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The Red Cross Society of Seychelles gears up for the Early Warning for All Initiative in Seychelles

Monday 29th July 2024

Preparing for the launch of the Early Warning for All Initiative in Seychelles, Ms. Francesca Cecchin - Consultant on Climate Change at the IFRC Country Cluster Delegation to the Indian Ocean Islands from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has been in Seychelles since last Monday in order to offer technical and operational support to the Seychelles Red Cross Society (RCSS). This is the case considering Pillar 4—Preparedness to Respond—will be spearheaded nationally by the RCSS.

Her mission has been to assist the National Society with the technical and operational aspects of preparing all the documents for the launch of the EW4All initiative (such as the gap analysis checklist and the pre-identification of Pillar 4 priorities and activities) and to take part in the initiative's national launch workshop.

Moreover, mapping/baseline research on RCSS's ongoing and planned actions on EWSs, anticipatory action, and other areas of intervention connected to climate risks has been facilitated by the mission, which has been supplying complementing information in parallel. Ultimately, the mission will help future resource mobilization efforts and the further integration of RCSS activities inside the EW4All strategy.

Early warning systems (EWS) are key elements of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, as they help reduce or avoid the detrimental impacts of hazardous events. To be effective, early warning systems need to be risk-informed, target communities most at risk, disseminate messages and warnings efficiently, ensure preparedness and support early action. Early warning systems must rely on a sound scientific and technical basis and focus on the most vulnerable people and sectors. This implies the adoption of a system-based approach incorporating all relevant risk factors, whether arising from the climate-hazards or social vulnerabilities, and from short-term or long-term processes.

The Early Warnings for All effort brings together the public and private sectors, governments, civil society, and the wider UN system to create people-centered, end-to-end multi-hazard early warning systems and close gaps. The initiative seeks to safeguard lives and livelihoods against natural disasters like floods, heatwaves, storms, and tsunamis by 2027 through fostering synergies

across initiatives and partnerships across sectors via coordination and collaboration.

The Early Warnings for All initiative is built on four pillars to support countries in building and operating effective and inclusive multi-hazard early warning systems:

- Pillar 1: Disaster risk knowledge - led by the [United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction \(UNDRR\)](#)
- Pillar 2: Observations and Forecasting - led by the [World Meteorological Organization \(WMO\)](#)
- Pillar 3: Dissemination and communication - led by the [International Telecommunication Union \(ITU\)](#)
- Pillar 4: Preparedness to respond - led by the [International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies \(IFRC\)](#)

With over 13 countries around the world having already launched the initiative at the national level to scale up prior efforts and strengthen national early warning systems, Seychelles will begin the national implementation of the EW4All initiative during a workshop on the 30th and 31st July 2024. Along with the RCSS, the other focal points for the initiative in Seychelles are the Disaster Risk Management Division (DRMD), the Seychelles Meteorological Authority (SMA), and the Department of Information Communication Technology (DICT).

Expectations leading up to the EW4All initiative national launch workshop:

Early Warning, Anticipatory Action and Preparedness are key intervention areas for IFRC and Red Cross Red Crescent National Societies to reduce communities' vulnerability and exposure to the impacts of climate change, in both rural and urban settings. Through effective end-to-end community early warning systems and anticipatory action, communities and National Societies will be better prepared to manage forecasted weather events and new climate extremes, including by being able to access resources ahead of their impact.

The EW4All initiative is a great opportunity to catalyse public attention and provide renewed political visibility on the importance of early warning and anticipatory action. It can provide a unique opportunity to foster joint action to reduce the humanitarian impacts of climate and weather-related disasters. As such, it is crucial that all stakeholders are engaged, and that ad-hoc mechanisms for continuous coordination and exchange are put in place.

The EW4All initiative offers a good reminder that life-saving early warnings require effective hazard monitoring, forecasting and prediction, disaster risk assessment, risk communication and early action planning. But each of these components is equally important; failure in one component can lead to the inefficiency of the whole system. Our expectations for the workshop include having fruitful discussions and establishing a clear coordination mechanism with dedicated focal point people and platforms for regular discussion. It is crucial that this mechanism is country-driven and adapted to the specific context of Seychelles, to allow coherence and due monitoring of advancements.

Additionally, the drafting of the National EW4All Roadmap provides an opportunity to address

local, national, regional and global levels. Local authorities and community leaders need to be involved in the implementation of the initiative to ensure that communities most at risk can access precise and timely warnings based on sound observation data, but also be able to act on those warning. Similarly, early warning systems set-up at community level must be strictly connected to those at the national level, to avoid duplications and confusion.

Following the national launch and consultation on Early Warnings for All, the expected results include:

- Agreement on national coordination mechanism to guide the scale-up of early warning systems;
- Gap Analysis that identifies national and sub-national policy, technical, financial and other gaps in Seychelles across the four pillars of EW4All;
- Agreement on process for the formulation of multi-year, multi-stakeholder EW4All National Roadmap (2023-2027) to achieve universal early warning coverage in Seychelles.



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