Tarascon, France

Main characteristics

Major type of flood: Fluvial and flash floods
Size of catchment area: 90,000 km²
Past flood events: Tarascon suffered from severe floods in December 2003 that affected a major part of its territory.
Environmental setting: Tarascon is located in the floodplains of the Rhone but is protected by flood defences. The dikes have failed in the past leading to flooding.

Socio-economic setting: Tarascon is a town in the south of France with a population of 14,000 people. Many industrial plants have been built in the floodplains. In spite of the flood hazard, the municipality wants to attract new inhabitants to this area.

Tarascon during the 2003 floods.

Level of stakeholder involvement

- Municipality of Tarascon: The municipality participated in a workshop hold in January 2011. They hosted a researcher from March to June 2011
- Fire services: They participated in the workshop held in January 2011. The fire services have been closely linked with the research. The researcher seconded to the municipality has assisted the fire service in drawing up flood maps for emergency planning management and to look at other flood scenarios including previous historical events.

CRUE Activities

- The city of Tarascon was identified because it has a well established flood emergency planning. The work carried out with the municipality and local firemen service was aimed at improving the set of maps to enhance crisis management. An estimate of the flood risk to people for the commune was made using local available data. Currently, stakeholders base their response to emergencies on previous floods events. Another objective achieved by the case study was to "test" a scenario for a major flood and to map the informal knowledge of emergency managers.

Specific outcomes

- The research helped to improve the flood maps used in emergency plans for Tarascon.
- A training exercise on crisis management in Tarascon was carried out in January 2011

Lessons learnt

The application of the developed framework under the FIM FRAME project has led to an improved dialogue between stakeholders at a local level. The assessment of the plan using the developed metrics and framework shows that local emergency planners are too confident in their knowledge of the flood characteristics. They are often reliant on their knowledge of previous floods without addressing other scenarios.

CRUE Project

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Partners

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