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Applying the healthy urban planning concept in a redevelopment project

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Introduction

Many efforts are currently being carried in the fields of urban planning, public health and environment to search for levers, methods and strategies to practically implement the healthy urban planning (HUP) concept (Grant et al. 2017).

The urban redevelopment project of Maille I - Mercure neighborhoods located in Miramas, France, is the focus of an initiative aiming to do so. The urban project is part of the New National Program for Urban Redevelopment (NPNRU) targeting specific deprived neighborhood and led by the National Agency for Urban Redevelopment (ANRU).

HUP initiative's objectives

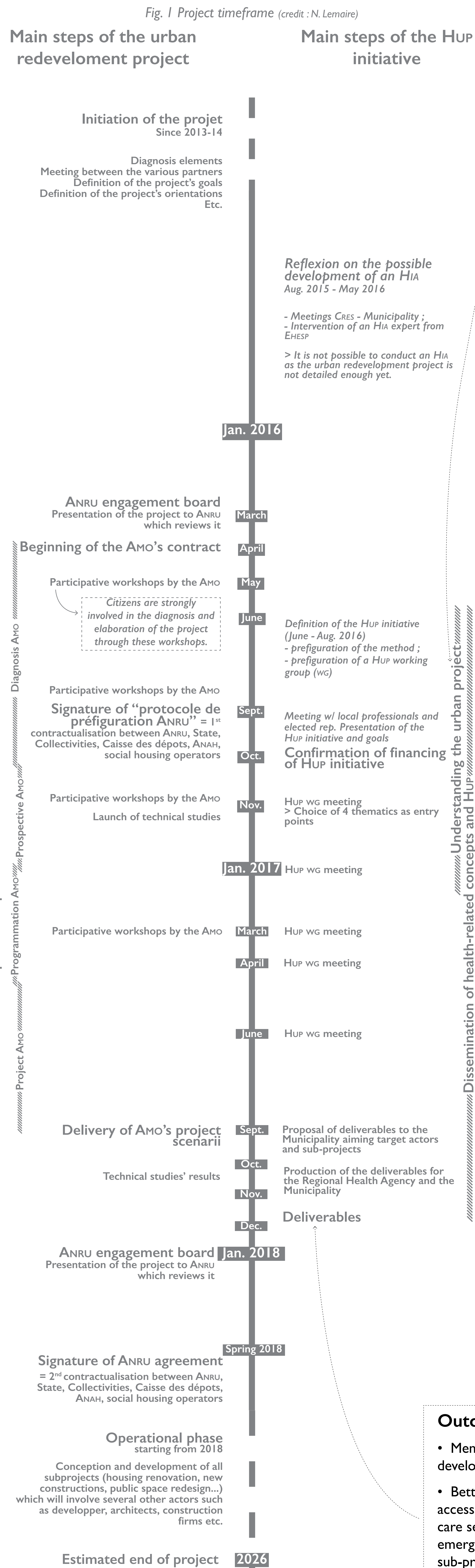
- Better integrate health stakes into the Maille I - Mercure redevelopment project
- Explore light methodologies and tools, distinct from evaluation methodologies, to actuate the topic of health in the process of this kind of urban project
- Contribute to the reciprocal acculturation process between health and urban planning actors.

This initiative is led by CRES and EHESP, and is financed by PACA Regional Health Agency and Métropole Aix-Marseille-Provence with the support of the Municipality of Miramas.

The existing area

Second to last pictures belong to O. Michel (Municipality of Miramas)

- 2762 inhabitants (Miramas = 25 583 inhab.)
- 20 hectares
- 86 % of social housing
- Presence of two primary schools, a few shops, healthcare and social professionals, etc.



Understanding this urban redevelopment project and setting up a HUP working group

In order to reflect on how to integrate health, it was important to understand :

- the area, the stakes of the project ;
- the time-frame and steps of the project (adjacent fig.) including the operational planning tools and documents mobilized by such process and the underlying political, financial and legal constrains etc. ;
- the actors and their roles (fig. below), the governance.

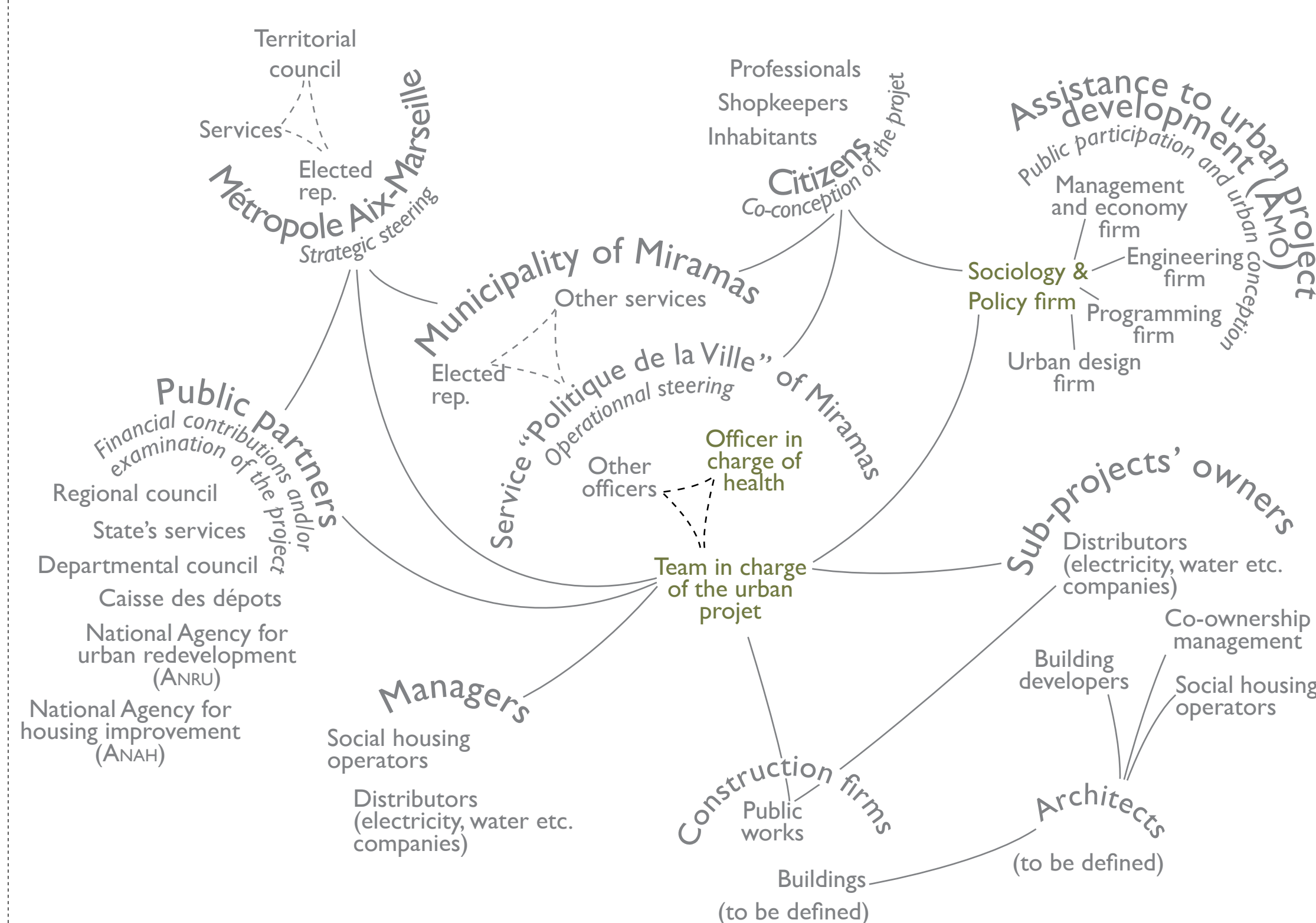


Fig. 2 Cartography of main actors involved in this urban redevelopment project (credit : N. Lemaire)

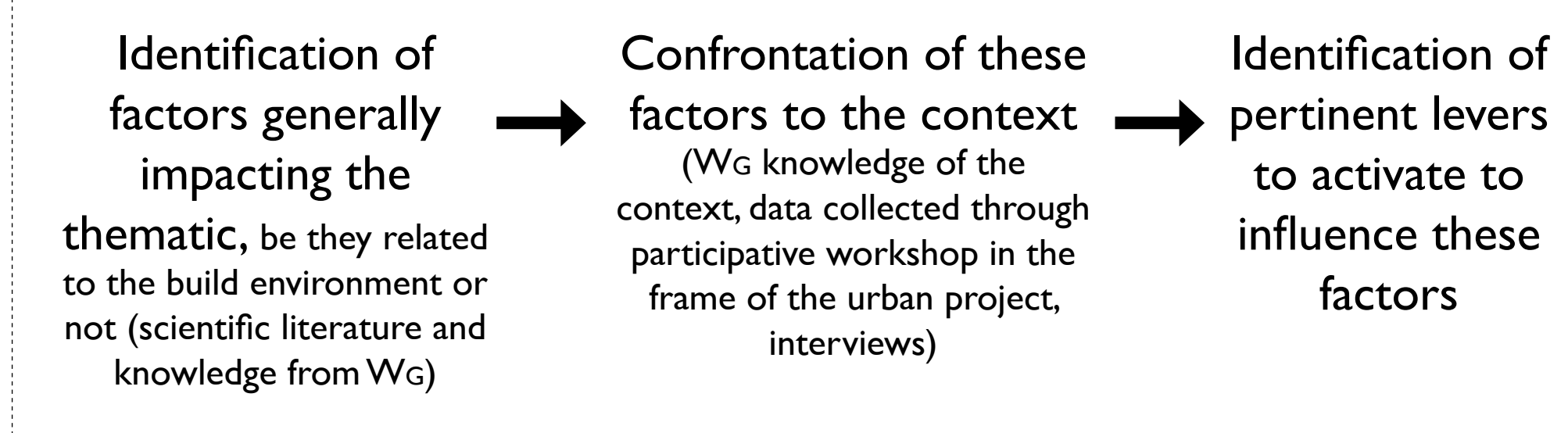
In green are the members of the HUP working group (WG) along with CRES and EHESP. The CRES-EHESP team and the WG both gather actors with backgrounds covering the fields of urban planning, health promotion and environmental health.

How to seize the Hup concept in this urban project ?



Fig. 3 Reference framework for HUP (source : A. Roué Le Gall et N. Lemaire, 2017)

- WG meetings allowed the members to progress towards a common culture concerning health and urban planning ;
 - WG agreed on the necessity to adopt a global approach to health ;
 - But entry points to further the work were needed.
- > Investigation of 4 thematics particularly relevant to the context (physical activity & diet ; indoor air ; access to healthcare ; social cohesion) following this logical path :



Outcomes

- Members of WG said they developed a "health lens" ;
- Better consideration of access to healthcare and care services in the project, emergence of a health center sub-project developed with local health professional.

Possible deliverables

- Potential deliverables have been identified by Wg with regards to the urban project timeframe, key documents, actors and governance :
- HUP charter to be included in the ANRU agreement
 - Leaflets to several actors and concerning specific sub-projects (social housing operators, concerning housing renovation ; building developers concerning new housing, municipality and staff concerning schools and health center)
 - Report to PACA Regional Health Agency.

Conclusion

Two key points are to be highlighted :

- It is important to understand the timeframe, the actors and their relationships, the financial mechanisms, the key documents etc. in order to identify the appropriate levers. A tactical approach, as defined in Harris et al 2014, is therefore required, as the elaboration of an urban project is a complex process and not a rational or linear operation ;
- Urban projects are not separated objects from other

policies or projects. As processes in which time and energy is focused on a specific area or subject, they can represent an opportunity to act on other policies or projects in the area. This is particularly true in the case of NPNRU projects, such as this one, in which the urban project is in relation with a social project.

Further research will focus on finding relevant entry points which would not compromise the global approach to health.

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