United Nations Institute for Training and Research

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Awareness raising workshop Flood Early Warning System (FEWS) - Guyana

卫星分析和应用研究

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合伙	：	CIMA Research Foundation, , UNDP Guyana

背景信息

The project “Strengthening Disaster Management Capacity of Women in the Cooperative Republic of Guyana and Commonwealth of Dominica” funded by the Government of Japan aims to reduce vulnerabilities to hydro-meteorological hazards such as floods and droughts by targeting three broad drivers of these problems, namely gaps in gender analysis, hazard and risk data, limited integration of climate change and disaster risk planning and practices in the

agriculture sector, and limited access to appropriate, sustainable finance for vulnerable small farmers and women's groups.

UNDP Guyana, as the implementing project management organisation is partnering with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research's Operational Satellite Application Program (UNITAR-UNOSAT) to develop a National Flood Forecasting and Early Warning System (NFEWS) for Guyana and enhance technical skills and knowledge of key national stakeholders about Flood Forecasting and Early Warning Systems (FEWS).

As part of the planned capacity development activities led by UNITAR-UNOSAT, an awareness-raising workshop about FEWS was delivered to selected national, sub-nation and local stakeholders with a particular focus on Early Warning Communication.

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The aim of this workshop was to raise awareness and foster communication as well as bring together with the national, sub-national and local key stakeholders, to:

- Share achievements, good practices and Early Warning System (EWS) tools with efficient communication in the Caribbean Region,
- Outline national EWS frameworks, legislation, and current practices in Guyana,
- Outline Flood Early Warning (EW) operational mechanism in Guyana,
- Recognize the benefits and limitation of the implemented flood forecasting chain, Guyana National Flood Early Warning System, and
- Strengthen Flood Early Warning Communication from national to sub-national and to local levels by identifying gaps and recommendations for improved communication based on current flood forecasting tools capacities including newly developed flood forecasting chain in Dewetra platform

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Although conducted through an online platform, the workshop provided an opportunity for the flood early warning responders from national, sub-national, and local levels to strengthen their communication and jointly work on its enhancement.

The workshop was organised into three main parts:

I Project overview,

II National legislations and practice in Guyana and

III Groups Discussion.

The first part of the workshop provided participants with an overview of the project “Strengthening Disaster Management Capacity of Women in the Cooperative Republic of Guyana and Commonwealth of Dominica” and the project’s activities related to the National Flood Forecasting System setup in Guyana. The first part of the workshop is concluded with a presentation from the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH) about the flood forecasting practices and EW communication and dissemination in the Caribbean region as well as platform Dewetra used for Guyana’s flood forecasting system visualizations.

The second part of the workshop was opened with a presentation from Civil Defence Commission (CDC) about existing FEWS frameworks, legislations, and practices in Guyana. In addition to the FEWS frameworks, the representative of the Hydrometeorological Service of Guyana (Hydromet) has presented current Flood Forecasting System (FFS) as well as flood early warning protocol. The presentation also referred to the new Guyana National FEWS platform use for daily operational flood forecasting procedures. The second part of the workshop is concluded by brief remarks from the Vice-Chair of the Neighborhood Democratic Council about community early warning communication context.

Focus of the third part of the workshop was participant’s discussion in order to:

- identify and summarise strengths, weaknesses, and gaps within FEWS in Guyana with a focus on the flood warning communication and

- recommend EW communication improvements based on the current and future capacities.

The discussion was led through 2 sessions whereas the participants were split into 3 groups. The groups' discussion outputs are presented to all participants by facilitators after each session.

During the presentations participants were asking questions, so in the final Question and Answer session no questions were posed, and the workshop is closed by closing remarks were given from the Project manager Mr Jason Chacon from UNDP Guyana and the workshop moderator Ms Imra Hodzic from the UNITAR-UNOSAT.

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The seven (7) national institutions already included in the previous capacity development activities of Guyana NFEWS project is invited to nominate their representatives to attend the workshop. Those are:

Guyana Livestock Development Authority (GLDA),

Civil Defence Commission (CDC),

Hydrometeorological Service (Hydromet),

Guyana Lands & Surveys Commission (GLSC),

National Agricultural Research & Extension Institute (NAREI),

National Drainage and Irrigation Authority (NDIA),

Office of Climate Change (OCC).

Further flood responders mapping from the sub-national to the local levels was conducted by UNDP Guyana. Identified and reachable sub-national and local representatives are:

Lethem Town Council

Neighbourhood Democratic Councils: Union- Naarstigheid, Fort Ordinance

Regional Democratic Council, Region 5 (Mahaica-Berbice)

Trafalgar Community Democratic Council,

Kwakwani Community.

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Due to the Covid-19 pandemic situation the workshop could not be held in Guyana.

Therefore, an online Zoom platform was used to share information and to present all lessons learned by the representatives from the national and local levels. The discussion was held in three (3) virtual rooms and facilitated by facilitators from UNDP Guyana, CIMA Research Foundation and UNITA-UNOSAT.