Collaborative governance can enable responsive governance of disaster management organisations. That is, it can allow them to be more deeply and broadly aware of both risks and capacities to respond, to be more flexible, and to responsively adapt their governance structures to accommodate diverse contributors. This also requires responsive governance of the collaborative information management system itself. It is important to specify rights and monitor how the system is distributing any value which is generated in and through collaboration. It is important to align incentives to continue the exchanges and sharing, which in doing so will support long-term interests in the system and of the individual parties.

Guiding Questions

How can a collaborative information management system be adapted to its users' needs as their goals and interests change?

What system is in place to process, limit, oversee, and audit decision-making?

Further Information

Responsive governance is an ability to reshape the governance structure of disaster risk management organisations and multi-agency collaborations as necessary. This can deliver positive disaster management processes and outcomes, with examples in different but related areas such as integrated coastal zone management, social and ecological resilience, and climate change adaptation. In addition, organisations that forge strong relationships with stakeholders, who in turn, ''buy-in'' to the whole approach, are more successful at achieving their goals than those that do not. Responsive governance can be achieved by reviewing the composition of collaborative networks (to ensure they maintain the appropriate membership) and their structure and network arrangements. When disaster management organisations are flexible in this way, they can learn and adapt to changing conditions, change as they develop, and responsively reshape their governance structure as necessary and so deliver positive disaster management processes and outcomes (see Tompkins et al 2008).

Responsive governance can involve monitoring of activities and contributions and this may raise issues of surveillance (Bekkers et al 2013) or commercial exploitation (Thrift 2011).

Examples

In preparing for risks from chemical hazards, a collaborative information management system may first invite a major chemical industry company in the area to participate in the system. Later, discussions may reveal that several smaller companies also hold chemicals, which may pose risks. While the first chemical company to enter the collaborative information management system may be happy to share information about the chemicals it holds with the emergency agencies gathered in the system, it may be unwilling to share such information with other chemical companies, who, in turn, may also be willing to share information with the emergency services, but not each other. This could prompt the need to redesign the collaborative information management system to enable selective disclosure of information within this group.

A collaborative information management system could amass a large database which, in principle, could be data mined. The governance structure should indicate if or how such mining should occur and, in the case it does occur, who has the right to profit from such mining and how these profits will be distributed.

Resources

Bekkers, V., Edwards, A., and de Kool, D. (2013). Social media monitoring: Responsive governance in the shadow of surveillance? *Government Information Quarterly*, 30(4): 335–342 [DOI]

Thrift, N. (2011). Lifeworld Inc—and what to do about it. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 29: 5–26 [DOI] [Link]

Tompkins, E. L., Lemos, M. C. and Boyd, E. (2008). A less disastrous disaster: Managing response to climate-driven hazards in the Cayman Islands and NE Brazil. *Global Environmental Change*, 18(4): 736–745 [DOI] [Link]