

## Early Warning Stakeholders Consultation Meeting

*Coordinated by ISDR Platform for the Promotion of Early Warning (PPEW), on 29 March 2006*

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Early Warning stakeholders were invited to a consultation meeting coordinated by UN ISDR PPEW and chaired by UNEP to discuss governance mechanisms and necessary arrangements to be established in order to strengthen the International Early Warning Programme (IEWP) as a vehicle for partnerships and coordination. The meeting also aimed at building on the momentum of the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Early Warning Conference by identifying priority areas facing the early warning community and sharing consensus on follow-up actions.

The meeting was co-chaired by Norberto Fernandez (UNEP) and Reid Basher (PPEW), with the participation of UN agencies (UNEP, UNDP, UNU-EHS, WMO, FAO, UNESCO-IOC, UNFCCC, WFP, UNCCD, UNOOSA), donors (World Bank, EC), governments (Norway, Japan, Germany, Australia, Pakistan, Cambodia), early warning related organisations (ADRC, DKKV, IFRC, Global Fire Monitoring Center, CDERA, GROOTS, ICPAC, SOPAC), universities (RMIT, Tohoku university) and ISDR secretariat.

Participants were briefed on the ISDR reform process and the new ISDR system with the changing roles of thematic platforms and the emphasis on global partnerships for disaster risk reduction with strengthened coordination and synergies across all partners. Within the framework of the current complex arrangements related to disaster risk reduction, the Hyogo Framework sets a mandate for all parties as the “road map” for the next 10 years with commitments of nations and organisations. It was also highlighted that the subject of early warning is receiving increased attention following the recent major disasters, the international conferences on early warning, and the launch of the Global Survey of Early Warning Systems. In this context, the importance of advancing IEWP with clearly defined benchmarks and milestones to achieve a clear global scope, and a set of strategic areas is a priority including the use of PPEW as a secretariat with enhanced efficiency to service IEWP.

### **Key discussion points:**

- The Global Survey of Early Warning Systems sets some groundwork facts, needs and gaps that should define the future work plans of IEWP.
- Need to identify clear indicators on how governments are advancing and set clear monitoring system to track progress of early warning systems every 3 years.
- The international community in coordination with regional and national institutes should ensure the agenda of disaster risk reduction is advanced and integrated in development planning.
- Financial institutions such as the World Bank are interested in investing in disaster risk reduction as it is the priority of client national governments as well as donors who agree that reducing disaster risk will effectively contribute to advancing the development goals.



- Some organisations such as WMO are taking further steps to identify in details the requirements and needs of meteorological and hydrological early warning systems, which will be published through an online database.
- IEWP should build on the integrated work programme of the new ISDR system to ensure an integrated approach, visibility, and recognition from the members of ISDR.
- Donors are interested in a coordinated approach to avoid duplication and ensure roles and responsibilities are clarified with regard to action required. It is important to clarify the global architecture that identifies a clear action plan, roles, and responsibilities for implementation of the early warning agenda.
- Different hazards need different specialised systems, which make it unfeasible to have one global multi-hazard early warning system; realistically the aim should be a global early warning system of systems. However, by strengthening national capacities and building on existing national and regional early warning systems, the linkages to the global scope would be strengthened and coordinated. In addition, a bottom-up approach will facilitate building community capacities for early warning of multiple hazards.
- When pursuing the efforts of building a global early warning system it is important that all partners need to discuss and agree on the characteristics of such a system. The global survey may function as a base of reference, but is not sufficient.
- Working together and in a coordinated manner is essential to build synergies and strengthen linkages among the various partners. The diversity of partners targeting one goal enriches the strategic approach as experienced in the Flash Appeal project to strengthen tsunami early warning systems in the Indian Ocean.
- It is important to strengthen regional strategies for disaster risk reduction to enable communities to develop and implement early warning systems according to their specific local hazards.
- UNESCO-IOC offers the existing structure of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group (ICG) as an effective coordination mechanism to advance early warning systems in the different regions of the world.
- Need to take stock of the various ongoing and planned initiatives to put in place early warning systems for different hazards to ensure complementary and coherent approach.
- IEWP needs to emphasise the people-centred approach and ensure that communities are the “First Mile” not the last. In addition, sustainable livelihoods constitute a core element for effective early warning systems that address risk and vulnerability assessments.
- Need to strengthen national capacities with regard to early warning capacities.
- National ownership is essential to ensure governments’ commitment for a comprehensive early warning system to be put in place.
- Need to be modest in coverage and prioritise the targeted countries and disasters, such as the Least Developed Countries and the drought disaster in Africa.
- Particularly for governments there is a need for economic evidence to justify prioritisation and investment in disaster risk reduction to facilitate the policy-making and decision-making processes at the national level, and support the integration of disaster risk reduction in long-term development plans. The establishment of tools measuring how much money could be saved through early warning systems is crucial, a few case studies are not sufficient.



- WMO is commissioning a cost-benefit analysis for meteorological and hydrological systems in relation to socio-economic development, which will be presented in an international conference in Spain, March 2007.

### **Key concluding issues:**

- IEWP aims at facilitating the coordination of different initiatives through having a comprehensive clear picture and ensuring the flow of information.
- Early warning stakeholders need to develop a concrete action plan based on recommendations from the global survey, with achievable outputs, clear roles and responsibilities, and prioritisation of key issues.
- The possibility for synergy and coordination exists through the facilitating role of PPEW, which acts as a secretariat for the IEWP.
- Governance mechanisms and clear processes have to be established to ensure the implementation of a comprehensive IEWP action plan, including an effective coordination of stakeholders' efforts.
- Need to move towards a concrete action plan that has a clear agenda with a clear time frame. For a start, a five year operational term for the IEWP is planned.
- ISDR is supporting the establishment of governance and stakeholder mechanisms for IEWP to evolve as a partnership collective effort.
- Need to ensure that IEWP is strongly linked to the ISDR reference group and the integrated work programme to facilitate the integration of IEWP to the Global Platform for Disaster Reduction.

### **Follow-up action:**

- An advisory group to be established with a clear terms of reference that includes membership details, mandate, and accountability structure.
- The advisory group will have a limited time frame to identify priorities, expected outputs from IEWP, and the implementation mechanisms and processes. The work within the advisory group needs to be consistent with the ongoing ISDR reform processes.
- The advisory group will be a small, effective and balanced team with voluntary membership that includes to date:
  1. UNEP (Norberto Fernandez)
  2. UNU (Juan Carlos Villagran)
  3. Global Fire Monitoring Centre (Johann Goldammer)
  4. DKKV (Karl Otto Zentel)
  5. WMO Maryam Golneraghi
  6. ADRC (Etsuko Tsunozaki)
  7. IFRC (Horst Letz)
  8. World Bank (Saroj Jha)
  9. FAO (Henri Josserand)

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