Communication during an evolving seismic sequence

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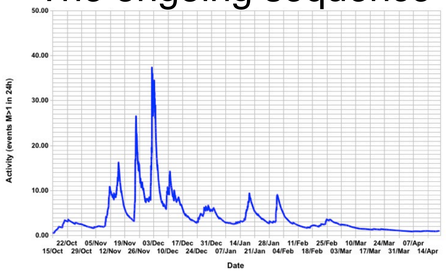
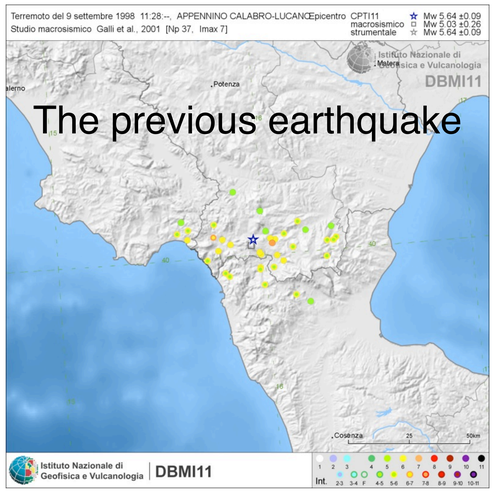
Since October 2011 a seismic swarm is affecting the Pollino mountain range, southern Italy. At 20.04.12 the sequence is still ongoing, with more than 750 events with M>1, at least 70 well perceived by the population and a maximum magnitude reaching 3.6. The area was hit by a magnitude 5.7 event in 1998 that caused one dead, some injured and widespread damage in at least six municipalities.
The population main fear is that a large event could follow the seismic swarm as it occurred at L'Aquila in 2009.
Among the several initiatives taken by Civil Protection at national and regional level, it was decided to try to implement at local scale two communication projects that were thought for "peace time" and not for dissemination during a seismic crisis: the "Terremoto-Io non rischio" project for general public and the "EDURISK" project

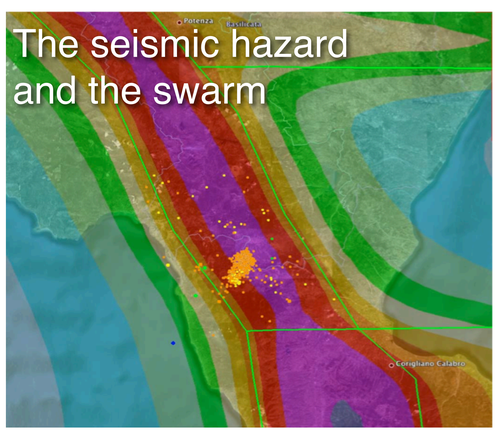
The ongoing sequence



The previous earthquake



The seismic hazard and the swarm

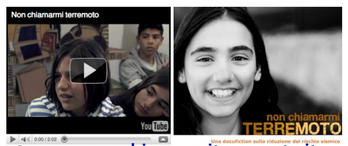


EDURISK

The EDURISK project is an educational joint venture of INGV and INOGS, fundend by the Italian Department for Civil Protection. The project started in the school year 2002-03. For almost six years from its inception, the EDURISK staff was mostly concerned with "laboratory work": educational tools for the schools (from infant to secondary) were planned, developed and tested within the frame of a large-scale educational campaigns, involving about 2,600 teachers and more than 40,000 students from hundreds of Italian scholastic institutes.
Their response to the EDURISK input found expression in a wide range of works, activities, studies, artifacts and so on, now available via the Internet (www.edurisk.it). In April 2009, the EDURISK project had to meet a new challenge when, for the first time ever, its methods and products were put to the test of a strong earthquake (Mw 6.3 L'Aquila earthquake). On the spot, the EDURISK staff had to devise completely new ways to carry out its work in the field, in circumstances no less demanding and infinitely more difficult than the friendly scholastic environment they had previously worked with. Completely new and original educational activities had to be devised to meet the psychological needs and answer the numberless questions of the suffering population of Abruzzo region.

New regional tools

New Euro-Med. editions



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a docufiction! www.nonchiamarmiterremoto.it

A lesson with EDURISK

TERREMOTO - IO NON RISCHIO

"Terremoto - io non rischio - Earthquake I dont' risk" is an initiative for seismic risk reduction promoted by the Civil Protection and Anpas - National Association for Public Assistenze, in collaboration with Ingv - National Institute of Geophysics and Volcanology and ReLuis - Network of University Laboratories of Seismic Engineering.
The campaign was held on 22 and 23 October 2011 in the squares of nine Italian municipalities at high seismic risk. Anpas civil protection volunteers were the main characters of the initiative: they were trained on the seismic risk, and then, in turn, trained other volunteers, making them actors of the process of knowledge diffusion. In total, 120 volunteers will distribute information material and answer to the citizens' questions on possible things to do in order to reduce the seismic risk.
The campaign aimed at promoting a culture of prevention, training a volunteer more aware and specialized and starting a process to guide the citizen in acquiring an active role in seismic risk reduction. Learning how to prevent and reducing earthquakes consequences are everybody's task: information diffusion on seismic risk is collective responsibility to which every citizen need to contribute. Over the year 2012 the initiative will be extended to 100 locations in Italy.

The main lesson learned during the first months of the activity:

1) it is possible to take advantage of the increased awareness and risk perception from the population to attract more citizen toward topics that could go unnoticed otherwise;
2) the Civil Protection volunteers could be a very effective mean to reach a large amount of the population, provided they are carefully trained especially when children are involved;
3) the expectations about earthquake prediction raised from media without any scientific support proved to be the most difficult to be tackled: to overcome this bias risk education in "peace time" is absolutely essential;