



# RC3 Long Night of Research, 1st Edition: Volunteer and Volunteerism Development

23 - 24 March 2023 , online



## Kind reminder:

### During the session:

- Rename yourself: Full Name + Organization
- Mute your microphone
- Keep your video on. Switch off if low connectivity

### If you have questions to the speakers:

- **Ideally:** Use the Q&A feature to ask your question
- **Second option:** Use the raise hand feature, the moderator will ask you to unmute yourself.

### If you have IT questions:

- Ask your question in the chat, an administrator will help you.

### Confidentiality statement and data protection

- Sessions will be recorded
- Participants commit not taking pictures of screen or of other participants without permission
- If slides are posted on the shared screen, the speaker should inform the participants if they will receive the slides.

## Facets of Engagement in the Context of Crises and Disasters



### Agenda

Introduction

Content I

- The Diversity of Engagement in German Civil Protection
- Insights to the ATLAS-ENGAGE Project

Content II

- Volunteering and Psychosocial Emergency Care
- Insight into the PsychoKat Project

Discussion

- On Needs, Potentials, Implementation Hurdles, Suitability ...

Conclusion

# Speakers



Eva Steinberger  
German Red Cross  
Project PsychoKat



Laura Aßmann  
German Red Cross  
Project PsychoKat



Tessa Bodynek  
German Red Cross  
Project ATLAS-ENGAGE

# Team Security Research & Innovation Transfer

Actively involved in national and international security research since 2009

## Fields

- Civil Security
- Risk Management
- Innovation Transfer

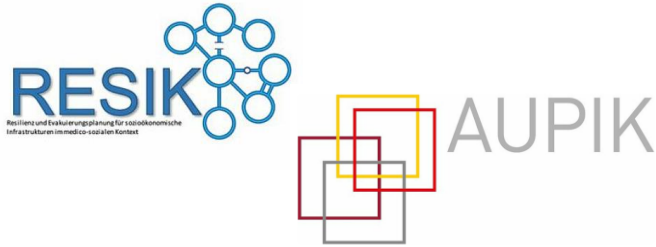
## Key issues

- Societal trends and developments
- Vulnerability/Resilience
- Civil Protection



German Red Cross Headquarter in Berlin

# Projects



## RESIK

Resilience and evacuation planning for socio-economic infrastructures in a medico-social context

## AUIPK

Maintaining ambulant care infrastructures in crisis situations

<https://www.drk.de/forschung/schriftenreihe/>

## GRC Internal Evaluation Projects

- flood 2021 in the Ahr valley and adjacent areas
- vulnerabilities in the COVID-19 pandemic

Internal evaluation projects on past crises, disasters and damage events as well as their processing along and within the structures of the German Red Cross.

## PsychoKat

### PsychoKat

Coping with psychosocial situations in crises and disasters



### ATLAS-ENGAGE

Atlas of civil society engagement in population protection

# Thematical Teaser



## social trends

- increased and multiple operational situations
- demographic change
- globalization, digitalization
- climate change

high demand for responders & "helping hands" in various crisis and disaster scenarios

wide spectrum of possible areas of engagement

# Different forms of engagement

What forms of engagement do you know?

How do you handle diverse forms of engagement?

What concepts do you have?





# Project informations

Project Lead:

Disaster Research Unit of the Freie Universität Berlin



Funded by:



Federal Office  
of Civil Protection and  
Disaster Assistance

Subcontracted:



German  
Red  
Cross

**Background:** Change in the engagement behavior of the population in the context of crises and disasters

**Objective:** Creation of an atlas of civil society engagement in population protection

**Key Questions:** What are the different forms of civil society engagement? How can they be meaningfully integrated into the existing structures of population protection? How future-proof is the use of new forms of engagement and what does it require? What are the challenges and potentials in this context?

# Challenges

The state of emergency as a permanent state

"We have been in a state of emergency for two years. Will we return to a normal state? Personally, I don't think so. I think we will remain in a certain crisis situation. You can see that yourself in your daily workload or in your professional life. The pressure is so high that you can't get out of it because there's always something new, and yes: I closed the vaccination centre on 31 July and said: 'The next thing we'll do is refugees'. I should have stuck to it for once."

Interview S. J., translation by T.B.



# Challenges

She continues ...

"The folks really want to help on a related project basis. [...] They just come for the sake of the cause, for this one project, at short-term actually. [...] This doesn't just affect us as the Red Cross, it affects all other aid organisations and the fire brigades in the same way. There is simply a lack of volunteers, who I train in a specialised way, so that they can then also be available for population protection"

ibid., translation by T.B.



# Taking a Chance

## New forms of engagement

- important addition to professional task forces
- valuable specific expertise due to their job or private involvement
- individual skills and qualifications for specific tasks
- specific interests & preferences of those willing to help



# Challenges & Needs

- Fixed coordination points
- Clarified responsibilities
- Better networking among civil protection actors, but also with unaffiliated volunteers
- Better communication structures
- Understanding of new forms of engagement
- Identify and reduce discrepancy between full-time / voluntary work / new forms of engagement
- Entering digitalization
- Strategies for dealing with unaffiliated helpers, integrating the topic into education and training courses of professional task forces
- More openness and flexibility

**Questions?**

# PsychoKat



German  
Red  
Cross

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# Background

- growing number of disasters and psychosocial consequences
- increasing recognition of psychosocial well-being
- need for psychosocial emergency care





Marion Müller/DRK, 2021

# Project information

**Funding:** Federal Ministry of Education and Research

**Project partners:**

- Interdisciplinary Security Research Group / Free University Berlin
- Fraunhofer Institute for Open Communication Systems (FOKUS)

**Project focuses on:**

- (1) the current psychosocial condition of German society at large and help-seeking behavior
- (2) different facets of psychosocial emergency care in the GRC

The results will be made accessible via publications and an interactive online platform

# Psychosocial emergency care

= short-term psychological response

Goals:

- strengthen coping resources
- promote protective factors
- prevent psychological trauma

Areas:

- people affected by personal crisis
- emergency workers



# The German Red Cross

- over 100 crisis intervention teams
- mainly voluntary basis

## Cooperation

- aid organisations
- churches



# Volunteering - 1

## Conditions

- intensive and long training
- coping with stressful situations
- great responsibility

## Challenges and questions

- pros and cons of voluntary basis?
- challenges of complex crises?
- support and care for the teams themselves?

# Volunteering - 2

## Conditions

- decrease of the ‚classic‘ voluntary work
- new and changing forms of volunteerism

## Challenges and questions

- changing dynamics in volunteerism?
- psychosocial care for unaffiliated volunteers?
- resources?

**Questions?**

# Discussion

What potentials exist in the context of different forms of engagement? And how do you use them in your RCRC-communities?

What challenges do you see yourself facing in your RCRC-community?

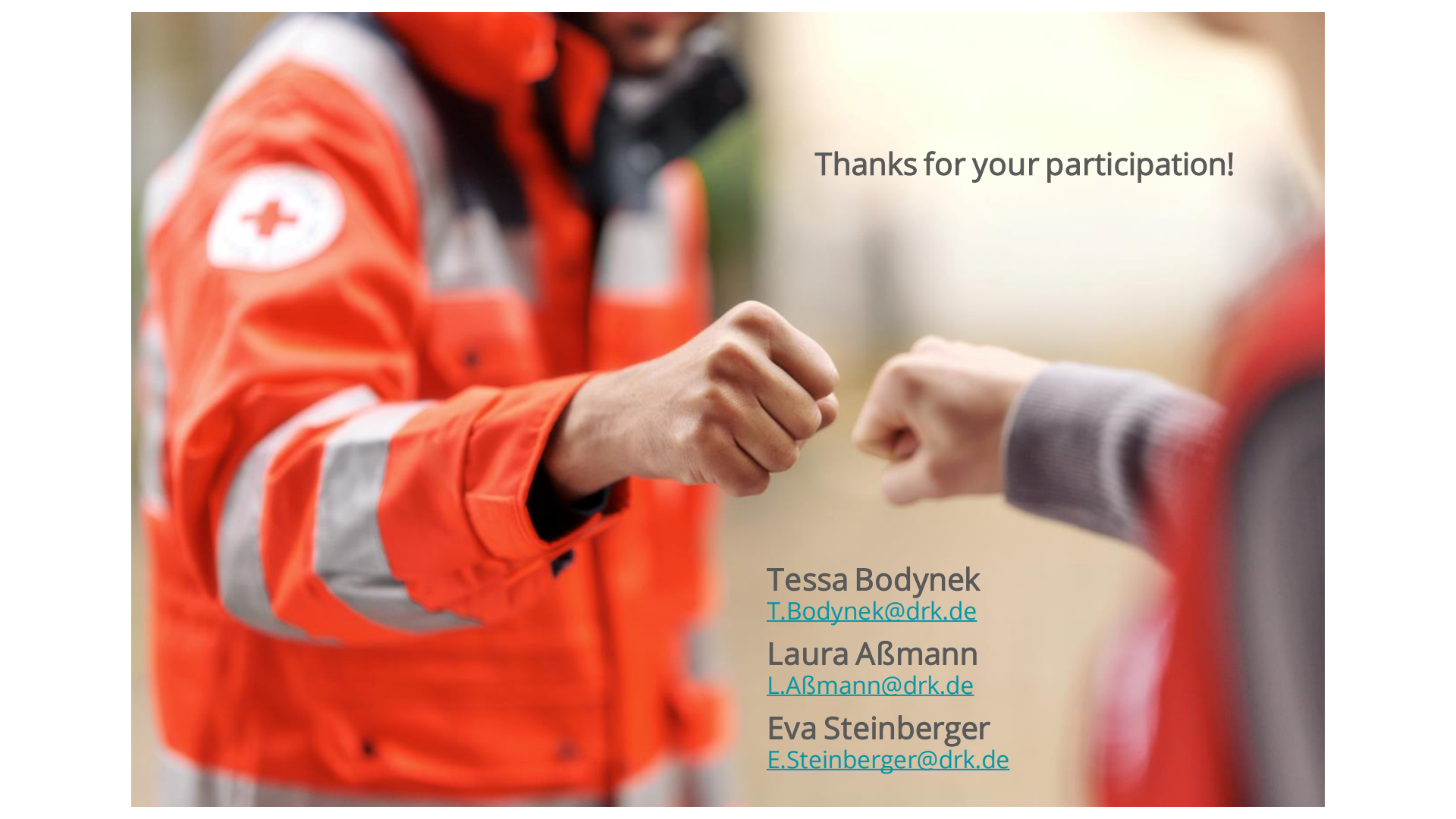
What needs do you see for the future handling of the different forms of engagement? Especially in context of civil protection in your country?

What kind of psychological stress or strain do volunteers (e.g., unaffiliated volunteers) experience? How would the psychological emergency care needed to be adapted to support these volunteers?

What methods do you use to deal with civilian helpers during/after a crisis or disaster?

What are hurdles and implementation barriers? Especially in translating research findings into practice?



A photograph showing two people fist-bumping. The person on the left is wearing a bright orange jacket with a white cross on the sleeve, characteristic of a Red Cross volunteer. The person on the right is wearing a grey sweater. The background is blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting.

Thanks for your participation!

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