Warm-up session

**DRR and Climate Change: Sustainable Early Warning – Early Action**

Friday 10 March 2023, 11:00-12:30 (CET)

**Executive summary**

This warm-up session was organised in cooperation with the Czech Republic, its UN Mission in Geneva, and the EU Delegation in Geneva, assisted by the Egmont Royal Institute for International Relations. It was the third in a series of three consultations on the effects of climate change organised in the lead-up to the 2023 European Humanitarian Forum.

The discussion focused on challenges and opportunities for implementing Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) policies and building efficient and sustainable Early Warning Systems in fragile contexts, in line with the priorities of the former Czech Presidency of the Council of the EU. Around 120 participants joined the session online, 15 participants attended in person.

**Main discussion points**

- The UN Early Warnings for All initiative spearheaded by WMO has drawn the attention to the fact that access to Early Warning Systems (EWS) should not be a privilege but a universal right. This is the aim of initiative CREW, Early Warning for All (EW4LL) by 2027.
- Despite this, access to EWS is still highly unequal, particularly in fragile contexts. While evidence from the Sendai Framework for DRR has highlighted that the risk of death due to natural disasters is trending down globally, over 70 developing countries show an opposite trend due to a persistent lack of capacity to reduce risk, anticipate and prepare for.
- Fragile states with low public finance are those who struggle the most to build adequate capacity for early warning and early action, which require amongst others, a reliable governance system.
- Overall, building efficient and sustainable Disaster Risk Management including Early warning Systems in fragile contexts represent an important test for the capacity of multilateral

governance, development and humanitarian actors, and the financing system to deliver effective responses at the appropriate scale.

**Recommendations**

- **Bridge the capacity gap** by continuing to mobilise financial resources to build efficient EW systems.
  - Getting the financing through the whole system – from global, through regional to local recipients and solutions
  - Public and private financing is necessary, including sustainable investments
- **Promote a multichannel approach**: it is crucial to use all available communication channels to alert people at risk, taking into account the local context and the fact that warnings conveyed through multiple channels are more likely to be acted upon.
  - Mobile networks, broadcast technologies, and AI are particularly effective tools.
  - Access to and use of these tools should be supported through closer cooperation with governments, telecommunication authorities, regulators, and ICT ministries to establish regulatory systems that speed up EW processes.
  - Communication at the local level should always be inclusive and target the most vulnerable, including those forcibly displaced.
- **Improve the collaboration between humanitarian and development actors**: to overcome the specific challenges of fragile states, it is crucial that the allocation of tasks ensures that warnings reach vulnerable populations who do not have access to EWS including risk awareness campaign and education in order to react when receiving an alert message with the appropriate behaviour.
  - More broadly, coordination between governmental and non-governmental actors is fundamental in contexts where governments are non-cooperative or lack the capacity to deliver on DRR priorities.
  - Relatedly, it is important to overcome the fragmentation of financing instruments and ensure that finance acts as a catalyst of cross-actor collaboration.
- **Continue to support localisation**, including via the following actions:
  - more balanced financing across the EWS chain and the collection of localised climate-related data;
  - greater coordination with humanitarian partners on the ground to ensure the last-mile delivery of information and response to vulnerable communities;
  - diversification of the type of infrastructure to ensure greater long-term sustainability (i.e. low-cost stations can still provide accurate information while their maintenance is more sustainable for local governments and they can be more easily managed relying only on local capacities);

- o investment in flexible local governance systems that can deliver on short-term needs while, at the same time, adapting to an evolving context (including, for example, bringing local governments in as soon as the local context allows).

**For further reading**

- IOM Environmental Migration Portal, *Data and Resources*, https://environmentalmigration.iom.int/data-and-resources.
- IOM Environmental Migration Portal, *Developing Indicators on Displacement for Disaster Risk Reduction*, https://environmentalmigration.iom.int/developing-indicators-displacement-disaster-risk-reduction.
- ITU, *Focus Group on AI for Natural Disaster Management (FG-AI4NDM)*, https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-T/focusgroups/ai4ndm/Pages/default.aspx.

*This paper may not necessarily reflect the views of the European Institutions, the Swedish Presidency of the Council, and the organisations which took part in the event.*