



National Committee for Disaster Management



Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology



Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare



Ministry Of Natural Resources and Environment



CREWS Cambodia and Lao PDR

Project Launch Event - Meeting Summary

04 October 2021, 07:30 – 09:00 UTC (Coordinated Universal Time)

CREWS Members



Australia



Finland



France (Chair)



Germany



Luxembourg



Netherlands



Switzerland



United Kingdom

CREWS Observers



Canada



Japan



Mexico



New Zealand



Norway



CREWS Implementing Partners





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SUMMARY

Welcome remarks (Chair)

Ben Churchill, Head WMO Regional Office for Asia and Southwest Pacific welcomed participants to the meeting. Highlighted the increasing impacts of climate change globally and how it is most felt in those countries which are most vulnerable, particularly Southeast Asia. Emphasized how this project can align with countries national objectives, to protect those most vulnerable and mitigate the impacts of climate.

Introductory remarks

Filipe Lucio, Director, WMO Regional Strategy Office thanked the CREWS Initiative for the financial support provided through the project. Highlighted the intensity of the 2020 storm season and its impact on in Southeast Asia, particularly Cambodia and Lao PDR. Welcomed all of the partners, including national, regional and CREWS implementing partners to work jointly on this initiative and harness their comparative advantage, to reduce the impacts of hazards on Cambodia and Lao PDR. Emphasized the importance of this project having a positive transformational benefit, that can lead to better decision making, improved livelihoods and less impacts relative to climate variability and change.

Donor remarks

John Harding, Head of the CREWS Secretariat reiterated his sincere appreciation to the CREWS contributing members, including Australia, Finland, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Switzerland, United Kingdom. Emphasized the commitment to CREWS to try to support countries to establish multi hazard early warning systems, and to ensure that the principles of these early warning systems are multi hazard, impact based are people centred and gender based. Thanked the three CREWS implementing partners for their close collaboration. Highlighted the importance in moving in the right direction through the project, with national institutions, to have these effective early warning systems operating, by addressing critical needs and gaps in Cambodia and Lao PDR.

Presentation of CREWS Cambodia and Lao PDR Project

Moyenda Chavonda, WMO Project Management and Implementation Division highlighted that CREWS Cambodia and Lao PDR is four-year, US\$ 5.5 million, multi-partner project which aims to reduce the human and socioeconomic impact caused by hydromet hazards by enhancing the capacities of national and regional stakeholders and institutions to provide hydromet, early action, and response services, to ensure that vulnerable populations in Cambodia and Lao PDR are reached through effective and inclusive risk-informed early warning services.

The project will build upon ongoing initiatives in the region and actively engage the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) and National Disaster Management Offices (NDMOs) of both countries. Outcomes are designed to strengthen each of the four elements of end-to-end people-centred national multi-hazard early warning systems within Cambodia and Lao PDR:



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Risk Knowledge, Monitoring and Warning Services, Dissemination and Communication, and Response Capability.

Results are expected in the following areas:

- Strengthened institutions operational and legal frameworks;
- Capacity of NMHSs to provide more timely and precise forecasts and warnings;
- Ability to disseminate warnings to the people and institutions that need them most, through information and communication technology of the national services;
- Enhanced preparedness and response capability; and
- Improved integration of gender and disability inclusiveness to ensure early warnings are developed with and reach all relevant stakeholders.

Full presentation attached.

Round table discussion

Sara Sekkeness, UN Resident Coordinator for Lao PDR mentioned how Lao PDR is geographically and culturally diverse and many times the remote communities are not well targeted. Several good pilot initiatives are underway in the Southeast Asia region, but more effort is needed to ensure visibility. The CREWS Cambodia and Lao PDR project being a multi-stakeholder engagement can build up on all the work in the region.

Outhone Phetluangsy, Director General, Department of Meteorology and Hydrology (DMH) for Lao PDR highlighted the collaboration that exists between DMH and other stakeholders such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry who make use of the products and information generated by DMH. During the onset of severe events, DMH regularly provides these users with updated information. According to Ms. Outhone, the CREWS Cambodia and Lao PDR can help the staff from DMH upgrade their skills while improving the quality of hydromet forecasts and subsequently, the early warning systems.

Soim Monichoth, Deputy Director General, Department of Meteorology (DOM) for Cambodia outlined that climate transcends boundary and thus, cooperation at various levels with International Organizations, donors and other stakeholders is very critical to help Cambodia mitigate the risks of various events and also strengthen its capacities. He noted how WMO through ongoing projects is providing support to initiatives such as the Flash Flood Guidance System (FFGS) which is very relevant for the region. Mr. Monichoth stated that the CREWS project can be used to guide Members on how to generate information that can be made acceptable to the stakeholder.

Choem Pov Roka, Community Leader, from Cambodia talked about the crucial role that women play at the community level in disaster preparedness and response. She mentioned how the community held frequent meetings with the members which also comprised of women and children. An action plan has also been developed at the community level for this particular community and use of mobile internet is prevalent to keep themselves informed of the developments, whenever an impending hazard is forecasted.



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His Excellency, Mao Hak, Hydrological Adviser to Cambodia expects that the CREWS project can help improve the capacities of the forecasters and other relevant staff including IT. It is equally important that the project can help the Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology to strengthen the communication of information for preparedness to the communities which can further improve the existing early warning systems.

Implementing partner remarks

Marco Toscano-Rivalto, Regional Director of UNDRR Regional Office for Asia Pacific noted that COVID-19 has compounded the impact of disasters and as such this project is timely. UNDRR looks forward to working with national and CREWS partners in reinforcing capacities, contributing to national strategies and strengthening cooperation among the stakeholders.

David Rodgers, Senior Hydro-meteorological Advisor for the World Bank emphasized the need for cooperation among the various stakeholders and how the project is critical in ensuring that the early warning system value chain does not lead to an ineffective response. Equally important is to grasp the needs of the vulnerable groups and that the determined vulnerability is a major factor in shaping the outcomes of this project and any transformational benefit.

Meeting Summary (Chair)

Ben Churchill, Head WMO Regional Office for Asia and Southwest Pacific

Recapitulated some of the key points from the meeting such as the need to better understand the risk of remote communities, the strengthening of existing capacities in the NMHSs, the need for closer collaboration among all stakeholders and the inclusion of communities including women in the decision-making process.

Finally, Mr Churchill closed the meeting by wishing the project every success in having the largest possible impact on the ground and to achieve our unified goal of building resilience and protecting lives and livelihoods and property in Cambodia and Lao PDR.



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Group Photos

