

Recommendations for implementing the CREWS initiative



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Every year, disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes and floods lead to economic losses of an average of 250 to 350 billion US dollars¹. Between 1996 and 2015, more than 500,000 people died following over 11,000 extreme weather events².

In a context where extreme climate events are increasingly frequent, severe and unpredictable (such as the way cyclone tracks and their seasonal occurrence are differing from previously observed trends³), the Sendai Framework⁴ aims to significantly improve access of populations to multi-hazard early warning systems and to disaster information and risk assessments by 2030. Early warning systems are vital to meet the needs of the populations that are the most exposed and vulnerable to disasters.

It is in this context that the CREWS (Climate Risk and Early Warning System) initiative was launched in December 2015, aiming to increase access for the most vulnerable populations to Early Warning Systems (EWS) and risk information, to protect their lives and livelihood.

The French Network for Disaster Risk Reduction⁵ welcomes this initiative but regrets the lack of transparency and the exclusion of civil society in the consideration, selection and monitoring of projects funded by this initiative. We believe that consulting all stakeholders will in particular:

- **Increase coherence and complementarity among field projects**⁶ and avoid similar projects overlapping in the same operational areas;
- **Harmonize CREWS funded projects with the needs of the most vulnerable populations**, to reach the last mile in implementing these warning systems;
- **Facilitate better ownership of CREWS funded projects** among target communities, leading to **greater sustainability of the projects' activities**.

Also, we call on the CREWS initiative and its institutions (World Meteorological Organization, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the World Bank) to:

1. Implement inclusive and rigorous governance:

- **Consult civil society during project definition and implementation:** consulting civil society within the countries of operation should be a precondition to project approval.
- **Involve civil society partners in the steering committee for project selection** by ideally including at least two people (one from countries of the 'North' and the other from the 'South') from organizations that are well-known for their work in the area of disaster risk reduction and also belong to inter-NGO networks on this topic, so as to:
 - **Contribute to the definition of operating rules and procedures for the CREWS initiative's funding schemes**, and more specifically the selection criteria for project funding,
 - **Participate in project selection.**

¹ GAR 2015

² Germanwatch Climate Risk Index 2017

³ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Special Report on Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation (SREX). Summary for Policy Makers, 2011

⁴ Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030

⁵ Network composed of the following members: Action Contre la Faim, ACTED, CARE France, Croix Rouge Française, Handicap International, Médecins du Monde, Solidarités International and centre of expertise Urgence Réhabilitation et Développement

⁶ Projects implemented by international solidarity and civil society actors, or as part of bilateral institutional funding.

2. Define a monitoring framework for funded projects:

- **Define monitoring indicators for funded projects:** aiming to measure progress, the indicators that were recently adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 1st December 2016 in the Report of the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction are particularly relevant. These include: the '*share of people per 100,000 that are covered by early warning information through local governments or through national dissemination mechanisms*' and the '*number of countries that have accessible, understandable, usable and relevant disaster risk information and assessment available to the people at the national and local levels*'.
- **Guarantee that the core principles of global action against climate change are integrated into funded activities:** ensure that activities respect the Paris Agreement⁷ and have no negative impact on communities.
- **Ensure that national legislation introduces and strengthens provisions** for early warning systems and mechanisms that can be activated in case of a hazard.

3. Promote greater transparency and information exchange with civil society:

- **Publish the operating rules and procedures for the CREWS initiative funding scheme.**
- **Define and publish the eligibility requirements and selection criteria for project funding.**
- **Publish a list of members for the Steering Committee** in the interests of transparency and accountability.
- **Publish studies and analyses:** to promote continuous improvement in the quality of submitted projects, publication of the mapping of Early Warning Systems so as to identify the most pressing needs in LDCs (Least Developed Countries) for example, would be of great use to civil society.
- **Share lessons learned reports and reports on monitoring indicators with civil society** and other relevant stakeholders.

This information could be shared through a dedicated webpage within the UNISDR website for projects funded by the CREWS initiative.

Our call to strengthen inclusive governance and transparency in this initiative is in line in particular with recommendations made during COP 21⁸ and the guiding principles of the Sendai⁹ Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015 – 2030).

Document signed by:

- Action Contre la Faim
- CARE France
- Croix-Rouge Française
- Handicap International
- Solidarités International
- Médecins du Monde
- Groupe Urgence Réhabilitation Développement

⁷ http://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/convention/application/pdf/english_paris_agreement.pdf

⁸ http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/marrakech_nov_2016/application/pdf/reflections_on_the_way_forward_final.pdf

⁹ <http://www.preventionweb.net/files/resolutions/N1516717.pdf>