

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

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Strengthened Collaboration Needed to Enhance Interoperable Systems in Disaster Preparedness



Strengthening collaboration among different stakeholders and enhancing the interoperability of multi-hazard early warning systems for early action across the continent is needed. This recurring message arose from the recent governance and coordination meetings for the [Africa Multi-Hazard Early Warning and Early Action System](#) (AMHEWAS) Programme.

Members of the AMHEWAS [Technical Working Group](#) convened on 1-3 July, 2024, in Lusaka, Zambia in a meeting organized by the African Union Commission (AUC) and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) Regional Office for

Africa. Technical Working Group Members discussed AMHEWAS' ongoing implementation and deliberated on other topics related to Multi-hazard Early warning and Early action, which included impact-based forecasting and anticipatory finance and insurance. The meeting also deliberated on opportunities to enhance co-production and interoperability amongst the AMHEWAS Situation Rooms.

Diane Aboubakar, the AUC Senior Policy Officer for Disaster Risk Reduction, representing Harsen Nyambe, AUC Director of Sustainable Environment and Blue Economy, expressed the Commission's gratitude to donors and implementing partners for the Programme. He noted that the rollout of AMHEWAS has been successful, with five Situation Rooms already running and two others in the pipeline.

Titus Ng'andu, Director of Disaster Risk Management at the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit (DDMU) of the Government of the Republic of Zambia, noted that through the national multi-hazard contingency plan developed in 2023, the Unit was able to activate its response plan once drought hit the country.

Anderson Banda, the Director of the SADC Humanitarian and Operations Centre ([SHOC](#)) reiterated SADC's commitment to building and strengthening regional resilience against disaster, as epitomised in the 2022 [Maputo Declaration on the Commitment by SADC to enhance Early Warning and Early Action in the Region](#).

Marco Massabo, Knowledge Management and Early Warning Coordinator at the UNDRR Regional Office for Africa, commended AMHEWAS for inspiring different countries to coordinate the exchange of risk information and early warning. He pointed out the national situation room in Tanzania, where the disaster risk management authority, officers from the hydrometeorological authorities, and the Ministry of Water are co-producing a multi-hazard early warning bulletin to inform populations and organisations.

Roberto Rudari, Programme Director at the CIMA Research Foundation, noted that AMHEWAS implementation at the national level needs further enhancement. Representatives of Angola, Djibouti and Nigeria made presentations highlighting

progress in implementing multi-hazard early warning systems and the challenges, including human and technical capacities, limited financial resources, and the need to invest in detection, forecasting, and monitoring infrastructure.

Nomsa Dube, the AMHEWAS Programme Manager, presented the Technical Working Group meeting outcomes to the Programme's Steering Committee which met 4-5 July at the same venue.



Upon receiving the updates, H.E. Amb. Harold Bundu Saffa, Chair of the Bureau of the Sub-Committee on Environmental Issues of the AU [Permanent Representatives Committee](#) (PRC), requested the Steering Committee to develop actionable outcomes which align with the

collective vision to minimise economic losses, protect infrastructure, and protect development gains from disasters and their impacts.

Huw Beynon, Deputy Chief at UNDRR Regional Office for Africa, underscored the need to expand the donor base to meet the AMHEWAS' ambition, and welcomed in-kind support to the Programme, including technical expertise, capacity building, and equipment provision.

The AMHEWAS team, supported by the AUC's [Partnerships Management and Resource Mobilisation Directorate](#), presented the Programme's Resource Mobilisation Strategy. Reshmi Theckethil, manager of the [Sahel Resilience Project](#), representing the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), welcomed the need for a costed and time-bound resource mobilisation strategy that not only leverages the support of existing financial and technical partners, but also makes prioritised and targeted efforts to build partnerships with emerging partners.

Dr Agnes Kijazi, Director of the World Meteorological Organisation's Regional Office for Africa, expressed the WMO's commitment to supporting AMHEWAS in alignment with the Early Warning for All (EW4All) Initiative on Pillar 2, which focuses on *detection, monitoring, analysis and forecasting*.

The AMHEWAS Steering Committee adopted the report of the Programme Technical Working Group and reviewed AMHEWAS' workplan, the Programme and its associated projects, the proposed resource mobilisation strategy, and the revised Terms of Reference for the Steering Committee.

Participants who attended the two meetings represented Angola, Nigeria, Djibouti, the Arab-Maghreb Union (UMA), the East African Community, the Economic Commission of West African States (ECOWAS), the Indian Ocean Commission, the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre ([ICPAC](#)), the Global Network for Disaster Reduction (GNDR), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The AU and the Commission's entities represented included the African Risk Capacity (ARC), the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security ([PAPS](#)), the [Partnerships Management and Resource Mobilisation Management Directorate](#), and the AUC Climate and Weather Services ([ClimSA](#)) Programme.

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