



EnGenDER

**Becoming Climate Resilient
and Disaster Ready
Crossing the Finish Line**



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EnGenDER

Enabling Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery,
Climate and Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean

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WELCOME MESSAGE

Welcome to the latest edition of the EnGenDER newsletter, “Becoming Climate Resilient & Disaster Ready: Crossing the Finish Line.” We are excited to update you on the incredible strides we’ve made in our mission to combat climate change, promote gender equality, and enhance disaster recovery efforts in the Caribbean from March to September 2023. In 2023, our project has been on an accelerated path towards achieving our goals, making significant progress in several key areas.

We are proud to announce the successful launch and active execution of all climate change sub-projects. This marks a crucial milestone in our mission to combat climate change in the Caribbean. We have initiated Behavioural Change Communication (BCC) components and activities related to climate change and disaster recovery. These

initiatives aim to raise awareness and drive positive behavioral changes within our target communities. Notably, we executed the Exchange and Experience Programme in March 2023 and organized the Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) training and the Synergy and Exchange Colloquium in April 2023. These events have had a significant impact on the project’s reach and influence. We have integrated key M&E actions, including the Theory of Change Exercise and Lessons Learned and Exchange Workshops. This has led to the development of critical M&E tools, which will enhance our ability to report progress and standardize data collection.

While we continue to make impressive strides towards our objectives, we acknowledge that the project faces risks that could potentially impact our implementation progress. The Project Management Unit is actively implementing effective strategies and innovative solutions to manage and mitigate these risks. We are committed to finding solutions that will allow us to maintain our momentum and address these challenges head-on.

We want to express our heartfelt gratitude for your invaluable support and dedication to our cause. It is through your collective efforts that we can truly make a difference. Together, we will cross the finish line and create an inclusive world that is both climate resilient and disaster ready. Thank you for being a part of the EnGenDER community. We remain optimistic about the future. We eagerly anticipate celebrating our collective achievements in the near future.

Dr. Marium Alleyne
Project Manager



A MESSAGE FROM GLOBAL AFFAIRS CANADA

“Becoming Climate Resilient and Disaster Ready: Crossing the Finish Line” - what an appropriate theme as we approach the end of EnGenDER! As most of you are aware, Canada places gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and, by extension, all vulnerable gender groups at the heart of all of its development efforts. Canada believes that a gender equality approach is the most effective way to reduce poverty and to build a more inclusive, prosperous, and peaceful world. We are extremely proud to have financed EnGenDER, which has benefited nine Caribbean countries over the past five years. In the last three years alone, Caribbean countries have faced hurricanes and tropical storms, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, and severe flooding, all while tackling the COVID-19 crisis.

Climate change is only accelerating the frequency and severity of these events. When these events hit, there are immediate disruptions to services and livelihoods, damage to critical infrastructure, and potential loss of life. Each of these consequences exacerbate existing vulnerabilities for the Caribbean and set back development gains. Canada is committed to reducing the impacts of natural disasters, supporting Caribbean countries in adapting to climate change, building climate resilience, and providing timely and effective assistance for those who've been affected as they recover and rebuild. And we've been supporting these countries tremendously.

Through the EnGenDER project, we're now able to celebrate important milestones in the project. The project has empowered governments to take ownership of their disaster risks. For example,

EnGenDER has increased the resilience of the Tri Tri fisher Folk in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines to ensure the continued sustainability of livelihoods, poverty reduction and also reducing the gender gaps by mainstreaming gender equality. I visited this project myself and I was thoroughly impressed. In addition, over 10,000 people in rural communities that are prone to drought in Belize are benefiting from a water management system installed through this project. EnGenDER is also supporting inclusive aquaponics for a resilient Saint Lucia, which will also benefit farmers living with disabilities. And in an effort to enhance water access and resilience to flooding in Suriname, the project provided water storage facilities to 33 tribal and three indigenous communities. And these are just a few of the many success stories of EnGenDER over the years. In fact, the project has become a flagship project for Canada in the Caribbean.

I'd like to take the opportunity to congratulate the Governments of Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Jamaica, Guyana, and Suriname. EnGenDER would not have realized its successes without your commitment and hard work. We look forward to your continued cooperation in the project's final year of implementation. I would also like to recognize the contributions of UNDP, UN Women, the World Food Program and CDEMA as EnGenDER's implementing partners who have steered this project under unprecedented circumstances. The pandemic hit just as the project was about to take off; yet here we are today, celebrating numerous successes.

I am hopeful that the extensive support provided through Canada's EnGenDER project will provide countries with a much-needed platform for climate change adaptation and resilience efforts as we endeavour to cross the finish line. Canada recognizes that climate change is a global crisis that requires global action to help those most in need. And we remain committed to helping the most vulnerable communities adapt to climate change and mitigate its impact through projects like EnGenDER. Thank you very much.

Sharon Peake
Executive Director for the Caribbean Regional
Development Program
Global Affairs Canada

<https://bit.ly/CRDP>



A MESSAGE FROM FOREIGN, COMMONWEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

EnGenDER works to meet the varied needs of groups, with a particular focus on gender and rights-based planning and adaptation action. In May 2019 when EnGenDER was approved, no one anticipated the world would go through so many changes in four short years! Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, conflict in Ukraine, or substantial challenges to global financial systems championed by the Bridgetown Initiative, at the core of its development policy, the UK continues to champion the philosophy of “leave no one behind”.

The uptake of change that the programme was leading, which is to enhance climate resilience for the most vulnerable in our Caribbean societies, was increased, even as the region experienced a variety of natural disasters such as pandemic, earthquake, volcanic eruption, and tropical storms. These developments reinforced the importance and urgency of strengthening national and regional capacities to prepare for and respond to shocks as well as the increasing risk posed by climate change for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in the Caribbean.

The objective of EnGenDER was to improve pre and post disaster management in the Caribbean to strengthen resilience by better recovery systems and resilience measures, including specific support for vulnerable groups. Under this programme, the UK had approved up to £3.19m to improve disaster recovery planning by ensuring that national resilience planning and execution is inclusive; and showcasing economic empowerment through climate change mitigation, adaptation and disaster risk reduction, which fosters economic growth and socioeconomic development, especially for vulnerable persons.

The UK conducted a Project Completion Report in May 2023, and assessed the final programme performance score to be A+ because of the widespread institutional changes seen not only in the 8 ODA (Overseas Development Assistance) eligible countries, but as many as 23 countries and territories across the Caribbean, due to the widespread uptake of programme tools given the strategy of using regional agencies for delivery. These significant changes were also delivered with less budget

due to the move to virtual delivery because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The UK decided to adhere to the original close date of March 2023, with a spend of approximately 50% of approved budget. We look forward to the further progression of work as this continues to be financed by Global Affairs Canada.

For CDEMA, the main objective of EnGenDER was to ensure that disaster preparedness and response systems were improved, especially considering the lessons learned during significant disaster impact experiences over the last 7 years. Work under the programme focused on the steps needed to operationalize a regional mechanism for a CARICOM Regional Recovery Support Facility (CRRF), which would allow for efficient and effective deployment of surge recovery support, based in the Caribbean. CDEMA and WFP also facilitated the upgrade of 4 national and 2 regional shock responsive social protection systems.

UN Women focused on providing technical support to countries to ensure that there was improved planning, decision-making and action for gender-responsive and inclusive climate resilience in key livelihood sectors. This meant ensuring that decision makers were trained in inclusive decision making and policy, as well as strengthening the capacity for gender-responsive and inclusive climate change planning at both national and regional levels.

FCDO’s ambition on gender and equalities is high. Unlocking the full potential and power of women and girls is one of the four overarching priorities of the UK’s International Development Strategy, and its Disability Inclusion and Rights Strategy reaffirms the UK’s commitment to global leadership on disability inclusion. At the 11th UK-Caribbean Ministerial Forum, the UK committed to adapt global evidence on violence against women and girls and share learnings on ensuring climate finance is gender-sensitive. At the CARICOM Heads of Govt Meeting, UK’s Minister Rutley (Development) joined discussions on gender-based violence and challenges facing LGBT+ communities.

Related support on shock-responsive social protection promotes access and support for all in need, including vulnerable groups with protected characteristics, and there are some targeted projects under EnGenDER that specifically benefit groups such as the indigenous Kalinago (Dominica) and women (supporting livelihoods and tackling violence). In Suriname, the programme also supported a project to “Enhance Resilience to Water Access and Flooding” that focused on building resilience to social, environmental, and economic hazards. In Dominica, the programme helped the Kalinago expand their traditional crafting offering with new woodwork and craft skills to boost their economic productivity. The woodwork and craft training equipped 12 members of the Kalinago community with the know-how of using state of the art equipment to blend woodwork with handicraft. This training was paired with the funding needed to expand and start their own woodwork business.

The UK Government looks forward to the work undertaken by EnGenDER in the future!

Pat Shako
Climate & Disaster Resilience Adviser,
Caribbean Development Team
Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)



RAISING THE BAR - DISABILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

Q: What's your name and where are you from?

A: My name is Tor Bain and I'm from Gouyave, St. John in Grenada.

Q: Which course did you benefit from in the EnGenDER project here in Grenada and how do you expect your life to change?

A: I took part in the Hydroponics project and once I finish the hydroponics course, I expect my life will be wonderful.

Q: Can you give us some insight into the challenges you face as a person with disability in Grenada?

A: I was born hard of hearing but eventually I became deaf. It has been hard for me to get jobs here in Grenada. There is a big challenge here because it's not common to have interpreters for deaf persons at jobs.

Q: How has EnGenDER helped you?

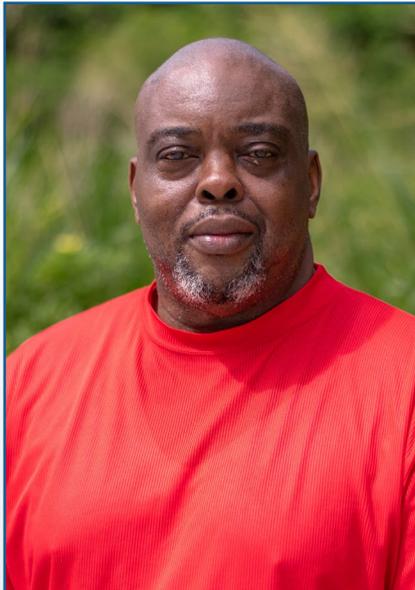
A: As a deaf person, this project has helped me to improve myself and my life through Hydroponics.

Q: Any last words as we end this brief interview?

A: Thank you very much for this opportunity to learn Hydroponics. I enjoyed learning Hydroponics, and I would like to learn more to improve myself. Thank you to the EnGenDER Project for this opportunity!



TOR BAIN



JUNIOR AUGUSTUS

Q: What's your name and can you give us a bit of your story?

A: My name is Junior Augustus and I'm from Grenada. I lost my leg when I returned to Grenada in a freak accident.

Q: You participated in the EnGenDER project's Apiculture course. What's your plan after you complete the course?

A: I'm planning to do as much bees as I could. I don't have free hands sometimes, but you don't have to check on it every week or every two weeks so let's see how this one works out. Then, I plan to register my business and have a productive honey business.

Q: What are your overall thoughts on this opportunity and what does it mean for you?

A: I would like to thank the EnGenDER project for giving me this opportunity. Especially someone with a disability – to move forward, to start off his own business without hesitation or discrimination. I am very grateful, and I hope you all could continue doing this to help people like me and others to achieve what they want to achieve.



Photo above: Building Recovery Capacity in Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) in Nine (9) CDEMA Participating States

Since 2020, Enabling Gender Responsive Recovery, Climate Change and Environment in the Caribbean Project (EnGenDER) has been implementing initiatives in nine (9) CDEMA Participating States: Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and Suriname to integrate gender equality and human-rights based approaches to strengthen disaster risk management, to build resilience for the effects of climate change and to improve disaster recovery capacity in the region. Here's a look at some of the activities undertaken through EnGenDER:

Under the banner of the Caribbean Resilient Recovery Facility (CRRF) launched in 2021, CDEMA conducted Recovery Capacity Assessments (RCA) in six (6) countries. The standards in this RCA are aligned to the Global Standard for Disaster Risk Reduction and CDEMA Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) Strategy 2022-2027 Outcome 3 – Accelerate Recovery. A key finding of the RCA was the capacity gap for speedy recovery after a disaster and the need for building national and regional capacity in assessing damage and loss.

To address this need, the CDEMA Coordinating Unit collaborated with UNDP Global through its Panama Regional Hub and the European Union to host a four-day Regional Technical Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) Methodology Training targeting high-level senior economic planning and sectoral representatives from seven (7) CDEMA Participating States: Antigua & Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent on March 27th – 31st, 2023.

The training workshop thus provided technical training to over thirty (30) professionals with lead responsibility for planning and executing projects and designing programs for their own post-disaster recovery frameworks within their country. The ultimate goal was to ensure a consistent and coherent approach while delivering an objective and comprehensive estimation of recovery needs, as well as swift decision-making and action. A secondary objective was to build a cadre of regional PDNA experts that could be drawn upon at the national level to support PDNA in

their own countries and be regionally deployed by the CDEMA CRRF, via an established PDNA Roster of Experts, to support regional recovery efforts in impacted Caribbean States.

The training also sensitized participants to the data requirements of PDNA assessments, the use of proxy data where there is a deficit, and the need for countries to have National Recovery Frameworks including agreed institutional arrangements in place before a disaster happens. The need for gender disaggregated data and data reflecting the needs of vulnerable populations was also brought into sharp focus given the differing needs of men and women and the exacerbated vulnerabilities faced by vulnerable groups in the aftermath of disasters. A key take-away from the workshop was the need for ongoing in-country training in all sectors, advocacy programmes and a network of informed strategic influencers and champions to promote the need for behavioural change within countries to address national recovery policy and strategy as well as recovery capacity needs.

This event underscored the importance of regional cooperation and partnership in disaster risk reduction and management. To further advance the building of regional capacity in PDNAs, EnGenDER under the umbrella of the nascent CRRF and using a similar collaborative arrangement will move to deliver a national-level PDNA Training programme in Antigua and Barbuda in September 2023, targeting agencies with strategic responsibility for economic planning, productive sectors, infrastructure and social sectors including the national gender agencies.

To sustain these efforts, the CDEMA CRRF intends to support the further development of the Regional PDNA Experts Roster and future training under other available programmes to further enhance PDNA capacity in countries and regionally.

Authors

Elizabeth Charles-Soomer, EnGenDER, UNDP
and Dr. Deborah Browne, CDEMA

PREPARING FOR CHANGE

Agriculture is not only a vital sector of Guyana's economy providing livelihoods for many persons, but also a part of our historical and cultural heritage. It's a way of life for many Guyanese, with practices passed down from one generation to another. However, this climate-dependent sector is vulnerable to climate variability and climate change, so the way we do agriculture in Guyana must change.

The Guyana School of Agriculture (GSA) is a premiere training institution, with over sixty (60) years of functional developmental support to agriculture in Guyana through academic programmes that heavily emphasise the inclusion of practical skills training. Currently, 57 % of the 166 students enrolled in the institution are females; a percentage that is unfortunately being restricted due to the lack of accommodation in the female dormitory. Many of the graduates pursue careers in agriculture education and extension services, contributing to a transfer of knowledge and technology learnt and practised at GSA to farmers.

Capitalising on this existing mechanism, EnGenDER will fast-track gender mainstreaming and climate-smart technologies support to farmers through strengthening the institutional capacity of GSA. Under the Offer of Complementary Funding (OCF), a web-based gender mainstreaming, and climate-smart agriculture course will be developed, making it one of the agencies under the Ministry of Agriculture that will benefit from a gender strategy. To support the course and the entire institution in further integrating technology into their learning, over 10 computers will be procured under the OCF. The course will also be extended to other interested persons, including young farmers and students from the University of Guyana. Upon completion, the GSA – and indeed Guyana – will be better able to show climate

fund donors that we have the capacity to effectively implement climate change adaptation projects in the agriculture sector.

GSA will further benefit under the Sector Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan under EnGenDER. Building on the institute's practical skills training programmes, a

greenhouse supporting aquaponics, hydroponics and aeroponics systems will be established in GSA's compound. Current students will benefit from being involved in the set-up of the greenhouse and the other systems, in addition to learning how to manage them. Upon project completion, it is expected that there will be more than 150 direct additional beneficiaries and over 500 indirect beneficiaries who are expected to visit the facility as a demonstration model.

In this changing climate, interventions like these greatly assist in sustaining climate change adaptation efforts, promoting technology transfer and uptake and safeguarding the region's food security in the future.

Author:

Ms. Lucina Singh, Technical Officer, Department of Environment and Climate Change, Guyana





YOUNG, FEMALE AND ON THE FRONTLINES OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Thirty-three-year-old farmer Anna-Kay Young always had a passion for gardening but growing up she was never allowed to pursue that interest freely. Whenever she planted her gardens, her uncles would take the machete from her and say, 'Planting is not for you. It's too hard'.

But that didn't stop the young farmer from trying. "I would have to wait until they were not around to spray the garden and weed," she remembers. "At times, to be honest, I'd get a few blisters in the palm of hand, my back would get swollen from the weight of the spray pump but gradually I got used to it so the blisters and swollen back wouldn't happen anymore."

Now a thriving Aquaponics farmer, who farms crops and fish together, Anna-Kay has found a clever way to contribute to the island's food security using climate-smart methods.

"Being climate smart and resilient is something that we should all take in consideration. Going into aquaponics or even hydroponics is a good way to plant crops using recycled water all year round. It doesn't take a lot of water because it's the same water that is being recycled. There's no overfishing in the sea," she explained.

Anna-Kay is a minority in a sector where cultural norms and perceptions may deny some women and girls in Jamaica equal opportunities to take up farming as a livelihood. Youth account for only 20% of all farmers, while females account for just under one-third (31%) of that number.

But with climate change causing adverse impacts on agricultural production through diminishing water supplies, increased floods, storms, heat stress, pests, and disease, both male and female farmers are needed in greater numbers to boost food security. That is why

EnGenDER's main aim is to build climate resilience in the agriculture sector, particularly for young women, girls and vulnerable groups by creating opportunities for them to learn climate-smart farming and fishing practices. In Jamaica, EnGenDER has reached more than 300 young farmers like Anna-Kay, equipping them with the tools they need to withstand the climate crisis.

Fishing is another important industry where climate-smart thinking matters. "If you go to the fisherman right now to buy fish, the majority are parrot fish – the endangered species – and they're not supposed to be catching those," Anna-Kay warns.

With her aquaponics enterprise, she avoids the pitfalls of open sea overfishing, while nourishing her crops from the fish effluent. To support her vision, the young farmer received the tools she needed from EnGenDER to set up a small aquaponics unit in her backyard – consisting of two grow beds, one fish tank, PVC pipes, a submergible water pump, smart plug, grit, blocks, and sand. Without the support, it would have cost her close to one million Jamaican dollars (JMD) or approximately USD \$6,470, she divulged.

With the smart plug, she can regularize the functions of the submergible water pump from anywhere. "It can be programmed from my phone in time regulation to run for an hour and then shut off for an hour to prevent overheating of the pump," she says. "By using the aquaponics unit, I save on fertilizer, so I don't release too much ozone-harming chemicals, if any at all. No pesticide is used."

Anna-Kay says on average she can reap 50 heads of lettuce every two weeks which she sells to market vendors. With the average price for lettuce hovering at JMD\$500 or approximately



USD three dollars, the young farmer takes home approximately JMD\$25,000 or approximately USD \$160 bi-weekly. She is now looking ahead to harvesting fish in nine months, which fetch JMD\$750 or approximately USD five dollars per pound at market.

With her current stock of 100 fish, Anna-Kay takes home an additional JMD \$75,000 or approximately USD \$485 from her small backyard aquaponics unit every nine months.

Although farmers and fishers are critical to food security, lingering inequalities result in unrealized potential, while climate change and natural hazards remain omnipresent dangers to fresh food supplies. Women and young people face greater challenges than men in accessing resources and securing employment, especially in the aftermath of a disaster. Women also encounter social barriers in benefiting directly or indirectly from what is perceived as ‘men’s work’.

These barriers must fall if the rising tide of climate change-induced global food insecurity is to be addressed. The World Bank says food insecurity pushed up food commodity prices in 2021 which in turn impacted 110 million additional people in low-income countries. Jamaica’s agribusiness sector contributed over US\$1.2 billion to the GDP in 2021. That’s about 8% of the island’s GDP.

As more young people like Anna-Kay are given a more level playing field to access opportunities in the fishing and farming sectors, Jamaica could conceivably increase its food production, staving off the worst impacts of the climate crisis while ensuring a food-secure future for its people.

Author
Andrew Laidley, Communications Associate
UNDP Multi-Country Office in Jamaica



ADDRESSING WATER SCARCITY IN RURAL BELIZE

Belize, a small Central American nation known for its stunning natural beauty and rich biodiversity, is facing a formidable challenge that threatens its ecosystems and the well-being of its people: the intertwined issues of water scarcity and climate change.

Rapid urbanization, population growth, climate change, and inadequate water management practices have intensified water stress in several parts of the country. These factors, combined with natural phenomena like prolonged droughts and erratic rainfall patterns, have placed immense pressure on water resources, particularly in rural areas.

The Enabling Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery, Climate and Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean (EnGenDER) project has emerged as an important initiative for confronting this issue. Through its groundbreaking interventions and collaborative approach, EnGenDER has significantly contributed to mitigating water scarcity in Belize and creating a sustainable future for its people.

The project was implemented with the main goal of improving climate and disaster resilience among vulnerable people, groups, and populations. Implemented by the Government of Belize in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the EnGenDER project also promotes sustainable development by integrating gender equality, climate change adaptation, and disaster risk reduction.

At the heart of EnGenDER is its commitment to community engagement and empowerment, recognizing the importance of involving local communities in decision-making processes and fostering ownership of water resource management initiatives. Through its collaboration with the Ministry of Rural Transformation, Community Development, Labour and Local Government, the project facilitated the updating of the Belize Rural-Area Based Development Strategy, which focuses on strengthening rural populations' decision-making capabilities in relation to water conservation efforts.

Recognizing the need for improved infrastructure to enhance water availability and access, EnGenDER invested in the purchase of a water bowser. The bowser serves two main purposes:

1. Enhanced emergency response: During times of drought, natural hazards, or infrastructure failures, the bowser provides an immediate emergency response. Currently, the bowser is used to transport and distribute water to affected communities, ensuring that people have access to safe drinking water for their basic needs. Before the purchase of the bowser, the Government of Belize spent approximately \$100,000 to purchase and deliver water to rural communities. The bowser therefore significantly reduces the Government's cost and improves its capacity to provide water in times of emergencies.

2. Improved water supply: In rural communities, where access to piped water infrastructure is limited, the water bowser is used to deliver water directly to communities. This helps to overcome the challenges of inadequate water supply and promotes equitable access to clean water for residents in those areas. The water bowser contributes to community resilience by offering a backup water supply in situations where the main water infrastructure is compromised. This can be especially important during the occurrence of natural hazards such as hurricanes or floods when regular water sources may become contaminated or inaccessible.



EnGenDER also contributed to the updating of the Rural Water Management Systems Database which is an important tool for tracking, managing, and ensuring access to clean and reliable water sources in rural areas. The database serves as a comprehensive repository of information related to rural water management



systems including infrastructure, water sources, maintenance records, and water quality monitoring data. It is designed to provide a holistic overview of the water supply systems in rural areas, aiding in effective decision-making, resource allocation, and policy formulation.

EnGenDER has emerged as a catalyst for change in Belize, revolutionizing water scarcity solutions by promoting community engagement, infrastructure development, climate change adaptation, gender mainstreaming, and sustainable water resource management. By addressing the complex challenges associated with water scarcity, the project has transformed the lives of countless Belizeans, ensuring access to clean water and creating a more resilient and sustainable future for all.

Author

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Photo Credits

National Climate Change Office, Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management.

SURINAME'S JOURNEY TO GREATER CLIMATE RESILIENCE



Climate change affects all economic and social sectors and strata of society, as well as global food security, and the fertility of agricultural areas. But climate change is also a political issue with fundamental implications for social justice and gender equality. Indeed, the road to resilience is not a smooth one. Despite being categorized and recognized as a net carbon sink country, Suriname is listed as one of the top ten countries that remain highly vulnerable to climate change. This exacerbates challenges to building future resilience, reducing poverty, and increasing employment, improving fiscal and macroeconomic stability, and sustainably improving the welfare of its population. What's the solution? Implementing measures to be well prepared for the consequences of climate change.

GENDER PERSPECTIVE

When the Gender Vision - Policy Document 2021 – 2035 was discussed and drafted in 2019, the national policy documents related to climate change were still being prepared. The policy document was therefore formulated based on the principle that the long-term goals, interventions, and actions to be included should explicitly contain a gender perspective and consider the specific needs of women.

It was considered essential at the time to add environment and climate change as a priority area, not only because women are disproportionately affected by the impact of climate change and disasters, but also because they are key drivers of change and play an important role in formulating and implementing policies and action plans related to the environment, protection of biodiversity, and climate change adaptation and mitigation. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the relevant Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) recommendations were included as long-term goals as in the other priority areas of the policy document.

The Gender-Responsive behavioral analysis of national climate change and disaster risk reduction coordinating bodies completed by UN Women, which aims to build a better understanding

of the individual and institutional biases and discriminatory behaviors and practices that are not captured in policy documents, and the Report of the Gender-based Climate Resilience Analysis for Suriname under EnGenDER emphasized the policy gaps related to gender and climate change.

Formulating the policy for climate action had to be completed in joint cooperation; gender equality therefore needed to be strongly endorsed by the financial sector. The Ministry of Home Affairs' Bureau of Gender Affairs took on that responsibility and deemed it necessary to update the Gender Vision Policy document 2021- 2035.

To update and elaborate the long-term goals, interventions, and actions on the priority area "Climate Change and Environment", an addendum of the Gender Vision Policy Document 2021 – 2035 was developed based on:

- The 2nd Nationally Determined Contribution (NAP).
- The National Adaptation Plan (NAP).
- The Sectoral Adaptation Strategy and Adaptation Plan (SASAP) for the water sector.
- Suriname's Multi-Year Development Plan 2022- 2025.



ESSENTIAL GUIDE

Gender equality is explicitly highlighted in the NAP and the SASAP, resulting in the “Climate Change and Environment” addendum to Gender Vision 2021 - 2035 that is a thorough guide for politicians, policymakers, NGOs, and other partners. And every journey is made easier and faster by being able to reduce uncertainty and steer clear of pitfalls. The integration of gender, finance and climate change will bring us closer to the goal of changing our behavior and attitudes to improve resilience against the effects of climate change.

Support from relevant agencies for gender responsive planning, monitoring, verification and reporting, the implementation of the Communications for Behavioral Change Strategy and Action Plan, and the development of Gender-Responsive and inclusive systems and capacities in measurement, reporting and verification (MRV), will help change our behavior to tackle climate change.

Author

Faryal Rosiek

EnGenDER Focal Point in Suriname, UNDP



CDEMA ADVANCES THE CARIBBEAN RESILIENT RECOVERY FACILITY

Since its establishment, CDEMA has and continues to advocate for Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) by supporting disaster risk management capacity development in 19 Participating States through three (3) of the four (4) phases of the disaster management cycle: (i) Mitigation (disaster risk reduction); (ii) Preparedness; and (iii) Response (humanitarian support). The fourth phase of the CDM cycle – Recovery – has largely been a national effort with bilateral partner support.

However, since the devastating impacts of Hurricanes Irma and Maria in September 2017, and against the backdrop of the region's vulnerability to multi-hazards and decades of economic, social and environmental damage and losses arising from severe weather events reflective of the effects of climate change, a decision was taken at CARICOM Heads of Government in 2018 to pursue the establishment of the Caribbean Resilient Recovery Facility (CRRF) to address the Recovery phase of the disaster cycle.

Under EnGenDER, the CRRF was launched by CDEMA in December 2021 at the CDEMA Regional Recovery Symposium. Several actions were undertaken under EnGenDER to inform the CRRF programme:

- Update of Model Recovery Framework and adaptation to five (5) countries.
- Study of past recovery experiences and institutional arrangements in the Caribbean to advise on the institutionalization and a whole-of-government approach to recovery.
- Pandemic Guidelines Playbook which emphasizes a Continuity of Business approach.
- Country Recovery Capacity Assessments to identify capacity gaps to be addressed both at the national and sector level.

How the CRRF will work

The CRRF will operate as a regionally-owned partnership mechanism drawing on the resources, programmes and experience of regional institutions and international partners. It will be aligned to the CDEMA-coordinated Regional Response Mechanism and will be led by CARICOM and coordinated by CDEMA Coordinating Unit (CU). The CRRF is to be built around four (4) recovery thematic clusters: -

- (i) Building Recovery Capacity
- (ii) Research and Information
- (iii) Financing
- (iv) Knowledge Solutions, with gender responsiveness as a crosscutting theme.

Each of these clusters are to be led by key and relevant regional institutions supported by international partners.

The main purpose is to support the building of national recovery capacities before disasters (i.e. disaster recovery planning/readiness); to fast-track recovery in the aftermath of disasters through critical surge capacity support where capacities are temporarily overwhelmed; to support the planning, implementation and monitoring of the recovery process (i.e. short- and medium-term recovery); and to build resilience within the region by ensuring recovery efforts are based on the principles of building back better and inclusion (i.e. long-term recovery).

The details of the mechanism, partnership agreements, organizational arrangements, and financing, among others, are being advanced through a technical consultancy managed by the CDEMA CU.

The EnGenDER capacity-building initiatives have elevated the recovery agenda in the short term and the operationalization of the CRRF is anticipated to improve recovery capacity and enable comprehensive disaster management in Participating States going forward.

Authors

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DRIVING INNOVATION FOR ENHANCED NATIONAL RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

Making systems more efficient is a key element of tackling risk and advancing resilience at all levels in the Caribbean, a region that acknowledges its significant vulnerability to disasters and is even more aware of the challenges that come with recovery. Through EnGenDER, the World Food Programme (WFP) has contributed to wider investments that seek to create space for governments to innovate and test out new ways to strengthen national social protection systems and ensure that these systems are more shock-responsive.

Processes and data tools are critical in developing systems that respond to the needs of all members of society and in ensuring that sex-disaggregated data is available to understand the different capacities and vulnerabilities. Strengthening data collection and information management is a key area of WFP's support through EnGenDER. In Dominica, where social assistance registration processes have been largely paper-based, a digital form has been developed with the Government and piloted with 10% of the Public Assistance Programme beneficiaries. In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, a plan targeting actions for data preparedness ahead of the hurricane season has been developed, with actions to follow to support data flows and readiness for digital assessments. In Jamaica, support has been provided and continues on digital assessments following disasters and to inform targeting.

In Saint Lucia, WFP supported the Ministry of Equity, Social Justice, and Empowerment to develop shock-responsive social protection standard operating procedures. Additionally, WFP partnered to complete and implement a household vulnerability index to support the identification of households vulnerable to shocks based on multi-dimensional poverty, resilience, and hazards in order to inform response planning and targeting in the event of shocks. When Category 1 Hurricane Elsa swept across Saint Lucia in 2021, the Government used the vulnerability index to identify the most vulnerable people needing assistance. This facilitated supporting people outside existing social programmes, for whom data was not already available on multi-dimensional poverty or resilience. With support from WFP, the response also tested new digital payment solutions.

“For us, we are happy that the World Food Programme supported the development of that tool. We were able to pilot that tool and to prioritize persons for assistance post Hurricane Elsa. We are looking to enhance that tool for post disaster assessment. But I also believe there is scope for broadening that tool and to ensure that we can use it for disaster preparedness,” said Velda Joseph, Saint Lucia’s Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Equity, Social Justice, and Empowerment.

Digital cash transfers

New payment modalities were also tested in Jamaica, where in 2022 in response to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, over 26,000 people with ongoing food security needs – primarily the elderly – received digital cash assistance payments through WiPAY, a mobile payment service provider. After using the digital wallet for cash assistance, WiPAY was used again by the Government of Jamaica for a COVID-19 grant, demonstrating the relevance of this tool for responding to shocks.

With WFP support, the Government of Belize also provided cash transfers to impacted people using mobile money services following the aftermath of Category 1 Hurricane Lisa, 2022. Through EnGenDER, complementary technical support was provided to the programme that reached 6,500 individuals. Not only was this the Government's first use of the recently developed DigiWallet for social payments, but it was also the first time that the Government provided cash transfers in response to a sudden onset emergency. Technical assistance on registration, communication and feedback mechanisms supported the scale-up, as well as knowledge gained through WFP's tailored training on shock-responsive social protection in the Caribbean.

Similar technical support was provided to the Government of Belize to a subsequent programme providing cash transfers and vouchers to impacted farmers to support their recovery, which used the same digital wallet delivery system – this time with a mix of vouchers redeemable in agricultural supply stores and a portion that could be cashed out. That experience shows how innovative delivery systems used in the social protection sector can link to other sectors, particularly when it comes to enhanced linkages with the agricultural sector.

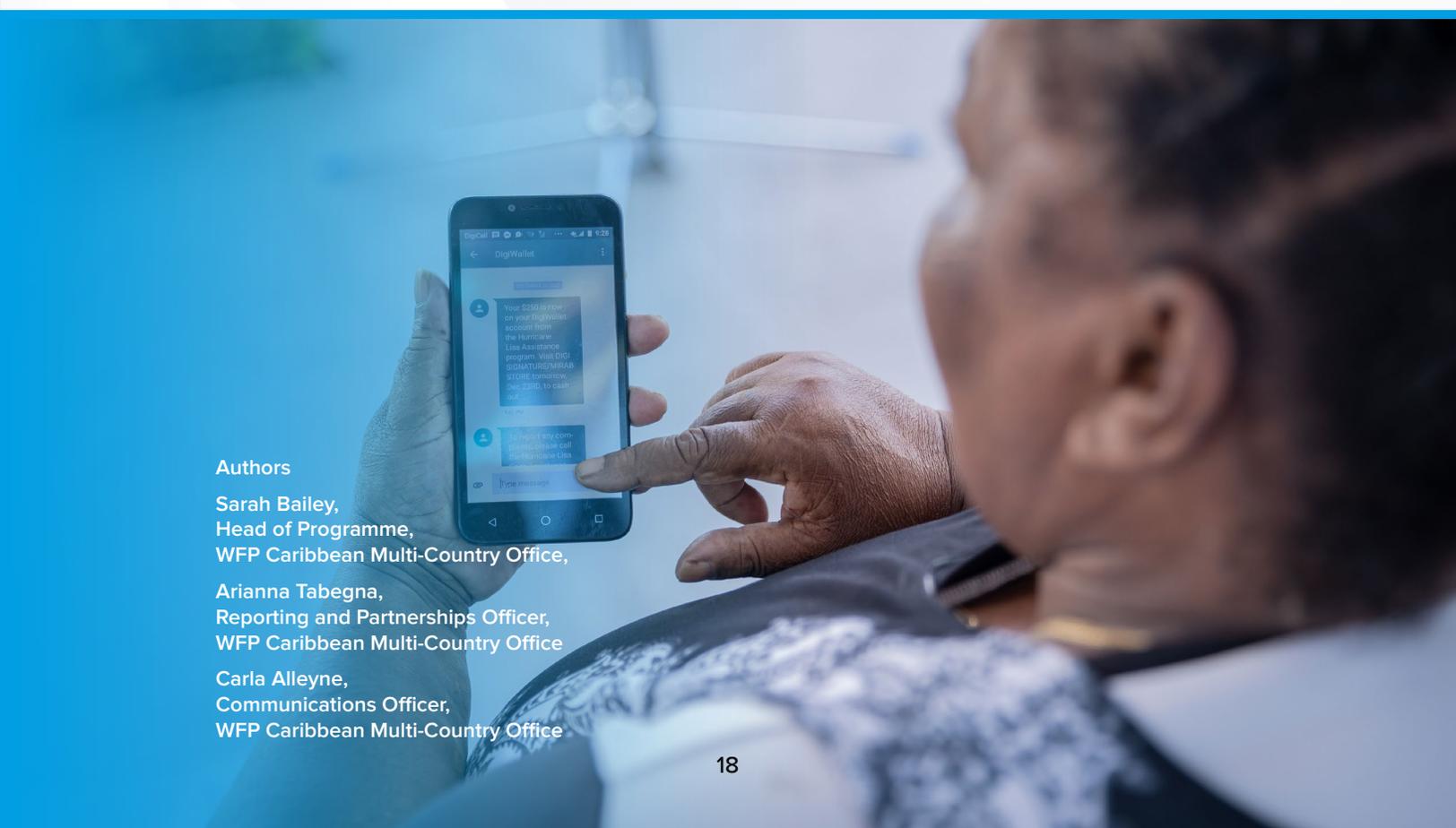
The lessons learned in these experiences are critical to supporting government response to shocks and support recovery by determining how systems and processes can maximize efficiency, convenience, timeliness, and accessibility. Overall, the EnGenDER Project has contributed to a wider pool of resources that have unlocked opportunities for governments to explore new approaches that will strengthen their social protection systems based on the national contexts. WFP's regional research, capacity-building and learning initiatives on shock-responsive social protection have provided a base for moving into a new dimension in people-centered disaster response and recovery.

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ENGENER IN ACTION

ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES AND DOMINICAN FISHERS DRINK IN KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE IN EXCITING EXCHANGE

Fisherfolks in St. Vincent and the Grenadines will learn how to use a tiny fish called ‘Tri Tri’ in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and ‘Titiwi’ in Dominica to create a unique punch; just one of the many culinary showcases forming part of the UNDP Knowledge and Experience Exchange between the two Caribbean countries.

St. Vincent and the Grenadines will host 18 fisherfolks from Dominica in October 2023; an extension of part one of the exchange visit to Dominica, the Nature Isle, in March 2023. The main objective of the learning exchange is to empower fishers with the knowledge and skills to make the Titiwi/Tri-Tri value chain more sustainable and a more attractive market and livelihood for generations to come.

Chief Fisheries Officer of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Jennifer Cruickshank-Howard, believes the exchange will foster the sharing of diverse experiences, lessons and provide solutions to common challenges faced by both participating countries. She noted, “This intervention will increase the resilience of Tri Tri fishers to adapt to the vagaries of climate change and to ensure the sustainability of livelihoods, poverty reduction, and food and nutrition security.”

During the exchange, Dominican fisherfolks will get a hands-on experience of Titiwi/Tri-Tri harvesting in St. Vincent and the Grenadines while Dominica will showcase a culinary experience and demonstrate the many delicacies that can be created using the Tri Tri, including a unique Tri Tri punch. Dominica’s Fisheries Officer, Diana Degallerie, believes that this exchange program will advance greater collaboration in the fisheries industry among vendors from both countries that will birth new ideas and opportunities for growth. Reflecting on the first phase of the exchange, she noted, “The fishers have been able to connect and learn from each other. That’s one of the biggest benefits from phase one – allowing the fishers to form new connections and understand how the other country is harvesting, processing, preparing, and selling the fish.”

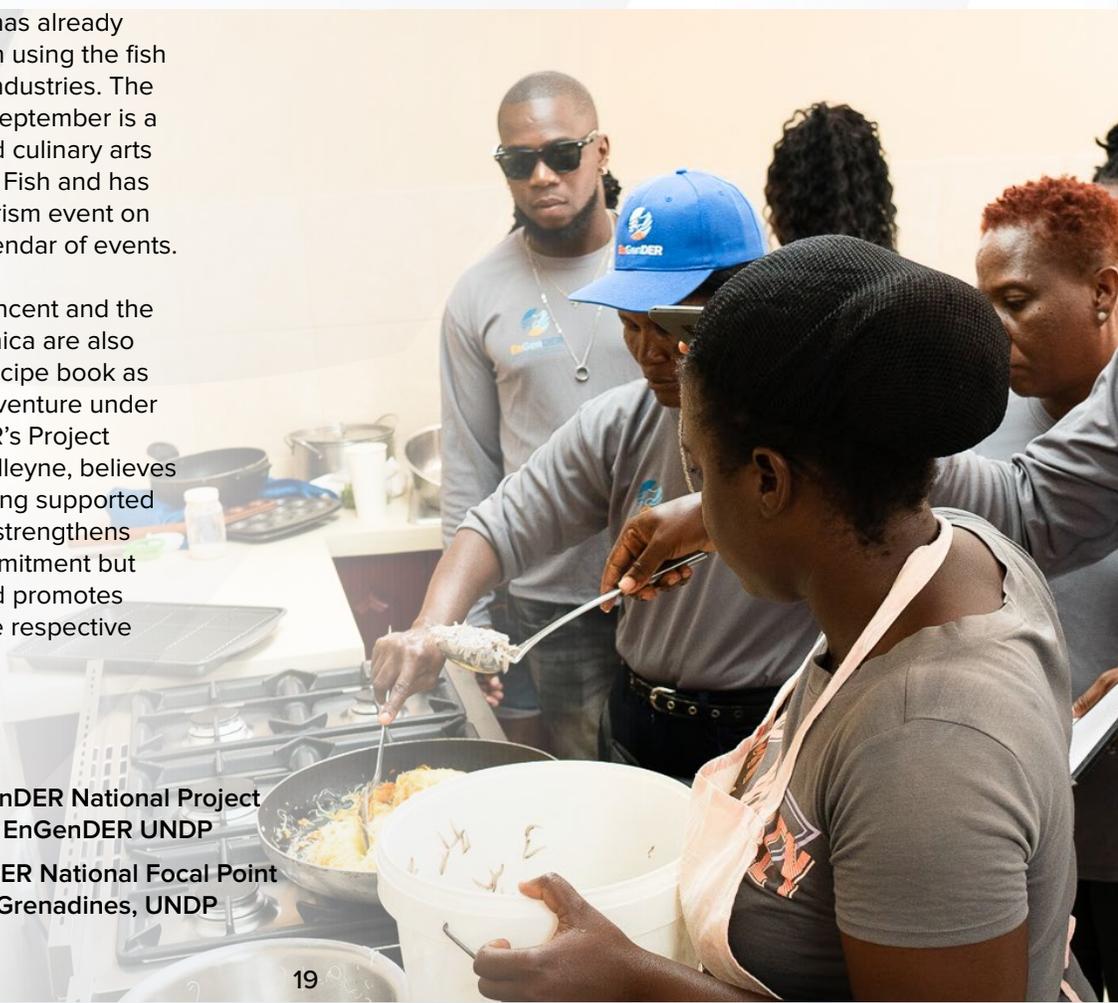
Meanwhile, Dominica has already made great progress in using the fish to add value to other industries. The Titiwi Festival held in September is a showcase of music and culinary arts using the Titiwi Baiters Fish and has become a flagship tourism event on the island’s annual calendar of events.

The groups from St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Dominica are also planning to launch a recipe book as part of a collaborative venture under EnGenDER. EnGenDER’s Project Manager, Dr. Marium Alleyne, believes that such initiatives being supported by the UNDP not only strengthens the organization’s commitment but also improves lives and promotes sustainability within the respective fishing sectors.

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FUTURE ACTIONS

In the final year of the EnGenDER project (2023-2024), we will maintain a focused approach on several key thematic areas and their intersection with vulnerable groups. These thematic areas include:

Climate Resilience and Fisheries Management

- Enhancing the climate resilience of coastal and marine ecosystems to support sustainable fisheries.
- Promoting gender equality in the fisheries sector, including empowering women involved in fishing communities.
- Implementing adaptive strategies to address climate impacts on fisheries and ensure food security.

Disaster Management and Gender Equality

- Strengthening disaster management strategies with a gender-responsive approach.
- Providing gender-sensitive disaster preparedness training and resources to at-risk communities.
- Ensuring the active participation of women in disaster response and recovery efforts.

Disaster Recovery and Persons with Disabilities (PWD)

- Tailoring disaster recovery and relief efforts to accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities.
- Ensuring accessibility to emergency shelters, resources, and support services for PWD.
- Promoting inclusive disaster recovery policies and practices.

Climate Resilience, Agriculture, and Persons with Disabilities

- Promoting climate-resilient agricultural practices that are inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities.
- Providing resources and training to PWD in agricultural activities.
- Creating pathways for economic empowerment and food security for PWD through sustainable agriculture.

Behavioural Change Communication

- Conduct training sessions and workshops for project stakeholders, community members, and partners.
- Engage with local communities to understand their needs, concerns, and the cultural context in which behavioral change interventions are being implemented.
- Partner with local organizations, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations to amplify the impact of behavioral change initiatives.

CRRF/ CDEMA Collaboration

A consultancy to guide the rollout and programme of the Caribbean Resilient Recovery Facility (CRRF) was initiated. The focus will be initiating wide regional and national engagement over the coming months.

Update of the National Disaster Management Plan to include Recovery and Recovery Framework for Saint Lucia

The Model National Recovery Framework will be adapted through a consultative process in Saint Lucia. It will establish the comprehensive thematic areas for resilient recovery and a whole-of-government institutional framework for adoption. The adapted national framework for Saint Lucia will also be added, along with other recovery guidelines and standard operating procedures, as a Recovery chapter in the statutory National Disaster Management Plan for Saint Lucia for adoption and application. The lessons learnt from this approach will be used to guide recovery actions in other participating states.

Post Disaster Needs Assessment Training (PDNA)

EnGenDER, CDEMA and UNDP Panama Regional Hub collaborated to advance in-country training in Antigua and Barbuda across key productive, infrastructural and social sectors including the national gender machinery in September 2023. This initiative will further build regional capacity in PDNA and will be duplicated in the future by the CDEMA CRRF under other programmes.

Gender Training Products for the CDEMA Regional Training Platform

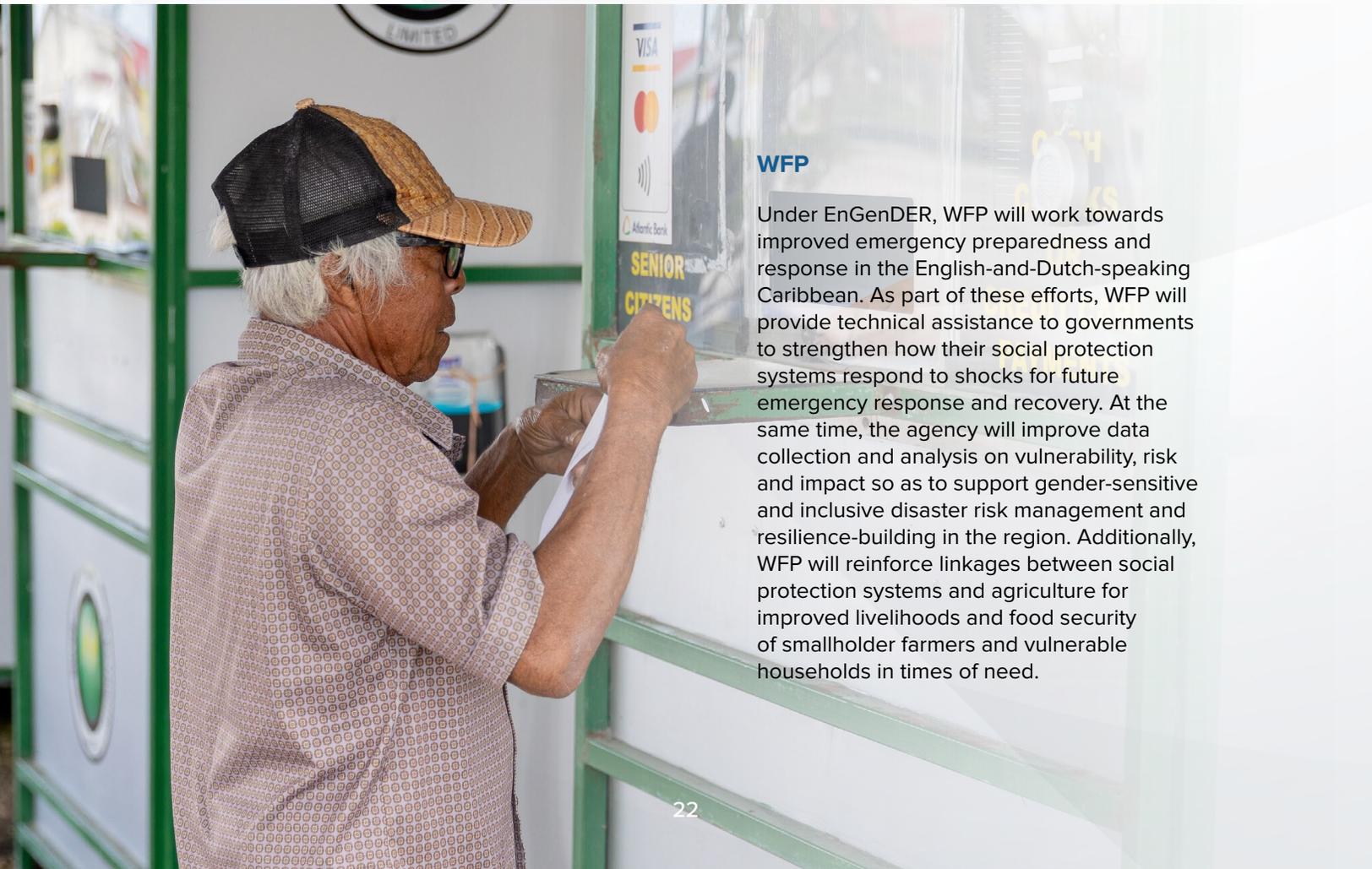
The consultancy to develop Gender Inclusive Recovery Tools for delivery via the CDEMA Regional Training Centre (RTC) got underway in Quarter 3. The RTC is an online training platform established at CDEMA in 2015 to further advance Comprehensive Disaster Management Training to CDEMA Participating States. This initiative will add Recovery to the existing Suite of Training Tools administered by CDEMA.



UN Women Multi-Country Office - Caribbean

As a key part of its work on strengthening standards, knowledge, and capacity in addressing gender inequality in climate and disaster resilience in EnGenDER, UN Women designed and launched a Caribbean model for Resilient, Inclusive, Smart and Safe Cities* in October 2022. In 2023 this work was continued through the mapping of pathways to further support the development of inclusive, smart, and safe spaces that are resilient to climate change impact and natural hazards, provide economic opportunities for women and other vulnerable groups, and are free from violence and harassment. Key components of the model will be tested in Saint Vincent & the Grenadines and Jamaica to provide further methodological and data inputs from (i) assessments of specific public markets; (ii) identification of entry points and opportunities for application of the model in current administrative frameworks and planning activities; (iii) consultations with key stakeholders on effective application of the model; and (iv) identification of capacity considerations for moving forward.

**Previously known as RISS but soon to be re-branded as IRiS (Inclusive Resilience in Safe & Smart SIDS)*



WFP

Under EnGenDER, WFP will work towards improved emergency preparedness and response in the English-and-Dutch-speaking Caribbean. As part of these efforts, WFP will provide technical assistance to governments to strengthen how their social protection systems respond to shocks for future emergency response and recovery. At the same time, the agency will improve data collection and analysis on vulnerability, risk and impact so as to support gender-sensitive and inclusive disaster risk management and resilience-building in the region. Additionally, WFP will reinforce linkages between social protection systems and agriculture for improved livelihoods and food security of smallholder farmers and vulnerable households in times of need.



EnGenDER

Enabling Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery,
Climate and Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean

For more information on the EnGenDER Project, please visit:
www.undp.org/barbados/engender

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