share and move to face nasty bugs

# TITLE: DIALOGUE AND PARTECIPATION

# SUBTITLE: PROJECT INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT 1

ASSET Project • Grant Agreement N°612236

# ASSET

Action plan on SiS related issues in Epidemics And Total Pandemics

7th RTD framework programme

Theme: [SiS.2013.1.2-1 Sis.2013.1.2-1]

Responsible partner: **ZADIG**

Contributing partners: **ABSISKEY,ISS**

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## DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

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Report D1.3 **PROJECT INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT 1**
Task: T1.3 Project Infrastructure

Leader: ZADIG – Other contributors: **ABSISKEY,ISS**

### History of changes:

| Vn | Status | Date | Organisation / Person responsible | Reason for Change |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| V1 | Draft | 16/07/2015 | ZADIG<br>Eva Benelli | Integrations |
| Vf | Final | 16/09/2015 | ZADIG<br>Eva Benelli | |

# Table of Contents

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ASSET (Action plan in Science in Society in Epidemics and Total pandemics) is a 48 month Mobilisation and Mutual Learning Action Plan (MMLAP), which aims to:

1) forge a partnership with complementary perspectives, knowledge and experiences to effectively address scientific and societal challenges raised by pandemics and their associated crisis management

2) explore and map SiS-related issues in global pandemics

3) define and test a participatory and inclusive strategy to succeed

4) identify necessary resources to make the action sustainable after the project's completion.

The first phase (WP1 and 2) is expected to provide the baseline knowledge and will focus on the creation of common approaches and languages in a cooperative, multi-actor environment. The first phase will make the best of previous or ongoing European and National projects. ASSET will build on previous projects, notably from earlier and concurrent MMLAPs. This report describes the two pillars that sustain the ASSET network: the Virtual space of interaction (the Community of Practice) and the EU-funded MMLAPs virtual cluster.

Both activities started at the end of 2014, suffering from an overall project delay due to the project coordinator change: the entire ASSET project started de facto in the second half of the first year (2014).

Meanwhile the activity soon became intense as demonstrated by the very high frequencies on the CoP and the two successful MMLAP webinars that set up five projects.

The activity is progressing and there is still a long way to go, but overall it seems that this specific activity is on the right track and has successfully built two tools on which ASSET life can develop.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The project infrastructure is a virtual place of interaction that encourages the transfer of knowledge, the development of new ideas, the re-framing of problems, and the finding of original solutions. The project infrastructure will be hosted on the ASSET website (see WP7: ASSET website). It will include:

- An online system for discussing and voting on proposals about topics, issues, and opportunities to be addressed as they emerge during the Action. We will adopt anopen-source software, powering internet platforms for proposition development and decision making. The system should combine concepts of a non-moderated, self-organized discussion process (quantified, constructive feedback) and liquid democracy (delegated or proxy voting). The main goal is to facilitate a transparent and participatory discussion, allowing multi-actor cooperation and transfer of knowledge among partners. Initially the platform will be restricted to project partners, yet we will progressively extend access to stakeholder representatives as they are involved in the project, thus injecting them into the core of the Action Plan, creating a wider community and crossing sectors, disciplines, levels (local, national, supranational), and areas both geopolitical and cultural. A Beta Version of the platform will be available by m6.

- An ongoing, informal, MMLAP virtual cluster that may facilitate the exchange of experiences with other MMLAPs and promote best practices. The MMLAP virtual cluster will provide a rare opportunity to learn from others with whom ASSET partners may not interact on a regular basis and to learn from their experiences in MMLAPs. Learning from other MMLAPs should not focus only on infectious outbreaks and related crises, but on how others have tried to achieve their goals in other fields such as environment, education, agriculture, etc. (e.g., what works and what does not work in participatory practices, training, and communication with stakeholders). In order to identify the best practices, the task leader will contact MMLAP coordinators and relevant partners, exchange documents, and ask each MMLAP to appoint a liaison officer with ASSET. To the greatest extent possible we will then try to establish a database, which will be hosted on the ASSET website and will be made accessible to the ASSET partners and to all the MMLAPs that have accepted to participate in the cluster exercise.This will also be done in order to develop a 'RRI momentum' early in Horizon2020. The Beta Version of the virtual cluster will be online by m12. The virtual cluster will run for the whole project life.

This report describes the two lines of activities as requested by the DOW.

# 2. THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE PLATFORM

## 2.1. Objectives

To create a virtual, interactive platform for dialogue and to encourage the transfer of knowledge, the development of new ideas, and the re-framing of problems to find original solutions.

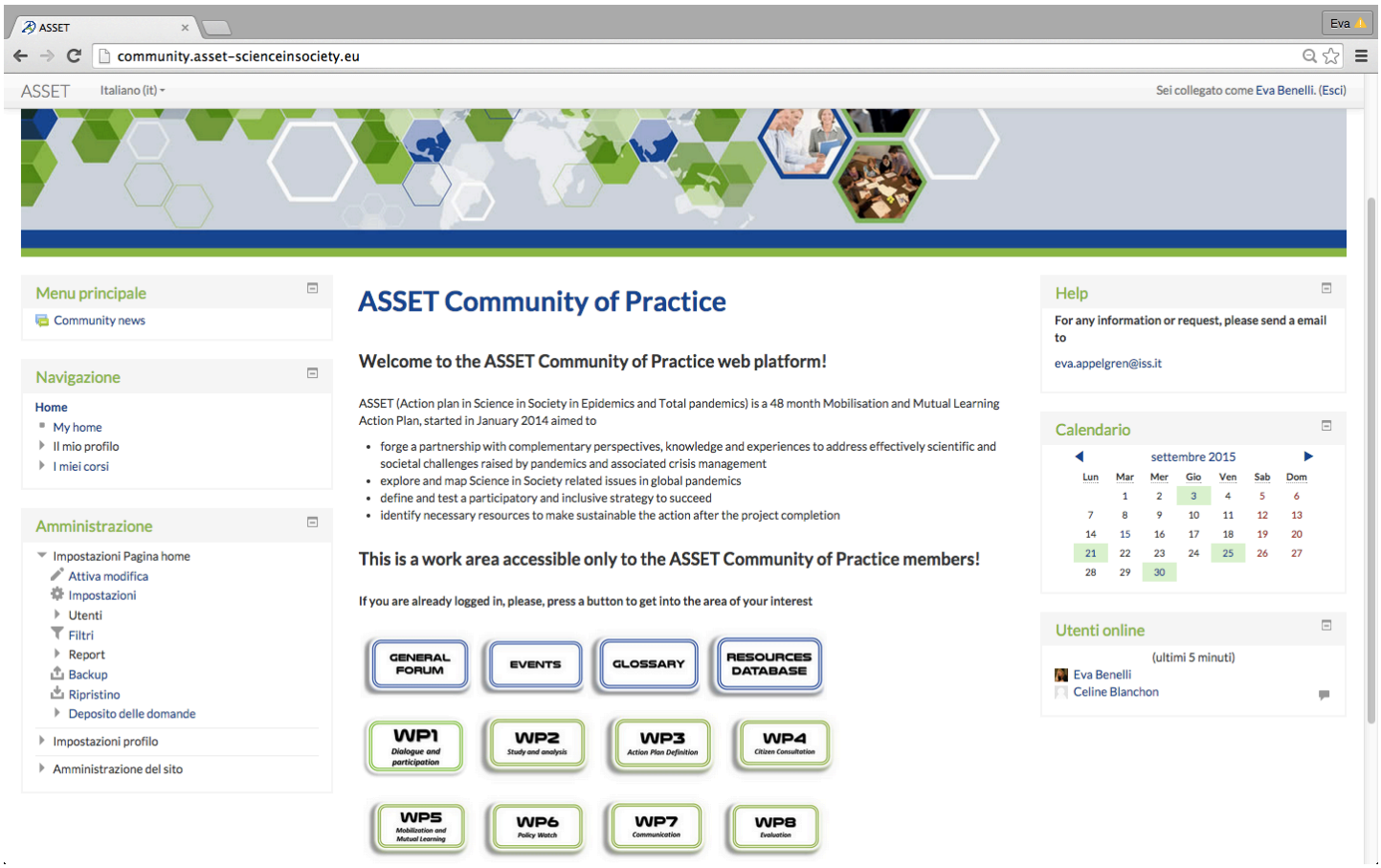
To give life to the project infrastructure, which represents the entire community of ASSET partners, who endeavour to produce: an analysis of the project's context and any related problems; new ideas; plans of action and new analyses when necessary.

## 2.2. Methods

In order to encourage intense long-distance exchange, which makes up the project's essence, we have created a place of virtual interaction called the project Community of Practice, CoP (http://community.asset-scienceinsociety.eu/ ) that encourages the transfer of knowledge; the development of new ideas; the re-framing of problems; and the finding of original solutions.

The CoP is based on an open-source software, MOODLE, which powers internet platforms for proposition development and decision making. The system combines concepts of a non-moderated, self-organized discussion process (quantified, constructive feedback) and liquid democracy.

## The CoP home page




Started in December 2014, the ASSET Web Platform is an online system with several services tailored on ASSET needs: for each WP there is an open forum for discussing proposals about topics, issues, and opportunities to be addressed as they emerge during the Project; the activity leading to the expected deliverables is enriched by each WP forum space that contributes to the work in progress, so that each ASSET product is transparently available to all ASSET participants. A deliverables repository is also included as well as a common events calendar and a resource space.

One of the strengths of the CoP is the availability of automatic functions to individual partners; for example, the language of choice for the platform's commands (the content language is always English), the possibility of filtering messages, the opportunity to activate calendar functions, and so on.

The first year sees the CoP as restricted to project partners, yet we will progressively extend the access to stakeholder representatives as they are involved in the project (I.e. others MMLAP projects), thus injecting them into the core of the Action Plan, creating a wider community, and crossing sectors, disciplines, levels (local, national, supranational), and areas both geopolitical and cultural.

The CoP is the ASSET internal platform, but there is also the ASSET external web: a dedicated website, active from January 2015 and of open access (www.asset-scienceinsociety.eu ).

## 2.3 Results

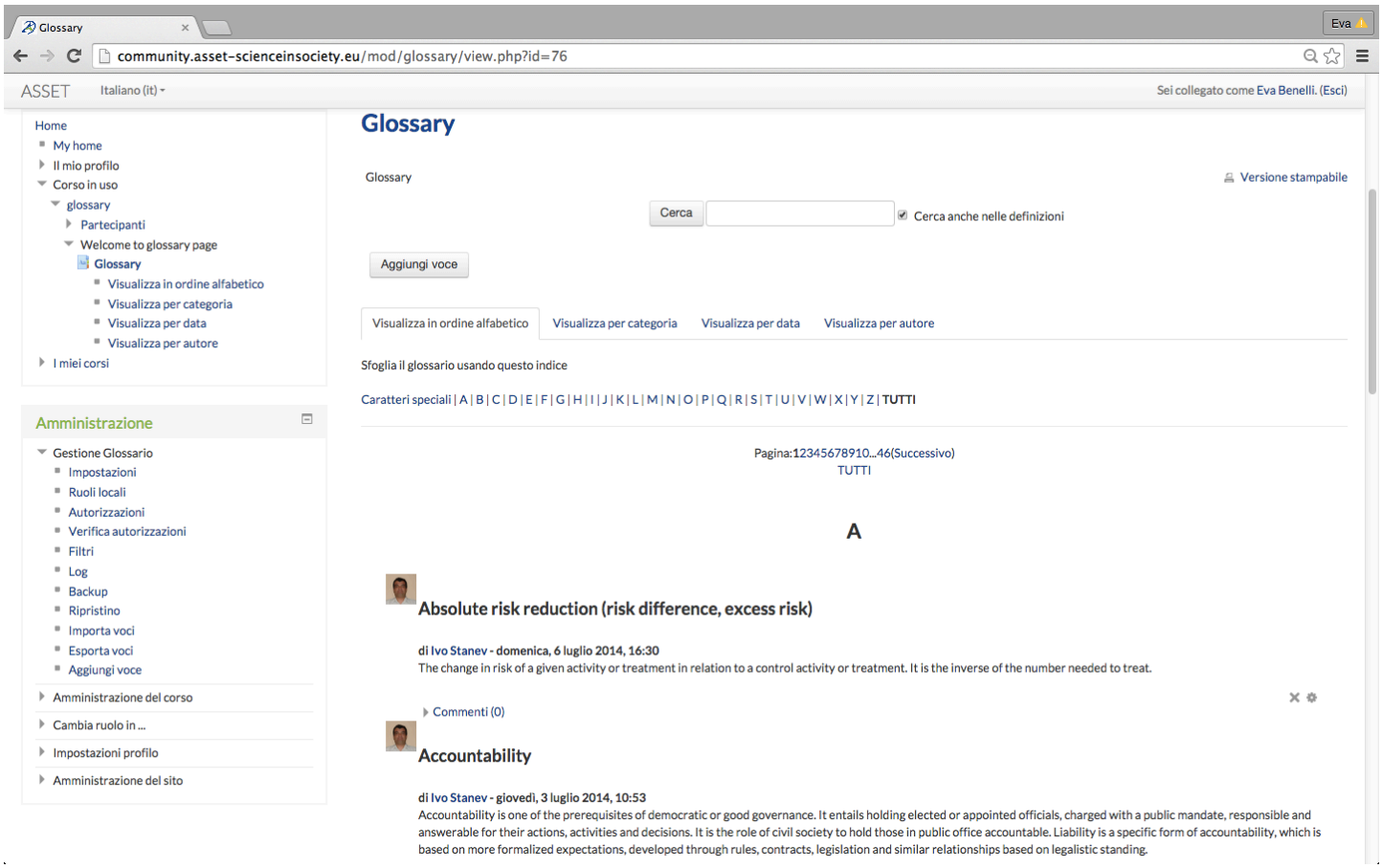
### 2.3.1 The glossary

The CoP has shown itself from the very start to be an extremely valid working instrument for the ASSET community. One of the first activities imagined by DOW was the production of a glossary that allowed all partners to share not only language but also concepts related to society and science in epidemics and pandemics. Reviews of literature and materials on pandemic flu communications revealed indeed some confusion on the use of technical terms and terminology that relate to potential interventions for pandemic flu. Moreover the usage of pandemic related terms largely differs between different disciplines.

The goal of the glossary was to facilitate internal communication, avoiding linguistic misunderstandings among partners and stakeholders with so many different disciplinary and cultural backgrounds, contributing to ensure overall coherence, and forming a shared, interdisciplinary language for the Action Plan.

The Moodle platform used for the CoP foresaw a “glossary” function that was then used by the Task Leader (NCPID) to complete the expected activity, making up for the project’s late starting date. This function has actually allowed the partners to intervene with their own comments about the diverse glossary entries following the methods indicated by the Task Leader. It was one of the very first examples of shared work. The glossary is still available to the CoP because it could become necessary to intervene later on in order to modify some entries.

## The glossary



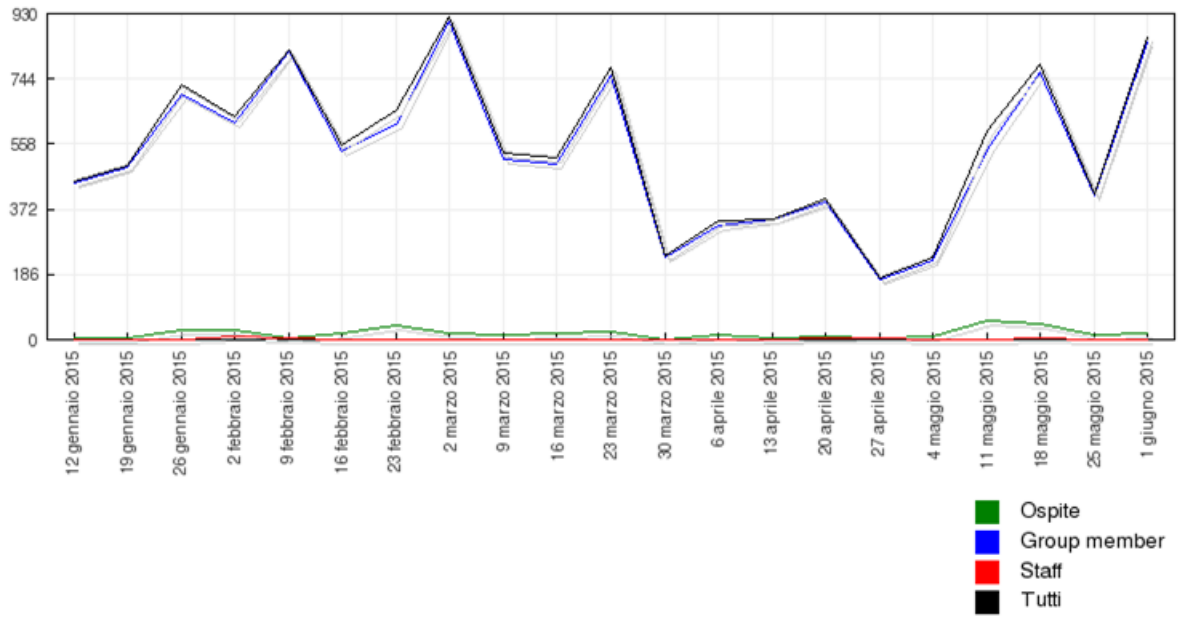

The current version of the glossary, which is consolidated and non-modifiable, may also be accessed on the ASSET website as an example of the relationship between the CoP (a reserved work space) and the project's universally accessible site.

### 2.3.2 Statistics

A dedicated tool is applied for monitoring the access to the CoP. Statistics of access are considered a proxy for Project participation.
The CoP started between December 2014 and January 2015. By June 1, 2015 there had been 11.486 accesses to the CoP: a mean of 574 accesses every week.
Most of the accesses were from Project members but we had also 359 guest visits.

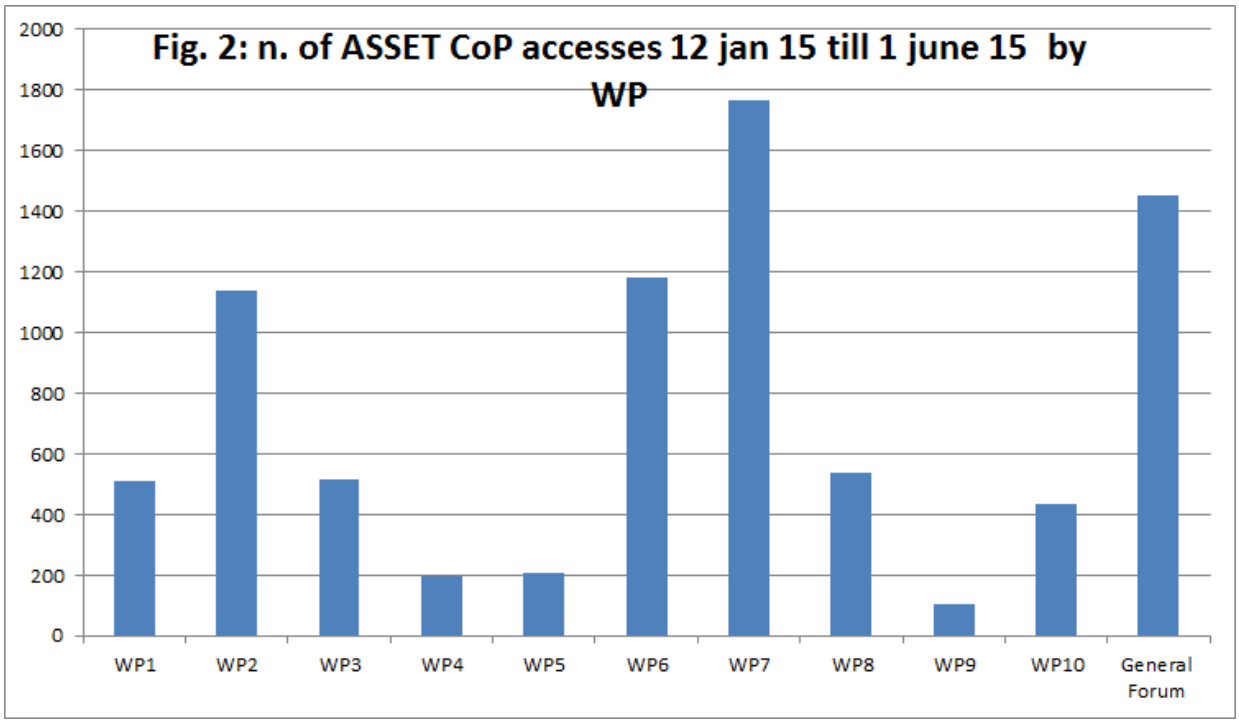
The following graph offers the number of accesses by time. Numbers of accesses are available by each of the 10 Work packages and by the general project forum.

Figure 1: N. of accesses to the ASSET CoP by time




The WP7 leads the access statistic with 1767 accesses, followed by the General Forum with 1452 accesses, then WP6 (Policy Watch) with 1179 and WP2 (Study and Analysis) with 1140 accesses.

The figure 2 offers the ASSET CoP accesses by WP for the first 5 months of 2015. Other 3427 accesses were for other CoP pages as resources, calendar, glossary, and profiles.




Some general scientific questions were intensively discussed in the CoP general Forum: the ASSET scientific product authorship was one, citation style another, participation to scientific conferences and, of course, the recent African Ebola epidemic.

The CoP is not the only internal communication tool of ASSET: in fact, many contacts still go through ordinary e-mail. Moreover, every day the CoP system sends to all registered individuals a digest (in the chosen language) with the contributions received in the previous 24 h: in this way, all the ASSET participants do receive the info with the contents of the contributions; if full info are required or access to deposited files, then the user can click on the mail message and enter the CoP . This to say that the CoP accesses only cover a portion of internal ASSET contacts.

To encourage the platform's use and exchange between partners, the staff at Zadig has designated a platform "tutor" to whom all partners may turn for clarifications or to resolve functional problems. The tutor also acts in a proactive manner, soliciting the participation of partners when necessary, and proposing the eventual activation of new functions with regard to the requests and needs that emerge over the course of the project's activity.

For example, besides the use of the calendar, which signals the activities of the project and of the local partners, it has been decided to activate an alert that reaches each partner via email, indicating a few days in advance the deadlines that everyone is expected to respect.

In conclusion, the Community of Practice combines the best automatic functions imagined by Moodle with a human touch. Everything is finalized to create a true group of work capable of sharing activities as well as exchanging various ideas, experiences, and points of view.

# 3. THE MMMLAP VIRTUAL CLUSTER

## 3.1 Objectives

To create an ongoing, informal, virtual cluster to not only facilitate the exchange of experiences with other MMLAPs and to promote best practices, but also to create the opportunity to learn from others on a regular basis by comparing methods.

## 3.2 Methods

We created a small database that includes a collection of various MMLAPs, either still ongoing or completed. We have now started with some (1-2) preliminary interviews with the project leaders, conducted on counselling approach (listening mode).

Then we will propose a more structured debate mode (webinar), extended to all leaders and partners from the different MMLAPs that will be available.
To start the MMLAP virtual cluster activity, Zadig is organizing a series of webinars as a first step towards the creation of a "MMLAP virtual cluster that may facilitate the exchange of experiences with other MMLAPs and promote best practices":

## 3.3 Results

First WEBINAR
The first one has been on June 3 2015 within ASSET and three more EU-funded MMMLAP projects.

## Webinar 03 June 2015

| PARTICIPANTS | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| PROJECT | WEBSITE | NAME | AFFILIATION | COUNTRY |
| ASSET | asset-scienceinsociety.eu/ | Eva Benelli | Zadig rtd | Italy |
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| ASSET | asset-scienceinsociety.eu/ | Roberta Villa | Zadig rtd | Italy |
| ASSET | asset-scienceinsociety.eu/ | Valentina Possenti | ISS (Istituto Superiore di Sanità) | Italy |
| ASSET | asset-scienceinsociety.eu/ | Barbara De Mei | ISS (Istituto Superiore di Sanità) | Italy |
| BEWATER | www.bewaterproject.eu/ | Anabel Sanchez | CREAF (Centre for Ecological Research and Forestry Applications) | Spain |
| PERARES | www.livingknowledge.org/livingknowledge/perares | Andrea Vargiu | Università di Sassari | Italy |
| SYN-ENERGENE | www.synenergene.eu/ | Steffen Albrecht | KIT (Karlsruhe Institute of Technology) | Germany |

The aim of the webinar was to activate a first contact between MML projects in view of the creation of the virtual cluster and the sharing of experiences between different projects.

Apart from ASSET, the following projects were represented: BEWATER, PERARES and SYN-ENERGENE. These projects are very different in terms of issues faced,

methodology used, and state-of-the-art work and of the Action Plans (some were closed, some were just at the beginning, and for some the creation of the Action Plan corresponds to a specific Work Package).

The webinar was structured as follows:

After an introduction as to the objectives and the methodology of the webinar, all the participants were asked to present their projects in two rounds:

- The first round was dedicated to a brief description of the issue, its main aim, and the targeted stakeholders of each project.

- The second round was dedicated to the true focus of the meeting, the methodology described in the Action Plans and the tools planned to involve stakeholders and best disseminate the project's activities and results. Every participant was asked to indicate three strong points and three weak points related to the Action Plan and the tools used.

**Project ASSET** (Action plan in Science in Society in Epidemics and Total pandemics) Jan. 2014 / Dec. 2017 - asset-scienceinsociety.eu/ was presented at both webinars by ValentiValentina Possenti (Istituto Superiore di Sanità) on June, 3 and Roberta Villa (Zadig) on July, 7.

Asset deals with the societal challenges raised by pandemics and associated crisis management. It is the legacy of the TELL ME project (www.tellmeproject.eu/) and it is much more focused on the involvement of the stakeholders in the process of responding to pandemics.
ASSET combines public health, vaccine and epidemiological research, social and political sciences, law and ethics, gender studies, science communication, and media in order to develop an integrated and transdisciplinary strategy, which will take place at different stages of the research cycle, combining local, regional and national levels. Stakeholders: general public, researchers, institutions.
It is hard to define the weak and strong points as the project is still in a very preliminary stage. By now we can say that the methodology chosen is very precise and this means that there is a line to follow, but at the same time it is rther strict and therefore limiting.

**Project BEWATER** - Making society an active participant in water adaptation to global change
Oct.2013/Mar.2017 - http://www.bewaterproject.eu/
Anabel Sanchez (Centre for Ecological Research and Forestry Applications)

*Description*
Aim of the project is to promote dialogue and collaboration between science and society for adaptive Water Management to face global change in the Mediterranean. The project has 4 case studies: Catalonia (Spain), Tunisia, Slovenia, and Cyprus; it works with all the stakeholders interested in river basin water management in . The project tries to promote interactive dialogue and mutual learning, which means a collaborative process throughout the project: the knowledge that science puts on the table and the knowledge that comes from society cooperates to co-create a River Basin Adaptation Plan for the 4 river basins facing the challenges of water scarcity and drought. The project tries to increase the resilience of the social and ecological system through the involvement of all the relevant actors.

*Stakeholders*: water authorities, agriculture, education, Municipalities and other Administrations, NGOs, industries, scientists, people living near water.

*Methodology & Tools*
This is a three and a half-year project; being at month 18, some activities foreseen by the Acion Plan have already been implemented, and others modified or included:

- Internal Mutual learning between partners has been implemented through some workshops. The general meetings of the consortium are structured in a particular way: after the classical general meeting between partners there is an extra-day workshop dedicated to build the approach of Bewater of mutual learning and common understanding. Apart from all the consortium partners, 2 stakeholders (people with long-term commitment to the issue) from the river basins are invited to take part in the workshops

- For co-creating the Adaptation Plan with local stakeholders some professionally facilitated workshops have been realized. They are developed in the local languages to promote participation and to permit all the participants to give their contributions; the facilitators are internal partners in the projects so these workshops need to be translated simultaneously in English. Every product of the workshops is bilingual (local language and English); all the workshops follow the same methodology. There were 4 planned workshops (one for each case study) in the project, but two have been added, considering the positive results obtained

- The work with local communities was not very defined in the Action Plan, so it has been improved during project development: the main activity is an awareness campaign in which schools of the 4 river basins, Municipalities and citizens are engaged. Examples of activities developed: an exhibition realized by schools to bring to the Municipalities; public talks for raising awareness of the water challenges for these river basins; discussions with whomever is interested in participating

- Another important activity is the specific youth engagement strategy (very roughly defined in the strategy and developed during the project implementation): Tunisia was chosen as the pilot case having a very active, open and ready to participate youth and good partners working with young people. The work with youth has just started; young people are involved in the same way as all the other stakeholders.

*Strong points*

- The addition of extra moments of interaction to build a stronger engagement with the stakeholders

- Non-institutional instances (none of the partners is an institution) permits the creation of deliberative spaces of real participation related to an issue that is very sensitive in the Mediterranean Region (Adaptation and Water Management)

- Experimenting different methodologies that are more qualitative than quantitative, the ability to integrate the scientific knowledge (pretty quantitative) and the stakeholders' knowledge. I.e. the project uses and applies a specific methodology that is able to include impact assessment of water management options in a river basin in a more qualitative way without modelling

- The socio-ecological diversity of the 4 river basins: one of the expected results of the project is a handbook of lessons learned with the application of similar processes in different socio-ecological environments, which is as important as the Adaptation Plan

- The Iterativity in the involvement of the stakeholders in the project.

*Weak points*

- The project is over-ambitious; the participatory moments and the aim of what the project wants to reach with these participatory moments are very hard to meet

- The River Basin Adaptation Plan has to proceed in a very structured way: in the co-creation with stakeholders this is very difficult and the project had to add 2 other workshops in order to meet the goals of what these workshops should produce.

**Project PERARES** - Public Engagement with Research And Research Engagement with Society
May 2010/Oct.2014, http://www.livingknowledge.org/livingknowledge/perares
Andrea Vargiu, Univeristy of Sassari

*Description*
The project came to an end in October 2014. It was a large project involving 28 partners: the leading partner was the University of Groningen (Netherlands). The main aim was to structure public engagement with Research, to bring together researchers and civil society organisations in the main process of doing Research. This mutual engagement needs to take place to formulate new Research questions; Civil Society Organisations (CSO) have been involved since the beginning and not only after the Research questions have been answered, as usually happens.
Stakeholders: Researchers and Civil Society Organisations

*Methodology & Tools*
PERARES doesn't only aim at specific issues; the main aim is to work out a system and develop a methodology to structure and foster the relationship between Science and Society, CSO, and researchers. Each one of the 12 Work Packages tried to cover different aspects of this goal. Two WPs had specific issues: domestic violence and forgotten citizens of Europe (nomadic cultures around Europe). These two WPs tried to put to work CSO and researchers in transnational study projects. Furthermore, there was a WP about online debate and another one about structuring activities in partnership among researchers and CSO based on the model of Science Shops. PERARES was built on a previous experience that tried to spread the Science Shops system around Europe.
As a result of the project, a new Association outside the University has been built: this Association is made of researchers and CSOs with the core aim of promoting science with and for society. This required a year for creating the needed trust to start with this new project.

Some techniques were used to make a Feasibility Plan for this project: scenario workshop (first used in 1998 in Denmark for dealing with technology issues and dilemmas).

*Strong points*

- Building structured systems in your projects but leaving enough space to face the unexpected (flexibility)

- Building mutual trust among partners is a key element

- Understanding stakeholders and their interests: they enter the project and become involved only if the project has something interesting for them. Strategies should be developed to observe the stakeholders and understand what their interests are and where they meet. Asking people to participate by bringing their interests means planning to enlarge the projects' interests to include stakholders.

*Weak points*

- The biggest problem was to get deeply involved in the online debate: many stakeholders have their own channels on the web, so they don't want to get involved in another online debate. Many offline activities are required to have good involvement in the online debate; direct interaction is a key element

- Most of the time online interaction is non synchronic, and this endengers the relationship.

**Project SYN-ENERGENE** Synthetic biology – Engaging with New and Emerging Science and Technology in Responsible Governance of the Science and Society Relationship
Jul 2013 / June 2017 - http://www.synenergene.eu/
Steffen Albrecht (Karlsruhe Institute of Technology)

*Description*
Syn-Energene is about Research and Synthetic Biology, a very young field, involving basic Research but also some applications already coming onto the market. It is a new approach of Biotechnology and Genetics which designs novel organisms or novel biological systems from scratch: you pre-program the DNA in your computer and then implement it in a living organism and then this organism is supposed to produce some proteins or others. The main aim of this MMLAP is to foster dialogue and mutual learning between Science and Society about societal and ethical implications of Biotechnology in this stage of Research field. The main focus is to

widen the discourse about the technology from the Research field to a wider part of society and make it aware of the potential implications they can have for the society and for the environment.

*Stakeholders*

Research Institutes, public groups, policy makers, organisations working on environmental protection, bio-artists, do-it-yourself communities (where there is a strand of biologists)

*Methodology & Tools*

The project counts a very large team of 25 professional and experienced partners, which makes the collaboration across borders work very well. There is a core team of people working on similar activities (science communication, technology assessment, public engagement on science, etc.); each one of the partners is working at the interface between science, community, and the stakeholders (policy community).

Other activities are structured in 4 different fields:

- Work with the young generation of scientists: Syn-energene collaborates with the "i-GEM competititon" on synthetic biology between students: several thousand students meet in Boston in Autumn to present their achievements and discuss them with senior researchers. The Syn-energene collaborates by discussing with these students the ethical and societal aspects of this research

- Public engagement activities: most of them are offline; Syn-Energene tried online consultations but it is difficult to have good participation. Various localities are working with the science centres

- Artistic reflection of the Synthetic Biology: there is a festival on this issue that manages to bring together scientists, artists and general public. There are theatre pieces and film festivals touring across Europe and the world

- Link to the policy maker community: they are invited to events where they can discuss issues dealing with Biotechnology with representatives from research centres, NGOs, and civil society.

This is a large-scale experiment on public engagement and technological issues and there is therefore an evaluation approach to verify which kind of activities work and which ones don't. Being at mid-term, it is not possible to draw any conclusions.

*Strong points*

- The professionality and diversity of partners, which allows us to cover different aspects of the issues the project deals with

- The variety of activities (hundred of actions and events to reach the wider society).

*Weak points*

- Reaching the science community is hard because it is a reality that has difficulties in seeing the importance of discussing science with the society

- It is difficult to talk with people about synthetic biology because it is a complex and abstract issue, quite far from daily life. Syn-energene tries to find innovative methods to talk about it to lay people

- The project is very ambitious and it is hard to communicate the activities outside of the consortium.

**Webinar 07 July 2015**

| PARTICIPANTS | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| PROJECT | WEBSITE | NAME | AFFILIATION | COUNTRY |
| ASSET | asset-scienceinsociety.eu/ | Giulia Candiani | Zadig rtd | Italy |
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| ASSET | asset-scienceinsociety.eu/ | Roberta Villa | Zadig rtd | Italy |
| ASSET | asset-scienceinsociety.eu/ | Valentina Possenti | ISS (Istituto Superiore di Sanità) | Italy |
| ASSET | asset-scienceinsociety.eu/ | Barbara De Mei | ISS (Istituto Superiore di Sanità) | Italy |
| Gap 2 | | | | Spain |
| SIFORAGE | www.siforage.eu | Elena Urdaneta | BCC (Basque Culinary Center) | Spain |

**Project SIFORAGE** - SiforAGE - Providing innovative solutions for active and healthy ageing.
November 2012 -October 2016 www.siforage.eu
Elena Urdaneta (BCC Spain)

*Description*
The project counts 19 partners in Europe, Turkey and Brazil.
The objective is to strengthen the cooperation among the stakeholders working on active and healthy ageing. There are 7 different objectives that include:

- The engagement and empowerment of CSOs in research about Active and Healthy Ageing (AHA)
- The production of evidence-based policy making
- The raising of awareness in the scientific community about the importance of social responsibility and ethics in research
- The analysis and improvement of the existing mechanisms for accessing the market of innovative products and solutions for older people
- The involvement of the wide range of stakeholders working on AHA and the spreading of knowledge generated along the project duration
- Stimulating Mutual Learning between the stakeholders involved.

*Stakeholders*
The project involves scientists, end-users, civil society, public administrations, and companies in order to improve the competitiveness of the European Union regarding the promotion of research and innovative products for longer and healthier lives.
The project aim is to have 2.000 stakeholders and involve them in the mutual learning process. Every Country has the same group of stakeholders represented, and each country is involved only in some of the activities (e.g. the Technology Experience Café is implemented only in 5 countries; the dialogue between scientists and other people is implemented in another 6 countries; and so on).

*Methodology & Tools*
The project produced some guidelines on the methodology to engage stakeholders (an internal wiki). For example, the identified subjects receive a document explaining the project and they are asked to actively participate: in order to make their participation real and effective, they are engaged in a specific activity, not in the project as a whole.

The project is now producing a document about the engagement of different subjects in different countries.
The exclusive online participation wasn't used in the project (the only online tool is the newsletter for stakeholders); there is a MOODLE platform for the online training of policy makers, but before that the consortium had a personal contact with them.
Other tools are: a Technology Experience Cafè, permitting people to participate in the development of new technologies; a package for increasing the communication between researchers and laypeople (the project had to define the concept of Healthy Ageing before starting the activities to make it accessible to everyone); for the project it is very important to reach people aged 65-85, so some flyers in each of the native languages in a accessible vocabulary were produced.

*Strong and weak points*
Difficulties with two targets:

- Laypeople don't understand the importance of participating and they don't know what is going to happen, so, in some countries the project didn't reach the target

- Policy makers. The more difficult target group is policy makers because the project talks about producing scientific or evidence-based policy making about AHA whereas policy makers have their usual ways of working and they are not interested in starting new methodologies like mutual learning; moreover, policies are generally driven by other issues (like budget). In 6 Countries some physical meetings have been organized to promote their participation.

The methodology had to be adapted to different contexts because the project consortium is composed of very different situations and different public programs to approach healthy ageing. Also the Action Plan was adapted during the project; it took 6 months for the partners to understand that they are part of the same team in the project, and also the stakeholders had some difficulties in understanding that they are expected to have an active role in the mutual learning process.
About the consortium, a strong and weak point at the same time is the variety in the composition of the consortium (different types of subjects with different experiences in project management): it is an interesting experiment, but it is difficult and it takes a lot of time to find a good balance.

**Project GAP2** - Bridging the gap between science, stakeholders and policy makers
Phase 2:Integration of evidence-based knowledge and its application to science and management of fisheries and the marine environment

April 2011 – March 2015 (www.gap2.eu) Steve Mackinson (CEFAS- Centre for Environment, Fisheries&Acquaculture Science, UK) declared his interest in being part of the MMLAP network, but in the end he wasn't able to take part in the webinar. He sent GAP2 information by e-mail.

*Description*
The societal issue is about establishing sustainable Fisheries. Our focus was on the knowledge and governance framework that is required to mobilise and enable relevant knowledge from difference stakeholders. Our approach was twofold:
(i) Influencing actions – promoting dialogue and debate at regional and national levels
(ii) Demonstration actions – specific actions of participatory research where different stakeholders come together to tackle problems of shared interest.

*Strong Points*
1. The level of engagement with fisheries stakeholders was first class. We successfully worked as partners in research projects, and managed to overcome many deeply rooted feelings of mistrust
2. We maintained a high degree of cohesiveness in the consortium – all working with a shared understanding of the needs and approaches
3. Communications were successful in reaching their target audiences and were a vital part of enhancing the spirit of the projects and awareness of their outputs.

*Weak Points*
1. Awareness of outputs does not necessarily lead to impact. The bridge from communicating to influencing needs to be carefully constructed
2. Policy makers did not play the role we envisioned and hoped they would have, so better understanding of the policy dynamic before beginning the project would have helped (the beauty of hindsight!)
3. Like all projects, securing continuity is difficult. I am not sure we could have done a lot more than the efforts that were made, but nonetheless it remains a weakness because much of the positive momentum we have made quickly dissipates at the end of a project.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At month 18 the ASSET Virtual space of discussions and contacts is working well trough the Community of Practice: all the ASSET participants are updated daily on the project's life and any new contact within the CoP is mailed to the single participant's address.

Anyhow most participants, but not all, are quite frequently present in the CoP contributing to the different work packages' discussion as evidenced by the reported CoP statistics.
Researchers involved in Work Packages scheduled to start in the third and fourth project year are less present in the CoP.

It is to be noted that, some ASSET participants still prefer the use of ordinary e-mail exchange to activate specific discussion, thus avoiding the entire ASSET community to actively contribute to specific tasks: this is a negative approach to the project and action is needed to avoid personal mail use and instead promote CoP access.

The ASSET website is very young, but this is is the space where the open arguments from the Cop are expected to be offered to the general public: this passage needs to be strengthened and carefully reinforced.

The MMLAP NETWORK successfully started with two webinars: participants were quite active and the webinars produced interesting confrontation between projects quite different in contents and area of interest.
Further steps are needed to improve this useful dialogue and some actions have to be implemented:

1. Gather all the useful documents on different participatory methodologies: those coming from literature that every project took as a point of reference and those directly produced within the projects (reports, handbooks, Action Plans, etc.)

2. Organise a database of best practices: the indicators of the database will be shared and agreed upon with all the participants in order to make it easy to use and consult. The database will be hosted in the internal Community of Practice (CoP) of ASSET

3. Create a CoP sub-community dedicated to MMLAP discussion and sharing, a sort of online forum.

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