

Stakeholder Hub

Stakeholders involved by AHEAD and on their role in eliciting requirements and IS testing

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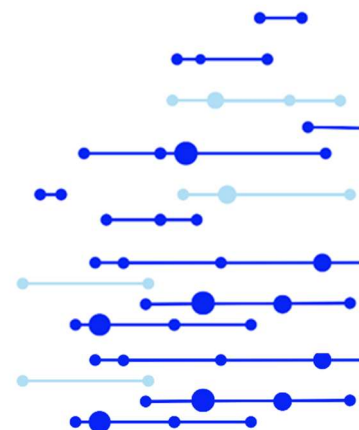
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Summary

The AHEAD project aims at developing a comprehensive disaster damage and loss data information system to improve disaster impact-based knowledge in Europe. This report outlines the creation of a Stakeholder Hub, designed to facilitate effective communication and engagement among all stakeholders involved in the project. The Stakeholder Hub is essential for ensuring that the project is well-supported, transparent, and capable of addressing the complex challenges associated with disaster management in a way that is aligned with the presently most effective practices.

Key objectives of the Stakeholder Hub include the co-creation of the relational data model and the testing of the information system (IS). Expected outcomes include improved data accuracy and completeness, enhanced knowledge sharing, and innovative solutions for disaster management. The hub will consist of beneficiaries, associated partners, and stakeholders from related projects such as SOTERIA, MAIA, ICARIA, and LODE as well as from public sector entities. This collaboration will maximize requirements elicitation, understand the diverse conditions for damage data collection and usage, and test the IS.

Effective stakeholder engagement is facilitated through tailored communication strategies and regular activities, including individual communication with primary stakeholders¹, joint communication for secondary stakeholders, and public communication for tertiary stakeholders. Regular updates, meetings and feedback mechanisms will ensure that all stakeholders are kept informed and engaged. Scheduled meetings and workshops will provide opportunities for direct interaction and collaboration, fostering a collaborative environment where stakeholders can contribute to the project's success and benefit from shared knowledge and experiences.

In summary, the Stakeholder Hub is the project's core asset for developing the data model and testing the information system through a co-creation process. Together, this diverse group of stakeholders will benefit from and contribute to the project, while also connecting with ongoing efforts in the same field. The vibrant nature of the hub allows for the continuous addition of new stakeholders, ensuring it remains responsive to the project's evolving needs and tasks. The transition from a confidential, controlled environment to a more open and collaborative one is key to achieving the project's objectives and ensuring its long-term success.

¹ Primary Stakeholders are explained in chapter 3.1.

1. Introduction

The AHEAD project, initiated in January 2025, aims at developing a comprehensive and fully engineered information system (IS) for Europe, designed to collect and analyze post-disaster damage and loss data. Building on prior efforts, this advanced IS will enable the input of geolocated damage data across multiple sectors and facilitate querying for data reporting and visualization. This functionality will support various purposes, including accounting for Sendai Framework indicators, requests to the Solidarity Fund, state or insurance compensation, risk analysis improvement, evidence-based early warning, and forensic investigation to support disaster risk reduction (DRR), climate adaptation measures, and crisis management planification. AHEAD will focus on detailed data modeling and implementation for damage to cultural heritage, waste and water systems, structural defenses, and natural ecosystems.

The project expects three main outcomes: the integration of the fully engineered AHEAD IS into the Risk Data Hub of the Joint Research Centre (JRC), a list of requirements for developers of existing IS used by member states and regions, and a training kit to support administrations in post-disaster damage data collection and reporting (including guidelines for data collection, use and reuse). Through these efforts, AHEAD aims to enhance disaster response and risk management across Europe, ensuring a more resilient and prepared society.

Stakeholder engagement is crucial for the project's success, ensuring that all parties are informed, involved, and supportive. Stakeholders will play a crucial role in co-creating the relational data model and testing the IS. Development and testing will occur in parallel, starting with sectors where database fields and input interfaces are already available, while new ones are being developed. Testing will involve stakeholders using their own data and project testbeds, providing data on recent events to complement stakeholder knowledge with empirical evidence from three real cases. Iterations will be organized as and when needed.

This report details the structure and function of the Stakeholder Hub, presenting its living character and providing a comprehensive overview of stakeholder interaction.

2. Stakeholder Hub

A stakeholder hub can be defined as a means designed to facilitate communication, collaboration, and engagement among all stakeholders involved in a project. It serves as a focal point for sharing information, gathering feedback, and coordinating activities, ensuring that all parties are aligned and informed throughout the project's lifecycle. The AHEAD Stakeholder Hub will be launched with a list of primary stakeholders. Importantly, the hub is dynamic and adaptable, allowing stakeholders to be added at any time based on the project's evolving needs and tasks.

The AHEAD project relies heavily on effective stakeholder engagement for several reasons:

1. **Enhanced Information System and Decision-Making:** Engaging stakeholders ensures that diverse perspectives and expertise are considered, leading to more informed and effective information system and decision-making. This is crucial for a project like AHEAD,

where accurate and timely data is essential for impact-based knowledge about disaster loss and damage.

2. **Increased Transparency and Trust:** Regular communication with stakeholders builds transparency and trust. When stakeholders are kept informed and involved, they are more likely to support the project's objectives and contribute positively. Therefore, some of the primary stakeholders are directly involved as project partners and associated partners, some others make part of the partners' closer network. With the latter we intend that both DKKV and AFPCNT being national level stakeholders are able to mobilize a relatively large number of actors with stake in DRR and CCA. Those have been the first ones contacted and represent the core of the Hub.
3. **Improved Project Outcomes:** Active stakeholder engagement can lead to better project outcomes by ensuring that the project meets the needs and expectations of all involved parties. This is particularly important for AHEAD, as it aims to provide the integration of the fully engineered IS tested by stakeholders.
4. **Risk Mitigation:** Identifying and addressing stakeholder concerns early can help mitigate potential risks. By involving stakeholders in the planning, creation, testing, and implementation phases of the IS, the AHEAD project can anticipate and manage challenges more effectively.
5. **Building Stronger Relationships:** Engaging stakeholders fosters stronger relationships and collaboration. This will lead to long-term success and sustainability of the AHEAD project.

The relevance of stakeholder engagement in the AHEAD project is underscored by its mission, goals and the nature of its work. The project aims to enhance disaster impact-based knowledge, which requires accurate, comprehensive, and timely data. Stakeholders, including government agencies, local communities, researchers, and disaster response organizations, play a vital role in providing and utilizing this data. By actively engaging these stakeholders throughout the project phase, the AHEAD project can ensure data accuracy, aiming for completeness, as stakeholders can provide valuable insights and data to maximize its quality and to ensure the scope of the information system is adequate to their needs. Engaging stakeholders also facilitates knowledge sharing, promoting the exchange of knowledge and best practices, which leads to more effective disaster loss and damage data management strategies. Furthermore, collaboration among stakeholders can lead to innovative solutions and will maximize requirements elicitation, understand the diverse conditions for damage data collection and usage in different countries and for different sectors, and test the information system.

The Stakeholder Hub for the AHEAD project is designed to be dynamic and adaptable. This means that stakeholders can be added at any time based on the project's evolving activities and tasks. As the project progresses, new stakeholders may emerge, and their involvement will be crucial for addressing specific challenges and opportunities. This living character ensures that the hub remains relevant and responsive to the needs of the project and its stakeholders.

3. Stakeholder Hub Structure

This chapter will dive into the structure of the Stakeholder Hub. This includes the stakeholder identification, the categories of stakeholders and the stakeholder list itself.

3.1. Stakeholder Identification

Identifying stakeholders is a critical step in ensuring the success of the AHEAD project. The process involves several key steps to ensure that all relevant parties are included and engaged effectively.

1. Primary Stakeholder: Existing Affiliated Stakeholders

The first step in stakeholder identification involves recognizing and listing stakeholders who are already connected to the project such as beneficiaries, associated partners, and part of the latter's closest network. These existing project affiliated stakeholders include project team members, funding bodies, and any individuals or organizations that have been directly involved in the project's initial phases. Their existing connection to the project makes them valuable contributors, as they are already familiar with its goals and objectives. All project partners jointly collected these stakeholders during the kick-off meeting in January (22-24) 2025 and at the Stakeholder Hub workshop organized by AFPCNT and DKKV on the 6th of March 2025. Together with these stakeholders the data model development and the IS testing will be initiated. During the early stages of the AHEAD project, these affiliated stakeholders play a crucial role in establishing the foundation for stakeholder engagement. Their involvement is often characterized by a higher level of confidentiality, as they are privy to sensitive information and strategic decisions that are not yet public. This confidentiality ensures that the project can proceed without external pressures or influences, allowing for a focused and controlled development phase.

2. Secondary Stakeholders: Stakeholders related to AHEAD's testbeds

Stakeholders of this group will be involved in the testbeds of AHEAD. They are in general public authorities or insurance associations with whom the consortium has already a relationship and who are sort of committed to provide some data on post disaster damage that has been suffered in the selected areas. Those stakeholders will be asked to contribute directly to the testing, using their own data to feed the information system. They will also be asked to suggest relevant use cases they imagine can benefit from the data they collected.

3. Tertiary Stakeholders: Stakeholders from Related Projects and the Public Sector

At a later stage stakeholders from related projects and the public sector will be identified and invited to engage in the AHEAD project.

Projects like SOTERIA, MAIA, MERLIN, MEDIS, ICARIA, or LODE share or shared similar goals and challenges, making their stakeholders valuable allies. By engaging with these stakeholders, the AHEAD project can benefit from their experiences, insights, and established networks. It should be noted that coordinators of MAIA and SOTERIA are also part of the AHEAD's Advisory Board.

This collaboration will also help in aligning efforts and maximizing the impact of the project. Engaging stakeholders from the public sector on the other side is crucial for the AHEAD project. This includes government agencies, local authorities, and public institutions that play a significant role in disaster management and data collection. These stakeholders can provide essential support, resources, and legitimacy to the project. Their involvement ensures that the project aligns with public policies and regulations and addresses the needs of the broader community. As the project progresses and moves into more public and collaborative phases, the relevance of these affiliated stakeholders may diminish. The project will begin to attract and engage a broader range of stakeholders, including those from related projects, the public sector, and new stakeholders identified through a snowball system or outreach efforts. At this later stage, the focus shifts from maintaining confidentiality to maximizing transparency and inclusivity, ensuring that all relevant parties are informed and involved.

4. Larger Stakeholders' circle: Attracting More Stakeholders at a Later Stage

As the project progresses, it is important to attract additional stakeholders to broaden the project's reach and impact. This can be achieved through a snowball system, where existing stakeholders recommend new ones, creating a network effect. Additionally, a well-crafted two-pager document can be used to attract potential stakeholders. This document succinctly outlines the project's goals, benefits, and opportunities for involvement, making it easy for new stakeholders to understand the value of their participation.

Participation as a stakeholder is on a voluntary basis and so implication and effective and fruitful participation is an outcome of the alignment between the AHEAD project and the stakeholder's mission.

By following these steps, including the transition from a confidential, controlled environment to a more open and collaborative one, the AHEAD project can ensure a comprehensive and inclusive stakeholder identification and engagement process. This will facilitate effective engagement, collaboration, and ultimately, the successful achievement of the project's objectives and ensuring its long-term success.

3.2. Categories for Stakeholder

The following image displays the categories of the Stakeholder Hub. Based on these categories, the Stakeholder Hub will be gradually developed step by step. The list exists in a joint google spreadsheet format and can be continuously expanded by all project partners.

[illegible]

Figure 1: Categories for the Stakeholder Hub

3.3. Stakeholder List

The following table shows the primary stakeholders, which whom the Stakeholder Hub will be initiated. The list exists in a joint google spreadsheet format and is continuously expanded by all project partners. The current state of the art can be found in the annex.

Politecnico di Milano (POLIMI)
University of Porto (Portugal) - UPORTO
German Committee for Disaster Risk Reduction (Germany) – DKKV
Association Française pour la Prévention des Catastrophes Naturelles et Technologiques (AFPCNT)
Municipality of Modigliana
JRC - European Commission
Regione Lombardia (Directorate Security and Civil Protection)

Figure 2: Table with primary Stakeholders of the Stakeholder Hub

4. Stakeholder Engagement

The stakeholder engagement varies over the course of the project and depends heavily on the individual stakeholders and their role and interest in the project. Therefore, the stakeholder role, the stakeholder communication, and activities with the stakeholders are outlined in this chapter.

4.1. Stakeholder Role

The roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder in the AHEAD project depend on their stakeholder group and on their individual mission. For the primary group roles include co-creating the relational data model and testing the information system (IS). Responsibilities will be set up individually with all stakeholders.

Next to the role given by the grant agreement and the stakeholder's mission and expectation, the role is linked with the project organization and group or subgroup animation. The consortium will set up subgroups, partly in a thematic approach and partly in project management mode (i.e. ad hoc depending on the progress of the project and proximate result at hand).

The following figure is a first approach for the mapping of stakeholder roles.

Stakeholder summary mapping {collection, uses}							
	Primary uses (core project)				Secondary uses		
	emergency / temporary		recovery (including rebuilding)		(case studies + bonus)		
	A	B	C	D	E	F	R
	Immediate management	temporary restoration	Assessments for compensation	Extending and refining assessments	Recon-struction	building resilience and knowledge	REX return on experience
collection	i		insurers (ALL)	Coll. Local (waste)			
	ii		France Assureurs				
	iii	ENSOSP, CEREMA, AFPS	state, region (IT)				
	iv	citizens, NGOs, etc.					
	v						
	vi						
uses	1	ENSOSP, communities, local authorities, critical entity operators, citizens ...	ENSOSP, communities, local authorities, critical entity operators, citizens ...	waste chain		ENSOSP	
	2			M.H (UPORTO), architects (POLIMI)	Polimi, AFPCNT		
	3		CCR		DKKV		
	4						
	5						
	6						
	x						
				land reclamation			
evaluation registers (decision-making)	functional (not the core of the project)	functional, financial, and economic	financial	financial, economic, (other?)	long-term economic and strategic finance	strategic and scientific	
decision/ action timeframe	1h - 1 week	1 day / some month	3 years maximum	depends on category	according to scale		

Figure 3: Stakeholder role mapping approach (elaborated by F. Tatout, AFPCNT)

4.2. Stakeholder Communication

Effective communication is essential for successful stakeholder engagement. The communication strategy for the AHEAD project involves individual communication with primary stakeholders, joint communication for secondary and tertiary stakeholders, and public communication for the outer circle stakeholders. Various communication channels will be established to ensure that all stakeholders are kept informed and engaged. Methods for gathering stakeholder feedback include surveys and suggestion boxes, which will be used to continuously improve the engagement process.

A detailed communication plan will be developed, outlining key messages tailored to each stakeholder group. Communication tools such as email, social media, webinars, and face-to-face meetings will be utilized to disseminate information. Regular updates will be provided through newsletters and progress reports, with more frequent communication during critical project phases. Interactive platforms like online forums and social media groups will facilitate ongoing dialogue and engagement.

4.3. Stakeholder Activities

The first stakeholder meeting took place during the kick-off meeting on the 23rd of January 2025 in Milan. The next significant meeting will be the mid-term meeting end of 2025, where primary stakeholders and secondary stakeholders will be invited to participate. A schedule of planned meetings and workshops will be established to facilitate direct interaction and collaboration among stakeholders. Here focus group webinars or workshops on the data modeling section topics like e.g. cultural heritage or waste and water systems are envisioned. These activities will include stakeholder meetings to review progress, address concerns, and plan next steps, as well as thematic workshops focused on specific issues or project components. Each meeting and workshop will have clear objectives and agendas, and the outcomes will be documented and shared with all stakeholders. Minutes and action items will be recorded to ensure transparency and accountability and shared with stakeholders in line with the structuration (subgroups, thematic sub-network, etc.). These activities are designed to foster a collaborative environment where stakeholders can contribute to the project's success and benefit from shared knowledge and experiences.

5. Conclusion

The AHEAD project, with its focus on developing an advanced disaster damage and loss data information system, underscores the high importance of a Stakeholder Hub with a living character. This hub serves as the central means for facilitating effective communication, collaboration, and engagement among all stakeholders. By identifying and involving a diverse range of stakeholders, including existing project affiliates, participants from related projects, and public sector entities, the AHEAD project ensures that it benefits from a wide array of insights, experiences, and resources.

The Stakeholder Hub is not only a tool for managing relationships but also a core asset for the project's success. It enables the co-creation of the relational data model and the testing of the information system, ensuring that the project meets its objectives with accuracy and efficiency. The dynamic and adaptable nature of the hub allows for the continuous addition of new stakeholders, fostering an inclusive and evolving environment that can respond to the project's changing needs.

Effective stakeholder engagement, facilitated through stakeholder group tailored communication and regular activities, is essential for building trust, enhancing transparency, and promoting collaboration. This engagement helps mitigate risks, improve project outcomes, and ensure that the project aligns with public policies and community needs. The transition from a confidential, controlled environment to a more open and collaborative one is crucial for achieving the project's long-term success.

In summary, the Stakeholder Hub is indispensable for the AHEAD project. It not only supports the project's technical and strategic goals but also ensures that all stakeholders are actively involved and invested in the project's success. Through this comprehensive and inclusive approach, the AHEAD project is well-positioned to make significant advancements in disaster impact-based knowledge and management.

Annex

AHEAD Fact sheet for potential Stakeholders

prepared by Frederic Tatout, AFPCNT

AHEAD: information system project for the collection and analysis of post-disaster loss and damage data

Duration 24 months (January 2025 to end 2027) - Kick-off meeting from January 22 to 24, 2025.

Project Consortium:

- Leader: Polytechnic di Milano (POLIMI),
- AFPCNT (France),
- DKKV (Germany),
- Porto University (Portugal),
- Modigliana municipality (Italy)

Context

The development of capacities for collecting, processing and exploiting post-disaster data has received strong impetus at the European level (Decision on civil protection mechanisms, 2021 Climate Regulation (art. 8), the earlier Floods Directive, etc.).

However, these capacities have limitations, such as: problems with the recovery of old data; approaches and processes differing from one organization or member state, to the other (this can hamper cross-border disaster management); granularity more or less adapted to the type of use, etc.

The project aims at reducing these limitations in the respect of damages and costs.

Expected results and modalities: create a complete, functional information system for collecting post-disaster loss and damage data for primary use and subsequent re-use in feedback, recovery, detailed analysis of phenomena, aftermath of events, risks, improvement of simulation tools, planning for future crises, etc. This system will be completely engineered and come up with guidelines for data collection, use and reuse; a user manual; a comprehensive notice intended for users from the administrations in charge of data collection, use and reuse, so that it is readily adoptable.

The guidelines and the databases specs will build on a panel of at least 40 stakeholders having mission and practice in the production, collection, use and re-use of damage and cost data.

Role of stakeholders in the project

Stakeholders will be invited to share their practices, formulate their expectations regarding the expected deliverables (e.g. act in a “prescription” role). Also a few of them will be invited to try the developed information system for validation in testbed cases.

To this end, the project will elaborate on case studies in order to focus analysis on key aspects, and to perform the validation process of the developed database tool

Project test beds

Damage and Loss data

Focus

- Cultural Heritage;
- Natural Heritage;
- Ecological Services;
- Natural / structural defences;
- Buildings / housing
- Economy;
- Waste generated by disaster;
- Water management systems;
- Critical infrastructures (C.I).

Case Study	Focus (asset, theme)	Event (s)
Région de Lisbonne	Cultural Heritage	Wind (2022 à 2024)
Commune de Modigliana	Multisectorial, notably C.I and Economy	Floods (05. 2023)
Saxonie	Housing, Economy, C.I	Floods (2013, 2021)
FR-ALL	Idem (transfrontier case) + comparaison of data gathering and impacts / costs evaluation methodologies	Floods (Bernd, 07. 2021)
Région de Lombardie	Multisectorial, notably C.I and natural systems	Wind & Floods (07.2023)

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Stakeholder Hub List									
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