From June 20th to 22nd, the VI Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas took place in Cartagena, Colombia, in which the Ponte Alerta Caribe project presented its advances and participated in the workshop “Disaster preparedness makes the difference: Contributions from ECHO and its partners to the strategies of the Latin American and Caribbean region” that took place the days before the event. In this platform, the project presented the Consultative Team on Protection, Gender and Age, the Detachable Shelter of San Cristóbal and the Community Networks of Prevention, Mitigation and Response, this last experience in charge of Mahirivos Rosario, Community leader of San Cristobal, Dominican Republic. In addition, the project achieved the 4th place in the contest “For Community Resilience” for its video “Community Networks: First line of resilience” receiving an award. In addition, key actors of the system are involved in this adaptation, such as the National Emergency Commission, the Protection, Gender and Age Advisory Team, the National Disability Council, among others.

Between the 10th and 12th of July in the Guantanamomo municipality of San Antonio del Sur, a Workshop was held to enrich the resilience assessment tool for drought and hurricanes. The participants analyzed indicators to determine both the aspects that violate the farm and those that guarantee their adaptability to extreme hydrometeorological events. The meeting brought together representatives of the agriculture, the local government and specialists in Meteorology.

On July 17th and 18th, a moment of exchange of experiences took place in Santiago de Cuba. First, the workshop “Let’s Build an Inclusive Family Emergency Plan” was developed, whose purpose was to build a more inclusive primary version with a multi-threatening approach to this community tool applied in previous projects. The final proposal must be validated for later application throughout the country. On the 18th the Workshop “Enriching the VCA tool” was developed, which took up the lessons learned by applying the Vulnerability and Capability Analysis (VCA), an experience of the Cuban Red Cross in vulnerable communities throughout the country.

This time, inputs were identified to enrich it with a more inclusive approach. The contributions of members of associations of people with visual impairment (ANCI), hearing impairment (ANSOC) and with physical and motor limitations (ACLIFIM) were essential. Members and volunteers of the Red Cross of six provinces also participated. Both workshops, successfully developed, are part of Cuba’s effort to strengthen Inclusive Disasters Risk Management. Current work with the Cuban Red Cross and Civil Defense at the national level seeks to outline both tools, validate them and incorporate them, enriched, into the country’s disaster reduction system.

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The X International Congress on Disasters, held in Havana from July 2 to 6, became an opportunity to share tools, good practices and lessons learned for inclusive risk management of disasters. With the slogan “Understanding the risk of disaster and join efforts to reduce it in the interest of sustainable development,” the National Civil Defense Staff in Cuba, convened various government actors, along with representatives of the academy and civil society, to continue integrating visions in favor of a sustainable development, that considers the adaptation to the climatic change, the reduction and resilience of the risk of disasters.

The program of presentations of the event was enriched with the binational project “Ponte Alerta Caribe” of the Oxfam-Plan-Habitat-HI consortium, and financing from the Directorate General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO). From the Dominican Republic came the proposals of the Mobile Shelter and the Community Networks of Prevention, Mitigation and Response. Both initiatives enrich the risk management in that country, with an inclusive approach and greater community participation. The work of the Consultative Team on Protection, Gender and Age for the National Emergency Commission (EC-PGE), an inter-institutional and multilateral platform that, since 2016, focuses on the preparation, strengthening and implementation of measures to guarantee compliance, has also been carried out of human rights in the prevention and response to disasters, attending to the specific needs of each population.

Other topics addressed in the Congress were the response to the drought in Cuba, through the tool to adapt the resilience of farms to this phenomenon and community water management. Likewise, the Vulnerability and Capacity Analysis and the Family Plan (VCA) were presented, along with inclusive instruments in the management of disaster risk reduction (GRDR), when the inclusive perspective is incorporated.

Meanwhile, Cuban associations of people with disabilities took advantage of these days to socialize their experiences in inclusive risk management and insist that they be taken into account in the strategies developed from the localities. These presentations were coordinat- ed with HI and respond to approaches that the binational disasters reduction project, Ponte Alerta Caribe, seeks to institutionalize.

The institutional booths of Oxfam and HI brought the visibility of the Congress information and publications that document many of the processes carried out by both organizations that are now part of the “Ponte Alerta Caribe” project.
EWS GAP ANALYSIS

EARLY WARNING SYSTEM GAP ANALYSIS CONCLUDED IN 5 CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES

The EWS Gap Analysis in the Caribbean has been completed, with the Dominican Republic, Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, and Dominica being the countries analyzed. The Multi Hazard Early Warning System Checklist was used to evaluate the status of their EWS and identify gaps. Validation of these gaps has been provided, offering a roadmap for strengthening EWS in these countries and creating a solution package.

EWS TOOLBOX

LAUNCH OF THE EWS TOOLBOX OF CUBA

A toolbox created by Cubans was officially presented during the International Congress of Civil Defense in July. This toolbox is intended to be a resource for countries to enhance their EWS capabilities. The toolbox includes methodologies, instructions, publications, and tools that are adaptable to different contexts.

EWS EXPERTS

VISIT FROM EWS CUBAN EXPERTS TO DOMINICA AND SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

Experts from Cuba visited Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to share their knowledge and experiences with local EWS teams. The visit aimed to support the development and implementation of EWS in these countries, with a focus on training and capacity building.

EWS SOLUTIONS

4 CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES RECEIVE SOLUTIONS PACKAGES TO EWS GAPS DEVELOPED BY CUBA

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Dominica, Dominican Republic, and Saint Lucia have received support from Cuba in developing EWS solutions tailored to their specific needs. These solutions will be implemented soon to address the identified gaps in their EWS systems.

CONTRIBUTIONS DIPECHO EWS IN REGIONAL RRD PLATFORM

The DIPECHO Regional project has contributed significantly to EWS implementation in the Caribbean. From June 20th to 22nd in Cartagena, Colombia, the VI Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) of the Americas was held, with the workshop "Disaster preparedness makes a difference: Contributions from ECHO and its partners to the strategies of the Latin America and the Caribbean region" taking place on June 18th and 19th. The European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) and the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) organized the event.

These contributions represent an opportunity for governments, civil society, and other actors in the Americas to exchange experiences regarding the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. There were opportunities for dialogue, learning, and collaboration.

The DIPECHO Regional project contributed to strengthening the EWS in the Caribbean region by working with UNDP, IFRC, and CDEMA. The project participated in events such as the ECHO workshop in Cartagena, offering privileged spaces for debate, learning, and collaboration.

Noteworthy highlights are:

- The presentation in plenary session of Ronald Jackson, director of CDEMA on the application of the multi-risk EWS checklist in 6 Caribbean countries.
- The support for the parallel session 1 “Early Warning System for different threats” as well as.
- The side event “Opportunities” priorities for strengthening Early Warning Systems in Small Island Developing States coordination with CREWS.
- The Regional Platform also offered privileged spaces to share experiences regarding the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.
- The presentations of several of the achievements reached so far and continued strengthening the collaboration with regional partners.

In conclusion, the Regional DRR Platform and the ECHO workshop in Cartagena offered spaces of great exposure for the project where, in addition to sharing achievements, different visions of how to work the EWS were discussed. Lessons learned were shared and alliances with regional partners were created to enhance the actions in progress.