

Consolidated Training Workshop Report

Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction and Inclusive Early Warning Systems Training



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23 March 2026

Executive Summary

Introduction

This report presents the outcomes of a regional capacity-building workshop on Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR) and Monitoring Inclusive Early Warning Systems (EWS), held in Boksburg, South Africa from 17–20 March 2026. The training was organised by the Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled (SAFOD), in partnership with CBM Global Disability Inclusion, and brought together 12 participants from Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) in Zimbabwe (Federation of Disabled People in Zimbabwe), Zambia (Zambian Federation of the Disabled), and Botswana (SAFOD).

Purpose of the Training

The workshop was designed as a two-part, complementary intervention. The first component, a Training of Trainers (ToT) on DiDRR, focused on strengthening participants' conceptual understanding of inclusive disaster risk reduction, enhancing facilitation skills, and positioning OPDs as trainers and advocates within disaster risk governance systems. The second component, a technical training on Monitoring Inclusive Early Warning Systems, aimed to build participants' capacity to assess, monitor, and influence the inclusivity and effectiveness of early warning systems through practical tools and evidence-based approaches.

The Training

Baseline findings from the pre-training assessments indicated that while participants demonstrated strong general awareness of disaster risk reduction and disability inclusion, there were notable gaps in technical knowledge, particularly in relation to system components, monitoring frameworks, and accessible communication mechanisms. In addition, participants expressed limited confidence in engaging with policy and institutional processes.

The training successfully addressed these gaps through a participatory, practice-oriented approach that combined experiential learning, technical tools, and applied exercises. By the end of the workshop, participants demonstrated significant improvements in their understanding of DiDRR frameworks, inclusive early warning systems, and the role of monitoring in strengthening accessibility and accountability. There was a clear shift from a hazard-focused understanding of disasters to a more comprehensive perspective that recognises the role of vulnerability, systemic barriers, and exclusion in shaping disaster risk.

Importantly, the training strengthened participants' capacity to translate knowledge into practice. Through group-based exercises, participants developed country-specific action and monitoring plans, identifying priority areas for intervention, including accessible early warning communication, inclusive risk assessments, and strengthened engagement with disaster management authorities. Participants also demonstrated increased confidence in advocacy, with a stronger ability to engage with policy processes and institutional actors using evidence-based approaches.

The overall workshop evaluation indicates a high level of effectiveness and participant satisfaction. Over 90% of participants rated the training as "Very Good" or "Excellent," with facilitation, relevance, and practical applicability identified as key strengths. The use of

participatory methodologies, practical tools, and real-world case analysis contributed significantly to knowledge uptake and engagement. However, the training also highlighted persistent capacity gaps, particularly in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) within OPDs. While participants showed strong commitment to inclusion and advocacy, their ability to generate and utilise evidence remains constrained by limited technical skills and institutional systems. Addressing these gaps will be critical for sustaining and scaling the impact of the training.

Lessons Learned

- Participatory and practical training approaches are highly effective in strengthening understanding and application of DiDRR and EWS concepts.
- While participants demonstrated strong foundational awareness, there are significant technical gaps, particularly in monitoring and evaluation and inclusive early warning systems.
- Inclusion requires intentional design and dedicated resources—it cannot be assumed within existing disaster systems.
- OPDs have strong potential as system actors, but require enhanced capacity to engage effectively in policy, planning, and governance processes.
- Monitoring and evidence generation are critical for strengthening accountability and influencing inclusive DRR systems.
- Community-level and last-mile systems are essential to ensure early warning messages reach persons with disabilities.
- Sustained support and follow-up mechanisms are necessary to translate training into long-term impact.

Key Recommendations

- Strengthen OPD technical capacity in monitoring and evaluation, including indicator development, data collection, and analysis.
- Establish structured post-training mentorship and technical support to facilitate implementation of action plans.
- Enhance accessibility of early warning systems through multi-modal communication (e.g. sign language, audio, simplified messaging, local languages).
- Institutionalise OPD participation in disaster risk governance structures at local, national, and regional levels.
- Develop and adopt standardised monitoring frameworks and promote the use of disability-disaggregated data.
- Strengthen community-based and last-mile early warning mechanisms to reach remote and underserved populations.
- Promote multi-stakeholder collaboration between OPDs, government, and humanitarian actors.
- Scale and institutionalise the training model regionally through SAFOD to support harmonised and sustainable DiDRR and EWS implementation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Boksburg training represents a significant step towards strengthening disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction and early warning systems in Southern Africa. By combining conceptual grounding, technical skills development, and action planning, the training has positioned OPDs as key actors in advancing inclusive, accessible, and people-centred disaster risk management systems. With sustained support and strategic follow-up, the outcomes of this intervention have strong potential to contribute to long-term systems transformation across the region.

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1. Background and Rationale

Southern Africa is experiencing increasing frequency and intensity of climate-related hazards, including droughts, floods, and cyclones, driven in part by climatic variability such as the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO). These hazards are occurring within fragile socio-economic contexts characterised by poverty, food insecurity, and limited adaptive capacity, thereby amplifying disaster risks, particularly for vulnerable populations.

Persons with disabilities are disproportionately affected due to structural, institutional, and communication barriers that limit their access to early warnings, evacuation support, and recovery services. Despite global frameworks such as the Sendai Framework emphasising inclusion, disability considerations remain inadequately integrated into disaster risk reduction (DRR) systems, particularly within early warning systems (EWS), which often fail to deliver information in accessible, timely, and actionable formats.

Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) are strategically positioned to address these gaps through advocacy, community engagement, and accountability. However, their effectiveness is constrained by limited technical capacity to engage with complex DRR systems, including monitoring and evaluating the inclusivity of early warning systems. In response, the Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled (SAFOD), in partnership with Christian Blind Mission (CBM), implemented a regional capacity-building initiative targeting OPDs from Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Botswana. The training combined a Training of Trainers (ToT) on Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR) with specialised training on Monitoring Inclusive Early Warning Systems.

The rationale for this intervention was to strengthen OPDs' capacity to engage with DRR systems through a disability-inclusive lens, while equipping them with practical tools to monitor, assess, and advocate for more accessible and effective early warning systems. By adopting a Training of Trainers approach, the programme also aimed to ensure sustainability through knowledge cascading and to position OPDs as active agents of change in advancing inclusive and resilient disaster risk management systems.

2. Training Objectives

The Boksburg training comprised two interlinked capacity-building components:

- (i) A Training of Trainers (ToT) on Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR)
- (ii) A technical training on Monitoring Inclusive Early Warning Systems (EWS).

While distinct in focus, both trainings were designed to collectively strengthen the role of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) as technical actors, trainers, and advocates within disaster risk governance systems.

2.1 Objectives of the DiDRR Training of Trainers (ToT)

The DiDRR ToT aimed to strengthen the foundational, strategic, and facilitation capacities of OPDs to engage effectively in disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction processes.

Specifically, the training sought to:

- (i) Strengthen participants' understanding of Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR), including relevant international, regional, and national frameworks.
- (ii) Build capacity to integrate disability inclusion across all phases of the disaster risk management cycle (prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery).

- (iii) Enhance participants' facilitation, adult learning, and training design skills to enable effective cascading of DiDRR knowledge within their organisations and networks.
- (iv) Strengthen the role of OPDs as active stakeholders in DRR systems, capable of engaging with government institutions, humanitarian actors, and coordination platforms.
- (v) Equip participants with practical approaches to develop and implement country-level DiDRR action plans.

2.2. Objectives of the Training on Monitoring Inclusive EWS

The EWS training aimed to build the technical capacity of OPDs to assess, monitor, and influence the inclusivity and effectiveness of early warning systems.

Specifically, the training sought to:

- (i) Strengthen participants' understanding of early warning systems (EWS) and their role in disaster preparedness and climate resilience.
- (ii) Equip participants with practical tools and methodologies to monitor the functionality, accessibility, and reach of inclusive early warning systems, particularly for persons with disabilities.
- (iii) Build capacity to assess communication channels, dissemination pathways, and accessibility barriers affecting early warning systems.
- (iv) Strengthen participants' ability to analyse monitoring data and generate evidence-based recommendations for improving EWS inclusivity.
- (v) Enhance advocacy skills to enable OPDs to engage effectively with government agencies, disaster management authorities, and humanitarian actors on inclusive EWS.
- (vi) Support participants to develop country-specific monitoring and advocacy plans for strengthening inclusive EWS.

2.3. Positioning of the Training Interventions

The Boksburg training was strategically designed as a two-part, complementary capacity-strengthening intervention, comprising a Training of Trainers (ToT) on Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR) and a standalone technical training on Monitoring Inclusive Early Warning Systems (EWS). While delivered sequentially, each training had a distinct focus and depth, together forming a coherent pathway for strengthening the role of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) within disaster risk governance systems.

The DiDRR ToT provided the foundational and strategic grounding, equipping participants with an understanding of inclusive disaster risk reduction frameworks, the disaster management cycle, and the role of OPDs in advocacy and system engagement. In contrast, the EWS training functioned as a specialised technical intervention, focusing on building practical competencies in monitoring, assessing, and analysing the inclusivity, accessibility, and effectiveness of early warning systems. This dual structure enabled a deliberate progression from conceptual understanding to technical application and system influence. Participants were not only introduced to the principles of inclusion but were also equipped with concrete tools to interrogate early warning systems, generate evidence, and engage with institutional actors in a more informed and strategic manner.

Importantly, the Training of Trainers approach embedded within the DiDRR component ensured that participants are able to cascade knowledge and facilitate similar trainings within their respective contexts, while the EWS training strengthened their capacity to

engage in evidence-based advocacy and system accountability. Together, the two trainings reposition OPDs from passive recipients of DRR interventions to active technical actors, trainers, and advocates, capable of contributing to more inclusive, responsive, and resilient disaster risk management systems across the region.

3. Training Approaches

The Boksburg intervention employed differentiated but complementary training approaches for the two components, the DiDRR Training of Trainers (ToT) and the Training on Monitoring Inclusive Early Warning Systems (EWS), reflecting their distinct objectives while maintaining overall methodological coherence.

3.1 Approaches Used in the DiDRR Training of Trainers

The DiDRR ToT was primarily anchored in a participatory, facilitation-oriented, and experiential learning approach, with a strong emphasis on building participants' capacity to train others. The training prioritised adult learning principles, recognising participants as experienced practitioners whose knowledge and lived realities could enrich the learning process.

A key approach used was experiential and reflective learning, where participants drew from their own experiences of disability, disaster risk, and exclusion to analyse vulnerabilities and systemic barriers. This was complemented by co-creation methodologies, which enabled participants to collectively construct an understanding of disability inclusion within disaster risk reduction frameworks. Given the ToT orientation, significant emphasis was placed on facilitation skills development, including how to structure sessions, engage diverse audiences, and simplify complex DRR concepts for community-level application. The training also utilised simulation and role-play approaches, particularly in advocacy sessions, allowing participants to practise engaging with institutional actors in a controlled environment. Importantly, the DiDRR training adopted a cascade-oriented approach, equipping participants with not only knowledge but also the tools and confidence to replicate the training within their respective countries and organisations, thereby ensuring sustainability and scale.

3.2 Approaches Used in the Training on Monitoring Inclusive EWS

In contrast, the EWS training adopted a more technical, analytical, and application-driven approach, reflecting its focus on building practical competencies in monitoring and assessment. The training utilised a hands-on, practice-based methodology, where participants engaged directly with monitoring tools, frameworks, and indicators. Through structured exercises, participants analysed early warning systems, mapped dissemination pathways, and assessed accessibility barriers affecting persons with disabilities. A strong systems analysis approach was employed, enabling participants to critically examine the functionality of early warning systems, including institutional arrangements, communication channels, and last-mile dissemination challenges. This encouraged a shift from general awareness to evidence-based interrogation of systems.

The training also incorporated a problem-solving and evidence-generation approach, guiding participants to translate their analyses into actionable findings and recommendations. This was closely linked to a strategic advocacy approach, where participants were supported to use monitoring evidence to engage with government agencies, disaster management authorities, and humanitarian actors. Finally, the EWS training was anchored in an action-planning approach, culminating in the development of country-specific monitoring and

advocacy plans. This ensured that participants left with concrete, implementable strategies for strengthening inclusive early warning systems within their contexts.

3.3 Overall Methodological Coherence

While the DiDRR ToT focused on facilitation, conceptual grounding, and knowledge cascading, and the EWS training emphasised technical application, system analysis, and evidence-based advocacy, the two approaches were intentionally complementary. Together, they created a comprehensive capacity pathway that enabled participants to move from understanding inclusion, to applying technical tools, to influencing disaster risk management systems in practice.

4. Training Proceedings

This section provides a structured account of the delivery of the Boksburg training, outlining how the two components, namely the DiDRR Training of Trainers (ToT) and the Training on monitoring inclusive EWS, were implemented over the four-day period. The section captures the progression of sessions, key thematic areas covered, and the overall flow of learning across the training.

4.1. DiDRR Training of Trainers

Day 1 – 17.03.2026

4.1.1. Opening and Welcome Remarks – Key Highlights

The training was officially opened by Mr Leonard Marange, National Director of the Federation of Organisations of Disabled People in Zimbabwe (FODPZ), who set a strong rights-based and strategic tone for the entire programme. He emphasised the importance of multi-stakeholder participation, recognising the presence of OPDs, support institutions, and regional actors as a reflection of a shared commitment to advancing inclusive disaster risk reduction.

Mr Marange highlighted the disproportionate impact of disasters on persons with disabilities, noting that heightened risks are driven by barriers in communication, mobility, and access to critical information and services. He underscored that these vulnerabilities are largely the result of systemic exclusion, particularly within disaster preparedness and response systems. He further stressed that integrating disability inclusion into disaster risk reduction is both a rights-based obligation and a strategic necessity for strengthening overall community resilience. Inclusive systems were framed as more effective, responsive, and sustainable.

Mr Marange observed that Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR) remains a relatively underdeveloped area within development practice, with many stakeholders—including OPDs—having limited exposure to its concepts and application. This reinforced the importance of the Training of Trainers approach in building both technical capacity and the ability to cascade knowledge. The remarks were anchored within key international and regional frameworks, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the African Disability Protocol, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. These were highlighted as critical instruments guiding inclusive disaster risk governance, particularly in relation to protection in emergencies, participation, and data systems.

Importantly, Mr Marange emphasised the role of OPDs as change agents, with a responsibility to promote awareness, share practical knowledge, and advocate for inclusive disaster risk management across all levels, from community to national and regional platforms. He concluded by underscoring the importance of sustainability beyond project cycles, noting that while funding may end, the responsibility to advance inclusion must continue. The training was therefore positioned as a foundation for building a regional network of DiDRR practitioners and trainers, capable of sustaining and scaling inclusive practices over time.

4.1.2. Participant Introductions and Expectations

The main facilitator for the training was Prof. Tsitsi Chataika with Dr.Mxolisi Sillah as a co-facilitator. This session provided an opportunity for participants to introduce themselves and share their institutional backgrounds, roles, and expectations for the Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR) Training of Trainers (ToT). A total of 12 participants attended the training, with balanced regional representation comprising 4 participants from Zimbabwe, 4 from Zambia, and 4 from Botswana. Participants were drawn from Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), bringing diverse experience in advocacy, community engagement, and disability programming.

The session was highly interactive and set the tone for a participatory and collaborative learning environment, enabling participants to build rapport and establish a shared sense of purpose. It also provided an early indication of participants' experience levels and areas of interest, which informed the facilitation approach. Through the expectations mapping exercise, participants expressed a strong interest in strengthening both their conceptual understanding and practical capacity in DiDRR. Key expectations included:

- (i) Strengthening knowledge of Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR) concepts, principles, and frameworks
- (ii) Gaining practical approaches to integrate disability inclusion across the disaster risk management cycle
- (iii) Enhancing skills to engage effectively with government institutions and disaster management structures
- (iv) Building capacity to design and facilitate DiDRR trainings within their organisations and communities
- (v) Developing strategies to promote inclusive disaster risk reduction at community, national, and regional levels

These expectations were closely aligned with the objectives of the ToT and provided a useful benchmark for assessing the relevance and effectiveness of the training, particularly in relation to participants' ability to cascade knowledge and influence practice within their respective contexts.

4.1.3. Key Findings from the Pre-Training Evaluation (DiDRR)

The pre-training evaluation (n = 11) provided a baseline understanding of participants' knowledge and capacity in DiDRR. The findings indicate that while participants generally demonstrated a strong awareness of disaster risk reduction principles and the importance of disability inclusion, there were notable gaps in technical depth and practical application. All participants (11/11 - 100%) correctly identified the primary goal of disaster risk reduction and recognised the importance of including persons with disabilities in DRR processes. This reflects a solid foundation in rights-based awareness and general DRR concepts.

Eleven participants completed this exercise, while one from Zambia did not as he was not around at the time of completing. However, his awareness was not consistently matched by deeper understanding. While 10/11 participants (90.9%) identified the Sendai Framework as a key global DRR framework, only 1/11 (9.1%) demonstrated broader knowledge by linking it with other relevant frameworks. Similarly, although 8/11 participants (72.7%) correctly identified all phases of the disaster risk management cycle, a proportion (3/11; 27.3%) still showed partial understanding, focusing mainly on preparedness and response.

In relation to disability inclusion, 7/11 participants (63.6%) demonstrated a more comprehensive understanding, while 4/11 (36.4%) focused primarily on barriers faced by persons with disabilities. This suggests that while inclusion is recognised, there is still a need to strengthen understanding of its broader application within DRR systems. Self-assessment results further showed that most participants (10/11; 90.9%) rated their knowledge as moderate, with only a small proportion indicating high confidence (1/11; 9.1%). Advocacy and engagement capacity emerged as an area requiring strengthening, with the majority of participants expressing moderate to low confidence in engaging with disaster management institutions.

Overall, the findings highlighted that participants entered the training with:

- strong general awareness of DRR and inclusion.
- moderate understanding of key frameworks and processes.
- limited confidence in advocacy and institutional engagement.
- a need for deeper practical and systems-level application of DiDRR.

Table 1 - Summary of Key Findings

Assessment Area	Key Finding	Score (%)
DRR Conceptual Understanding	Correct understanding of DRR	11/11 (100%)
Inclusion Awareness	Recognition of importance of disability inclusion	11/11 (100%)
Knowledge of Frameworks	Identified Sendai Framework	10/11 (90.9%)
Integration of Frameworks	Linked multiple frameworks	1/11 (9.1%)
DRR Cycle Understanding	Identified all phases	8/11 (72.7%)
Disability Inclusion Concept	Comprehensive understanding	7/11 (63.6%)
Advocacy Capacity	High confidence	1/11 (9.1%)
Advocacy Capacity	Moderate to low confidence	10/11 (90.9%)

4.1.3.1. Key Observations

Based on the pre-training evaluation, several key observations emerged regarding participants' knowledge, capacities, and areas requiring further strengthening. These observations provide a useful summary of the overall baseline and help to frame the focus of the training.

- (i) Participants demonstrated a strong foundation in disaster risk reduction (DRR) and disability inclusion concepts, indicating good awareness of core principles.
- (ii) There was a need to strengthen the practical understanding and application of DiDRR frameworks, particularly in translating concepts into action.
- (iii) Understanding of the full disaster risk management cycle required further reinforcement, with some participants still focusing primarily on response-oriented approaches.

- (iv) Advocacy and institutional engagement capacity remained an area for development, particularly in terms of influencing policy processes and engaging with disaster management structures.

4.1.4. Introduction to the DiDRR Training of Trainers

In introducing the DiDRR component, Prof. Tsitsi Chataika emphasised that the training was deliberately designed as a Training of Trainers (ToT). She clarified that the primary aim was not only to build participants' knowledge on DiDRR, but to develop their capacity to train others, particularly within Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), communities, and other stakeholders in their respective countries. Prof. Chataika underscored that participants were being prepared as multipliers of knowledge and practice, with a responsibility to cascade the training to their members and communities. As such, the focus of the training extended beyond content delivery to include the development of andragogical skills (adult learning approaches) and practical facilitation competencies.

She highlighted the importance of understanding how adults learn, noting that effective training requires approaches that are participatory, experience-based, and contextually relevant. Participants were therefore encouraged to think critically about how to:

- i. Simplify complex DiDRR concepts for different audiences
- ii. Facilitate inclusive and engaging learning environments
- iii. Adapt training materials to suit local contexts and diverse groups, including persons with different types of disabilities

This framing positioned the training as both a technical and pedagogical intervention, combining knowledge on disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction with practical skills in training design and facilitation. It also reinforced the expectation that participants would go beyond personal learning to actively contribute to strengthening DiDRR capacity at community, national, and regional levels.

The consultants further explained that the ToT was designed using a modular approach, with the content structured into a series of clearly defined modules. Each module followed a consistent format to guide participants not *only on what to deliver, but also how to deliver* it. Specifically, each module outlined the introduction of the topic, the core content to be covered, and the participatory exercises to be conducted with participants. This structure was intended to support trainers in delivering sessions in a systematic, engaging, and learner-centred manner, ensuring that concepts are not only presented but also actively explored and internalised through interaction. The inclusion of participatory methods, such as group discussions, case analysis, co-creation, and practical exercises, reinforced the emphasis on adult learning principles and equipped participants with practical techniques to facilitate inclusive and effective DiDRR trainings within their respective contexts.

4.1.4.1. Module 1: Introducing Disaster Risk Reduction

This session guided the participants on how to handle module 1 and was delivered with a strong emphasis on equipping participants with both the content and facilitation approaches required to effectively deliver the topic in their own contexts. Participants were guided on how to introduce climate change and disaster risk concepts in a manner that is simple, context-specific, and participatory, particularly when working with community-level audiences. The training demonstrated how trainers should begin by drawing on participants' local experiences of disasters, allowing them to identify hazards affecting their communities before introducing broader regional perspectives. This approach was intended to make the content accessible, relatable, and grounded in lived realities, rather than purely theoretical.

A key learning point for participants was how to facilitate discussions that link human behaviour and disaster risk. Through shared examples, particularly from Zambia, participants highlighted how poor waste management practices, such as improper waste disposal and blocked drainage systems, contribute to flooding. This provided a practical example of how trainers can guide communities to understand disaster risk as not only natural but also influenced by human actions.

Importantly, the module also equipped participants with approaches to broaden the scope of hazards during training delivery. Participants learned how to introduce and discuss socio-natural and human-induced hazards, such as drug and substance abuse and crime, which are often overlooked in traditional DRR discourse but significantly affect vulnerability and resilience. This reinforced the need for trainers to adopt a more holistic and inclusive framing of risk when delivering DiDRR content. Module 1 provided participants with practical insight into how to deliver climate and disaster risk content in a way that is interactive, reflective, and grounded in community realities, while encouraging critical thinking about the drivers of disaster risk.

4.1.4.2. Module 2: Disability and Disaster Risk

The session on module 2 focused on building participants' capacity to deliver core DiDRR concepts, principles, and frameworks, while also strengthening their ability to facilitate learning on inclusion within disaster risk reduction. Participants were guided on how to introduce DiDRR as both a rights-based and practical framework, linking it to key instruments such as the Sendai Framework of Action and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The training emphasised that when delivering this module, trainers should ensure that concepts are not presented in isolation but are linked to real-life experiences and practical applications.

A key technical emphasis in this module, highlighted by Dr Sillah, was the importance of inclusive risk assessments as the foundation of effective DiDRR programming. Participants were equipped with approaches on how to deliver this concept to others, including how to explain that risk assessments must:

- Actively involve persons with disabilities
- Capture both vulnerabilities and capacities
- Identify barriers related to communication, mobility, and access to services

This was positioned as a critical entry point for ensuring that disaster risk reduction interventions are evidence-based, inclusive, and contextually relevant. From a ToT perspective, participants were also exposed to methods of facilitating discussions on disability inclusion in a way that moves beyond a barrier-focused narrative towards recognising the agency and contributions of persons with disabilities. They were encouraged to create safe and inclusive learning spaces that allow participants to reflect on their own assumptions and practices. Module 2 equipped participants with both the technical understanding of DiDRR and the practical facilitation approaches required to deliver inclusive, engaging, and impactful training sessions. It reinforced the importance of combining knowledge with effective teaching methods, in line with the broader objectives of the Training of Trainers approach.

4.1.4.3. Co-Creation Session: Lived Experiences of Disability & Disaster Risk

This session served as a practical example of a participatory training activity, where participants were actively engaged in sharing their lived experiences of disability and

disaster risk within their respective contexts. The session created a safe and inclusive space for participants to reflect on real-life situations, enabling a deeper understanding of how disaster risks are experienced differently by persons with disabilities.

Through guided discussions and facilitated group interactions, participants identified a range of systemic barriers, including challenges related to communication (such as lack of accessible warning formats), mobility constraints during evacuations, and limited access to essential services during emergencies. Participants also reflected on how social attitudes, stigma, and institutional gaps further exacerbate vulnerability in disaster situations. From a Training of Trainers perspective, the session provided a clear demonstration of how facilitators can use experience-based learning approaches to make training more relevant and impactful. It illustrated how trainers can move beyond lecture-based methods by encouraging participants to share, analyse, and learn from their own experiences, thereby enhancing engagement and ownership of the learning process.

The activity further reinforced the importance of co-creation of knowledge, where participants are not only learners but also contributors to the training process. This approach enables the generation of context-specific insights and supports the development of practical, locally relevant solutions. Overall, the session highlighted the value of participatory methods in DiDRR training, particularly in ensuring that the voices and experiences of persons with disabilities are central to disaster risk analysis and response planning.



Figure 1: Participants undertaking a co-creation exercise in country groups

4.1.4.4. Module 3: Global Frameworks for Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction

This session focused on how to handle module 3, which aims to introduce participants to the global policy and legal frameworks underpinning DiDRR, emphasising that inclusion is not only good practice but is grounded in binding international commitments and standards. The session aimed to strengthen participants' understanding of the global architecture supporting DiDRR and how these frameworks can be translated into national and local action. The Sendai Framework for DRR (2015–2030) was presented as the primary global blueprint guiding disaster risk reduction efforts. Participants learned that the framework

explicitly recognises the need for the active involvement of persons with disabilities across all stages of disaster risk management, including prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. The emphasis on accessibility, inclusivity, and risk-informed development was highlighted as central to effective DRR programming.

The session also examined the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), particularly Article 11, which addresses situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies. Participants were guided on how this framework establishes the legal obligation of states to protect and ensure the safety of persons with disabilities during disasters, reinforcing the rights-based foundation of DiDRR.

A key takeaway from the module was the need for participants to move beyond awareness of these frameworks to actively use them as advocacy and accountability tools. Participants were encouraged to reference these frameworks when engaging with governments and institutions, ensuring that disability inclusion is aligned with international standards and obligations.

The module further emphasised three core principles that cut across global DiDRR frameworks:

- Accessibility – ensuring that information, infrastructure, and services are usable by all
- Participation – promoting the meaningful involvement of persons with disabilities in decision-making processes
- Inclusion – integrating disability considerations across all DRR systems and interventions

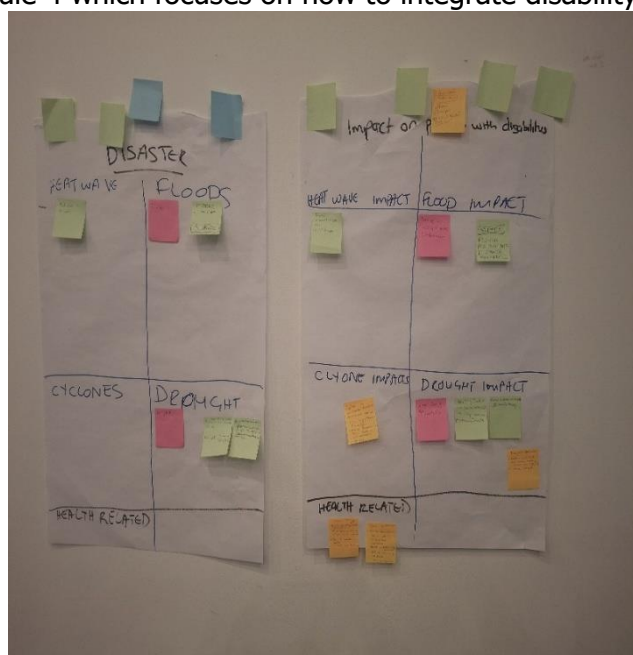
From a ToT perspective, participants were equipped with approaches to deliver this module in a way that connects global frameworks to local realities, enabling communities and organisations to understand their rights and responsibilities within DRR processes.

4.1.4.5. Module 4: Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction in Practice

This session focused on equipping participants with the knowledge and skills for handling module 4 which focuses on how to integrate disability inclusion across all phases of the

disaster management cycle - prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. The session emphasised that inclusion must be mainstreamed throughout the entire cycle, rather than being treated as an isolated or response-focused issue.

Participants were guided on how to deliver this content in a structured and practical manner, including how to explain each phase of the cycle and demonstrate where and how disability inclusion should be incorporated. The training highlighted key considerations such as:



- Inclusive risk reduction and mitigation strategies in the prevention phase
- Accessible early warning systems and preparedness planning in the preparedness phase
- Inclusive evacuation, shelter, and response mechanisms in the response phase
- Rehabilitation, recovery, and reconstruction processes that consider the needs of persons with disabilities in the recovery phase

The session also reinforced the importance of using real-life examples and case-based discussions when delivering this module, to help participants understand how inclusion can be operationalised in different contexts. From a ToT perspective, participants were equipped with approaches to facilitate discussions that encourage critical reflection on existing systems and identify gaps in inclusion. The module strengthened participants' ability to translate DiDRR principles into practical actions, ensuring that disability inclusion becomes an integral part of disaster risk management processes.

Additionally, this session focused on discussions that unpack the different roles OPDs can play, including advocacy, community mobilisation, monitoring of inclusion, and engagement with policy and decision-making processes. The importance of meaningful participation was emphasised, where persons with disabilities are actively involved in planning, implementation, and evaluation of DRR initiatives, rather than being passively consulted.

A key area of focus was the role of OPDs in promoting accountability within DRR systems. Participants explored how OPDs can track inclusion gaps, document experiences of persons with disabilities, and use evidence to advocate for improved policies, programmes, and service delivery. This included engaging with government institutions, disaster management authorities, and humanitarian actors to ensure that disability inclusion is effectively integrated into DRR frameworks and practices.

4.1.4.6. Module 5: Community Risk Mapping and Barrier Analysis

This session provided participants with practical guidance on how to facilitate participatory disaster risk and barrier mapping as a core DiDRR training activity. The module emphasised the importance of engaging communities, particularly persons with disabilities, in identifying and analysing the risks they face, as well as the barriers that increase their vulnerability.

Participants were taken through a structured approach to conducting risk and barrier mapping, including how to guide group discussions, identify key hazards, and analyse how different types of disabilities intersect with disaster risks. The session highlighted the need for trainers to ensure that mapping exercises are inclusive, interactive, and reflective of diverse experiences, allowing all participants to meaningfully contribute. Through group work, participants analysed disaster risks affecting persons with disabilities in their contexts and identified barriers related to access to early warning information, mobility during evacuations, access to shelters, and service delivery systems. This practical exercise enabled participants to move from theoretical understanding to hands-on application, reinforcing their ability to facilitate similar exercises in community settings.

From a ToT perspective, the module demonstrated how participatory tools can be used to generate context-specific evidence, which can then inform planning, preparedness, and advocacy. It also reinforced the importance of positioning persons with disabilities as active contributors in risk analysis, rather than passive beneficiaries.

4.1.4.7. Conclusion of Day 1

The day concluded with a reflective session facilitated by Prof. Chataika, aimed at assessing participants' understanding and capturing key takeaways from the first day of the ToT. Participants were invited to share their reflections on the day's sessions, using single words

and short phrases to describe their overall experience. Participants described the day as “powerful,” “insightful,” “interesting,” “worthy,” and “satisfying,” reflecting a high level of engagement and appreciation of both the content and the participatory delivery approach. These reflections indicated that the training had successfully created an interactive and meaningful learning environment.

Participants were also encouraged to share their “aha moments”, which are key insights or shifts in understanding that stood out during the sessions. Several important learning points emerged from this exercise. Notably, participants highlighted a shift in perspective from “nothing about us without us,” to “nothing without us”; thus, reinforcing the importance of meaningful inclusion of persons with disabilities in all DRR processes.

Participants further reflected on their expanded understanding of hazards, including the distinction between a prolonged dry spell and drought, and the importance of differentiating between various types of risks in disaster analysis. A key technical insight that emerged was the recognition of inclusive risk assessments as the foundational entry point for effective DiDRR programming, emphasising the need for evidence-based and inclusive planning approaches. Additional reflections included the understanding of drug and substance abuse as a human-induced hazard with both socio-economic and environmental dimensions, highlighting the need to broaden the scope of hazards considered within DRR. Participants also underscored the importance of disaster risk-informed development as a critical strategy for reducing vulnerability, as well as the principle of “building back better,” particularly in the context of recovery from crises such as COVID-19. Taken together, the recap session demonstrated that participants were not only engaging with the content but were also internalising key concepts and critically reflecting on their application, which is a critical outcome for a Training of Trainers programme.

Day 2 – 18.03.2026

4.1.4.8. Recap of Day 1

Day 2 commenced with a recap session designed to reinforce learning and promote collective reflection on the key concepts covered during Day 1 of the ToT. A word cloud approach was used as a participatory tool to capture participants’ reflections, allowing them to express key takeaways and impressions using single words and short phrases.

This approach enabled a visual and interactive synthesis of learning, with commonly recurring words highlighting the most impactful aspects of the previous day’s sessions. It also created an inclusive space for all participants to contribute, reinforcing the principles of participatory learning and engagement. Through this process, participants revisited major themes including climate change and disaster risk, DiDRR, inclusive risk assessments, and the importance of meaningful participation of persons with disabilities. The exercise helped to consolidate understanding, clarify key concepts, and strengthen continuity between Day One and the sessions that followed. Collectively, the use of the word cloud method enhanced engagement and provided a quick yet effective reflection mechanism, ensuring that participants were well-positioned to build on prior learning as the training progressed.

4.1.4.9. Module 6: Advocacy for Disability-Inclusive DRR

The session on module 6 focused on strengthening the advocacy capacity of Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) within disaster risk reduction systems. The session emphasised that effective DiDRR requires not only technical understanding, but also the

ability of OPDs to influence policies, programmes, and institutional practices to ensure meaningful inclusion of persons with disabilities.

Participants were guided through the process of identifying key stakeholders involved in disaster risk management, including government ministries, disaster management authorities, local authorities, humanitarian actors, and civil society organisations. The session highlighted the importance of understanding stakeholder roles, power dynamics, and entry points for engagement in order to design effective advocacy strategies.

A key feature of the module was a practical advocacy simulation exercise, conducted in groups. Participants were assigned different roles, including government officials, OPD representatives, and other relevant stakeholders, and engaged in a structured role-play scenario. The simulation was designed to replicate real-life policy engagement processes, allowing participants to practise articulating issues, presenting evidence, negotiating priorities, and advocating for disability inclusion within DRR frameworks.

Through this exercise, participants gained practical experience in:

- Framing advocacy messages in a clear and persuasive manner
- Engaging with decision-makers and responding to institutional perspectives
- Building alliances and negotiating for inclusive outcomes
- Using evidence, including insights from risk assessments, to support advocacy positions

The simulation also highlighted common challenges faced by OPDs in advocacy spaces, such as power imbalances, limited access to decision-making platforms, and competing priorities. At the same time, it demonstrated the potential of strategic, evidence-based engagement in influencing change.

Group Work: Policy and Legal Framework Analysis - As part of the session, participants engaged in a group work exercise focused on analysing existing DRR-related policies and legal frameworks within their respective countries, with a specific lens on disability inclusion. The exercise aimed to strengthen participants' ability to critically assess whether current laws and policies adequately address the needs and rights of persons with disabilities in disaster contexts. Participants were divided into country groups (Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Botswana) and tasked with reviewing selected national policies and legislation, identifying strengths, gaps, and opportunities for strengthening inclusion.

Key examples discussed included:

- **Zimbabwe**
 - *Civil Protection Act (1989)* – Provides the legal framework for disaster management, but participants noted limited explicit provisions on disability inclusion.
 - *Disaster Risk Management Bill*
 - *National Disability Policy (2021)* – Recognised as progressive in promoting inclusion, though participants highlighted gaps in its integration within DRR systems.
- **Zambia**
 - *Disaster Management Act (2010)* – Establishes institutional arrangements for disaster management; however, participants observed limited mainstreaming of disability considerations.

- *Persons with Disabilities Act (2012)* – Provides a strong rights-based framework, though linkages with DRR policy and practice remain weak.
- **Botswana**
 - *National Policy on Disaster Management (2013)* – Guides disaster risk management processes, with some recognition of vulnerable groups, though disability inclusion is not comprehensively addressed.
 - The National Policy on Disaster Management (1996) - This policy outlines the country's approach to disasters (excluding drought, which has its own system) and established the National Disaster Management Office (NDMO).

Through this exercise, participants demonstrated the ability to critically interrogate policy environments, identifying that while many countries have relevant frameworks in place, there is often a gap between policy provisions and practical implementation of disability inclusion within DRR systems. From a Training of Trainers perspective, the activity also illustrated how trainers can use policy analysis exercises to build participants' analytical and advocacy skills, enabling them to engage more effectively with national frameworks.

From a ToT perspective, the session provided participants with practical approaches to facilitate similar advocacy exercises, using role-play and simulation as tools to build confidence, communication skills, and strategic thinking. The module reinforced the positioning of OPDs as key advocates and accountability actors, capable of driving inclusive disaster risk reduction through sustained engagement with policy and institutional processes. Collectively, the session reinforced the positioning of OPDs as agents of change, with a critical role in promoting participation, strengthening accountability, and advocating for the integration of disability inclusion within disaster risk reduction policies and practices.

4.1.4.10 Module 7: Training Skills for Trainers

The session on module 7 focused on equipping participants with the facilitation and adult learning (andragogical) skills required to effectively cascade DiDRR training within their organisations and communities. The session reinforced that effective training is not only dependent on content knowledge, but also on the ability to engage adult learners, adapt delivery methods, and create inclusive learning environments. Participants were introduced to key principles of adult learning, including the importance of participatory approaches, drawing on learners' experiences, and ensuring that training is practical, relevant, and context specific. The module emphasised that trainers should move away from lecture-based delivery and instead adopt interactive methods that promote dialogue, reflection, and co-creation of knowledge.

A central component of the session was the use of micro-teaching exercises, where participants were given the opportunity to deliver short training segments based on selected DiDRR topics. These sessions allowed participants to practise:

- Structuring and introducing a topic
- Delivering content in a clear and accessible manner
- Facilitating discussions and participatory exercises
- Managing time and engaging diverse audiences

Participants received constructive feedback from facilitators and peers, which helped to strengthen their confidence and refine their facilitation techniques. The feedback process also highlighted the importance of clarity, inclusivity, and adaptability when delivering training, particularly when working with diverse groups, including persons with different types of disabilities.

The session also demonstrated a range of participatory training methods, including group discussions, case studies, role plays, and practical exercises, reinforcing their importance in making training sessions more engaging and effective. As a result, the session strengthened participants' ability to deliver structured, inclusive, and impactful training, supporting the broader goal of scaling up disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction efforts across communities and institutions.

4.1.4.11 Module 8: Action Planning and Implementation

The final module focused on translating learning into practical, country-level action, ensuring that the ToT leads to concrete follow-up activities. Participants were supported to develop draft action plans for promoting DiDRR within their respective contexts.

Participants were organised into country groups (Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Botswana) and provided with a structured action planning template to guide their discussions. The exercise required groups to identify key priority issues, propose relevant actions, assign responsible organisations, and outline implementation timelines. Discussions were grounded in participants' experiences, focusing on:

- Current challenges affecting persons with disabilities during disasters
- Opportunities to strengthen inclusion within existing DRR systems
- Practical, implementable actions that OPDs can lead or influence

Common priority actions identified included engaging disaster management authorities, monitoring accessibility of early warning systems, training community-level actors on disability inclusion, and advocating for accessible evacuation and response mechanisms. Following the group work, participants presented their draft action plans in plenary, creating an opportunity for peer learning and feedback. Contributions from other participants and facilitators focused on the feasibility of proposed actions, opportunities for collaboration across countries, and ways to strengthen and refine the plans. This process helped to enhance the practicality and relevance of the proposed interventions.

The exercise also encouraged participants to consider both short-term actions (such as awareness-raising and stakeholder engagement) and long-term strategies (including policy advocacy and institutional partnerships), reinforcing the need for sustained and strategic engagement. As a result, each country team produced a draft action plan, which are attached as annexes to this report, providing a clear pathway for post-training implementation and follow-up.

4.1.4.12 Closing Reflections and Post-Training Evaluation

The final session of the training provided a structured opportunity for participants to consolidate their learning, reflect on key insights, and evaluate the overall effectiveness of the training. This segment was deliberately designed to capture both immediate learning outcomes and participant perceptions of relevance, applicability, and delivery quality, while also generating evidence on the extent to which the training had influenced participant mindsets and practical orientation towards DiDRR.

Participants were first invited to share brief reflections on their learning experience. The reflections revealed a strong and consistent appreciation of DiDRR as a rights-based, participatory, and governance-oriented approach, rather than a purely technical or humanitarian intervention. Participants emphasised that the training had deepened their understanding of the importance of meaningful inclusion of persons with disabilities in decision-making processes, particularly within disaster risk governance structures. There was a clear recognition that OPDs must be positioned not as beneficiaries, but as active actors and strategic partners in disaster risk management.

This shift is further evidenced in the competency assessment responses. For example, participants moved beyond generic descriptions of risk to articulating how disaster impacts are shaped by accessibility and inclusion gaps, as reflected in responses such as *"loss of assistive devices in floods"* (ID 003) and *"inaccessible evacuation centres with no ramps, interpreters and emergency medication"* (ID 009). These responses demonstrate a transition from hazard awareness to a more nuanced understanding of risk as experienced differently by persons with disabilities.

A significant shift was also observed in how participants conceptualised disaster risk. Reflections indicated movement away from a narrow, hazard-focused understanding toward a more holistic perspective that incorporates vulnerability, accessibility barriers, and systemic exclusion. This is reinforced by responses such as *"exclusion in planning"* and *"underrepresentation"* (ID 008), as well as *"lack of representation of persons with disabilities during policy formulation and decision making"* (ID 004). These insights indicate that participants are now recognising structural and institutional drivers of risk, rather than viewing disasters solely as natural events.

Participants further reflected positively on the practical and applied nature of the training. The use of participatory methodologies, including group discussions, practical tools, and country-based action planning exercises, was highlighted as particularly effective. These approaches enabled participants to contextualise learning within their own operational environments and to begin translating knowledge into actionable strategies. Many participants noted increased confidence in their ability to apply DiDRR principles within their organisations, particularly in areas such as advocacy, policy engagement, and monitoring accessibility within early warning and response systems. This is supported by responses such as *"policy and budget advocacy"* (ID 008) and *"engage with disaster management authorities and effective participation in decision-making processes"* (ID 001), which reflect a clear shift toward strategic and institutional engagement.

The training environment itself was also recognised as a key strength. Participants described the space as inclusive, interactive, and conducive to learning, allowing for open exchange of experiences across different country contexts. This peer learning dimension was particularly valuable in reinforcing regional perspectives and shared challenges in advancing disability inclusion within disaster risk reduction.

Following the reflection exercise, participants completed a structured post-training evaluation. The evaluation assessed several core dimensions, including the relevance of the training content, clarity and effectiveness of facilitation, usefulness of training materials and tools, level of participation and engagement, and participants' perceived capacity to apply the knowledge and skills acquired.

Findings from the evaluation indicate consistently high levels of satisfaction across all assessed dimensions. Participants overwhelmingly rated the training as highly relevant to their work, noting that it addressed critical gaps in disability inclusion within disaster risk management systems in their respective countries. The facilitation was rated very positively, with participants highlighting the facilitators' strong subject matter expertise, clarity of presentation, and ability to create an inclusive and participatory learning environment.

The training materials and tools were also well received, particularly the practical assessment and planning tools introduced during the sessions. Participants indicated that these tools are directly applicable within their organisational contexts and can support both programme implementation and advocacy efforts. The high levels of engagement observed throughout the training were reflected in the evaluation, with participants noting that the interactive methodologies enhanced both understanding and retention of key concepts.

Table 2 :- Post Evaluation Form Responses

ID	Q4_Risk1	Q4_Risk2	Q5_Barrier	Q6_OPD_Action	Q7_Org_Action
001	Floods	Cyclones	Communication	Engage with disaster authorities and decision-making	Legal & policy engagement (Civil Protection Act reform)
002	Severe floods	Droughts	Inaccessible messages (radio/TV/hearing loss)	Advocacy messaging	Use platforms to share DiDRR & promote committee participation
003	Flood risks to life/movement	Loss of assistive devices in floods	Communication barriers	Targeted advocacy with authorities	Representation in DRR systems (regional/national)
004	Lack of representation	Lack of assistive technology	Inaccessible early warning formats	Policy advocacy for inclusion	Inclusive budgeting & stakeholder mobilisation
005	Floods	Substance abuse	Inaccessible information formats	Engage disaster teams regularly	Ensure accessible information
006	Floods	Substance abuse	Inaccessible information formats	Engage disaster teams regularly	Ensure accessible information
007	Flooding	Drought	Information not easy to understand	Advocate for inclusion in disaster units	Engage duty bearers through training
008	Exclusion in planning	Underrepresentation	Non-inclusive policies	Policy & budget advocacy	Advocacy; research
009	Inaccessible evacuation centres	Inaccessible communication	No sign language interpreters	Influence policy change	Strengthen govt collaboration
010	Floods	Cholera	Lack of braille/sign language formats	Advocacy with disaster authorities	Engage disaster management units
011	Floods	Droughts	Lack of accessible early warning formats	Participate in planning & budgeting	Advocate for participation across DRR cycle
012	Floods	Droughts	Lack of accessible early warning formats	Participate in planning & budgeting	Advocate for participation across DRR cycle

Importantly, the evaluation findings point to a marked increase in participants' self-reported capacity to operationalise DiDRR. Participants indicated that they are now better equipped to advocate for inclusion and to engage with systems of governance. This is strongly corroborated by responses such as *"advocacy with disaster management authorities"* (ID 010), *"participate in disaster preparedness meetings, budgets and planning"* (ID 011), and *"influence policy change"* (ID 009). These responses demonstrate that participants are not only understanding DiDRR conceptually but are also identifying clear entry points for action within policy, planning, and institutional processes.

In addition, participants demonstrated increased awareness of the importance of accessibility in early warning systems. This is reflected in responses such as *"lack of braille/sign language formats"* (ID 010), *"information not easy to understand"* (ID 007), and *"inaccessible early warning formats"* (ID 004). These insights highlight a growing recognition that effective disaster risk reduction must address communication and accessibility barriers to ensure no one is left behind.

The session concluded with facilitators acknowledging participants' contributions and emphasising the importance of translating learning into action, particularly through the

implementation of the country action plans developed during the training. Overall, the closing session confirmed that the training had not only enhanced knowledge but had also stimulated critical reflection, practical competence, and a clear shift toward action-oriented and systems-focused approaches. Participants left the training better positioned to act as agents of change, capable of advancing disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction within their respective countries and organisations.

4.1.5 Conclusion of the ToT on DiDRR report

In conclusion, the DiDRR Training of Trainers successfully achieved its intended objectives of strengthening both conceptual understanding and practical capacity among participants drawn from Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Botswana. As evidenced throughout the chapter, participants entered the training with a solid foundation in disaster risk reduction and inclusion principles, but with notable gaps in technical depth, advocacy capacity, and systems-level application. By the end of the training, there was clear and measurable progress across all these areas. Participants demonstrated not only improved knowledge of DiDRR frameworks and processes, but also a significant shift in mindset, from viewing disasters primarily as hazard events to understanding them as outcomes shaped by vulnerability, accessibility barriers, and institutional exclusion. This shift was further reflected in their ability to articulate more nuanced risk scenarios and propose practical, context-specific interventions.

The ToT approach proved particularly effective in positioning participants as multipliers of knowledge and practice, equipped with both technical content and facilitation skills to cascade DiDRR within their organisations and communities. The use of participatory methodologies, including co-creation exercises, policy analysis, advocacy simulations, and action planning, enhanced engagement and ensured that learning was grounded in real-world contexts. Importantly, participants demonstrated increased confidence in engaging with policy processes, disaster management institutions, and governance structures, addressing a key gap identified during the pre-training assessment. The development of country-level action plans marked a critical transition from learning to implementation, providing a clear pathway for advancing disability inclusion within disaster risk management systems. These plans, which are attached as annexes to this report, reflect both immediate priorities and longer-term strategic actions, reinforcing the sustainability of the training outcomes.

Overall, the training can be considered highly effective in building a cohort of DiDRR practitioners and trainers who are capable of driving change at community, national, and regional levels. The chapter demonstrates that the intervention did not merely enhance knowledge, but also fostered critical reflection, strategic thinking, and practical readiness, positioning participants as key actors in promoting inclusive, accountable, and resilient disaster risk governance systems.

4.2. Monitoring Inclusive Early Warning Systems

DAY 1 (19 March 2026)

4.2.1. Introductory Session

The training on Monitoring Inclusive Early Warning Systems (EWS), held in Boksburg, Johannesburg, was facilitated by Dr. Mxolisi Sillah as the Lead Facilitator, with Prof. Tsitsi Chataika serving as Co-Facilitator. The facilitation combined technical expertise in DRR with strong grounding in disability inclusion, ensuring both conceptual depth and practical relevance throughout the sessions.

At the outset of the training, Dr. Sillah introduced the overall objectives of the training, outlining that by the end of the programme, participants should be able to:

- (i) explain the concept, purpose and key components of early warning systems and their role in disaster risk reduction and preparedness;
- (ii) demonstrate an understanding of disability inclusion in early warning systems;
- (iii) apply practical tools and approaches for monitoring the inclusiveness of early warning systems at community, institutional and national levels;
- (iv) analyse findings from monitoring processes in order to identify gaps, strengths and priority areas for improvement in inclusive early warning systems; and
- (v) use monitoring evidence to support advocacy, stakeholder engagement and action planning aimed at strengthening inclusive early warning systems in their countries and organisations.

The training was designed around these clearly defined learning outcomes, aimed at strengthening participants' capacity to engage with inclusive early warning systems in both theory and practice. By the end of the training, participants were expected to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the concept, purpose, and key components of early warning systems, as well as their role in disaster risk reduction and preparedness. In addition, the training placed strong emphasis on disability inclusion, equipping participants with the knowledge required to critically engage with accessibility challenges within existing systems.

A key focus of the training was on building practical competencies. Participants were expected to apply tools and approaches for monitoring the inclusiveness of early warning systems across community, institutional, and national levels. This included the ability to analyse monitoring findings in order to identify systemic gaps, strengths, and priority areas for improvement. Furthermore, the training aimed to strengthen participants' ability to utilise monitoring evidence to support advocacy, stakeholder engagement, and action planning processes, ultimately contributing to the strengthening of inclusive early warning systems within their respective countries and organisations. Essentially, the training outcomes were structured to move participants beyond conceptual understanding towards practical application, critical analysis, and evidence-based advocacy, aligning closely with the gaps identified in the pre-training assessment.

4.2.2. Pre-training Evaluation and Expectations

The pre-training assessment indicated that participants possessed a moderate to high level of conceptual understanding of early warning systems. A total of 82% of participants reported that they understood what early warning systems are, while 91% demonstrated understanding of their role in disaster preparedness. This suggested that participants were generally familiar with the purpose and importance of EWS within the broader disaster risk

reduction framework. However, understanding of the technical components and operational aspects of early warning systems was comparatively weaker. Approximately 55% of participants indicated neutral responses when asked about their understanding of EWS components, pointing to limited clarity on how early warning systems function in practice. Similarly, understanding of communication processes within EWS was mixed, with a notable proportion of participants expressing uncertainty.

These findings suggested that while participants were confident in explaining the concept and relevance of early warning systems, they lacked a detailed understanding of the system architecture, processes, and functional linkages that underpin effective early warning.

Inclusion and Accessibility - Participants demonstrated strong awareness of disability inclusion within disaster risk reduction, with 82% indicating that they understood the concept of inclusive DRR. Furthermore, 91% of participants reported strong awareness of the barriers faced by persons with disabilities in accessing early warning information, highlighting a high level of sensitivity to inclusion challenges. Despite this, knowledge of accessible communication formats and practical inclusion mechanisms was more limited. Only 45% of participants demonstrated clear understanding of accessible formats, while the majority expressed uncertainty. This indicated a gap between awareness of exclusion and the ability to operationalise inclusive solutions, particularly in the design and delivery of accessible early warning messages. The findings suggested that inclusion was well understood at a conceptual level, but required strengthening in terms of practical application and technical implementation.

Monitoring and Advocacy - Approximately 82% of participants reported a neutral level of understanding of monitoring processes and accessibility indicators, highlighting significant gaps in familiarity with the tools and frameworks required to assess and strengthen the inclusivity of early warning systems. In contrast, 82% of participants expressed confidence in advocating for inclusive early warning systems, demonstrating stronger capacity in normative and rights-based engagement. This imbalance suggested that while participants were well positioned to advocate for inclusion, they lacked the technical skills required to generate, analyse, and utilise evidence to support such advocacy. These findings highlighted monitoring and evaluation as a priority capacity-building area, particularly in strengthening participants' ability to assess system performance and identify gaps in accessibility.

Experience with Early Warning Systems - All participants (100%) reported having received early warning messages, indicating widespread exposure to existing systems. The most commonly cited communication channels included radio (82%), SMS (73%), and television (36%), with limited use of social media. Despite this high level of exposure, 55% of participants identified communication barriers as a key challenge, while others noted issues related to inaccessible formats and general accessibility limitations. This indicated that although early warning systems were operational and widely disseminated, they were not effectively reaching or serving persons with disabilities in an inclusive manner.

Expectations - Participants' expectations were closely aligned with the gaps identified in the assessment. The majority expressed a desire to:

- strengthen their understanding of how early warning systems function in practice;
- gain practical skills in monitoring and evaluating inclusive early warning systems;
- improve knowledge of accessible communication approaches; and
- enhance their ability to apply inclusion principles in real-world contexts.

These expectations indicated a strong demand for practical, tools-based learning, particularly in areas that bridged the gap between conceptual understanding and operational implementation.

Self-Assessment of Knowledge - A significant proportion of participants (82%) rated their knowledge of inclusive early warning systems as “good,” while a small number reported moderate or low levels of confidence. However, this self-assessment contrasted with the findings from earlier sections, which revealed notable gaps in technical areas such as monitoring and system components. This suggested the presence of a perception gap, where participants may have overestimated their level of practical competence. This reinforced the importance of the training in providing hands-on, skills-based learning, enabling participants to align their perceived knowledge with actual technical capability.

4.2.3. Overview of Early Warning Systems

The session on the overview of EWS commenced with a reflective opening exercise based on a cyclone warning scenario, which was designed to ground participants in a practical, real-life context. Participants were asked to critically reflect on how an early warning message could effectively reach all members of the community, including persons with visual and hearing impairments, persons with physical disabilities, older persons, and individuals without access to mobile phones or internet. The exercise further challenged participants to interrogate the effectiveness of early warning systems by posing a critical question: *whether a system can be considered effective if even one group is excluded from receiving the warning.*

This exercise stimulated discussion around inclusivity, last-mile communication challenges, and systemic gaps in early warning dissemination, setting the tone for the technical content that followed.

Building on this reflection, the facilitator introduced the concept and purpose of early warning systems, emphasising their central role in reducing disaster risk and enabling timely preparedness and response. The session then unpacked the four core components of early warning systems, namely: risk knowledge, monitoring and forecasting, warning communication, and preparedness/response.

Particular emphasis was placed on the interdependence of these components, with the facilitator highlighting that the effectiveness of an early warning system is contingent upon the strength of all four elements working together. It was stressed that strong monitoring systems cannot compensate for weak communication, and equally, effective communication alone is insufficient without adequate preparedness mechanisms in place.

Throughout the session, the facilitator consistently linked the technical components of EWS to issues of accessibility and inclusion, reinforcing the principle that early warning systems must be designed to reach *everyone*, particularly those who are most at risk of being excluded. Essentially, the session provided participants with a structured and practical understanding of early warning systems, bridging conceptual knowledge with real-world application and setting a strong foundation for subsequent modules. The session concluded with a strong emphasis on the key characteristics of an effective early warning system, reinforcing the core message that technical functionality alone is insufficient without inclusivity and coordination.

KEY MESSAGE

What Makes a Strong Early Warning System

 Multi-Hazard Covers the full range of hazards a community faces	 End-to-End All four components function and connect seamlessly	 People-Centred Designed around the needs of communities, not institutions
 Coordinated Multiple agencies and actors working together	 Inclusive Accessible and usable by everyone, including persons with disabilities	

"The true test of an Early Warning System is not whether a warning was sent — but whether everyone at risk could receive it and act in time."

Participants were guided to understand that a strong early warning system must be multi-hazard in scope, ensuring that it addresses the full range of risks faced by communities rather than focusing on a single hazard. In addition, the importance of an end-to-end system was highlighted, where all components (risk knowledge, monitoring, communication, and preparedness) are fully

integrated and function seamlessly.

The facilitators further stressed that effective systems must be people-centred, meaning they are designed around the needs, realities, and capacities of communities, rather than institutional convenience. This was closely linked to the principle of inclusivity, with emphasis placed on ensuring that early warning systems are accessible and usable by everyone, particularly persons with disabilities. Finally, the importance of coordination was underscored, highlighting that multiple stakeholders including government agencies, civil society, and community structures, must work collaboratively for early warning systems to function effectively.

4.2.4. Accessibility in Early Warning Systems

Types of Barriers in Early Warning Systems

Persons with disabilities may face a range of different barriers that prevent them from fully benefiting from and accessing from early warning systems. These barriers do not occur at a single point — they can arise at different stages of the early warning cycle.

- 1 **Communication Barriers**
- 2 **Information Barriers**
- 3 **Physical Barriers**
- 4 **Institutional Barriers**
- 5 **Social Barriers**

This session focused on examining the barriers faced by persons with disabilities in accessing early warning systems, with the aim of strengthening participants' understanding of accessibility within disaster risk reduction. The facilitators led participants through a structured discussion on the different types of

barriers, including communication barriers (such as lack of sign language, captions, or simplified messaging), physical barriers, institutional limitations, and attitudinal challenges that affect inclusion. Participants engaged in reflective discussions, drawing from their own contexts to illustrate how early warning systems, while operational, often fail to reach everyone effectively. Particular attention was given to the gap between availability and accessibility, with participants recognising that the existence of early warning messages does not automatically translate into meaningful access for all groups.

The session also highlighted the importance of accessible communication formats and multiple dissemination channels, as well as the need to involve persons with disabilities in the design and implementation of early warning systems. Facilitators emphasised that inclusion must be deliberate and systematic, requiring both technical adjustments and institutional commitment. The session enabled participants to critically analyse existing systems and reinforced the principle that an effective early warning system is one that is accessible, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of all members of the community.

4.2.5. Introduction to Monitoring Inclusive Early Warning Systems

This session introduced participants to the concept and importance of monitoring inclusive early warning systems, with a particular focus on monitoring frameworks, accessibility indicators, and the domains of monitoring. The facilitators emphasised that monitoring is essential for assessing whether early warning systems are not only functional, but also inclusive, accessible, and effective for all population groups.

Participants were guided through key elements of monitoring, including how to identify relevant indicators for inclusion, assess system performance, and generate evidence to inform improvements. Particular emphasis was placed on the different domains of monitoring, highlighting that inclusive EWS must be assessed across all core components—risk knowledge, monitoring and forecasting, warning communication, and preparedness/response. In addition, the facilitators stressed that monitoring should not be confined to one level, but should be conducted across multiple levels of society, including community, institutional, and national systems, to ensure a comprehensive understanding of inclusivity gaps.

The discussion highlighted the need to move beyond general observations towards structured, evidence-based monitoring approaches that can support both accountability and advocacy. Building on the conceptual foundation, the session then focused on the application of practical tools for monitoring inclusive early warning systems. Participants were introduced to the Inclusive EWS Toolkit, which served as the primary handout for the session.

The facilitators systematically guided participants through Tools 1 to 5 within the toolkit, which covered:

- comprehensive system assessment,
- accessibility audits,
- dissemination mapping,
- barrier analysis, and monitoring indicators.

Each tool was explained in terms of its purpose, structure, and practical application, with facilitators demonstrating how the tools can be used in real-world contexts to assess inclusivity across different components of early warning systems.

To reinforce learning and encourage practical application, participants were given a home-based assignment. They were tasked with applying Tool 1: Comprehensive Inclusive Early Warning System Assessment Tool using a case study of their choice, drawn from their country or organisational context. This exercise was intended to strengthen participants' ability to translate theoretical knowledge into practice, while also generating context-specific insights that could be used in subsequent sessions. Overall, the session strengthened participants' capacity to systematically assess inclusive early warning systems across different domains and levels, equipping them with both the conceptual understanding and practical tools required to undertake effective monitoring.

Day 2 (20.03.2026)

4.2.6. Recap of Day 1

The Day 2 proceedings commenced with a recap of Day 1, designed to consolidate key learning points and reinforce participant understanding. The session adopted a participatory

and interactive “mimicking approach”, where participants were invited to recall and repeat key concepts and messages that had been discussed by the facilitators on the previous day. Through this approach, participants actively engaged in reconstructing the learning content, effectively “mirroring” the facilitators’ explanations on topics such as early warning system components, accessibility, and inclusion. This method encouraged active recall, peer learning, and collective reflection, rather than passive listening. The exercise also allowed facilitators to quickly assess areas of strong understanding and identify any gaps that required clarification. Overall, the mimicking approach proved effective in reinforcing key concepts while creating an energised and participatory start to the day’s sessions.

4.2.7. Advocacy for Inclusive Early Warning Systems and Institutional Engagement

This combined session focused on strengthening participants’ understanding of institutional arrangements for early warning systems and how these can be influenced through evidence-based advocacy. The facilitators began by outlining the roles and responsibilities of key disaster management institutions, highlighting how early warning systems operate within broader governance and coordination frameworks.



SAFOD DiDRR Podcast

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Building on this foundation, the session shifted towards advocacy, with a strong emphasis on how participants can use monitoring findings to influence systems and deepen inclusivity across all four components of early warning systems—risk knowledge, monitoring and forecasting, communication, and preparedness/response.

Participants were guided on how to translate monitoring

evidence into actionable insights that can inform policy engagement, institutional reform, and improved practice.

A key feature of the session was the use of a podcast simulation approach, where participants were placed in a scenario requiring them to present and discuss their monitoring findings as if they were engaging duty bearers and stakeholders in a public dialogue. Through this method, participants practised how to clearly communicate evidence, frame key issues, and propose solutions in a structured and persuasive manner.

The podcast simulation enabled participants to explore how monitoring findings can be used to:

- highlight gaps in accessibility and inclusion within early warning systems;
- engage decision-makers in meaningful dialogue;
- advocate for inclusive policies, resource allocation, and system improvements; and
- push for deeper inclusivity across all stages of early warning systems.

The facilitators emphasised that monitoring is not an end in itself, but a tool for driving change and influencing institutional behaviour. By linking technical findings with advocacy strategies, participants developed practical skills in positioning themselves as credible actors capable of engaging duty bearers and influencing early warning systems. Verily, the session

reinforced the importance of combining technical monitoring with strategic communication and advocacy, equipping participants with practical approaches to promote more inclusive, coordinated, and people-centred early warning systems.

4.2.8. Country Monitoring Plans

This session focused on supporting participants to develop country-specific monitoring plans for inclusive early warning systems, with an emphasis on strengthening national and organisational approaches to monitoring. Participants worked in country groups to outline how monitoring of inclusive early warning systems could be structured within their respective contexts, including identifying priority areas, key indicators, responsible actors, and potential data sources. The facilitators guided participants through the process of translating the concepts and tools introduced in earlier sessions into practical, context-specific monitoring frameworks. This included discussions on how monitoring can be embedded within existing disaster management structures and how OPDs can play a more active role in generating and using evidence to influence systems. However, the session also revealed notable weaknesses in the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) functions of OPDs. Many participants indicated limited experience with structured monitoring processes, indicator development, and data collection systems. This was consistent with findings from the pre-training assessment, which highlighted gaps in technical capacity related to monitoring inclusive early warning systems. While participants were able to develop initial drafts of country monitoring plans, the session underscored the importance of continued capacity building and institutional strengthening to ensure that monitoring functions are effectively established and sustained within OPDs.

4.2.9. Country Action Plans for Inclusive Early Warning Systems

This session focused on translating the training content into practical, country-level strategies for strengthening inclusive EWS. Participants worked in country teams to develop national visions, identify priority gaps, and propose actionable interventions anchored in monitoring evidence and advocacy pathways. The session marked a critical shift from conceptual understanding to operational planning, with participants demonstrating varying levels of strategic depth and system thinking.

For Zimbabwe, the country group articulated a vision of a robust, functional, and inclusive early warning system that is responsive to the needs of all sub-population groups, particularly persons with disabilities. The proposed actions reflected a strong orientation towards system strengthening and accountability mechanisms. Participants emphasised the need to conduct comprehensive needs assessments to understand the differentiated risks and communication needs of various groups, particularly in rural and marginalised communities. They also identified the importance of awareness-raising initiatives targeting OPDs and communities to improve understanding and uptake of early warning systems.

The Zimbabwe team proposed system reviews and periodic assessments to evaluate whether existing early warning mechanisms meet inclusivity standards, alongside strengthening monitoring and evaluation functions to track implementation. A notable dimension of their plan was the emphasis on advocacy for budget allocation, recognising that inclusive systems require sustained financial investment. This included advocating for dedicated funding at both sub-national and national levels to support accessible communication, infrastructure improvements, and community-based response mechanisms.

In contrast, the Zambia country team presented a more comprehensive, systems-driven and policy-oriented framework, demonstrating advanced thinking in linking monitoring, governance, and accountability. Their national vision positioned Zambia as a regional leader

in inclusive resilience, where early warning systems are sensorially diverse, physically accessible, and data driven.

A key strength of the Zambian approach was its structuring of priorities into three interconnected domains: governance and risk knowledge, multi-modal communication, and preparedness and infrastructure. Within the governance and risk knowledge domain, participants identified “data invisibility” as a fundamental barrier to inclusion. They proposed mandating the use of disability-disaggregated data collection tools in national disaster assessments and census processes to ensure that persons with disabilities are systematically captured in risk profiling. This reflects a critical nuance: without data, inclusion remains rhetorical. By embedding disability metrics into national data systems, Zambia’s approach ensures that risk profiles, planning, and resource allocation are evidence-based. For example, this would allow disaster management authorities to identify districts with high concentrations of persons with hearing impairments and tailor warning systems accordingly, such as prioritising visual alerts and SMS-based systems.

In addition, Zambia addressed policy tokenism by proposing the institutionalisation of OPD participation through permanent, decision-making representation on district and national disaster management committees. This moves beyond consultation towards influence and co-governance, ensuring that persons with disabilities are directly involved in shaping early warning systems. Within the communication domain, the Zambian plan demonstrated strong technical depth by proposing the standardisation of multi-modal early warning dissemination systems. This included integrating sign language interpretation in televised alerts, SMS-based messaging, and audio warnings, supported by collaboration between media institutions, telecommunications regulators, and government agencies.

The nuance here lies in recognising that no single communication channel is sufficient. For instance, SMS may exclude those with literacy challenges, while radio excludes persons with hearing impairments. The proposed system therefore combines channels to ensure redundancy, reach, and inclusivity, which is critical in emergency contexts. The Zambia team also addressed the persistent “last mile” challenge by proposing community-led dissemination mechanisms, such as the use of megaphones, flags, and local volunteer networks. This reflects an important contextual understanding that formal systems often fail to reach remote or digitally excluded populations, and that community structures are essential for bridging this gap. For example, trained community volunteers could ensure that warnings reach older persons or individuals with mobility challenges who may not access mainstream communication channels.

In the preparedness and infrastructure domain, Zambia emphasised universal design principles, proposing that all evacuation centres (such as schools and clinics) be made physically accessible through features like ramps and inclusive sanitation facilities. This highlights a key insight: early warning is only effective if response systems are accessible. A warning that reaches a person with a disability but directs them to an inaccessible shelter still results in exclusion. Furthermore, Zambia introduced community-based response innovations, such as neighbourhood “buddy systems,” where individuals are paired with trained community members to support evacuation during emergencies. This approach embeds inclusion within community structures and acknowledges that social support systems are critical in disaster response. A particularly advanced aspect of the Zambian plan was its focus on accountability and implementation mechanisms. This included leveraging existing funding structures by advocating for inclusion-sensitive budgeting conditions, where resources are tied to demonstrated inclusivity in planning.

Additionally, the team proposed community-led monitoring and independent reporting mechanisms, where OPDs generate evidence on system performance and use it to influence

government and institutional actors. This reflects a sophisticated advocacy approach, where monitoring evidence is actively used to drive policy change and institutional accountability, rather than remaining as passive data. The Zambia action plan demonstrated a high level of integration between data systems, governance structures, communication mechanisms, infrastructure, and accountability frameworks. It moved beyond identifying problems to proposing systemic, actionable solutions with clear pathways for implementation, illustrating a mature and forward-thinking approach to inclusive early warning systems.

Across both countries, the session highlighted that while awareness of inclusion is relatively strong, the ability to operationalise inclusion through structured monitoring, policy engagement, and resource mobilisation varies significantly. The exercise reinforced the importance of strengthening the technical and institutional capacities of OPDs and stakeholders to move from advocacy to evidence-based system transformation.

4.2.10. Country Action Plans for Inclusive Early Warning Systems

The training on Monitoring Inclusive EWS held in Boksburg, South Africa, represents a highly successful and impactful capacity-building intervention, effectively strengthening both conceptual understanding and practical competencies in disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction. The evaluation findings demonstrate overwhelmingly positive participant feedback, with consistently high ratings across all assessment areas, particularly in relation to facilitation, relevance, and applicability of the training content.

Critically, the training achieved its intended objective of bridging the gap between conceptual awareness and practical implementation. While pre-training assessments indicated that participants possessed a general understanding of early warning systems and disability inclusion, significant gaps existed in technical areas such as system components, monitoring frameworks, and accessible communication. Through a structured, participatory, and tools-based approach, the training successfully addressed these gaps by equipping participants with practical methodologies for assessing, monitoring, and strengthening inclusive early warning systems across multiple levels.

A notable strength of the training lies in its emphasis on applied learning and systems thinking, enabling participants to move beyond theoretical discussions towards actionable strategies. This was clearly demonstrated through the development of country-specific monitoring and action plans, which reflected varying but progressively strengthening levels of technical depth, policy engagement, and institutional awareness. The integration of monitoring, advocacy, and planning further positioned participants as active agents of change, capable of influencing early warning systems within their respective countries and organisations. However, the training also revealed persistent structural challenges, particularly the limited M&E capacities within OPDs. While participants showed strong commitment to inclusion and advocacy, their ability to generate, analyse, and utilise evidence remains constrained by weak institutional systems. This highlights the need for sustained post-training support, including targeted capacity development in M&E, data systems, and evidence-based advocacy.

Essentially, the training underscores a critical insight: effective early warning systems are not defined solely by their technical functionality, but by their inclusivity, accessibility, and responsiveness to the needs of all population groups. The strong participant engagement, high satisfaction levels, and clear pathways for application indicate that the training has laid a solid foundation for advancing inclusive early warning systems in the region. Going forward, there is significant opportunity to scale and deepen this work, particularly through continued technical support, strengthening institutional capacities, and embedding inclusive monitoring practices within national and local disaster risk management systems. If

sustained, these efforts have the potential to contribute meaningfully to the development of people-centred, inclusive, and resilient early warning systems, ensuring that no one is left behind.

5. Overall Workshop Evaluation

The training on DiDRR and Inclusive EWS conducted in Boksburg, South Africa, can be conclusively assessed as a highly effective and impactful capacity-building intervention, based on analysis of 12 completed evaluation forms.

Across all sections of the evaluation, the training received overwhelmingly positive ratings. Out of the 12 respondents:

- 11 out of 12 participants (91.7%) rated the training as either “Very Good” or “Excellent” across all core dimensions
- 10 out of 12 participants (83.3%) consistently rated key aspects of the training as “Excellent”
- 0 out of 12 participants (0%) rated any aspect of the training as “Poor”
- Only 1 out of 12 participants (8.3%) provided ratings below “Very Good” on isolated indicators

These results indicate near-universal satisfaction and strong endorsement of the training’s quality, relevance, and delivery.

A particularly notable strength of the training was the quality of facilitation, which emerged as the highest-rated component across the evaluation. Specifically:

- 12 out of 12 participants (100%) rated the facilitators as either “Very Good” or “Excellent”
- 11 out of 12 participants (91.7%) rated facilitation as “Excellent” across key dimensions
- 0% of participants expressed any dissatisfaction with facilitation

Participants consistently highlighted the facilitators’ ability to:

- Clearly explain complex technical concepts in accessible and relatable ways
- Create an inclusive and participatory learning environment that accommodated diverse needs
- Effectively respond to questions and adapt to participant inputs
- Link theoretical concepts with practical, real-world applications

The facilitation approach was therefore not only technically sound but also highly responsive, inclusive, and learner-centred, significantly enhancing participant engagement and knowledge uptake.

The relevance of the training was also rated extremely highly:

- 12 out of 12 participants (100%) confirmed that the training content was relevant to their work
- 11 out of 12 participants (91.7%) rated the training objectives and content as “Excellent”

In terms of learning outcomes:

- 10 out of 12 participants (83.3%) reported strong improvements in understanding disability-inclusive DRR and early warning systems

- 11 out of 12 participants (91.7%) indicated increased confidence in applying tools and approaches introduced during the training

Training methods and materials were equally well received:

- 11 out of 12 participants (91.7%) rated training methods as “Very Good” or “Excellent”
- 10 out of 12 participants (83.3%) rated materials as “Excellent”, citing their clarity, practicality, and usability

Logistical arrangements also performed strongly:

- 10 out of 12 participants (83.3%) rated logistics as “Excellent”
- 2 out of 12 participants (16.7%) rated logistics as “Very Good”, with no negative feedback recorded

Qualitative feedback reinforces these findings, with all 12 participants (100%) highlighting the usefulness of the training and its direct applicability to their work. Participants particularly valued the practical tools, participatory approaches, and opportunities for peer learning. Importantly, all participants expressed clear intentions to apply the knowledge and skills gained within their organisations and communities.

A small proportion of participants identified areas for improvement:

- 2 out of 12 participants (16.7%) recommended extending the duration of the training.
- 2–3 participants (16.7%–25%) suggested allocating more time for group work, practical exercises, and discussions.

These suggestions reflect a demand for deeper engagement rather than dissatisfaction, further underscoring the perceived value of the training.

In terms of overall rating:

- 10 out of 12 participants (83.3%) rated the workshop as “Excellent”.
- 2 out of 12 participants (16.7%) rated it as “Very Good”.
- 0% rated the workshop below “Very Good”.

The training successfully achieved its intended objectives, demonstrating strong performance across all evaluation dimensions. The exceptional quality of facilitation, combined with highly relevant content, practical tools, and participatory methods, played a central role in its effectiveness. The training not only enhanced participant knowledge and skills but also strengthened their capacity to apply inclusive early warning system approaches in practice. With continued support, particularly in strengthening monitoring and evaluation capacities within Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), the training has strong potential to contribute to sustained, evidence-based, and inclusive transformation of disaster risk reduction systems across the region.

6. Lessons Learned

The training generated important insights into the strengths and gaps in advancing DiDRR and inclusive EWS. While participants demonstrated strong commitment and foundational knowledge, the workshop highlighted key areas requiring further strengthening to achieve sustained and system-level impact.

(i) Participatory, practice-oriented approaches enhance learning effectiveness - Interactive methods such as group work, case studies, and practical exercises significantly

improved understanding and application of concepts, demonstrating the value of experiential learning in capacity-building.

(ii) Foundational awareness exists, but technical capacity gaps remain -

Participants showed a general understanding of DRR and disability inclusion; however, gaps were evident in technical areas, particularly in monitoring and evaluation, accessibility indicators, and EWS system components.

(iii) Inclusion requires intentional design and resourcing - The training confirmed that inclusion is not automatic. Persistent barriers in communication, infrastructure, and systems highlight the need for deliberate planning, accessible formats, and dedicated resources.

(iv) OPDs have strong potential as system actors but require strengthened engagement capacity - OPDs are well positioned to contribute to advocacy, monitoring, and community engagement, but their participation in policy and institutional processes is often limited by capacity and structural barriers.

(v) Monitoring and evidence generation are critical for accountability and advocacy - Limited capacity in data collection and analysis constrains the ability of OPDs to influence systems. Strengthening monitoring frameworks and evidence use is essential for driving inclusive DRR and EWS improvements.

(vi) Community-level and last-mile systems are essential for effective inclusion - The effectiveness of early warning systems depends on how information reaches communities. Local networks, peer support systems, and community-based dissemination mechanisms are critical for reaching persons with disabilities.

(vii) Multi-stakeholder collaboration is key to inclusive system strengthening - Effective DiDRR and EWS require coordinated efforts among OPDs, government, humanitarian actors, and communities. Partnerships enhance system responsiveness and sustainability.

(viii) Sustained support is necessary to translate training into impact - While the training strengthened knowledge and confidence, long-term impact will depend on follow-up mentorship, technical support, and integration of learning into institutional systems.

7. Practical Recommendations

The recommendations below are derived from the training findings, participant feedback, and observed capacity gaps. They aim to strengthen the effectiveness, sustainability, and scalability of DiDRR and Inclusive EWS across Southern Africa. They prioritise system strengthening, technical capacity, institutionalisation, and regional scaling, positioning OPDs as key actors in disaster risk governance.

(i) Strengthen OPD Capacity in Monitoring and Evidence-Based Practice

Build the technical capacity of OPDs in M&E by equipping them with practical skills in:

- Indicator development
- Data collection (FGDs, KIIs, observation)
- Data analysis, interpretation, and reporting

Support OPDs to establish internal M&E systems to track inclusion in DRR and EWS and strengthen their ability to generate and use evidence for advocacy and programming.

(ii) Establish Structured Post-Training Support and Mentorship

Develop and implement structured mentorship and technical backstopping mechanisms to support OPDs in translating training knowledge into sustained practice. This should include:

- Follow-up coaching
- Peer learning platforms
- Technical advisory support

to ensure effective implementation of country action and monitoring plans.

(iii) Operationalise and Integrate Country Action Plans

Support the implementation and institutionalisation of country action and monitoring plans by:

- Aligning them with national DRR frameworks
- Integrating them into existing organisational programmes
- Supporting resource mobilisation

This will ensure that training outcomes translate into sustained system-level change.

(iv) Strengthen Inclusive and Accessible Early Warning Systems

Enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of EWS by:

- Promoting multi-modal communication systems (SMS, radio, visual alerts, community channels).
- Ensuring messages are available in accessible formats (sign language, braille, audio, simplified language).
- Delivering information in local languages.

Work with disaster management and meteorological agencies to integrate accessibility standards into EWS design and implementation.

(v) Strengthen Community-Level and Last-Mile Early Warning Systems

Strengthen community-based dissemination mechanisms to address last-mile gaps by:

- Supporting local volunteer networks
- Promoting peer support and "buddy systems"
- Leveraging community structures for warning dissemination

This ensures that early warning messages reach persons with disabilities in remote and underserved areas.

(vi) Institutionalise OPD Participation in DRR Governance

Strengthen the participation and influence of OPDs by:

- Institutionalising their representation in national and local disaster management structures
- Establishing formal consultation mechanisms
- Promoting inclusive representation (women, youth, diverse impairments)

Strengthen accountability mechanisms and advocate for dedicated budget allocation for accessibility within DRR and EWS systems.

(vii) Strengthen Monitoring Systems and Data for Inclusive DRR

Develop and adopt a standardised monitoring framework for inclusive EWS, including:

- Common indicators
- Tools and reporting systems

Promote the integration of disability-disaggregated data into national DRR systems to support evidence-based planning and resource allocation. Encourage:

- participatory monitoring approaches.
- Accessibility audits.
- Documentation of good practices and lessons learned.

(viii) Strengthen Policy Influence, Partnerships, and Regional Scaling

Support the institutionalisation of disability inclusion within national DRR policies and frameworks, aligned with:

- SENDAI Framework.
- UNCRPD (Article 11).
- National policies.

Strengthen multi-stakeholder collaboration between OPDs, governments, NGOs, and humanitarian actors. At regional level:

- SAFOD should establish a regional learning and coordination platform.
- Scale training models across countries.
- Develop regional guidelines on inclusive DiDRR and EWS.
- Engage regional bodies (e.g., SADC) to mainstream inclusion.

(ix) Cross-Cutting Recommendations

- Integrate gender and intersectionality across all DiDRR and EWS interventions.
- Ensure accessibility is budgeted for, not treated as optional.
- Promote community ownership and participation.
- Strengthen partnerships between OPDs, governments, and NGOs.
- Invest in long-term capacity building, not one-off training.

Implementing these recommendations will contribute to the development of inclusive, accessible, and accountable disaster risk reduction systems that effectively protect all members of society, particularly persons with disabilities.

8. Overall Conclusion

The outcomes of this training extend beyond individual capacity development and have important implications for strengthening disaster risk governance systems across the region. At national level, the enhanced capacity of OPDs creates opportunities for more meaningful participation in disaster planning processes and greater accountability in the implementation

of inclusive policies. At policy level, the integration of monitoring tools and evidence-based advocacy approaches positions OPDs to influence the design and implementation of more inclusive early warning systems and disaster preparedness strategies.

At regional level, the training provides a foundation for scaling disability-inclusive disaster risk reduction through SAFOD's network, promoting shared learning, harmonised approaches, and collective advocacy. This is particularly important in the context of increasing climate-related risks affecting Southern Africa.

Ultimately, strengthening inclusive early warning systems and disaster risk reduction is not only a technical priority but a critical step towards achieving equitable, resilient, and rights-based disaster preparedness systems. Sustained investment in OPD capacity, institutional partnerships, and evidence-driven advocacy will be essential to ensuring that no one is left behind in disaster preparedness and response. Hence, inclusive disaster risk reduction is not an option, it is a necessity for effective, equitable, and resilient systems.

Annexes

Annex I: ToT DiDRR Training Programme

Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled
ToT Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction Training Programme
Holiday Inn – Boskburg, Johannesburg, South Africa
17-18 March 2026

Day 1: 17.03.2026 – Foundations of Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction

Training Objectives

- (i) Build participants' understanding of climate-related disaster risks in Southern Africa.
- (ii) Introduce the principles and frameworks of Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR).
- (iii) Facilitate co-creation of knowledge by drawing on participants' lived experiences of disasters and disability inclusion.
- (iv) Analyse barriers and vulnerabilities faced by persons with disabilities in disaster contexts.

Time	Session	Description	Facilitator
08:30-09:00	Registration	Participant registration and networking	SAFOD
09:00-09:20	Opening and Welcome Remarks		Mr Leonard Marange (FODPZ)
09:20-09:40	Participant Introductions and Expectations	Interactive introductions and expectations mapping	Consultants
09:40-10:00	Pre-Training -Training Evaluation Tool – DiDRR	Written pre-training evaluation on DiDRR	Consultants
10:00-10:30	Climate Change and Disaster Risk in Southern Africa	Overview of climate hazards affecting the region	Consultants
10:30-10:45	Tea Break		
10:45-12:00	Understanding Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction	DiDRR principles and international frameworks	Consultants
12:00-13:00	Co-creation session: Lived Experiences of Disability and Disaster Risk	Participants share experiences and identify systemic barriers	Consultants
13:00-14:00	Lunch		
14:00-15:30	Participatory Disaster Risk and Barrier Mapping	Group analysis of disaster risks affecting persons with disabilities	Consultants
15:30-15:45	Tea Break		
15:45-16:45	Integrating Disability Inclusion in the Disaster Management Cycle	Prevention, preparedness, response and recovery	Consultants
16:45-17:00	Recap of the Day's work	Assessing level of understanding of participants	Consultants

**Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled
ToT Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction Training Programme
Holiday Inn – Boskburg, Johannesburg, South Africa
17-18 March 2026**

Day 2: 18.03.2026 – Advocacy and Institutional Engagement in DiDRR

Training Objectives

- (i) Strengthen the role of OPDs as actors in disaster risk reduction.
- (ii) Enhance advocacy skills for engaging disaster management institutions.
- (iii) Promote collective learning and regional knowledge exchange among participating OPDs.
- (iv) Support participants in developing country-specific DiDRR action plans.

Time	Session	Description	Facilitator
09:00-09:15	Recap of Day 1	Reflection and collective learning	Consultants
09:15-10:30	Role of OPDs in Disaster Risk Reduction	Strengthening participation and accountability	Consultants
10:30-10:45	Tea Break		Consultants
10:45-12:15	Advocacy for Disability-Inclusive DRR	Strategies for influencing policies and institutions	Consultants
12:15-13:00	Advocacy Simulation Exercise	Role-play engagement with disaster management authorities	Consultants
13:00-14:00	Lunch		SAFOD
14:00-15:30	Regional Peer Learning Exchange	Cross-country sharing of experiences and practices	Consultants
15:30-15:45	Tea Break		SAFOD
15:45-16:45	Country Action Planning	Development of DiDRR engagement strategies	Consultants
16:45-16:55	Closing Reflections & Post-training Evaluation	Participant reflections and lessons learned and written post-training evaluation	Consultants
16:55-1700	Closing Remarks	SAFOD	Consultants

Annex II: ToT DiDRR Training Programme

Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled Monitoring Inclusive Early Warning Systems (EWS) Programme Holiday Inn – Boskborg, Johannesburg, South Africa 19-20 March 2026

Day 1: 19.03.2026 – Understanding Inclusive Early Warning Systems Training Objectives

- (i) Strengthen participants' understanding of early warning systems and their role in disaster preparedness.
- (ii) Facilitate co-creation of knowledge on accessibility barriers in early warning systems.
- (iii) Analyse communication and dissemination challenges affecting persons with disabilities.
- (iv) Introduce monitoring frameworks for assessing inclusive early warning systems.

Time	Session	Description	Facilitator
08:30-09:00	Registration	Participant registration	SAFOD
09:00-09:20	Opening and Welcome Remarks	Remarks by FODPZ	Mr Leonard Marange (FODPZ)
09:20-09:40	Pre-training evaluation and Expectations	Written pre-training evaluation and expectations mapping	Consultants
09:40-10:30	Overview of Early Warning Systems	Components and role of EWS in disaster preparedness	Consultants
10:30-10:45	Tea Break		
10:45-12:15	Accessibility in Early Warning Systems	Barriers faced by persons with disabilities	Consultants
12:15-13:00	Co-Creation Session: Experiences with Early Warning Systems	Participants share experiences of accessing warnings	Consultants
13:00-14:00	Lunch		
14:00-15:30	Introduction to Monitoring Inclusive Early Warning Systems	Monitoring frameworks and indicators	Consultants
15:30-15:45	Tea Break		
15:45 -17:00	Practical Exercise – Analysing Early Warning Systems	Group analysis of warning dissemination systems	Consultants

**Southern Africa Federation of the Disabled
Monitoring Inclusive Early Warning Systems (EWS) Programme
Holiday Inn – Boskburg, Johannesburg, South Africa
19-20 March 2026**

Day 2: 20.03.2026 – Monitoring & Advocacy for Inclusive Early Warning Systems

Training Objectives

Equip participants with practical tools for monitoring inclusive early warning systems.
Strengthen skills for analysing communication formats and dissemination channels.
Support participants to develop monitoring and advocacy plans for improving EWS accessibility.

Time	Session	Description	Facilitator
09:00-09:15	Recap of Day 1	Reflection and learning synthesis	Consultants
09:15-10:30	Practical Tools for Monitoring Inclusive EWS	Monitoring tools for analysing accessibility and dissemination	Consultants
10:30-10:45	Tea Break		SAFOD
10:45-12:15	Institutional Arrangements for Early Warning Systems	Roles of disaster management institutions	Consultants
12:15-13:00	Advocacy for Inclusive Early Warning Systems	Using monitoring evidence to influence systems	Consultants
13:00-14:00	Lunch		SAFOD
14:00-15:30	Country Monitoring Plans	Development of national monitoring approaches	Consultants
15:30-15:45	Tea Break		SAFOD
15:45-16:45	Country Action Planning	Development of monitoring and advocacy strategies	Consultants
16:45-16:55	Closing Reflections and Post-training Evaluation	Participants' closing reflections and written post-training evaluation	Consultants
1655-1700	Closing Remarks	Reflections and Wayforward	SAFOD

List of Participants and Facilitators

No.	Full name	Gender	Type of Impairment (if any)	Organization
1.	Ruth Zulu	Female	Albinism	ZAFOD
2.	John Mvula	Male	Physical impairment – wheelchair user	ZAFOD
3.	Jethro Phiri	Male	none	ZAFOD
4	Paul Mbewe	Male	Hard Hearing	ZAFOD
5.	Tsitsi Hove	Female	none	FODPZ
6.	Brenda Mhlanga	Female	Albinism	FODPZ
7.	Hilda Mupfumira	Female	none	FODPZ
8.	Leonard Marange	Male	Physical impairment – crutches user	FODPZ
9.	Ashllah Mmusi	Female	none	SAFOD
10.	Georginah Kgaswane	Female	none	SAFOD
11.	Banthati Tshekoetsile	Female	none	SAFOD
12.	Aobakwe Tshireletso	male	none	SAFOD