

37. Improving early warning system capacity in least developed countries and small island developing states

By Arnaut Rayar, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, France

Climate-related hazards put lives at risks in least developed countries and small island developing states

In least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS), increasing numbers of people are at risk of losing their lives as a result of weather- and climate-related hazardous events. This trend can, in part, be attributed to a low or basic capacity to use risk information and to provide early warning. LDCs and SIDS are prioritising improvements to early warning systems for climate change adaptation, as reflected in their Nationally Determined Contributions to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Although investment to strengthen climate services has increased, these countries' funding needs remain unmet. Closing the funding gap requires building on existing investments, leveraging additional funds, and improving effectiveness.

An initiative to help countries improve their early warning system capacity

Climate Risk & Early Warning Systems (CREWS) is an initiative steered by a committee of Australia, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands with seven additional observers.¹ It supports LDCs and SIDS to significantly increase their capacity to generate and communicate effective, impact-based, multi-hazard, gender-informed early warnings to protect lives, livelihoods and assets.

The CREWS initiative responds to the urgent need to develop and strengthen early warning systems expressed by LDCs and SIDS. Its objective is to bring meteorological data to exposed populations, in order to strengthen their awareness, save lives, and significantly reduce the economic impact of disasters related to extreme climate events. This is based on the recognition that without early warning systems, adaptation to climate change is unlikely at best.

Tailoring the technical expertise of different partners to specific country contexts

In 2017, the CREWS initiative helped countries improve their early warning system capacities so that warnings will reach all those who need them with targeted risk information that enables people to take action. The initiative assisted 19 governments in the Pacific and in Africa to fulfil their populations' most critical early warning needs. These activities are presented in the first CREWS Annual Report.²

The CREWS initiative has achieved these concrete results because it aligns the technical expertise of its implementing partners - the World Meteorological Organization, the World Bank and its Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, and the

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction - to offer technical services tailored to each specific context.

In 2017 the CREWS initiative approved and funded seven projects, and a total of USD 17 million disbursed for implementation. The initial inputs under CREWS have allowed countries to leverage wider investments from other donors, such as the Green Climate Fund and Global Environment Fund. USD 106 million in such additional funds were leveraged in 2017.

What next?

The number of projects implemented under CREWS continues to rise, and reach an extended range of countries. In 2018, another nine countries were approved to receive support from the initiative to build more effective early warning systems.

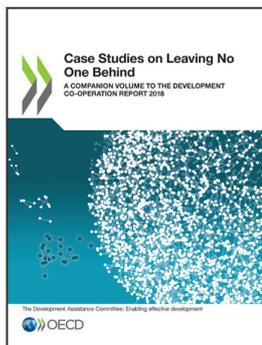
Furthermore, the initiative is exploring co-operation possibilities with other initiatives for coping with disaster risk management, such as *Insuresilience*.³ This partnership has the potential to help developing countries access better insurance solutions in case of extreme weather- or climate-related disaster.

Notes

¹ <http://www.crews-initiative.org/en>.

² <https://www.crews-initiative.org/en/about-us/crews-2017-annual-report>.

³ <https://www.insuresilience.org/>.



From:

Case Studies on Leaving No One Behind

A companion volume to the Development Co-operation Report 2018

Access the complete publication at:

<https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264309333-en>

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD (2018), "Improving early warning system capacity in least developed countries and small island developing states", in *Case Studies on Leaving No One Behind: A companion volume to the Development Co-operation Report 2018*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264309333-39-en>

This work is published under the responsibility of the Secretary-General of the OECD. The opinions expressed and arguments employed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of OECD member countries.

This document and any map included herein are without prejudice to the status of or sovereignty over any territory, to the delimitation of international frontiers and boundaries and to the name of any territory, city or area.

You can copy, download or print OECD content for your own use, and you can include excerpts from OECD publications, databases and multimedia products in your own documents, presentations, blogs, websites and teaching materials, provided that suitable acknowledgment of OECD as source and copyright owner is given. All requests for public or commercial use and translation rights should be submitted to rights@oecd.org. Requests for permission to photocopy portions of this material for public or commercial use shall be addressed directly to the Copyright Clearance Center (CCC) at info@copyright.com or the Centre français d'exploitation du droit de copie (CFC) at contact@cfcopies.com.