

Monthly progress update

January 2022

Leveraging ASEAN Capacities for
Emergency Response (LACER)

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Background

“*Leveraging ASEAN Capacities for Emergency Response (LACER)*” is a project funded by the European Union. The overall objective is strengthened resilience in ASEAN region through improved disaster risk management. The specific objectives consists of strengthened capacity and sustainability of the AHA Centre to achieve operational excellence in disaster monitoring, preparedness and emergency response, and enhanced mechanism for ASEAN Leadership to Respond-As-One through excellence and innovation in disaster management.

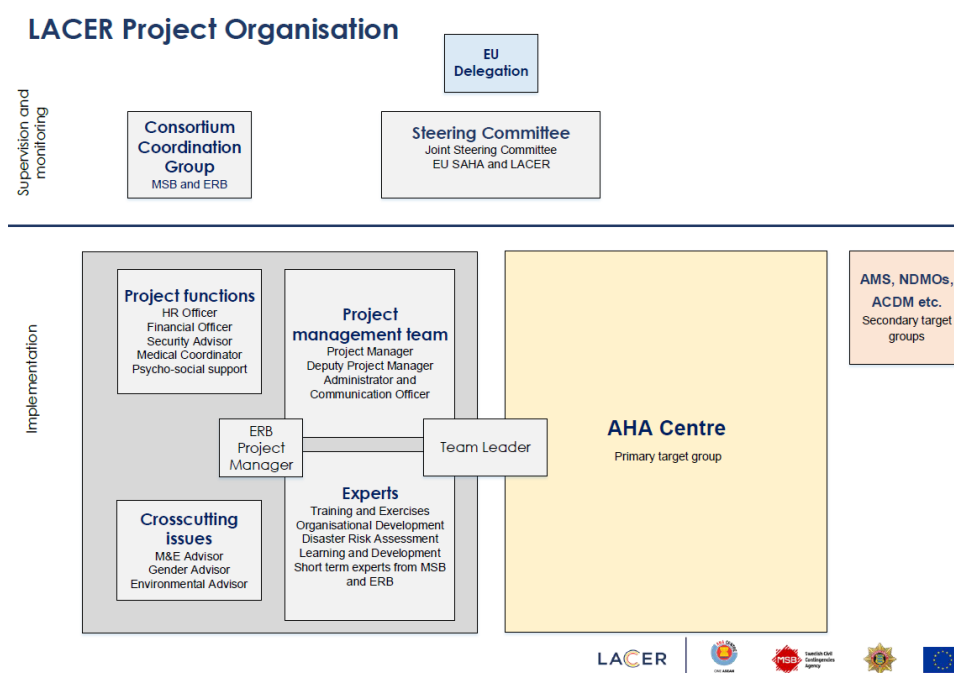
The project is implemented by a Consortium consisting of the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agencies (MSB), as lead, jointly with the Estonian Rescue Board (ERB). It is a component of the overall EU programme “*Integrated Programme in Enhancing the Capacity of AHA Centre and ASEAN Emergency Response Mechanisms (EU Support to AHA Centre)*”.

The project consists of the following four outcomes organised as components.

- Component 1
Strengthened institutional capacity, corporate policies and management of the AHA Centre
- Component 2
Enhanced operational capacity of the AHA Centre in monitoring, preparing and responding to disasters
- Component 3
Increased preparedness and Respond-As-One capacities of ASEAN
- Component 4
Enhanced professionalism through standards and certification

The project has a 43 month lifespan and started on March 1, 2020.

Fig 1. Illustration of the LACER project organisation structure



Project progress update for the period January 2022

Essentially, the LACER project aims to strengthen the institutional capacity of the AHA Centre to become a highly professional and trusted organisation that effectively carries out its operational mandate in facilitating and coordinating regional disaster preparedness and response, sharing European best practices and facilitating and building sustained institutional ASEAN – EU exchange. The project aims to plan for, implement and sustain organisational development using a comprehensive strategic approach. In real terms, this means that the project will not independently deliver ready products to the AHA Centre, but is committed to building sustained capacities over time.

The project is in implementation phase. Some LACER activities have not been fully implemented during the project period, which has prompted a discussion on mutual expectations and prioritisation of outputs.

Management and Leadership

Britta Ramberg, having previously served as a Head of Operations in MSB with responsibility for supervising substantial resources in national and international missions, has joined the LACER team to provide expertise on management and leadership in the emergency response context. She has been introduced to the AHA Centre team and begun planning activities under *C2.1 Establish collective leadership/ management standard modules for internal AHA Centre staff at all levels* and secondly *C2.2 Middle Management Training*.

Cross-Cutting Gender Equality and Environment Perspectives

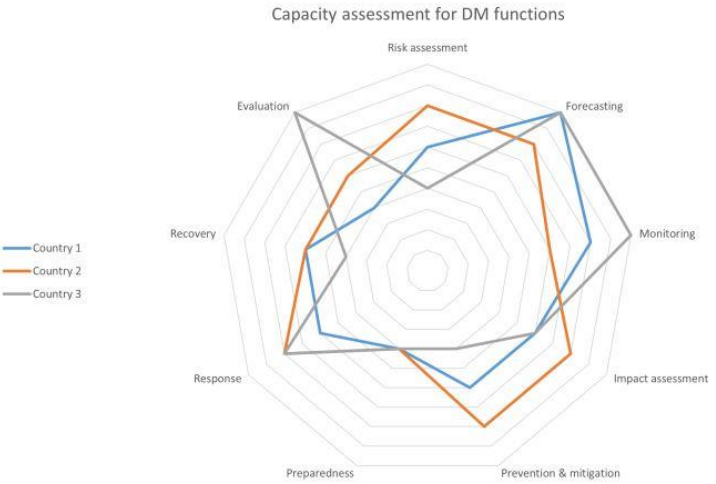
During the reporting period, AHA Centre CAD requested the LACER team to assist in development of a Child Protection Policy. The LACER Team Leader, who has previous experience in preparing child protection policies for humanitarian organisations operating in field context, reviewed the draft and provided extensive feedback, leading to a revised version. LACER proposed changes which improved alignment with international standards in child protection such as Convention on the Rights of Child and the 2019 Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. The feedback also highlighted importance of recognising child populations at increased risk of abuse in humanitarian contexts, such as child labourers or children separated from primary caregivers.

Strategic Planning and Donor Coordination

LACER experts continue to work closely with AHA Centre's colleagues in Resource Mobilisation on the design and setup of the Partner Platform, a unique online tool to disseminate information to partners and donors.

At the initiative of AHA Centre, LACER is supporting with inputs on integrating the societal resilience model (which considers nine interconnected DRM functions) into platform design, in order to provide a clear framework for prioritising resource allocation ahead. This collaboration under *C.0 Capacity development strategy* aims at AHA Centre analysing its five-year plan from the perspective of the 9 DRM functions in the aforementioned model.

As reported in the last monthly update, the AHA Resource Mobilisation team has now developed and shared a Concept Note on Donor Mapping, with reference to LACER’s model for societal resilience.



During the reporting period, LACER’s organizational development expert, Peter Månsson, worked with AHA Centre staff to refine concept note objectives as well as develop a questionnaire to target potential donors and conduct research on donor interests and needs,

which can be assessed using the model. The model can also be adapted to consider ASEAN member states DRM needs, as per the enclosed diagram.

Mutual Exchange and Learning between EU and AHA Centre

On January 27th, the LACER project hosted the fourth webinar in the brown bag series of mutual exchange and learning. The theme of this discussion was Host Nation Support (HNS) in ASEAN and the EU. The event included a presentation by ERCC Liaison Officer Simon Stermann on the EU role in HNS and use of the EU Guidelines, followed by a facilitated discussion with the AHA Centre on HNS in ASEAN. Thereafter LACER experts Martin Sjöholm and Peter Månsson briefed

participants on the Swedish national experiences with HNS relative to support from other EU countries.



The event saw broad participation, with a total of 33 guests encompassing all AHA divisions, the ASEAN DMHA, and three officers from BNPB (Indonesian NDMO), along with LACER team members and other institutions. The discussion covered the following topics:

- Why HNS is important/ the rationale for coordination
- Typical legal issues that may impede cross-border assistance (e.g. regulations on the import of rescue dogs, medicines, licenses of medical personnel, visa requirements etc.) and how such challenges could be mitigated by regional agreements
- The shifting role of the ERCC toward the European NDMOs

- Lessons learned from the work to enhance/propel HNS within the EU (e.g. from the development phase of the HNS guidelines) as well as from actual missions when HNS may have been deficient, how this was dealt with during the mission and what changes it potentially generated in terms of HNS recommendation to the EU member states.

A recorded version of the event and presentations is available at:

<https://zoom.us/rec/share/3GirJZ-FPeG7DR3mLUNvHOWNuk8NU0ZEDJhOOQj6hdcAyNiFUqWuQwxmdlSq-6iY5.dXNqlbe9iQWhPmZ4> (Passcode: pgQFm.8v)

With the completion of this fourth webinar, activity *C3.1* has achieved all of its planned objectives; however, the LACER and AHA Centre teams both agree that the brown bag offers a valuable forum that is useful to maintain. The plan is therefore to continue holding brown bag webinars moving forward, building further on this tool for dialogue and to launch new ideas and exchange practices between EU and ASEAN DRM professionals.

A second activity under this intermediate outcome (C3.2), focused on developing an exchange of experts between the ERCC and AHA Centre, also seeks to build up mutual learning and facilitate more institutionalised ASEAN-EU interaction. This activity was launched during the reporting period, following a request by the AHA Centre for LACER team to identify an ERCC expert to present as part of an ASEAN led panel event at the United Nations Global Platform for DRR in May 2022 in Bali. The LACER team is moving forward on this request by identifying a suitable expert and topic related to the EU's regional role in DRM. For more info on the GPDRR see

<https://www.undrr.org/event/seventh-session-global-platform-disaster-risk-reduction-gp2022>

Launch of Component 3 Activities targeting Operational Capacity

Activities have been launched to support development of AHA Centre's operational capacity, in line with Activity Plan F3.1-F3.4 on improving the routines of the ERAT roster and training.

In December 2021, AHA Centre assembled a Project Management Team to collaborate closely with a LACER team of experts created to consider the current functioning of ASEAN-ERAT and make recommendations for improvements moving forward. Since then, weekly discussions have been launched to ensure a comprehensive dialogue and a detailed planning of activities expected to run through much of 2022. The discussions have not as yet identified specific activities but several areas are under consideration, such as LACER support to training, evaluation and roster development.

Communication and visibility

The LACER team continues its efforts to spread awareness of ASEAN capacity for disaster risk management through a series of interviews with AHA staff accompanied by publication of associated material through online media. On January 18, LACER Communications Officer Johanna Rixer published the article based on the interview with Agustina Thunay (Rina), AHA Centre Assistant Director for Emergency Preparedness & Response. The article, titled "Meet Rina, an Engineer with focus on people in need" is available at the following link:

<https://www.lacerproject.eu/sv/news/meet-rina-an-engineer-with-focus-on-people-in-need/>

On 28 January, the AHA Centre communications team posted a link to the LACER article on various social media, demonstrating solid coordination within the partnership:

 **The ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance o...** 3,596 followers
7h • 🌐

"We are all humanitarians and we work under the leadership of the 10 ASEAN Member States' NDMO," said Rina, Assistant Director - Preparedness & Response of the AHA Centre, during the conversations with LACER team on her experience working with the Centre.

Read more at https://bit.ly/LACER_Rina

“ We are all humanitarians and we work under the leadership of the 10 ASEAN Member States' NDMO.

Agustina Tunay (Rina)
Assistant Director of Operations
Preparedness and Response

Read more at:
https://bit.ly/LACER_Rina

Also during the reporting period, AHA Centre circulated a blurb on social media, appearing on Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram, with reference to the introductory piece published in *The Column* vol. 76, on LACER Team Leader Charles Silva. A cut-out from LinkedIn is enclosed:

The ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre)
3,527 followers
View full profile

The ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance o... 3,527 followers
18h • 🌐

A lot of exciting initiatives coming up between LACER Project and AHA Centre in enhancing disaster management across the ASEAN Region. According to [Charles Silva](#), LACER Project Team Leader, the cooperation between the two organisations is very complex but at the same time rewarding because each agency can contribute something special and important to the regional effort.

Learn and read more about LACER Project at <https://lnkd.in/gfz5K-5C>

“ Like the MSB, each national disaster management organisation across the ASEAN region has a unique way of working and a national context in which it operates.

Charles Silva
LACER Project Team Leader

Read more at:
<https://lnkd.in/gfz5K-5C>

On 27 January, LACER team members participated in the *7th Communication and Visibility Workshop for EU-funded Projects: Communication and Visibility Case Studies*

Also during the reporting period, LACER team collaborated with Communication and Visibility for EU Cooperation ASEAN Team Leader Dian Saputra on a Blue Book piece highlighting LACER support to AHA Centre's capacity development strategy, titled "Mapping ASEAN's resources to respond to disasters." The article emphasised the importance of AHA Centre developing a tool to map its resources, as well as to identify gaps and assets of each AMS to allow effective response in times of disasters.

END