

WHAT

CAPFLO is a research project funded by the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO). Its general objective is to promote participatory capacity building processes for flood risk mitigation. CAPFLO acronym is related to the idea of CAPacity building for FLOod mitigation.

Four main products will be issued during the project:

- An Assessment Tool to evaluate social and civic capacities at community level
- A Participatory Tool to carry out participatory capacity building processes
- Good practices based on pilot actions in 5 case studies
- A Guideline to facilitate the replication in other urban areas

WHO

The project is made of 5 partners from Spain, Italy, France, The Netherlands and Germany and it is led by the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) and its Institute of Government and Public Policy (IGOP) that is the coordinator. CAPFLO partners organization are the following research centers: Istituto per la Ricerca Sociale (IRS) based in Bologna, the University Paris Est-Créteil (UPEC) based in the french Parisian region, the University of Amsterdam (VU), and finally the University of Luneburg (LEUPHANA) based in Germany. Moreover, local communities, water authorities and civil protection organizations are involved in the project.



WHY

CAPFLO arise in the context of an increased need for socially innovative approaches to societal problems. In particular, regarding traditional flood management, a new and more participative vision is required for flood risk management in order to cope with flood events and find more suitable solutions.

CAPFLO aims at creating useful tools for capacity building in the context of flood risk management across Europe in order to help institutions and communities to work together in preventing and dealing with flood events.

The final expected impact of CAPFLO is to increase local resilience related to flood risk mitigation.

HOW

The methodology used in the project is diverse and a combination of desk research and workfield is going to be deployed. An assessment tool and a participatory tool will be created for instance. In particular, CAPFLO' approach is based on learning from practice and 5 case studies have been chosen to assess capacity building in different contexts of flood risk management.

The 5 cases chosen are located in Spain (Ebro basin), The Netherlands (Meuse Basin), France (Seine basin), Italy (Tebbia Basin) and Germany (Danube Basin).

Spain

Cities involved: Aragon autonomous region and includes 7 municipalities of Ribera Alta.

Affected Population: 15.758 inhabitants

Last flooding episodes: 2003, 2007, 2013, 2015

Ribera Alta has been identified as a “high risk of floods area” in the Flood Risk Management Plan of the Ebro river basin. Flood events in this area are recurrent and those episodes have caused important economic and social damages. Therefore, institutions, citizens, agriculture and environmental sectors have a common interest on finding effective measures for floods mitigation.

The Netherlands

Cities involved: Itteren and Borgharen in the municipality of Maastricht

Affected Population: 2.800 inhabitants

Last flooding episodes: 1993, 1995, 2003, 2011

An effort to improve flood risk in the area has been initiated in response to the major 1993 and 1995 flood events. The so called Maaswerken program includes the construction of dikes, natural areas and gravel extraction (whose revenues pays the works) along the Meuse. Works in the case study area will be concluded in 2017. Traditionally the case study area is one of the few in the Netherlands where self-reliance has been the norm in case of floods. However, research has shown that the construction of flood defense infrastructure may have undermined the capacity of the local communities to be self-prepared because they feel safe behind the dikes and the new infrastructure has rendered more difficult for locals to interpret the signs of the river. The case study therefore provides an interesting opportunity to assess how different flood risk management approaches interact and play out in terms of community resilience.

France

Cities involved: Parisian region

Affected Population: 26,000 inhabitants

Last flooding episodes: 1982, 2000

Vitry-sur-Seine is located 4 km south of Paris and currently has a plan to prevent from floods (warning systems, evacuation and relocation plan). Vitry appears to be a territory

where major development of “Greater Paris” projects are to be located. Therefore, a city capable of coping with a flooding event is highly needed.

Italy

Cities involved: 36 municipalities, in particular Bobbio and Rivergaro

Affected Population: 10.000 inhabitants

Last flooding episodes: 1953, 2015

This basin, situated in hills and mountains areas, can be hit by intensive rains in the mountain areas, while rains are generally modest in the hills and the plain areas. 56% of the overall population and 11% of the overall surface of the Trebbia sub-river basin are subject to a risk of floods. The recent flooding events (2015) caused 3 deaths and several social and economic damages. To increase local actors' capacity to prevent and manage floods, the ARTURO project, led by the mayor of Rottofreno, is tested in the Trebbia area. The project aims to provide a smart risk assessment and communication tool for flood risk prevention and management. The digital tool ARTURO integrates georeferenced flood risk data from several sources and provides various types of alerts for local actors in charge of flood management (i.e. mayors) and a set of guidelines for both mayors and citizens on actions to be taken in case of risk of flood events.

Germany

Cities involved: Parts of Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria

Affected Population: approx. 14 860

Last flooding episodes: 1999, 2002, 2005, 2013

The river Iller located in the Danube Basin is identified as an area of high flood risks and was several times affected by floods. Interestingly, it marks the border between the federal states of Baden-Württemberg and Bavaria, which means that different approaches towards flood risk management and mitigation are employed at both sides of the river. Whereas institutionalized co-operation between different communities exist in Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria has a more state-centred approach, which nonetheless relies on information structures between state actors and municipalities.

WHEN

The project started in January 2016 and will be implemented until December 2017 . A first stage of CAPFLO will be to build a theoretical framework and the assessment tool. The second stage will focus on performing the case studies and do a first analysis of the capacity environment of each of them. Thirdly, the participatory tool will be built and tested. Finally, best practices will be compiled and the guideline for replication in other urban areas will be created.

For more information contact us at: www.capflo.net and gr.capflo@uab.cat