After Action Review
October 2017
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Part 1: Context of the study

1.1 Introduction and Context

a) ALERT

The ALERT Project aims to contribute toward the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance by providing the humanitarian community with the technology and guidance to facilitate an increased level of emergency preparedness and maintain their operational preparedness at a consistent and appropriate level. The system will aim to be freely available and compatible with the wide range of humanitarian agencies irrespective of their size or mandate.

b) Rollout

Throughout the timeframe of the ALERT project, the Consortium has led an iterative process of design, prototyping, consultation, redesign and development to produce a minimum viable product (MVP) of the ALERT Platform in July 2017. It is with this first version (MVP) of the ALERT Platform that we seek to ‘rollout’ for trialing. The aim of the rollout was to train individuals from INGOs, National NGOs, and government departments on the use of ALERT and trial it with the outcome to establish its value as a Platform for improving emergency preparedness, essentially ‘proving the concept’ of the innovation. Additionally, feedback from ALERT users will be used to make the appropriate improvements.

The rollout of ALERT has been planned in the following countries: Philippines, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Kenya, Mozambique and DRC.

The approach taken was to establish a cohort of ALERT ‘focal points’ through a serious of ‘train the trainer’ workshops in London, in Asia and in Africa, inviting those organisations interested in training their partners in the ALERT Platform relevant to the emergency preparedness process underpinning the platform. With this structure, it was hypothesised that focal points could lead further training in the target countries, meeting the current (higher than expected) demand for training on the Platform, and enabling a richer set of data to prove the concept of ALERT and to gather feedback for improvements in the functionality of the platform.

1.2 After Action Review (AAR)

Organisational learning requires continuous assessment of organisational performance, looking at successes and failures, ensuring that learning takes place to support continuous improvement. The After Action Review (AAR) is a simple option for facilitating this assessment.

The objective of this AAR is to highlight how feedback and comments collected during – and after – each workshop have been taken into account in order to improve the quality of the
rollout strategy and the training sessions, and to ensure the achievement of the objectives of the Rollout.

In order to conduct this exercise, information from different sources have been analysed:

- **Usability survey:** At the end of each training an online ‘usability survey’ has been taken by the participants to share their views on the usability of the ALERT platform (survey conducted by the ‘Operations Partnership’),
- **Satisfaction survey:** Accompanying the usability survey, an online satisfaction survey has been filled in by participants where they were able to share their views on the training,
- **Feedback:** All feedback collected during the training was collated and reviewed to highlight participants' impressions on the platform and on the training,
- **Training material:** Material used during the training was assessed to highlight any modifications made over time,
- **AAR interview/survey:** In order to fill the gaps in the existing data, a short AAR interview/survey has been conducted/sent to selected participants and with the ALERT team,

Analysis of abovementioned documentation point toward several trends in the feedback regarding the rollout and the ALERT platform. Those trends are the following:

1) General comments on the training  
2) Training of Trainers  
3) Balance of theory vs. practice  
   o Time balance  
   o Material and facilitation  
4) Readiness of the platform

This report is built around these identified trends and each of those trends will be explored in detail in Part 2 of the AAR report. For each trend, some results from the trainings will be presented.

This report is an After Action Review of the 6 first trainings held in London, Chiang Mai, Pakistan, Kenya, Philippines and Bangladesh. It highlights all the changes made between the first training workshop in Pakistan and the training in Kenya according to the feedback received and how those changes improved the quality of the rollout. All conclusions and recommendations that have not been addressed yet will be taken into account to refine rollout strategies for Mozambique and DRC as well as inform future plans for ALERT trials.
Part 2: After Action Review

2.1 Rollout strategy and purpose

a) Expectations

As mentioned previously, the rollout of the ALERT platform was planned to be conducted in 6 different target countries.

Initially, 2 different types of workshop were planned:

- **Training of Trainers (TOT):** How to train others in the ALERT Preparedness system (Preparedness Planning and using the ALERT Platform and support materials)
- **Country Rollout of the ALERT system:** How to undertake the ALERT Preparedness process in your organisation and use the ALERT Platform to improve your preparedness

The expectations regarding the rollout were different between TOT and Country Rollout but also between facilitators and participants (especially for the TOT).

According to the objectives of the training, the expectation of the facilitators from the TOT were the following:

- By the end of the week, participants should have a solid understanding of how to develop and maintain preparedness for effective humanitarian response, gain confidence in the use of the ALERT Platform, and be equipped with the knowledge and tools to train and support others.
  The training was planned to train others on the emergency preparedness process, with ALERT integrated in every step. It was assumed that the ease of use of the ALERT Platform would require little resources for training.

On the hand, the participants’ expectations were the following:

- By the end of the week, participants should be confident in the use of ALERT and should be able to answer questions from future trainees. In addition, participants will have the confidence to train others on ALERT thanks to a complete training pack and will have a plan settled for the future steps they have to undertake (future trainings to facilitate, support to provide)

Regarding the Country Rollout, the facilitators’ objectives evolved over time as shown below but were quite similar to the participants’ expectations:

- **Pakistan’s objective:** Participants are confident in using ALERT for emergency preparedness and aspects of the ALERT preparedness process are covered to enable participants to have a common understanding of the preparedness process.
- **Kenya, Philippines and Bangladesh’s objective:** By the end of the training, participants should have gained strong confidence in the use of ALERT in order to develop and maintain preparedness for effective humanitarian response through:
  - Using the ALERT Platform in relation to the stages of the emergency preparedness process,
  - Identifying the elements of their current processes that they may want to adapt, and/or learn how to make the ALERT Platform work for them,
  - Starting setting up ALERT for their country offices, adding staff members to the Platform and adjusting settings in accordance with country office preferences
b) What happened during the Rollout

The following table shows the evolution in the planning of ALERT’s Rollout:

**Figure 1: Evolution in the planning of the ALERT’s Rollout (Yellow arrow indicate when the major changes have been made and the yellow box represent modification from the initial planning)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial planning</th>
<th>Final planning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>HQ TOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiang Mai</td>
<td>HQ TOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>HQ TOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>HQ TOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>HQ TOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>HQ TOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>HQ TOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>HQ TOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>HQ TOT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first 3 Rollouts happened within a short period of time; therefore major changes have not been possible at that point. However, after the Pakistan Rollout, the ALERT team met to discuss the rollout strategy and refine the workshop in order to achieve the overall goal of the rollout in order to meet agencies’ expectations.

The main changes made between Pakistan and Kenya were the following *(more details are provided in the following paragraphs)*:

- Cancellation of the remaining TOT for the time being
- Adjustment of the balance between preparedness theory and practice on the platform
- Facilitation approach to be less prescriptive* (change of the training objective)
- More time on the use of ALERT to build on their own agency/country office accounts
- More targeted training to agency preparedness approaches
- Refinement of the material used for the training
- Adjustment of trainees’ expectations
- Fixing major bugs on the platform

At the end of each training, participants have been asked to fill in a satisfaction survey to collect their feedback on several subjects of interest. Participants have been asked to rate each subject between 1 and 5 (1 being ‘strongly disagree’ and 5 being ‘strongly agree’).

The graph below highlight the changes toward the level of satisfaction of the participants through the changes made during the Rollout of the ALERT platform.

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* In this report, a ‘prescriptive’ approach is referring to an approach focused on teaching participants the emergency preparedness process rather than how to use the platform. This approach was implemented with the objective of ensuring a common understanding and a common practice on emergency preparedness. It was perceived by the organisations trained as ‘too prescriptive’; ALERT is a tool that should be ‘inclusive’ of all organisations’ preparedness processes.
The graph above show a considerable improvement in the feedback regarding the achievement of the training’s purpose between Chiang Mai and Pakistan and a stable level of satisfaction regarding the trainings held in Pakistan, Kenya, Philippines and Bangladesh.

From the ‘training of trainers’ in London and Chiang Mai, most comment indicated that the overall purpose of the training was achieved but that the training was focused on the theory of emergency preparedness rather than using the platform. As a result, most participants did not feel like they would be able to support their team at the country level in the use of the platform. Another point that has been raised several times was that the materials were not ready and, therefore, could not be shared, nor were the facilitators (who were refining the material during the workshop) or the platform. The material was deemed ‘too academic’ which was not appropriate at the field level.

The feedback collected changed considerably in the Pakistan training and in all the following trainings. For all country rollout training, participants were happy with the content of the training and felt like the purpose of the rollout was achieved. Indeed, most feedback resulting from the country rollout indicated that participants found the overall message to be clear and felt confident in their ability to use ALERT.

Whilst the majority of the training adjustments were made after the training in Pakistan, the Pakistan training saw very positive results in the workshop feedback. It is important to acknowledge that most participants for the Pakistan training were from national or local response organisations, in contrast to the previous training that constituted almost exclusively INGO stakeholders. This suggests that the original training curriculum was more useful for national and local organisations and further considerations on meeting the different needs of the stakeholders would be necessary in the future. Similarly, a government stakeholder attended the training in Chiang Mai, and feedback suggests that future training and roll-out for the government would require a bespoke approach.
2.2 Training of trainers

a) Expectations

Expectations from facilitators and participants regarding the TOT are detailed in the Part 2: After Action Review - 2.1. Rollout strategy and purpose - a0. a) Expectations on page 6.

b) Feedback from the training

As indicated above, after each training, feedback from participants were collected. After the training of trainers held in London and Chiang Mai, participants indicated that:

- The **ALERT project and platform were well introduced** and they appreciated the idea behind ALERT as they think that a global platform will be of great added value,
- They **enjoyed the interactions between all stakeholders** and thought they were valuable. Participants also indicated that they have learnt a lot about preparedness from all the discussions with different organisations and countries.

However, about 70% of the feedback received from the ALERT TOT in London and Chiang Mai indicated that the training conducted was not a proper ‘Training of Trainers’.

To illustrate this, participants and facilitators expressed the following frustrations (in both workshops):

- The **training material was not ready** to be shared (unavailability of a trainer's package)
- **No session was planned to organise the upcoming Rollout** facilitated by the participants
- The future trainers were **not able to build enough confidence** to enable them to train others and meet the training’s objectives
- The **ALERT system still had too many bugs** to be properly used (more details in the ‘Platform readiness’ section)

Another feedback came strongly from the TOT organised within the ALERT’s regional TOT in Chiang Mai was that since participants were coming from 3 different countries it was not possible to delve into a deeper discussion based on country context. The discussions were interesting but geographical heterogeneities and cultural diversities were too pronounced to enable more contextual analysis based on real country information. As such, examples were difficult to use within the whole training and the simulation was not adapted to each country’s specificity. The participants considered the lack of local preparedness context in the training as a missed opportunity for deeper learning.

**Changes made:** After the Chiang Mai training, it has been surmised that the training materials, the platform and the team were not at a stage wherein it would be possible to deliver a ‘Training of Trainers’ of the ALERT system to a high level of quality. Additionally, through discussions with participants, it was clear that the first objective of the Rollout should be to give the participants the confidence needed to use the platform, and the time to input their own data into the platform, rather than ask them to be able to train others right away.

Therefore, the planned Africa TOT was cancelled and replaced by a regular country training for Kenya. There were no TOTs planned going forward.
The following graph shows the improvement of the feedback between the TOT and the regular trainings. As the expectations from the participants were different, the feedback from the participants became very positive and each session had positive feedback from the audience.

**Figure 3: Detailed satisfaction on the Rollout (difference between TOT and Country Rollout)**

Additional feedback collected through discussions during the trainings and through the ‘Usability survey’ indicates some very positive results:

- **Participants felt more confident to share the platform with their team and partners.** Some of them even declined the proposed support to rollout the platform, saying that it did not seem necessary as the platform is user friendly.

- **As a result of the Country rollout trainings, 98% of the participants who responded to the survey indicated that they would recommend the platform to other organisations or colleagues involved in preparedness against 75% of the participants from the TOT.**

- **73% of the respondents from the Country Rollout trainings said that they would imagine that most people would learn to use these elements of the platform very quickly against only 66% from the trainings conducted before the changes were made (16% did not agree with this point)**

2 It is to be highlighted that other changes had a lot of impact on these results since the survey results after the changes made between Pakistan and Kenya indicated that 82% of the respondents said that they would imagine that most people would learn to use these elements of the platform very quickly (the 18% remaining stayed neutral)
Figure 4: Willingness to share the platform and confidence on the ability of others to learn to use it

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>TOT</th>
<th>Trainings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend:
1. I would recommend the platform to other organizations or colleagues involved in preparedness
2. I would imagine that most people would learn to use these elements of the platform very quickly

However, it is important to note that one participant from the Chiang Mai training was able to give an orientation to his management team followed by a training session with their emergency response team members as a result of the Chiang Mai TOT.

c) Recommendations

As the main recommendation has been addressed (cancellation of the TOT planned), the recommendations remaining to take into account for the trainers who have been trained already are as follows:

- Provide a full ‘Trainer package’ for future facilitators
- Provide a finalised User manual for future users
- Provide support to the new trainers in the planning of their activities and in the rollout of the platform

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3 This has been addressed to some degree: an information pack was given to the participants at the end of the trainings (Pakistan, Kenya, Philippines) including the User manual (still in progress) and it was distributed to participants in Bangladesh at the beginning of the training. The recommendation is really to ‘finalise’ the user manual to ensure that it can be shared.

4 This has been addressed to some degree as well – not during TOT but the ALERT team provides support to former participants in the TOT so they can ensure the progress of the ALERT project in country when needed.
2.3 Balance theory vs. practice

a) Time balance

i. Expectations

Adult training theory supports the notion that an agenda with the right balance between theory and practice can make a huge difference in the achievement of the objectives of a training. Moreover, apart from 'learning by doing' or learning by being taught theory, most also need to understand how the subject of the workshop will be of use to them in their everyday jobs. Therefore, the expectation of the ALERT team was that the balance between 'theory on emergency preparedness' and 'practice on the platform' enabled the team to meet each training objective.

ii. Feedback received from the rollout

As indicated previously, the objectives of the initial agenda for the Training of Trainers and for the Country Rollout in Pakistan were the following:

- **London and Chiang Mai:** By the end of the week, participants should have a solid understanding of how to develop and maintain preparedness for effective humanitarian response, gain confidence in the use of the ALERT Platform, and be equipped with the knowledge and tools to train and support others.
- **Pakistan:** Participants are confident in using ALERT for emergency preparedness and aspects of the ALERT preparedness process are covered to enable participants to have a common understanding of the preparedness process.

In order to achieve the part of the objective highlighted in red, a significant volume of theoretical information was initially made part of the agenda for the TOT and Country Rollout training.

Feedback from the London and Chiang Mai workshops were very strong on the two following points:

- **The approach and the information shared were too academic and not realistic** – the approach is too prescriptive and caused a lot of discussions on the preparedness process itself rather than spending time on the ALERT platform⁵,
- **Methodology was too complicated and participants felt lost in numbers** - The session on hazard prioritisation was interesting for participants but most feedback indicated that it was also very confusing and might be the source of many mistakes in the future.

On the other hand, feedback from the Pakistan training was positive. **Participants indicated that they were satisfied with the training sessions and that they had learnt a lot.** In Pakistan, a majority of the participants were representatives from local and national NGOs which did not have a well-established preparedness process in place. The hypothesis that can be made from this feedback is that when organisations and agencies do not have a well-established preparedness process the training should be introducing the preparedness principles and best practices behind ALERT but when agencies have one it is best to use their own preparedness process and introduce how it can fit into the platform.

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⁵ Note that this point was also reported by 100% of the ALERT team.
Changes made:

As shown in figure 5, initially, 65% of the training was dedicated to theory on preparedness; the remaining time was on the use of the platform (only 35%). As a result of the feedback, the planning of the workshop was reviewed and more than 70% of the time has been dedicated to the use of ALERT, leaving 30% of the time for introduction, definitions and discussions (participants’ understanding, similarities with their own preparedness process).

Time dedicated on the use of ALERT was planned in several ways:

- **Activities on each session** and time to use the ‘training site’,
- **One-to-one meetings** at the end of the trainings: during those sessions the ALERT team was able to sit with each agency to assess upcoming challenges and next steps necessary to the integration of ALERT in their day-to-day work,
- **Hands-on sessions** at the end of each day: the hands-on session is a time for each agency to be logged into their Agency platform rather than on the training site and to start inputting data in ALERT with support from the ALERT team (this was done in Philippines and Bangladesh; in Kenya a hands-on session was organised only on the last day of the training).

The ALERT team did not feel like it had the internal capacity to support organisations in the refinement of their own preparedness process. Therefore, after the training in Pakistan, it was decided to first focus on INGOs that already have a well-established preparedness process rather than local and national NGOs without one.

After the changes were made, feedback received was very positive:

- **The approach is very practical and efficient** – Participants indicated that their confidence in using ALERT was increasing every day
- **Group work enabled participants to share their perspectives** – Participants were happy to share perspectives in groups with people from different organisations *(also a feedback received on the TOT but with less enthusiasm)*
- **Hands-on session gave time to participants to think of next steps** – Sessions on their ‘live’ accounts gave participants a window of time during the training to start thinking of their next steps to incorporate ALERT within their organisation and to start inputting data in the system which they might not always have after the training. The hands-on session also enabled participants to see potential issues relating to how their current organisational data can fit into ALERT and immediately get feedback from the trainers.
b) Materials and facilitation

i. Expectations

Materials include PowerPoint presentations used and handouts distributed to the participants during the sessions. It was expected for the materials to be of good quality, which means containing relevant information displayed in a clear way and helping the participant understand each session. Materials of good quality should be a tool to achieve the training’s objectives for the facilitators.

Facilitation refers to methodology used by the facilitators to achieve the training’s objectives. It was expected that the facilitation should be clear and participative. Facilitators were expected to have expertise in their subject and to be able to answer participant’s questions.

ii. Feedback received during the Rollout

Due to several circumstances, the production of the material for the training was delayed. As a result, the materials (PowerPoints and handouts) could not be properly reviewed and refined before the first trainings which considerably impacted the quality of the training. In addition, handouts that should have been sent to participants prior to the workshop were sent with a delay.

As a result, even if some feedback was similar, the impression from the participants and from the facilitators was quite different regarding the material and facilitation.

Feedback on the materials for the London, Chiang Mai and Pakistan trainings are as follows:

☑️ Handouts during the training were of good quality, they helped with the overall comprehension – Participants

☒️ Handouts given before the training arrived too late for participants to be able to read them before the training, plus there was too much to read – Participants and Facilitators

☒️ PowerPoints were too heavy (contained too much information), prescriptive and their quality needed improvement (design, text) – Participants and facilitators

Feedback on the facilitation for the trainings conducted before changes was made are as follows:

☒️ Facilitators were not confident in the material and participants could feel that they were trying to refine the material during the workshop. This caused a lack of confidence in the Rollout from the ALERT team – Participants and facilitators

☒️ More expertise in Emergency Preparedness was needed within the facilitation team – Indeed, the initial objective of the training being focused on the preparedness process, it would have made sense for the facilitators to be experts in this field – Participants and some of the facilitators

Changes made: After the training in Pakistan, the ALERT team decided to shift its approach for the training and make it less prescriptive and less focused on the preparedness process. The training was redesigned to focus on ALERT as a tool for emergency preparedness within each organisation.

As a result, the materials were modified: PowerPoints were considerably reduced (shortened by 65% on average) and simplified to introduce preparedness concepts used in ALERT and focus on the ALERT platform itself. In addition, no handouts were sent prior to the training.
After those changes were made, the feedback shifted toward a more positive one:

- **Materials:** Changes made on the presentations were necessary. **The new version is a lot clearer,** plus the **focus on the platform is really good** and it was missing in Chiang Mai – *Participants from Chiang Mai who attended the Philippines Country Rollout*

- **Materials:** The **handouts were given on time and they were helpful** for the participants – *Participants*

- **Facilitation:** The **approach that consists of working from participant’s preparedness process is interesting and successful,** it is less prescriptive and it gives a chance for the participants to share their process and discuss with others – *Participants and facilitators*

Across the 3 trainings that were conducted after the changes were made, only one participant indicated that the trainers should have more experience in preparedness and emergency response. Other participants indicated that the training as it was did not require more expertise in preparedness from the facilitators, reflecting the facilitation technique used by the trainers to draw on the experience of participants to shape the sessions.

### c) Overall results

It appeared that changes made through the Rollout regarding the balance between theory and practice had a considerable impact on several results from the training, especially regarding the impression on the ALERT platform or on the capacity to use it for the participant’s organisation’s preparedness work.

#### i. ALERT platform as a preparedness tool

When giving feedback on the ALERT platform as a preparedness tool, participants in the Rollout used the following phrasing:

- **Great tool for coordination**
- **Enables collaboration and transparency**
- **APA and preparedness actions in general were the missing link**
- **User-friendly and easy to use**
- **Enables evidence-based decisions (at the country office level, HQ level and donor level)**
- **ALERT is a good and simplified solution for preparedness**
- **ALERT helps structure agencies’ preparedness work**

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6 As an example, the preparedness mapping conducted in Bangladesh indicated that the agencies participating did not do risk monitoring as part of their preparedness work. Therefore the risk monitoring session was not delivered since it is not something that they will be using ALERT for.
As expected, the feedback on ALERT was very positive and encouraging within the humanitarian sector.

The following graph captures the change in perception in ALERT throughout modifications made on the Rollout strategy.

**Figure 6: Changes in the participant’s perception on ALERT as an Emergency Preparedness Tool**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before changes</th>
<th>After changes</th>
<th>Before Changes</th>
<th>After changes</th>
<th>Before changes</th>
<th>After changes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Legend:**

1. This platform fills gaps in current disaster preparedness efforts among humanitarian agencies.
2. I thought the platform was easy to use.
3. I found the various functions in the platform were well integrated.
4. This platform does not duplicate preparedness efforts already existing (i.e., there is no precedent or equivalent).

It is clear from this graph that the changes made in the Rollout’s methodology had a huge impact on the feedback on the platform. As a result of spending more time on the ALERT platform through several methods, 86% of respondents found the platform fills gaps in current preparedness efforts, 86% think that the platform is easy to use and 82% found that the functions are well integrated. Those numbers have increased by 8 to 21% from the feedback received after the London, Chiang Mai and Pakistan training.

After the London, Chiang Mai and Pakistan training, only 42% of the respondents thought that the platform did not duplicate existing preparedness efforts. This number went up to 68% (+26%) after the changes were made. However, it indicates a possible room for improvement in future trainings.
ii. **ALERT as part of agencies’ preparedness work**

As a result of the new facilitation approach used and the introduction of one-to-one meetings, the impression of the participants regarding the use of the platform as part of their work changed as well:

- **✓ 100% of the ‘after changes’ respondents indicated that they would use ALERT as an integral part of their agency’s preparedness efforts** (against 75% from the London, Chiang Mai and Pakistan’s training),
- **✓ 100% of the ‘after changes’ respondents found ALERT relevant to their work** (96% before the changes were made)
- **✓ 100% of the ‘after changes’ respondents think that they would like to use the platform frequently** (against 84% before the changes were made)

The introduction of hands-on sessions and one-to-one meetings gave participants time to start thinking about the next steps that would be needed in order to integrate ALERT into their agencies’ preparedness work.

An important point that came out of the one-to-one sessions is the need for ‘planning-time’ for the agencies that want to introduce ALERT in their work. Indeed, most agencies indicated that the introduction of ALERT in their preparedness work would require coordination meetings to roll out the platform to their ERT members and also to discuss risk monitoring, preparedness actions, response plans and the country office profile. Populating data takes time as well and the ALERT team understands that if ALERT is going to reduce the workload in the future by only needing updates, the first step can take some time. **This is why the ALERT team planned to conduct one-to-one support visits to work with each agency in the process of setting up their profile.**

iii. **Need for technical support to use ALERT**

After Chiang Mai and Pakistan, most participants did not feel confident to use the platform without technical support. Participant confidence and overall capacity to use the platform also improved after the changes were made:

- **✓ Up to 86% of the ‘after changes’ respondents felt confident to use the platform without direct supervision** against 58% only from the London, Chiang Mai and Pakistan’s training,
- **✓ (x) There is a marked improvement on the capacity of the participants to use elements of the platform without having to learn too much before** (from 35% to 50%). However, the need for more learning before using elements of the platform is still something that participants feel strongly about.

As indicated previously, post-training support is provided to help agencies setting up their profile. Although the ALERT team feels like the focus was on the Rollout more than on the post-training support, participants, on the other hand, are mainly happy with the support they are receiving so far.

**d) Recommendation**

Majority of recommendations have been addressed through the changes made after the Pakistan training. However, there are still some recommendations that can be pursued, such as:
• Factor in time between initial training and the proper use of ALERT for participants to initiate coordination and planning meetings in their organisations as well as orient their teams on the use of the platform.
• Carry out a pre-course questionnaire and preparedness mapping session. Align the training agenda to the processes that the agencies already carry out
• Improve the quality of the presentations and facilitator’s note (trainer’s package) to enable sharing the materials
• Provide a finalised User manual to the participants
• Take time to help agencies in the planning of the introduction of ALERT in their work
• Ensure that participants understand that ALERT will, with time, reduce considerably their workload and that it does not duplicate work
• Have physical support in each targeted country (it is the case in Pakistan and Philippines).

ej) Readiness of the platform

i. Expectations

The Rollout of the ALERT platform is a ‘trial’ Rollout. With the platform being still under development, this Rollout should enable the developer to tweak and improve the platform to meet agencies’ expectations. Therefore, the ALERT team expected to be rolling out a platform with a few bugs but nothing major and nothing that would prevent the platform from being used during the Rollout.

Participants knew that they were participating in the trial of the ALERT platform but they were not expecting to be experiencing bugs. They expected the platform to be ready to be used in its polished form.

ii. Feedback received from the Rollout

The Rollout of the ALERT platform was a trial, however there was a lot more bugs than expected during the training in London, Chiang Mai and Pakistan. Some of the feedback received indicated:

× The platform is not ready to be rolled out,
× There are too many bugs in the platform to be properly used,
√ 69% of the respondents in the ‘Usability survey’ found that there were not too many inconsistencies on the platform which is already a good number but which shows that improvements still need to be made on the platform.

Changes made: During and after the 3 first trainings, the developers worked on the bugs to fix as many as they could (prioritising bugs that prevented the platform from being properly used). All the major bugs were fixed before the succeeding trainings.

In addition, the ALERT team decided to emphasise setting participant expectations regarding this. The Rollout is a ‘trial’ of the software. It is a series of workshops that aim to train the participants on the use of the platform, but also to map out the bugs that need to be fixed and improvements that can still be made. To lower participants expectations without lowering their satisfaction, ‘bug notifications’ and ‘innovation contests’ were introduced.

During the training in Philippines and Bangladesh, a session was added regarding ALERT’s next step during which the facilitator presented the future functionalities and the improvements expected.
As a result of the changes made, bugs were expected and the feedback received were the following:

✓ (×) The platform is in a good and usable state but some improvements can still be made
✓ It was good that participants were given the opportunity to propose improvements and innovation ideas. It is a good way for them to make the tool theirs and it is really helpful for the ALERT team – Participants and facilitators
✓ 82% of the respondents in the ‘Usability survey’ found that there were not too many inconsistencies on the platform (18% remaining are ‘neutral’)

In addition, the participants responded well to the session on the next steps for ALERT. They were able to know more about what they could be expecting in the future. Moreover, they were asked to prioritise the future functionalities which was great for the ALERT team: it enabled the team to understand the vision from the field and adjust the phase 2 and the mobile application development to align with this vision.

iii. Recommendations

The changes made were helpful to ensure improvements in the rollout. Recommendations that the project is taking forward include:

- Fix remaining bugs,
- Input improvement ideas from the participants.
Part 3: Conclusions and recommendations

3.1 Conclusions

The aim of ALERT rollout training was to train individuals from INGOs, National NGOs, and government departments on the use of ALERT so that they can trial the Platform between now and the end of the project. The trial was also meant to enable the ALERT team to refine the Minimum Viable Product based on feedback received.

This report demonstrates the positive impact of the improvements that were made to the training approach in order to better meet the needs of the participants to enable them to trial ALERT. It also offers further recommendations for enabling an effective rollout of ALERT as well as useful insights to further inform future rollout planning of the platform.

Participants learn more when they can relate their own processes to the platform.

The TOT approach focused on a prescribed way of conducting preparedness planning processes and integrating ALERT into the planning. However, it became clear that a more thorough approach to training on the platform, particularly in relation to each individual agency’s preparedness process, was the first step for achieving the confidence in participants to move forward to train others. The data from the Training of Trainers section on pages 8 to 9 as well as the data from the Balance between theory and practice section on pages 11 to 16 stand as evidence that more use of the platform in relation to what individuals know about preparedness positively impacted the results for recommending the platform to others and in their confidence that others can use the platform – making it more effective as an approach for training others in the use of the platform. Additional one-to-one time between facilitators and each agency is important to relate existing processes to the platform, as well as offering more time within the training for inputting data and planning the next steps of the integration of ALERT within the organisation.

When participants don’t have well established approaches to preparedness, use of the preparedness theory is important.

The training in Pakistan represents one of the most interesting insights moving forward. The participants at the training were mostly working for organisations with a national or local remit. The agenda largely mirrored that of the TOT training (with some adjustments to balance out theory and practice), but the feedback received was much more positive. Facilitators and participants also expressed that the theory on a prescribed way to conduct preparedness planning was well-received.

The ALERT training materials were designed to enable trainers to train others that do not have well established, systematic preparedness processes in place. The positive data from Pakistan suggests that the training was meeting the needs of participants at that time, enabling them to fully understand the preparedness concepts and processes behind the platform, without it clashing with pre-existing processes and notions.

Follow up support is needed and data entry and preparedness planning takes time

The need for follow up with organisations on the use of the platform after the training was always anticipated, and resourcing of in-country staff members to provide that support has
been put in place in the Philippines and Pakistan. Support to country offices in other countries was to be provided by those who attended the TOT training and by the ALERT team. So far, data entry on the platform has been slow due to the necessity of the stakeholders to plan their preparedness activities first. However, we are beginning to see more activity overall outside of the training times. The different support approaches have seen similar, mixed results with regard to uptake of the platform, but early indications are showing that in-country follow up support is valuable and have a positive impact on progress with agencies using and trialling the platform. Moreover, as the ALERT system was designed for NGOs, a tailored support will be needed for government agencies that showed interest in using ALERT.

### 3.2 Recommendations

In summary, the training offered should cater to two different audiences: those with well-established systematic preparedness processes, and those without well-established systematic preparedness processes.

For those with well-established systematic preparedness processes the practices that were adjusted throughout the rollout should continue to be refined and used for future rollout approaches. These are:

1. Preparedness mapping prior to the training (pre-training survey and a session at the beginning of the training)
2. Include ‘hands on’ time within the training agenda for participants to apply what they have been practicing on the ALERT training site to their real ALERT account.
3. Factor in one-to-one time with each agency within the training agenda – Use the time to cross-reference existing preparedness plans and processes with the ALERT platform and help agencies in the planning of the introduction of ALERT in their work. Also ensuring that participants understand once the initial planning and data entry has been completed, ALERT will considerably reduce their workload
4. Facilitation approach that encompasses drawing upon existing preparedness experience and practises of participants
5. An agenda that focuses much more time on practice on the platform and much less time on theories and approaches for emergency preparedness
6. Follow up visits to encourage progress with preparedness planning and data entry into the platform

Once participants have begun to use the platform, the feedbacks suggest that they are then likely to train others on the use of the platform, particularly their humanitarian response partners. The following materials and approaches are undergoing development/refinement to support the training of others on the Platform:

1. Full ‘Trainer package’ for future facilitators
2. User manuals on the functionality of ALERT
3. Provide support to the new trainers in the planning of their activities and in the rollout of the platform

For training with participants without well-established, systematic preparedness processes, the approach to training should encompass points 1 to 4 outlined above and:

1. An agenda that includes a tailored (up to equal) balance of theory and approaches for emergency preparedness and practice on the ALERT platform.
2. Regular and easily accessible follow up support on emergency preparedness practices and use of the platform
As the follow up support approach require more time and testing, another AAR will be carried out later on to draw out lessons and recommendations.
Annex

Google analytics

a) Change in the use of ALERT within time

Google Analytics was not in place during the London training, this is why it is not showing on the graph.

Kenya training  Philippines training

More regular use?

Chiang Mai Pakistan training