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The O3E program: Innovative educational and communication tools for better face natural hazards and emergencies

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As dramatically reminded during the last days by the Haiti disaster, earthquakes are traumatic events as storms or floods. They cause more damages when population don't have the knowledge of these phenomena and doesn't know how to deal with it.

Presently, it's not possible to predict an earthquakes or extreme meteorological events. Preparation stay the best and efficient way to save life. Education and training are two essential ingredients to help the population to perceive the scientific information formerly confined in the laboratories, in particular in the domain of the environmental risk.

The "O3E" innovative Project (European Observatory for Education and Environment) is established after 10 years (1997-2007) of regional, national and international programs ("Sismos of the Schools", "Rinamed Medocc"), and from Italian and Swiss experiences concerning environment tools for education.

This project with cooperation between scientists of France, Italy and Switzerland, is born to promote a responsible behavior of young citizens by means of scientific information about natural risks. ARGAL (Agency for Geological Risk in the Latin Arc - France) operates the administrative and technical coordination.

The first innovative output of O3E is the creation of a school network in the Alpine and Mediterranean areas equipped with environmental sensors installed direct into the educational buildings. The data by seismometers, weather stations, river's flows and soil moisture, recorded in the schools and processed by the students, are collected on dedicated servers and then made available through a internet platform to the entire educational community. By means of coordinated activities of critical analysis of data, their comparison with the information available through other media, the awareness about the importance of knowledge and evaluation of reliable data about their own territory is promoted.

This equipment's network "O3E," is the starting point of many other activities realized by the consortium with students and teachers. The teachers attend common meetings to exchange ideas and methods. The students are involved in activities of teaching towards younger pupils. The number of involved schools can theoretically increase without limit, by means of the implemented virtual network and e-learning tools at the dedicated web site.

Various general objectives are pursued.

- To promote the applied sciences and new technologies.
- To put in network the actors of Education and formation.
- To develop the sense of the autonomy and the responsibility in the young people.
- To reinforce and develop relationships with regional partners of the educational and university fields.
- To support a rational awakening for the prevention of the natural risks that can make the difference during the

event in terms of safety.

With these premises, the “O3E” experience sets up a permanent educational network of citizens in the Alpine and Mediterranean areas, building an exchange of knowledge on natural risks prevention.

KEYWORDS : “O3E” program, educational network, natural hazard