

Introduction

This contains a set of Lesson Plans (LPs), co-designed and tailored for the curricular objectives of the Department of Education, that provide students with learning experiences in the areas of global environmental change and disaster risk reduction. Students learn how to translate technical bulletins and other official information about hazards such as storm surges and floods in everyday language and, moreover, to become local experts who can convey this knowledge to others.

These lessons are grounded in emerging research on enhancing risk communication around natural hazards. Often, disasters happen not because there is no information about these risks but because such information is not shared, understood, or put into practice. The research confirms three principles that inform curriculum design around risk communication, as follows.

i. Democratizing Knowledge

Science should not be simply transmitted in technical terms and in bureaucratic forms. Rather, they should be translated into everyday language and transmitted in narrative form. This kind of communication is inclusive and does not create a gap between people and knowledge.

ii. Teaching to the nth Power

Science communication works best when it is not just a matter of imparting knowledge to people. Rather, it should aim at the recipients of knowledge becoming local experts themselves and acquiring competencies in communication knowledge. This way, the knowledge can penetrate even the most secluded parts of a community. In short, students must learn to become teachers themselves.

iii. Empowerment

We know that, often, people become more vulnerable to natural hazards because they do not feel motivated or equipped to plan for such an event and act to reduce their risks. Through processes of reflecting on one's situation, risks, and how one can reduce these risks, participants learn that they are not powerless in the face of these events but can act.

The hope is that teachers can avail of these lesson plans and put them to use in their classrooms. They are meant to be used by anyone who wishes to and are freely available to the Department of Education and all teachers. The authors share the rights to these lesson plans with the Department of Education. Other, related learning material can be found on the website, <https://environmental-communication.space>.

These Lesson Plans can be cited and referenced as:

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