



# CARIBBEAN

## Comprehensive Approaches to Disaster Management

### Disaster Context

In the Caribbean, tropical storms, hurricanes, tidal waves, rainstorms, droughts, earthquakes, and volcanos have resulted in disasters and have been particularly intense since the late 1970s. Disasters have significantly affected the productive sectors such as agriculture and tourism, and have significantly impacted communities, particularly the poor. In addition, the increase in passenger and cargo traffic in the region increases vulnerability to further disasters such as chemical and oil spills and marine and aeronautical accidents.

During the past three decades, economic development has decreased as the region has suffered billions of dollars of devastation. For example, between 1970 and 1999, economic losses suffered by Montserrat, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis and Dominica measured as a percentage of their GDP were 899 percent, 272 percent, 116 percent and 55 percent respectively. Even more devastating is the human suffering and dislocation, which extend long beyond the initial disaster.

When faced with disasters, Caribbean nations have been unable to find sufficient financial and human resources to rehabilitate social and economic infrastructure. Often, the small economic gains made through years of economic change can be wiped out by one disaster. Therefore, the need to retain resources for development rather than for reconstruction has been emphasised.

Within the context of this scenario, regional activities have traditionally focused on disaster response with inadequate attention paid to prevention and mitigation. The challenge was to bring regional stakeholders to take a more holistic and integrated approach to Disaster Management.

The Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) is the integrated management of all natural resources and human induced hazards, involving management, through all phases of the Disaster Management Cycle (prevention, mitigation, preparation, response,

recovery, and restoration). CDM engages the public and private sectors, civil society, urban and rural communities, and the general population in hazard prone areas. CDM is therefore multi-hazard and multi-sectoral in its application and is concerned primarily with integrating vulnerability assessment and risk reduction into development planning and management.

### Project Title

Comprehensive Approaches to Disaster Management in the Caribbean (CAR/00/002)

### Sectors

The project focused on the following objectives:

- To develop a strategy to infuse CDM into the development and planning process within the region
- To strengthen CDERA (Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency) to effectively implement CDM at the regional level to build support for CDM at the national level

### Funding

UNDP contributed \$121,650 from TRAC 1.1.3 funds and USAID and the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance contributed cost sharing resources of \$288,000.

### Partners

UNDP has partnered with the following towards the implementation of the project:

- USAID, Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
- CDERA
- Participating governments, through their National Disaster Offices
- Civil society and the private sector

## Programme Activities

Key activities over the three year period (2000-2003) include:

- Development of baseline information concerning the status of CDM in the region
- An analysis of contemporary trends in disaster risk, including patterns of hazard and vulnerability and adopted approaches to reduce risks
- Development of a draft regional CDM strategy; stakeholders working group convened to review draft strategy
- Broad regional meeting convened to discuss and gain approval for the regional strategy
- Development and analysis of baseline organisational and management information regarding CDERA
- Training on financial management, performance management, plan development, project management, grant and fund management, proposal writing, managing for results, and strategic thinking to strengthen CDERA
- Workshops held in at least 10 countries, attended by highest government policy makers and other stakeholders to discuss regional and national CDM strategy and measures needed to embed CDM in their respective countries
- Development of national CDM strategies
- Conducting institutional reviews to position and transform National Disaster Offices (NDOs) within the CDM context.
- Technical assistance and training in plan development, public administration, financial management, project management, and human resources development

## Results

- Adoption of a regional CDM strategy
- Regional Strategy translated into National Strategies linked with countries' development plans
- Growing emphasis in the region on disaster prevention and mitigation as an important component of development

- Increased commitment to comprehensive disaster management in the region from highest-level policy and decision-makers, private sector, and civil society
- Institutional Study produced highlighting options and measures to position CDERA within CDM context
- Capacities of key disaster management institutions, particularly CDERA, and NDOs strengthened in identified areas to enable them to deal effectively with all types of hazards within the disaster management continuum; improved systems in key organisational functions
- CDM strategy provided a framework for increased mobilisation of resources to the region for disaster management in a coherent and coordinated manner around CDM Results Frameworks (five specified intermediate results identified under the strategy); greater than \$8 million additional donor funding has been mobilised to date within the context of the strategy
- Regional donors and CDM Stakeholders Working Group have agreed to support regional intervention within the context of the CDM strategy