Working Sessions

Concept Note

Event title	**Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems: progress and challenges to achieve target G**
Date and Time	Friday, May 17, 2019. 14:30 – 16:00
Venue/ Room no.	CICG, Room 4
UNISDR Focal Points	Sandra Amlang (amlang@un.org) Iria Touzon Calle (iria.touzoncalle@un.org)
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Background and Rationale	The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, recognises that early warning systems (EWS) play an important role in reducing the risk of death, injury, disease, loss of livelihood and damage to property from disasters. Strengthened monitoring and assessment of hazards and improved forecasting and warning services have contributed to strengthening EWS. However, limited access to EW information results in uneven spread of societal benefits across countries and communities, often missing the most vulnerable.
	The Sendai Framework urges a paradigm shift towards an impact-based, risk-informed multi-hazard integration approach for multi-hazard early warning systems (MHEWS, target g), national and local disaster risk reduction strategies (target e) and government policies. As EWS for specific hazards and consequences have many common elements, the use of a common MHEWS framework enables sharing of lessons learnt, create economies of scale and eventually reinforce sustainability of the system.
	MHEWS provide a common foundation of risk assessment, planning and exercising for hydro-meteorological, geological and biological, as well as human-induced and technological hazards, that ensures an effective emergency response, whether the hazard is frequent and low-impact or rare but high-impact, on timeframes ranging from the immediate to multi-year. It ensures common lines of control and communication in an emergency, including mechanisms for accessing and incorporating situation-specific expert knowledge from diverse sources. Since hazards may be linked or may trigger new hazards, it is necessary that recipients can access multi-hazard information in a common geospatial framework.
	MHEWS inform people of the potential impacts of impending natural and human-induced hazards on their lives and livelihoods and of actions they could take to protect themselves and minimize impact. To be effective, this approach entails cooperation and coordination between and among stakeholders from all levels, including national disaster risk management agencies, meteorological, hydrological and geological services, scientific institutions, civil protection organizations, intergovernmental organizations, central and local governments, Parliamentarians, civil society, communities at risk and the private sector. MHEWS should engage all relevant actors to

	increase the effectiveness, efficiency, consistency and utility of warning services.

Since different users of MHEWS are exposed to different hazards, have different vulnerabilities and require different information for their responses, an effective MHEWS should be co-designed with each type of user. At the same time, the MHEWS must be practicable and must operate in an emergency situation. Achieving these twin aims requires flexible and diverse services within a common governance framework. Some users look for advice on actions to take, while others have response plans that require information on expected impact, and others find basic hazard information more useful. Some are only interested in low probability, high impact warnings, having protected themselves against more likely hazards, while others are only concerned with high probabilities. The way risk information is communicated should be tailored to users with different levels of disaster risk awareness and understanding.

Achieving effective responses to MHEWS requires that users trust the warning enough to act on it. In a world of competing information sources, a user is more likely to trust information from a recognised source with whom they have an established relationship. Achieving this may involve personal contact, careful branding, multiple consistent messaging, use of a trusted intermediary or other approaches. |
| **Session objectives** | Building on previous global and regional discussions, specially outcomes of the International Conference on Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems (IC-MHEWS) 2019 to be held prior to the GP 2019, the MHEWS working session will focus on identifying key steps and lessons learned for a holistic approach towards impact-based and risk-informed MHEWS to support effective DRR decision making for saving people's lives, building secure and resilient societies.

Concretely, this working session will:

1. Share experiences in enhancing and sustaining MHEWS and related services at local, national and regional level highlighting good practices, challenges and lessons learned., especially in achieving last mile communication.

2. Demonstrate how EWS are an integral component of national and local DRR strategies and can contribute for inclusive DRR action. |
| **Agenda and Structure** | - Introduction by moderator to session and panellists.
- Keynote presentation (State of the art and prompting key questions): summarizing key outcomes and recommendations and linking them to the session discussion items.
- Envisioned is a guided dialogue among panellists based on key questions introduced by the keynote speaker. |

	- Engaging audience by using interactive GP application. (The audience will define questions or make statements and poll the audience. The panelists can then for example react to the 'public' opinion.) - Closing remarks by moderators highlighting the key findings of the session & final statements by panellists.
Expected Outcomes	*1. What key recommendations can be made to policy makers to accelerate the implementation of the Sendai Framework for DRR?* The participation of government officials, experts from different international and regional organizations, key national agencies from different parts of the world and representatives of different user communities would facilitate comprehensive discussions on the different strategies and actions to strengthen MHEWS in support of the implementation of Sendai Framework. • Experiences and perspectives shared by practitioners and researchers on effectiveness and feasibility of MHEWS at different levels. • Recommendations put forward towards enhancing MHEWS by ensuring inclusiveness when designing and implementing early warning system and when taking decisions. *2. If applicable, how does this session contribute to the achievement of Sendai Target E?* • This session will showcase how MHEWS are an integral component of national Disaster Risk Reduction Plans and Strategies. • It will put forward recommendations on what elements of the EWSs should be integrated in both the DRR strategies and National Adaptation Plans in order to underpin National Determined Contributions. *3. What to inform their deliberations from a Disaster Risk Reduction perspective?* When implemented and operated in a proper way, MHEWS save lives and reduce the impacts of disasters on some types of assets.
Special commitments / Announcements	*Expected commitments in support of the implementation of the Sendai Framework and announcements from panellists or participants* The session will introduce to the main findings of the MHEWC-II.
Proposed Moderator of the Session	Mr. Peter Felten, Head of Division for Humanitarian Assistance – Policy, International Organisations, Multilateral Coordination Federal Foreign Office Germany
List of Panellists	- (Keynote) Mr. Petteri Taalas, Secretary General, World Meteorological Organization - Mr. Osvaldo Luiz Leal de Moraes, Director of the National Early Warning and Monitoring Centre of Natural Disaster, CEMADEN, Brazil

	- Ms. Saima Hossain, Chairperson, Shuchona Foundation International Focal Point, Advisory Group on Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Management (DiDRM) Bangladesh
	- Ms. Esline Garaebiti, Manager, Meteorology and Geo-Hazards Department, Ministry of Climate Change, Regional Coordinator - Oceania Regional Seismic Network Vanuatu
	- Mr. Guleid Artan, Director of the IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Centre ICPAD, Intergovernmental authority on Development (IGAD), Kenya
Reference Documents	National Academy of Sciences, 2018, Emergency Alert and Warning Systems: Current Knowledge and Future Research Directions, http://nap.edu/24935. This report also includes an extensive primary reference list.
	WMO, 2017: Multi-hazard Early Warning Systems: A Checklist, https://www.preventionweb.net/publications/view/57604
	WMO, 2015: WMO Guidelines on Multi-hazard Impact-based Forecast and Warning Services. WMO-No.1150, http://library.wmo.int/pmb_ged/wmo_1150_en.pdf.
Technical equipment requirements	High-speed WIFI connection. Wireless microphones for discussants.