



SEVENTH MEETING OF THE PACIFIC METEOROLOGICAL COUNCIL (PMC-7)

"AT THE FRONTLINE OF WEATHER, CLIMATE, WATER, AND OCEAN ACTION IN THE PACIFIC"

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"At the Frontline of Weather, Climate, Water, and Ocean Action in the Pacific"

17-19 September 2024, Warwick Le Lagon-Vanuatu Resort, Port Vila, Vanuatu

Agenda Item 18 - Supporting and Empowering Gender Equality, Disability & Social Inclusion

Purpose:

To encourage the Council to leverage investment, capacity, and efforts in making early warning systems end-to-end, inclusive, accessible, and actionable by diverse groups, including persons with disabilities, women, children, older persons, and other minority groups.

Background:

Early warning messages must reach everyone in the community through multiple and trusted communication channels, including traditional ways of communication. The warning messages should be clear and simple to understand, actionable, and accessible in multiple formats that will enable appropriate preparedness and response actions by all persons.

[A study by the Pacific Disability Forum \(2022\)](#) found that climate change is increasing the impacts of pre-existing exclusion for persons with disabilities and creating new risks and negative impacts for persons with disabilities. Various factors contribute to increase climate risk for persons with disabilities, including over-representation in the informal and subsistence economy; barriers to relocating agricultural practices when faced with decreasing yields and soil degradation; higher levels of anxiety; and increased exposure to waterborne diseases for people with underlying health conditions. The report also highlights that early warning information is not always designed or delivered in a way that reaches individuals with disabilities, and particularly those who are deaf, blind or have vision impairment, or intellectual or psychological disability. Women with disabilities face additional barriers in accessing resources and opportunities to ensure their food security.



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[Thematic Report on Disability Inclusion in Disaster Risk Reduction in the Pacific \(2023\)](#) found that ensuring access to information communication technologies was reported as a priority by OPDs. The widening of mobile and internet coverage is bringing benefits to persons with disabilities in terms of improving access to information and strengthening personal and support networks. The need to ensure telecommunications infrastructure and services continue to function post disaster was noted as a priority. Key recommendations in the report include improving the collection and use of disability data to better understand vulnerability and disaster risk. Further work is needed to strengthen a multi-stakeholder approach to DRR and identify existing and promote new budget allocations for disability in risk reduction projects. The leadership of persons with disabilities is critical to successful, local decision-making in DRR and should be further promoted.

The need for inclusive early warning systems is also highlighted in the Pacific-led Mid-term Review of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, at the Inaugural Pacific Disaster Management Ministers Meeting in Nadi in 2022 and at the Pacific Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Brisbane in 2022.

UNDRR in partnership with Shifting the Power Coalition and ActionAid Australia conducted a study on [“Inclusive and Accessible Multi-Hazard Early-Warning Systems: Learning From Women-Led Early-Warning Systems In The Pacific”](#). The report identifies a number of recommendations that can be adapted by governments for more inclusive and accessible MHEWS, which can be applied in different contexts. While the challenges of developing inclusive and accessible MHEWS are well known and documented, these recommendations highlight the benefits of the unique approach of the Pacific women-led initiatives.

UNDRR’s scoping study on [“Gender-Responsive and Disability Inclusive Early Warning Early Action in the Pacific”](#) highlighted that while gender and disability are integrated into and referenced in national policies and strategies, the implementation in practice remains challenging. This is due to the limited financial, human and technical capacities to implement





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specific actions at the local level. There is a need to translate the commitments in policy frameworks into action and allocate dedicated and sustained budget for implementation and monitoring progress. The study made a number of recommendations aimed at strengthening inclusive EWS, including a checklist and implementation guide.

The Inclusive Early Warning Early Action Checklist and Implementation Guide was developed as part of the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems (CREWS) Pacific initiative and aims to ensure that the key elements of early warnings systems (governance; disaster risk knowledge; detection, monitoring, analysis, and forecasting; dissemination and communication; and preparedness to respond) are gender-responsive and disability-inclusive. They provide support and direction for systematically integrating and monitoring gender and disability inclusivity across all actions related to warnings.

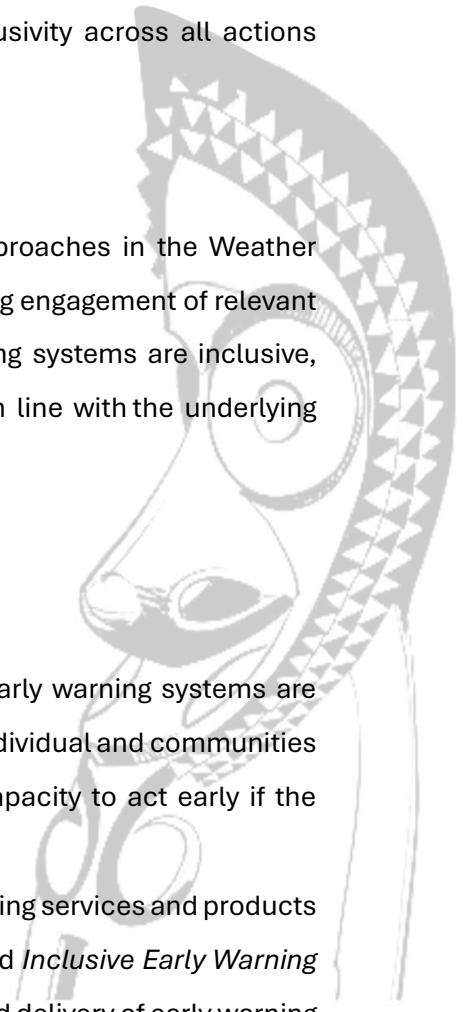
Objectives:

To recommend the Council prioritise inclusive and participatory approaches in the Weather Ready Pacific governance structure and implementation plan, including engagement of relevant partners and civil society organisations to ensure that early warning systems are inclusive, accessible, and actionable by all, particularly at the community level, in line with the underlying principles of the EW4All initiative.

Recommendations:

The Meeting is invited to:

- **Note** that national governments have a duty to ensure that early warning systems are people centred, end to end to enable early action. Ultimately individual and communities are the end users of early warning systems, they have the capacity to act early if the warnings are timely, accessible and appropriate.
- **Recommend** that NMHS conduct assessment of the early warning services and products using existing tools such as *Partner Readiness Assessment* and *Inclusive Early Warning Early Action Checklist and Guide*. This will ensure the design and delivery of early warning is inclusive, accessible and actionable by ALL.





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- **Recommend** that NMHS as well as the regional initiatives such as the Weather Ready Pacific & Early Warning for ALL invest in the capacity building of the NMHS staff, Organization for Persons with Disabilities, Women's Groups and Youth Organizations. This includes joint training, co-design and dissemination of the warning products.
- **Recommend** that NMHS allocate funding and resources in their annual budget for inclusive early warning services and products, including funding for the collection, analysis and use of disaggregated data by age, gender and disability to inform the efficiency of the warning services and products.
- **Recommend** that the PMC Secretariat formalise the working relationship between the Met Community and the Pacific Disability Forum through an MOU.

