

2

3 **Preparedness actions towards seismic risk mitigation for the general public in Martinique,**  
4 **French Lesser Antilles: a mid-term appraisal**

5

6 **J. C. Audru<sup>1\*</sup>, J.L. Vernier<sup>2</sup>, B. Capdeville<sup>2</sup>, J.J. Salindre<sup>2</sup>, and É. Mouly<sup>2</sup>**

7 <sup>1</sup> BRGM, French Geological Survey, Fort-de-France, Martinique, France.

8 <sup>2</sup> Directorate for Environment, Planning and Housing, Schoelcher, Martinique, France.

9 \* Correspondence to: J.C. Audru ([jc.audru@brgm.fr](mailto:jc.audru@brgm.fr))

10

11 **Abstract**

12 Martinique is a French island in the Lesser Antilles, with a high seismic hazard. In 2006, Martinican  
13 stakeholders involved in seismic safety formed the “Réplik” working group (“Aftershock” in  
14 French), the first of its kind in this region. This paper addresses a mid-term appraisal of the first  
15 seismic awareness campaign organized by Réplik from 2006 to 2011, and how it has modified, or  
16 not, local earthquake and tsunami preparedness. Despite efforts from Réplik to assess its efficiency  
17 through surveys, a growing gap is noted between the observed awareness and the actual preparedness  
18 of the public. As usual, gender, age, educational level, then boredom and saturation contribute to this  
19 discrepancy; strong cultural items may also influence the perception of actions. To remain efficient  
20 and respond to public’s expectations, Réplik must redirect its actions towards a cultural congruence  
21 of information: consideration of religion and local beliefs, comprehensive messages on TV and radio,  
22 use of Creole language, participatory experiences and drills, with a little bit of science. So that, the  
23 Réplik stakeholders can hope to increase Martinicans’ involvement into the preparedness process, to  
24 cope quickly with a strong earthquake and this know-how can be shared with other seismically active  
25 islands in the Caribbean.

26

27 Key words: seismic; preparedness; public; campaign; Antilles; Martinique; French Earthquake Plan

28

## 29    **1    Introduction**

30    Martinique Island is a French Overseas island of the Lesser Antilles archipelago, in the eastern  
31    Caribbean Sea. Martinique is located at a plate boundary (Fig. 1), above the North American plate  
32    subduction beneath the Caribbean plate at 2cm/yr. (Lopez et al., 2006); it was formed over 25 million  
33    years by the joining together of several volcano complexes (Westercamp et al., 1989; Germa et al.,  
34    2011). This geodynamic position on top of a descending slab implies a high seismic hazard (Fig. 1):  
35    around 1 000 events are detected each year, located at the subduction interface, within the Atlantic  
36    slab and the deforming Caribbean plate (Beauducel et al., 2011) but only a very few of these events  
37    are felt. The French SisFrance catalogue of historical earthquakes (BRGM, 2009) illustrates several  
38    strong MSK intensity events that have hit the island in the past: 1727 (VIII), 1827 (VII), 1839 (IX),  
39    1946 (VII-VIII), 1999 (Mb 5.5, VII) and the recent 2007 earthquake (Mw 7.4 and EMS98 int.VI-VII,  
40    see Fig. 2). Historical tsunamis are also reputed to have submerged the Atlantic coastline of  
41    Martinique (BRGM, 2010). These submersions had several origins (O'Loughlin and Lander, 2003;  
42    Lambert and Terrier, 2011): the 1755 Lisbon earthquake, the 1767 Barbados earthquake, the 1867  
43    Virgin Islands earthquake and the 1902 Mount Pelée volcanic eruption. There is still a high concern  
44    in Martinique within public services regarding an eventual close, strong earthquake rupturing the  
45    oceanic floor at the subduction front 250 km off the eastern coast of Martinique.

46    Mainland Martinique includes a 1128-km<sup>2</sup> mountainous island (Fig. 2). The highest point is Mount  
47    Pelée standing at 1397 m, a large explosive volcano which last erupted in 1929 and previously in  
48    1902, destroying the then main city of Saint-Pierre. The current population of Martinique is around  
49    403,000 inhabitants (INSEE, 2011), with one fourth living in or around Fort-de-France, the rest  
50    mostly in coastal towns (Fig. 2).

51    In 2005, France reviews its national seismic zonation. The highest peak ground acceleration of the  
52    territory is attributed to Martinique and Guadeloupe (PGA over 0,3g for a 475 yr.-return period). In  
53    2007, the National Earthquake Plan is launched; it includes the Antilles Earthquake Plan, to dedicate  
54    specific actions to Martinique and Guadeloupe, owing to their high hazard level and island  
55    specificity. The objective was to reduce the vulnerability of people and buildings in the French West  
56    Indies.

57    The objective of this paper is to present a mid-term appraisal of this recent and short seismic  
58    educational campaign in Martinique. A number of original actions were carried out for the first time  
59    from 2006 to 2011, and annual surveys were used to check the assimilation of actions and how these  
60    modified, or not, the preparedness of the general public (Audru et al., 2011b). Successes and failures

61 were thus pointed out. Despite a lack of robust feedback, some hypotheses are made in this paper that  
62 may explain the observed lack of involvement into prevention actions and of preparedness. Several  
63 suggestions will be put forward to improve the preparedness process, which is essential, so that  
64 Martinique is able to cope quickly with a strong earthquake.

65

## 66 **2 The preparedness campaign**

67 Within the national plans framework, services or associations involved in seismic safety in  
68 Martinique came together in 2006 into a working group called “Réplik” (“Réplik” means  
69 “Aftershock” in French), the first of its kind and importance in this region. A logo was created which  
70 is still in use (Fig. 3). Since then, all major actions regarding public information and preparedness are  
71 implemented and validated by Réplik, which includes state representatives, the Directorate for  
72 Environment Planning and Housing, the Association of Mayors, the Regional and General Councils,  
73 the French Geological Survey, the Civil Defence, the French Army, the Academy, the Seismological  
74 and Volcanological Observatory, the Architects Council, the Regional Health Agency, the  
75 Departmental Agency for Housing Information, the Departmental Fire and Rescue Service and  
76 several private consultants specialized in media, communication and social psychology. This  
77 diversity allows a wide array of sensibilities and ideas and favours the diffusion of messages agreed  
78 on by all partners.

79 Réplik’s actions relating to earthquake and tsunami preparedness are characterised by events and  
80 innovations, taking place all year long but particularly in November (end of cyclonic season). These  
81 actions target residents (adults, pupils, employees, construction professionals etc.) and non-residents  
82 (Audru, 2010).

83 Actions in public areas include travelling theatre skits (how to talk about seismic preparedness with  
84 humour in various situations of contemporary life, in Creole and French), a prevention caravan and  
85 the earthquake simulator of the General Council (which allows people to learn about earthquakes’  
86 origins and to experience shaking), scientific conferences about the effects and consequences of  
87 earthquakes and tsunamis, art exhibitions related to earthquakes, information stands in annual  
88 housing fairs or hardware stores, and participation in Carnival parades. The “Réplik for Companies”  
89 action is specifically dedicated to employees and is very successful. It consists in information which  
90 is given to employees in their workplace during working hours, which is of major importance.  
91 Seismic preparedness presentations are given at the request of companies, and are adapted to

workplaces and workmates with leaflets tailored specifically to companies' working practices then being distributed.

Actions also take place in schools. Booklets are adapted to pupils, preparedness and evacuation plans are carried out by teachers and pupils under the authority of the Local Education Authority. In five high schools, an original project ("seismometer at school") installed seismometers for educational purposes ([www.edusismo.org](http://www.edusismo.org)). The seismometers monitor the local and worldwide seismicity; recordings are operated by pupils and transmitted for computing to seismologists. The signals, downloadable for all, are then used by pupils within the framework of their curriculum.

Various goodies are distributed to remind people how to behave in the event of an earthquake or evacuate if a tsunami occurs: tee-shirts, caps, whistles, magnets, posters and brochures drawn by children, mouse pads, etc. Leaflets with instructions for safety during an earthquake have been sent by post to all families in Martinique with electricity bills. Local TV channels, cinema or radio stations are also involved in the campaign; they broadcast short spots, reality shows and cartoons of families facing earthquake situations.

Tourists arriving to Martinique are informed through short notes regarding dos and don'ts during earthquakes and tsunamis, printed on free roadmaps which are offered by hotels, tourism information desks and rental cars.

With time, the Réplik leaflets and messages gradually benefit from a wider partnership and dissemination network, usually for free: buses, pharmacies, medical offices, insurance firms, post offices, petrol outlets, commercial centres, tourism offices etc. (Audru et al., 2011a). Examples of printed materials and media are shown in Fig. 3. Eventually, all advice, videos, leaflets, dos and don'ts related to seismic and tsunami safety from Réplik are compiled on a Martinique-specific website ([www.replik972.fr](http://www.replik972.fr)). From August 2011 to July 2012, the site recorded 262,000 short hits and around 22,500 thirty-minute visits, which is actually not a high result.

On the neighbouring French Island of Guadeloupe, a website dedicated to the self-evaluation of house seismic vulnerability (Bengoubou-Valérius, 2009) is created in 2011 ([www.miseismantilles.com](http://www.miseismantilles.com)). The analysis of web traffic shows that Martinicans represent one third of visitors; among these, up to 40% of Martinique evaluated houses prove vulnerable to earthquakes (Bengoubou-Valerius, pers. Comm.). This confirms that in Martinique, many private buildings do not meet the mandatory seismic building rules in force since 1996 (French PS-92 codes), despite strong site effects have been evidenced since 1995 by microzonations (Gagnepain-Beyneix, 1995; Chassagneux et al., 1996 among others). This is why Réplik has also funded technical sheets and

124 simplified building codes dedicated to traditional small-scale builders. As a complement, specific  
125 training courses are dedicated to masons regarding paraseismic building practices, based on recent  
126 and neighbours experiences (Spence, 2007; Adams, 2009). However, despite their high interest, the  
127 courses do not appeal to lots of self-employed masons (100 a year), probably due to the perceived  
128 loss of time involved in attending. For public buildings, done and current seismic diagnoses underline  
129 a high level of vulnerability and a large number of retrofit and reconstruction programs have been  
130 implemented.

131 From a scientific point of view, the Antilles Earthquake Plan encourages applied scientific studies.  
132 The regional evaluation of tsunami hazards is completed for the Caribbean French islands, using  
133 simulations based on the compilation historical scenarios (Pedreros and Terrier, 2007). Precise  
134 tsunami submersion maps are in project, to help municipalities to organize their evacuation plan.  
135 Seismic microzonations are already in progress in several districts of Martinique following a  
136 homogeneous methodology (Monge et al., 2000; Vanoudheusden et al., 2011), as well as a predictive  
137 earthquake-induced damage evaluation for the whole island (Belvaux et al., 2013). In 2009, the  
138 SeisMCaRe® (Seismic Mitigation in the Caribbean Region) symposium ([www.seismcare.com](http://www.seismcare.com))  
139 gathered together twenty Caribbean countries in order to share know-hows, successes and failures in  
140 mitigation and education experiences between Caribbean neighbours.

141 Alarming results obtained from initial simulations of strong earthquake consequences (Monge et al.,  
142 2000) encouraged the authorities to organize, within the AEP framework, a wide simulation drill in  
143 2008 which took place simultaneously in Martinique and Guadeloupe. The “Richter Antilles” drill  
144 lasted 24 hours and tested several topics (Cova, 2009) such as the coordination of rescue services,  
145 management dysfunctions (population, lifelines, and casualties), national reinforcements, and  
146 deceased people management. The drill marked a turning point for such simulation exercises in  
147 France (Winter et al., 2009).

148 Despite this wide array of preparedness actions from 2006 to 2011, a question rapidly arises: what is  
149 the actual impact and effectiveness of this educational campaign among the population? The question  
150 is important, almost vital, given the historical records and the high seismic and tsunami hazard  
151 threatening Martinique.

152

### 153 **3 The public’s general perception of preparedness actions**

#### 154 **Methodology**

155 The perception of preparedness actions by the public does not benefit from a strong history and  
156 feedback. It is approached through the analysis of five short surveys conducted in Martinique in  
157 various conditions in 1999, then from 2006 to 2010 (Fig. 4). The 1999 survey was conducted by the  
158 University of the French West Indies after the 1999 earthquake; the last four were organized by a  
159 specialized polling company under Réplik request. The surveys structures remained quite simple;  
160 detailed information about the data collection process, questionnaires and analysis is available from  
161 the author on request.

## 162 Results

163 The 1999 survey occurred within ten days following the 5.5 earthquake. The authors (Léone and  
164 Mavoungou, 2000) telephoned 224 people who were standing in buildings during the event. The  
165 analysis of their answers outlined that 75% of those surveyed described inappropriate behaviour  
166 during the event and 64% after the event; later on, only 22% of those surveyed took preparedness  
167 measures. The people surveyed had then expressed high expectations in terms of information and  
168 preparation advice.

169 In 2006, a second survey was conducted among 334 Martinican visitors to the itinerant earthquake  
170 simulator. Colbeau-Justin et al. (2007) had outlined that most of the visitors (72.5%) proved  
171 interested in safety measures, especially in terms of technical aspects (49%) rather than scientific  
172 aspects; the latter being considered useless for individual protection. Women showed more interest  
173 (60%) in the correct behaviour to adopt during an earthquake, in the reliability of the home interior  
174 and in the preparation of survival kits, while men (40%) were interested in technical skills  
175 (construction, first aid certificates).

176 The survey also evidenced the public's preference for an immediate response organization (as  
177 opposed to post-crisis planning) via TV (65%), rather than through written brochures (31.5%), insets  
178 in newspapers, scientific conferences or neighbourhood meetings, which was indeed common to  
179 several countries (Spence, 2007). On this basis, Colbeau-Justin et al. (2007) suggested that  
180 Martinicans preferred personal learning experiences and visual demonstrations, which explains the  
181 continuing success of the earthquake simulator and of the itinerant theatre. This use of a few media  
182 for addressing prevention actions is also preferred in Turkey for instance (Tekeli-Yeşil et al., 2011).  
183 The male-female dichotomy is observed elsewhere (Mulilis, 1999); Solberg et al. (2010), from a  
184 detailed lecture of the related psychological literature, suggest that experience, gender and also age  
185 can shape risk perception and thus a campaign's successes or failures. The above analysis encouraged

186 Réplik to prepare TV spots and cartoons featuring a woman preparing her family for a potential  
187 earthquake.

188 The 2007 survey followed the 7.4 earthquake (which occurred one month before). This poll  
189 (computer-assisted telephone interviews) of 1050 Martinicans (Ipsos Antilles, 2008) aged over 15  
190 who felt the earthquake, revealed that 63% of people judged themselves sufficiently informed, while  
191 68% had heard about Réplik's actions. The analysis showed that 62% knew how to behave during the  
192 earthquake and 70% believed they had appropriate behaviour during the event. Indeed, only 20% of  
193 people had immediately exited buildings, 21% moved away from building facades, 19% had listened  
194 to the radio and 2-3% had cut electricity and gas. On the contrary, 42% of people inside buildings  
195 had inadequate responses: 41% used stairs to exit buildings during the shaking, 38% remained inside  
196 buildings after the first shock, 39% used a cellular phone and 36% entered back into the buildings  
197 shortly after the main shock. More educated people and those younger than 36 were much more  
198 aware of the reality of risk (89%) than elderly or less educated people (69%), who were less affected  
199 by communication campaigns. The survey showed that appropriate instructions given by Réplik were  
200 mostly known, but were rarely enforced. People's knowledge was affected by surprise, fear and even  
201 panic for some, preventing them from behaving in an appropriate way (Ipsos Antilles, 2008). Finally,  
202 only 3 to 18% of Martinicans, mainly those under the age of 36, spontaneously said they would  
203 enhance their preparedness, these values went up to 71% when people were told what sort of action  
204 to take (survival kits, home security, seismic drills etc.).

205 In 2009, a fourth survey (Ipsos Antilles, 2009) tested the response to actions developed through  
206 Réplik in 2008, in order to assess the impact of the modified campaign. The survey of 503 people  
207 living in Martinique (computer-assisted telephone interviews) showed that awareness of Replik  
208 increased to 79% of the public, especially among women. This was mainly due to the strong  
209 emphasis placed on TV cartoons (seen by 79.9%) and radio spots (heard by 64.6%) with the  
210 involvement of local popular personalities (singers, writers, the archbishop etc.) and of the prevention  
211 caravan (9%). The perception of dos and don'ts in building codes increased in up to 54% of the  
212 public. TV and radio remained the best dissemination channels even if their audience decreased by  
213 10% compared to 2007. The toll-free information phone number got very few calls (1%) and was  
214 then abandoned. This survey revealed that the 2007 earthquake experience increased preparedness for  
215 a while, as observed in other studies (Dooley et al., 1992; Nguyen et al., 2006), but with variable  
216 impact, may be depending on 2007 material losses, as observed elsewhere (Lindell and Perry, 2000),

217 or most probably on individuals' unrealistic estimations of their own ability to cope with the  
218 consequences of an earthquake (Colbeau-Justin, 2009).

219 The last Réplik survey occurred in 2010 (Ipsos Antilles, 2010). This poll (computer-assisted  
220 telephone interviews) of 509 Martinicans outlined a decrease in Réplik awareness to 74% of  
221 respondents (Fig. 4). The participation in prevention actions decreased considerably with the  
222 exception of the theatre skit (11%), illustrating either a good knowledge of correct behaviours or  
223 saturation or even public boredom regarding preparedness actions (Audru et al., 2011a). Respondents  
224 found the actions' content less relevant than previous years. The TV (79%) and the radio (49%)  
225 remained the best communication vectors, far above printed materials (11%) and internet information  
226 channels (3%). This latter information highlights the difference of culture to cope with, in earthquake  
227 prevention, with internet being a much more promising dissemination technique for Turk people for  
228 instance (Tekeli-Yeşil et al., 2011) than for Martinicans. The observed decrease in people's interest  
229 through this survey suggests that inadequate actions and messages were presented at some time  
230 during the 2010 Réplik campaign: these factors decrease people's knowledge (Johnston et al., 2005),  
231 as does the frequency of the messages, (Mileti and Fitzpatrick, 1992) which can alter risk awareness  
232 and contribute to the persistence of inadequate behaviour.

233 A parallel survey conducted through the housing self-evaluation website confirmed that in both  
234 Guadeloupe and Martinique, 75% of people know the dos and don'ts regarding earthquake safety;  
235 however, only 20% say that they are "earthquake-ready" and 32% have prepared a survival-kit  
236 (Bengoubou-Valerius, pers. comm.). These values are close to the 2008 post-earthquake survey and  
237 may reflect an inappropriate self-estimation of preparedness.

238

## 239 **4 Discussion**

240 Martinican respondents to the surveys generally have a high level of knowledge about the possible  
241 occurrence of strong earthquakes or tsunamis. As an encouraging result, Réplik's actions have  
242 significantly raised an interest and its set points were known by 80% of the public in Martinique in  
243 2010. However, the surveys outline a discrepancy between those who are aware and those who  
244 actually prove able to cope with earthquake or tsunami consequences. Considerable efforts must still  
245 be made to reinforce people's involvement. Which hypotheses can be made to explain the obstacles  
246 and what are the perspectives?



247 A first hypothesis is based on daily life in Martinique, which is strongly influenced by fatalism. It is  
248 anchored in religion but also in magical beliefs or superstitions which have been inherited from the  
249 population's African, European and Amerindian origins (Léti, 2000): "Quimbois", for instance,  
250 comprises practices related to magic and sorcery very similar to "Voodoo" in Haiti (Revert, 1951).  
251 Indeed, beliefs like "earthquakes occur during the hot season", "talking about earthquakes makes  
252 them occur", "the island will sink" and "the island will be cut in half" are still common (Léone and  
253 Mavoungou, 2000; Sarant et al., 2004; Colbeau-Justin et al., 2007). Regarding religion, up to 13% of  
254 people interviewed for the 2008 survey attribute a divine origin to earthquakes, mainly those over 55  
255 years of age and people not having been to high school (Ipsos Antilles, 2008). Magical beliefs and  
256 religion, as an important element of the Martinican culture, have not been explored through surveys  
257 yet. At this stage, but no one knows to what extent yet, one can make the hypothesis that such  
258 popular beliefs and religion decrease the actual perception of the threat by misrepresenting the actual  
259 consequences of an earthquake in Martinique, as observed in other regions (Turner et al., 1986). It  
260 implies that nothing can be done to protect oneself and it clearly influences individual's involvement;  
261 this inhibits or slows down citizens' engagement in preventative practices and preparedness actions  
262 (Turner et al., 1986; Paton et al., 2005). This is probably the reason why, in survey answers, the  
263 possible consequences of earthquakes are never clearly described by people and therefore are not  
264 clearly anticipated and, even less, prepared for. These cultural and religious considerations have to be  
265 much more included in the next Réplik phase, in order to increase the effectiveness of prevention  
266 (Chester 2005; Chester et al., 2008). Solberg et al. (2010) argue that the preparedness sources of  
267 information have to be strongly culturally congruent with the general public in order to be fully  
268 trusted and accepted. A role may be given to the clergy (Chester, 1985) to help overcome the  
269 perception of the divine and inevitable consequences of earthquakes and tsunamis. The inclusion of  
270 much more local culture into the preventative actions of an efficient preparedness plan is also  
271 supported by Tanaka (2005) or either the United Nations (2005).

272 Another hypothesis is that messages are not correctly formatted. Martinican and Turkish surveys for  
273 instance (Tekeli-Yeşil et al., 2011) highlight similar knowledge and preparedness attitudes according  
274 to socioeconomic factors and educational level. Tekeli-Yeşil et al. (2011) or Barooah (2006) in India  
275 both favour preparedness programmes carried out by the media to target weaker people characterized  
276 by lower educational and socio-economic levels. Nathe et al. (1999), then Olshansky (2005), give  
277 simple guides to reaching these ambitious objectives as part of an efficient long haul campaign: clear  
278 messages using common, comprehensive words, tailored for specific audiences, sent through modern  
279 media and a wide partnership network. An unusual approach is given by Paton et al. (2005) who

280 define three successive stages of preparedness: motivation to prepare, formation of intentions, and the  
281 conversion of intentions into actions. People progress to the next phase under relatively high (but  
282 appropriate, see Lamontagne and La Rochelle, 2000) levels of hazard anxiety. Specific strategies  
283 form a step from one stage to another, for example information targeted to a specific community, as  
284 cited by Tekeli-Yesil et al. (2011) above. Weiss et al. (2011) promote the perspective of a more  
285 participatory communication for the prevention of natural hazards.

286 A third hypothesis states that science is not in a good position in the campaign. People show very  
287 little interest in science because it does not help them in practical prevention actions (rescue kits,  
288 furniture etc.). Despite the low levels of audience interest, science may still have a role to play.  
289 According to Lamontagne and La Rochelle (2000), seismologists should follow psychological  
290 courses to help and support the public's emotional reactions before or after an earthquake. Scientists  
291 should also participate in communication plans which include concrete facts about earthquakes, to  
292 anticipate the event and its associated anxiety (Lamontagne, 1992, McClure et al., 1999). Science can  
293 at least promote up-to-date scientific ideas instead of fakes and rumours disseminated by local beliefs  
294 or the internet.

295 These hypotheses regarding local and cultural factors may explain the failures in Réplik's campaign.  
296 Our set of observations, despite it is quite short in time and despite the surveys are simple, favours  
297 new prevention axes for Martinique. The second phase of the Antilles Earthquake Plan will begin in  
298 2013 and will offer the opportunity to test these hypotheses and to redirect Réplik's actions.

299 First, a survey would specifically explore the weight of beliefs and religion in the representations of  
300 earthquakes and tsunamis in Martinique. This will allow a tailored response to Martinicans' demands  
301 and needs, in accordance with most recent UN advice (United Nations, 2005). The use of much more  
302 Creole language in media and messages could help overcoming the cultural beliefs, the barrier of  
303 fatalism and the disinterest in basic science. Such a redirection may help people to take an extra step  
304 towards the preparedness process of Paton and overcome their subjective representations.

305 Then emphasis should be put on the answer to growing demand for practical skills: individual short  
306 training courses for adults and pupils (first aid courses, appropriate behaviour at home, outside, at  
307 work, at the seaside etc.), home security (furniture organisation and securing, rescue kits for homes,  
308 work and cars etc.). TV and radio will be the privileged vectors.

309 In Martinique, the community network is very dense, due to the small space formed by the island and  
310 to the numerous interconnections between families. This community strength should be used to  
311 increase hazard preparedness, following Paton et al. (2010) who suggest that mainstream community

activities can increase the likelihood of developing preparedness among neighbours. The organisation of participatory experiences (neighbourhood solidarity, earthquake simulators, seismic and tsunami drills in suburbs, towns or at work, etc.) is to be encouraged. The creation of a special day dedicated to an historical or recently felt earthquake would be another opportunity for community actions, following the model of “shakeout” drills ([www.shakeout.org](http://www.shakeout.org)) initially organized by the Earthquake Country Alliance of California (2003).

On a technical point of view, the training courses and booklets for building professionals have to be strongly simplified for small builders or individual masons in order to attract more such artisans, using another similar experience (Adams, 2009). Simplifications should help to avoid misunderstandings and comply with vernacular traditions (Spence, 2007), demonstrations of the techniques in the field would be extended to ensure a more successful course (Leslie, 1984).

## **Conclusions**

At the beginning of the Réplik campaign in 2006, public awareness was quite low in Martinique despite historical events and recent earthquakes. The Réplik actions significantly raised an interest and its set points are now known by most of Martinicans, especially through TV and radio which prove the most efficient vectors. However, despite efforts on the part of the Réplik group to assess the efficiency of educational actions, this paper outlines a growing gap between the observed awareness and the actual preparedness of the public. As usual, gender, age, educational level, boredom, saturation, but also Martinique’s culture may explain this discrepancy.

To remain attractive and efficient and to respond to this public’s expectations and needs, Réplik has to upgrade its appeal. An opportunity lies in the coming second phase of the Antilles Earthquake Plan, to anchor existing actions or successful overseas experiences much more into local culture: consideration of cultural beliefs and religion to maintain the congruence with information, use of Creole language, specific education to specific people, participatory experiences, seismic and tsunami drills,, with a little bit of science to maintain a moderate level of knowledge. This is thought to increase people’s involvement in the construction of preparedness. Thus, one can hope that Martinique will rapidly be able to cope with a strong earthquake, and this know-how will benefit other seismically active islands in the Caribbean.

## **Acknowledgements**

343 The authors wish to thank the French Ministry for Environment, the Martinique Directorate for  
344 Environment, Planning and Housing and the French Geological Survey (BRGM) for supporting and  
345 funding this paper. This study is a part of the long-term Réplik joint venture gathering Martinican  
346 communities and stakeholders; both are also thanked for their implication in seismic safety in  
347 Martinique. The authors are finally grateful to their referees, to D. Paton, K. Tanaka and S. Tekeli-  
348 Yeşil for their highly constructive comments on our initial manuscript. All cited open file BRGM  
349 reports are freely downloadable from [www.brgm.fr](http://www.brgm.fr) and numerical matter from Réplik is available  
350 from the authors on request. The paper is dedicated to Jean-Pierre Doudic.

351

## 352 **References**

353 Adams, G.: The safer building programme in the UK Virgin Islands. In: proceedings of the  
354 SeismCaRe conference, Schœlcher, Martinique, 2009.

355

356 Audru, J.C.: Los canales de información pública sobre el riesgo sísmico en Martinica, Antillas  
357 Francesas (in English and Spanish). UN-ISDR Informs Journal, 17, 2010.

358

359 Audru, J.C., Capdeville, B., Salindre, J.J., and Nérée, N.: Actions towards seismic risk mitigation in  
360 Martinique, French Antilles. In: proceedings of the 19<sup>th</sup> Caribbean Geological Conference, Le Gosier,  
361 Guadeloupe, 2011a.

362

363 Audru, J.C., Belvaux, M., Bengoubou-Valerius, M., Bertil, D., Mompelat, J.M., and Roullé, A.:  
364 Seismic hazard status and mitigation actions in Guadeloupe and Martinique, French West Indies. In:  
365 proceedings of the 6<sup>th</sup> Caribbean Conference on Comprehensive Disaster Management proceedings,  
366 Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago, 2011b.

367

368 Barooah, P.R.: Capacity building for earthquake safety and mitigation through awareness and  
369 community education. In: proceedings of the First European Conference on Earthquake Engineering  
370 and Seismology, Geneva, Switzerland, 2006.

371

372 BCSF, Bureau Central Sismologique Français: Séisme de Martinique, 29 novembre 2007, synthèse  
373 sismologique et étude macrosismique. Openfile BCSF report (in French), 132 pp, 2008.

374

375 Beauducel, F., Bazin, S., Bengoubou-Valérius, M., Bouin, M.P., Bosson, A., Anténor-Habazac, C.,  
376 Clouard, V., and De Chaballier, J.B.: Empirical model for rapid macroseismic intensities prediction in  
377 Guadeloupe and Martinique. C. R. Geosci., 343, 717–728, 2011.

378

379 Belvaux, M., Monfort-Climent, D., Bertil, D., Roullé, A and Noury, G.: Cartographie départementale  
380 du risque sismique en Martinique. Openfile BRGM report (in French) RP-61904-FR, 2013

381

382 Bengoubou-Valérius, M.: Development of an Internet tutorial for self-assessment of the seismic  
383 vulnerability of individual houses in the French West Indies In: proceedings of the SeismCaRe  
384 conference, Schœlcher, Martinique, 2009.

385

386 BRGM, French geological survey: SisFrance website for historical earthquakes in the Antilles and  
387 the Caribbean region, [www.sisfrance.net/Antilles](http://www.sisfrance.net/Antilles), 2009.

388

389 BRGM, French geological survey: Official website for historical tsunamis in France,  
390 [www.tsunamis.fr](http://www.tsunamis.fr), 2010.

391

392 Chassagneux, D., Martin, C., Monge, O., Samarcq, F., and Sedan, O.: Microzonage sismique des  
393 communes de Schoelcher, Fort-de-France et Le Lamentin: effets de site et liquéfaction. Openfile  
394 BRGM report (in French) RR-39186-FR, 1996.

395

396 Chester, D.K.: Theology and disaster studies: The need for dialogue. J. Volcanol. Geoth. Res. 146,  
397 319– 328, 2005.

398

399 Chester, D.K., Duncan, A.M. and Dibbenc, J.J.C.: The importance of religion in shaping volcanic  
400 risk perception in Italy, with special reference to Vesuvius and Etna. *J. Volcanol. Geoth. Res.* 172, 3-  
401 4, 216-228, 2008.

402

403 Colbeau-Justin, L., Cartier, S., and Weiss, K.: Le risque sismique en Martinique, de sa perception à  
404 son intégration dans des pratiques préventives. Plan National de Prévention du Risque Sismique,  
405 Journées Réplik, technical note (in French), 2007.

406

407 Colbeau-Justin, L.: How to deal with the safety needs of people at seismic risk? In: proceedings of  
408 the SeismCaRe conference, Schœlcher, Martinique, 2009.

409

410 Cova, P.: Earthquake crisis simulation exercise in the French Antilles: methods and experience  
411 feedback. In: proceedings of the SeismCaRe conference, Schœlcher, Martinique, 2009.

412

413 Dooley, D., Catalano, R., Mishra, S., and Serxner, S.: Earthquake preparedness: predictors in a  
414 community survey. *J. Appl. Soc. Psychol.*, 22(6), 451-470, 1992.

415

416 Earthquake Country Alliance of California: internet website [www.earthquakecountry.info](http://www.earthquakecountry.info), 2003.

417

418 Gagnepain-Beyneix, J., Lépine, J.C., Nercessian, A., and Hirn, A.: Experimental study of site effects  
419 in the Fort-de-France area (Martinique Island). *B. Seismol. Soc. Am.*, 85(2), 478–495, 1995.

420

421 Germa, A., Quidelleur, X., Labanieh, S., Chauvel, C., and Lahitte, P.: The volcanic evolution of  
422 Martinique Island: Insights from K–Ar dating into the Lesser Antilles arc migration since the  
423 Oligocene. *J. Volcanol. Geoth. Res.*, 208, 122–135, 2011.

424

425 INSEE (French institute for statistics and economic studies): Recensement de la population et  
426 Populations légales en vigueur à compter du 1er janvier 2012 en Martinique (in French), 2011.

427

428 Ipsos Antilles (polling company): Étude Réplik et Séisme du 29 novembre 2007 (in French), 2008.

429

430 Ipsos Antilles (polling company): Enquête de notoriété et d'impact des journées Réplik 2008 (in  
431 French), 2009.

432

433 Ipsos Antilles (polling company): Enquête d'opinion sur les 5èmes journées Réplik auprès du grand  
434 public Martiniquais (in French), 2010.

435

436 Johnston, D., Paton, D., Crawford, G. L., Ronan, K., Houghton, B., and Bürgelt, P.: Measuring  
437 Tsunami Preparedness in Coastal Washington, United States. *Nat. Hazards*, 35(1), 173-184, 2005.

438

439 Lambert, J., and Terrier, M.: Historical tsunami database for France and its overseas territories. *Nat.*  
440 *Hazards Earth Sys. Sci.*, 11, 1037–1046, 2011.

441

442 Lamontagne, M., Du Berger, R., and Stevens, A. E.: Seismologists can help attenuate post-  
443 earthquake public vibrations. *Earthq. Spectra*, 8(4), 573-594, 1992.

444

445 Lamontagne, M., and La Rochelle, S.: Earth scientists can help people who fear earthquakes.  
446 *Seismol. Res. Lett.*, 71(4), 461-463, 2000.

447

448 Léone, F., and Mavoungou, J.: Le séisme du 8 juin 1999 de la Martinique, résultats de l'enquête post-  
449 sismique sur les personnes se trouvant dans les bâtiments. Département GEODE, Note technique de  
450 l'Université des Antilles et de la Guyane (in French), 2000.

451

452 Leslie, J.: Think before you build: an earthquake reconstruction project in Yemen. In: proceedings of  
453 the International Symposium on Earthquake Relief in Less-industrialised Areas, Zurich, Switzerland,  
454 1984.

455

456 L  ti, G.: L'univers magico-religieux antillais, ABC des croyances et des superstitions d'hier et  
457 d'aujourd'hui (in French). Eds. L'harmattan, Paris, 2000.

458

459 Lindell, M. K., and Perry, R. W.: Household adjustment to earthquake hazard: a review of the  
460 research, *Environ. Behav.*, 32(4), 461–501, 2000.

461

462 Lopez, A., Stein, S., Dixon, T., Sella, G., Calais, E., Jansma, P., Weber, J., and La Femina, P.: Is  
463 there a northern Lesser Antilles forearc block? *Geophys. Res. Lett.* 33, L07313, 2006.

464

465 McClure, J., Walkey, F., and Allen, M.: When earthquake damage is seen as preventable:  
466 attributions, locus of control and attitudes to risk. *Appl. Psychol.*, 48(2), 239–256, 1999.

467

468 Mileti, D.S. and Fitzpatrick, C.: The causal sequence of risk communication in the Parkfield  
469 earthquake prediction experiment. *Risk Anal* 12(3), 393–400, 1992.

470

471 Monge, O., Bour, M., Lebrun, B., Leroi, E., Mirgon, C., Sedan, O., Mompelat, J.M., Martin, C.,  
472 Souloumiac, R., and Chauvel, F.: Seismic risk assessment at both urban and regional scales in the  
473 French Lesser Antilles, methods and results. In: proceedings of the 12<sup>th</sup> World Conference on  
474 Earthquake Engineering, New Zealand, 2000.

475

476 Mulilis, J.P.: Gender and earthquake preparedness. A research study of gender issues in disaster  
477 management: differences in earthquake preparedness due to traditional stereotyping or cognitive  
478 appraisal. *Aust.. J. Emerg. Manag.*, 14(1), 41–50, 1999.

479

480 Nathe, S., Gori, P., Greene, M., Lemersal, E., and Mileti, D.: Public education for earthquake  
481 hazards. Univ. of Colorado, Natural Hazards Center, Informer Issue 2, 1–12, 1999.

482



483 Nguyen, L.H., Haikang S., Ershoff, D., Afifi, A.A., and Bourque, L.: Exploring the causal  
 484 relationship between exposure to the 1994 Northridge Earthquake and pre- and post-earthquake  
 485 preparedness activities. *Earthq. Spectra* 22(3), 569-587, 2006.  
 486  
 487 O'Loughlin, K.-F., and Lander, J.-F.: Carribbean tsunamis, a 500-Year History from 1498–1998,  
 488 *Adv. Nat. Technol. Haz. Res.*, 263 pp., 2003.  
 489  
 490 Olshansky, R.B.: Making a difference: stories of successful seismic safety advocates. *Earthq. Spectra*  
 491 21(2), 441–464, 2005.  
 492  
 493 Paton, D., Smith, L.M., and Johnston, D.: When good intentions turn bad: Promoting natural hazard  
 494 preparedness. *Aust.. J. Emerg. Manag.*, 20(1), 25-30, 2005.  
 495  
 496 Paton, D., Bajek, R., Okada, N., and McIvor, D.: Predicting community earthquake preparedness: a  
 497 cross-cultural comparison of Japan and New Zealand. *Nat. Hazards*, 54, 765–781, 2010.  
 498  
 499 Pedreros, R., and Terrier, M.: Étude préliminaire de l'aléa tsunami aux Antilles françaises. Openfile  
 500 BRGM report (in French) RR-55792-FR, 2007.  
 501  
 502 Revert, E.: *La magie antillaise* (in French). Paris, Éd. Bellenand, 203 p, 1951.  
 503  
 504 Sarant, P.M., de Vanssay, B., Colbeau-Justin, L. and Flagie A.: Satisfaction résidentielle et  
 505 perceptions du risque sismique chez les résidents d'habitat social en Guadeloupe, DDE Guadeloupe,  
 506 Secteur pilote d'innovation outre-mer, technical note (in French), 2004.  
 507  
 508 Solberg, C., Rossetto, T., and Joffe, H.: The social psychology of seismic hazard adjustment: re-  
 509 evaluating the international literature. *Nat. Hazards Earth Sys. Sci.*, 10, 1663–1677, 2010.  
 510

511 Spence, R.: Saving lives in earthquakes: successes and failures in seismic protection since 1960. B.  
 512 Earthq. Eng., 5, 139–251, 2007.

513

514 Tanaka, K.: The impact of disaster education on public preparation and mitigation for earthquakes: a  
 515 cross-country comparison between Fukui, Japan and the San Francisco Bay Area, California, USA.  
 516 Appl. Geog., 25, 201–225, 2005.

517

518 Tekeli-Yeşil, S., Dedeoğlu, N., Braun-Fahrlaender, C., and Tanner, M.: Earthquake awareness and  
 519 perception of risk among the residents of Istanbul. Nat. Hazards, 59(1), 427-446, 2011.

520

521 Turner, R.J., Nigg, J.M., and Paz, D.H.: Waiting for Disaster: Earthquake Watch in California. Los  
 522 Angeles, California. University of California Press, 1986.

523

524 United Nations: Report on the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, 18–  
 525 22 January 2005, United Nations, Geneva, 2005.

526

527 Vanoudheusden, É., Roullé, A., and Barras, A.V.: Seismic microzonation of a municipality in  
 528 French West Indies. In: proceedings of the 18<sup>th</sup> Caribbean Geological Conference, Le Gosier,  
 529 Guadeloupe, 2011.

530

531 Weiss, K., Girandola, L., and Colbeau-Justin L.: Les comportements de protection face au risque  
 532 naturel: de la résistance à l’engagement. Prat. Psychol., 17(3), 251-262 (in French), 2011.

533

534 Westercamp, D., Andreieff, P., Bouysse, P., Cottez, R., and Battistini, R.: 1/50 000 geological map of  
 535 Martinique and its notice (in French), BRGM Eds., 1989.

536

537 Winter, T., Bes de Berc, S., Cova, P., Sedan, O., Audru, J.C., and Terrier, M.: Méthodologie pour la  
 538 réalisation d’un exercice de crise sismique de type Richter. Open file BRGM report (in French) RP-  
 539 57237-FR, 2009.

540

541 **Figures**

542

543 **Fig. 1:** Sketch-map of Martinique Island within the Caribbean-Atlantic plate-boundary setting. The  
544 main regional faults and earthquakes are illustrated. The large arrow represents the motion of the  
545 Atlantic plate relative to the Caribbean plate (from Lopez et al., 2006).

546

547 **Fig. 2:** The Martinique mountainous topography culminates at Mount Pelée volcano (1397 m; 4 583  
548 ft). The island is divided into 34 municipalities; Roman letters plotted into municipalities areas  
549 represent the EMS98 intensities evaluated after the M7.4, November 2007 slab earthquake (data from  
550 BCSF, 2008).

551

552 **Fig. 3:** Examples of Réplik information supports. A) The Réplik logo since 2006; B) Tsunami leaflet;  
553 C) Arts exhibition “haz’arts”; D) Video series featuring a Martinican family; E) Simplified technical  
554 brochure for construction; F) Magnet with dos and don’ts; G) Instructions poster drawn by children;  
555 H) theatre skit of “Tranblad” which means “shaking” in Creole (featuring an authentic childbirth  
556 during the 2007 earthquake).

557

558 **Fig. 4:** Evolution of awareness and of several preparedness topics among successive polls within the  
559 Martinique population from 1999 to 2010. A) Notoriety of Réplik actions; B) Perception of  
560 prevention and preparedness actions.

561

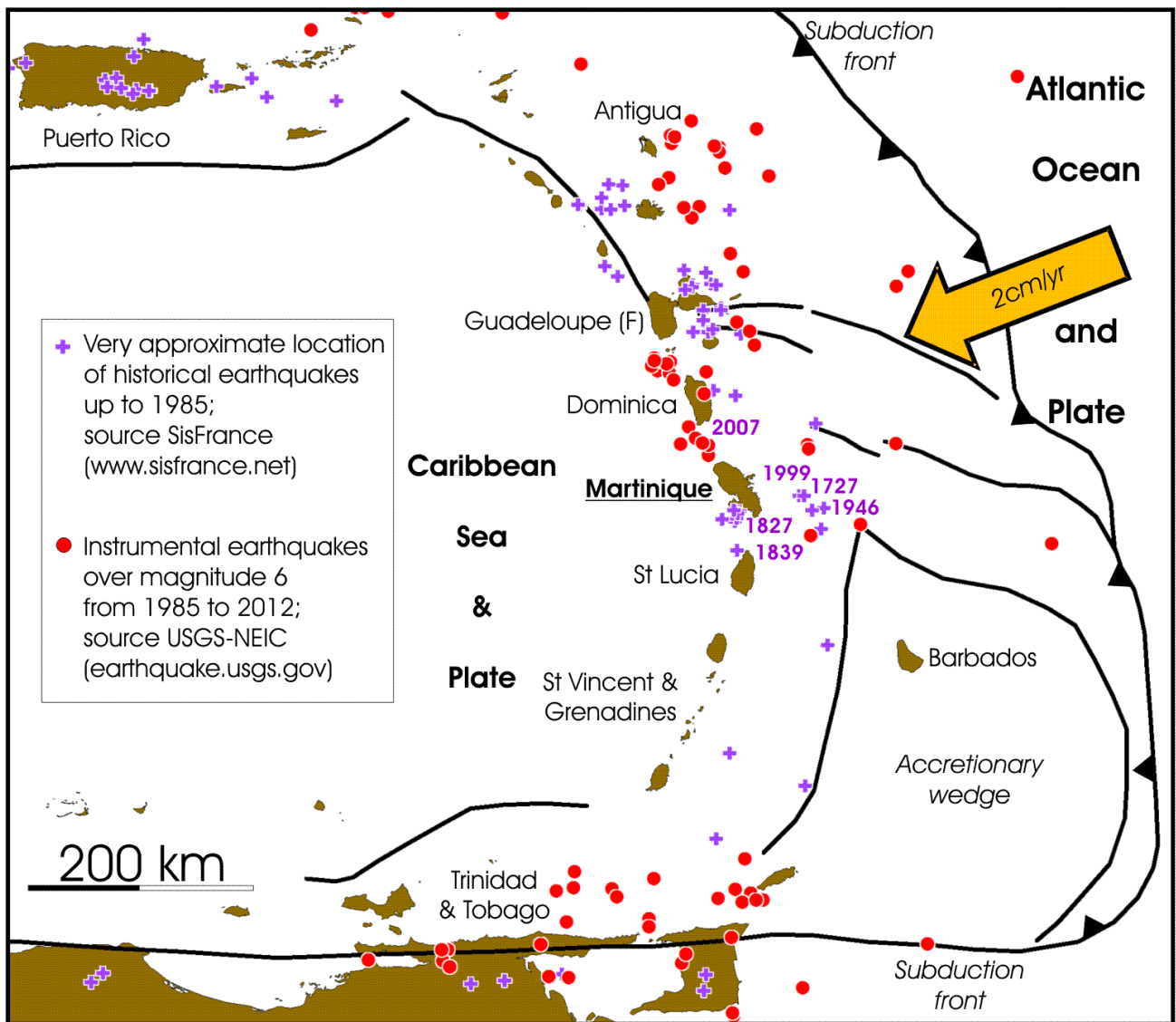


Figure 1

562

563







Figure 3

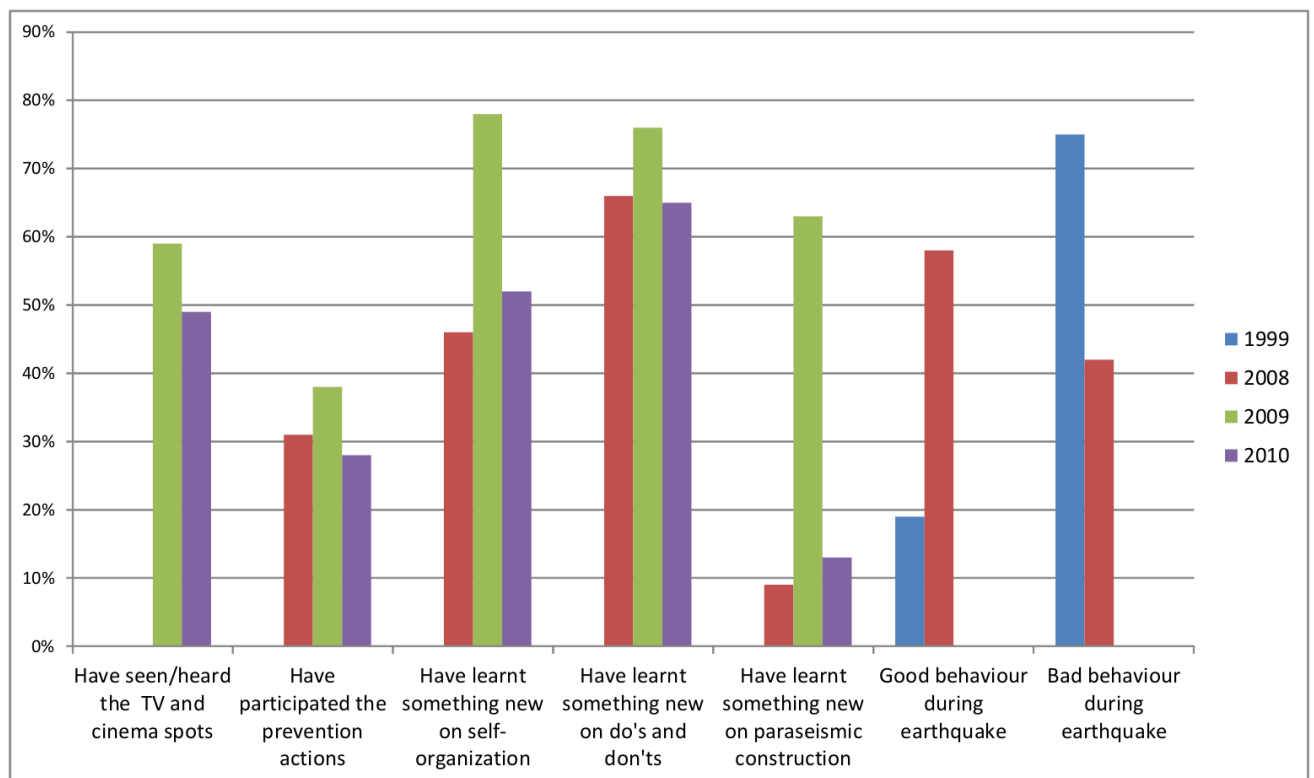
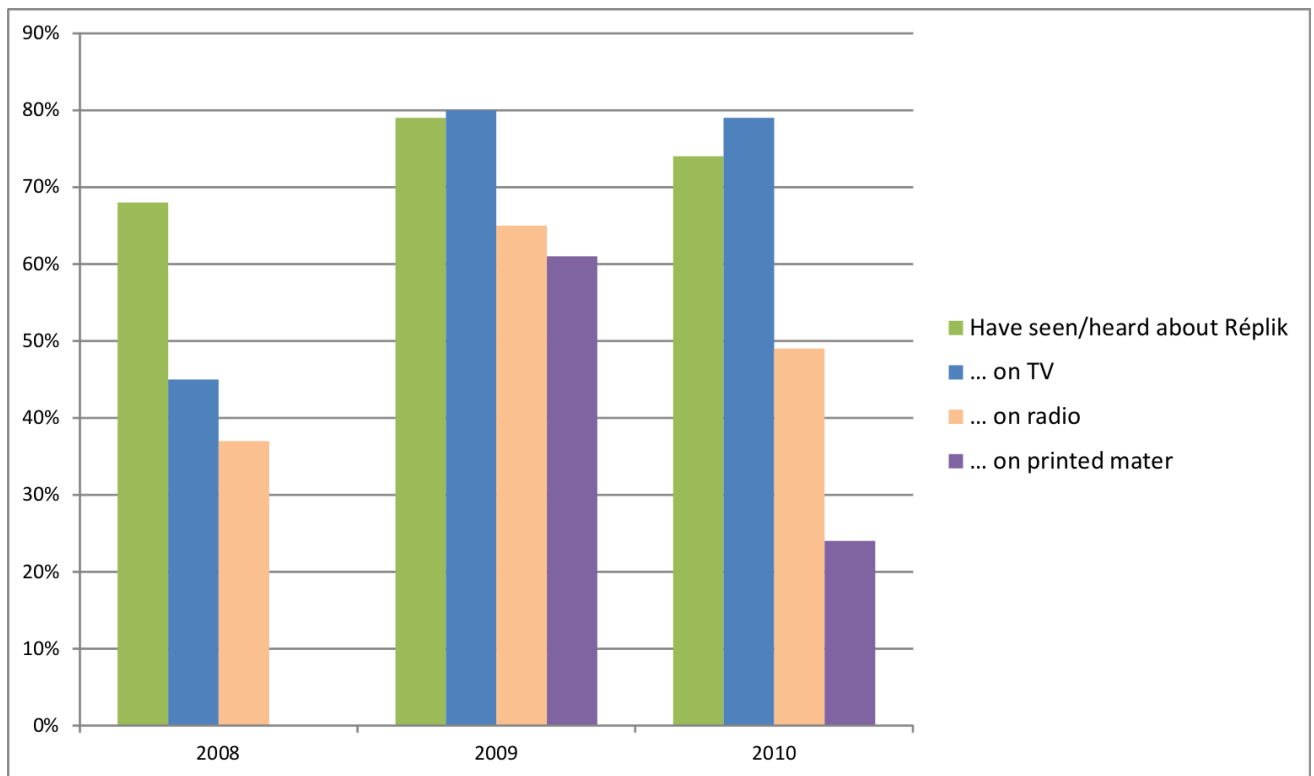


Figure 4