

# **13<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems (CREWS) Steering Committee**

## **FINAL MEETING REPORT**

17 June 2021

## Summary of Proceedings and Decisions

1. Representatives from CREWS Contributing Partners: Finland, France (Chair), Germany, The Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Kingdom; Australia and Luxembourg sent apologies. Two invited Observers participated: the European Commission's Director-General for International Partnerships (EC DG/INTPA) and Environment Canada. CREWS Implementing Partners were represented: the World Bank, Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) as well as the CREWS Trustee (World Bank) and the CREWS Secretariat. (Annex 1 – List of Participants).
2. The meeting was chaired by French Ambassador for Climate, Stéphane Crouzat. He expressed special thanks to Georges Gehl and Luxembourg who effectively chaired CREWS for the past two years.

### Agenda Item 1 – Opening

3. The Chair outlined the objectives of the meeting; to: (i) discuss and approve a list of pipeline countries to guide future funding decisions; (ii) discuss the next round of countries and regions, in the pipeline list, for which projects should be initiated; (iii) approve the CREWS Operational Plan: Delivering at Scale 2021 – 2025 and discuss its roll-out, including a specific discussion on the scope and eligibility criteria of the proposed Strategic Support Window; (iv) hear latest developments with regard to strategic partnerships such as the InsuResilience Global Partnership and the Risk Informed Early Action Partnership (REAP); (v) hear of the status of the relationship with the Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF); and (vi) address standing agenda items such as the status of progress of the CREWS portfolio of projects and the approval of the Administrative Budget for FY 22.
4. Under other items, UNDRR offered to update on the launch of the Global Assessment Report on Drought and its findings vis-à-vis CREWS. The representative from Switzerland also suggested to discuss the follow-up to the WMO's internal audit recommendations to CREWS.

### Agenda Item 2 – Status of CREWS Operations

5. The Trustee noted that as of 31 March 2021, total signed contributions amount to USD 70.53 million and total received contributions amount to USD 58.80 million. Currently, the funding available for decision allocation by the Steering Committee is USD 16.0 million.
6. The Head of the Secretariat reported activities since the last meeting (CREWS/SC.13/infdoc.3): (i) the Cambodia and Lao PDR proposal has been circulated for approval; (ii) operational procedures have been revised, including reporting templates; (iii) the 2020 CREWS Annual Report was produced on time and widely circulated; (iv) the CREWS Operational Plan 2021 – 2025 was finalized and its roll-out initiated; (v) the external evaluation has been initiated ; (vi) a number of outreach activities were carried out such as the Climate Adaptation Summit (CAS) event; contributions to hydromet events

in Africa, contributions to UNFCCC's Santiago network; (vii) partnerships strengthened with InsuResilience and REAP secretariats, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), private sector partners and workshop being initiated with the African Risk Capacity (ARC). For the next 6 months, the Secretariat would be focusing on the finalization of the initial phase external evaluation, roll-out of the Operational Plan, piloting private sector partnerships and fund-raising and scaling-up action for COP 26.

7. The representative from Switzerland suggested to consider linking up with the prevention web or the anticipation hub for the dissemination of the practice compilation.
8. The representative from the Netherlands expressed interest to learn more about the planned joint event of CREWS with GCF during COP 26. The Chair responded noting that preliminary discussions have been held and would keep all Members posted on developments.
9. The representative from EC/DG INTPA expressed interested to learn more about the work initiated with ARC.
10. The Chair then invited the Trustee and the Secretariat to present the Administrative Budget for Fiscal Year 2022 (CREWS/SC.13/workdoc.2).
11. The representative from Switzerland inquired about the almost 19% increase in staff costs comparing with the request for FY21 estimates. The Secretariat explained that the costs reflected for FY21 are the actual costs for each staff member while the costs reflected for FY22 are the standard costs based on the UN standard rules for salaries and remuneration. This will be reflected in the footnote in the document.

**Decision 1: The CREWS Administrative Budget for Fiscal Year 2022 (July 2021 to June 2022) is approved.**

### Agenda Item 3 – Status of Progress of Projects Portfolio and Pipeline Countries

12. The three Implementing Partners presented the status of progress of CREWS projects over the last six months, including impact of COVID-19 to CREWS operations. WB/GFDRR presented the interim report for the period January – June 2021 (CREWS/SC.13/infdoc.4).
13. All CREWS projects remain aligned with their objectives. In terms of rate of expenditure, six projects are on track (South-West Indian Ocean, West Africa, Caribbean, Haiti, Pacific and Global project on Measuring Early Warning Effectiveness), 8 projects show moderate progress (Burkina Faso, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Niger, Togo, Papua New Guinea and Afghanistan). In terms of rate of delivery, eight projects are on-track (Togo, South-West Indian Ocean, West Africa, Haiti, Pacific, Papua New Guinea, Afghanistan and Global project on Measuring Early Warning Effectiveness), six projects show moderate progress (Burkina Faso, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Niger, Caribbean).

14. Each of CREWS projects leverages additional financing, to sustain and strengthen weather/hydrological services and/or sectoral projects funded by development partners such as the Global Environment Fund (GEF), the World Bank International Development Association (IDA), GFDRR, The EU's ACP/EDF funds and the Green Climate Fund (GCF).
15. In terms of risk status, four projects reported low/medium (South-West Indian Ocean, West Africa, Pacific and Global project on Measuring Early Warning Effectiveness), five projects report medium risk (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Caribbean, Papua New Guinea), two projects reported medium/high (Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo) and two projects report high risk (Haiti and Afghanistan).
16. With regard to the impact of COVID-19 on the project's delivery, the average delay is six-months. Five projects have been granted no-cost extensions and most activities are conducted remotely.
17. The representative from Finland inquired about the common denominators for rating risk in the projects, for those that reported high risk such as Haiti and Afghanistan. The Implementing Partners noted that the main driver of risks to the projects is the political stability and fragility of the situation in the country. The WMO representative, further explained that working in Afghanistan, for instance, remains unpredictable due to the continuous evolution of the security situation exacerbated further by the COVID-situation. However, despite the complex risk environment, work is still ongoing.
18. The Secretariat presented the current pipeline list (CREWS/SC.13/workdoc.3), which is a product of mapping of needs, demand and leveraging potential and multiple consultations among partners. The funding requirement to cover all countries/regions in the proposed pipeline list would be USD 38 million.
19. The representative from Germany suggested to also prepare the pipeline list based on additional elements, for example: (i) potential for CREWS to leverage the private sector (i.e. climate and disaster risk finance and insurance (CDRFI)); (ii) potential for collaboration with other partners, for instance with the InsuResilience Global Partnership. On the latter point, Horn of Africa, in particular Ethiopia, is of interest.
20. The representative from the United Kingdom expressed support to ensure systematic alignment with other programmes, for example WISER 2 and potential future UK-supported work in Africa. UK Met, in particular would like to offer an opportunity for the Secretariat to work together on any upcoming programming in Africa and Asia and continue to collaborate closely with REAP on early warning-early action.
21. The representative from Switzerland noted the value of the proposed project in South-Asia (Bhutan, Nepal and Maldives) and its cooperation office in Nepal would be available to coordinate with the Implementing Partners.
22. The Chair invited the representative from EC/INTPA to provide an update on the European Commission's contribution to the CREWS initiative. The EC/INTPA representative reminded that the

EU adopted a financing decision to contribute to CREWS Euros 10 million. However, the Financial Intermediary Fund (FIF) is not covered by the established framework agreement between the World Bank and the EU, hence, it is challenging for the EU to contribute directly to the CREWS Trust Fund. Options are being looked at. There is a need to ensure the most suitable option for all parties. The EU reiterated that it remains committed to the CREWS initiative. It is continuing its discussions with France and the Secretariat and CREWS implementing partners. The EU is hoping to provide more details either before or during the next CREWS Steering Committee meeting.

**Decision 2: The Steering Committee approves the revised list of pipeline countries, once comments and suggestions made at the meeting have been reflected, as a basis for prioritizing future financing decisions.**

**Decision 3: The Steering Committee invites the Implementing Partners to identify countries and regions for which project preparation will be initiated, for a total equivalent to the funds available in the Trust Fund, and to submit their proposal to the Steering Committee, within six weeks of the meeting, for review and approval.**

**Decision 4: The Steering Committee invites the Secretariat and the Implementing Partners to continue working with the European Commission in the preparation of the EC contribution to CREWS. The EC will inform the Steering Committee on the implementation modalities once a proposal has been developed, in order to seek a common agreement on the proposed modalities.**

#### Agenda Item 4 – CREWS Operational Plan 2021 – 202 Roll-out

23. The Chair noted that the CREWS Operational Plan 2021 – 2025 (CREWS/SC.13/infdoc.5) provides a useful blueprint to: (i) strengthen the operational modalities of the CREWS initiative in areas where the work with countries could be more effective; and (ii) scale-up commitments and engagement. He recommended that the version presented at the meeting be approved by the Steering Committee.
24. The Secretariat presented a brief overview on the objectives of the CREWS Operational Plan, and the timeline for its roll-out. Key actions to be taken for each key feature were outlined. This includes: (i) finalization of the case studies on People Centered Early Warning: Lessons from the Red Cross (CREWS/SC.13/infdoc.8) and drafting of the Operational Procedures on People-Centered Early Warning; (ii) updating of the Operational Procedures on Programming & Project Development, Monitoring & Evaluation; (iii) completion of the initial phase external evaluation; (iv) development of one results-based management framework with core programme indicators, targets, baselines; and (v) development of a resource mobilization strategy complemented by a robust communication strategy. By the June 2022 CREWS Steering Committee, the Secretariat will provide updates on the progress of the roll-out.
25. The representative from Switzerland noted the importance of the external evaluation and its expected outcomes to be part of the planning process for the Operational Plan roll-out. This was echoed by the representative from the Netherlands.

26. The representative from Switzerland noted its appreciation on the emphasis on the people-centered approach and the need to reach the last mile and inquired about the next steps after finalizing the report jointly prepared with the IFRC.
27. The representative from the United Kingdom supported the incorporation of the people-centered approach into the CREWS Operational Plan.
28. The representative from Germany expressed its support to the rolling-out of the CREWS Operational Plan and elaborated on how the results-based framework will be developed with specific targets and indicators. It was encouraged to work closely with the InsuResilience Global Partnership and to the extent possible align the indicators of CREWS with the InsuResilience Vision 2025 indicators.
29. Sarah Conway, consultant, presented an overview of the current discussions around the proposed Strategic Support Window (SSW). It was mentioned that the Trustee expressed no red flags in the operationalization of the proposed financing window and referred to it as a notional program, where contributing members would continue to contribute to the CREWS FIF and no adjustments would be required to contribution agreements. The Implementing Partners, on the other hand, had noted many points of convergence during discussions on scope and eligibility criteria such as in the types of action, emphasizing leveraging potential, strategic use of resources with focus on CREWS pipeline and ongoing projects. As a next step, bilateral discussions with Members will be held. It is envisaged that the SSW operational procedures would be finalized and the SSW will be operational this year.
30. The representative from Switzerland inquired on how the SSW can be operationalized and how it will add value in terms of enhancing CREWS's agility to respond to needs in the countries/regions.
31. The representative from the Netherlands suggested to have discussions with the NDC Partnership, to benefit from their experience towards the conceptualization of the SSW.
32. The representative from the United Kingdom noted on the need to address the ways on how potentially the high demand for the SSW could be met.
33. The representative from Germany also supported the objectives of the SSW and also pointed at the lessons that can be learned from the NDC Partnership. On the decision-making process, there is room for piloting/testing on what could work. The SSW could also be used to substantiate synergies with the SOFF.
34. The WMO representative indicated that programme analysis conducted for climate financing going towards hydrometeorological systems and services show need for technical advisory service to operationalize and steer these towards a full value chain of systems and services.
35. The World Bank representative commented on the strategic nature of the SSW should it allow for leveraging financing and highlighted that the timing of provision of support is of the essence.
36. The Secretariat suggested further bilateral discussions in the coming months to strengthen the concept.

**Decision 5: The CREWS Operational Plan: Delivering at Scale 2021 – 2025 and its roll-out timetable is approved.**

**Agenda Item 5 – Wrap - Up**

37. The Chair requested the Secretariat to provide updates on its engagement with InsuResilience and REAP. The Secretariat noted that it has strong engagement with both partnerships. Joint workplans are prepared and regular meetings held. Further, joint activities are conducted, for example, the Climate Adaptation Summit jointly organized by CREWS and REAP. Alignment is also ensured, for instance, a proposed joint Africa Risk Capacity (ARC) activity with InsuResilience in Chad and Niger to contribute to the development of new flood insurance tools for resilience.
38. The Chair reported on the status of discussions on the alignment with the proposed Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF). A meeting was held between France and WMO Secretary General in May. WMO informed that the CREWS FIF is no longer considered an option for SOFF. WMO is looking for other options, including a UN Multi-donor Trust Fund mechanism. WMO has also confirmed that it will seek cooperation between the CREWS and the Secretariat and Governance structures to be established for SOFF. WMO also informed that it is organizing a second SOFF potential funders forum on 28 June 2021 and any interested partner is welcome to contact WMO.
39. The representative from Germany invited CREWS partners to further strengthen CREWS operations to support the objectives set-out in the SOFF proposal and enhance synergies. CREWS and SOFF operations should be mutually supportive, potentially facilitated through the proposed Strategic Support Window. SOFF as a proposed financing mechanism to implement the GBON standard can significantly increase the effectiveness of investing in early warning systems.
40. The representative from UNDRR announced that the UNDRR GAR Special Report on Drought is being launched on 17 June 2021 in the context of the World Day to combat Desertification and Drought. The report was commissioned by UNDRR and developed by more than 80 authors. UNDRR further informed that the upcoming Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction planned in 2022 has a number of events related to early warning and invited CREWS and its partner to engage in the preparatory processes.
41. The representative from Switzerland requested a follow-up on WMO's internal audit of CREWS and inquired on the recommendations and measures taken by the Secretariat. The Secretariat noted that the findings and the management response of the Audit are internal and sharing these requires an authorization from the WMO internal oversight office.
42. The representative from Germany informed the Steering Committee of a planned new contribution of Euros 5 million, in 2021, to the CREWS Financial Intermediary Fund. A public announcement will be made in due course.

**Decision 6: The Steering Committee invites the Chair to sign on its behalf, as appropriate, Letters of Intent between the InsuResilience Global Partnership and the Risk-Informed Early Action Partnerships, and the CREWS initiative to formalize cooperation.**

**Decision 7: The Steering Committee invites the CREWS Secretariat to share the management responses to the recommendations of the recent Internal Audit of the CREWS Secretariat and the status of their implementation.**

**Decision 8: The 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the CREWS Steering Committee, for Contributing Members and Observers, will take place in the fourth quarter of 2021, either virtually or in person at COP 26, to approve funding for the next round of countries and regions, review the preliminary findings of the first CREWS external evaluation, approve operational modalities for the proposed Strategic Support Window and discuss people-centered approaches.**



## Annex 1 – List of Participants

<b>MEMBERS</b>	<b>NAMES</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Finland	Saana Ahonen, MFA	Confirmed Online
France (Chair)	Amb. Stéphane Crouzat, Climate Ambassador	Confirmed Online
	Vincent Szleper, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs	Confirmed Online
	Arnaut Rayar, Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs	Confirmed Online
Germany	Martin Kipping BMZ	Confirmed Online
	Janek Toepper GIZ	Confirmed Online
	Lea Kulick GIZ	Confirmed Online
The Netherlands	Pieter Copper, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Confirmed Online
	Ge Verwer, KNMI	Confirmed Online
Switzerland	Sergio Perez, SDC	Confirmed Online
	Philippe Brunet, EDA	Confirmed Online
UK	Katherine Marsden, FCDO	Confirmed Online
	Helen Bye, UKMet	Confirmed Online
<b>OBSERVERS</b>	<b>NAMES</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
Canada	Jen Collette, Env Canada	Confirmed Online
	Shannon deGraaf, Env Canada	Confirmed Online
EC	Valentina Villoria, DEVCO	Confirmed Online
	Jochen Luther, DEVCO	Confirmed Online
<b>IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS</b>	<b>NAMES</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
UNDRR	Paola Albrito	Confirmed Online
	Sandra Amlang	Confirmed Online
	Sarah Houghton	Confirmed Online
	Jair Torres	Confirmed Online
	Diana Mosquera Calle	Confirmed Online
	Iria Touzon Calle	Confirmed Online
World Bank	Niels Holm-Nielsen	Confirmed Online
	Vladimir Tsirkunov	Confirmed Online

	Henriette Mampuya	Confirmed Online
	Anna-Maria Bogdanova	Confirmed Online
	Makoto Suwa	Confirmed Online
	Hugo Wesley	Confirmed Online
	Isabelle Forge	Confirmed Online
	Lisa Lang	Confirmed Online
	Alice Soares	Confirmed Online
	Efrem Ferrari	Confirmed Online
	Habiba Gitay	Confirmed Online
	Cecile Lorillou	Confirmed Online
	Jian Vun	Confirmed Online
WMO	Filipe Lucio	Confirmed Online
	Paul Egerton	Confirmed Online
	Maxx Dilley	Confirmed Online
	Jean-Baptiste Migraine	Confirmed Online
	Lina Sjaavik	Confirmed Online
	Tamara Comment	Confirmed Online
<b>TRUSTEE</b>	<b>NAMES</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
	Larissa Vovk	Confirmed Online
	Iris Sta. Maria	Confirmed Online
	Catharina Widiarti	Confirmed Online
<b>SECRETARIAT</b>	<b>NAMES</b>	<b>STATUS</b>
	John Harding	Confirmed in person
	Elkaye Macasil	Confirmed in person
	Catherine Thompson	Confirmed in person
	Chimwemwe Nyirenda	Confirmed Online
	Sarah Conway (consultant)	Confirmed Online

## Annex 2 – Provisional Agenda | 17 June 2021

- 1.00 – 1.20      **Item 1 – Opening**
- Welcome by the Chair and objectives of the Meeting
  - Review of progress on decisions taken at the 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting
  - Adoption of the Agenda
- 1.20 – 2.10      **Item 2 – Status of CREWS Operations**
- Update by the Trustee on activities and status of the CREWS Trust Fund
  - Update by the Secretariat on its Activities since the 12<sup>th</sup> meeting
  - Presentation and approval of CREWS Administrative Budget FY 22
- 2.10– 3.10      **Item 3 – Status of Progress of Projects Portfolio and Pipeline Countries**
- Interim report by Implementing Partners on progress achieved for the period January – June 2021, across the portfolio of projects (key achievement, rate of expenditure, rate of delivery, risk status)
  - Mapping of needs, demand and financing by other partners and prioritization of CREWS investments. Discussion and approval of the list of pipeline countries that demonstrate a level of eligibility, ownership and readiness for the preparation of project proposals for potential future funding decisions
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- 3.10 – 4.30      **Item 4 – CREWS Operational Plan 2021 – 2025 Roll-out**
- Presentation and discussion regarding the roll-out of the revised CREWS Operational Plan: Delivering at Scale 2021-2025
- 4.30 – 5.00      **Item 5 – Any Other Business and Wrap-up**
- Update on CREWS alignment with InsuResilience, Risk-Informed Early Action Partnership (REAP) and the proposed Systematic Observation Financing Facility (SOFF)
  - Objectives and dates for the 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Steering Committee
  - Any other business
  - Review of the decisions taken at the meeting