

# Monthly progress update

March 2023

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.

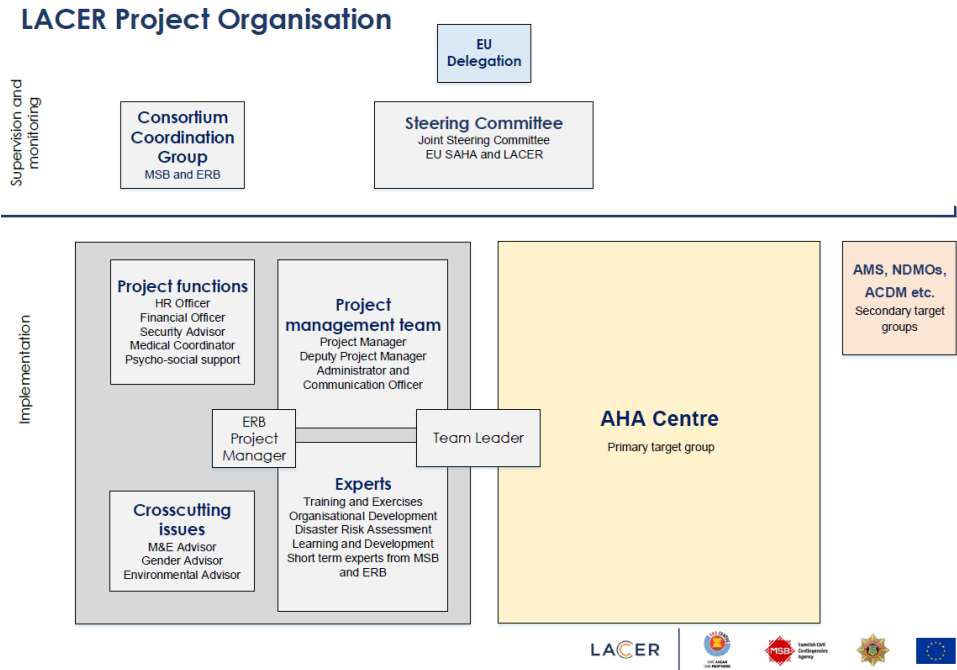
The project is implemented by a Consortium consisting of the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), as lead, jointly with the Estonian Rescue Board (ERB). It is a component of the overall EU programme “Integrated Programme in Enhancing the Capacity of AHA Centre and ASEAN Emergency Response Mechanisms (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 48 month lifespan and started on March 1, 2020.

Figure 1. Illustration of the LACER project organisation structure



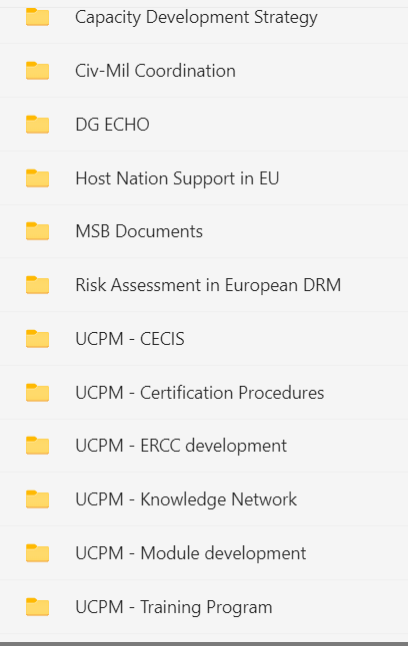
# Project progress update for the period March 2023

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. A no cost extension has been agreed, which extends the project implementation period to a total of 48 months.

## Support information management systems (A3.2)

During the reporting period, LACER staff began populating the LACER-AHA Centre Digital Archive with project data accessible to all staff. Although this remains a work in progress, the effort has thus far yielded a range of material including the following areas:



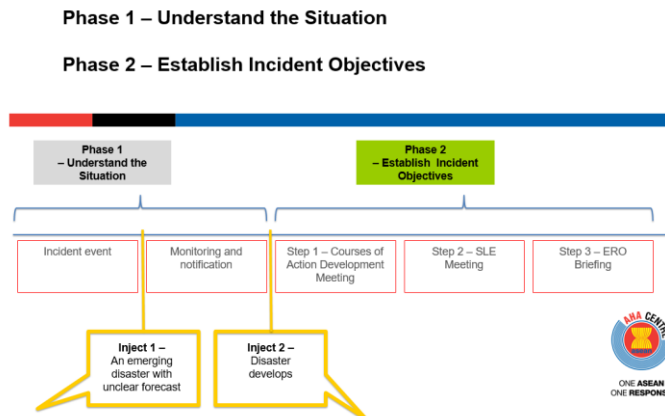
Capacity Development Strategy
Civ-Mil Coordination
DG ECHO
Host Nation Support in EU
MSB Documents
Risk Assessment in European DRM
UCPM - CECIS
UCPM - Certification Procedures
UCPM - ERCC development
UCPM - Knowledge Network
UCPM - Module development
UCPM - Training Program

## Development of EOC/Duty Officer function in AHA Centre and NDMOs (D1.1)

## Conduct functional exercises of ERO function and evaluate (E1.1)

## Joint assessment of pathway for further development of AHA Centre Training & exercise plan (F1.2)

The LACER expert on Emergency Operations Centre Development, Anders Fridborg, deployed to Jakarta on 14 March 2023 and began integrated work with AHA Centre emergency operations staff on planning EOC exercises (EOCX) which are meant to occur quarterly for all AHA staff as well as ERAT roster members and NDMO focal points. Planning of the EOCX is currently underway, albeit delayed by an unforeseen ASEAN assessment mission to Myanmar and a large number of national holidays in member states throughout March-April. A date will shortly be selected for the first exercise, and in that light the LACER expert has already presented a draft plan for EOCX 1:

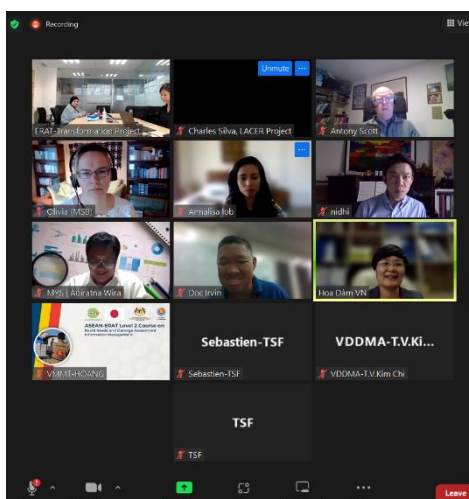


Besides planning and implementing the first EOCX of 2023, expert Anders Fridborg will also design a template for use in future ASEAN exercises (F1.2), support the ASEAN Information Management Network workshop planned for 2023, and prepare a visit of NDMO EOC experts to the ERCC and DG ECHO in Brussels. His efforts will also contribute to general observations on the methods of disaster monitoring and analysis within the AHA Centre EOC, which will prove valuable in further LACER activities such as *D1.3 Technical Advisory Mission (TAM) on monitoring & analysis*.

### Support development of ASEAN-ERAT training (F3.4)

Organisational learning requires continuous reflection on and assessment of organisational performance, honestly reviewing successes and failures, while ensuring that learning takes place to support continuous improvement.

LACER’s engagement with the ASEAN-ERAT training has focussed on identifying areas for continuous improvement, while highlighting recent achievements and potential gaps. LACER experts have thus encouraged AHA Centre teams to continually evaluate their training efforts, using for instance an after action review (AAR) tool. The AAR is a simple method for facilitating an assessment of organisational performance by bringing together a team to discuss a task or activity in a transparent and candid manner. The systematic application of properly conducted AARs across an organisation can help drive organisational change and internal learning.



On 2 March, LACER experts participated in the AAR of the recently completed ERAT Induction Training. With

participation from all partners involved in the training (NDMOs, MapAction, OCHA, Telecoms sans frontières, LACER), this AAR proved to be a key process for evaluating training efforts and reviewing progress based on the varying perspectives of facilitators, observers and organisers. LACER experts provided a summary of feedback and recommendations, while praising the overall professionalism of trainers and organisers from AHA Centre.

Thereafter, LACER Learning and Development expert Olivia Setkic shared a 10-page report based on her extensive observations from attending the training. The report provides a large number of recommendations (29) on improving the learning outcomes for individual participants as well as enhancing the impact of presenters and mentor dialogues. All recommendations are accompanied by detailed justification. Many offer unique insights into the learning process, such as how to turn unconscious learning into tacit learning, ways to build more trust among participants and facilitators, and relatively simple measures which can further assist AHA ERAT staff in improving individual performance and overall results of the process. LACER plans to follow up with the ASEAN-ERAT team on these points.

**LACER Observations & Recommendations from 14<sup>th</sup> ASEAN-ERAT Induction Training**



**LACER Communications and Visibility**

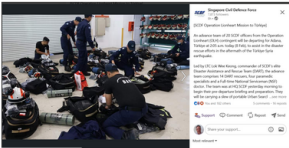
The LACER Communications team maintained efforts to spread awareness of project activities and events of general interest to ASEAN and EU disaster management experts.

During the reporting period, expert communicator Johanna Rixer published a summary of recent project activities on the LACER website <https://www.lacerproject.eu/sv/news/february-news/>

**February news**

In the beginning of February, we were all devastated by the earthquake in Türkiye and Syria. EU and ASEAN colleagues exchanged information on their respective roles in the response. The LACER Team Leader updated AHA Centre staff on the activation of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, first following Syria’s and the World Food Programme’s requests for assistance from the UCPM, which led to nine countries offering assistance of tents, blankets and other shelter items. Thereafter, based on Türkiye’s request for assistance from the UCPM, 26 countries offered 38 search and rescue teams, medical teams and thousands of tents, blankets, heaters and other shelter items. LACER Team Leader shared the daily maps and Copernicus data produced in the wake of the earthquakes.

- Support information sharing tools and working methods (A3.1)
- Support information management systems (A3.2)



The LACER team also circulated information on the latest episode of the AHA Centre podcast series, which included interviews of ASEAN-ERAT roster members and their experiences from training and deployment:



On social media, LACER experts disseminated highlights of recent ASEAN events, such as AHA staff attending the Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction and the meeting of the ACDM Working Group on Global Leadership, tasked with priority program 5 of AADMER which aims to bolster ASEAN’s standing as a global thought-leader on disaster resilience and climate change action.



LACER experts also engaged with ASEAN colleagues on more social occasions, with expert Anders Fridborg joining the winning AHA Centre team at the annual football competition and LACER Team Leader Charles Silva and expert Anders participating in a potluck lunch with the AHA Centre prior to the beginning of Ramadan. These both provided great occasions to meet new team members and get more acquainted outside the office.

