

# ***MECANISMOS DE INFORMAÇÃO E SENSIBILIZAÇÃO PARA A REDUÇÃO DO RISCO DE CATÁSTROFE NO MUNICÍPIO DA AMADORA***

## ***AWARENESS AND TRAINING MECHANISMS FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF AMADORA***

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### **1. Introdução**

The responsibility for disaster risk reduction is a mission that belongs to everyone and, due to ethics and principles of humanism and solidarity must be part of daily routine, from public awareness to the planning of cities. It was with this background that in 2010, the Municipality of Amadora joined the Making Cities Resilient, a UNISDR campaign, which challenges the communities to develop a set of good practices that will make them more resilient in a disaster situation.

The work developed over these years has mainly aimed at building a more resilient Municipality, better prepared, adapted and with a greater capacity to react and recover to an extreme event at the local scale.

### **2. Métodos**

Based on the UNISDR campaign ten essentials of Resilient City, the municipality ensures the involvement and mobilization of several stakeholders (municipal services, local actors, civil society groups, universities and specialized organizations), offering them partnerships and local alliances. To this end, workshops and public sessions were organized to explain them the benefits and commitments needed to ensure a more resilient community.

In addition to the mobilization, awareness-raising and training mechanisms have been developed for the community, especially for the most vulnerable groups (children, the elderly and the disabled), in order to provide all the information needed for emergency situations. In this respect, the following projects stand out: Senior Civil Protection Academy (senior volunteer project); Artistic Resilience (expression of concepts of distress and emergency by people with special needs through painting); Playing is prevented (playful board game aimed for primary schools); Educate to Prevent (an intergenerational project where Senior Civil Protection Academy promote awareness raising about risks to kindergarten classes).

In addition to the referenced projects, the municipality annually has an information and awareness program for disaster risk reduction, where it makes available to the school community and private public entities awareness sessions and training related to the themes: climate change; basic support of life; natural and technological risks/disasters; measures of self-protection. All this sessions are promoted by civil protection agents and associations of civil protection volunteers.

### **3. Resultados**

After the municipality joined the MCR Campaign (2010), there was a need to create a working group/multidisciplinary team, comprised of six personnel from different municipal departments: Civil Protection Service, Health and Safety at Work Service, Urban Planning Department and Mayor Office, with the mission to integrate disaster risk reduction in community.

Currently Amadora has more than thirty stakeholders. A summary of stakeholder involvement follows:

- Academic-scientific entities: have developed a set of studies about risk and vulnerability assessment;
- Local councils: promotes contacts with local associations and citizens' groups in order to increase their awareness;
- Municipal services: gives cooperation and collaboration to the campaign team;
- Rescue and emergency: provides data about disaster losses and support the stakeholders (on the

- local campaign) training and awareness for first aid and drills;
- Public-private entities and private social solidarity institutions: receive technical support (by the local campaign team) to improve their emergency plan and to provide social and cultural activities about disaster risk reduction to their clientele;
- NGO'S: support public awareness initiatives; provide free training (first aid; risk, disaster and resilience frameworks) to campaign stakeholders;
- School community: organise training activities and awareness about risk and disaster. Some schools have created civil protection centres for students to develop skills and facilitate a culture of safety.

In the last school year (2017/2018), 166 sessions were carried out and about 7496 students were involved. With regard to the information and awareness-raising program for the community at large, the growing interest of associations and social institutions is what has motivated a gradual increase in the number of awareness-raising actions and of the citizens involved. In 2017/2018, 55 actions were carried out to the community associations on the topics of disaster risk reduction, and approximately 8920 residents were involved.

Between 2010 and 2018, under the mentioned program, 916 actions were carried out involving 69,223 citizens, equivalent to about 40% of the total population living in the Municipality of Amadora (according to CENSOS 2011 data). That is, for every 4 citizens who live / study / work in Amadora, one has already attended, at least once, one of the actions available in the program.

Training sessions teach practical steps for the community to reduce the population's exposure to risk, the disaster causes and consequences. For example, in the seismic risk session for secondary schools, the team present the impact of an earthquake in our society and what we can do to prevent them (Carvalho et al., 2013, p. 20). Students make an oral presentation about the preventive measures to take into account in emergency and urban planning. Some secondary schools have created volunteer civil protection teams to encourage various activities (query's, games, flyers) and support the local campaign by spreading awareness messages

#### **4. Conclusões**

Building a close relationship between stakeholders and the campaign has been crucial to ensuring the team understand the principal needs of community. The efforts of the Amadora have resulted in increased interest from stakeholders in seeking information on risks and disasters. For them it is now important to keep their population safe.

But it was important for the team adapt their strategy to meet the needs of each target audience, to implement the concepts of risk, disaster and resilience. The most collaborative and participatory public was always school students. Every month the team makes the time for self-reflection and a debriefing to improve our performance and relationship with stakeholders. To keep disaster risk reduction on the agenda, it is important that the people feel that something is being done.

#### **5. Referências Bibliográficas**

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