External Evaluation of the ALERT Project

Final Evaluation Report

Prepared by Key Aid Consulting for HelpAge International
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Executive Summary

The ALERT: Preparing to respond now! (hereinafter ALERT) Project is one of 14 projects of the Disasters and Emergency Preparedness Programme (DEPP). It aims to design a new information system, dubbed ALERT, to support disaster preparedness by helping increase the effectiveness, efficiency and coordination of humanitarian responses.

The current phase of the ALERT project is the phase 1 or Proof of Concept phase. During this phase, ALERT aimed to design a standardised emergency process and platform,¹ to help humanitarian actors increase their level of preparedness:

- The ALERT process² is the summation of the key preparedness components organisations need to undertake to improve their emergency preparedness. It is based on the Inter-Agency Standing Committee’s (IASC) preparedness process,³ and is designed to be compatible with a wide variety of humanitarian agencies.
- The ALERT platform is a free and easily accessible portal, and has been designed to be compatible with a wide variety of humanitarian agencies, regardless of their mandate or size. It has dedicated sections for adding and completing steps of the ALERT process, including risk identification and risk monitoring, etc.

Implementing the ALERT project included consultations with various humanitarian actors to inform the ALERT process, the creation of a static prototype⁴ and then a Minimum Viable Product (MVP),⁵ and trialling the MVP and conducting trainings in the pilot countries (Bangladesh, Mozambique, Kenya, Pakistan and the Philippines).

As this phase of the project is concluding in March 2018, the lead consortium member, HelpAge International, has commissioned a final evaluation. The purpose of the evaluation is to take stock of the ALERT Project since the beginning of its implementation in January 2015 to provide feedback on its process and outcomes, with the aim of highlighting strengths, weaknesses and best practices.

Key Findings

Relevance

The ALERT project team was successful in including a wide range of actors in the design process of the platform and embedding their feedback into the design. However, there was criticism that country offices and NGOs were not involved or involved quite late in

¹ The evaluators have decided to use the terms “process” and “platform” rather than “software” and “system,” as those were for marketing purposes.
² The ALERT process could also be called ‘ALERT principles’. They are based on the IASC preparedness principles and have been adapted to fit the platform and to be easy to use for humanitarian actors on the field.
³ https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/preparedness
⁴ The static prototype was developed by Futurice.
⁵ The MVP was developed by Roller Agency.
this process, which was detrimental to the further localisation of the content of the platform.

Despite this criticism, most of the stakeholders considered the ALERT emergency process to be relevant to their organisation, because it improved their existing process while being transferrable without entailed significant changes. There was also general agreement that the ALERT platform was relevant for their preparedness work and transferrable to their organisations. The transferability of the platform was aided by its modular design. However, the biggest hurdle to the transferability of the platform was the time required to set it up at both the country and organisation levels.

Despite bugs that users reported, the data suggests that the features of the platform are mostly appropriate for emergency preparedness activities. However, since many stakeholders felt it was too early to provide detailed feedback on the platform’s use, the perception of the features’ appropriateness is likely to evolve over the next few months as NGOs begin to use the platform more regularly.

The accessibility of the ALERT platform emerged as a real concern and potential barrier to usage. There were concerns that field-based staff would not be able to access the platform due to connectivity issues. However, feedback suggests that the ALERT platform is perceived to be easy to use and is user-friendly, once people have been trained on using it.

Most users were satisfied with the current privacy settings, which provided them with sufficient flexibility to manage data confidentiality while collaborating with others. However, at the same time a vast majority of interviewees would like the privacy settings to be more granular.

While the platform’s potential for improving coordination was still untested, feedback suggests that the platform is perceived as just a tool among others to help with coordination, which on its own is not sufficient to solve the lack of coordination among humanitarian actors. However, they also felt that ALERT had the potential to be an information management tool with the possibility of improving existing coordination mechanisms among NGOs and reducing the overlap during emergency responses.

**Effectiveness**

By March 2018 the ALERT project met its intended objectives, including its primary objective to develop a nearly bug-free platform\(^6\) that was tested in the pilot countries. ALERT also met, and even exceeded, the number of NGO staff trained on the ALERT emergency preparedness process and platform.

When it comes to the project’s timeliness, while all activities were completed before the end of the project, not all were implemented in a timely manner. The main issue was the

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\(^6\) At the time of writing this report the ALERT team was working on fixing the remaining bugs, with the aim of completing this before the end of March 2018.
delay in creating the static prototype and having to dissolve the partnership with EPAM.\(^7\) The project’s ability to still finish on time is due to the ALERT project team’s agile project management approach.

While there is evidence that humanitarian agencies have started to use the platform to carry out preparedness activities, no organisation had fully deployed the ALERT platform at the time of this evaluation. However, considering the first organisations were trained in August 2017, this should not be seen as a lack of achievement for the project.

After only being rolled out for a few months, it appears that organisations that used the platform were more prepared and more systematic in their approach to operational preparedness since, for instance, they had a centralised and accessible repository.

Findings across countries and types of organisations suggest that the training resulted in an increase in their knowledge of preparedness processes and best practices. In addition, the level of user engagement was interrelated with the number of trainings conducted and the frequency of the repetitions. In other words, the more training and awareness on the platform an organisation received, the more likely it was to use the platform.

When this evaluation took place, the majority of organisations had just started to roll-out the platform and thus had not yet had the opportunity to use it during an emergency response. As such, it was too early to assess whether the ALERT platform would result in faster, more organised and better emergency responses among NGOs and local organisations. However, early adopters of the platform started to witness organisational changes, such as centralising data, leading them to believe that ALERT would result in greater preparedness and response.

The project’s M&E system was effective in tracking the roll-out of the platform and making operational decisions based on users’ feedback. Collecting feedback throughout the project allowed the project team to improve the training materials and platform (through de-bugging) in real time. However, the project team did not monitor its number of users effectively, relying only on the default Google Analytics settings that tracked the number of devices\(^8\) connected to the platform instead of the number of users.

**Efficiency**

This project had three main type of expenses: the software development, the consultation and roll-out process, and the HR and consortium costs:

- The evaluation team found that the cost of the software design as of 31 December 2017 represented overall good value for money, in relation with the final product

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\(^7\) EPAM was the first software company ALERT contracted, based on a 50:50 partnership, to develop the prototype. For more details see Section V.3.2.1.

\(^8\) In default setting, Google Analytics tracks the device connected to the platform rather than the number of users.
delivered, its features, and the complexity and variety of users’ stories. Nevertheless, the static prototype seems to have been the least cost efficient component of the software design, as its price appeared to be above market price.

- Considering that the ALERT project team consulted more than 58 actors, interviewees reported this phase to be a pretty efficient use of resources. However, the evaluation team did not have access to sufficiently detailed budget information to confirm this opinion. Considering that ALERT developed a MVP to get as many users’ feedback as possible, the evaluation team found these costs to be quite efficient.

- HelpAge International’s HR was actively involved in the process’ conception, the platform’s design, conducting trainings and providing feedback to users. Therefore, comparing the volume of activities to the size of project team, it is the evaluation team’s opinion that the HR set up of the project was quite efficient.

There were five main drivers of Value for Money (VfM) of this project:

- Corporate partnerships: Overall, the corporate partnerships did not result in noticeable efficiency gains. While the legal sector partnerships were more successful, the partnership with EPAM was unsuccessful and did not lead to efficiency gains.

- Procurement: HelpAge International’s procurement strategy was successful, and resulted in both economy and efficiency gains for the project. By choosing a new software developer (Roller), ALERT was able to add some additional functionalities that were initially set aside, including the network module and mobile application.

- Consortium structure: while it was relevant to get international INGOs on board from the start, the consortium arrangements were not formalised, which resulted in a loss of efficiency. The project team was only comprised of ALERT staff and had limited support from other organisations in the early phases of the project.

- Local partnerships: the ALERT project formed partnerships for the demonstration and assistance of users at local level, which resulted in cost savings for international travel.

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9 In software development, a user’s story is a narrative short description of one or more features of the software, from the point of view of a type of user. An example within ALERT would be: “As a/an ERT User I want to be able to see what actions have been assigned to me”

10 A note on this analysis: The evaluation team assumed that the 56,263 GBP available for the “Specialist IT interface company - interface, proofs, mock-ups” were solely dedicated to developing the prototype and did not include other cost as travelling. It is the evaluation team software developer experience that such static prototype usually range between 20,000 to 35,000 GBP.


12 The ALERT project team was composed of four staff: The project Manager, the Evaluation and Learning Officer, the Project and Communication Officer (who was mainly involved in IT and the relationship with Roller) and the Administrative Officer.
- Iterative project management: developing a static prototype before launching the MVP was good VfM, because it enabled the ALERT project team to prioritise features based on users’ perceived needs.

**Sustainability**

According to most interviewees, the ALERT process was aligned with their organisations’ systems, procedures and approaches. Even when the ALERT process was different, the modularity and flexibility of the process/platform helped to make it aligned. The main risk for alignment is technical, i.e. the platform’s accessibility.

At the time of the evaluation, there have not been examples of institutionalisation. The anticipated level of institutionalisation for consortium members significantly varied. As these INGOs train their local partners, their level of engagement will substantially impact the trickle-down effect of the project and its sustainability.

Many interviewees considered the time needed to input data into the platform to be a barrier to institutionalisation. Findings also suggest that organisations do not institutionalise the data if an ALERT support team is not available to provide support and assistance.

A vast majority of the country users felt they had the local capacity to use the platform, but would need regular and punctual access to external help, such as the help desk. It appears however that the issue of capacity is not related to the use of the platform itself, but rather to being able to use the emergency preparedness process underpinning the platform.

Although interviewees were aware that ALERT was just a tool, most interviewees felt that ALERT had the potential to strengthen global preparedness systems by: 1) increasing the theoretical preparedness knowledge of NGOs, 2) support the localisation agenda of the Grand Bargain, and 3) producing standardised information in a consistent format.

However, all interviewees concurred that, for the platform to truly strengthen emergency preparedness process, users needed to first use the platform and second be transparent about data they published online. In addition, many noted that the platform would also need to include other humanitarian actors (donors, the UN, and governments) to reach this potential.

**Recommendations**

The recommendations below are suggested to benefit the next phase of the ALERT project. They are organised into the following categories.

**ALERT Training**

Recommendation 1: Add a “light” systematic capacity building module

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- ALERT should systematically add a half-day preparedness training, before presenting the platform to the participants, to help build their preparedness capacity and/or serve as a refresher.

**Recommendation 2: Send the training materials in advance**

- ALERT should send the training materials at least a week in advance to let participants review it and prepare their questions.
- This could also be an opportunity to share recommended learning on preparedness and to systematically send a short questionnaire to determine the training participants’ pre-existing preparedness capacity.

**Recommendation 3: Partnership with a training organisation**

- To meet the needs of participants who have only a limited understanding of preparedness, ALERT could partner with a humanitarian training organisation to provide training sessions that combine an emergency preparedness training with a practical platform demonstration.

**Platform improvements**

**Recommendation 4: Add an auto-save function**

- Consider adding an auto-save function to the platform to avoid users losing their data (i.e. in the event of a power cut, etc.).

**Recommendation 5: A drop-down menu for geographical locations**

- Consider adding a drop-down menu in the risk monitoring section, as it requires limited development time from the software developer.

**Recommendation 6: Import/Export functions**

- Consider developing an import feature, at least for the country profile as it takes a significant amount of time to fill out.
- ALERT could also build-in an export function to allow organisations to export data.

**Recommendation 7: Granularity in the data privacy settings**

- Consider expanding the privacy settings within the platform’s module, i.e. allowing for only some documents to be public within a module.

**After-training follow-ups**

**Recommendation 8: In-country focal points**

- As having in-country focal points seems to have helped increase the platform’s adoption, the ALERT project team should train local staff, and subcontract his/her organisation for providing platform assistance.

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14 The ALERT project team has started to address some of the recommendations presented in this section but this occurred after the scope of this evaluation.
Recommendation 9: Create a community of users

- ALERT should encourage the set-up of country communities of users where new organisations could seek advice on setting up the platform.

**Monitoring, evaluation & learning**

Recommendation 10: Configure Google Analytics to track usage

- Set up a tagging plan\(^\text{15}\) on ALERT’s Google Analytics account to better track the number of platform users.

Recommendation 11: Leverage on-site data

- Leveraging on-site data could help the ALERT project team measure its impact indicator “Agencies are more systematic in their approach to operational preparedness which results in an improvement in the delivery of humanitarian assistance to disaster-affected communities,” by tracking the number of completed APAs/MPAs, etc.

Recommendation 12: In-country simulations

- To demonstrate its proof of concept, the ALERT team should organise emergency simulations in different settings. They could, for example, compare the effectiveness of an emergency response that used the ALERT platform to a control group that did not use the platform.

**Sustainability of the platform**

Recommendation 13: Adding governments to the platform

- ALERT should strengthen the promotion of the platform to government actors and include them on the platform. At the same time, the increased flexibility in the privacy settings could ensure that sensitive data is only accessible to the correct actors.

Recommendation 14: A “view my profile as a donor” function

- Consider adding a “view my organisation account as a donor” feature to help organisations understand what data donors have access to and help organisations correctly adjust their privacy settings.

Recommendation 15: Discuss the full Open-Source potential

- In the next phase of ALERT, it is worth considering ALERT’s open source ability and level of collaboration. This could allow organisations to tailor ALERT to their needs by developing new features, thus sharing the burden of developing new features and accentuating the platform’s transferability.

\(^{15}\) The tagging plan is a reference document determining which website features and action should be monitored, and how.
Consortium structure

Recommendation 16: Creation of a formal consortium structure

- Having a formal consortium structure with, for example a steering committee and management committee wherein all members are equally involved in jointly implementing the project, could help improve the project’s effectiveness in the next phase. This could help reduce the strain on the project team and get new staff on-board more easily, and help ensure the sustainability of the project.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APA</td>
<td>Advanced Preparedness Actions</td>
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<tr>
<td>CHS</td>
<td>Core Humanitarian Standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Country Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEPP</td>
<td>Disasters and Emergency Preparedness Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>ERP</td>
<td>Emergency Response Preparedness</td>
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<tr>
<td>ERT</td>
<td>Emergency Response Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>GA</td>
<td>Google Analytics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HQ</td>
<td>Headquarters</td>
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<tr>
<td>IASC</td>
<td>Inter-Agency Standing Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>INGO</td>
<td>International non-governmental organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>LNGO</td>
<td>Local non-governmental organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEL</td>
<td>Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning</td>
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<td>MPA</td>
<td>Minimum Preparedness Actions</td>
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<tr>
<td>MVP</td>
<td>Minimum Viable Product</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organisation</td>
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<td>NNGO</td>
<td>National non-governmental organisation</td>
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<td>NPS</td>
<td>Net Promoter Score</td>
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<td>PoC</td>
<td>Proof of Concept</td>
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<td>ToC</td>
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<td>ToT</td>
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<td>VfM</td>
<td>Value for Money</td>
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<td>WAI</td>
<td>Web Accessibility Initiative</td>
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A glossary of the technical and project terms used in this report has been annexed to the present evaluation report.
I. Introduction

The ALERT: Preparing to respond now! (hereinafter ALERT) Project is one of 14 projects of the Disasters and Emergency Preparedness Programme (DEPP). It aims to design a new information system, dubbed ALERT, to support disaster preparedness by helping increase the effectiveness and coordination of humanitarian responses. ALERT, a Start Network project with support from DFID, is governed by a seven-organisation consortium\textsuperscript{16} that HelpAge International leads. The total budget of ALERT is 1,309,658 GBP. As the project ends in March 2018, the consortium members have commissioned a final evaluation.

The purpose of the evaluation is to take stock of the ALERT Project since the beginning of its implementation in January 2015 to provide feedback on its process and outcomes, with the aim of highlighting strengths, weaknesses and best practices.

II. The Intervention and Context

Faced with an expected increase of natural and man-made disasters in the years to come, the humanitarian sector realised more resources and tools were needed in disaster preparedness to increase the effectiveness, timeliness and efficiency of emergency responses. ALERT is one of these tools; a global one-of-a-kind information system level that would help NGOs better plan and respond to hazards.

The three-year ALERT project began at the beginning of 2015, with the ambitious objective “to make NGO emergency preparedness more effective, leading to faster and more efficient decision-making systems for emergency response,”\textsuperscript{17} thanks to an information system that systemises the preparedness process. ALERT focuses on three main pillars of support:

- Help agencies streamline and track their preparedness for disaster response: risk identification, scenario development, and action plans before and during the emergency response.
- Allow agencies to communicate and share information prior and during emergency responses.
- Enable donors to identify and fund response plans.

As detailed in Figure 1, the current phase of the ALERT project, the phase 1 or Proof of Concept phase, was preceded by a Pre-ALERT phase. It is expected to be followed by a phase two, dubbed the Pilot phase.

\textsuperscript{16} Care International, Concern Worldwide, Coventry University, Handicap International, HelpAge International, Islamic Relief, and Oxfam.

In its Proof of Concept Phase, ALERT aimed to design a standardised emergency process and platform to help humanitarian actors increase their level of preparedness:

- The ALERT process is the summation of the key preparedness components organisations need to undertake to improve their emergency preparedness. It is based on the Inter-Agency Standing Committee’s (IASC) preparedness process, and is designed to be compatible with a wide variety of humanitarian agencies, regardless of their mandate or size. The main steps are outlined below:

- The ALERT platform is a free and easily accessible portal, and has been designed to be compatible with a wide variety of humanitarian agencies, regardless of their mandate or size. It has dedicated sections for adding and completing steps of the ALERT process, including risk identification and risk monitoring, creating and maintaining minimum and advanced preparedness actions, scenario-based planning, country office profile & capacity, etc.

NGOs that choose to use the platform set up an organisation account and created a login for their staff. They used the platform to do hazard/risk monitoring, track their preparedness actions and surge capacity, design hazard-based response plans, and coordinate with other humanitarian organisations at the country-level.

The ALERT project team designed the platform collaboratively in two steps (the overview of project activities is provided in Figure 3). The project team first developed a static prototype to display the layout and present the main theoretical features of the platform. Second, it developed a Minimum Viable Product (MVP) to collect feedback from early users.

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18 The evaluators have decided to use the terms “process” and “platform” rather than “software” and “system,” as those were for marketing purposes.
19 The ALERT process could also be called ‘ALERT principles’. They are based on the IASC preparedness principles and have been adapted to fit the platform and to be easy to use for humanitarian actors on the field.
20 https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/preparedness
21 The static prototype was developed by Futurice.
22 The MVP was developed by Roller Agency.
adopters to continuously improve the platform and to solve bugs (see the technical glossary in Annex VIII.7). Due to issues that emerged with the contracted software developer EPAM, the relationship ended in March 2016. ALERT next contracted Futurice to create the static prototype of the platform during the first half of 2016. Once this was accomplished, Roller Agency was hired to create the MVP. The University of Coventry was contracted to design the training materials during the first two years of the project. This also included the package of supporting materials, such as a training manual that acted as a preparedness technical manual for staff on how to do preparedness.23

The ALERT consortium consulted more than a hundred different stakeholder organisations (INGOs, UN agencies, government and donors) on how to do preparedness over the course of the project, in order to determine which preparedness aspects should be included in the ALERT process and platform. Discussion about the ALERT process took place in three workshops in the UK with 27 organisations. From August 2016 to December 2016, the ALERT project team presented the static prototype to key personnel from INGOs and UN agencies24 to gauge interest and to prioritise the platform’s features. Then, from January 2017 to June 2017, the project team presented the MVP to several INGOs and NNGOs25 in the pilot countries (Bangladesh, Mozambique, Kenya, Pakistan, and the Philippines), to gauge their interest and to collect feedback on the MVP as it was being developed.

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23 The development of the training materials did not go as expected, as detailed in the “ALERT Roll Out After Action Review” (HelpAge International, 2017), which impacted the rollout of trainings. In addition, the training materials were further refined in January 2018 with the help of an external consultant.

24 The ALERT project team demonstrated the static prototype at the TRIPLEX to 40 representatives from international humanitarian organisations (HelpAge International, “ALERT DEPP Quarterly Report 8 July-Sept. 2016,” 2016, 7) individually to 34 int. humanitarians organisations (HelpAge International, “ALERT DEPP Quarterly Report 9 Sept-Dec. 2016,” n.d., 9), and surveyed 41 staff from 17 INGOs (ibid.).

25 From January 2017 to June 2017, the ALERT project team demonstrated the static prototype to INGOs country offices, and NNGOs, in Bangladesh, Kenya, Mozambique, Pakistan, The Philippines. (HelpAge International, “ALERT DEPP Quarterly Report 11 April-June 2017,” n.d., 11.)
Figure 3: Overview of the project until mid-February 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Platform Development</td>
<td>EPAM to develop prototype (relationship ended March 2016)</td>
<td>Future to develop static prototype</td>
<td>Roller to develop MVP</td>
<td>Roller fix bugs and add new features</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation Workshops: Platform</td>
<td>Nepal and Ethiopia Workshops Apr-Jun 2016</td>
<td>Demonstrate in 24 organs’ HQ online South Asia, Triplex</td>
<td>Workshops: Bangl., Mozam, Phil., Pak., Lon.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training Materials Development</td>
<td>Development of training and supporting materials (modules, user guide) Coventry Uni</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training and rollout delivery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trainings:
- London July 2017
- Chiang Mai Aug. 2017
- Pakistan Aug. 2017
- Pakistan Sept. 2017
- Philipp. Sept. 2017
- Kenya Sept. 2017
- Pakistan Oct. 2017
- Bangladesh Oct. 2017
- Mozambique Nov. 2017

Rollout trainings to partners:
- Pakistan Nov. 2017
- Pakistan Jan. 2018
- Philipp. Jan. 2018
- Philipp. Feb. 2018
- Kenya Feb. 2018
- Bangladesh Feb. 2018
Finally, from July 2017 to mid-February 2018, the ALERT consortium members trained 192 individuals from 45 organisations on how to use the MVP in Bangladesh, Mozambique, Kenya, Pakistan and the Philippines. The purpose was to train participants on key preparedness concepts (when needed) and introduce them to using the ALERT platform. After receiving training, in-country INGOs and NNGOs started to roll-out the platform internally by uploading their data and preparedness plans, and externally by conducting trainings for their local partners. The roll-out took place from September 2017 to March 2018.

Figure 4: Genesis of the ALERT preparedness process

The design of the ALERT emergency preparedness started in 2011 before the launch of the ALERT project. At the time, HelpAge was designing its internal emergency preparedness process. In doing so, HelpAge consulted with INGOs, such as Care and Oxfam, and with UN agencies, and chose to base its process on the Inter Agency-Standing Committee (IASC) Emergency Response Preparedness (ERP) guidelines, a standard used by many humanitarian actors.

HelpAge’s emergency preparedness process was similar to the IASC ERP in that it included risk/hazard monitoring based on indicators, minimum preparedness actions, hazard-specific advanced preparedness actions and scenario-based actions. Its main differences were that the scenario-based plan has a much shorter duration (45 days vs. 200 days) and APAs were not only scenario-based specific.1

While consulting with various actors when designing the ALERT emergency preparedness process, HelpAge International realised that a lot of humanitarian actors were facing difficulties with operationalising their paper-based response plans, and following and keeping staff accountable for preparedness actions.1 At the time, some UN agencies were developing an online platform for the UN to solve these difficulties.1 Similarly, HelpAge designed a 5,000 GBP internal multi-language cloud-based solution, dubbed ALERT V1, automating and tracking Minimum and Advanced Preparedness Actions progress, and displaying a preparedness summary map of all its country offices. This first internal tool was the genesis of the ALERT project; aiming to design an emergency preparedness software, with an offline mode.1

III. Evaluation Objective and Scope

The focus of this evaluation was both on accountability and learning. It aimed to ensure the project was accountable to both the primary stakeholders (HelpAge International ALERT staff, consortium members and supporting partners, the DEPP and the Start Network) as well as the secondary stakeholders (INGO/NNGO/LNGO users and donors). In terms of learning, this evaluation’s findings will inform the next phase of the project, which

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26 These numbers have evolved since mid-February 2018 but were not included in this report as they fall outside the scope of this evaluation.
was being designed when the evaluation took place. The evaluation will feed into the DEPP project evaluation that the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative is currently conducting. It also aims to be informative for any other agency thinking of undertaking similar innovative projects.

This evaluation’s overall objective is to provide a review of the project’s design and implementation. More specifically, the objectives of the evaluation are to determine:

- The project’s performance based on the OECD DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.
- The platform’s performance, and involved stakeholders’ usage of it.
- The extent to which the project has achieved (or made progress towards achieving) its intended outcomes, as provided in the project’s plans and logframe indicators.

The corresponding evaluation questions can be found in Annex VIII.8.

The recommendations at both the global and country level aim to assist HelpAge in conducting the pilot phase\(^{27}\) of ALERT, as well as designing future innovative projects.

This evaluation report includes data collected from the beginning of the ALERT project in 2015 through mid-February 2018. As this phase of the project, under the DEPP, continued until the end of March, some data (such as the number of trainings, number of participants trained, etc.) have evolved since the data collection.

IV. Methodology

IV.1. Overview of the methodology

The evaluation used a participatory approach that included project management in-country staff to help increase buy-in. It implemented a mixed-methods approach that relied on a variety of secondary and primary sources. The steps of the proposed methodology are detailed below. A more detailed methodology can be found in Annex VIII.9.

The evaluation covered all five countries that are part of the project (Bangladesh, Kenya, Mozambique, Pakistan and the Philippines), through the entire length of the ALERT project up to the data collection phase for this evaluation in February 2018.

\(^{27}\) The next phase of ALERT that will begin after March 2018 is considered the “pilot phase” of the ALERT project. The project is currently in the “proof of concept” phase. For more information see the next section.
Figure 5: Overview of Methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Desk Review</th>
<th>2. KII</th>
<th>3. Observation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Structured and comprehensive in-depth review of:</td>
<td>- Semi-structured interviews with key informants</td>
<td>- Evaluator during field visit to Philippines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Project documentation</td>
<td>- Face-to-face in Kenya, Pakistan and the Philippines</td>
<td>- Observe review working where:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- On-site data monitoring</td>
<td>- Remotely for international and Bangladesh</td>
<td>- Users testing the ALERT platform shared experiences,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Other relevant literature</td>
<td>- 55 interviews in total</td>
<td>- Discussed challenges and successes of integrating the platform</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Participants’ satisfaction with the trainings and platform features, platform’s relevance and effectiveness, and collect recommendations to further improve.</td>
<td>- Analysis of Google Analytics data</td>
<td>- Data analysis: disaggregate and code qualitative data, Descriptive statistics for quantitative data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 89 respondents (Ban: 5, Ken: 6, HQ: 6, Moz: 0, Phi: 46, Pak: 26).</td>
<td>- Light touch technical review, focus on feedback from interviews with software development stakeholders</td>
<td>- Triangulate across sources to ensure accuracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Presentation of findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Draft evaluation report, finalize based on client’s feedback</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IV.2. Limitations**

**Timing:**

The evaluation took place after the platform had only been rolled out for nine months, and before it was actually used for an emergency response in any of the countries where it was tested. Therefore, the evaluation team could not analyse real-life examples of the platform being used during emergency responses for the effectiveness criteria. Instead, as a mitigation measure, the evaluation team probed interviewees about their expected use of the platform, and their opinion of the anticipated impact it would have.

**Scope:**

The evaluation was unable not collect data on Mozambique, because no users in Mozambique took part in the survey, and no interviewees from the country were part of the KII list that HelpAge International provided. Therefore, the evaluation team removed Mozambique from the scope of the evaluation, although it was part of the initial scope suggested in the evaluation Terms of Reference (ToR).

**Online survey:**

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28 By the time of data collection for the evaluation, only 6 people had been trained in Mozambique. Since this training occurred rather late in the project (November 2017), it does not appear that they are using the platform.
With 89 respondents, the sample size is not representative of the total ALERT user base. The evaluation team triangulated the survey data with the data collected from the desk review and the KIIs before using it in the report.

Furthermore, because some respondents could not reliably determine which type of user they were, e.g. country user or Emergency Response Team (ERT) member, the evaluation team did not use this categorical variable to disaggregate the data.\(^2^9\)

**For software review:**

The software review is based only on Google Analytics (GA) data, as it was against ALERT data protection’s policy to share on-site data (user database, GIRA, etc.) with the evaluation team. As such, the evaluators were not able to conduct the full review as initially planned in the inception report.

Furthermore, Google Analytics (GA) was configured with default settings, which means it did not record the platform’s usage reliably.\(^3^0\) Therefore, it could not be used as a reliable data source for usage and performance of the ALERT platform. As a mitigation measure, the evaluation team triangulated all data sources, i.e. desk review, KIIs, survey, GA, to assess the platform’s usage.

**V. Findings**

**V.1. The relevance of ALERT in developing the preparedness of in-country actors**

The relevance of an innovation in the humanitarian sector is the “extent to which the innovation responds to a recognised problem or meets end user needs and priorities.”\(^3^1\)

Looking at the ALERT relevance entailed examining how both the ALERT emergency process and the ALERT platform met the needs of its target users, and if stakeholders found the ALERT platform features appropriate to carry out preparedness activities.

**V.1.1. The relevance of the ALERT project**

Even though the launch of the ALERT project was opportunity-driven with the launch of the DEPP, ALERT’s team made sure the design process was participatory to ensure uptake. Stakeholders usually found the ALERT project relevant but reported it lacked the sufficient amount of national level participation early on.

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\(^2^9\) The proposed categories in the survey were: agency administrator, country administrator, country director, emergency response team (ERT), ERT leader, country user, I don’t know, and other: please specify. Respondent could select all categories that applied to them.

\(^3^0\) For more information on Google Analytics, please go to VIII.9.2.3.

\(^3^1\) Alice Obrecht, “Evaluating Humanitarian Innovation” (ALNAP & HIF, 2017).
V.1.1.1. Design of the ALERT emergency preparedness process

When the project was launched, the ALERT consortium aimed to develop and propose an emergency preparedness process applicable to all organisations, and have it endorsed by the Start Network.\(^{32}\) The ALERT project team used HelpAge's existing preparedness process as a starting point (see Figure 4: Genesis of the ALERT preparedness process) and further developed it collectively with other stakeholders. This entailed agreeing on a common terminology and trying to determine baseline country context indicators,\(^{33}\) and discussing and adding scenario-based response planning and CHS actions.\(^{34}\) The refining of the ALERT process was done iteratively, through three workshops in the UK that comprised of representatives from 25 INGOs, two universities and DFID.\(^{36}\)

Most of the stakeholders interviewed (34 out of 45 who responded to this question) considered the ALERT emergency process to be relevant to their organisation, because it improved their existing process while being transferrable without entailed significant changes (see V.1.1.3). This was reported consistently across stakeholders, be they from INGOs at global or country level or from NNGOs, except in Kenya where the uptake was comparatively lower. However, several key informants, at country and global levels, criticised the design of the process because INGOs’ country offices and NNGOs were not part of these three workshops, and therefore were not consulted. However, INGOs country offices and NNGOs stakeholders interviewed during this final evaluation still generally found the process relevant to their organisations, even if they were not consulted during the design process.

V.1.1.2. Design of the ALERT emergency preparedness platform

The ALERT project team was successful in including a wide range of actors in the design process of the platform and embedding their feedback into the design (See V.4.1 in the Effectiveness section). As a result of these presentations, ALERT evolved from a desktop software to an online platform, to better adjust to the expressed needs from users. Furthermore, the ALERT project team decided to add a network module to the platform, to enable agencies to collaborate across country offices and partners. This contributed to the fact that, regardless of countries and type of NGOs, a vast majority of survey respondents, as shown in the graph below, concurred that the ALERT platform was relevant for their preparedness work. This finding was also corroborated during the KIIs.

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34 “ALERT Report of Workshop 2: The Online Early Response Template Structure; Applying Core Humanitarian Standards” (HelpAge International et. al., 2016).
However, some country offices and NNGOs felt they were involved quite late in the consultation process, which was detrimental to the further localisation of the content of the platform and to getting the feedback from the government: a key actor during emergency response, and to whom the platform could have been useful.

A majority of external stakeholders interviewed during the final evaluation and survey respondents, as shown in the graph below, concurred that the ALERT platform was relevant for their preparedness work, and transferrable to their organisations.

### Graph 1: Relevance of the ALERT platform for preparedness

![Graph showing relevance of ALERT platform](image)

ALERT included specific components, which added value to their existing preparedness system, and were factors that motivated the use of the platform:

- **The breakdown between Minimum Preparedness Actions and Advanced Preparedness Actions**: this was not often known/understood before attending the training.
- **The Core Humanitarian Standards actions**: these core humanitarian standards were not well-known before attending the ALERT training and using the platform.
- **The scenario based planning**: the latter was mainly referred to as one of the key features of ALERT in the Philippines, because the country was prone to regular and sudden rapid-onset disasters.

### V.1.1.3. Transferability of the ALERT emergency preparedness process and platform

Regardless of the country, type of NGO, or type of disaster (slow-onset vs. rapid-onset disaster), interviewees agreed that the ALERT emergency process is transferable to their respective organisations. This is because it is comprehensive, based on the IASC framework and is quite similar to the existing process that most INGOs, and their partners, seek to implement.

The ALERT platform was in their opinion transferrable/adoptable to their organisation because the platform was modular. This meant that modules/features not deemed relevant could be deactivated, and each of the features/module worked independently, i.e. organisations could choose to only use specific modules, such as the risk monitoring, while being able to collaborate with other agencies on the platform.

However, as reported by early adopters, the biggest hurdle to the transferability of the platform was the time required to set it up at both the country and organisation levels. All the data has to be manually entered on the platform, as there is no option to upload...
existing data. As a result, to have an organisation’s account up and running, organisations needed to dedicate significant manpower to set it up rapidly, or to do it with existing resources at a much slower pace. For instance, some NGOs trained in September and October 2017 in Kenya, Pakistan and the Philippines, had not yet completed the full process in February 2018.

For a minority of interviewees, **there were a number of specific cases where the process and platform were not easily transferable:**

- The terminology was sometimes confusing for users. The ALERT implementation team did address this however, by adding definitions of the key terms on each page of the platform.
- NGOs with more complex internal processes, e.g. four trigger levels instead of three as in ALERT (green, amber and red), had to reprocess their existing data and information to fit them into the ALERT model.
- ALERT has been primarily designed for humanitarian actors doing direct implementation. As such, its design is not necessarily adapted for INGO/NNGOs working with implementing partners.
- Similarly, ALERT was not adapted for INGO/NNGOs with multiple offices/bases in a given country. At the time of redaction, the ALERT project team was addressing the issue.

**V.1.2. The appropriateness of the ALERT platform’s design and features**

This section looks at the appropriateness of key components of the ALERT platform to conduct preparedness activities and share information with other actors.

Users generally found the platform features, ease of use and privacy settings appropriate. On the other hand, they were concerned with the accessibility of the platform.

**V.1.2.1. The appropriateness of ALERT’s features**

Despite bugs that users reported, all the data collected during the final evaluation points to the fact that the features of the platform are mostly appropriate for emergency preparedness activities.

First, more than two-thirds of the interviewees found the platform features to be appropriate. Second, with an overall satisfaction average of 7.9 out of 10, as detailed in the graph below, respondents were usually quite satisfied with the ALERT platform.

**Graph 2: Overall satisfaction with the ALERT platform**
However, as detailed in Section VIII.9, to gauge user satisfaction with new technologies, a satisfaction score of 9 or 10 signals that users are satisfied, and are promoters of the technology. It turned out that 27% of the survey respondents were ALERT promoters.

Graph 3: Overall satisfaction with the ALERT platform (NPS Methodology)

This score was increased due to respondents from NGOs, who despite being involved late in the design of ALERT were its strongest advocates, and from the Philippines and Pakistan. This can be explained by the fact that the ALERT project team conducted more

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37 Users of a service may fall into three categories. Promoter, Neutral and Detractor. Promoters have a satisfaction score higher than 8, neutrals fall between 7 and 8 included, and detractors score less than 7. This repartition is based on the NPS methodology, as detailed in Section VIII.9.

38 As detailed in the methodology in Annex VIII.9, it is not feasible to use a benchmark. 27% being promoters may appear to be low at first, and one of the goals for the ALERT team is to improve this ratio. However, an analysis of the data reveals that 63% of respondents are categorised as neutral, with 40% having assigned an 8-rate (passives), while detractors only represent 10%. The audience breakdown reveals there is potential for tool improvement. Furthermore, when compared to the original loyalty NPS question for “How likely is it that you would recommend the ALERT platform to a colleague or a peer in the humanitarian sector?” the 31.3 NPS scoring breaks down into 45% of promoters, 42% of passives (with 28% 8-rate) and 13% of detractors revealing a robust support for ALERT.
regular trainings and after-training follow-up with two dedicated in-country resource persons in those countries.\textsuperscript{39} In Kenya and in Bangladesh, respondents were neutral, i.e. they were neither promoting nor detracting from the platform, which may suggest that the adoption in these countries had not reached its full potential. Looking at the platform’s features in detail, as demonstrated in the graph below, except for the "interact/collaborate with other feature", no feature ranked significantly lower than others, which suggests that users found the preparedness-related features of the platform to be appropriate for their preparedness work. The “interact/collaborate with other feature” ranked comparatively lower because the network feature\textsuperscript{40} was not launched until late 2017 and debugged in January/February 2018. This ranking suggests that users are equally interested in the external collaboration features that the platform provides as in its internal automation and organisational management features.

Graph 4: Satisfaction with the platform’s features

From a user perspective, the main complaints with the platform lay with the data management functions of the platform:

- There is no auto-save function when populating the platform with data, e.g. a scenario-based plan. This was mainly reported in Kenya.
- Users cannot import existing data, or export the data from the platform.
- Email addresses cannot be used for more than one user access on the platform, e.g. a staff member with two roles on the platform, such as country administrator and ERT member, needs two separate email addresses, although in his/her organisation, the person only uses one.
- There is no scroll-down menu to choose locations in the risk monitoring section.
- There is no link to outside data, except INFORM,\textsuperscript{42} such as weather forecasts.

\textsuperscript{39} HelpAge appointed one of its staff in Pakistan and one staff from a national partner in the Philippines to act as a Help Desk and assist users in rolling out the platform in their organisations.

\textsuperscript{40} At organisation level, it allows NGO country offices to be part of the same NGO network and share information globally. At country level, it allows several NGOs, e.g. an INGO and its local partners, to be part of the same network. Both types of network allow for a greater sharing of information than the platform would otherwise allow without.

\textsuperscript{41} According to the HelpAge project team, the export feature was going to be developed and added to the platform by March 31\textsuperscript{st}. 

\textsuperscript{42}
When receiving notifications from the ALERT platform to complete monitoring or MPAs/APAs, there was no direct link to the actions to complete. When the final evaluation was conducted, many users were new to the platform or their organisations were just rolling it out. A significant number of interviewees and survey respondents felt it was too early to provide the evaluation team with detailed feedback on the platform’s use. As such, the perception of the features’ appropriateness is likely to evolve over the next months, as NGOs use the platform more regularly.

V.1.2.2. The accessibility of the platform

Accessibility/connectivity

While the ALERT project team and the developers aimed to design a platform as light as possible, i.e. with a simple design and no complex graphics or moving images to minimise bandwidth consumption, the accessibility of the ALERT platform was a real concern and potential barrier to usage.

In Kenya, Pakistan and the Philippines, more than half of those interviewed reported having difficulties accessing the platform due to connectivity issues. These respondents were also mainly capital-based where connectivity is supposed to be stronger than in the more remote rural areas. Other interviewees were able to access the platform without any problem, suggesting that with a sufficiently strong internet connection the platform can be available in these countries, though at a cost.

Most interviewees, regardless of their ability to access the platform, feared that field-based staff would not be able to access the platform. Some also feared that the platform would not be accessible during an emergency response if communications were down. This finding is consistent with the data collected from the desk review, and with the satisfaction survey’s responses: as detailed in the graph below, at least 20% of respondents noted that they could not easily access the platform.

Graph 5: Accessibility of the platform

![Accessibility Graph]

INFORM is a global, open-source risk assessment for humanitarian crises and disasters. It can support decisions about prevention, preparedness and response.

When looking at the accessibility of a web-based platform, one needs to assess: whether the platform is accessible with the users’ bandwidth, whether it is accessible to users with specific needs, whether it is accessible to users from all different settings.

42 INFORM is a global, open-source risk assessment for humanitarian crises and disasters. It can support decisions about prevention, preparedness and response.

43 When looking at the accessibility of a web-based platform, one needs to assess: whether the platform is accessible with the users’ bandwidth, whether it is accessible to users with specific needs, whether it is accessible to users from all different settings.


The ALERT platform’s Google Analytics data substantiates users’ perceived difficulty in accessing the ALERT platform. The average sample page load\(^{46}\) for the ALERT platform is \(25.19\) seconds, as detailed in the table below. The longest time was in Pakistan (41.01s) and in Bangladesh (31.54s):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Avg. Page Load Time (sec)</th>
<th>Average server-side Page Load Time (sec)</th>
<th>Average client-side Page Load Time (sec)</th>
<th>% of page load server-side</th>
<th>% of page load client-side</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>31.54</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>30.61</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>11.93</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>11.13</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>41.01</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>35.33</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>18.17</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>16.68</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>25.19</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.56</strong></td>
<td><strong>22.48</strong></td>
<td><strong>14%</strong></td>
<td><strong>86%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These lengthy load times appear to be due to the poor internet in these target countries rather than the platform design. Indeed, except for the UK, targeted countries rank between 80\(^{th}\) to 120\(^{th}\) in terms of internet speed.\(^{48}\) Even if some Google Analytics’ speed suggestions\(^{49}\) had been implemented, it would probably not have had a significant impact on the country’s page speed.

86% of the ALERT platform page load is spent on the client side,\(^{50}\) which meant that the code behind the platform took time to be handled by users’ browser. The main

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\(^{46}\) Default Google Analytics settings only measure page load for 1% of page views. As such, the evaluation team would recommend against using the page load as standalone data. The data was used by Key Aid Consulting to triangulate the findings from the desk review, KIIs and the satisfaction survey.

\(^{47}\) Google only records 10% of the page load time, meaning that this data is indicative and not representative of the total page loads.

\(^{48}\) January 2018 speed test benchmark based on average download speed in 128 countries (this analysis does not take into account the upload speed). For more detail on median and average speeds (See Annex VIII.9).

\(^{49}\) Google Analytics offers a speed suggestions page where it formulates some design recommendations. For ALERT, it mainly consists of small page redesigns and file compressions. This can be time consuming and can be considered negligible at this time.

\(^{50}\) The client side corresponds to the time the browser takes to display the page. On the other hand, the server side corresponds to the time the ALERT servers take to process a request.
explanation for the imbalance in server timings is the technology used to build the ALERT platform, i.e. Firebase.\textsuperscript{51} Further research and analysis should be conducted to determine if such client-side technology is sufficiently applicable for countries with slow internet speeds. Nevertheless, the evaluation team concluded that the choice of Firebase represented a good compromise considering the other benefits provided by the technology used.\textsuperscript{52}

ALERT is a cloud-based platform that relies on an internet connection, which is not always compatible with field work or with a remote posting. This explains why a significant number of interviewees and survey respondents recommended a mobile application version of ALERT. At the time of writing this report, Roller was developing an Android mobile application for the ALERT platform\textsuperscript{53} and had addressed technical login issues that could be identified through a drop-off analysis.\textsuperscript{54}

People living with disabilities

More than half of interviewees were concerned that the ALERT platform was not accessible for visually-impaired people, as the platform was not compatible with screen readers.\textsuperscript{55}

Cultural Norms

Interviewees consistently considered the ALERT platform to be neutral on all political, religious and social aspects. When designing the platform’s visual identity, the ALERT project team chose the colours and logo cautiously, so that the latter could not be associated with specific countries.\textsuperscript{56}

Languages

The ALERT platform was initially supposed to be available in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Urdu, Bangla and Arabic.\textsuperscript{57} By the end of March 2018, the platform should be translated into French, Spanish and Portuguese.

Based on data from the desk review and from the KIIs (slightly less than half the KIIs), the lack of translation in local languages may be a barrier to use for NNGOs and LNGOs, and

\textsuperscript{51} The use of a more server-oriented technology would have led to a decrease in client-side timing and an increase in server-side timing.

\textsuperscript{52} Firebase is a plug and play service that avoids spending time and funds on complex system configuration and maintenance. Client-side rendering is a modern pattern derived from mobile applications and used in Firebase. Among others, it limits the multiplication of round-trips between remote server and user’s browser which brings less dependency to internet breaks. It also helps to ease data automatic synchronisation among users and leverage the implementation of offline features.


\textsuperscript{54} Drop-off represents a user leaving (i.e. dropping-off) a specific visit flow. In the case of ALERT, given the level of Google Analytics settings, a drop-off can be considered as a user leaving the ALERT platform.

\textsuperscript{55} It should be noted that after the scope of this evaluation the ALERT project team began to look into how to rectify this issue.

\textsuperscript{56} ALERT Consortium Key Informants.

\textsuperscript{57} HelpAge International, “Concept Note for Start Network DEPP Submission: ALERT: Preparing to Respond Now!”
for field staff from INGOs. However, it is worth mentioning that no survey respondents requested the translation of the platform as an improvement or a new platform feature.

V.1.2.3. The ease of use of the platform

The data collected for this final evaluation suggests that the ALERT platform is perceived to be easy to use.

First according to the project's secondary data and interviewees, after having been trained and having spent some time using the different features, users consistently reported the platform to be easy to use and user-friendly. As one interview puts it: "It's like Facebook, once someone shows you how to use it, then it's easy to use." Out of the four countries stakeholders interviewed, Kenyan interviewees were the least satisfied with the ease of use because the platform lacked essential features, such as a search function. Finally, as detailed in the graph below, the survey demonstrates that users are satisfied with the platform's ease of use, with an average satisfaction score of 8. Although the sample size was n=4 in Kenya, with an average satisfaction of 7.7, it is worth mentioning that the findings from the survey in Kenya did not appear consistent with the interviews.

**Graph 6: Satisfaction with the platform's ease of use**

Compared to others, HQ based respondents ranked the ease of use significantly lower. While the sample size is too small to draw definitive conclusions, this score is meaningful when considering the role these respondents may have in the rollout of the platform at the organisation level.

Furthermore, a significant number of interviewees reported that, for the platform to be easy to use, users need to have a sufficient background in emergency preparedness. In their opinion, organisations with no or limited preparedness knowledge would have a hard time rolling out the platform and should not be given access to it without first receiving proper training on both the platform and the basic emergency preparedness concepts.

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59 The ALERT training encompasses the preparedness process and the use of the platform.
60 The ALERT project team has amended the training materials to account for this, see Section V.2.4 for more information.
behind the ALERT process. As a mitigation measure, and with the project coming to an end, several interviewees and survey respondents requested for detailed and interactive training materials and videos.

V.1.2.4. The adequacy of the privacy settings

The ALERT platform includes three types of privacy settings that the country administrator can apply to each of the platform’s modules.61

- Public, i.e. the organisation’s data is accessible by all organisations in the same country.
- Private, i.e. the organisation's data is only available to the organisation's staff with an account.
- Network, i.e. the organisation's data is accessible to all organisations that are part of the same network. The networks are either organisation networks, i.e. an INGO with its country offices, or country networks, i.e. a NGO with its partners in a given country.

A majority of users were satisfied with the three current settings, which provided them with sufficient flexibility to manage the confidentiality of their organisations’ data while collaborating with others. At country level, interviewees were inclined to have as much of their data public as possible. They saw the platform as a good opportunity to cooperate, and learn from each other, as long as organisations were being transparent and willing to share their data (hazards, indicators, MPAs, APAs, plans, stocks, etc.). In their opinion, only specific data should be made private, such as sensitive staff information. At the global level though, interviewees were more reserved. While satisfied with the types of settings available, they were concerned with the incompatibility of NGO data being public for coordination when operating in insecure environments, where there is a lot scrutiny from the governments.

Regardless of their stance on data protection, a vast majority of interviewees would have liked the privacy settings to be more granular to have the options to make specific data within modules public, private, or only accessible to their network. For instance, organisations would like the ability to make, within the same module, particular documents public, some available to their partners, and keep others internal to their organisation. Similarly, they would also like the ability to make some MPAs/APAs public while keeping others private. This finding is consistent with the current discussions on increasing the granularity of the privacy settings of the ALERT platform.62 At the time of writing, the ALERT team was looking into adding this option to the platform.

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61 Examples of platform’s modules: APAs, Risk Monitoring, Country Profile
62 “Minute DEPP Event Data Transparency Nov17,” n.d.
V.1.3. The relevance of the ALERT platform’s design and features for coordination

Considering the platform has not yet been used during an emergency response (see Section V.2.5), and the ALERT project team recently added new collaboration features such as the network feature, a vast majority of the interviewees thought it was too early in the lifetime of the platform to assess whether the platform’s design and features were relevant for coordination, because they could not test it. However, they have formed an opinion on the future relevance of the platform for coordination, when it would be fully functional.

Many saw ALERT as just a tool among others to help with coordination, which on its own is not sufficient to solve the lack of coordination among humanitarian actors. They also did not think ALERT would replace coordination meetings.

Yet, in their opinion, ALERT had the potential to be an information management tool with the possibility of improving existing coordination mechanisms among NGOs and reducing the overlap during emergency responses. For instance, ALERT could help NGOs rapidly find out the operational presence and preparedness capacity in different areas, become an early-warning mechanism, standardise the information collected and reported, foster collective hazard monitoring, etc. The network function was perceived as a crucial feature to allow such coordination. Thanks to its collaborative features, ALERT could also help increase the effectiveness/efficiency of collaborative delivery models, such as consortia or local partnerships with national and local NGOs, and is line with the Grand Bargain commitment on increasing the efficiency of aid.

As detailed in the graph below, there were relatively significant differences in opinion across countries and type of organisations. In Pakistan, where humanitarian stakeholders are numerous and diverse, users highlighted the potential of the platform to support coordination. However, this has not materialised yet as half of the trained organisations are not using the platform, and those who are keep some of their data private. In the Philippines, most interviewees, especially NNGOs, already saw the benefits of having access to the platform, such as gaining access to information they did not necessarily have before. At organisation level, NNGO/LNNGOs (average = 8.4) perceived the platform to be more useful for coordination than INGOs (average = 7.0).

Graph 7: Survey respondents’ perceptions of the relevance of ALERT for coordination

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63 The average score to the question “to what extent does the ALERT platform foster humanitarian coordination?” was 7.6 out 10.
64 The network function was operational in January 2018 (“ALERT Roll Out After Action Review.”
65 The data for Kenya, Bangladesh and at HQ should be considered with caution given its sample size and will not, therefore, be commented.
However, in interviewees’ opinion, for ALERT’s coordination potential to be realised at the country level, organisations would have to 1) add their data on the platform, 2) be transparent about the data they publish, and 3) use the platform on a regular basis. This had not yet happened in the countries where ALERT was tested by the time this evaluation data was collected.

Furthermore, for most interviewees in Kenya, Pakistan and the Philippines, the ALERT platform could have a stronger potential for coordination, if government bodies, who played an essential role in the coordination of the emergency responses of these three countries, were part of the platform. From the start of the project, the ALERT project team aimed to include the government among the platform’s users, but this did not happen during this phase of the project.66

V.2. The effectiveness of the ALERT project: Has the platform increased the preparedness of its users?

To determine effectiveness, the evaluation team first assessed the extent to which and how the project met the project’s objectives in a timely manner. Then, it analysed how each activity met the desired output and project outcome.

V.2.1. The effectiveness of the project delivery

The majority of external stakeholders and users interviewed during the final evaluation concurred that the ALERT project met the programmes intended objectives. Examination of the project’s logical framework (See Annex VIII.11) further demonstrates that ALERT met its output and outcome indicators. However, considering the ALERT platform’s roll-out only began in August 2017, it is not possible at this stage to determine if ALERT will meet its impact indicator.

Results from the output indicators, i.e. the number of countries where the platform was rolled out, sometimes differed from the stated targets. This was primarily due to the ALERT

66 Governments were part of the proposal to the donor but the project team did not actively pursue governments within this project phase, so engagement was minimal.
When implementing a humanitarian innovation project, iterative project management, wherein the project team is continuously adjusting its activities and objectives to ensure the innovation meets end user's needs, is a factor of effectiveness. The ALERT project team was successful in that respect, because it constantly sought to collect feedback from its users to improve the final product, the ALERT platform.

First, the ALERT project met its primary objective to develop a nearly bug-free platform (i.e. with as few bugs as possible), which both INGOs and LNGOs tested in Bangladesh, Kenya, Pakistan and the Philippines by the end of March 2018. This is a result of an iterative consultation approach, as shown in the figure below, and an iterative software project management.

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67 In DRC for instance, only two NGOs showed interest in participating in the ALERT training, and one became unresponsive when the ALERT project team tried to schedule a meeting. Therefore, considering the limited uptake and the translations delays of the training materials and platform into French, HelpAge decided not to include DRC in the roll-out phase.


69 The addition of the Network feature to the platform is such an example.

70 At the time of writing this report the ALERT team was working on fixing the remaining bugs, with the aim of completing this before the end of March 2018.
For the roll-out of the MVP, working as a consortium led to gain in effectiveness. Some consortium members, such as CARE, Oxfam and Humanity & Inclusion reached out to their local partners to organise trainings and roll-out the platform. As a result, by the end of the project, it is likely that more organisations are using the platform than if the project were delivered by a single agency (See V.2.2). Some of the trainings even took place simultaneously starting in January 2018, thus explaining the significant rise in the number of users after December 2018. However, other consortium members, such as Concern Worldwide did not organise such trainings.

The ALERT project team was effective in developing the platform, thanks to an agile project management approach, sequencing development in eight two-week sprints. Then, users tested the MVP for a limited period, usually three weeks, after which new developments were supposed to be made. While it could not follow such a project management approach because it was too demanding given the project’s human resources and technical capacity, this approach allowed the team to collect constant feedback from early adopters, and subsequently fix bugs and add new features to the platform. This approach was in line with the MVP short-cycle

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71 Figures for the MVP were not inclusive of the last training conducted in February and March in Bangladesh, Kenya, and the Philippines. These figures were computed from the various quarterly report, workshop summary, participants list (e.g. Participants lists of ALERT workshop in Dhaka. In Mozambique and Pakistan, the quarterly reports referred to 15-20 NGOs; the evaluation team counted 15.


73 In agile scrum methodology, the sprint is the base time unit: “An iteration of work during which an increment of product functionality is implemented. The sprint starts with a one-day sprint planning meeting. At the end of the sprint we have a sprint review meeting, followed by a sprint retrospective meeting. During the sprint, the team must not be interrupted with additional requests. Guaranteeing the team will not be interrupted allows it to make real commitments it can be expected to keep.” – Scrum Alliance

74 There was no team member with a significant development or design thinking experience. The ALERT project team subcontracted this expertise by hiring a consultant.
methodology the ALERT project team followed (see Figure 7). From January 2017 to June 2017, during the first eight sprints, the ALERT project team was able to present the platform to potential users to leverage feedbacks (see Figure 5).

Secondly, ALERT met, and even exceeded, the number of NGO staff trained on the ALERT emergency preparedness process and platform. However, as detailed in Section V.2.4, based on the feedback from the first ToT trainings, participants considered them to be too technical and reported that they felt it only lightly touched upon the use of the ALERT platform. Therefore, after the first two trainings, the ALERT project team decided to change the content of the trainings to focus on the platform rather than the process and the preparedness capacity building. As a result, participants' positive feedback significantly increased.

When it comes to the project’s timeliness, while all activities were completed before the end of the project, not all were implemented in a timely manner. First, Coventry University, who was in charge of producing the training materials, was late in producing them, mostly because of the delays in developing the prototype. They were not ready for the first round of training. Furthermore, according to the original project timeline, the static prototype presentation and feedback should have been completed by October 2016 (vs. May 2017 in reality). The delays were due to the unsuccessful 50:50 partnerships with EPAM, which led to a six-month delay in the project (see Corporate partnerships in Section V.3.2.1). With the change in project design, i.e. an online platform instead of a software program, the time required to develop the platform was less than initially planned, and thus ALERT was able to make up for some of the lost time. The decision to allocate time and a budget to build a dynamic prototype also significantly contributed to understanding users’ requirements and re-scoping the project needs.

In addition, the project’s intrinsic complexity, such as the multiple user roles and related authorizations, resulted in invalidating the initial time estimates. While Roller provided additional free resources to meet the project deadlines to deliver mid-June 2017, the platform had more bugs, at the start, than initially anticipated. Instead of starting in June 2017, the country roll-outs began in late August 2017. While a difference of two months may appear small over a period of three years, many early adopters reported that the timeframe to fully roll-out the platform was not sufficient. However, considering the innovativeness and the technicality of the ALERT platform for the given timeframe, the ALERT project team was reasonably successful in maintaining the project’s timeliness.

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76 “ALERT Roll Out After Action Review.”
77 Ibid.
79 ALERT was initially planning six months for the software development, from Nov. 2016 to May 2017.
80 Ibid.
V.2.2. The emerging evidence of humanitarian agencies using the platform to carry out preparedness activities

While conducting this evaluation, the evaluation team did not come across any organisation that had fully deployed the ALERT platform, i.e. set up all the features, trained their staff to use the platform, and used it for preparedness activities. However, considering the MVP was released in July 2017, and the first organisations were trained in August 2017, this should not be seen as a lack of achievement for the project.

All the data collected during this final evaluation (desk review, KIIs, satisfaction survey, and Google Analytics) consistently provided evidence of humanitarian agencies that had started to use the platform to carry out preparedness activities. As of 26 February 2018, there were 1,177 devices\(^81\) on the platform in 30 different countries, spending on average 19 minutes on the platform and viewing 14 pages per visit.\(^82\) The increase in the number of users\(^83\) and sessions indicated that the platform was being used regularly, especially in the Philippines (by 44% of users for 43% of sessions) and Pakistan (by 19% of users, for 23% of sessions).

**Table 2: Audience overview based on Google Analytics data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Users</th>
<th>Sessions</th>
<th>Pages / Session</th>
<th>Avg. duration/session (min)</th>
<th>Users (% of total)</th>
<th>Sessions (% of total)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>1,094</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>2,050</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,177</td>
<td>4,764</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Primary data is consistent with Google Analytics data. About a third of the interviewees reported that their organisation used all/most ALERT features and were currently training staff and rolling it out with their partners. This was especially the case in Pakistan and in the Philippines. About half of the organisations interviewed were in the process of uploading their data onto the platform and training staff. The rest were not using the platform and/or spending time on it, which was mostly the case in Kenya and Bangladesh.

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\(^81\) When configured with the basic settings, which is the case of the MVP, Google Analytics records devices rather than users. Google Analytics’ algorithms tried to match devices to specific users, with some degree of success. However, the number of devices is likely to be overestimated compared to the actual number of users.

\(^82\) Google Analytics data.

\(^83\) There were 869 devices recorded on the platform as of 6\(^{th}\) February 2018 on Google Analytics (“Consortium Meeting For Evaluation 0702,” n.d.)
In terms of usage pattern, based on the findings from the satisfaction survey, 75% of users were using the platform either weekly or monthly. This is consistent with Google Analytics as shown in Section VIII.12. As detailed in the graph below, this figure is mostly driven up by Pakistan and the Philippines. However, considering that many NGOs were uploading their data on the platform at the time of writing this report, these patterns may not be representative of the future use of the platform to conduct normal preparedness activities.

Graph 8: Frequency of use of the platform

![Graph showing frequency of platform use](image)

In terms of using platform features, since the launch of the MVP, 24% of the traffic\(^8^4\) was directed mainly towards the settings pages,\(^8^5\) and 19% towards country profiles, local profiles and capacities, which indicated that some organisations were currently in the process of setting up the platform. On the other hand, 44% of the traffic was directed towards preparedness activities pages (preparedness actions, risk monitoring, response plans, coordination).

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\(^8^4\) The evaluation team only focused on unique page views per module. Unique page view records a page once even if it was viewed multiple times within a single session. By focusing on uniqueness, we limit bias due to people re-visiting the same pages.

\(^8^5\) Settings pages includes admin, agency and director settings.
At country level, there were no noticeable differences in unique page views, except in the Philippines where the network module was used the most.\(^{88}\)

The limited level of Google Analytics’ account customisation and the lack of access to the logs journal did not enable the evaluation team to clearly identify which preparedness actions were specifically undertaken by users on the platform.

\(\text{V.2.3. The emerging evidence of users being systematic in their approach to operational preparedness}\)

After being rolled out for a few months, it appears that organisations that used the platform were more prepared and more systematic in their approach to operational preparedness in three ways.

First, the emergency preparedness plan of the organisation was centralised in one accessible repository, instead of “sleeping on a shelf” and “being only known by the emergency coordinator.” Adding data to the platform, especially MPAs and APAs, encouraged organisations to discuss and clarify the roles and responsibilities within the emergency team, and across all supporting departments.

Second, the platform automated the emergency preparedness, i.e. staff received email notifications informing them when they were supposed to complete MPAs/APAs and monitor indicators. While submitting a document did not necessarily mean the task was properly done, this reportedly created a sense of ownership and accountability at the organisation level.

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\(^{86}\) The evaluation team categorised all ALERT URLs retrieved from Google Analytics. See Annex VIII.9 for more details. The evaluation team excluded authentication-related pages and donor pages (module under development at the time of the evaluation).

\(^{87}\) In the graph “Coordination” refers to the Network, Map, partner validations and face-to-face meetings.

\(^{88}\) As there was training on the network module in the Philippines a week before extracting the data, this likely drove the page views up.
Third, organisations added new components to their existing emergency preparedness plan and procedures, such as generic and hazard-based APAs, CHS actions and scenario-based response plans. It would appear, as suggested by the graph below, that these additions were the result of both the ALERT platform training and the use of the platform.

Graph 10: Respondents' change in preparedness SOPs as a result of the training

However, the emerging evidence of users/organisations being more systematic will only be sustained if organisations maintain the use of the platform over time and if new staffs in the organisation are trained on using the platform.

V.2.4. The effectiveness of the ALERT trainings in building the preparedness capacity of users

From August 2017 to February 2018, ALERT trained 192 users in 45 organisations (22 INGOs, 22 NNGOs, 1 government body) on the ALERT process and platform. Interviewee and respondent feedback demonstrates (see

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89 HelpAge International, “Participant ALERT Training.Xlsx,” n.d. As previously stated, these numbers have increased since data was collected for this evaluation report.
Graph 11) that regardless of their country, the type of NGO (INGOs vs NNGOs) and the training attended, the training resulted in an increase in their knowledge of preparedness processes and best practices.
For participants with no/limited preparedness knowledge, the training enabled them to have access to a comprehensive and modular emergency preparedness process, to become knowledgeable of best practices (APAs vs MPAs) and to learn from participants present in the workshops.

For participants with existing preparedness capacities, the training reportedly had several advantages. First, it served as a refresher course and helped them reflect on the strengths and shortcomings of their organisations’ current preparedness plans. The training also allowed them to learn about more in-depth concepts, such as the MPAs and the CHS actions.

**Over the course of the project, the training materials and facilitations evolved.** The first round of trainings (in London and Chiang Mai for a total of 39 participants) relied on the training materials that Coventry University, one of the consortium’s members, developed. The materials were deemed too theoretical and prescriptive, and not sufficiently focused on utilisation. Participants were reportedly disappointed and at the end were left with questions on using the platform.

As a result, the ALERT project team reviewed the content of the training to focus on the use of the platform and to be more demand-driven, i.e. to explain how participants

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90 According to the desk review, the first trainings were 65% theoretical and 35% on the use of the platform.
92 Ibid.
94 The training was 70% focused on using ALERT (”ALERT Roll Out After Action Review.”)
could adapt their organisations’ data to the platform. The first training that used the new curriculum took place in Kenya in September 2017. According to the data from the desk review, the satisfaction with the training improved as a result of these changes. HelpAge International, as well as other consortium members, conducted 14 trainings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Training Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Oct. 2017, Feb 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Sept. 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>Nov. 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data collected suggests that the level of user engagement was interrelated with the number of trainings conducted and the frequency of the repetitions. In other words, the more training and awareness on the platform an organisation received, the more likely it was to use the platform. That confirms the findings from the relevance section: the use of the platform is relevant and deemed satisfactory by the users, if the ALERT process and platform are known.

As detailed in Section V.1.2.3, the platform’s ease of use depends on the user’s capacity to understand the concepts on which the platform relies and to turn these concepts into real-life actions. For instance, some users struggled with the risk monitoring section, not because they did not know how to use the webpage, but because they could not develop appropriate indicators to monitor the hazard. Most of the in-country and consortium members interviewed welcomed the fact that the training revolved around the platform. Yet, they felt it should give a stronger emphasis on the concepts behind the platform.

At the time of writing this report, the ALERT project team was reviewing the training materials to develop two versions, based on the preparedness capacity of NGOs. First, one training set targets organisations with pre-existing preparedness capacity, and mostly focuses on the platform (like the current version of the training). The second training set places equal emphasis on building the preparedness skills of participants as on the ALERT platform itself.

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95 “ALERT Roll Out After Action Review.”, consortium key informants
96 In Pakistan and the Philippines, some users attended more than one training.
97 This finding is consistent with the baseline report realised by the Operations Partnerships. The Operations Partnership, “Baseline Report on ALERT’s Usability and Potential Long-Term Impact.”
V.2.5. **ALERT resulting in a greater preparedness and response among humanitarian actors (NGOs, local organisations, government and communities)**

When this evaluation took place, the majority of organisations had just started to roll-out the platform and thus had not yet had the opportunity to use the ALERT platform during an emergency response. As such, **it was too early to assess whether the ALERT platform would result in faster, more organised and better emergency responses among NGOs and local organisations.**

During the roll-out, three red alerts were activated, i.e. advanced preparedness actions were enabled, and NGOs were getting ready to conduct emergency activities. NRC activated a red ALERT in Kenya during the election in October 2017, and both CDRC and ACCORD did so in the aftermath of the Moyon Volcano eruption in the Philippines in January 2018.** These events were the closest the platform has come to being used during a real emergency response. However, these organisations were not fully using ALERT at the time, and did not use the platform meaningfully to trigger advance preparedness actions and track the implementation of the first emergency activities. Therefore, the evaluation team could not study these three red alerts to determine the extent to which the platform led to greater preparedness.**

At the time of data collection, Christian Aid’s HQ was planning a simulation for June 2018 in Bangladesh and the Philippines with its local partners, using the ALERT platform. If no earlier example of using the platform arises before then, this will provide a unique opportunity for the ALERT project to validate its proof of concept: "**ALERT makes NGO emergency preparedness more effective, leading to faster and more efficient decision-making systems for emergency response."**

A significant number of the interviewees** unsurprisingly mentioned that the platform’s evaluation was taking place too soon after the beginning of the roll-out. However, these early adopters started to witness organisational changes, leading them to believe that ALERT would result in greater preparedness and response, if deployed. These include:**

- The data is centralised, and the information is easier to find. During the emergency response, roles and responsibilities are clear.
- Users are able to prepare proposals in advance, thus saving time during the submission.
- Some organisations adapted their preparedness plan, in particular adding APAs. One INGO even developed its preparedness plan in Kenya as if it had not been produced before. If correctly set up and followed, the APAs would, in their opinion, improve the timeliness of the emergency response.

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98 Key Informants Interviews
99 This was mentioned by 15 interviewees
- Organisations could monitor their compliance with Core Humanitarian Standard preparedness commitments.¹⁰⁰
- The platform was particularly adapted to INGOs that are present in different countries to track their country offices’ and partners’ preparedness.¹⁰¹
- It provides NGOs with a tool to build and retain institutional capacity and memory, and ensures language and terminology consistency. This was deemed to be particularly useful in dealing with the high turnover reported in the humanitarian sector.

V.2.6. The effectiveness of the M&E system in informing the design of the platform

As summarised by one interviewee, the difficulty with the ALERT’s M&E system is that the ALERT project team had “to combine a macro to a micro approach,” i.e. assessing the global impact of the project to be accountable and transparent, while consistently assessing and prioritising users’ needs to adapt the platform. Considering the innovativeness and the complexity of the project, the ALERT project team was relatively successful in setting up a M&E system combining both approaches.

To resolve bugs and improve the MVP based on users’ feedback, the ALERT project team set up a self-reflective project monitoring, evaluation and learning system to collect feedback from users via different channels, and constantly learn from its early adopters.

Figure 8: Channels to collect users’ feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Permanent</th>
<th>Regular</th>
<th>Punctual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Help Desk  | - 1 dedicated position  
             - 2 focal points (PHI, PAK) | Users’ survey (after each training)  
             Google Analytics (# users)  
             Review workshops  
             - Thematic live chat  
             - Focus group discussions | Independent research:  
             - Usability Baseline (OP)  
             - ALERT credibility (OP)  
             - Final Evaluation (KAC)  
             - Research on Weather forecasts (Sussex Uni.)  
             Internal research:  
             - After-action review |

This system was effective in tracking the roll-out of the platform and making operational decisions based on users’ feedback. Feedback was collected via the help desk¹⁰² and was

¹⁰⁰ CARE, who is piloting the platform globally, mentions this is as one of the perks of using the platform in its internal documentation (CARE Int., “ALERT in Care,” n.d.)
¹⁰¹ This was also mentioned in “ALERT Roll Out After Action Review.”

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either handled directly (support with the platform set up), referred to the developers (bugs) or recorded (requests to improve features or add features). From September to December 2017, the ALERT project team tapped into the latter, alongside the findings from the review workshops and the various pieces of research, to determine which features to add/improve on the platform. It prioritised users’ requests based on their frequency, cost of implementation and potential added-value in the emergency preparedness process.

The feedback and questions from users on using the platform were often handled by email, Skype or phone, and were not formally recorded in one central repository. Therefore, the project team will not be able to conduct a long-term analysis on the use of the platform to identify the most recurrent hurdles users faced, to adjust the training materials and support if needed.

At a macro level, since the approval of the proposal, the project has evolved: creating a cloud-based platform instead of a software program, and reducing the number of countries from 8 to 5. These changes were formalised quite, late with the final and official version of the logical framework being finalised in October 2016. Since then, the logical framework evolved in April 2017, with the DEPP’s request to add new indicators to the logical framework, such as a gender breakdown.

While the ALERT project team was successful in tracking its output indicators related to the platform’s development progress, the number of participants trained and the number of organisations on the platform, it did not monitor its number of users effectively.

Indeed, to report on its user base, the ALERT project team used Google Analytics to track its number of users. However, because ALERT’s Google Analytics account was configured in default settings, it tracked the number of devices connected to the platform instead of the number of users. As such, it prevented ALERT from effectively tapping into GA to measure the usage of the platform. Web Analytics experts recommend customising GA accounts based on the users’ stories to determine the real usage of the platform. Otherwise, there is a strong risk of misinterpreting data and of confusing “vanity metrics” (see Section VIII.9) with actual usage.

The evaluation team did not have the opportunity to access on-site data reports, which would have enabled them to determine the accurate number of users and their usage of

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102 There was one dedicated staff in the ALERT project team, and two focal points respectively in the Philippines and Pakistan.
104 In default setting, Google Analytics tracks the device connected to the platform rather than the number of users.
105 Zee Drakhshandeh, “Google Analytics for Beginners (MOOC) – Session 1.4 – How to Setup Views with Filter – Google Academy“Basic Google Analytics Filters”, n.d.
Experts in data analytics have raised concerns about the risk of considering some GA metrics as actionable metrics. These are called vanity metrics. Source : “Vanity Metrics vs Actionable Metrics” – Guest Post by Eric Ries.
106 Some informants reported that this data was barely used by the ALERT project team at the time of the evaluation.
the platform. At the time of the evaluation, the ALERT project team prioritised the collection of feedback over setting up the platform’s M&E functionalities.

V.3. **The efficiency of the use of the project resources**

Value for Money (VfM) can be defined as the 3 E’s framework of; economy, efficiency and cost-effectiveness. It refers to the optimal use of resources to achieve the best outcomes.

Efficiency focuses on how well inputs are converted into outputs. Efficiency gains can come from choosing less resource-intensive software and roll-out options and from decreases in direct costs, such as transportation. Efficiency also includes the indirect costs of the project, such as the cost of running the consortium. Measuring cost-effectiveness means analysing the relative costs of achieving the desired impact, which, in ALERT’s case, is to build the preparedness of its users.

Despite evidence of organisations using the platform for preparedness activities, and showing signs of improved preparedness, the evaluation team could not assess the cost effectiveness of the project, i.e. "resulting increase in speed, appropriateness and effectiveness of response," because no emergency responses were triggered during the project’s life span.

The sections below examine, in a qualitative way, the VfM of the ALERT project.

V.3.1. **Results versus the cost of implementation**

A majority of the interviewed project stakeholders agreed that the results of the project justified the cost of implementation, and that the same results could have not been achieved with a smaller budget.

At the end of the project, the total expenditure was expected to be 1,987,001 GBP, versus 1,987,000 GBP in the original budget. Because of the evaluation timeframe, i.e. collecting data in February 2018, the evaluation team could not fully investigate the budget components for the first quarter of 2018, as the final financial report was not available. Therefore, it limited itself to analysing the VfM until 31 December 2017.

**As of 31 December, the total expenses were 1,309,658 GBP**, which could be broken down into three main type of expenses: the software development, the consultation and roll-out process, and the HR and consortium costs.

V.3.1.1. **The software development**

The total direct cost to develop the software amounted to 423,268 GBP as of 31 December 2017, which accounts for 32% of total expenditures. According to the initial

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project proposal, it should amount to 862,627 GBP, i.e. 43% of the budget, at the end of the project.\footnote{The indirect costs, such as the project management team, which spent time working on the platform, are not included.} The direct cost can be broken down as follows:

\footnote{As of 31 December 2017, the total budget spent was 1,309,658 GBP.}
Table 4: Break-down of the software development cost

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>End of December 2017</th>
<th>Planned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Software design (prototype &amp; MVP)</td>
<td>250,421 GBP</td>
<td>577,065 GBP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software training materials</td>
<td>57,632 GBP</td>
<td>135,000 GBP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software consultants (to assist the team with the software design)</td>
<td>115,215 GBP</td>
<td>150,562 GBP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The evaluation team found that the cost of the software design as of 31 December 2017 represented overall good value for money, in relation with the final product delivered, its features, and the complexity and variety of users’ stories. In addition, compared to the initial budget, the ALERT project team added new features, such as the network module, which represented significant development time.

Roller’s initial quote was 70,000 GBP, which represented one-sixth of the budget available. According to one interviewee, the choice of the platform’s technology, i.e. Firebase, resulted in about 40% savings in the Roller’s quote compared to its competitors. This allowed the ALERT project team to reprioritise features that were initially deprioritised in the software RFP. Higher complexity compared to initial estimates led Roller to double the development resources to deliver on time. This resulted in extra development time that benefitted the overall quality of the ALERT platform, at no cost because Roller provided these extra resources pro-bono.

The static prototype Futurice designed represented 22% of the software design costs. While this step was effective in validating the main project hypothesis, and represented a valuable resource to collect users’ feedback, the price of the static prototype appeared to the evaluation team to be above market price.

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111 This cost includes the static prototype, the MVP, the ALERT branding and the debugging and hosting. At the end of December 2017, no budget was associated to hosting.

112 In software development, a user’s story is a narrative short description of one or more features of the software, from the point of view of a type of user. An example within ALERT would be: “As a/an ERT User I want to be able to see what actions have been assigned to me”.

113 Key Informant Interviews enabled the identification that the implementation of the Network feature required a more complex architecture that planned and developed for the MVP. Complexity of user roles and related authorization has also consumed more time than estimated.

114 Based on the initial collaboration with EPAM, the ALERT project team’s estimates for the full software design was 500,000 GBP. Futurice, who developed the static prototype, quoted 200,000 GBP. HelpAge International, “ALERT DEPP Quarterly Report 9 Sept-Dec. 2016.”

115 KI, Rollers proposal and quotation vs JIRA user stories

116 A note on this analysis: The evaluation team assumed that the 56,263 GBP available for the “Specialist IT interface company - interface, proofs, mock-ups” were solely dedicated to developing the prototype and did not include other cost as travelling. It is the evaluation team software developer experience that such static prototype usually range between 20,000 to 35,000 GBP.
The ALERT project team hired external consultants to help with the technical project oversight, e.g. redaction of the RFP document or the co-management of Roller Agency. These consultancy costs, which represented 17% of the total software development costs, may appear to be high when compared to the software design costs. However, according to the consortium members, the software consultant’s contribution to the project (96% of this consultancy cost) was deemed to be crucial, because he largely assisted with the re-scoping of the project after the end of the partnership with EPAM and bridged the gap between HelpAge International and Roller Agency. Without the contribution from a software development expert, the consortium felt they would not have been able to produce such a complete final product. It would have been worth looking into hiring a software developer, because for a relatively similar budget, he/she would have been working full-time on the project.

Finally, while the project comes to an end in March 2018, HelpAge International has already paid for the next two years of debugging and hosting. As such, even if it were too early to assess the impact of the project, the project team has laid the foundation for the ALERT platform to be used by humanitarian actors after the end of the project.

There is a difference of 326,643 GBP between the planned software cost and the actual at the end of December 2017. This difference was meant to include, among others, the hosting and debugging cost for the two years after the project (85,000 GBP), and the mobile application (no cost information). However, these two expenses alone do not justify this difference, since a mobile app, when the platform it is based on is already developed, costs less than 100,000 GBP. As the last quarter’s financial data was not available when the final evaluation was conducted, the evaluation team could not fully investigate the budget components to understand this difference.

V.3.1.2. The consultation and the roll-out

The total cost for the consultation with various humanitarian actors, to elaborate the process and present the static prototype, was 76,971 GBP. Considering that the ALERT project team consulted more than 58 actors, interviewees reported this to be a pretty efficient use of resources. However, the evaluation team did not have access to sufficiently detailed budget information to confirm this opinion.

Furthermore, the ALERT project team dedicated 126,667 GBP to the roll-out in the different countries. As there were 45 organisations on the platform, a very blunt

117 This estimate is based on the Software developer’s professional experience. For more experience, please refer to VIII.15 Details on composition of evaluation team.
119 The figure is based on HelpAge International, “Participant ALERT Training.Xlsx.” This list did not include the organisations that were trained from Mid-February until the end of the project. Therefore, the number of organisations was likely to be higher.
calculation shows that it costs 2,815 GBP to have one organisation use the platform (usually three members of staff per organisation\textsuperscript{120}), which represents a significant acquisition cost. However, these costs also included all four in-country demonstration costs (travels, venues)\textsuperscript{121} where the ongoing MVP was presented to 102 NGOs. Therefore, considering that ALERT developed a MVP to get as many users’ feedback as possible, the evaluation team found these costs to be quite efficient. The acquisition costs are likely to decrease for the next phase of the project.

When the roll-out was organised by consortium partners’ country offices, it drove costs down, e.g. no international travelling, and increased the roll-out efficiency, without, according to interviews and respondents, compromising the quality of the training. For example, CARE had a budget of 8,335 GBP to train 19 partners in the Philippines; this was a cost of 438 GBP to train three people per organisation.\textsuperscript{122}

\textbf{V.3.1.3. The HR and the consortium structure}

The Human Resources (HR) cost of the project represented 19\% of the total project cost. HelpAge International’s HR was actively involved in the conception of the process, the design of the platform, conducting training and providing feedback to users. Therefore, comparing the volume of activities to the size of project team,\textsuperscript{123} it is the evaluation team’s opinion that the HR set up of the project was quite efficient.

Finally, the consortium costs represented 10\% of the total project, and were materialised by the salary of consortium members’ staff involved in the consortium. Delivering the project through a consortium did lead to some increased effectiveness (see Section V.2.1). However, there is limited evidence of efficiency gains as a result of working through a consortium, because HelpAge International carried out the bulk of the project activities by themselves (see V.3.2.3) and consortium interviewees reported spending very little time on the ALERT project.

\textsuperscript{120} As the evaluation team did not have access to the platform’s data table, it could not determine the actual number of users and calculate a cost per user, which would be a useful metric.

\textsuperscript{121} There were four consultation workshops (Bangladesh, Mozambique, Pakistan, the Philippines), where the project team presented the ALERT (HelpAge International, “ALERT DEPP Quarterly Report 11 April-June 2017,” HelpAge International, “ALERT DEPP Quarterly Report 10 Jan-Mars 2017,” n.d.

\textsuperscript{122} From KIs.

\textsuperscript{123} The ALERT project team was composed of four staff: The project Manager, the Evaluation and Learning Officer, the Project and Communication Officer (who was mainly involved in IT and the relationship with Roller) and the Administrative Officer.
V.3.2. The drivers of value for money

V.3.2.1. Corporate partnerships

From the onset of the project, at the request of DFID, the ALERT project team aimed to include the private sector in the project, in the form of corporate partnerships. Overall, the corporate partnerships did not result in noticeable efficiency gains, although there were successful and unsuccessful partnerships.

The successful partnerships were mainly with the legal sector. ALERT partnered with law firms Deschert, CMS, Bristows, and White & Case, and got free legal assistance on several topics, such as the consortium partnership agreements or the software agreement. These legal partnerships were a source of both economy and efficiency, because they reduced the project costs while delivering a similar quality as a classic provider would have done. For instance, the partnerships with Bristows resulted in a monetary value of around 35,000 GBP. Another successful partnership included the design of the ALERT branding by Blast.

On the other hand, ALERT had an unsuccessful partnership with EPAM, who was initially supposed to design the ALERT platform. It resulted in ALERT losing six months of project implementation time. The ALERT project team initially proposed a 50:50 partnerships to 12 software companies. Only EPAM agreed to such a partnership, quoting a discounted rate of 600,000 GBP. ALERT and EPAM agreed to work on the project, but the partnership was terminated nine months after its start, due to various reasons. First, EPAM never agreed to sign the draft partnership agreements. Second, EPAM missed its profit targets, and its board decided to deprioritise pro-bono projects. EPAM proposed several alternatives to continue the collaboration, such as using bench time and agreeing on a loose delivery timeframe, or using a proprietary solution. However, none of these alternatives were viable because they would have further delayed the project, and meant that the platform would not have been open source. Although EPAM reportedly spent 203 man days on the project, it did not deliver a usable prototype to ALERT, and the project team had to restart the development from scratch. Even if the partnership failure resulted in a loss of 9 calendar months for the product development, consortium members concurred that the initial scoping phase with EPAM was not lost time, and allowed them to start looking for a service provider immediately.

Looking at these examples, legal partnerships were more successful than others, because there is an existing pro-bono culture in this sector and the scope of work was reasonable.

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124 A corporate partnership is a partnership between a NGO and a private company, wherein the latter provides financial support, access to skills, resources, etc., or a mix of both. For more information, please refer to the Glossary.
126 Ibid.
127 Blast was a design agency based in the UK.
128 “More Than Just Money: ALERT’s Journey in the World of Corporate Sector Partnerships.”
(40,000.00 GBP vs. 600,000.00 GBP). For such a complex task, i.e. developing the ALERT platform, relying on corporate partnerships did not lead to efficiency gains.

V.3.2.2. Procurement

HelpAge International’s procurement strategy was successful, and resulted in both economy and efficiency gains for the project. It also allowed them to develop a mobile application, which is expected to improve the project’s effectiveness.

After the termination of the contract with EPAM, HelpAge adapted its procurement strategy to identify a firm to design the static prototype and test it, while in the meantime taking the time to develop a proposal request for the MVP. To do so, ALERT split the bid into 2,\(^{129}\) in order to avoid having to go through a full tender process involving HelpAge’s International board, thus further delaying the project.\(^{130}\)

For the MVP, 14 firms submitted expressions of interests, and the project team invited 8 firms to submit a full proposal. Out of the three companies shortlisted, Roller Agency won the bid, because it quoted less than its closest competitor, Futurice with a total cost of 200,000.00 GBP.\(^{131}\) As highlighted in the project’s documentations, “It is worth recognising that the tendering process revealed an unexpected opportunity for the Consortium, in revealing a lower cost to software development than we had planned for.”\(^{132}\)

By choosing Roller Agency, ALERT was able to add some additional functionalities that were initially set aside: a network module, a mobile application and language options, among others.\(^{133}\) On the other hand, while being cheaper, Roller was a young company and there were fewer guarantees it would deliver as it was relatively inexperienced compared to Futurice, who already knew the project.\(^{134}\) In retrospect, consortium members thought they took the right decision, because, in spite of delays in implementation, Roller delivered a quality platform, and by the end of March 2018 Roller is expected to develop an ALERT mobile application.

V.3.2.3. Consortium structure

While the consortium approach was relevant to get international INGOs on board from the start, the consortium arrangements were not formalised, which resulted in a loss of efficiency.

According to the project proposal, the ALERT consortium management was dependent on a working group, comprising of an organisation focal point. However, the role and responsibilities of the working group members were apparently never clarified. This was reported to have two main inconveniences.

\(^{129}\) There were two bids: one bid for the Static prototype, another one for the MVP.
\(^{132}\) Ibid.
\(^{133}\) Ibid.
\(^{134}\) Consortium KIIs.
The first inconvenience was that the ALERT project team, which was only comprised of ALERT staff, had limited support from other organisations at the beginning of the project, as mentioned by several interviewees. HelpAge International absorbed the bulk of the project implementation during the first phases of the project. Except for the roll-out with national partners, which undeniably led to some increased effectiveness, other consortium members reportedly had limited involvement in the first phase of the project. In addition, during the project implementation, several partner focal points changed, and some were not fully involved with the project in its later stages.

The second was that not all the organisation appointees had the sufficient internal leverage to create a strong buy-in on ALERT at the organisation level. In retrospect, one interviewee thought that having a steering committee made of senior staff, e.g. Director of Operations, would have helped promote ALERT in all consortium organisations. Two other interviewees reported they faced difficulties in convincing their organisations to roll-out ALERT.

V.3.2.4. ALERT’s local partnerships

The ALERT project formed partnerships for the demonstration and assistance of users at local level, which resulted in cost savings for international travel.

For instance, in the Philippines and in Bangladesh, HelpAge International leveraged its country offices, and its local partner COSE, to demonstrate the platform. Starting in September 2017, Helpage International involved its country office in Pakistan, and subcontracted COSE to provide technical support for agencies in the Philippines. Similarly, CARE, Christian Aid and Handicap International delegated the demonstration of the platform to their local staff. This resulted in savings on international travels costs.

V.3.2.5. Iterative project management

Developing a static prototype before launching the MVP was good VfM, because it enabled the ALERT project team to prioritise features based on users’ perceived needs, and to avoid developing features that users did not need. As a result, it enabled the ALERT project team to make informed decisions based on users’ feedback and to refine the RFP documents. This saved time on software development and costs.

Similarly, launching a MVP with only the core features allowed the project team to collect feedback from users before investing more time in development, and to prioritise the development of new features. The ALERT project team was able to save on the software development cost.

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135 At the end of the project, there was little evidence that Concern Worldwide would adopt ALERT. Evidence that Islamic Relief may adopt ALERT occurred outside the timeframe for data collection for this evaluation report.
136 HelpAge International has no country offices in the Philippines.
V.4. **The sustainability of the ALERT project**

Looking at the sustainability of the ALERT project entails examining the extent to which the ALERT process and platform are aligned with the users’ approaches, systems and procedures; whether users have institutionalised ALERT in their organisations and have the local capacity to use it; and assess how it is anticipated to strengthen global preparedness systems.

V.4.1. **The alignment of the ALERT project with users’ approaches systems and procedures**

According to most interviewees, the ALERT process was aligned with their organisations’ systems, procedures and approaches, either because it followed the same steps, had similar components as their emergency preparedness plan, and/or was based on the IASC framework. Even when the ALERT process was different, the modularity and flexibility of the process/platform made it aligned with the organisations’ approaches, systems and procedures.

It should be noted though that, as suggested by the data collected during the final evaluation, most users only understood how the platform could be moulded to their organisations’ needs after being trained. The training is required to understand the process (e.g. terminology) and platform, its flexibility (e.g. enable/disable modules), and to reassure participants on the next steps to set it up in their organisation. That being said, a significant number of users complained that reprocessing the data to fill the platform is time-consuming, and would like the platform to be able to include the data as it is, i.e. to be able to import existing data.

The main risk for the ALERT project of not being aligned with users’ systems and procedures is technical. As detailed in Section V.1.2.2, the platform’s accessibility was a primary concern for users, especially for those with offices in remote areas or who work with local partners with limited technological means. NGOs operating in remote areas or NNGOs with limited IT budgets, and hence low internet, are likely not to be able to use the platform. INGOs, who are driving the adoption of the platform, may not invest the time and budget necessary to institutionalise the platform, if some of their country offices and partners cannot use it.

V.4.2. **Institutionalising the benefits of the project**

At the time of the evaluation, there have not been examples of institutionalisation. However, some informants expressed a commitment to ensure institutionalisation in the future.

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138 KII and Desk Review.
As shown in the graph below, more than 50% of survey respondents were early adopters or promoters of the platform,\textsuperscript{139} which is quite high for a MVP. Organisations are more likely to institutionalise the benefits of the project if their current users are willing to promote the platform internally to their organisation and externally to other stakeholders.

\textsuperscript{139} As a reminder, promoters are respondents who graded 9 or 10 out of an 11-point scale: the likelihood of recommending the ALERT platform.
In addition, about two-thirds of interviewees anticipated that specific features of the ALERT platform would be institutionalised, such as risk monitoring, preparedness actions and scenario-based plans. Users expected that the launch of the network feature would be an added-value to institutionalising the platform, because it would allow INGOs to have one global tool to track the preparedness of their country offices and local partners.

However, the anticipated level of institutionalisation from INGOs that were part of the consortium significantly varied. As these INGOs train their local partners, their level of engagement will substantially impact the trickle-down effect of the project and its sustainability. CARE and Humanity & Inclusion\textsuperscript{140} were piloting the ALERT platform within their organisations and promoting it, via trainings, to their partners. CARE had given itself 12 months\textsuperscript{141} to test the platform globally and was promoting the platform in its emergency preparedness guidelines and in a dedicated document.\textsuperscript{142} Furthermore, CARE trained its national partners on the use of the platform, e.g. CARE PHI trained 30 different partners on using the platform. HelpAge International was using the platform in the project countries, had trained its national partners, and was discussing the modalities internally to roll it out globally. Humanity & Inclusion tested it in Bangladesh, Kenya and the Philippines, and was about to roll it out in Haiti. Oxfam was planning to make ALERT available to all its country offices on a facultative basis and had trained some national partners in the Philippines. However, it did not appear as active as other consortium members in Kenya and Pakistan. Regarding Concern, the evaluation team found its

\textsuperscript{140} Used to be known as Handicap International.
\textsuperscript{141} From January to December 2018.
country office in Pakistan was using the platform. At the time of data collection for this evaluation, Islamic Relief had not rolled out any trainings.\textsuperscript{143}

While not a consortium member, Christian Aid’s HQ was encouraging its country offices to use the platform and was planning to conduct a simultaneous ALERT simulation in Bangladesh and the Philippines.

There were also significant differences across countries. In the Philippines and in Pakistan, about three-quarters of interviewees anticipated their organisation would institutionalise the ALERT platform, at least partially. These interviewees, especially in the Philippines, often referred to themselves as “early adopters,” and felt a sense of pride in being among the first few to test the platform. While in their opinion the platform undeniably brought value, it is to be anticipated that their level of engagement with the project will reduce after March 2018, because they will not have access to an in-country focal point.

It was the opposite in Kenya and Bangladesh, as most interviewees anticipated that ALERT would not be institutionalised. For some, the platform did not justify the added workload it would entail as it did not bring a sufficient advantage compared to the organisations’ existing processes. Others felt they were not sufficiently trained to use the platform without assistance, and did not want to invest the energy with the future of the platform being uncertain.

Furthermore, many interviewees considered the time needed to input data into the platform to be a barrier to institutionalisation.\textsuperscript{144} In the Philippines and Pakistan, users were taking the time to do so, because they had a dedicated support resource in-country, and because the ALERT project team organised one-to-one support visits to help them set up their ALERT account.\textsuperscript{145} On the other hand, in Bangladesh and Kenya where such support was not available, the uptake was more limited. This suggests that organisations do not institutionalise the data if an ALERT support team is not available to provide support and assistance. Alternatively, several organisations reported they would use the platform if they had budgeted to get extra human resources to take care of the data entry on the platform.

Either way, the institutionalisation of the platform will ultimately depend on each organisation’s capacity to get extra resources to implement ALERT, and their willingness to prioritise time on the platform over other activities and projects.

\section*{V.4.3. Local capacity to continue to use the platform}

A vast majority of the country users felt they had the local capacity to use the platform, but would need regular and punctual access to external help, such as the help desk or a hotline. Only 4 INGOs’ country offices felt completely capable of using the platform and

\textsuperscript{143} In the list of KIIs provided to the evaluation team, there was no interviewees from Islamic Relief. It appears they have conducted at least one training after the period of data collection for this evaluation.

\textsuperscript{144} This barrier to usage was also reported in the desk review: “ALERT Roll Out After Action Review.” and HelpAge International, “ALERT DEPP Quarterly Report 12 July-Sept. 2017,” 12.

\textsuperscript{145} “ALERT Roll Out After Action Review.”
training staff internally without support. However, they were concerned that they would not be able to retrain external partners because they lacked the ToT skills required to do so.

Probing interviewees on their anticipated capacity to use the platform, it appeared that the issue did not lay in the capacity of local staff to use the platform as many said, “it was as easy as Facebook”; the issue rather laid with the emergency preparedness processes behind the platform. For instance, many interviewees reported having difficulties with the risk monitoring sections, but, after probing, they told the evaluation team that it was because they did not know which indicator to choose. Similarly for the preparedness actions, interviewees did not know which actions should be considered as Advanced Preparedness Actions. While interviewees from NNGOs tended to report this, there were also a significant number of interviewees from INGOs who admitted facing similar difficulties.

After March 2018, the country support staff, as well as the ALERT project team, will not be involved in the platform support. It will be handled by Roller for bugs/feedbacks on the platform and two HelpAge HQ staff members for content-related support (one for the liaison between Roller and users, and the other for the contract with Roller and strategic relations). Considering the reported need for support from users to roll-out the platform, the available support is likely to not be sufficient to meet all the needs. While INGOs’ interviewees were confident they could get preparedness support from their HQs, NNGOs’ users were concerned this support would not be available for them at either the country or global level.

V.4.4. Expectations of the ALERT project to help strengthen global preparedness systems

Although interviewees were aware that ALERT was just a tool, most interviewees felt that ALERT had the potential to strengthen global preparedness systems.

First, ALERT could help by increasing the theoretical preparedness knowledge of NGOs, thanks to an exhaustive and modular emergency preparedness process, and an interactive support tool with an active community of users. New organisations would have access to a repository of public data (indicators, plans, actions) to tap into to design and upgrade their emergency preparedness plans.

Second, ALERT could support the localisation agenda of the Grand Bargain, i.e. support the capacity development of NNGOs, LNGOs and civil society organisations (CSOs). This was especially noted by interviewees from the Philippines, whose emergency response usually involves multiple organisations.

Third, ALERT could help by producing standardised information in a consistent format, first at the country level, and second at the global level. As one interviewee put it, ALERT could

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be a “Bank of information not available before.” Therefore, it would allow its users to make data-driven decisions.

However, all interviewees concurred that, for the platform to truly strengthen emergency preparedness process, users needed to first use the platform and second be transparent about data they published online. As this was not yet the case, it was therefore too early to assess if ALERT could reach that potential.

In addition, for about half of the interviewees, the platform would also need to include other humanitarian actors (donors, the UN, and governments) to reach this potential.

The Donors

When the data was collected, the ALERT team was about to deploy a donor module to the platform, allowing donors to access public data on the platform. Users had mixed feelings about the inclusion of donors on the platform. For some, the donors were a prominent actor in the emergency response, and would finally have the opportunity to take data-driven decisions for their funding arrangements. Having them on the platform would represent an opportunity for NNGOs to access donors’ funding directly, and for the latter to assess the preparedness level of users, and even fund preparedness. The donors interviewed concurred that the platform would help them take data-driven decisions more quickly and would increase the transparency of their funding allocations. In their opinion, reliable preparedness information was currently hard to get.

For the others, having the donor on the platform represented a risk that the platform would be misused by organisations, who would want to appear more prepared than they actually were. Some of the interviewees were concerned that the donor could misinterpret the information, and even “punish” organisations for not being sufficiently prepared.

The Governments

Regardless of the country, in interviewees’ opinions, ALERT should have included the government on the platform because it was a key actor in the response. Government officials needed first to access information on the NGOs’ preparedness capacity, and second to feed NGOs with data (weather forecasts, national plans, etc.). In Pakistan and Kenya, interviewees considered this to be a requirement for the platform to be sustainable. In the Philippines, most interviewees thought it would also improve the sustainability of the platform, and 2 interviewees wondered how well ALERT would coexist with the platform that the government was reportedly about to launch.

From the onset of the project, the ALERT project team aimed to include the government in the platform via direct consultations, and research. However, ALERT was also

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147 The donor module has been developed since the MVP. The project recommended that organisations have more time to set up and get comfortable with the platform before donors joined.

148 This was also mentioned in The Operations Partnership, “Baseline Report on ALERT’s Usability and Potential Long-Term Impact.”

149 For example, HelpAge international met the Mozambican Government to present to them the platform.

150 The project team commissioned an independent research in the Philippines and in Kenya on how to include weather forecasts on the platform.
concerned that the government could not be included in all contexts,\textsuperscript{151} such as in Niger, Central African Republic, Bangladesh and Pakistan.\textsuperscript{152}

\textsuperscript{151} “Minute DEPP Event Data Transparency Nov17.”
\textsuperscript{152} Key Informant Interviews
The UN

Similarly, several interviewees felt that the ALERT platform should either include the UN (OCHA, UNICEF, OCHA), especially because there is information about the clusters on the platform, or at least import UN data, e.g. Relief Web data, on the platform.

Since the start of the project, the ALERT project team had been proactive in involving various UN agencies in the design of the process and the platform. They attended and contributed to several UN preparedness workshops, e.g. IASC sub-group for Emergency Response Preparedness workshop, and an IASC working group meeting in February 2018. They also included the UN into the ALERT process design, and discussed the interoperability of the platform with existing UN resources.

During implementation, the ALERT project team decided to wait for the second phase of the project to resume their discussion with the UN agencies, because during the MVP phase the platform was not sufficiently mature enough to interoperate with the UN.

VI. Conclusions

ALERT succeeded in designing an appropriate emergency preparedness process and emergency preparedness tool, thanks to collaborative and iterative project management. ALERT’s investment in collaboration appear to have paid off, with findings from this evaluation suggesting that both the ALERT process and the platform are generally relevant, transferable, aligned and appropriate for targeted organisations. The iterative project management allowed the project to overcome hurdles, especially time delays, to still meet its objectives (specifically of developing the platform and training NGO staff). Furthermore, this process allowed the project to improve in real-time, such as debugging the platform and making it more user-friendly, and re-scoping the training materials to better fit beneficiaries’ needs.

The ALERT project team managed to roll-out the platform in Pakistan and the Philippines reasonably well, thanks to the collective effort of most consortium members. It was, however, less successful in rolling out the platform in Bangladesh and Kenya. For Bangladesh, the Rohingya emergency there greatly hindered the roll-out during this phase of the project. For Kenya, the lack of an in-country focal point appeared to have been the biggest deterrent to a wider adoption.

However, despite promising evidence that the platform could lead to improved preparedness and response, ALERT has not yet demonstrated its proof of concept, “to make NGO emergency preparedness more effective, leading to faster and more efficient decision-making systems for emergency response.” Reflecting on the complexity of the ALERT project and the time it takes to create long-lasting positive change at the

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156 Key Informant Interview with consortium members
humanitarian sector level, three years may not have been sufficient to demonstrate this proof of concept.

For the second phase of the project, it is paramount that ALERT substantiates that it can help improve the preparedness of its users. Otherwise, the platform may fall into disuse, and the time and money invested into developing it will have been wasted.

There are several challenges ahead of ALERT to become an essential tool in the global emergency preparedness ecosystem.

First, ALERT needs to include the governments and donors on the platform, without losing the uptake of NGOs.

Second, ALERT has to work out a business model where it can extend its user base while maintaining sufficient levels of support to all users to roll-out and use the platform. Realistically, considering the current platform is a MVP with a limited user base, another round of funding may be required to stabilise the platform, before envisioning a self-sustaining business model.

Third, ALERT will have to actively communicate outside of the START network if it wants the platform to be known, and used, by humanitarian actors in different countries. Only a collective effort from all INGOs using the platform will enable such a communication strategy. This questions ALERT’s current governance model: How should it evolve to ensure that all NGOs feel that ALERT is a collective tool that is owned by the broader humanitarian community?

VII. Recommendations

The recommendations below are suggested to benefit the next phase of the ALERT project. The recommendations fall into six categories: Training, Platform improvement, After-training support, MEL, Sustainability of the platform, and Consortium structure.

VII.1. ALERT Training

In addition to demonstrating the platform, training participants usually found the training useful for building their preparedness capacity. Some only needed a light reminder, while others needed more thorough training. The recommendations below are designed to help ALERT combine both needs.

**Recommendation 1: Add a “light” systematic capacity building module**

While some participants felt they either had sufficient preparedness knowledge and capacity or that their organisations would take care of training them, they usually welcomed the preparedness reminders and the discussions around preparedness.

On the other hand, other participants (as per KII, desk review, and the survey) with no/limited capacity felt that the training was not sufficient to build their capacity, and saw this as a hurdle to use the platform.
Therefore, to accommodate both needs, **ALERT should systematically add a half-day preparedness training, before presenting the platform to the participants.** This is applicable for both types of trainings ALERT is preparing, as some INGO interviewees felt that the ALERT training for their level was too short.

**Recommendation 2: Send the training materials in advance**

Two recurring recommendations survey respondents provided to improve the quality of the training were to 1) increase the duration of the training, and 2) share the training material in advance.

**ALERT should send the training materials at least a week in advance to let participants review it and prepare their questions.** Considering participants often ask for the materials before attending, but rarely read them, ALERT could ask participants to attend an e-learning module, e.g. on disasterready.org, with a completion certificate at the end.

ALERT could use this as an **opportunity to share recommended reading on preparedness, e.g. the IASC ERP, and to systematically send a short questionnaire to determine the training participants’ pre-existing preparedness capacity.** This short questionnaire could help ALERT determine which training materials to use.

**Recommendation 3: Partnership with a training organisation**

While the ALERT training helps to build the participants’ capacity for emergency preparedness, in its current form the training is not sufficient to transform people with a limited basic understanding of preparedness into humanitarian workers with a proficient understanding of this process. This finding emerged from both interviewees and survey respondents.

To meet this need of certain participants, and while developing a new attractive service offer, **ALERT could partner with a humanitarian training organisation, such as RedR, Bioforce or MZN, to organise training sessions that combine an emergency preparedness training with a practical platform demonstration.** The platform could even be used during the training as a basis for practical exercises on how to construct an emergency preparedness plan.

**VII.2. Platform improvements**

While interviewees generally felt the platform’s features were appropriate and the platform was easy to use, they suggested further improvements or additions. The

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157 While this does occur in Kenya and the Philippines it is not systematically done in all countries.

158 In January 2018, consultants were reviewing ALERT’s training materials and developing two types of materials: one for NGOs with existing preparedness capacity and another one for NGOs with no preparedness capacity.

159 The evaluation team referred to these three organisations, because they were implementing partners in the Talent Development Project, which is one of the DEPP projects.
recommendations below are a list of the most recurrent suggestions, which were filtered based on their technical feasibility and cost.

**Recommendation 4: Add an auto-save function**
A significant number of participants complained about losing the data they were entering in the event of a power cut. This was deemed especially problematic for the scenario-based planning, which required a lot of data entry.

ALERT should add an auto-save function to the platform to avoid users losing their data.160

**Recommendation 5: A drop-down menu for geographical locations**
Interviewees and survey respondents161 consistently reported that adding/removing geographical locations in the risk monitoring section was challenging because they could not scroll through a list.

ALERT should add a drop-down menu in the risk monitoring,162 as it requires limited development time from Roller Agency.

**Recommendation 6: Import/Export functions**
Not only did interviewees mention that it took time to enter data on the platform, but they also complained that they could not export the data afterwards, except for the scenario-based planning.

ALERT should develop an import feature, at least for the country profile that takes a lot of time to fill out. ALERT could also build-in an export function163 to allow organisations to export data for a meeting, a presentation, etc.

**Recommendation 7: Granularity in the data privacy settings**
While the data privacy settings, i.e. public, private, and network, were deemed appropriate for all contexts, users would have liked the settings to be more granular.

ALERT should look into expanding the settings within the platform’s module. As such, instead of applying the settings at the module-level, users could apply the settings to the information within the module, e.g. only making some documents public.164

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160 While this is supposedly part of the upcoming functionalities (at least for the response plan), at the time of collecting data for this evaluation it was not yet included.
161 Respondents were asked the following open-ended question: “If you could improve one of the ALERT features, what feature would it be and how would you improve it?”
162 While this is supposedly part of the upcoming functionalities, at the time of collecting data for this evaluation it was not yet included.
163 An export function is supposedly currently being built (under testing) and will be available before the end of March. However, at the time of collecting data for this evaluation it was not yet included.
164 While this is now supposedly done for the conflict indicators, at the time of collecting data for this evaluation it was not yet included.
VII.3. After-training follow-ups

The after-training follow-ups played an essential part in the platform's adoption. For the next phase of the project, ALERT should maintain, or even accentuate, the follow-up provided to users.

**Recommendation 8: In-country focal points**

As shown in the Philippines and Pakistan, having in-country focal points to assist early adopters in using the platform helped increase the platform’s adoption.

For the next phase of the project, when deploying ALERT to a new country, the ALERT project team should train local staff, and subcontract his/her organisation for providing platform assistance.

**Recommendation 9: Create a community of users**

In countries where there would be a sufficient number of users, ALERT should encourage the set-up of country communities of users.\(^{165}\)

After being trained, new organisations on the platform could request advice from the community in setting up the platform in their organisation.

VII.4. Monitoring, evaluation & learning

The ALERT project team did not use Google Analytics and on-site data for the monitoring, evaluation and learning. They also could not assess the effectiveness of the platform because it was not used during an emergency response.

The recommendations below are to help the ALERT project team monitor the platform’s usage more efficiently and demonstrate its proof of concept.

**Recommendation 10: Configure Google Analytics to track usage**

As it was not configured, ALERT’s Google Analytics (GA) account did not allow the ALERT project team to efficiently track the platform’s usage.

For the next phase of the project, ALERT should set up a tagging plan\(^ {166} \) on its GA account. It would, among other activities, allow the project team to exclude the traffic from Roller developers and the project team, and instead only track individual country usage. This would give a more accurate number of users, and track the completion of specific tasks (APAs, MPAs, and Risk Monitoring).

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\(^{165}\) Depending on the country, it could be on any of the following tools: WhatsApp, Facebook, Slack,

\(^{166}\) The tagging plan is a reference document determining which website features and action should be monitored, and how.
Recommendation 11: Leverage on-site data

To measure its impact indicator "Agencies are more systematic in their approach to operational preparedness which results in an improvement in the delivery of humanitarian assistance to disaster-affected communities,” the ALERT team should leverage on-site data.

For example, this data could allow ALERT to track the number of completed APAs/MPAs, if organisations were late in achieving them, etc. This would help the ALERT project team demonstrate the platform's proof of concept.

Recommendation 12: In-country simulations

Even if the platform had been used during an emergency response during the rolling-out phase, it would have been difficult for the ALERT project to demonstrate its proof of concept, because it would require detailed data, e.g. time spent to conduct actions, the percentage of actions forgotten, etc., with and without ALERT. Realistically, this data would have been difficult to obtain.

To demonstrate its proof of concept, the ALERT team should organise emergency simulations in different settings. They could, for example, compare the effectiveness of an emergency response that used the ALERT platform to a control group that did not use the platform.

VII.5. Sustainability of the platform

Recommendation 13: Adding governments to the platform

The vast majority of interviewees agreed that the government should be part of the platform because it plays an important role in humanitarian response.

ALERT should strengthen the promotion of the platform to government actors, as was done in Mozambique, and include them on the platform. The increased flexibility in the privacy settings would allow organisations to decide which information to make public for their government, thus ensuring that their sensitive data is only accessible by network members, or within the organisation.

Recommendation 14: A “view my profile as a donor” function

The option to add donors to the platform led to a lot of debate among interviewees. Some were in favour because it would lead to data-driven funding decisions. Some were against it because they feared people would not be transparent or would make their data private, which defeats the purpose of the platform for both donors and users.

While there is not much ALERT can do to prevent people from being non-transparent, ALERT could add a feature such as “view my organisation account as a donor.” This would allow users to understand the data donors have access to, and determine what data to make private and public.
Recommendation 15: Discuss the full Open-Source potential

ALERT originally opted for an open-source and free model\textsuperscript{167} to ease the platform’s adoption and enable custom development. While the current platform hosted on Firebase is not open source per se, the approach to the platform still follows the open-source spirit. However, open-source means it is not only free of charge but also collaborative, wherein users are active in the development of new features.

While this was not the focus of the MVP for phase 1, it would be worth considering ALERT’s open source ability and level of collaboration for the next phase of the project. Among other elements, the impact of a collaborative open-source project could be:

- Organisations could tailor ALERT to their needs by developing new features. This would further accentuate the transferability of the platform;
- Organisations using the platform would share the burden of developing new features.

Of course, such a collaborative system would only work if the governance of the ALERT project is shared among its users, i.e. users would vote on what new features to add or exclude.

VII.6. Consortium Structure

Recommendation 16: Creation of a formal consortium structure

Having a formal consortium structure with, for example a steering committee and management committee wherein all members are equally involved in jointly implementing the project, could help improve the project’s effectiveness in the next phase. During this proof of concept phase, the lack of more formal consortium structure where implementation was more evenly shared among members seems to have contributed to the strain on the HelpAge project team, which reported being understaffed. It also would have made getting new staff on-board easier. Formalising the consortium structure could help rectify these issues for the next phase and help ensure the sustainability of the project.

## VIII. Annexes

### VIII.7. Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Accessibility      | Web Accessibility (A11Y) refers to best practices for keeping a website usable despite physical and technical restrictions. Web accessibility is formally defined and discussed at the W3C through the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI). Precision on WAI from www.w3.org: The W3C Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) brings together people from industry, disability organisations, government, and research labs from around the world to develop guidelines and resources to help make the Web accessible to people with auditory, cognitive, neurological, physical, speech, and visual disabilities. *See Web standards for more precisions*                                                                 | https://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Glossary/Accessibility  
https://www.w3.org/standards/webdesign/accessibility |
| Application performance | Application performance, in the context of cloud computing, is the measurement of the real-world performance and availability of applications. It is particularly used with remote and cloud computing applications being run in remote servers and served over a network such as the Internet. Application performance is a good indicator of the level of service that a provider is offering and is one of the top monitored IT metrics. | https://www.techopedia.com/definition/30457/application-performance |
| ALERT Platform     | A free and easily accessible portal, and has been designed to be compatible with a wide variety of humanitarian agencies.                                                                                      | NA                                                                                                   |
| ALERT Process      | The summation of the key preparedness components organisations need to undertake to improve their emergency preparedness.                                                                                       | NA                                                                                                   |
| Bug                | In IT, a bug refers to an error, fault or flaw in any computer program or a hardware system. A bug produces unexpected results or causes a system to behave unexpectedly. In short it is any behaviour or result that a program or system gets but it was not designed to do. | https://www.techopedia.com/definition/3758/bug                                                                 |
| Bug Fix            | A bug fix is a change to a system or product designed to handle a programming bug/glitch. Many different types of programming bugs that create errors with system implementation may require specific bug fixes that are successfully resolved by a development or other IT team.                                            | https://www.techopedia.com/definition/29994/website-monitoring                                      |
| **Bug tracking** | Bug tracking is a process used by quality assurance personnel and programmers to keep track of software problems and resolutions. A bug tracking system is normally put in place to store information about reported bugs. This type of issue-tracking system provides a clear, centralised overview of development requests and their corresponding states. In this project, JIRA is part of the bug tracking process. | https://www.techopedia.com/definition/18105/bug-fix |
| **Capacity Building** | Capacity building is increasing one’s knowledge, skills, and ability to carry out a task. This evaluation understands preparedness capacity building to mean increasing humanitarian actors’ abilities to prepare for and carry out preparedness activities. Capacity building related to ALERT is understood as increasing users’ abilities to effectively and efficiently use the ALERT platform, and the ALERT platform’s contribution to humanitarian actors’ abilities to prepare for and carry out preparedness activities. | NA |
| **Corporate Partnership** | A corporate partnership is a partnership between a NGO and a private company, wherein the latter provides financial support, access to skills, resources, etc., or a mix of both. These partnerships sometimes combine a service provider component, i.e. the company invoices for a part of the service provided, to a pro bono component, i.e. the company donates the remaining part. In this project, examples include EPAM, RMS, Bristows, CMS, Dechert LLP, White& Case, and EPAM. | NA |
| **Debugging** | Debugging is the routine process of locating and removing computer program bugs, errors or abnormalities, which is methodically handled by software programmers via debugging tools. Debugging checks, detects and corrects errors or bugs to allow proper program operation according to set specifications. Debugging is also known as debug. | https://www.techopedia.com/definition/16373/debugging |
| **INGO Partnership** | INGOs (consortium members or not) that provide in-country training on using the ALERT platform to local and national NGOs and/or trailing ALERT with their country offices. Examples include CARE in the Philippines and Christian Aid in Mozambique. | NA |
| **Google Analytics** | Google Analytics is a freemium web analytics service offered by Google that tracks and reports website traffic. It includes basic features such as page views, number of visitors. More advanced features can also be set up to track specific set of actions and segment visitors. | https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_Analytics |

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168 The evaluators have not found any documented evidence in ALERT’s INGO partnerships.
| Minimum Viable Product (MVP) | "A Minimum Viable Product is the version of a new product that allows a team to collect the maximum amount of validated learning about customers with the least effort."
- Eric Ries - The Lean Startup |
| Net Promoter Score (NPS) | The Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a simple but powerful tool to measure client satisfaction with one single question, an indication of the growth potential of your company or product. The Net Promoter Score is a customer loyalty metric developed in 2003 by management consultant Fred Reichheld of Bain & Company in collaboration with the company Satmetrix. The objective was to determine a clear and easily interpretable customer satisfaction score which can be compared over time or between different industries.

The NPS assesses to what extent a respondent would recommend a certain company, product or service to his friends, relatives or colleagues. The idea is simple: if you like using a certain product or doing business with a particular company, you like to share this experience with others. Specifically, the respondent is asked the following "ultimate" question: How likely are you to recommend company/brand/product X to a friend/colleague/relative?

This can be answered on an 11-point rating scale, ranging from 0 (not at all likely) to 10 (extremely likely).

| Pilot phase | The next phase of the ALERT project beginning in March 2018, when the nearly-finished version of the ALERT platform will be tested in more countries. |
| Proof of concept | A proof of concept (POC) is a demonstration, the purpose of which is to verify that certain concepts or theories have the potential for real-world application. POC is therefore a prototype that is designed to determine feasibility, but does not represent deliverables.

Proof of concept is also known as proof of principle. |
| Proof of concept phase | The current phase of the ALERT project (i.e. from 2015-2018 when the ALERT process and platform were developed, and the platform was tested in Kenya, the Philippines, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. |
| Prototype | A prototype is an original model, form or an instance that serves as a basis for other processes. In software technology, the term prototype is a working example through which a new model or a new version of an existing product can be derived. |
**Precision by Key Aid Consulting:**

A prototype can be considered as static or dynamic. By static prototype we consider a prototype where user inputs are not saved, there are no real backend logic behind the prototype. Spending the time and resource available to get feedback, static prototypes can be as simple as an organised sequence of mock-ups. More complete prototypes can be composed of coded frontend webpages linked each other.

On the contrary, dynamic prototypes are more inclined to store user input & data and even make simple computations.

The choice between which to use really depends on time & resource constraints, and is specific to the problem and people you address.

**Vanity metrics**

Vanity metrics are things you can measure that don’t matter. They’re easily changed or manipulated, and they don’t bear a direct correlation with numbers that speak to business success.

People use vanity metrics because they don’t know that these numbers don’t really count, or because vanity metrics can make you feel like you’re getting results – even though they don’t really tell you anything about your business health or growth.

The trouble with vanity metrics is that they steer you off course. You measure things so you can make decisions based on the measurements, but vanity metrics don’t contribute to that process.

"The only metrics that entrepreneurs should invest energy in collecting are those that help them make decisions. Unfortunately, the majority of data available in off-the-shelf analytics packages are what I call Vanity Metrics. They might make you feel good, but they don't offer clear guidance for what to do." - Eric Ries

"Vanity metrics: good for feeling awesome, bad for action." - Tim Ferris

**Website monitoring**

Website monitoring is the process of testing and logging the status and uptime performance of one or more websites. This monitoring tool ensures that websites are accessible for all users and is used by businesses and organisations to ensure that website uptime, functionality and performance are always up to standard.

**Web standards**

Web standards are rules established by international standards bodies and defining how the Web works (and sometimes controlling the Internet as well).

Several standards bodies are responsible for defining different aspects of the Web, and all the standards must coordinate to keep the Web maximally usable and accessible. Web standards

Richard Bayston - Crazy Egg (https://www.crazyegg.com/blog/glossary/what-is-a-vanity-metric/)

Tim Ferris, Eric Ries (https://tim.blog/2009/05/19/vanity-metrics-vs-actionable-metrics/)
also must evolve to improve the current status and adapt to new circumstances.

This non-exhaustive list gives you an idea of which standards websites and network systems must conform to:

- IETF (Internet Engineering Task Force): Internet standards (STD), which among other things govern set-up and use of URIs, HTTP, and MIME

- W3C: specifications for mark-up language (e.g., HTML), style definitions (i.e., CSS), DOM, accessibility

- IANA (Internet Assigned Numbers Authority): name and number registries

- Ecma Intl.: scripting standards, most prominently for JavaScript

- ISO (International Organisation for Standardization): standards governing a diverse array of aspects, including character encodings, website management, and user-interface design.
### VIII.8. Evaluation Questions

The evaluation matrix is presented below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation question</th>
<th>Working questions</th>
<th>How judgement will be formed</th>
<th>Pre-conditions</th>
<th>Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How relevant is ALERT in developing the preparedness of in-country actors?</td>
<td>- To what extent is the ALERT emergency preparedness process relevant to countries where ALERT was tested?</td>
<td>The ALERT emergency preparedness process has been designed collectively, and users/humanitarians consider it applicable/transferable to their existing preparedness systems.</td>
<td>In-country users reported ability to access the system; Analysis of visits &amp; sessions frequency vs. error logs, understanding of bounce rate; Opinions on ease of use, privacy; Review of the users' feedback mechanism and existing data</td>
<td>Desk review (including previous user surveys and JIRA) On-site data: Google Analytics, Error Logs, database metrics) Review of platform KIs Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Are the ALERT platform's design and features appropriate for its users (accessibility, ease of use, privacy, etc.)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>JIRA User Feedback, google analytics tracker Accessibility to error, downtime logs are available. Isolation of real user traffic vs. developers and testers traffic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- To what extent is ALERT relevant for coordination? Is its design appropriate for coordination?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To what extent has ALERT increased/is expected to increase the level of preparedness of partner agencies?

- How effective was project delivery? Which delivery mechanisms worked well and which ones did not? What are the key lessons regarding implementation?

- What is the emerging evidence of the humanitarian agencies using the ALERT platform to carry out preparedness activities in countries where the platform was tested?

- To what extent did the project contribute to positive change (i.e. greater preparedness and response) among INGOs, local organisations, communities and governments?

- To what extent are ALERT users more systematic in their approach to operational

Comparison of the achievements against the logical framework; Timeframe of the project has been adhered to; Consortium members’ opinions on project delivery.

Analysis of available on-site data for each country where ALERT was tested: number of agencies, individual users; Page views per components of Alert system, frequency of use per country; Reported usage of the ALERT platform; Reported implementation of preparedness actions by users; Number of feedback comments posted by users.

Users reported an increase in preparedness and self-reported examples of changes from users in countries where ALERT was tested; Perceived future increase in preparedness by future/users of the platform.

Users of the platform in the three countries (where ALERT was tested) reported and demonstrated a more organised, comprehensive and methodological emergency preparedness.

Self-reported capacity of users who attended the ALERT trainings; Analysis of ALERT’s training materials.

On-site monitoring is accessible and configured.

Ability of ALERT project team/developers to provide disaggregated metrics and historical data.

The ALERT training materials is made available to the evaluation team.

- Desk review (including previous user surveys and JIRA)
- On-site data: Google Analytics, database metrics)
- Review of platform KIs
- Survey
<p>| To what degree have project resources been used efficiently? | - Have resources been used efficiently? In general, do the results achieved justify the costs? Could the same results be attained with fewer costs? | Cost efficiency of the platform development compared to similar platforms. Consortium members’ and project donors’ opinions on cost efficiency. | Access to ALERT project budget and to Futurice/Roller proposals. | Desk review (including budget data) Review of platform KIs |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent do stakeholders perceive ALERT results to be sustainable beyond the life of the project?</th>
<th>Self-reported anticipated use of ALERT platform by users in their country and organisational preparedness; Examples of institutionalisation in countries where ALERT was tested; Mentions of ALERT as an emergency preparedness tool in organisational documents. Perceptions of the consortium members and humanitarian agencies on the congruence of ALERT with their existing approaches, systems and procedures. Self-reported capacity of the users to fully use the platform; Perceptions of the quality of the training; Analysis of the users’ perceptions of the quality of the training.</th>
<th>Desk review, KIs, Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resources?</td>
<td>partnerships in terms of cost savings and project delivery; Consortium members’ opinion on partnership arrangements. Examples of good practices in terms of cost savings and gain in effectiveness across programmes and countries.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Were procurement, management and corporate partnership arrangements appropriate to achieving the desired quality, quantity, and timeliness of outputs?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- What have been the drivers of Value for Money (economy, cost effectiveness and efficiency) across the project?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- How is the ALERT project aligned with agencies’ humanitarian approach, systems and procedures in the agencies that used the ALERT platform?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>platform?</td>
<td>feedback.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To what extent are local capacities sufficient to continue to carry out preparedness activities using the ALERT platform?</td>
<td>Perceptions of humanitarian agencies and users.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what ways is the project expected to help strengthen global preparedness systems?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VIII.9. Methodology

VIII.9.1. Approaches and tools used

The evaluation objectives were met through a participatory, mixed-methods approach that relied on a variety of primary and secondary sources.

The evaluation was based on the following steps:

VIII.9.1.1. Desk Review

The Desk Review consisted of a detailed examination of 58 ALERT project documents, on-site data monitoring information and other available relevant literature. Sources were shared through the online file sharing system Box, or bilaterally via email with the project implementers and the Review Group. A detailed bibliography of documents use in this report is presented in Annex VIII.13.

VIII.9.1.2. Key informant interviews

Key informant interviews (KII) were one of the primary data collection methods for this evaluation. A total of 55 KII were conducted for this evaluation.

KII were conducted in-person in the Philippines, Kenya and Pakistan, because the ALERT training took place and the platform was rolled out in these three countries. In-country interviews were done on a one-on-one basis to give participants the opportunity to share learning and confront opinions. For Bangladesh, KII were held remotely (via Skype or telephone) as there are only a few users currently. Finally, at the request of HelpAge International, the evaluation team conducted no interviews in Mozambique, because only two INGOs were trained and given access to the platform.

Local consultants conducted the KII in Pakistan and Kenya, while, in the Philippines, an international consultant handled the data collection during his field visit.

The evaluation team interviewed the Key Stakeholder groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Stakeholder Groups</th>
<th>Number of KII conducted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International organisations</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National/local organisations</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultants &amp; Developers</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donors</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>55</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A detailed list of Key informants is presented in VIII.14

**VIII.9.1.3. Online Satisfaction Survey**

An online satisfaction survey was shared with all users of the ALERT platform. The survey used both open and closed-ended questions to understand participants’ satisfaction with the trainings and platform’s features. The survey was pre-tested with the evaluation review group.

The survey was administered using Kobo Toolbox, an open source and free platform developed by the Harvard Humanitarian Platform. It enables data collection through Web Forms/Enketo. As participants’ contact details could not be shared with the evaluation team, the evaluation manager disseminated the survey via the ALERT platform.

A total of 89 participants completed the survey. The survey took place over the course of 14 days from 16-24 February 2018. A reminder email was sent a few days before the survey’s closing date.

**Figure 9: Breakdown of survey’s respondents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Philippines</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of organisation</th>
<th>Sample size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An international NGO</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A national/local NGO</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A government body/office</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The survey cannot be considered representative of the user population for several reasons:

1. As the evaluation team was not granted access to the platform database, and could not get the total number of users, it is not possible to determine whether the survey is representative.

2. Due to data protection issues, the consultants had no control over the administration of the survey to the participants.

3. The sampling strategy was not random. While all participants were given an equal chance to participate, the ultimate choice to do so was made by the respondent (rather than selecting a random sample to respond).

Throughout the report, the data was disaggregated by programme and/or country when required.
VIII.9.1.4. **On site data**

In terms of on-site data, the evaluation team only had access to Google Analytics. Due to HelpAge’s data protection policy, they were not granted to the Firebase Analytics console. As such, the evaluation team could not determine with precision the platform usage, because Google Analytics was configured in default settings.

**VIII.9.2. Analysis**

**VIII.9.2.1. Qualitative data and desk review**

Secondary and primary data were both coded on a rolling basis as they were collected. Qualitative disaggregated data (by organisation type and country as appropriate) were recorded and coded to analyse emerging trends.

The analysis was done in an iterative manner, starting with the extensive desk review. Primary data collected through interviews and surveys were used to triangulate the secondary data and deepen the analysis on certain emerging trends, as outlined in the evaluation matrix. The findings have been used to verify and expand upon previous learning reviews’ findings and recommendations.

**VIII.9.2.2. Satisfaction survey**

The data was not weighted by country and type of NGOs because the evaluation team had no user-base composition to weigh it against. As a result, weighting the data would have only resulted in adding an additional bias to the data set.

For each survey question, the evaluation team computed descriptive statistics, disaggregating data per country and type of NGO. The data was not disaggregated by gender, age, and computer proficiency because it was deemed not relevant to answer the evaluation questions, nor by type of users, because the evaluation team questioned the accuracy of the answers for that question.

The online quantitative survey, was built based on the Net Promoting Score (NPS) methodology, which has proved to be a quick and straightforward method to measure users’ adoption and loyalty in various industries. This methodology consists on asking users the question: “What is the likelihood that you would recommend Company X to a friend or colleague?” Respondents are split in three different categories (detractors, passives and promoters) to compute a final score ranging from -100 to 100.

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169 It provides reports on bandwidth use, the number of requests & queries, the storage consumption and an access to the database.

170 How and why did you develop the Net Promoter Score?” – Bain & Company (netpromotersystem.com)

171 “Companies That Use Net Promoter” – Bain Company (netpromotersystem.com).
The final NPS score has not been used in itself\textsuperscript{172} in the evaluation since no point of comparison could be found: the ALERT platform has no competitors to benchmark and no previous measurement of NPS was made before the evaluation.

Instead, the evaluation team leveraged the NPS methodology to qualify the ALERT audience and enrich the descriptive statistics analysis.

In the end, this score could later be used as a reference point in future M&E operations, to measure the impact of future developments on users’ satisfaction.

\textbf{VIII.9.2.3. Google Analytics}

As mentioned during the inception phase, Google Analytics had a low level of configuration. Therefore, its data had to be handled with caution. The evaluation team noticed an effort to restrict the traffic sources to the ALERT production platform only by filtering out traffic from training, development and staging platforms. Setting up additional filters and options\textsuperscript{173} would have generated more precision in the data. The remaining lack of specific configuration increases the risk of using vanity metrics\textsuperscript{174} as criteria of performance.

As a result, the evaluation team first adopted a user-centred approach with the goal of assessing the users’ perception and adoption through desk review, KII and the online survey. However, to the extent possible, the evaluation team tried to reinforce users’ subjective feedback analysis with web-data analysis to bring objective proof of users’ perception.

Google Analytics data was disaggregated by platform module and/or country when required in order to analyze accessibility and identify signals of usage.

Given the current limitations around Google Analytics, the evaluation team’s conclusions drawn from web analytics review should only be considered as potential bottlenecks and recommendations for further investigations, and not considered as objective proof of the system performance.

\textsuperscript{172} Given the level of maturity of the project and the absence of a competitive environment, the evaluation team does not recommend to use the ALERT’s final NPS to draw any final judgement on ALERT system.

\textsuperscript{173} Such as IP filtering to filter out usage from developers and project team, implementation of User-Id, using event-tracking functionalities and defining custom segments by country, agency and user type, etc.

\textsuperscript{174} As expressed by experts in web analytics there is a risk of considering some GA metrics as actionable metrics. These are called Vanity Metrics. Source: “Vanity Metrics vs Actionable Metrics” – Guest Post by Eric Ries.
VIII.10. Evaluation program

The timeline of the evaluation, as determined in the Inception Report, is presented in the figure below.

**Figure 10: Timeline of the Evaluation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inception Phase</th>
<th>January</th>
<th>February</th>
<th>March</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inception meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preliminary desk review</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>KTs with ALERT project team and review group</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Inception Report &amp; tools</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments on report and revision</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Secondary Data collection</td>
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<td>Primary qualitative data collection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary quantitative data collection</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare Final Report</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation of findings</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft of the study report</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>One week for comments</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final version of the report (23rd of March)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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### VIII.11. Logical framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title: ALERT: Preparing to respond now!</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indicator</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>IMPACT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OUTCOME</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OUTPUT 1</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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175 As the evaluation team did not have access to the platform database, it could not determine the number of individual NGOs using the platform. The data collection however suggested that at least 7 INGOs, including 5 with partner base structure, adopted the system at the end of the project.

176 As the evaluation team did not have access to the platform database, it could not determine the number of individual NGOs using the platform. The data collection however suggested that at least 4 NNGOs adopted the platform at the end of the project.
| OUTPUT 2 | The Alert Emergency Preparedness System is widely compatible, incorporates key preparedness components, and is relatively easy to use. | 1. At least 5 agencies take part in design and testing of the ALERT system and their feedback is incorporated into the software design process. | Prototype launched and at least 5 agencies receive training on use of prototype and feedback mechanisms | 22 INGOs, 22 NNGO, 1 Gov. trained |
| 2. ALERT system maintains its relevance by incorporating best practice for preparedness | Debate and collaboration on current best practice preparedness with key preparedness stakeholders by March 2018 (for report on recommendations of ALERT system development) | Research & report conducted fed into prototype software development | 3 pieces of research conducted |
| 3. Training modules and system usage help developed for the Alert software | Training modules and usage help developed by June 2017 | Contract actor to lead on research and development of training modules | 2 trainings material developed at the end of the project |
VIII.12. Extract from Google Analytics

Monthly users vs. sessions per user

Weekly users vs. sessions per user

Daily users vs. sessions per user
VIII.13. Bibliography (used in report)


CARE Int. “ALERT in Care,” n.d.


“Consortium Meeting For Evaluation 0702,” n.d.

“DEPP Final Report VFM Closure Template,” n.d.

Drakhshandeh, Zee. “Google Analytics for Beginners (MOOC) – Session 1.4 – How to Setup Views with Filter – Google Academy “Basic Google Analytics Filters”,” n.d.


“ALERT DEPP Quarterly Report 11 April-June 2017,” n.d.


“ALERT Prototype Launch Prep Reading,” n.d.


“Participant ALERT Training.Xlsx,” n.d.


“Minute DEPP Event Data Transparency Nov17,” n.d.


### List of Interviewees

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Type of Organisation</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Ahmed Nawaz</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>AHO (Asian Humanitarian Organisation)</td>
<td>National</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alexandros Yiannopoulos</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Oxfam</td>
<td>International</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alvic Padilla</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>CHRISTIAN AID</td>
<td>International</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew Collodel</td>
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<td>HelpAge</td>
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<td>Andrew Koach</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Norwegian Refugee Council</td>
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<td>HRC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anwar Ul Haq</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bijay Kumar</td>
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<td>ActionAid</td>
<td>International</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carissa C. Galla</td>
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<td>HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL</td>
<td>international</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clare Harris</td>
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<td>Cyra M. Bullecer</td>
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<td>CHRISTIAN AID</td>
<td>international</td>
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<td>Dialogue Kubvoruno</td>
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<td>Dominic Hunt</td>
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<td>Emma Flaherty</td>
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<td>Javed Iqbal</td>
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<td>Doaba Foundation</td>
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<td>Jefferson Balistoy</td>
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<td>Jerry Requillo</td>
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<td>Joan Njoroge</td>
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<td>Donor</td>
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<td>Katharina Hamed</td>
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<td>WeltHungerHilfe</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Country</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Type</td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luis Vidal</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>HelpAge (ALERT Team)</td>
<td>International</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luke Caley</td>
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<td>Start Network</td>
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<td>Makena Mwobobia</td>
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<td>International</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marc-Andre Peltzer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maria Adelma M. Montejo</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>CARE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martin Harris</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>Tumika</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Kilavi</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Kenya Meteorological Department</td>
<td>Government</td>
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<td>Masood Khan</td>
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<td>ACTED</td>
<td>International</td>
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<td>HelpAge</td>
<td>International</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mehwish Hira</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melinda T. Buensuceso</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>ACTION AGAINST HUNGER</td>
<td>international</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monica Blagescu</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paula Sansom</td>
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<td>The Operations Partnership</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
</tr>
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<td>Raffi Ullah Khalil</td>
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<td>Randy O. Rimpongan</td>
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<td>Ryan Wright</td>
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<td>Saffi Jones</td>
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<td>HelpAge (ALERT Team)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sana Basim</td>
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<td>Tear Fund</td>
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<td>Shafiqul Islam</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
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<td>Shahid Saleem</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sharon Kibor</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>Christian Aid</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VIII.15. Details on composition of evaluation team

The team leader, Hélène Juillard, was responsible for the overall data collection and analysis as well as the production of the deliverables. She acted as the main point of contact with the evaluation review group and the consultancy manager.

Clément Charlot, evaluator, took the lead on the data collection and drafting the final report. He undertook the field visit to the Philippines and produced the corresponding country report.

Maxime Delpit, the software evaluator, conducted the light software review and provided corresponding input for the final deliverable.

Lauren Weiss, analyst, supported data collection, analysis, and drafting the deliverables.

Caroline Wanjiku, the local Kenyan consultant, undertook data collection and coding for data collected in Kenya. She was responsible for producing the Kenyan in-country report.

Arjumand Nizami, the local Pakistani consultant, undertook data collection and coding for data collected in Pakistan. She was responsible for producing the Pakistani in-country report.

Tiphaine Valois, the evaluation manager, provided inputs on the deliverables and had the overall responsibility of the consultancy. She would arbitrate in case there are diverging views, and also ensures the sign-off on the final version of the documents. Tiphaine also ensured the evaluators have access to the necessary documents and people to interview.
The evaluation review group comprised 7 members that are representative of the ALERT consortium and partner agencies. They steered the work and had an opportunity to review the outputs of the consultancy at critical steps (i.e. inception report, preliminary findings and first draft). The review group included Tiphaine Valois for HelpAge, the Evaluation and Learning Officer for the ALERT project (and the evaluation manager); Saffi Jones from HelpAge, the ALERT Project Manager; Alexandros Yiannopoulos from Oxfam, an ALERT consortium member and focal point; Tom Newby from CARE International, an ALERT consortium member and focal point; Hannah Wichterich from Action Against Hunger, a Senior Project Officer (DEPP learning project); Syed Moeez from HelpAge Pakistan, M&E team in the Pakistan country office; and Martin Harris from Tumika, a software development consultant.

VIII.16. Tools

VIII.16.3. Questionnaires for key informant interviews

Background

The ALERT Project, implemented by a seven-organisation consortium headed by HelpAge International with funding from DFID through the Start Network, aims to improve disaster preparedness by helping to improve its effectiveness and coordination. To assist in-country actors with preparedness, ALERT focuses on three main pillars of support:

I. Help agencies streamline and track their preparedness for disaster response: risk identification, scenario development, and action plans before and during the emergency response.
II. Allow agencies to communicate and share information prior and during emergency responses.
III. Enable donors to identify and fund response plans.

After a collaboration process with over 80 organisations on preparedness, the project developed the ALERT platform and subsequently provided in-country training in Kenya, Pakistan, the Philippines, Mozambique and Bangladesh. As the 3-year project ends in March 2018, the consortium members have commissioned a final evaluation.

This evaluation aims to take stock of the project to provide feedback on its process and outcomes, with the aim of highlighting strengths, weaknesses and best practices. It focuses on assessing:

1. The project’s performance based on the OECD DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.

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177 Care, Concern Worldwide, Coventry University, Handicap International, HelpAge International, Islamic relief, and Oxfam.
2. Assess the platform’s performance and involved stakeholders and partners’ usage of it.
3. The extent to which the project has achieved (or made progress towards achieving) its intended outcomes, as provided in the project’s plans and logframe indicators.

The lessons learnt and recommendations at both the global and country level will help assist HelpAge in designing future innovative projects and inform the second phase of the project.

To capture the various stakeholders’ perspectives, the evaluators are collecting primary data at the global and country levels, specifically where the ALERT platform was tested.

The interview will last about 60 minutes. Everything we say will be used to inform the evaluation but nobody will be quoted individually. Personal data collected will be used by Key Aid only for the sole purpose of the evaluation and will not be forwarded to third parties.

Ask for interviewee’s consent.

Tell interviewee if and how he/she will see the results of this evaluation.

Instructions

This structured interview guide provides an overview of all the topics and corresponding questions, however, each interview will be tailored to focus on the set of questions that are most directly relevant to the interviewee’s expertise and interest.

General information

Name:
Position:
Organisation:
Email address:
Country:

Introductory questions (for all interviewees)

- How have you been involved with the ALERT project?
- What are your expectations of this evaluation?

VIII.16.3.4. Project Management & Consortium members – International Staff ONLY

Relevance
In your opinion, is the ALERT emergency preparedness process relevant to humanitarian organisations?
- How would you characterise the process of designing it?
- What were the strengths/weaknesses of this process?
- Is ALERT’s emergency preparedness process applicable and/or transferable to your organisation’s existing preparedness systems, as well as to other humanitarian organisations? Why or why not?

Do you feel that the ALERT emergency preparedness process incorporates the key preparedness components (i.e. response plans, risk monitoring, country office information, etc.)? Why?
- Do you think there are any components that are missing? If so, which ones?

In your opinion, how does the platform features help users to be more organised, more efficient and better informed when doing emergency preparedness?

Is the ALERT platform easily accessible? Does anyone in your organisation (at HQ or in the country offices) have any issues accessing it (e.g. bandwidth, internet connection, etc.)?

In your opinion, to what extent is the ALERT platform accessible to users from all cultural settings?

In your opinion, to what extent is the ALERT platform accessible to specific users? (Provide example if interviewee asks: i.e. those with physical impairments)

In your opinion, did users in countries where the ALERT platform was tested find it easy to use?

How appropriate are the privacy settings (i.e. data being public) of the ALERT platform for the different countries where ALERT has been tested?
- Do you foresee specific privacy settings issues for when the ALERT platform will be rolled out in all pilot countries?

Do you think the ALERT platform can help reduce overlap and help increase the sharing of information during preparedness and emergency responses? Why or why not?

Effectiveness

1. In your opinion, what project delivery mechanisms worked particularly well/did not work particularly well?
- Do you have any recommendations on how they could be improved?

2. After participating in the in-country training, to what extent are users in countries where ALERT was tested utilising the ALERT platform and process to plan preparedness activities?
- If yes, how? (please provide an example)
- How often would you say they use or check the ALERT platform?

3. Overall, do you think ALERT has increased humanitarian organisations’ preparedness for a disaster in countries where ALERT was tested?
- If yes - do you have an example of how?
- If no - do you expect ALERT to increase their level of preparedness? Why or why not? How?
4. Do you think ALERT has helped humanitarian organisations using the platform to become more organised, comprehensive and methodological in their approach to operational preparedness?
   - If yes - do you have an example of how?
   - If no - do you expect ALERT to make them more systematic in their approach? Why or why not?

5. Do you think participating in the training has increased the knowledge and understanding of best practices related to disaster and emergency preparedness and response of humanitarian organisations using the platform in countries where the training occurred? Why or why not?
   - If yes - can you provide an example?

6. Did any of ALERT’s established partnerships with INGOs to train local organisations in the countries where the platform was tested help support or develop local preparedness capacities?
   - If yes - how so?

7. Were there any components of the platform that users found more difficult to use than others?
   - If yes - which ones, and why?

Efficiency
I. In your opinion, do the results of the project justify the costs of implementation? Why/why not?
II. Do you think the same results could have been attained with fewer resources? If yes, how so?
III. Do you think the procurement and corporate partnerships’ management arrangement supported the project’s implementation (in terms of quality, quantity, or timeliness)? Why or why not?
   III.1. What about in terms of the partnership arrangements? Why or why not?
   III.2. And the procurement arrangements? Why or why not?
IV. How have you used M&E data to inform programming?
   IV.1. Can you provide a specific example?
   IV.2. For the next phase of the project, what data do you think is relevant to collect?

Sustainability
- In your knowledge, have humanitarian organisations in countries where ALERT was tested institutionalised any elements of the ALERT preparedness process?
  - If yes - which ones, and how?
  - If no - which elements do you expect to be institutionalised in the future, and why or why not?
- Is ALERT aligned with humanitarian organisations’ approaches, systems and procedures for preparedness?
  - If no - can you provide an example of how they are misaligned?
Do you think humanitarian organisations using the platform in countries where ALERT was tested possess enough capacity to continue to use ALERT to carry out preparedness activities? Why or why not?

Do you think ALERT can strengthen global preparedness systems?
- If yes - how so?
- If no - why not?

VIII.16.3.5. Project Management & Consortium members – In-country Staff ONLY

Relevance

1) In your opinion, is the ALERT emergency preparedness process relevant to humanitarian organisations in your country?
   a) How would you characterise the process of designing it?
   b) What were the strengths/weaknesses of this process?
   c) Is ALERT’s emergency preparedness process applicable and/or transferable to your organisation’s existing preparedness systems, as well as to other humanitarian organisations? Why or why not?

2) Do you feel that the ALERT emergency preparedness process incorporates the key preparedness components that are relevant to your country (i.e. response plans, risk monitoring, country office)? Is the ALERT platform easily accessible? Does anyone in your organisation (at HQ or in the country offices) have any issues accessing it (e.g. bandwidth, internet connection, etc.)?

3) In your opinion, to what extent is the ALERT platform accessible to users from all cultural settings?

4) In your opinion, to what extent is the ALERT platform accessible to specific users? (Provide example if interviewee asks: i.e. those with physical impairments)

5) How appropriate are the privacy settings (i.e. data being public) of the ALERT platform for your country?

6) Do you think the ALERT platform can help reduce overlap and help increase the sharing of information during preparedness and emergency responses in your country? Why or why not?

Effectiveness

In your opinion, what project delivery mechanisms worked particularly well/did not work particularly well?

Do you have any recommendations on how they could be improved?

After participating in the in-country training, to what extent are users utilising ALERT to plan preparedness activities?

If yes, how? (please provide an example)

How often would you say they use or check the ALERT platform?
Overall, do you think ALERT has increased humanitarian organisations’ preparedness for a disaster in countries where ALERT was tested?

If yes - do you have an example of how?

If no - do you expect ALERT to increase their level of preparedness? Why or why not? How?

Do you think ALERT has helped humanitarian organisations using the platform to become more organised, comprehensive and methodological in their approach to operational preparedness?

If yes - do you have an example of how?

If no - do you expect ALERT to make them more systematic in their approach? Why or why not?

Do you think participating in the training has increased the knowledge and understanding of best practices related to disaster and emergency preparedness and response of humanitarian organisations using the platform in countries where ALERT was tested? Why or why not?

If yes - can you provide an example?

Did any of ALERT’s established partnerships with INGOs to train local organisations in the countries where the platform was tested help support or develop local preparedness capacities?

If yes - how so?

Were there any components of the platform that users found more difficult to use than others?

If yes - which ones, and why?

**Efficiency**

In your opinion, do the results of the project justify the costs of implementation? Why/why not?

Do you think the same results could have been attained with fewer resources? If yes, how so?

Have you used M&E data to inform programming in-country?

If yes – can you provide an example of how?

For the next phase of the project, what data do you think is relevant to collect?

**Sustainability**

In your knowledge, have humanitarian organisations in your country institutionalised any elements of the ALERT preparedness process?

If yes - which ones, and how?
If no - which elements do you expect to be institutionalised in the future, and why or why not?

Is ALERT aligned with humanitarian organisations’ approaches, systems and procedures for preparedness?

If no - can you provide an example of how they are misaligned?

Do you think humanitarian organisations using the platform in your country possess enough capacity to continue to use ALERT to carry out preparedness activities? Why or why not?

Do you think ALERT can strengthen global preparedness systems?

If yes - how so?

If no - why not?

VIII.16.3.6. In-country users (INGOs, LNGOs, other stakeholders)

Relevance

1. Is ALERT's emergency preparedness process applicable and/or transferable to your organisation’s existing preparedness systems? Why or why not?

2. Is the ALERT platform easily accessible? Do you have any issues accessing it (bandwidth, internet connection, etc.)?

3. Do you find that the ALERT platform is adapted to the cultural norms of your country?

4. Do you find that the ALERT platform is adapted to all users’ group in your organisation? (Provide example if interviewee asks: i.e. those with physical impairments)

5. Overall, do you find the ALERT platform is easy to use?

6. How appropriate are the privacy settings (i.e. data being public) of the ALERT platform for your country?

7. Do you think the ALERT platform can help reduce overlap and help increase the sharing of information during preparedness and emergency responses in your country? Why or why not?

Effectiveness

After participating in the in-country training, are you/your colleagues using the ALERT platform to plan preparedness activities?

If yes, how? (please provide an example)

How often would you say you/your colleagues use or check the ALERT platform?

Which features of the ALERT platform is your organisation currently using or not using? Why?

Overall, do you think ALERT has increased your organisation’s preparedness for a disaster? If yes - do you have an example of how?
If no - do you expect ALERT to increase your level of preparedness? Why or why not?

Do you think ALERT has helped your organisation become more systematic (i.e. organised, comprehensive) in your approach to operational preparedness?

If yes - do you have an example of how?

If no - do you expect ALERT to make you more systematic in your approach? Why or why not?

Do you think participating in the training has increased your knowledge and understanding of best practices related to disaster and emergency preparedness and response? Why or why not?

If yes - can you provide an example?

Are there any components of the platform that you/your colleagues find more difficult to use than others?

If yes - which ones, and why?

**Sustainability**

Has your organisation institutionalised any elements of the ALERT preparedness process?

If yes - which ones, and how?

If no - which elements do you expect to be institutionalised, and why or why not?

Is ALERT aligned with your organisation’s approach, systems and procedures for preparedness?

If no - can you provide an example of how they are misaligned?

Do you think your country office possesses enough capacity to continue to use the ALERT platform to carry out preparedness activities? Why or why not?

Do you think ALERT can strengthen global preparedness systems?

If yes - how so?

If no - why not?

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**VIII.16.3.7. Project Donors: DFID & START Fund**

**Relevance**

- How would you characterise the process of designing the ALERT preparedness process?
  - What were the strengths/weaknesses of this process?
- Do you feel that the ALERT emergency preparedness process incorporates the key preparedness components (i.e. response plans, risk monitoring, country office information, etc.)?
  - Do you think there are any that are missing? If so, which ones?
- Do you think the ALERT platform can help reduce overlap and help increase the sharing of information during preparedness and emergency responses? Why or why not?
- Do you think the ALERT platform will help you make decisions based on the data available on the platform? Why or why not?

**Effectiveness**

Do you think that the project has helped INGOs and/or NNGOs become more organised, comprehensive and methodological in their approach to operational preparedness? Why or why not?

If no - do you expect ALERT to make them more systematic in their approach? Why or why not?

Do you think ALERT has increased INGOs and/or NNGOs preparedness for a disaster?

If no - do you expect ALERT to increase their level of preparedness? Why or why not?

Do you think the project has increased the knowledge and understanding of best practices related to disaster and emergency preparedness and response of INGOs and/or NNGOs? Why or why not?

**Efficiency**

In your opinion, do the results of the projects justify the costs of implementation? Why or why not?

How can ALERT improve this for the next phase of the project?

Do you think the same results could have been attained with fewer resources? If yes, how so?

Do you think the management arrangement supported the project’s implementation (in terms of quality, quantity, or timeliness)? Why or why not?

What about in terms of the partnership arrangements? Why or why not?

And the procurement arrangements? Why or why not?

**Sustainability**

Do you think ALERT can strengthen global preparedness systems?

If yes - how so?

If no - why not?

What can ALERT do in the next phase to increase the likelihood of this?

Supporting partners (OCHA, Futurice, Roller, RMS, A4ID, Bristows, CMS, Dechert LLP, White& Case, EPAM, etc.)

**Relevance** *(for OCHA, UN agencies, etc.)*
What are your expectations from the ALERT platform?

How do you think it could be useful for UN agencies?

Do you feel that the ALERT emergency preparedness process incorporates the key preparedness components (i.e. response plans, risk monitoring, country office information, etc.)?

Do you think there are any that are missing? If so, which ones?

Relevance (for software developers)

In your opinion, what are the needs of your client vis-à-vis this platform? To what extent do you think the platform you designed answers your client’s needs?

How does the platform features help users to be more organised, more efficient and better informed in doing emergency preparedness? (to ask based on how they reply to the first question)

Is the ALERT platform easily accessible in countries where it’s been tested?

Did users (at HQ or in the country offices) have any issues accessing it (e.g. bandwidth, internet connection, etc.)?

Do you anticipate accessibility issues for specific countries?

In your opinion, to what extent is the ALERT platform accessible to users from all cultural settings?

In your opinion, to what extent is the ALERT platform accessible to any kind of users? (if interviewee unsure give example, i.e. physical impairments)

What data privacy settings have you incorporated in the platform?

How did the ALERT project team brief you on the inclusion of the data privacy settings?

Effectiveness (for all)

How did your organisation contribute to the ALERT project?

How did your organisation’s partnership with the ALERT project specifically help support or develop country-level actors’ preparedness capacities?

for software developers:

What is your understanding of the emergency preparedness process behind the platform?

In your opinion, what are the main features that are supporting the preparedness process within the Alert platform? To what extent do you feel those features benefit to the whole process?

As a software developer, did you identify core users’ journey in the platform?

Did you come out with key user journeys within the Alert platform?

Did you had to deal with specific challenging issues (technical or project management)? How did you handle it?
Efficiency (for all)

Do you think the partnership and/or procurement arrangement supported the project’s implementation (in terms of quality, quantity, or timeliness)? Why or why not?

What were some of the strengths/weaknesses of the partnership/procurement arrangement?

What would you do differently next time?

How should the partnership/procurement arrangement evolve to best support the next phase of ALERT?

Sustainability (for software developers)

How is the sustainability of the platform ensured?

Are there concerns about the coding become outdated?
VIII.16.4. **Survey questions**

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey to rate your satisfaction with the ALERT platform. This survey should only take 10-15 minutes to complete. Be assured that all answers you provide will be kept in the strictest confidentiality by Key Aid Consulting. Kindly note the deadline to successfully complete this survey is 21 February 2018. In case you encounter any problems, please reach out direct to Key Aid Consulting (via survey@keyaidconsulting.com).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Questions:</th>
<th>Options</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>USER’S INFORMATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>In which country do you work?</td>
<td>Bangladesh, Kenya, Mozambique, Pakistan, The Philippines, Other: please specify</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>What is your Gender?</td>
<td>Female, Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>What is your age group?</td>
<td>18-25, 26-40, 40-60, &gt;60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>What type of organisation do you work for?</td>
<td>An international NGO, A national/local NGO, A government body/office, Other: please specify</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Did you attend a training/workshop on the use of the ALERT platform by HelpAge International/ another organisation?</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|   |   | The Philippines Feb. 2018  
Other: please specify |
|---|---|---|
| 7 | (If Q5=No) Did a staff member from your organisation (colleague/line manager) train you on the use of ALERT platform? | Yes  
No |
| 8 | Do you use/have you used the ALERT platform? | Yes  
No |
| 9 | (If Q8 = yes) How frequently did you use the ALERT platform during the month after the training? | Daily  
Weekly  
Monthly  
Other: please specify |
| 10 | (If Q8 = yes), How frequency do you use the ALERT platform now? | Daily  
Weekly  
Monthly  
Other: please specify |
| 11 | (If Q8 = yes), in what role?  
*Multiple answers* | Agency administrator  
Country administrator  
Country Director  
Emergency Response team (ERT)  
ERT Leader  
Country user  
I don’t know  
Other: please specify |
| 12 | Do you agree with the following statement: “I am computer and internet proficient”? | I strongly agree  
I agree  
I disagree  
I strongly disagree |
| **ALERT TRAINING (If Q4=Yes)** |   | 11-point scale  
   |
| 13 | How would you rate your satisfaction with the training modules for the ALERT platform? |   |
| 14 | Did your country office have clear policies and SOPs for preparedness and response activities (i.e., policies and SOPs outlined in formal agency guidelines or staff handbooks that can be referenced) before being introduced to ALERT? | Yes  
No |
| 15 | Did your country office change/develop some of its policies and/or SOPs as a result of some its | Yes  
No |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff attending the ALERT training?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(if Q13=Yes), Could you please succinctly describe the changes that were made as a result of the training? <em>open-ended question</em></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you agree with the following statement: “After attending the ALERT training, I personally feel more knowledgeable about and competent on emergency preparedness”?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| I strongly agree  
I agree  
I disagree  
I strongly disagree |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>After completing the training, do you think your organisation is capable of using the ALERT platform for preparedness, with no or limited support from the ALERT team?</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Yes  
No |

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<tr>
<th>What recommendations would you make to improve the ALERT training? <em>Open-ended question</em></th>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>ALERT PLATFORM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the ALERT platform?</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How relevant is the ALERT platform to your preparedness work?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11-point scale</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>To what extent does the ALERT platform foster humanitarian coordination?</th>
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<tr>
<td>11-point scale</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>To what extent is the ALERT platform aligned with your agency’s humanitarian approach, systems and procedures?</th>
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<tr>
<td>11-point scale</td>
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<tr>
<th>To what extent do you agree with following the statement: “I can access the ALERT platform whenever and wherever I need it”?</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| I strongly agree  
I agree  
I disagree  
I strongly disagree |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How would you rate your satisfaction with the ALERT platform’s ease of use?</th>
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<tr>
<td>11-point scale</td>
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<td>---</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
|27 | Which actions are you doing (or have you done) on ALERT platform?         | Create/Edit a Hazard (on Risk Monitoring page)  
Create/Edit an Indicator (on Risk Monitoring page)  
Raise/Update an Alert (on Risk Monitoring page)  
Create/Edit a preparedness action – both APA/MPA (on Preparedness page)  
Complete a preparedness action – both APA/MPA (on Preparedness page)  
Create/Edit a Response plan (on Plans page)  
Manage Country Office Profile (on Country Office page)  
Administrate Country Office Settings (on Country Office page)  
Interact/Collaborate with other agencies (view what other agencies are doing) |
|28 | (if Q23 = Create/Edit a Hazard), How would you rate your satisfaction with the Create/Edit a Hazard feature? | 11-point scale                                                                   |
|29 | (if Q23 = Create/Edit a Hazard), Why have you chosen this grade on the Create/Edit a Hazard feature? | Ease of use  
Difficulty of use  
Speed of completion  
Slow/long process of completion  
Relevance of the action for the preparedness of your organisation  
Lack of relevance of the action for the preparedness of your organisation  
Automation of the action  
Lack of automation of the action  
Other: please specify |
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<tr>
<th>Q No</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Rating Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>(if Q23 = Create/Edit an Indicator), How would you rate your satisfaction with the Create/Edit an Indicator feature?</td>
<td>11-point scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>(if Q23 = Create/Edit an Indicator), Why have you chosen this grade on the Create/Edit an Indicator feature?</td>
<td>Ease of use, Difficulty of use, Speed of completion, Slow/long process of completion, Relevance of the action for the preparedness of your organisation, Lack of relevance of the action for the preparedness of your organisation, Automation of the action, Lack of automation of the action, Other: please specify, I don't know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>(if Q23 = Raise/Update an Alert), How would you rate your satisfaction with the Raise/Update an Alert feature?</td>
<td>11-point scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>(if Q23 = Raise/Update an Alert), Why have you chosen this grade on the Raise/Update an Alert feature?</td>
<td>Ease of use, Difficulty of use, Speed of completion, Slow/long process of completion, Relevance of the action for the preparedness of your organisation, Lack of relevance of the action for the preparedness of your organisation, Automation of the action, Lack of automation of the action, Other: please specify, I don't know</td>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>(if Q23 = Create/Edit a preparedness action - both APA/MPA), How would you rate your satisfaction with the Create/Edit a preparedness action (both APA/MPA) feature?</td>
<td>11-point scale</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Acceptable Rating</td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>(if Q23 = Create/Edit a preparedness action, both APA/MPA), Why have you chosen this grade on the Create/Edit a preparedness action (both APA/MPA) feature? <em>Multiple answers</em></td>
<td>Ease of use</td>
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<td>Speed of completion</td>
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<td>Lack of relevance of the action for the preparedness of your organisation</td>
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<td>Lack of automation of the action</td>
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<td>I don’t know</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>(if Q23 = Complete a preparedness action - both APA/MPA), How would you rate your satisfaction with the Complete a preparedness action (both APA/MPA) feature?</td>
<td>11-point scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>(if Q23 = Complete a preparedness action both APA/MPA), Why have you chosen this grade on the Complete a preparedness action (both APA/MPA) feature? <em>Multiple answers</em></td>
<td>Ease of use</td>
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<td>Speed of completion</td>
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<td>Lack of relevance of the action for the preparedness of your organisation</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of automation of the action</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I don’t know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>(if Q23 = Create/Edit a Response plan), How would you rate your satisfaction with the Create/Edit a Response plan feature?</td>
<td>11-point scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>(if Q23 = Create/Edit a Response plan), Why have you chosen this grade on the Create/Edit a Response plan feature? <em>Multiple answers</em></td>
<td>Ease of use</td>
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<td>Speed of completion</td>
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<td>Lack of relevance of the action for the preparedness of your organisation</td>
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<td>Lack of automation of the action</td>
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<td>I don’t know</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Options</td>
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<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td><em>(if Q23 = Manage Country Office Profile), How would you rate your satisfaction with the Manage Country Office Profile feature?</em></td>
<td>Other: please specify I don’t know 11-point scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td><em>(if Q23 = Manage Country Office Profile), Why have you chosen this grade on the Manage Country Office Profile feature?</em></td>
<td>Ease of use Difficulty of use Speed of completion Slow/long process of completion Relevance of the action for the preparedness of your organisation Lack of relevance of the action for the preparedness of your organisation Automation of the action Lack of automation of the action Other: please specify I don’t know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td><em>(if Q23 = Administrate Country Office Settings), How would you rate your satisfaction with the Administrate Country Office Settings feature?</em></td>
<td>Other: please specify I don’t know 11-point scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td><em>(if Q23 = Administrate Country Office Settings), Why have you chosen this grade on the Administrate Country Office Settings feature?</em></td>
<td>Ease of use Difficulty of use Speed of completion Slow/long process of completion Relevance of the action for the preparedness of your organisation Lack of relevance of the action for the preparedness of your organisation Automation of the action Lack of automation of the action Other: please specify I don’t know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td><em>(if Q23 = Interact/Collaborate with other agencies), How would you rate your satisfaction with the Interact/Collaborate with other agencies feature?</em></td>
<td>Other: please specify I don’t know 11-point scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td><em>(if Q23 = Interact/Collaborate with other agencies), Why have you chosen this grade on the</em></td>
<td>Ease of use Difficulty of use Speed of completion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interact/Collaborate with other agencies feature?</td>
<td>Slow/long process of completion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multiple answers</td>
<td>Relevance of the action for the preparedness of your organisation</td>
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<td>Lack of relevance of the action for the preparedness of your organisation</td>
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<td>Automation of the action</td>
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<td>Lack of automation of the action</td>
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<td>Other: please specify</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I don't know</td>
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</table>

46  If you could improve one of the ALERT features, what feature would it be and how would you improve it?  
*Open-ended question*

47  If you could add a feature to the ALERT platform, what feature would it be and why?  
*Open-ended question*

### VIII.17. Country Reports

These country reports seek to contextualise and bring granularity to the findings of the report. However, these reports are not necessarily exhaustive in order not to duplicate the content of the report.

The three country reports were drafted by the consultants who handled the data collection, and were then edited to be aligned with the content and formatting of the report. Furthermore, the evaluation added the satisfaction survey data, filtered by country.

#### VIII.17.1. Kenya

**Relevance:**

The majority of organisations interviewed considered the ALERT process relevant and transferrable to their organisation.

However, most of the KIs criticised the fact that the design was not collaborative as some key stakeholders were not involved in the consultation: INGO country offices, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), and grassroots organisations.

These interviewees also reported hurdles to the transferability of the platform:

- Platform not being sufficiently adapted enough to the realities of emergency and disaster in Kenya, which involved a lot of local actors with no/limited internet;
- Uploading data was deemed time consuming. Some NGOs trained in September 2017 in Kenya had not completed the process in February 2018;
- One person mentioned the difficulty of maintaining training related to the platform due to the high turnover in the NGO sector.

### Survey questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Kenyan respondents n=6</th>
<th>n=6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I.1.1. The relevance of the ALERT emergency preparedness process</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21. How relevant is the ALERT platform to your preparedness work? *Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10) (n=4)*

### Appropriateness

Overall, interviewees reported the features to be mostly appropriate for emergency preparedness activities. However, they were neither promoting nor detracting from the platform,\(^{178}\) which may suggest that the adoption in these countries had not reached its full potential.

From a user perspective, Kenyan participants noted that there was no auto-save function when populating the platform with data, e.g. a scenario-based plan, in the event of a power cut.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>An international NGO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the ALERT platform? <em>Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10) (n=4)</em></td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. How would you rate your satisfaction with the....feature? <em>Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10) (max n=4)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit a Hazard</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit an Indicator</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise/Update an Alert</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit a preparedness action – both APA/MPA</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete a preparedness action – both APA/MPA</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit a Response plan</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage Country Office Profile</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrate Country Office Settings</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interact/Collaborate with other agencies</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{178}\) Survey’s respondent (n=4) graded their overall satisfaction with the platform between either 7 or 9, which is defined as neutral according to the NPS methodology.
More than half of the interviewees reported having difficulties accessing platform. They would have liked ALERT to have added an offline option for offices in rural areas, and to develop a mobile application.

Some respondents mentioned the non-accessibility of the platform for people with visual impairments.

About half of the KIs recommended having the platform in local languages for local organisations: Swahili, Kikuya, Kamba, Masai, Luyha, etc.

### Survey questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>International NGOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24. To what extent do you agree with following the statement: “I can access the ALERT platform whenever and wherever I need it”? (n=4)</td>
<td>I agree: 75% I disagree: 25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall, users found the platform easy to use. However, they felt that a search option would make the platform more user-friendly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>International NGOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25. How would you rate your satisfaction with the ALERT platform’s ease of use? Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10) (n=4)</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Kenya, while users were mostly satisfied with the current settings. Some would have liked the privacy settings to be more granular, e.g. to be able to only make some documents public.

### The relevance of the platform for coordination:

A minority of the persons interviewed noted a real relevance of the platform in term of coordination. Although interviewees felt that it was too early to test it and assess the coordination aspect, they thought that the government should be included on the platform, because in Kenya that actor drives the preparedness and emergency guideline and plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>International NGOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22. To what extent does the ALERT platform foster humanitarian coordination? Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10) (n=4)</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Effectiveness – platform usage

While all respondents approved of the idea of ALERT platform, more than half questioned its effectiveness. The lack of effectiveness mainly came from the time and resources it would take to get the platform up and running (human resources to manage the platform, the lack of personnel to manage the platform, the need to train all departments in the organisation, etc.)

179 The platform was reportedly used in Nairobi but only a few people in the field offices used it.
Most of the organisations interviewed have been trained to use the platform but were not using it and had not really spend time on it. There was however, emerging evidence that some interviewees were using the platform to conduct drought monitoring, and to develop contingency plans.

Survey questions | International NGOs
--- | ---
8. Do you use/ have you used the ALERT platform? (n=6) | Yes: 67%  
No: 33%
9. How frequently did you use the ALERT platform during the month after the training? (n=3) | Monthly: 33%  
Quarterly: 67%
10. How frequency do you use the ALERT platform now? (n=4) | Monthly: 50%  
Quarterly: 50%

27. Which actions are you doing (or have you done) on ALERT platform? (Select all that apply) multiple choices, (n=4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit a Hazard</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit an Indicator</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise/Update an Alert</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit a preparedness action – both APA/MPA</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete a preparedness action – both APA/MPA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit a Response plan</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage Country Office Profile</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrate Country Office Settings</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interact/Collaborate with other agencies</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Effectiveness – evidence of NGOs being more systematic

In Kenya, there was limited evidence of users being more systematic in their approach to operational preparedness. Only a few organisations reportedly use the platform.

For those who used it, they incorporated some features of the platform: e.g. Core Humanitarian Standards, MPAs, APAs, transitioning from plans to actions, delegating responsibilities to others etc.

Effectiveness – training

The vast majority of the respondents found the training effective in terms of:

- Information gathering on disaster profiles, sharing best practices, analysis of issues, coordination of disaster management efforts;
- Reviewing key concepts: MPAs, APAS, CHS commitments, monitoring of indicators, delegating responsibilities to others response plans, etc.
They were critical about the fact that there was:

- Limited understanding of the platform;
- The training did not target the right people from their organisations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>International NGOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17. Do you agree with the following statement: “After attending the ALERT training, I personally feel more knowledgeable about and competent on emergency preparedness”? (n=2)</td>
<td>I agree: 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. How would you rate your satisfaction with the training modules for the ALERT platform? Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10) (n=2)</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Effectiveness – greater preparedness among humanitarian actors**

It was still too early to assess the results. One organisation was still learning how to use the platform. Others had partially rolled out the platform. Two did not and were not planning to do so.

NRC activated a red ALERT in Kenya during the election in October 2017, but the platform was not fully operational at that time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>International NGOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14. Did your country office have clear policies and SOPs for preparedness and response activities before being introduced to ALERT? (n=2)</td>
<td>Yes: 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Did your country office change/develop some of its polices and/or SOPs as a result of some its staff attending the ALERT training? (n=2)</td>
<td>No: 100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. To what extent is the ALERT platform aligned with your agency’s humanitarian approach, systems and procedures? Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10) (n=4)</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sustainability – transferability & institutionalisation**

The interviewees generally found the process and platform to be transferable because it included the IASC, CHS, plans and MPAs.

However, most interviewees did not anticipate the use of the platform after this phase due to different reasons:

- Lack of acceptability by some organisations’ decision makers;
- Existence and usage of a pre-existing manual on disaster and emergency preparedness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>International NGOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26. How likely is it that you would recommend the ALERT platform to a colleague or a peer in the humanitarian sector? (0 being not at all likely, 10 being completely likely) (n=4)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sustainability – local capacity to continue using the platform

The majority of interviewees felt that more training was required in Kenya for organisations to use the platform.

Survey questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>International NGOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18. After completing the training, do you think your organisation is capable of using the ALERT platform for preparedness, with no or limited support from the ALERT team? (n=2)</td>
<td>Yes: 100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sustainability – expectations ALERT will strengthen the global preparedness systems

The majority of interviewees highlighted the platform’s potential to strengthen preparedness in Kenya, thanks to:

- Standardised information being available to the humanitarian community;
- Cross-learning thanks to the access to information;
- Easier access to funding;
- Allowing advocacy to the donor community to fund flood and drought preparedness activities.

VIII.17.2. Pakistan

Relevance:

The majority of organisations interviewed considered ALERT’s process to be highly relevant to their organisation, and transferrable to their organisation, because:

- Pakistan was struck by frequent natural and man-made disasters;
- The platform gave greater access to information on other organisations’ work;
- INGOs and NNGOs were already collaborating a lot in Pakistan;
- The process included follow ups from HelpAge to all the member organisations to help them use the platform effectively. Moreover, these follow ups were planned as per the capacity of individual organisations to make this one-on-one support more relevant.

Regarding the transferability of the platform, one interviewee noted that the process was more relevant for local NGOs since they have relatively less capacity, despite being present on the field. Two INGOs mentioned it was helpful and relevant to improve preparedness and get organised, even for big organisations. Two other INGOs did not see the added value of ALERT emergency preparedness process as they already had strong capacity in this regard.

Uploading data was deemed to be time consuming.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>International NGO</th>
<th>National/local NGO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Pakistani respondents n=26</td>
<td>n=13</td>
<td>n=13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I.1.1. The relevance of the ALERT emergency preparedness process

21. How relevant is the ALERT platform to your preparedness work? Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10) \( (n=20) \)

- National NGOs: 8.5
- International NGOs: 7.9

National NGOs were particularly enthusiastic and promoted the process. This was mostly due to more regular trainings and after-training follow-up with the ALERT project team.

**Appropriateness**

Overall, interviewees reported the features to be mostly appropriate for emergency preparedness activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>International NGOs</th>
<th>National NGOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the ALERT platform? Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10) ( (n=20) )</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. How would you rate your satisfaction with the...feature? Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10) ( (max n=20) )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit a Hazard</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit an Indicator</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise/Update an Alert</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit a preparedness action – both APA/MPA</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete a preparedness action – both APA/MPA</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit a Response plan</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage Country Office Profile</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administer Country Office Settings</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interact/Collaborate with other agencies</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More than half of interviewees reported difficulties in accessing the platform. They would have liked ALERT to have added an offline option to enable access during an emergency as internet facilities may be interrupted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>International NGOs</th>
<th>National NGOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24. To what extent do you agree with following the statement: “I can access the ALERT platform whenever and wherever I need it”? ( (n=20) )</td>
<td>I strongly agree: 33%</td>
<td>I strongly agree: 55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I agree: 44%</td>
<td>I agree: 27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I disagree: 22%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All interviewees mentioned the non-accessibility of the platform for people with visual impairments. They reported that features are appropriate with regards to cultural norms.

Overall, users found the platform user-friendly and easy to use. However, some functionalities were found to be a bit time consuming, i.e. changing the email address of outgoing staff or uploading data, or hard to use, i.e. no scroll down menu for districts.

Survey questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25. How would you rate your satisfaction with the ALERT platform’s ease of use? Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10) (n=20)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Pakistan, users were mostly satisfied with the current settings. Some reported concerns in accessing some documents and would have liked the privacy setting to be more granular. They also complained about the fact that a lot of users were not being transparent, and set their data as private.

The relevance of the platform for coordination:

Pakistani users felt the ALERT platform was highly relevant to improve coordination due to the large number of organisations present in the field.

The platform would also improve coordination within organisations, not only on DRR topics, but also in terms of finance and logistics.

National partners indicated that district-based collaboration improved as they felt more prepared and belonging to a group.

However, half of the respondents recognised that coordination was not fully effective, as half of the organisations trained were not using the platform, and others were keeping some of their data private.

To promote the platform and enhance coordination, participants mentioned that it was essential to extend accessibility to authorities (namely National and Provincial Disaster Management Authorities – NDMA and PDMAs) as Pakistan emergency response is mostly controlled by the State.

Survey questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22. To what extent does the ALERT platform foster humanitarian coordination? Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10) (n=20)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Effectiveness – platform usage

More than half of the respondents were satisfied with the platform’s effectiveness especially on CHS, integration of partners, improving clarity on preparedness concepts, and follow-ups.

However, a few obstacles to its effectiveness have been noted: the lack of financial and human resources, the short delay to assess the platform, the decision-making processes internal to each organisation, the lack of experience on providing humanitarian assistance for some of the partners.

In Pakistan, there were discrepancies in the use of the platform. In some organisations, focal points updated documents regularly, while other organisations kept relying on their own systems (especially INGOs).

More than half of the organisations interviewed have defined roles and responsibilities within the organisations to use ALERT efficiently.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>International NGOs</th>
<th>National NGOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8. Do you use/ have you used the ALERT platform? (n=26)</td>
<td>Yes: 69% No: 31%</td>
<td>Yes: 85% No: 15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. How frequently did you use the ALERT platform during the month after the training? (n=19)</td>
<td>Daily: 0% Weekly: 63% Monthly: 38% Quarterly: 0% Other: 0%</td>
<td>Daily: 9% Weekly: 27% Monthly: 55% Quarterly: 0% Other: 9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. How frequently do you use the ALERT platform now? (n=20)</td>
<td>Daily: 0% Weekly: 33% Monthly: 56% Quarterly: 0% Other: 11%</td>
<td>Daily: 0% Weekly: 45% Monthly: 45% Quarterly: 0% Other: 9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27. Which actions are you doing (or have you done) on ALERT platform? (Select all that apply) multiple choices (max n=20)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>International NGOs</th>
<th>National NGOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit a Hazard</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit an Indicator</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise/Update an Alert</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit a preparedness action – both APA/MPA</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete a preparedness action – both APA/MPA</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit a Response plan</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Effectiveness – evidence of NGOs being more systematic

Although a few organisations were not using ALERT frequently, interviewees noted that ALERT had helped users to be more systematic in preparedness (in terms of logistics, plans, agreed communication channels etc.).

Some of the interviewees cleaned up their database to increase efficiency. Moreover, ALERT has helped to improve accountability within the team, as responsibilities have been systematically distributed accordingly.

However, users reported their use of the platform to be irregular because of time constraints.

Effectiveness – training

The vast majority of the interviewees found the training effective in terms of:

- Reviewing key concepts: MPAs, APAS, CHS commitments, monitoring of indicators, delegating responsibilities to others response plans, etc.
- Strengthening capacities: local acceptance, networking and accessibility.

They were critical about the fact that:

- The effectiveness of the training was linked to organisations’ experiences on emergency response.
- The training was not long enough to have a complete understanding of the platform and process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>International NGOs</th>
<th>National NGOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17. Do you agree with the following statement: “After attending the ALERT training, I personally feel more knowledgeable about and competent on emergency preparedness”? (n=19)</td>
<td>I strongly agree: 55%</td>
<td>I strongly agree: 88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I agree: 45%</td>
<td>I agree: 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. How would you rate your satisfaction with the training modules for the ALERT platform? Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10)</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Effectiveness – greater preparedness among humanitarian actors

Although it was still too early to assess the results, the vast majority of the people interviewed agreed that ALERT would result in a greater level of preparedness among
humanitarian organisations. However, the fact that the government was missing from the platform limited its potential to effectively produce better preparedness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>International NGOs</th>
<th>National NGOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14. Did your country office have clear policies and SOPs for preparedness and response activities before being introduced to ALERT? (n=19)</td>
<td>Yes: 100% No: 0%</td>
<td>Yes: 91% No: 9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Did your country office change/develop some of its polices and/or SOPs as a result of some its staff attending the ALERT training? (n=19)</td>
<td>Yes: 50% No: 50%</td>
<td>Yes: 56% No: 44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. To what extent is the ALERT platform aligned with your agency’s humanitarian approach, systems and procedures? <em>Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10) (n:20)</em></td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sustainability – transferability & institutionalisation**

All interviewees mentioned that ALERT was aligned with their organisations’ overall approaches. The platform has helped in identifying systems and procedures. One organisation also indicated that systems and procedures in local organisations are often dependant on donor agencies and hence are not always easy to change.

The majority of the interviewees suggested that ALERT benefits have not been fully institutionalised. The process would only be completed when Advanced Preparedness Actions were tested and demonstrated in an emergency situation.

Some organisations still relied on their own systems, and in other organisations, staff did not have time to frequently steer ALERT and keep the maintenance up to date.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>International NGOs</th>
<th>National NGOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26. How likely is it that you would recommend the ALERT platform to a colleague or a peer in the humanitarian sector? (0 being not at all likely, 10 being completely likely) (n=20)</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sustainability – local capacity to continue using the platform**

Half of the interviewees felt that their local preparedness capacity had improved. However, brief training events and follow-ups were not sufficient to build and institutionalise local capacity.

On the other hand, as there is a lot of turnover in the sector in Pakistan, interviewees thought they were likely to build their capacity to use the platform over time.
**Survey questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>International NGOs</th>
<th>National NGOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18. After completing the training, do you think your organisation is capable of using the ALERT platform for preparedness, with no or limited support from the ALERT team? (n=19)</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sustainability – strengthen global preparedness systems**

Most of the interviewees were confident in ALERT’s potential to strengthen overall preparedness in Pakistan as:

- Communication was made possible with other actors/NGOs in humanitarian sector using the same terminology;
- There was a stronger systematic approach to improve overall global/local preparedness;
- Information was organised in a proper way.

However, there is still much to be done:

- INGOs took longer to make decisions due to a longer command chain and were also less open to sharing information;
- Allowing access to PDMA/NDMA is necessary to have a complete and strong preparedness system.

**VIII.17.3. The Philippines**

**Relevance**

The majority of organisations interviewed considered the ALERT process to be relevant and transferable.

However, uploading data was deemed to be time consuming. Some NGOs trained in September 2017 in the Philippines had not completed the process by February 2018. None of the NGOs trained in 2018 had finished entering their data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>An international NGO</th>
<th>A national/local NGO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Philippines respondents n=46</strong></td>
<td>n=13</td>
<td>n=33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.1.1. The relevance of the ALERT emergency preparedness process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. How relevant is the ALERT platform to your preparedness work? Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10) (n=36)</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NGOs were particularly enthusiastic and promoted the platform, because there were a lot actors in the Philippines involved in the emergency response. This includes church actors that are doing development/social work. As such, they were not emergency experts and did not have formalised processes.
Appropriateness

Overall, the participants reported the features to be mostly appropriate for emergency preparedness activities. NNGOs were particularly promoting the process. This support was mostly due to more regular trainings and after-training follow-up with the ALERT project team.

Interviewees found the scenario-based planning particularly adapted to the Philippines, because humanitarian actors have to prepare for multiple potential sudden-onset disasters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
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<th>National NGOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the ALERT platform? Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10) (n=36)</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. How would you rate your satisfaction with the...feature? Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10) (max n=36)</td>
<td>Create/Edit a Hazard 8.0</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit an Indicator 7.7</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise/Update an Alert 8.3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit a preparedness action – both APA/MPA 9.0</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete a preparedness action – both APA/MPA 9.0</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit a Response plan 8.3</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage Country Office Profile 8.3</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrate Country Office Settings 8.0</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interact/Collaborate with other agencies 7.0</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many reported having under-estimated the time needed to “populate data” on the platform.

In the Philippines, most of the interviewees reported facing difficulties in accessing the platform, while in the field, at home or even in the office. INGO and NNGOs stated that this could be a challenge for the confederation/union, i.e. groups of local actors involved in the response, because they had limited internet access. On the other hand, they reported that these actors had access to a good 3G network and could use a mobile app more easily.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24. To what extent do you agree with following the statement: “I can access the ALERT platform whenever and wherever I need it”? (n=36)</td>
<td>I strongly agree: 0%</td>
<td>I strongly agree: 13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I agree: 23%</td>
<td>I agree: 48%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I disagree: 10%</td>
<td>I disagree: 6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All interviewees found the platform easy to use, after having been trained. Several interviewees compared its ease of use with Facebook. They faced issues with the terminology, but the ALERT fixed this by adding definitions on the pages of the platform.

All interviewees were satisfied with the privacy settings and were advocating for users to make as much of their data public as possible.

The relevance of the platform for coordination
In the Philippines, most interviewees, especially NNGOs, mentioned that they have already witnessed the benefits of having access to the platform, because it gave them access to information they did not necessarily have before. At organisation level, NNGO/LNNGOs perceived the platform to be more useful for coordination than INGOs.

For most interviewees in the Philippines, the ALERT platform could have a stronger potential for coordination if government bodies, who played an essential role in the coordination of the emergency responses, were part of the platform. One interviewee wondered how ALERT would interoperate with the government’s platform that is supposedly under development.

Effectiveness – platform usage
A vast majority of interviewees reported using the platform at least partially, or to be in the process of entering data. As a lot of NNGOs were trained in January/February, the platform usage was overall relatively limited.

However, all interviewees said they would use the platform in the medium term, as soon as they have finished entering their data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25. How would you rate your satisfaction with the ALERT platform’s ease of use? Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10) (n=36)</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. To what extent does the ALERT platform foster humanitarian coordination? Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10) (n=36)</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Do you use/ have you used the ALERT platform? (n:46)</td>
<td>Yes: 22%</td>
<td>Yes: 57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No: 7%</td>
<td>No: 15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. How frequently did you use the ALERT platform during the month after the training? (n=35)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Daily</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Quarterly</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. How frequency do you use the ALERT platform now? (n:36)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Daily</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Quarterly</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27. Which actions are you doing (or have you done) on ALERT platform? (Select all that apply) (max n=36)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Daily</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Quarterly</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit a Hazard</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit an Indicator</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise/Update an Alert</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit a preparedness action – both APA/MPA</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete a preparedness action – both APA/MPA</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create/Edit a Response plan</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage Country Office Profile</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrate Country Office Settings</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interact/Collaborate with other agencies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Effectiveness – evidence of NGOs being more systematic**

There was emerging evidence in the Philippines that demonstrated that organisations that used the platform were more prepared and more systematic in their approach to operational preparedness in three ways.

Most of them, but mostly NNGOs, updated their preparedness plan while using the ALERT platform. For instance, they clarified the roles and responsibilities within their organisations. Others had developed Advanced Preparedness Actions. Some applied the three ALERT levels to their preparedness plans.

**Effectiveness – training**

In the Philippines, all interviewees from NNGOs, and most interviewees from INGOs, concurred that attending the training increased their knowledge of preparedness processes and best practices. For those with existing capacity, it acted as a reminder and
was sometimes useful for learning new concepts, such as the distinction between APAs and MPAs, and the CHS actions.

Some found that the training was not sufficient to use the platform and welcomed the fact they had access to an in-country focal point in COSE.

### Survey questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey questions</th>
<th>International NGOs</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17. Do you agree with the following statement: “After attending the ALERT training, I personally feel more knowledgeable about and competent on emergency preparedness”? (n=35)</td>
<td>I strongly agree: 30% I agree: 60% I disagree: 10%</td>
<td>I strongly agree: 16% I agree: 76% I disagree: 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. How would you rate your satisfaction with the training modules for the ALERT platform? Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10) (n=35)</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Effectiveness – greater preparedness among humanitarian actors**

According to interviewees, it was too early to assess whether the ALERT platform would result in faster, more organised and better emergency responses among NGOs and local organisations in the Philippines. However, all expected that the platform would lead to a greater preparedness when it would be used by emergency actors in the future. It would be especially helpful for NNGOs and LNGOs who often carry out emergency preparedness activities without coordinating with other actors.

Both CDRC and ACCORD signalled a red alert in the aftermath of the Moyon Volcano eruption in the Philippines in January 2018. These events were the closest the platform came to being used during a real emergency response. However, these organisations were not using ALERT fully at the time, and did not use the platform meaningfully to trigger advance preparedness actions and track the implementation of the first emergency activities.

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14. Did your country office have clear policies and SOPs for preparedness and response activities before being introduced to ALERT? (n=35)</td>
<td>Yes: 90% No: 10%</td>
<td>Yes: 76% No: 24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Did your country office change/develop some of its polices and/or SOPs as a result of some its staff attending the ALERT training? (n=35)</td>
<td>Yes: 50% No: 50%</td>
<td>Yes: 56% No: 44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. To what extent is the ALERT platform aligned with your agency’s humanitarian approach, systems and procedures? Average (11-point scale: 0 to 10) (n=36)</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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180 Key Informants Interviews
Sustainability – transferability & institutionalisation

In the Philippines, most of the interviewees thought the platform was transferable and that it would be institutionalised. They thought that the added workload due to the adopting of the platform justified the advantages it brought.

Some were concerned however that the CSO/grassroots organisations would not have the necessary resources to use the platform.

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26. How likely is it that you would recommend the ALERT platform to a colleague or a peer in the humanitarian sector? (0 being not at all likely, 10 being completely likely) (n=36)</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sustainability – local capacity to continue using the platform

A vast majority of the country users felt they had the local capacity to use the platform, but that the project was stopping too early. As such, organisations in the Philippines will not have access to the focal point in COSE after March 2018.

When the data was collected, INGOs were training a lot of their local partners. These actors were concerned however that they would not have access to external support after the end of the project.

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18. After completing the training, do you think your organisation is capable of using the ALERT platform for preparedness, with no or limited support from the ALERT team? (n=36)</td>
<td>Yes: 80%</td>
<td>Yes: 64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No: 20%</td>
<td>No: 36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sustainability – expectations ALERT will strengthen the global preparedness systems

The majority of interviewees highlighted the platform’s potential to strengthen the preparedness in the Philippines as follows:

- Standardised information being available to the humanitarian community;
- Cross-learning thanks to the access to information and data of what others are doing;
- NNGOs having direct access to funding;
- Allowing space for advocacy to the donor community to do preparedness activities;
- Use of a common terminology across the sectors;
- Capacity building of NNGOs and LNGOs.