



ALTER PROGRESS REPORT



(Period 1/2/2018 – 30/9/2018)



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General reminder of project objectives, partnership and expected deliverables

ALTER partnership consists of National Observatory of Athens (NOA – EL, coordinator), European University Cyprus (EUC - CY), Center for National Security and Defense Research, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (CNSDR - BG), American University of Armenia (AUAF – AM) and Disaster Risk Reduction National Platform Foundation (ARNAP – AM).

The main ALTER's objective is to create public - private partnerships, in order to improve resilience in areas of Armenia that face risks from floods originating in earthquakes (i.e. Dams' failure or landslide that creates big waves overflowing or destroying dams). Dams can be those used for producing electricity or tailing dams that are being used as storage to dangerous residue of metallurgical industries. ALTER public private sectors alliances will be founded on transfer of methods, tools, knowhow and experience from acknowledged parties from EU countries to Armenian partners, Armenian government and stakeholders.

Specific objectives will be:

- 1) Identification the pilot areas for which resilient strategy will be elaborated, record and analyze the characteristics that will interact with such strategy
- 2) Design and implementation of a package of activities that will increase resilience at selected areas
- 3) Improvement of risk management capabilities at the operational level suitable per case
- 4) Transfer of methods, tools, knowhow and experience for risk management planning and implementation of risk management tools and procedures at selected areas
- 5) Design, Implementation and Evaluation of risk awareness campaigns to sensitize entities stakeholders, local communities and general public. Focus will be at pilot territories and key decision makers that can enable fast transfer of paradigm
- 6) Integration, evaluation and continuation of activities through training programs and small scale exercises.

Expected deliverables are:

WP1	D1.1	Communication plan
WP1	D1.2	A project identity and specific project website,
WP1	D1.3	A mix of communication tools,
WP1	D1.4	A final dissemination report
WP2	D2.1	Questionnaire on collection and analysis of best practices
WP2	D2.2	Methodology on adaptation and adoption of best practices
WP3	D3.1	Signed Agreements on Public-Private partnerships
WP3	D3.2	Package for Improved local communities' resilience
WP3	D3.3	3 training programmes
WP3	D3.3	3 small scale exercises
WP4	D4.1	Report on topics of transfer
WP4	D4.2	Report on methodology for transfer
WP4	D4.3	Packages of Sensors
WP4	D4.4	Web GIS systems
WP4	D4.5	Floods evolution prediction software
WP4	D4.6	Tool for supporting evacuation of people
WP4	D4.7	Tool for supporting provision of goods to people and forces
WP5	D5.1	Progress Report
WP5	D5.2	Midterm Report
WP5	D5.3	Final Report

General summary of project implementation process

➤ General overview of the process:

A technical meeting was held on 24/01/2018, in Brussels, where both NOA and EUC participated, presenting the key points of ALTER Project to the DG ECHO officers and other representatives of approved projects. Discussion on project implementation took place also. Project meetings proved to be very helpful for the successful implementation of the Project so far, and for the programming of the upcoming activities as well. During the Kick-off meeting in Athens (12-13/02/2018), administrative and technical issues were discussed and the Steering Committee (SC) of the project was elected. During the project meeting in Armenia (in pilot areas and Yerevan, 18-22/06/2018), the project team visited all pilot areas (3 pilot areas), where the foreseen activities will take place, and discussed with representatives of companies from the private sector/ owners and managers of dams, local communities and regional/local authorities. In addition, during the two meetings (in Athens and Yerevan) the SC also met to discuss about implementation issues and to invite researchers to participate in the foreseen Advisory Board. For project's integrity, beside the aforementioned activities, six (6) Skype meetings were organized (16/01/2018, 13/03/2018, 10/05/2018, 31/07/2018 and 13/9/2018, 26/9/2018) amongst the Partnership, in order to discuss the deliverables' status and to coordinate the remaining activities. EU Platform takes for granted projects' starting date 1/1/2018, while ALTER was officially launched on 1/2/2018. As a result, EU Platform calculates a month earlier the deliverable dates of the Project. ALTER's Deliverables, were uploaded on time, according to the initial timetable. ALTER Project was presented through a poster with the key notes on the 36th General Assembly of the European Seismological Commission on (2-7/09/2018) in Malta (see the Appendix).

➤ Comparative analysis of

- Initial and actual time schedule:

From the starting date of the project until 30/09/2018, three (3) deliverables were implemented according to the initial timetable. The communication plan (D 1.1) was developed by AUAF with information provided by the rest of the Partnership until the end of May. AUAF also developed the project identity and the specific project website www.alter-project.eu (D 1.2) until the end of May. A common graphic line was produced for all communication materials. A mix of communication tools was produced (project leaflet, press releases, social media presence: Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/ALTERProjectEU> and LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/alter-alliance-for-disaster-risk-reduction> by AUAF until the end of July (D 1.3). More communication materials will be produced during Project's lifetime.

- Planned and used resources:

Financial resources: Based on estimation at the end of the reporting period, an amount up to 102.000,00 Euros, approximately 22,6 % of the total budget, has been spent from the starting date of the project (01/02/2018) until 30/09/2018. Higher portion of the total budget will be spent in the next reporting periods, as it is foreseen to implement the most of the activities (small scale exercises, purchase and installation of the instruments, training activities, etc.). The detailed budget spent so far, will be provided in the near future.

Human Resources: Researchers and experts from the Project Partners took part in the implementation of the aforementioned deliverables as initially planned. Mobilization of private sector in Armenia is ahead than what was scheduled, and it is expected that during the December meeting in Yerevan this issue will be underlined.

- Expected and actual results:

Activities implemented up to 30/09/2018, and activities foreseen during the next reporting period, serve the ALTER project's expected results as initially scheduled. The results of the work completed in 2018 will be reflected in 2019.

Evaluation of project management/implementation process

➤ Positive aspects / opportunities:

Project's deliverables were submitted on time, according to the initial timetable, without facing any administrative or technical issue. The partnership cooperates fruitfully, in respect to the common goals of the project. During the project meeting in Yerevan (June 2018), the partnership visited the 3 pilot areas in Armenia and visited companies' representatives of the private sectors both in their industries and at their regional/central headquarters. These visits were very interesting and at the same time important for the implementation of the upcoming project's activities. Partners informed all key stakeholders about ALTER project, the foreseen activities and their added value. After the meeting, LB sent a letter inviting private companies to participate in the foreseen training activities and the small-scale exercises in 2019. The LB has already received an official positive answer, willing for more. Communication is intense to well-organize common and collaborated activities.

Additionally, the Advisory Board synthesis has been agreed amongst partners, after the enlightening study visit in Armenia. The Advisory Board members (consisting of three Armenian and one Greek scientist) have been informed on ALTER implementation progress and their task to support the consortium in the exploitation of outputs, alignment with Armenian's national strategy and policies on disaster risk reduction and on mainstreaming of results. The 1st Advisory Board meeting, with partners and representatives of European Commission and International initiatives in Armenia, is scheduled for the upcoming Yerevan meeting (3-5 of December 2018).

➤ Internal and external difficulties encountered:

The selected pilot areas are located far away from Yerevan (mainly close to the borders with Iran, Azerbaijan and Georgia), and travelling to visit them is very difficult. However, due to preparation activities implemented by Armenian Partners in order to organize better the study visit in June 2018, they had to travel from Yerevan to pilot areas, with expenses which were not initially foreseen. As a result of these preparation activities, the study visit in Armenia was fruitful and at the same time effective and efficient. In the framework of the upcoming planned activities, LB sent to private companies a letter inviting them to participate in the communication activities and the small-scale exercises of the local population foreseen to take place in Armenia next year. For the moment, ALTER project has already received a positive answer from a private company and is willing for more.

➤ Partnership/core group cooperation (as appropriate):

The partnership cooperates very well, since its establishment, while working for the successfully implementation of ALTER project. No cooperation problems exist.

➤ Cooperation with the Commission:

Cooperation between the partnership and the Commission is very good. Commission immediately provided its help whenever asked through the EU platform, and advised other EU initiatives in the area of Caucasus that could contribute to ALTER successful implementation.

➤ Comments on European value added:

ALTER added value is the increased efficiency and effectiveness in use of available resources to achieve disaster risk reduction strategies in countries outside EU CP Mechanism (Armenia in our case) and in fact in the most needed areas far away from the capital and near the borders with other countries. Towards this direction, all foreseen activities are being implemented as planned and the foreseen are expected to be implemented according to the initial schedule. The study visit in Yerevan on 17-23/6/2018 was very

important to specify the needs in terms of efficiency and effectiveness in use of the available resources, and realize project activities in pilot areas. The upcoming visit in Yerevan (3-5/12/2018) with all stakeholders, and implementation of the training activities and small-scale exercises as well, will be also crucial for project success and for increasing the European added value.

➤ Lessons learnt and possible improvements:

The involvement of private sector is the key point of success in some projects, such as ALTER. Participation of private companies in the implementation of activities boosts the project's results. However, the selection and their attraction are not as easy as it seems. In any case, once it is achieved the Public – Private sectors partnership, multiplier benefits are gained in local, national and international level.

Activities

- Comparison between initially planned and implemented activities, including monitoring, evaluation and dissemination:

The implemented activities (*see the Appendix*) coincide, so far, with the initially planned activities. In detail:

- ✓ *Kick-off Meeting*: took place in Athens, on February 12th and 13th 2018 at the historical premises of National Observatory of Athens. All partners fully participated.
- ✓ *Confirmation of the Governance structure, organization and decision rules*: The Governance structure was confirmed, by the election of the Steering Committee (SC), the Project Executive and the Work Package Leaders. Moreover, the partners agreed to invite an external Advisory Board.
- ✓ *Establish communication flow and methods*: the partners agreed about the communication method.
- ✓ *Prepare and implement Communication and Dissemination Plan*: already completed.
- ✓ *Development of project identity and website*: A corporate identity for ALTER project was created as well as a specific website for the project is set-up and maintained by AUA
- ✓ *Production of dissemination materials for the various stakeholder groups*: One project leaflet and press releases are already included in the first Deliverables.
- ✓ *Plan and Elaboration of Public – Private Sectors partnerships*: The Armenian Partners (ARNAP) already started to examine the existing legislative and operational framework for Public – Private sectors partnership, with emphasis on the cooperation between local communities and the companies that own – manage dams.
- ✓ *Improvement of local communities' resilience through Public – Private Sectors partnership*: To achieve such a partnership, ALTER's Armenia team carried out an introductory visit to the project' sites of interest. Specifically, on May 4 (Lori Marz Sites - Akhtala city municipality and "Nahatak" tailing dam) and May 23-24 (Syunik Marz Sites - Kapan and Sisian cities municipalities, Artsvanik and Geghanush tailing dams, Geghi Water Reservoir, Vorotan Cascade Water reservoirs and "Contour Global Hydro Cascade" regional office in Goris city)
- ✓ Moreover, ALTER Team members (from all participating countries) gathered in Yerevan, Armenia from June 18th to 22nd to meet with in country stakeholders and visit the three project target areas. Besides the personal contacts, the ALTER Consortium sent an Invitation Letter to some of the companies that own – manage dams.
- ✓ *Identification of specific topics for transfer of methods, tools, knowhow and experience*: Based on the analysis of the existing situation in Armenia and the three pilot areas concerning earthquake and floods (initiated by earthquake) risks, the most needed topics for transfer of methods, tools knowhow and experience will be identified. There was a short delay of this activity, due to the initial difficulty to select the proper site for the installation of the instruments. However, after well organized efforts of the Armenian partners, the Geghi Dam was selected for the installation of the instruments.
- ✓ *Good practices identification, analysis and adoption*: EUC formulated a detailed questionnaire for good practices, identification and analysis, aiming to ease the best practices adaptation and adoption phase. All partners agreed on that and after slight improvements they all work on the good practices field.



➤ Qualitative evaluation of the activities:

All implemented activities were evaluated by the consortium through intense communication and mainly during the Yerevan meeting that took place on 22nd June 2018 in the premises of the American University of Armenia. The evaluation continued after the meeting and the partners, with the contribution and the suggestions of ARNAP, decided to install the instruments at Geghi dam.

We must mention that ALTER consortium elaborated internal reports (not foreseen in the approved forms) to share information about the Armenian partners' visits to pilot areas prior the study visit on June 2018 and the identification of the situation in the dams of interest (ownership, management, political implications, foreseen activities outside ALTER project that can influence project activities itself). These reports are also available.

Presentation of the technical results and deliverables (one section per deliverable)

Besides the partners' meetings that took place on time (one in Athens and another one in Yerevan), the visits at the project' sites of interest, as well as the contacts with the local communities and the private sector, a brief description of the three Deliverables (D1.1, D1.2 and D1.3) elaborated since the start of the project until 31st July 2018, are presented below.

➤ **Description of individual deliverable (D1.1):** A communication and dissemination plan has been finalized defining key messages, positioning statements and target audiences, and selecting appropriate tools and channels (including relevant conferences and events) to meet the information needs of the target audiences. Partners will provide regularly information for communication and dissemination and the plan will be updated in mid-term while a media monitoring report will be consolidated.

Purpose of the deliverable: The objective of this document is to support partners in designing and organizing project-related communication and dissemination activities by providing a reference guideline, common strategies and suggestions, and coordinated tools to increase the effectiveness of other project work packages and objectives. This document will help project partners to promote ALTER and effectively communication project results

Evaluation of the deliverable: There is a positive evaluation by all partners of ALTER project.

Value-added – in particular European value-added and transferability - of the deliverable: The communication and dissemination plan is very important for the communication and dissemination of the project. The ALTER one is very practical and will be tested in the next project activities. We consider its European value-added and transferability high, yet this statement will be proven in 2019.

Dissemination: Dissemination will be done through ALTER website, the Social Media pages, training events, table top and field exercises as well as by participation of the partners in forums and events.

➤ **Description of individual deliverable (D1.2):** A corporate identity for ALTER is created including ALTER's logo, Report Cover, Document and Presentation Templates, Social Media Profile Pictures and Banners, Unique Badges for events' participants.

Purpose of the deliverable: to ensure a common graphic line (project leaflet, website, presentation templates etc.) for all communications material produced by the consortium. A specific website for the project will be set-up and maintained by American University of Armenia for the duration of the project. During the final year of the project, a plan will be prepared for the ongoing hosting maintenance of the project website after the end of the project.

Evaluation of the deliverable: There is a positive evaluation by all partners of ALTER project that use them in relevant communication.

Value-added – in particular European value-added and transferability - of the deliverable: The corporate identity for ALTER project is very important for the communication and the dissemination of the project. Therefore, the European value-added and transferability is high.

Dissemination: Dissemination will be done through ALTER website, the Social Media pages, training events, table top and field exercises as well as by participation of the partners in Scientific Symposia.

➤ **Description of individual deliverable (D1.3):** a mix of communication tools has been prepared, such as project leaflets, press releases etc.

Purpose of the deliverable: to communicate to the public, the scientific and civil protection communities and decision- and policy-makers, about the activities and the achievements of ALTER project.



Evaluation of the deliverable: There is a positive evaluation by all partners of ALTER Project.

Value-added – in particular European value-added and transferability - of the deliverable: The corporate identity for ALTER project is very important for the communication and the dissemination of the project. Therefore, the European value-added and transferability is high and will be proven in 2019.

Dissemination: Dissemination will be done through ALTER website, the Social Media pages, training events, table top and field exercises as well as by participation of the partners in events and Scientific Symposia.

Evaluation of the technical results and deliverables

➤ General lessons learnt:

The long term, fruitful cooperation between public and private sector is very important for the successful implementation of the project. For this reason, the foreseen activities, in which private sector is involved, has to be carefully and well organized, and according both to the project activities timetable and private companies timetable. ALTER approach, as expressed by Armenian partners initially and by all partners during study visit and follow up communication, can be summarized as follows:

1. ALTER project is a catalyst to acknowledge already established private public sectors cooperation in Armenia, to activate and enhance synergies among key stakeholders at national /regional and local levels in Armenia and support efforts to optimize disaster risk reduction strategies and related activities.
2. ALTER' role is not to evaluate private companies' activities related to safety and security. Instead, in respect to the private companies' policies, ALTER aims to create synergies between the activities of ALTER, Armenian Authorities and the Private Companies themselves in the framework of Corporate Social Responsibility.

That approach brought results so far, as the private companies expressed their will to cooperate, during the upcoming meetings with the ALTER team. It should be emphasized that the most of these companies are activated in the difficult mining and metallurgical sector and are under American and Russian ownerships.

➤ Strengths:

Cooperation amongst the partners is very good, focusing on the achievement of the project's goal. This is a very important fact for the successful implementation of the deliverables and the activities, and the project in general.

➤ Possible challenges and/or improvements to be tackled through further action:

The attraction and participation in training activities and small scale exercises of key stakeholders from private and public sector, and locals as well, is very crucial for the successful implementation of the project. In this direction, positive answers from the private companies to the invitation letter are very important to achieve this goal.

➤ Recommendations to stakeholders, partners, authorities in charge, National and EU institutions:

ALTER Project, through the implementation of the planned activities, will achieve the Public – Private partnership, creating stability conditions in areas with critical infrastructures. In addition, project's stakeholders will be informed about disaster risk reduction. Therefore, disaster risk reduction strategies will be developed, and their multiplier benefits for development, will be exploited in local, national and EU level.

Follow-up

- Comparison between initial and current follow-up measures:

Foreseen follow up measures have been taken. All major stakeholders, including private sector have been actively engaged in project activities both in Yerevan and at pilot areas. Local communities have been sensitized and informed on disaster risk reduction, enhancing Armenian state campaigns and efforts. In 2019, all initially scheduled follow up measures, plus the additional ones will be at full force.

- Additional follow-up approaches:

ALTER encourages the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility that contributes to disaster risk reduction activities and resilience strengthening measures at regional and local levels. Private companies, managing dams and tailing dams at pilot areas of Armenia, already participate in local councils for disaster risk reduction, and in exercises conducted each year by civil protection authorities. However they do it in an isolated manner and not as an integral part of a complete disaster risk reduction strategy. ALTER offers a new perspective for all parties, making private sector an indispensable part of local communities' viable future, fostering socially responsible attitude that invests in disaster risk reduction at high risk prone areas, as those ALTER works on. Since all pilot areas are far away from big cities and Yerevan and the transport and logistics network is problematic, the role of private companies and their resources is critical for regional / local resilience. ALTER fosters a long term commitment and cooperation between private companies, local communities and authorities, far beyond what legislative provisions.