Weather and Climate Information Services (WISER):
Thematic evaluation across three regions

FCDO Response

Response to the WISER Thematic Evaluation Report

FCDO would like to thank the UK Met. Office (MO) and the multiple project partners involved with WISER for their help in informing the evaluation. We also thank the evaluation partner, Tropical Health, for their insightful report.

Summary of WISER Evaluation Questions and Findings

EQ1: Which approaches have been more effective in co-producing useful, relevant, and accessible weather and climate information services (WCIS) across contexts? What lessons can be learnt for differing contexts (including Fragile and Conflict Affected States (FCAS)) and end-user inclusion?

Findings - WISER has successfully worked with National Meteorological and Hydrological (NHMS) Services and local organisations to improve the flow of early warning data to end users and developing innovative partnerships in different contexts. WISER has created a demonstration effect at the intervention level – supporting NHMS's in strengthening services and tools. Co-production processes are widely recognised as a valuable technique to support the development of useful and accessible WCIS.

EQ2: What were the key operational and delivery lessons learnt from implementing the WISER model across differing contexts for future programming?

Findings - WISER built on the Meteorological Office (MO) reputation effectively to build credibility with partners and clear evidence of impact in a number of contexts. WISER Implementing Partners with proven track records, produced good results, and WISER increased the potential for both attracting other credible partners and future funding.

EQ3: To what extent, and in what ways, were improved climate information services effective in informing decision making at the producer, intermediary and user levels?

Findings - WISER responded to needs and helped partners deliver more effective WCIS to users. MO introduced innovative assets, tools and systems to NMHS' which in general were well-received, although sustained use of these tools is not universal.

EQ4: What factors, internal or external to the programmes, may have limited or accelerated the application of improved WCIS in decision-making for producers, intermediaries and users? What lessons can be learnt for delivery, in general and specifically in an FCAS context?

Findings - WISER could have involved users more in the design and linked more to wider initiatives on EWS (Early Warning Systems).

EQ5: Following the closure of the WISER 1&2 and of the Asia Regional Resilience to a Changing Climate Programme (ARRCC) programmes, what programme results have been sustained, in what ways, for whom? And why?

Findings - Evidence of results being sustained is available, but more could be done to build sustainability into the design of the programme from the outset and document long term impact.

Recommendations and FCDO Response

FCDO agrees with the main recommendations from this evaluation and plans to take them forward within the ongoing phases of WISER, as set out below:

1.   Recommendations - Building coherence to increase and demonstrating impact
- FCDO needs to actively identify linkages to wider FCDO programmes
- NMHS's can amplify their impact by working in partnership with intermediaries - particularly those working to enhance the resilience of end users
- Communication of results and stories of change need to be improved

FCDO Response - FCDO recognises that WISER programmes need to be well integrated with other FCDO and partners work on WCIS, EWS and DRR. In response FCDO WISER teams will:
- Develop with MO a joint, strategy for WISER that incudes its relationships with other FCDO funded and initiatives e.g. CREWS, REAP and Early Warning for All
- Work with MO and regional bodies and posts to ensure that WISER work is well understood and builds partnerships with key partners to maximise sustainability
- Compile WISER economic and delivery case studies and country and regional information resources to maximise the policy and learning impact of WISER

2.   Recommendations - Designing for political reality and sustainability
- Further develop WISER strategy to address sustainability
- Enhance Capacity building and engagement of National Met and Hydro services

FCDO Response - FCDO recognises the challenges of developing and delivering sustainable climate and early warning services to the highly climate vulnerable, particularly in fragile settings. To increase WISER's impact on the most vulnerable and sustainability FCDO will:
- Work with MO to meet the needs of users more effectively and sustainably with a focus on the most vulnerable, including women and girls
- Invest in better understanding the institutional and political economy of WCIS in WISER countries and adapting WISER support to better match with demand
- Update WISER approaches to supporting capacity and institutional development
- Engage with NHMS, development actors working in WCIS and the private sector to develop approaches to sustainable funding of climate and early warning services

3.   Recommendations - Tracking and maximising real world impact
- Better tracking of end-user decision making and resilience impact
- Ensure consistent MEL approaches within WISER and other FCDO programmes
- Adopt a set of core indicators across WCIS programming

FCDO Response - The evaluation usefully sets out where WISER can improve its tracking of delivery and evidence of impact. In response FCDO will build on existing work to:
- Agree a set of core indicators that will be reported across WISER and ensure that the results are consistently disaggregated by gender and vulnerable groups
- Identify where qualitative evidence can be generated to provide evidence and 'stories of change' on resilience impacts at the individual and community level
- Undertake further work to establish the VFM case for the WCIS being delivered under WISER
- Develop an evaluation approach for WISER that will enable meaningful evaluation of current WISER activities at the end of their current phase