



SIBYL

(Seismic monitoring and vulnerability framework for civil protection)

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CONTENTS

| | |
|--|---|
| Summary..... | 2 |
| 1. Introduction | 3 |
| 2. Outreach activities | 4 |
| 2.1. <i>Project website</i> | 4 |
| 2.2. <i>Interactions with the public during field activities</i> | 4 |
| 3. Final comments | 6 |

SUMMARY

This deliverable reports on outreach activities relevant to the general public. The primary source of information was the website, which is undergoing continuous and ongoing development. The consortium also communicated with the public, namely teachers and students and public officials responsible for school building safety, during field activities in Cologne. The need is recognized that future projects that will build upon the SIBYL output will need to continue to engage with Civil Protection and other authorities and stakeholders, including ultimately the general public, to ensure the resulting framework and tools are both relevant to the needs of stakeholders and are readily exploitable.

1. INTRODUCTION

The SIBYL project set out to develop an operational framework for Civil Protection (CP) authorities to rapidly and cost-effectively assess the seismic vulnerability of the built environment. While the immediate concern was to communicate the project's findings to those stakeholders who would be interested (e.g., Civil protection, insurance, etc.) it was also recognized that the general public would potentially be interested in its outcomes.

The primary objective of the dissemination activities within SIBYL is to make the results and products arising from the project known to as wide an audience as possible. While the focus is on CP communities, the importance of communicating aspects of the project to the wider public was recognized. Therefore, this deliverable presents the dissemination actions where the project was presented to the general public.

Naturally, there is some cross-over in the activities aimed at the public and those for a professional audience, hence there will be overlap with deliverable DF4 "Report on technical and professional outreach".

2. OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

2.1. Project website

The first contact any individual may have with the project is via its website¹. The project's website provides general information to the wider public about the SIBYL project. It is the principal platform for communication, public awareness and dissemination of results. The public website (Fig. 1) has been developed and hosted by Helmholtz Centre Potsdam GFZ and is continuously being updated and will be expected to be available for at least 2 years.



Figure 1. SIBYL homepage with list of events, news and access to different sections of the website

In addition, several videos have recently been created and uploaded to the website which provides general information on the project's objectives, the undertaken activities, the developed methodology and the obtained results.

2.2. Interactions with the public during field activities.

Field activities are obviously a means by which the public come in contact with the project. This is especially so for projects such as SIBYL, where the actual field work is undertaken within urban areas. For example, during the field work in Cologne, Germany (November/December 2015), where site assessment and building characterization

¹ <http://www.sibyl-project.eu/>

measurements were carried out at 7 schools, discussions were had with several of the school principals, where the importance of this work was explained. There was interest shown and, in fact in one case, the principle provided an older map showing the building distribution of Cologne. Furthermore, the students (and teachers) often approached the personal and inquired into what they were doing (Figure 2).



Figure 2: Interactions with school leaders, THW and the general public. (top left) The team and the principle of the Humboldt-Gymnasium, Dr. Harald Junge. (top right) The team with Mr. Marius Halbach of THW. (bottom) Often teachers and students showed interest in the activities of the team.

Also very useful were the contacts made with the public authorities who are responsible for the safety of the school communities. Several conversations took place with these authorities in Cologne in advance of the field work. They all showed a strong interest in learning the results of the SIBYL investigations on their buildings.

3. FINAL COMMENTS

The importance of communicating developments in natural hazard and risk mitigation research cannot be underestimated. However, not only is there a need to communicate with fellow professionals in the various relevant disciplines, but also with the general public. The primary formal way this was undertaken within SIBYL was via the website. However, a very valuable activity was communicating with members of the public while undertaking field activities, especially with teachers and students at the schools in Cologne which were the target sites. Future projects building upon SIBYL will naturally continue with such activities, however, greater effort will be placed in participating in activities such as institute open days, or “public” events, e.g., joining with Civil Protection during their display days.

The tools developed in the project, that have been specifically calibrated by considering the requirements/ suggestions of the stakeholders who attended the project workshops, meetings and test activities, should in future be implemented into the operational procedures of civil protections and/or other equivalent authorities. This would require an even closer cooperation with the stakeholders and the organisation of ad-hoc trainings and work shop. In this case, not only will the tools find the operative application they deserve but, taking advantage of their flexibility, they could be even adapted and refined depending on the specific needs of the stakeholders. This would maximize the benefit of the efforts carried out during SIBYL. This again would call for greater communication with the general public, as part of the various authorities’ efforts to engage with the wider community.