

RIA: Updates on 2013 activities

What we do:

We work at the interface of knowledge production and use, to better define this space. We work with researchers, practitioners and funders to innovate and record science methods, practical experience and organisational forms and to build an international research/practice agenda on knowledge coproduction, focussed on improved communication and learning, especially for early warning and DRR (development planning).

What we are:

An international focal point for integration of behavioural and social science with practice and policy on questions of knowledge generation and application, from global risk modelling and national early warning to everyday decision-making and behaviour.

Strategic aims:

- Build an international and integrated community of practice
- Influence science funders
- Influence practice and outcomes

Updates on 2013 activities

RIA Workshop: Disaster Risk Communication: Dialogues for Reducing Disaster Risk, King's College London, May 2013. Co-sponsored by Humanitarian Futures and the Global Network for Disaster Reduction

Papers presented:

Maria Veronica Bastias, Nguza Siyambango, Gert van Rooy and Terry Gibson, GNDR, Local learning and obstacles to action: case studies and reflection;

Ann Bostrom, University of Washington, U.S. Risk interpretation and action funding: trends, strategies and opportunities;

Christopher G. Burton, Global Earthquake Model, The development of measures of community resilience to natural hazards and disasters;

Terry Cannon, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, Myths and sense in dealing with disasters and climate change;

Richard Ewbank, Christian Aid, Making climate services useful for rural development: opportunities and challenges;

Charlie McLaren, UKCDS UKCDS' role as a knowledge broker;

Colin McQuistan, Practical Action, Community early warning systems in Nepal: turning good ideas into practice;

Britt-Marie Drottz Sjöberg, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, The power and detriments of non-communication;

Perko Tanja, Belgian Nuclear Research Centre SCK·CEN Salience of the Fukushima accident on the public agenda: media content analysis;

Emma Visman, Humanitarian Futures Programme NERC Knowledge Exchange Fellow, Creating channels for exchanging knowledge for the wide range of knowledge sources required to support resilience building.

How to better integrate local knowledge with big science, and policy?

Structural Concerns:

- Can big science (global modelling etc) coexist with local science?
- How to make risk information accessible to those who need it?
- More emphasis on enabling communities and individuals at risk to act.

Strategic Concerns:

- How to build accountability between science producers and consumers?
- How to build local and international space for sharing learning?
- How to best position local knowledge for risk reduction?

Methodological Concerns:

- From information production to coproduction – use and learning.
- From multi-hazard to multi-risk analysis to better include decision-making.
- From Big versus Small to knowledge as a continuum.

Conclusions: (1) provide an international architecture to document experience, (2) develop programmes to experiment and build capacity

Annual Meeting of the Society for Risk Analysis – Trondheim, Norway, June 2013. RIA session: ‘Natural’ hazards: Risk interpretation and action.

Papers presented:

J. Richard Eiser (Univ. of Sheffield, UK), Amy Donovan (Univ. of Cambridge, UK), Stephen Sparks (Univ. of Bristol, UK) Trust, precaution and interpreting volcanic risk

Ann Bostrom (University of Washington), Tim Scharks, Lori Reimann-Garretson, Glenn Rix (Georgia Institute of Technology). Seismic Risk Mitigation in Port Systems.

Gisela Böhm (University of Bergen, Norway) Social role and causal structure as determinants of environmental risk perception and behavior

Stuart Capstick, presented by Nick Pidgeon (Cardiff University) Personal experience of flooding heightens climate change risk perception and mitigation intentions

Britt-Marie Drottz-Sjöberg (University of Trondheim, Norway). Communication and action based on risk interpretation.

The symposium introduced aspects of the RIA approach in the contexts of empirical and conceptual papers with particular reference to volcanic, seismic and flooding risk. Among the main issues addressed were how citizens’ personal experience of hazard events shapes their interpretation of risk and how effective and trusted communication can mitigate disaster risk

The way forward (activity):

Key Challenges (1) need to keep strategic direction but spread leadership. (2) need to maintain momentum of engagement with modelling/early warning and behavioural/social science communities to develop the 'boundary space'.

1. Community and awareness building and agenda setting:

- International Community of Practice: exists on IRDR www but needs work and leadership, aim to have annual webinars, but no capacity for conveners. Role for NERC and other Knowledge Exchange Fellows???? Role for IPO???

- Workshops (1) Johnston: WSSF event in New Zealand, (2) UKCDS and Pelling: Good enough workshop in Colombia, UKCDS – need to build these to develop momentum to feed into IRDR conference (RIA coordination time).

- RIA academic paper (Pelling, Bostrom, Eisner, Johnston, McClure, Paton, Visman, Oxely et al.) – in draft, building on London workshop, to provide a research and practice agenda to feed into IRDR conference.

- Affiliated projects: BELMONT FORUM (FE) projects on coastal vulnerability 2013-2016, (each £1.1m): funded projects TRUC and METROPOLE – risk modelling combined with decision-analysis for urban coasts exposed to flood and SLR, and temperature extremes. DFID, BRACED programme of embedded science 2014-2017 (each £5m) – proposals under review with Humanitarian Futures working through Christian Aid and Global Network for Disaster Reduction across their networks.

2. Influencing practice:

- UN-ISDR support: US\$35k to examine empirical evidence on decision-making (role of information and context) on trade-offs between resistance, incremental adjustment and transformative adaptation. Now to May 2014. To feed into GAR 2015 and HFA2.

- DFID BRACED projects – embedding science in humanitarian practice with impact

3. Influencing research funders:

DFID SHEAR scope to move from consultation to implementation...???

Strategy for growth going forward:

Capacity: no core funding; small committed leadership team (Bostrom, Eisner, Johnston, Pelling) that works through piggybacking (eg affiliated projects, workshops) and opportunistic funding (eg WSSC fellows, UKCDS and DFID). OK for survival but not for growth and steering!

A) IPO plays a key facilitative role – can it do more?

- Help organise and convene meetings, meetings need to document a trajectory, need a website with conference streaming facility for workshops and video clips.
- Should RIA put effort into reaching out to ICSU science union and ISSC membership – parallel international and national activity???

B) Potential key role for National IRDR Committees and ICoEs. How to activate?

C) Dedicated academic champion – 25/50% time. Where to ask?