

Project summary

Multi-hazard Early Warning Services for Tanzania (MHEWS Tanzania)

Introduction

The purpose of the MHEWS Tanzania project was to reduce the impacts of extreme weather on coastal regions of Tanzania. Much of the population in Tanzania is vulnerable to weather and climate related hazards including flooding, drought, landslides, lightning and disease. Early warning of severe weather is vital as disasters can occur when communities face natural hazards but are not prepared for the impacts.

The project initially focussed on the pilot sectors of marine, fishing, agriculture, oil and gas, and the public weather service. The Tanzania Meteorological Agency (TMA) and the Met Office worked closely with sector stakeholder partners as well as representatives from the Tanzanian Disaster Management Department to understand requirements and jointly develop relevant early warning products and services.

Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder engagement was a key element of this project, as it was critical to gather an understanding of the requirements of the pilot sectors in respect of early warning services. Desk-based research was undertaken and consultations held with representatives of the various sectors. This was then shared with stakeholders at a

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workshop early in the project. The Severe Weather Events – Emergency Planning (SWEEP) workshop introduced the concept of impact-based forecasting to delegates from TMA and stakeholder groups and highlighted the necessity of working in partnership to co-produce and deliver these services.

Product development and delivery

Following the initial stakeholder engagement work, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were developed with inputs from sector stakeholders. These contain full details of the TMA processes involved in the production and delivery of a service, in order that this can be replicated smoothly in future service design. This has been integrated into the TMA Central Forecasting Office’s quality management systems.

The final impact-based warning services were not delivered as part of this project, due to the timescales involved, but the conceptual products were created. Engagement with media channels also took place in order to reach a shared understanding of impact-based warnings and how best to communicate them.

Conclusion

The project delivered increased capacity to both the TMA and to the relevant stakeholders of the pilot sectors. This was achieved by strengthening the cross-government and sector engagement, the introduction of the impact-based multi-hazard early warning concept and the co-production of the early warning products and SOPs. Multi-agency workshops ensured that delegates developed a greater understanding of meteorology, the strengths and weaknesses of the forecasting process, and how meteorological information can be used to improve risk management within sectors and communities. This work has laid the foundations for further modernisation and development.

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