ID de Contribution: **7** Type: **Talk**

School teachers as partners in a disaster risk reduction context: challenges and benefits highlighted by Mayotte case study in France

mardi 26 mars 2024 16:30 (20 minutes)

Scientists working on natural hazards and associated risks play a key role in population information with respect to disaster risk reduction. But they are not always familiar with the socio-cultural and informational contexts of at-risk communities, and identifying the right local partners and intermediaries can be a tricky and time consuming process. Sendai Framework and recent studies target school teachers as relevant mediators for disaster risk education and scientific information. Here, we document and analyze the experience of school teachers'during the 2018 seismo-volcanic crisis in Mayotte and discuss the benefits and challenges of taking them as partners to better inform at-risk communities during and prior to a crisis. Mayotte case study is interesting because it corresponds to a multi-cultural context with multilingualism, low levels of literacy and precarious living conditions (see Roinsard, 2014). Following the start of an unexpected seismic crisis in May 2018, submarine volcanism was discovered between 5 and 50 km off the east coast of this island where, in living memory, there had never been any volcanic activity. The first months of the crisis were marked by major scientific uncertainties and a perceived lack of information from the inhabitants'perspective (Fallou et al., 2020; Devès et al., 2022). Our study is built on 14 semi-directive interviews with school teachers and 18 focus groups with schoolers. This comprehensive set of qualitative data allows us to discuss the role of school teachers as intermediaries to spread information between scientists and at-risk communities, prior and following natural events.

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Classification de Session: Long talks (20 min)