I know you said that a lot of the volunteers helped with the like integration of the Icelandic language, has it been fairly easy to find volunteers that speak the like main languages the refugees speak when they come here, and has that been something that's been easy to like, find volunteers that can speak those languages? And if it has been, has that been what's like the like main factor of, like, feeling that stability that the refugees have someone there that, like, knows them in that sort of sense and it makes them feel more welcome?

Red Cross Representative

If I heard you correctly, you were asking about if it's easy to find a volunteer speaking a similar language? No, that's not always easy, it's getting easier. But we have been receiving and carrying out this program for decades when we didn't have anyone speaking anything, you know, except Icelandic, maybe English, mostly. But the refugees don't always speak English, I mean, some don't speak any English [inaudible]. But people have managed to like you know, connect with you know the help, sometimes we start with the help of a translator. Uh, especially in the in the resettlement program where there's a group in the same place, so it's easier to like work with them, but more or less people just find ways to get themselves understood, and then nowadays it's much easier with the help of Google Translate. When there's a formal issue that needs to be addressed we can use the language line, which is like a telephone service based in the UK. And that has really been a huge game changer for us because we don't have that money to get translators in Icelandic languages like professionals. Just a sec

[speaks in Icelandic to the carpenter]

Sorry, I had a carpenter in the kitchen.

Lasya

It's OK.

Red Cross Representative

So, yeah, language line was a huge game changer. We didn't have that many speaking different languages, and it's also actually better to use someone who's outside the room, because if you have a group of people who speak, for example, [inaudible] they may be 100 or 50 or something, and then you pick one to translate and that can be really tricky within the group. Some people in the group, even though the translator is really professional and takes care of confidence not everyone maybe trusts him. So it's actually better in a way to have people from outside translating that don't know, it's just over the phone and nobody knows anyone, so that's kinda, yeah. I must say the volunteers are really, who commit themselves into this program, they are really enthusiastic and interested and committed, so yeah, they find a way.

Mikayla

Yeah, it sounds like an amazing program, and it seems like it's been super helpful in like making those refugees feel as comfortable as they can be in that situation.

Red Cross Representative

It has actually proved to be quite an effective way and there are similar programs run by the Red Cross in in the Nordic countries, so this is not only in Iceland. But we have been, basically it was just like, you know, someone clever enough in the beginning started this and so this has been going on for a while. But in general Icelandic society is changing very fast in a relatively short time. I mean, the immigration in our neighboring European countries has been going on for decades and the increase has not been left sharp

like here. But it's only like this over 20 years that this whole change is happening. And then there's, uh, I mean, we're going through a lot of like would you say growth pains, the whole system or society in general. We have been advocating for, for example, for a national policy, we need the national policy on immigration. We have been advocating for that for years now and finally it is to be replaced this winter. Work is starting by the Ministry of Social Affairs, and it's really neat it, I mean, where do we want to go with this? Do we want like a two layer society where all the immigrants are only doing the low paid jobs and low skilled jobs, or do we actually want them to participate in society and really use, make use of their skills? Because these are educated people firstly and have great experience with all kinds of things and know all kinds of things that we are not you know, putting in use and we also have to step up before our language training and so many things that we need to improve, but there's like a, you know, huge opportunities. But yeah, I'm also afraid that we need to also need to step up our work against the Senior VP on racism because I mean it's all fine in the beginning and we want to help our European, what do you say, friends from Europe, and partly we have seen that the Ukrainian refugees coming from Europe are getting much better treatment or much better reception or you know, being more welcome than others from elsewhere. So we need to like watch that. But now as the time goes, we're also seeing that [inaudible] stay here forever and what about people who come to learn the language. We need to make it possible for them to learn the language and really make them, make it possible for them to participate in society. There's a big room for improvement at the moment, but with the new policy I think we will be in a better position hopefully if we can, excuse the pun, say the right word. We're a bit like hammering on the door with them. "What about this? What about that? We need to stop these other things." People need to be informed on the volcanic outbreaks and it's not like a stable protection system if it's only for a part of the population. We all need to, you know, take precautions and stay safe. I mean if no one among the immigrants knows about what to do and where to go and it's not safe for the rest of the population, so it all comes back to you.

Sam

So you mentioned, or we were talking earlier about the guiding friend system and that's very useful for communicating information about hazards and Iceland, earthquakes and volcanoes to refugees or immigrants. Are there any other systems you can think of that do that same kind of communication?

Red Cross Representative

Actually, yes. Well, another thing that we have been advocating for forever and ever is a proper Information center for immigrants and I don't know if you are aware, but it's actually now going to be connected to the multicultural center, so you may have heard about this.

Lasya

We have not, no.

Red Cross Representative

So, it's online, it's called New in Iceland, in one word, newiniceland.is. So they were actually quite active in getting out information to people as well. So I think also through the, they have lots of immigrants. I think more or less everyone who works there are actually immigrants themselves, so they also have like a connection to different groups on social media and so on. So I think they are pretty effective in spreading information to immigrants in general. And with the national officers roof, it's LUV.is. We could actually, if you go in there on their news sites and online new service, now we can actually see and use in English, in Polish. That increased immensely, it hardly existed before. Then there was like, in the call with suggestion, the civil protection along with the National Health Directorate and the Center for epidemics. They had like information meetings almost on daily basis. So they would spread the spread information

and tell, I mean now we're at this stage where we need to close down here and there, and they are doing that more and more, Using the media. But then when there's a like, like with the earthquakes in one area before the word came out, broke out, like ongoing earthquakes, for, I don't know, weeks and making people quite worried they also have like open meetings and open community meetings where they inform people. And there they would try to have someone who would speak a different language to get something out of those meetings in the new languages. So I think, yeah, we are improving a little bit, but yeah. Actually I wouldn't know, I couldn't tell you at the moment, but maybe my colleague can tell you because he's part of the civil protection setup system, whether this is now a mainstream part of their response, to actually provide the information in those different languages and getting them out to people and trying to reach everyone. So he could probably tell you about that, but I couldn't tell you whether it's part of the usual procedures.

Sam

We're all, we're all a little sick right now.

Red Cross Representative

Yeah, can I ask you which faculty are you in? Are you in metrological something?

Lasya

We're college students.

Red Cross Representative

Sorry?

Lasya

We're all college students who are working with our college on a project, an abroad project about the communication for natural disasters, specifically earthquakes, to immigrants and refugees and like seeing if we can improve or learn more about it.

Sam

So we're from a school in Massachusetts in the US called Worcester Polytechnic Institute, so the school does these study abroad trips where we work on projects like this.

Red Cross Representative

But the metrological center in Iceland or the yeah, they have, I wonder if they have actually, they are quite good in Icelandic actually. Let me just see if they have. We have a big tourist industry, and that's always the case with the tourists that they're traveling, you know, we have like a weather warning, you know, every few days over the winter time, so they have these weather warnings on the website. If you want to take a look at it, do you know it? Do you have a link to it?

Sam

Yeah, I think we we looked at it.

Red Cross Representative

Vedur.is. They have an English site but yeah, it's Icelandic and English. They are quite good in informing people. But it's always an issue to get this information to other people elsewhere who don't speak the language, and to tourists or travelers who are not aware of the immediate danger that the weather can have, the weather in Iceland changes drastically in a short time. So I was just to mention the importance of meteorological service and the alarm system. I used to work for the Red Cross in Mozambique for some years and there were huge floods and rains and hurricanes etc etc, with very dramatic consequences. In a country like that, where they are, the states they're at, you really see coming from Iceland, like how metrological service is such a huge, huge step forward and being able to assess and anticipate what is going to happen and also to get the warnings out, and to get a warning out in in a in a place where people

don't have radios, or there isn't an official like warning system that shout out any sort of announcements or something like that, and so, so many lives that have been saved if it's happening in that stage. So you know, it's a huge, it's a huge issue.

Mikayla

Yeah, we've been in contact with the Meteorological Office and we, I think, have a meeting set up with them in the next few weeks and we were definitely hoping to talk to them about like how they do have such an amazing, like informational source and they have ways to provide that information to the people within the country or to countries that kind of know more about it, but we were probably going to see if we could talk to them about like, how they were thinking about, like expanding their outreach in a more like direct way so that more people were more aware of it.

Red Cross Representative

I mean, yeah, and they're not only responsible for the weather announcement, but also for earthquakes and volcanic outbreaks etc. So I mean, they're definitely the ones. And it will be interesting also for me to hear what they tell you. I mean, are they actually changing their work, ways of working with this new combination or composition of the population? Are they taking that into account? I think it was like a wake up call for everyone, what happened when COVID started, but the system doesn't really reflect the society anymore, there's a huge gap somewhere that needs to be breached. With new ways of looking at who's who, and so on. And who's where? To really reach them because they are not maybe even, also not looking, or using the same and social media or news websites as the rest. Even though they would provide it in English or different languages they haven't, they're not used to, they use other sources to get the news. So, I think so, yeah, I think it's a big issue and a valuable research topic. So we'd be happy to see your the outcome, what you produce.

Mikayla

Would love to share it with you, when we've talked to more people and see what we can do to help out, yeah.

Sam

Part of our project is kind of evaluating how people are prepared and how they prefer to get information. So we have a, we put together a survey that we're hoping to get responses on. Our baseline idea is to just post it in as a QR code in public spaces and see if we can get responses, but you know, we also wanted to ask you if you had any ideas for how to garner more responses for that survey, specifically from the groups that we were researching.

Red Cross Representative

Are you talking about the refugees?

Sam

Yes.

Red Cross Representative

Yeah, I'm wondering if we could send out, and maybe it would be interesting for us also to see that outcome. We could send out an SMS, if it goes through, if it's a survey that you can answer on your phone.

Lasya

Yeah, it works on your phone.

Mikayla

Absolutely is.

Sam

Yep, it's.

Red Cross Representative

Kind of, yeah, maybe it would be interesting for us to like send it out the ones that we have the contact information on, personal contact information.

Sam

What kind of?

Red Cross Representative

Maybe, maybe if you could send to me like a short description of it?

Lasya

We can also send you the actual survey if you want to look at it.

Red Cross Representative

Oh yeah, yeah.

Lasya

It's very short.

Red Cross Representative

Describe it with a short text and I could discuss it in house, and we can see whether we should, you know, try to just try to help with facilitating it. And the outcome could be of interest to us and we could improve our communication.

Sam

That would be great. If we were to do that is there any specific information that you'd be looking for in terms of like, the questions we put on the survey, like what kind of information would be useful to the Red Cross? We can also send it to you.

Red Cross Representative

Where they would get information? If they've got enough information? What could be improved? Just off the top of my mind, but maybe I should think it over a bit.

Lasya

We can add that to the survey, and if you have any corrections we can also fix that after you see it.

Red Cross Representative

Are you doing this only in Iceland or elsewhere as well?

Lasya

We are only in Iceland.

Mikayla

We're just getting their information from the like refugee immigrant population specifically in the country.

Sam

And Icelandic citizens too, we're trying to kind of capture the whole population if we can.

Mikayla

Get the comparison between the people who have like grown up here and like have known about the hazards and stuff through their life, versus like the people coming and possibly not knowing about it before, and maybe not being in a place that has similar hazards. Well, everybody like the baseline of what the immigrants, you know, compared to the like native Icelanders.

Red Cross Representative

Maybe it would also be interested to know, or interesting to know. Because if you I mean if, you grow up in Iceland, you're like more likely to be sort of a geological nerd, you know, people are in general

interested in geology and earthquakes and volcanic outbreaks and you know, It's like a common knowledge that kind of allows hosts here and there. [inaudible] we are kind of aware and we have grown up with the, with all these natural disasters without them being really or most mostly [inaudible] doesn't really post any danger to towns or villages or people. So it's kind of an interesting natural phenomenon. Everyone goes to see it and goes up to the volcano to see the lava rivers and the flow, if it's possible, but if you're coming from elsewhere you might not be like that relaxed about it. If you have earthquakes and you have been in a war zone like, I don't know, some months before or years before It's not, earthquakes and the bombings, they produce the same sort of damage sometimes. Earthquakes in the area where we have are receiving refugees, house are [inaudible], even though people haven't been killed or injured, but then the houses are breaking down [inaudible]. So maybe it has a very different psychological effect on people. Then if you, if you're growing up here and then kind of used to it, then it's not like a big deal and you know that you will be compensated because everyone is insured for earthquakes, it's like a National Insurance, and so you don't really have to worry that much that you're like losing all your belongings. Of course it's devastating, but if no one is harmed these are only material things and we get them replaced, so.

Sam

So that's what we want to measure.

Red Cross Representative

Yeah, it's interesting to see the difference, I mean, how are people like experiencing this?

Sam

Yeah, we have questions on the survey about how prepared people feel for earthquakes. I mean, you can, you can look over, look it over when we send it to you, but also how they would feel during an earthquake and then that could help us get a comparison between the two conditions, hopefully.

Red Cross Representative

And also because everyone in Iceland who grows up in Iceland knows that the houses are, I mean, if you built a house in Iceland, you have to follow a very strict regulation to make it earthquake safe. But then if you are from elsewhere you see, you know, houses in a similar type of earthquake, but they all damaged and collapsed, but that doesn't happen here because of this strict regulation and they might not be aware of that, so they feel less safe if you're not aware of it.

So I'll expect mail from you?

Sam

We will send it out to you.

Red Cross Representative

The questions you can send me, I'll forward them on.

Sam

Yeah, sure thing.

Mikayla

Thank you so much. This has been incredibly helpful.

Lasya

Thank you for your time.

Red Cross Representative

OK, that's good to hear, great It's interesting.

Sam

Once we all get over this sickness, we'd love to meet in person again.

Lasya

Yeah, absolutely.

Red Cross Representative

Are you actually in Iceland now?

Lasya

We're all in Reykjavik right now.

Red Cross Representative

All right. So I can see at least one is sick.

Lasya

Uh, we're all sick.

Lasya

What are?

Lasya

Those things do you know?

Sam

Yeah, we're all, we're all out.

Mikayla

We will have some illness, one of us has COVID. It's a whole shebang.

Red Cross Representative

The bad version of COVID I just had, I was really sick for, it's now been six weeks and I'm still not good.

Lasya

Yeah, everyone either has COVID or some other sickness that's been going around just in our group, so.

Sam

We're all living together, so that's how.

Mikayla

It's spreading like wildfire.

Red Cross Representative

So take care and thank you.

Mikayla

Thank you so much.

Sam

Thank you. Bye.