

Pilot Action Handbook

Handbook on planning, preparation, implementation
and monitoring of pilot actions (D.3.1.1)



Version 1
July 2024





1. Introduction

This handbook is made to support the development of pilot actions within the Interreg Central Europe project LOCALIENCE, which aims to develop resilience against extreme weather threats caused by climate change at local level in Central Europe.

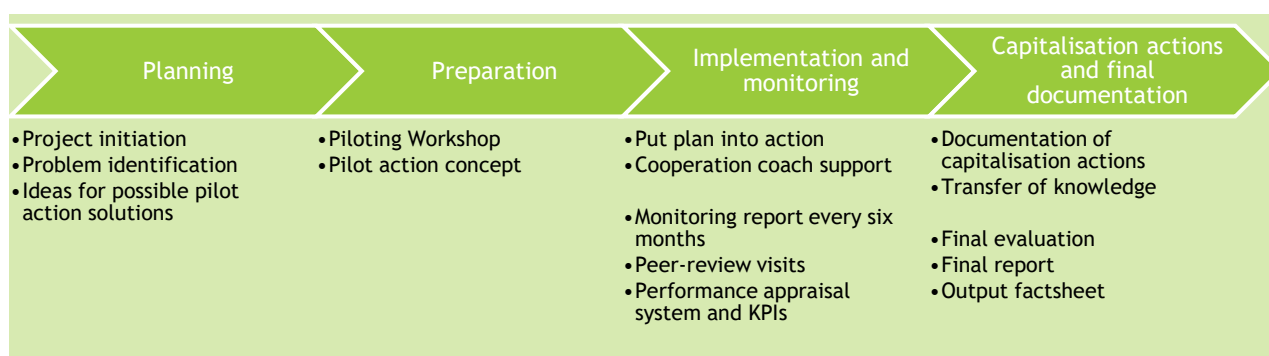
The pilot actions within the project are characterised by testing solutions to improve interaction of professional disaster management organisations with local level stakeholders. A pilot action will be implemented in each of the five project partner countries (Austria, Czechia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia), and will address local challenges of each individual location, which are also relevant for the other project partners. The joint preparation of pilot actions will ensure that novel solutions are validated in one LOCALIENCE region, but bear transnational significance and transfer potential to all other project partners and beyond.

The pilot actions will fulfil some or all of the following criteria:

- Improve collaboration between professionals and non-professionals
- Develop two-directional features of disaster management services and processes
- Involve local actors in collecting, distributing and processing data
- Discover untapped local capacities and potentials in preventing and fighting risks and damages of extreme weather events
- Improve skills and mobilisation potential of local actors.

This handbook contains a joint methodology and process design to support the project partners in designing and implementing their pilot actions in a way that enables co-creation, consideration of interests and expectations of all project partners, including a joint peer-review process, and which ensures effective capitalisation of shareworthy experiences and knowledge transfer.

The handbook will delineate the relevant phases of the pilot action process starting with planning, preparation, implementation and monitoring, and ending with capitalisation actions and final documentation.





2. Planning

The pilot action planning phase includes the initial conception of the pilot actions (project initiation) including the identification of the issue for which a solution is necessary. This may include a gap analysis of the current situation in the pilot region and the challenges and needs it presents. Multiple preliminary scenarios for possible solutions may be developed, the benefits and drawbacks of these designs should be assessed and the preferred approach selected. Based on this analysis a decision on the type of pilot action to test as a solution to enhance collaboration between professional disaster management organisations with local level stakeholders can be made. An outline of the pilot action goal and scope and an assessment of whether it is realistic and worthwhile to test (feasibility) should also be completed.

Reflections on the local area in which to implement the pilot action will have a great impact on the final process strategy and design of the pilot action. Researching and understanding local factors like cultural factors or the regulatory environment of the pilot area is important for the planning process.

The initial constellation of the pilot action team and the cooperative approach with project partners and local stakeholders should also be considered at this early stage for a successful project. Ideas on how to make sure the pilot action is scalable and transferable should be discussed.

It is important to remember that each pilot action has its own specific objective - thus this handbook should serve as a guideline but with room for flexibility to adjust to the specifics of each pilot action and for changes during implementation. Stay flexible in your plans and during implementation to account for the influence of stakeholder feedback and other factors which can lead to different scenarios.

Keep in mind during planning

- Identify challenges and needs for improved local collaboration against extreme weather threats
- Define goals and scope of your pilot action



3. Preparation

During the preparation phase a detailed pilot action plan is developed. This involves determining the key design of the pilot action and creating a comprehensive strategy for how the project partner team will execute the work, including stakeholder involvement, establishing a timeline, resource allocation and how to manage potential risks that could influence the pilot action implementation.

3.1. Detailed pilot action concept

At the end of the preparation phase the detailed pilot action concept is prepared by each pilot action team (see Annex for template). Here the pilot action should be described in detail and the following points should be covered:

- i) problem definition
- ii) stakeholder mapping and involvement
- iii) cooperation and roles and responsibilities of involved parties
- iv) resources and investments
- v) monitoring and risk management
- vi) communication and awareness raising activities
- vii) durability and transferability (future plans)
- viii) time plan

Each of these points are important to think about during pilot action preparation to ensure the best possible implementation.

Through thorough **problem definition** the objective and scope of the pilot action is delimited. It is useful to first present an analysis of the current challenges and needs in the region of interest and describe clearly what the issue is and how your proposed solution can help improve the situation and benefit the target groups. A description of the innovative elements in your pilot action should also be included. Further, you should describe the design and strategy for implementation of the pilot action here.

Stakeholder mapping helps you identify all relevant actors, which should either be directly **involved** in the development and implementation of the pilot action or third-parties who will be affected by the end-result. This includes both experts who can give input to the functionality of the pilot action and local level public/civil stakeholders. Remember in LOCALIENC the collaboration between professional disaster management and local stakeholders is key in creating resilience against extreme weather threats at local level! Stakeholders should be involved from an early stage of the pilot action to ensure you receive all relevant input in time and to minimise any possible resistance against the pilot action through information sharing and open communication from the start.

Besides stakeholder involvement, it is also important to define the **cooperation and roles and responsibilities of involved parties** within the core team, who are developing the pilot action. This means the cooperation between project partners and associated partners and stating who does what. Further, an



explanation of the joint development of the pilot action within the project partnership is valuable, e.g. exchange of knowledge and ideas at the Piloting Workshop.

An account of which **resources and investments** are needed to implement the pilot action should be included, especially if e.g. the purchase of needed equipment incurs larger costs. Resources can include personnel, equipment but also e.g. required data or expert knowledge for the successful execution of the pilot action.

Monitoring of the pilot action progress is essential to ensure adaptive management with a feedback loop from the involved actors throughout the process, which should also help in the **management** of potential **risks** (more information on monitoring can be found in chapter 4).

Engaging in open and direct **communication** and preparing **awareness raising actions** from the start of the pilot action is important to engage the relevant stakeholders and increase understanding and support for the objective of your pilot action and the challenge it is addressing. Therefore, a description of all planned communication and awareness raising actions, the target group and timings should be included in the detailed concept. This also helps towards preparing your documentation of local level capitalisation actions strengthening awareness and community preparedness (see chapter 5).

Lastly, reflections on the **durability and transferability** of the pilot action after the initial implementation within the LOCALIENCE project should also be covered in the detailed concept. This should comprise plans to ensure the long-lasting effect of the pilot action outcome beyond the project duration, as well as how the results can be adapted or further developed for use by additional target groups in other regions.

3.2. Piloting Workshop

Presentation of all pilot actions at the Piloting Workshop during the planning phase ensures joint preparation of concepts and co-creation of the pilot actions between partners and pilot regions. The current handbook on the methodology for the implementation of the pilot actions will also be presented to prepare the partners for the process and the needed documentation.

A peer-review matrix for the decision on which partner visits which pilot action according to interest and experience will be presented. Also, the methodology of how to conduct the peer-review visits will be presented and discussed during this workshop (see chapter 4.3 for further information on the peer-review visits).

Keep in mind during preparation

- Plan your pilot action in detail by considering the above-mentioned points
- Attend online Piloting Workshop to present pilot action plan and jointly prepare concepts and peer-review process
- Submit pilot action concept by filling out the detailed pilot action concept template (see Annex)



4. Implementation and monitoring

After completing all preparation steps, it is time to implement the pilot action and put the plan from the detailed concept into action. This means realisation of the detailed design and coordinating what is being done, by whom and when according to the plan, as well as monitoring the progress. Throughout the implementation process a clear and consistent communication with all partners and stakeholders should be maintained.

4.1. Support by cooperation coaches

The cooperation coaches (D.2.2.3) play a pivotal role in the success of the pilot actions by facilitating local collaboration between professional and civil/public actors. These coaches are meticulously trained to bridge the gap between different stakeholders, ensuring smooth and effective cooperation. During their training, they receive comprehensive disaster management knowledge and first-level medical training, equipping them with the essential skills to respond to emergencies. Additionally, they are taught the art of cooperation, learning strategies to foster teamwork and understanding among diverse groups. An important aspect of their training includes adult education techniques, enabling them to effectively impart knowledge and facilitate learning among adults.

The training program for these coaches is structured in two parts: an e-learning course followed by in-person training sessions. The e-learning component provides a theoretical foundation, covering essential topics and allowing coaches to learn at their own pace. The in-person training then builds on this foundation, offering hands-on experience and practical knowledge on how to support and enhance cooperation. Given the unique nature of each pilot action, the roles and responsibilities of the cooperation coaches will vary slightly, tailored to the specific needs and dynamics of each project. Their versatile training ensures they can adapt to different scenarios, assisting in the creation of events, leading workshops, and facilitating everyday meetings. This tailored approach enables them to effectively support local collaboration and contribute to the overall success of the pilot actions.

4.2. Continuous monitoring report

Monitoring involves regularly checking the pilot action progress and performance to make sure everything is going according to plan and if not to take corrective measures. As the implementation strategy may have to change over time due to changing circumstances or needs of the involved parties, it is crucial that the pilot action plan is adaptable to ensure its robustness. Therefore, monitoring of the pilot action throughout the implementation phase is important to determine if adjustments to the plan are needed to better achieve the goal of the pilot action and to ensure adaptive management.

In fact, to ensure the effectiveness of the pilot action beyond the initial implementation i.e. in its final operation stage, follow-up monitoring should be done throughout the lifetime of the pilot action. This helps evaluate the pilot action over time and gives valuable information to stakeholders and decision-makers on its performance.

Establishing a regular monitoring system with realistic reporting intervals from the beginning of the pilot action is thus key. For the project internal monitoring during the implementation phase of each pilot action, we will rely on a progress report to be completed twice during the pilot action implementation (half-yearly). Reporting on the progress of the pilot action and any collected information or data should be completed via



the continuous monitoring report template (see Annex for specific topics to be addressed), followed up by online meetings with all project partners for feedback on each pilot action and exchange of experiences.

4.3. Peer-review visits

Additionally, peer-review visits of project partners to a fellow pilot action region to study, supervise and cross-reference pilot activities will be organised (see deliverable D.3.3.1). These visits will check the effectiveness of local level collaboration between actors and the possible applicability potential of the pilot action in other regions through knowledge sharing and stakeholder discussions on-site.

The peer-reviews are to be considered as exceptional sources of information, expertise and experience a partner can gain from another partner. The visits will help partners to team up with peers from other LOCALIENCE countries to discuss their specific pilot action in depth. Together, they will share experiences and learn mutually helping each other to address the issue and also to identify solutions or additional benefits with the hosting partner.

Peer-reviews are also creating commitment and spirit within the partnership and among the partner countries and its stakeholders. The capacities of both hosting and visiting regions will increase via gained knowledge on specific issues discovering different solutions for the main issue with slight differences. Peer-reviews are, in essence, thematised study visits that give possibility for the exchange of ideas, experiences, and advices in a formalized manner. It will provide possibility to work together, interact and learn from each other on the spot.

Each pilot area will hold peer-review visits presenting their own pilot action and each partner will visit two other pilot areas. With their stakeholders (1 or 2 stakeholders per visit) each country project partners will visit another pilot area focusing on the exchange of experiences, to initiate creative process and help to find common grounds for future cooperation through different exchange methods (for example: The Future Dialogue process, Speed Dating and Speed Geeking, COCD box approach, Workshops and Walkshops, etc.)

The result is different for the visiting and the hosting partner. For the hosting partner, the peer-review will help to further develop the pilot action. Besides, to boost the cooperation with local stakeholders participating in the pilot actions. For the visiting partners it will lead to advanced knowledge about the local situation and pilot action. A new and interesting way of approach will be presented for them and they can take away stakeholder involvement methods from different countries to further develop their actions.

The peer-review methodology will be developed further in a separate document.

4.4. Performance appraisal system

Furthermore, a performance appraisal system with a comprehensive set of key performance indicators (KPIs) will be developed within the project to measure the effectiveness of local level collaboration of professional and civil/public actors in preparation for and management of extreme weather threats (see deliverable D.1.2.1). Partners apply the performance appraisal system and relevant KPIs to their local pilot actions to test them in specific case studies, give recommendations for their application and thereby refine the developed approach (see deliverable D.1.2.2). This process also contributes towards the overall evaluation of the pilot action for the final documentation.



Keep in mind during implementation and monitoring

- Maintain clear communication with stakeholders and partners throughout implementation process
- Continuously monitor your pilot action during implementation to ensure adaptive management
- Report on your progress every six months by completing the monitoring report template (see Annex)
- Share experiences and give feedback on pilot actions at online monitoring meetings
- Take part in peer-review visits - both to your own pilot action and to partner's pilot actions
- Apply the performance appraisal system to your pilot action and give feedback for its refinement



5. Capitalisation actions and final documentation

Both during the implementation phase and at the end of the pilot action period, the pilot action results should also be shared and demonstrated to strengthen climate awareness and community preparedness against extreme weather threats based on location-specific capitalisation action plans.

The effective capitalisation activities of shareworthy experience take place on three levels to gain the highest possible transferability potential from pilot actions: **1) at pilot/regional level**, where project partners, through the peer-review process, visit another pilot action and conduct monitoring, on-site evaluation and knowledge transfer (see deliverable D.3.3.1), **2) at country level**, where capitalisation action plans should be prepared and implemented to transfer knowledge and strengthen awareness and preparedness targeted at both professionals, stakeholders and citizens, e.g. through workshops, contests or community events (see deliverable D.3.3.2), **3) at transnational level**, where project partners plan continued cooperation and knowledge transfer beyond the project implementation period, also to potentially interested third parties (see deliverable D.3.3.3).

At the end of the pilot action implementation period, the final outcome should be evaluated, reported and documented as a validated solution and included in the Online LOCALIENCE Knowledge Repository (O.2.1). This repository will act as a toolbox from the project website, where all available knowledge on the pilot actions is stored and shared.

The pilot actions will function as validated solutions after their implementation and testing, as conclusions are drawn together with stakeholders at a follow-up meeting.

The final documentation will include several documents: the continuous monitoring reports, administrative documents (especially meeting minutes including decision points in the planning, photos), and a final report including an evaluation according to performance appraisal system, where the outcome and conclusions of the pilot action are conveyed in a detailed way.

For the final documentation on the implementation of the co-created pilot actions, a so-called **pilot action output factsheet** should also be filled in. Find the final pilot action output factsheet to be filled in at the end of the pilot in the [Interreg CE Output factsheet template](#).

Keep in mind for capitalisation actions and final documentation

- Report on your local level capitalisation actions which have been organised and documented during the pilot action implementation phase
- The pilot action should be evaluated, reported and documented for the final documentation (see Final documentation template in Annex)
- Fill out final pilot action factsheet (template found on Interreg website)



ANNEX

Reporting templates

1. Detailed pilot action concept template

Project index number	CE0100182	Acronym	LOCALIENCE
Delivery number	D.3.1.3		
Responsible partner (PP name and number)			
Pilot action title (as indicated in AF)			
Country + location of pilot action			
Pilot action timing (start and end date month/year)			
Expected solution derived from pilot action			
Project website	https://www.interreg-central.eu/projects/localience/		
Detailed pilot action concept description <i>Please present the detailed pilot action concept by addressing the following topics.</i>			
Problem definition <i>Please describe the current challenge your pilot action will tackle and provide a solution for, including:</i> ■ Gap analysis with description of current situation in the pilot region and the challenges and needs it presents ■ Pilot action aim, how it tackles the identified challenges and its benefits for the target groups (expected results) <i>(max. 1000 characters without spaces)</i>			



Technical and procedural description

Please describe the main features and processes of your pilot action, including:

- A summary of pilot action activities during its implementation, including preliminary steps
- The innovative elements in your pilot action approach/tools/processes compared to the current situation

(max. 3000 characters)

Stakeholder mapping and involvement

Please describe your stakeholders and target groups, including:

- Which stakeholders/target groups you plan to involve and why you decided on these
- How/by which activities do you plan to involve target groups during pilot action development and implementation

(max. 2000 characters)

Cooperation and roles and responsibilities of involved parties

Please describe the cooperation aspect of your pilot action and the involved parties, including:

- Involved project partner(s), associated partner(s) and their role and responsibility during the pilot action
- The joint development of the pilot action within the project partnership

(max. 1000 characters)

Monitoring and risk management

Please describe how you will monitor the progress of your pilot actions, including:

- A description of identified/potential risks and how you will prepare for them during the pilot action and how to deal with/mitigate them

(max. 1000 characters)



Communication and awareness raising actions

Please describe your communication plan and each planned awareness raising action, including:

- *Description of action, target group and timeline (timings can be filled in in the provided time plan Excel)*

(max. 2000 characters)

Sustainability and transferability of pilot action results

Please describe the possible future plans for the developed tool/process of your pilot action, including:

- *How you plan to ensure the long-lasting effect of the pilot action outcome beyond the project duration*
- *How ownership and durability will be secured after the project end*
- *How you expect your pilot action results can be adapted, further developed or transferred to additional target groups or in other regions*

(max. 1000 characters)

Timeline

Please describe the timeline of your pilot action by filling in all tasks and actions

- *Please fill in the Gantt chart in additional [Excel file “D.3.1.3_PilotActionConcept_Timeline”](#)*



2. Pilot action continuous monitoring report template

Project index number	CE0100182	Acronym	LOCALIENCE
Delivery number	D.3.2.1	Pilot action title	
Responsible partner (PP name and number)		Country	
Report delivery date			
Project website	https://www.interreg-central.eu/projects/localience/		
Monitoring of pilot action and progress report <i>Please report on the progress of your pilot action by addressing the following topics:</i>			
■ What you did to implement the pilot action, which tasks were carried out (max. 1000 characters)			
■ How you involved the stakeholders and what their feedback was (max. 500 characters)			
■ What went well, what went not so well (max. 500 characters)			
■ The successfulness of your pilot action according to relevant KPIs from the appraisal system (max. 500 characters)			



■ *Plans for possible adaptations/improvements*

(max. 500 characters)

■ *An update on the peer review progress*

(max. 500 characters)

■ *Your performed communication and awareness raising activities*

(max. 1000 characters)



3. Final documentation template

Project index number	CE0100182	Acronym	LOCALIENCE
Delivery number	D.3.2.1	Pilot action title	
Responsible partner (PP name and number)		Country	
Report delivery date			
Project website	https://www.interreg-central.eu/projects/localience/		
Final documentation on pilot action <i>Please report on the final output and evaluation of your pilot action by addressing the following topics:</i>			
Pilot action description and results <i>Please describe your pilot action, its results and final output including:</i> ■ <i>Description of the initial situation in the pilot region and the identified challenges</i> ■ <i>Main objective and how the pilot action contributed to tackle the identified challenges</i> ■ <i>Technical description of the pilot action (main features, design and innovative elements, plus roles and responsibilities of involved partners)</i> ■ <i>Needed resources and investments (if applicable) for the pilot action implementation</i> ■ <i>Its concrete benefits for the target groups and its uptake by relevant organisations</i> ■ <i>Please include graphs, illustrations, photos etc. with descriptions</i> <i>(max. 7500 characters)</i>			



Final evaluation

Please evaluate your pilot action including:

- A description of the monitoring process (e.g. peer-reviews) and what went well and what went not so well during the pilot action implementation
- The challenges you faced during the implementation process and how you solved these
- Stating relevant conclusions drawn from the peer-reviews
- Choosing the relevant KPIs from the performance appraisal system and measuring the success of the pilot action according to them

(max. 5000 characters)

Stakeholder involvement

Please describe the involvement of your stakeholders and target groups including:

- Their involvement during pilot action development and implementation
- Stakeholder feedback on the final pilot action output (from final follow-up meeting)

(max. 2500 characters)

Communication and awareness raising activities

Please describe the performed communication and awareness raising activities of your pilot action including:

- A description of each activity, its objective, how it was carried out and what the outcome was
- Stakeholder feedback on the activities

(max. 2500 characters)

Sustainability

Please describe the sustainability of your pilot action output including:

- The expected long-lasting effects of the pilot action output
- Ownership of the pilot action output after the project end (incl. financial, institutional support and maintenance)

(max. 1500 characters)



Transferability

Please describe the possible adaptation, scalability and transfer of your pilot action output including:

- *How your pilot action could be adapted to be applicable in other regions, sectors or target groups*
- *How you could support such an adaptation and transfer*

(max. 1500 characters)