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Strengthen integrated and cohesive preparedness capacity at a regional, national and community level in the Caribbean

Communication Strategy



Strengthen integrated and cohesive preparedness capacity at a regional, national and community level in the Caribbean Communication Strategy

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This document covers the activities implemented through the project “Strengthen integrated and cohesive preparedness capacity at a regional, national and community level in the Caribbean” project.

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Contents

01. Introduction... 2

02. Communication Strategy... 5

2.1 Main objectives... 7

2.2 Specific Objectives... 7

2.3 Guiding Pillars... 7

2.4 Targeted Audience... 8

2.5 Products and Means of Communication... 8

2.6 Progress and Monitoring... 11

2.6.1 Result 1: Regional preparedness is strengthened through operational response readiness and harmonized approach to MHEWS... **12**

2.6.2 Result 2: Appropriate actions and solutions taken to increase EWS integration and effectiveness at the national level... **14**

2.6.3 Result 3: Increased effectiveness of preparedness at community level through concrete priority actions... **16**

2.6.4 Leverage existing best practices and support for sustainable actions... **18**

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01. Introduction

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The “Strengthen integrated and cohesive preparedness capacity at a regional, national and community level in the Caribbean” project supports concrete actions for an effective early warning system, as well as aims to improve information management and operational capacity for an improved preparedness mechanism for the Caribbean Regional Response. Working with Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Cuba at a national and community level, and with regional early warning and response actors at the Caribbean level, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and the International Federation of the Red Cross and the Red Crescent (IFRC) are partnering with the General Directorate of Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid of the European Union (ECHO) to reduce the risk of disasters in the region.

For the fulfillment of visibility and communications required by ECHO and as part of the project implementation, there is the need to develop a communications strategy. It shall provide helpful guidance to all implementing partners and stakeholders to enhance the coordination communication among actors, develop tailored and successful communication interventions to targeted beneficiaries and to enhance the effectiveness and accountability of the implementation partners’ valuable work towards preparedness and resilience building.

The strategy builds up, on one hand, on the Communication and Visibility Manual for European Union funded Humanitarian Aid Actions for ensuring a high level of awareness and accountability and to underpin the continued strong support among key stakeholders and the wider public. On the other hand, it builds up on the communication strategies from implementation partners and the participation of national counterparts seeking to contribute to the overall mission and targets of the project. The strategy backs up the UNDP Strategic Outcome on Strengthen Resilience to Shocks and Crises. It takes into consideration lessons learned from previous projects and facilitate a streamlined approach to readiness and preparedness on the regional, national and community components of the project.

The planned communications are also considering the same levels of intervention to respond to the needs and interests of both direct beneficiaries and partners and relevant actors. Increasing awareness, allowing people’s engagement for stronger advocacy, better information flows, analysis, and tailored approaches will be fundamental to reinforce the value and work done by OCHA in the region.

While the project aims at supporting the strengthening of CDEMA’s Regional Response Mechanism (RRM) and effective scaling up of concrete mitigation actions for early warning systems (EWS); the communications strategy will help on raising awareness and contributing to gather and share comprehensive information on comprehensive disaster preparedness to interested communities, national, inter-governmental and nongovernmental organizations. All communication activities will reinforce the promotion, coordination and development of the CDM in the action beneficiary countries and can further be of used for promoting best practices in other Caribbean states.

The IFRC focus on communication, for this project, strengthens the DRM 3-pillar approach to community resilience programming involving institutional strengthening, knowledge management and communication and advocacy. The proper engagement in the communication activities from the current strategy will *“build new capacities, promote innovation in social mobilization, and harness new knowledge and advances in communications and technology”*, following the IFRC Strategy 2020. The project and its communication approaches will engage in advocacy at all levels bringing attention to the importance and required preparedness brought by the ownership of Multi-hazard Early Warning Systems.

This strategy will aim to unify messages and approaches across countries thus the target audiences are accurately reached. In this manner, the MHEWS will be strengthened and social and behavioral change will be boosted. Based on the project activities, this communication strategy is founded on people centered, gender and inclusion approaches. This communication strategy proposes a multi-channel approach (ranging from interpersonal communication to social media) to increase reach and reinforce messages. The communication strategy accompanies the project implementation plan coordinated among partners and the designed monitoring and evaluation (See annex 5: Communications and Visibility Report Template) to assess progress including the mid-term, quarterly and the final reports.





02. Communication Strategy

02. Communication Strategy

The current communications strategy is developed as a guide and support to the activities of the DIPECHO Project “Strengthen integrated and cohesive preparedness capacity at regional, national and community level in the Caribbean” in ensuring a high level of awareness and accountability and underpinning a continued strong support among key partners, and towards the beneficiary communities and the wider public.

Strategic Communication is an essential tool for successful project management and implementation. It is imperative that overall objectives relate with programme goals, sufficient staff and resources are ensured and delineations of responsibilities and accountability are clearly defined. Coordination among implementation partners will help to shape and promote a joint message towards local beneficiaries, governments and its national systems and regionally to relevant stakeholders as IGOs.

As addressed in the UNDP Communications Toolkit “Impactful communications require organization, insight, and creativity (...). Plans for advocacy and outreach, emergencies, and major events strengthen the contributions of regional and national UNDP offices, as well as, UNDP’s overall vision”. In this case, it will strengthen not only UNDP, ECHO and the implementation partners’ contributions, visions and missions, but also supports the efforts on the road to the fulfillment of the 2030 Agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, specially the related to priority 4: Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Regarding community and visibility, it is recommended that key stakeholders are engaged in the design/updating of the communication strategy. Likewise, it is important that counterparts make use of the communication products as part of the appropriation process. Technical teams should be in constant contact and ensure consistent communication to improve the coordination and exchange of information between institutions. An additional effort should be made on sharing information related to events and travels related to the project implementation.

An additional recommendation on the implementation of the Communication Strategy is to take advantage of modern communications skills and technologies to influence communities and decision-makers, and to deepen public support towards the importance of preparedness. The use of strong and broader campaigns about early warning systems, disaster preparedness and risk reduction can contribute extensively to saving lives and people’s livelihoods; nonetheless it is always important to ponder the access of the direct beneficiary communities to such technologies and how it could be improved. A strong communications-minded culture builds preparedness and rapid reaction capacities in communities with assessed risk and vulnerabilities.

2.1. Main Objectives

- Support and demonstrate the successful achievement of the project implementation and impact on beneficiaries and institutions involved
- Strengthen the engagement and coordination with implementation partners and stakeholders
- Raise awareness on preparedness and Early Warning Systems in the Caribbean

2.2. Specific Objectives

- Increase actions visibility of donors, implementing partners and counterparts
- Share communication guidelines and elements (processes and standards) with implementing partners
- Encourage ownership of the project from national stakeholders
- Promote the exchange of EWS experiences and best practices
- Familiarize the gender approach as part of the indicators

2.3. Guiding Pillars

- Multi Hazard Early Warning Systems in the Caribbean
- CDEMA Regional Response Mechanism
- Preparedness Strengthening
- Resilience Building



2.4. Targeted Audience

The targeted population are the implementation partners and the inhabitants of the 5 countries part of the project: Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Specific focus will be given to the beneficiary communities, national counterparts and relevant stakeholders working on EWS in the Caribbean.

All implementing partners at the local, national and regional level are encouraged to share the information on their experience regarding the best and most used means and ways of targeting the beneficiaries of the project to ensure the most effective communication.

2.5. Products and Means of Communication

For the dissemination of information, including activities and deliverables, the project will engage in different products depending on the project needs and activities, the foreseen products and means of communication will be:

| Products | Means of Communication |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Emails | <p>It is advisable to use informative emails between project implementing partners regarding events, specific activities and other publications to further improve overall coordination and knowledge sharing of the project. Emails can be used to inform beneficiaries and disseminating information about events, activities or other relevant information.</p> |
| Website | <p>Information of the project shall be displayed in all implementing partners' website. A UNDP webpage with general information on the project will be completed and links would be consequently integrated to the strategy. Links from other partners should also be relevant to include.</p> <p>Ongoing EU-funded projects should be mentioned on the partners' websites, acknowledging the EU's role as a donor and highlighting the partnership aspect.</p> <p>The EU emblem and a link to the ECHO website must appear on the partners' websites</p> |
| Press releases / Web stories | <p>Main events, simulation exercises and other activities can be systematized and shared in press releases or web stories. It will be encouraged that press releases and web stories are shared in partners websites and social media, including national counterparts. The leading implementation partner per activity should develop the desired press release. EU visibility must be ensured before and during the event: through invitations, programmes, banners and display boards, etc. in the local language where appropriate.</p> |

| Products | Means of Communication |
|--|--|
| <p>Press releases / Web stories</p> | <p>According to ECHO visibility guidelines, it is highly recommended to issue a press release – as a minimum – at the start and at the conclusion of a project. A press release can be issued inside the beneficiary country/region as relevant for the concrete project. The press release may display the EU emblem alongside that of the partners. The press release text must clearly state that the project is funded by the European Union. Preferably, the text includes tangible figures/examples of the (expected) impact of the project, such as the number of beneficiaries. Technical language should generally be avoided.</p> <p>Where relevant, press releases can include a quote by an ECHO representative. Press releases may also include the contact details of a relevant ECHO representative for follow-up questions by media. Quotes and the contact person must be approved by ECHO before publication.</p> <p>For guidance please see: Press Release Template and Tips.</p> <p>All press releases should include the Boilerplate with the overall information of the project.</p> <p>Examples of Press Releases:</p> <p>English - http://www.latinamerica.undp.org/content/rblac/es/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2019/pnud-apoya-a-gobiernos-de-america-latina-y-el-caribe-a-acelerar-.html</p> <p>Spanish - http://www.latinamerica.undp.org/content/rblac/es/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2016/10/10/pnud-apoya-a-gobiernos-de-am-rica-latina-y-el-caribe-en-la-implementaci-n-de-los-objetivos-de-desarrollo-sostenible.html</p> |
| <p>News Media</p> | <p>Products from national counterparts and national/local media should be disseminated/replicated in the implementation partners social media to increase the visibility of the project and acknowledgement and appropriation within the national level.</p> <p>Interviews for Tv, Radio, Digital and Newspapers should be sought and encouraged. Implementation partners and national counterparts support with further dissemination in social media of all partners. When speaking to the media on EU-funded projects, implementing partners should aim to acknowledge the partnership with the European Union and explain the tangible results achieved with the EU-funding.</p> <p>Whenever a press conference is organized in the context of an EU-funded project, the European Commission - through ECHO headquarters, the ECHO field office or the relevant Delegation - must be invited to participate.</p> |
| <p>Posts</p> | <p>Frequent post should be published on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other social media, in all partner's social media. It is important to differentiate the reach and target audience for each social media and post accordingly. Post should not be the same for all.</p> <p>A suggested post structure is "Text + hashtag + link + tags + photo/video". An additional recommendation is to respond all comments and questions under the post. Finally, retweet and like post where the project/activities related are mentioned.</p> <p>ECHO Partners are expected to make full use of social media channels, as well as incorporate ECHO related posts and tweets throughout the lifecycle of projects to provide followers with an interactive and/or "real time" experience. Mention/tag ECHO on tweets (@ECHO_LatAm) and Facebook posts when communicating about projects that are funded by ECHO. This will allow ECHO to share and further promote/re-tweet. ECHO will do the same on its own posts.</p> |

| Products | Means of Communication |
|-----------------|--|
| Videos | <p>Videos should be shared in Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and other social media, in all partner's social media. Alliances with Tv broadcast within the Caribbean could be promoted, e.g. Caribbean Media Corporation.</p> <p>Generally, shorter videos (not exceeding 2 minutes) are better suited for dissemination. Videos must display the EU emblem with accompanying text at the beginning and/or the end.</p> |
| Pictures | <p>Photos should be taken on all events, activities done within the project. Pictures should be of high quality and resolution. They should be engaging to the public and preferably showcasing people's active participation.</p> <p>Photos can be shared on all partners websites and social media, including national counterparts. Pictures will be used for systematizing and accompanying the process undertaken in the project implementation as reports, videos, outcome project documents. Pictures used in byproducts should display description and credits.</p> <p>All pictures of the project will be uploaded in Flickr for further use and dissemination of the project activities. Photos should be uploaded in the Teams shared folder of the project.</p> <p>If pictures do not include the donor or partners visibility as part of the picture, a photo frame, bottom or upper banner can be included with logos and project name for use on social media.</p> <p>ECHO Partners are encouraged to promote project photos on social media with a clear acknowledgement of the EU partnership. In the course of a project, partners are also invited to send to ECHO good quality photos in the form of photo stories – i.e. a series of 6-9 photos with short explanatory captions. ECHO can use the photo stories on its website. The photos should be accompanied by brief captions relating to the subject of the picture and an explanatory sheet with background information (date, country, city/region, project, name and role of the person on the photo if applicable). The Commission reserves the right to edit the captions text of the provided photo so as to fit the editorial style of ECHO's website.</p> |
| Branding | <p>A graphic line should be created for the project respecting the donor and the implementation partners guidelines on the use of their corporate images. The graphic line should be adapted to the products selected including promotional products, documents design and layout, etc.</p> <p>Promotional products should be shared in events, simulation exercises and high-level meetings among others. For the purpose of the project, it is recommended branding products are useful for supporting people's preparedness. The products should display properly logos and/or name of the project as possible.</p> <p>A #PreparedCaribbean hashtag should be used to encourage people engagement and support the theme and project branding positioning in the region.</p> |

All partners should ensure that all their project activities are captured as communication pieces to feed reports, posts, videos, etc.

All communication products should adequately include the donor's contribution to the project considering its recommendations in the [Communication and Visibility Manual for European Union-funded Humanitarian Aid Actions](#), including the following disclaimer "This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The views expressed herein can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of the European Union."



2.6 Progress and Monitoring

The communications strategy supports the overall project implementation, specifically it will respond to certain indicators. Implementing partners will be asked to include in all narrative reports information on the communications engaged during the quarterly intervention. For better information management, partners are encouraged to make use of the [Communications and Visibility Report Template \(PPT\)](#) to include all their visibility efforts. Their inputs will feed a matrix that will have the overview information on all partners communications and visibility undertaken during the project to ease the reporting to the donor, focusing on reach and impact of the activities and the project as such.

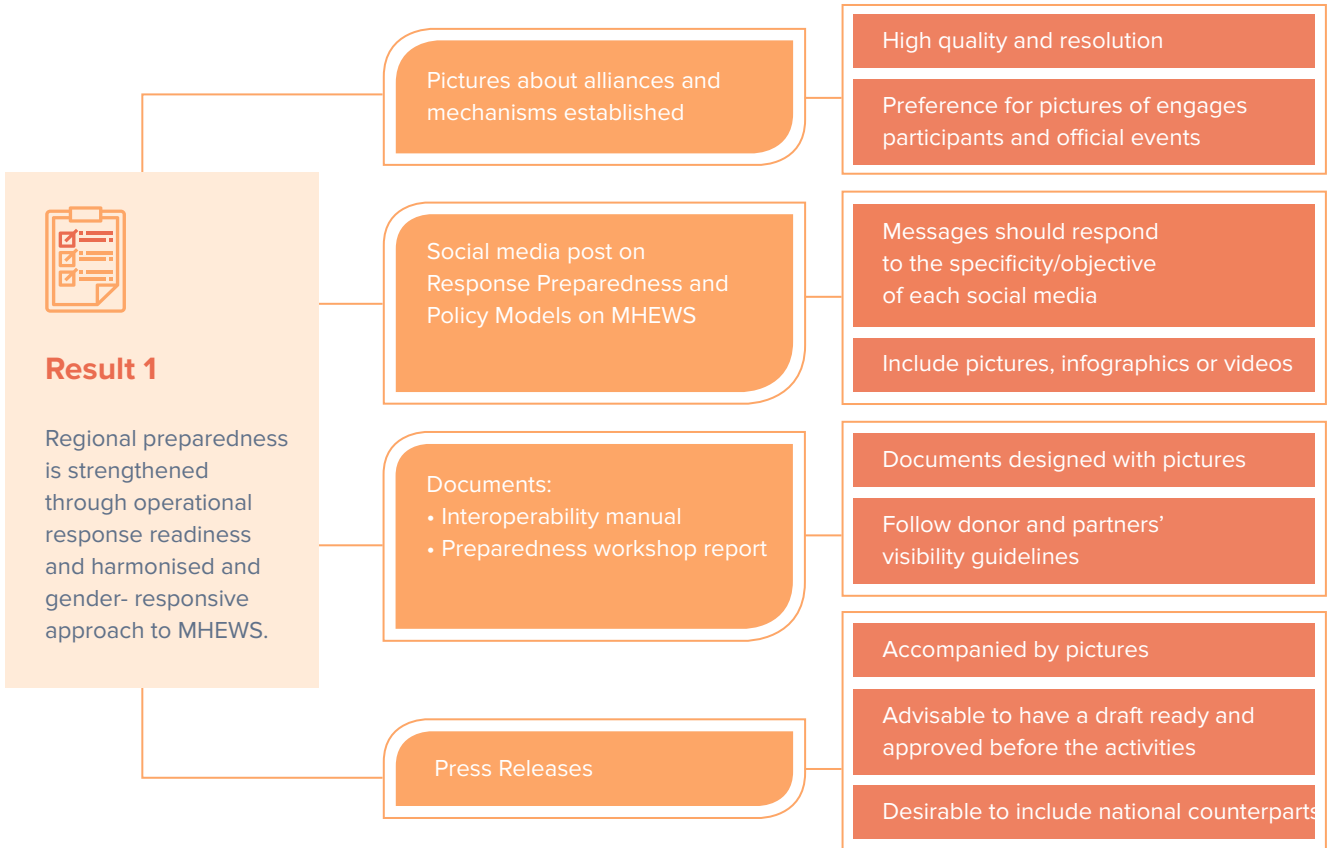
The communicational products addressed vary depending on the project's result, however there are certain visibility products like post on social media and institutional websites that are recurrent among all 4 project results.

2.6.1 Result 1: Regional preparedness is strengthened through operational response readiness and harmonized approach to MHEWS

Main Responsible: OCHA and CDEMA

Specific Target Audience: Preparedness and DRR regional stakeholders, Technical focal points from Disaster Management Agencies/Offices from the Caribbean, other government officials.

Products:



- *Pictures: High quality/resolution photos should be taken at workshops, events about alliances and mechanisms established during the project implementation and others considered relevant. Efforts should be made on having pictures with engaged participants and official event pictures.*
- *Post on Social Media: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram: posts will inform on the enhancing on information management, workshops undertaken on response preparedness, policy models on MHEWS with a gender approach and alliances and mechanisms established for EWS. All post on social media should include pictures, videos or infographics. Messages should be different on each social media; in case the same picture is used.*
- *Documents: Interoperability Manual, Lessons learned report, Preparedness workshop report. Documents should include pictures of the process undertaken in the activity, they should be diagrammed having into consideration the partners and donor visibility guidelines.*
- *Press Releases: When considered relevant, press releases can be published related to the activities undertaken, it should be accompanied with pictures. Template of a press release can be seen in Annex 1. It is advisable to work on having an approved document for publication before the event, missing only the picture of the activity, for ensuring timely publication and replication by engaged partners. National and Implementing partners should be included in drafting the publication to ensure ownership and sustainability of the process.*

Annex 1. It is advisable to work on having an approved document for publication before the event, missing only the picture of the activity, for ensuring timely publication and replication by engaged partners. National and Implementing partners should be included in drafting the publication to ensure ownership and sustainability of the process.

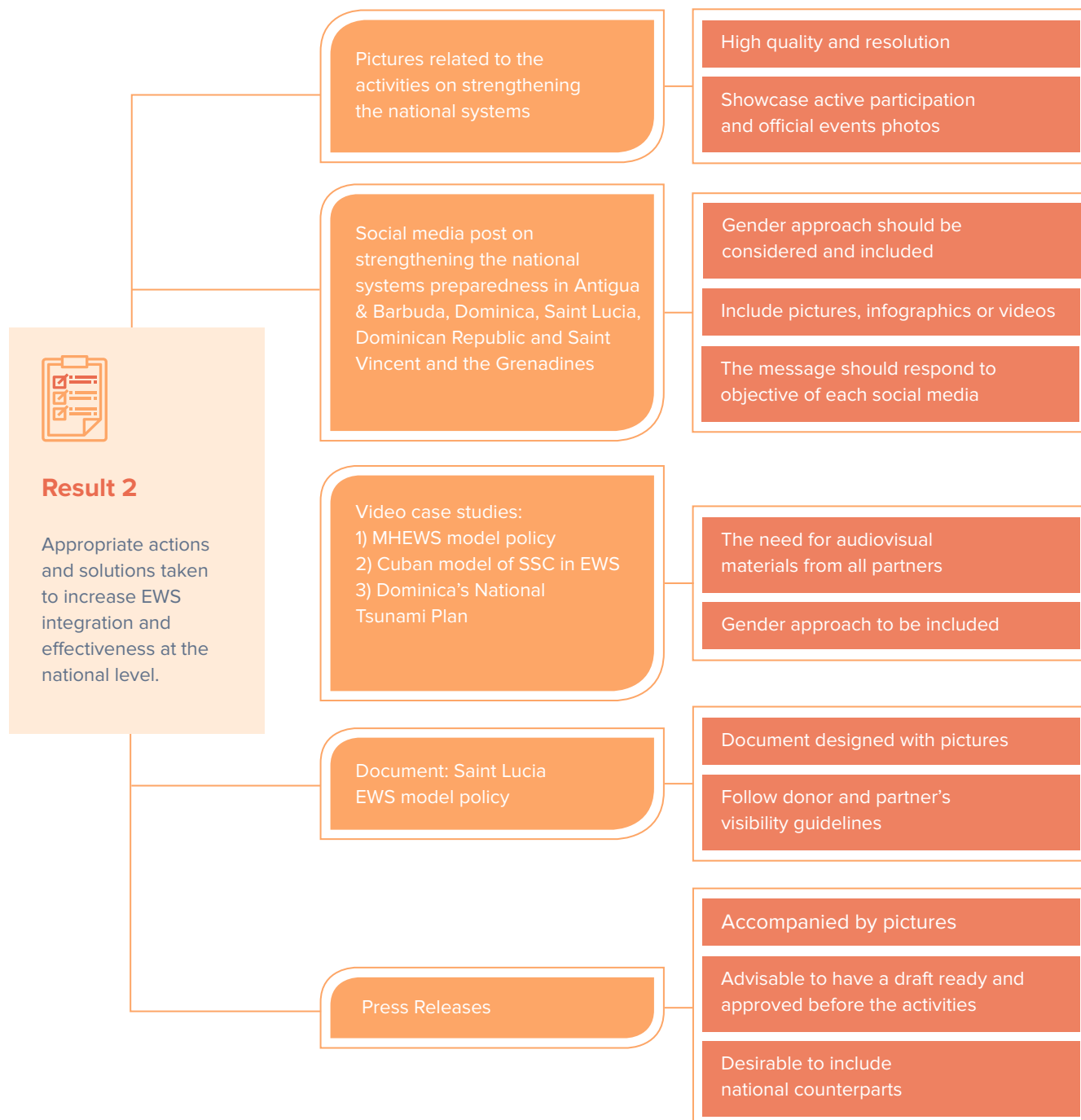


2.6.2 Result 2: Appropriate actions and solutions taken to increase EWS integration and effectiveness at the national level

Main Responsible: CDEMA, UNDP BRB, UNDP DR and IFRC

Specific Target Audience: Technical focal points from Civil Defense/Disaster Management Agencies/Offices, other government officials and general public from Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Lucia, Dominican Republic, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Products:



- *Pictures: High quality/resolution photos taken at meetings, workshops, events about specific actions towards strengthening the national systems. Efforts should be made on having pictures with engaged participants and official event pictures.*
- *Post on Social Media: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram: posts will inform on the activities to strengthen preparedness the national systems in Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines; gender approach should be showcased. Additional posts should show activities in the municipalities of Miches and el Seibo in Dominican Republic giving visibility to the gender EWS response. All post on social media should include pictures, videos or infographics. Messages should be different on each social media; in case the same picture is used.*
- *Document: SLU EWS Policy – the document should be diagrammed following the project branding and the partner' and donor visibility guidelines. The process undertaken for the development of the SLU EWS Policy should be documented with pictures for proper development of an outcome document to be shared online.*
- *Video case studies:*
 1. *SLU policy step by step – In addition to the documented pictures; partners should ensure videos, interviews, voice recording are made as they will be necessary for the development of a step by step video on how SLU developed its SLU EWS Policy and how others can replicate the experience. All material should be shared with UNDP Regional Hub for the video making. The SLU video will be a guide for other countries for the development of EWS policies at the national level. The regional component should be included.*
 2. *Simulation exercise(s): see detailed info in Result 3*
- *Press Releases: see detailed info in Result 1*

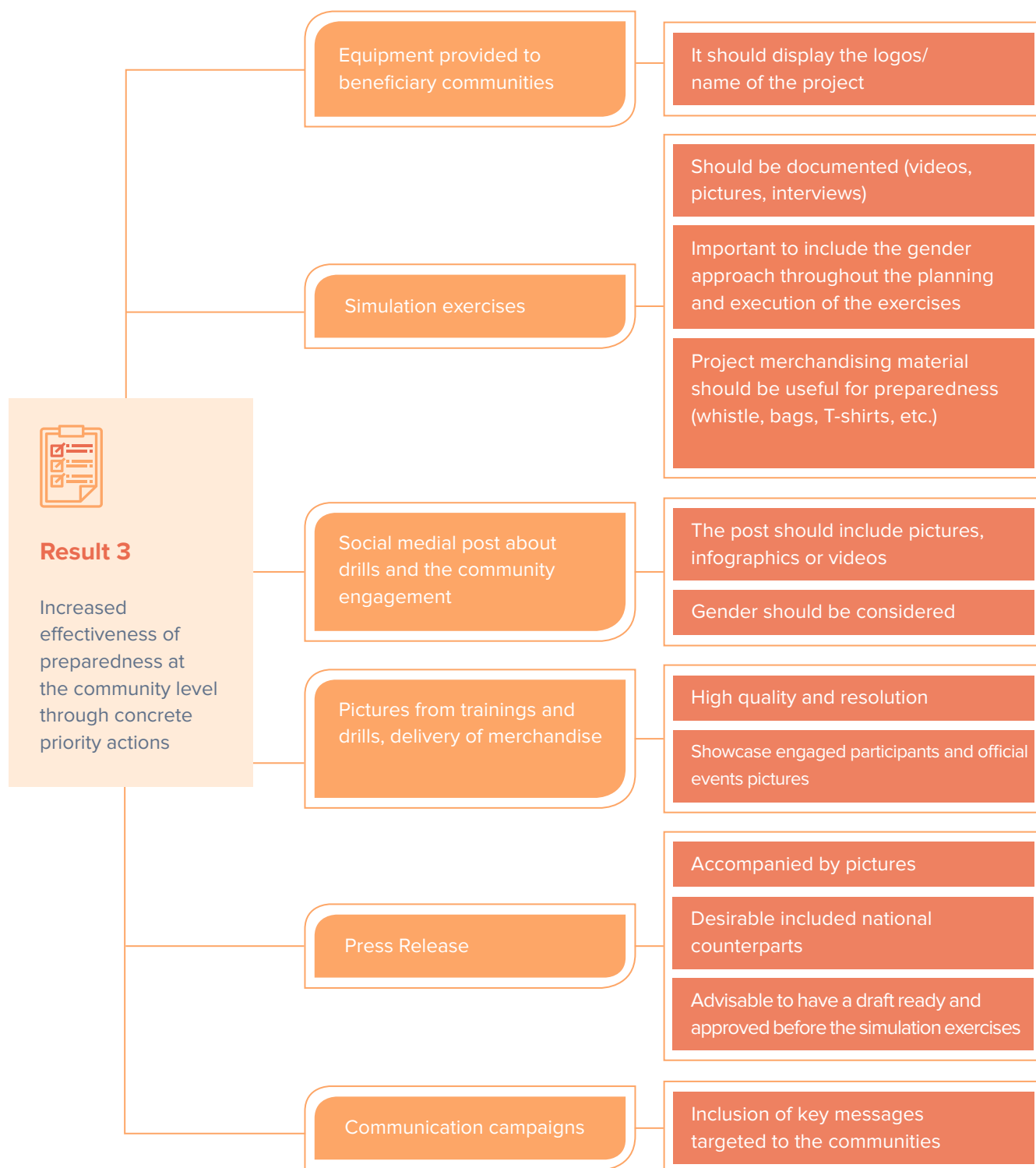


2.6.3 Result 3: Increased effectiveness of preparedness at community level through concrete priority actions

Main Responsible: IFRC, UNDP BRB and UNDP DR

Specific Target Audience: Beneficiary communities in Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Dominican Republic and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Civil Defense/Disaster Management Agencies/Offices, other government officials.

Products:



- *Communication equipment for community response coordinators. All equipment should be display properly logos and/or name of the project as possible (Stickers).*
- **Simulation Exercises:** *The organization of the simulation exercises and the simulation exercises as such should be documented by partners (IFRC, NS) with pictures, videos, interviews, etc. for the development of educational videos on carrying out drill in the Caribbean. The videos will focus on different types of hazards and the correspondent safety measures to take into consideration in case of an event. Videos will include the gender approach. All material should be shared with UNDP Regional Hub It is advisable that merchandising used for implementing partners besides promoting the project, partners and donor are useful for preparedness (whistle, raincoat, reusable bags, etc.)*
- *Post on Social Media: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram: posts will inform on the drills undertook and the participation and opinions of the community engaged; gender approach should be showcased. All post on social media should include pictures, videos or infographics. Messages should be different on each social media; in case the same picture is used.*
- *Pictures: High quality/resolution photos should be taken at trainings and drills, delivery of equipment and merchandise to communities. Efforts should be made on having pictures with engaged participants and official event pictures.*
- *Press Release: see info in Result 1*
- *Key messages: A communication campaign is being designed to prepare the population for the occurrence of different types of events in coordination with CDEMA and IFRC to develop target messages to the communities. Key messages should be included in systematization videos, if appropriate. UNDP Regional is exploring the possibility on engaging an alliance with Facebook for the dissemination of Key Messages in the selected countries. Additional alliances should be considered – Private Sector, Caribbean Media Corporation, etc.*

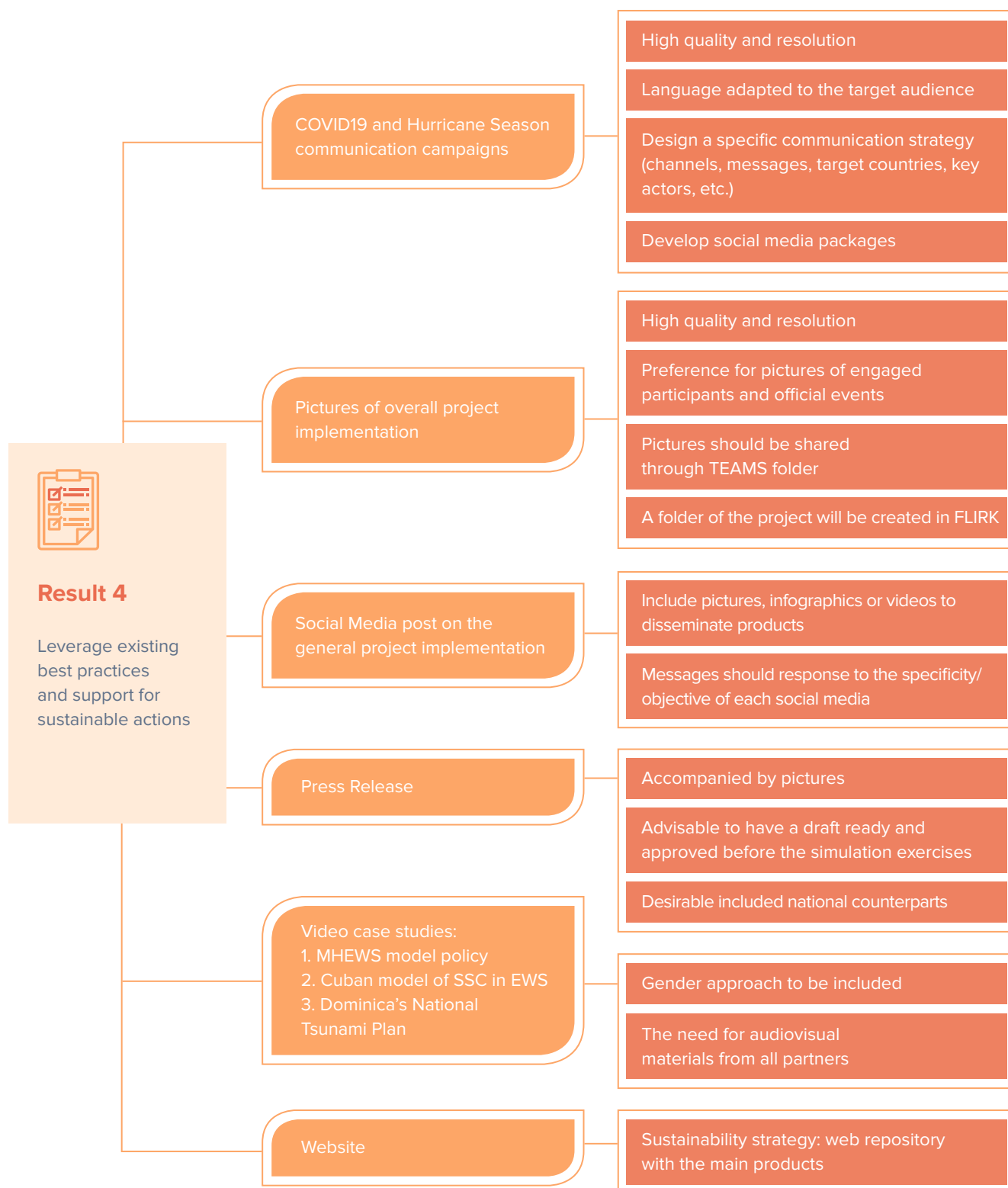


2.6.4 Result 4: Leverage existing best practices and support for sustainable actions

Main Responsible: UNDP Regional Hub, UNDP Cuba, UNDP DR, UNDP BRB, IFRC, OCHA and CDEMA

Specific Target Audience: Civil Defense/Disaster Management Agencies/Offices, other government officials and implementing partners.

Products:



- *Contest on EWS best practices: the exchange of experiences between islands will be promoted through the launch of a Contest on EWS best practices to all the Caribbean region. Dissemination of the contest would be done on the website and social media of the project implementing partners.*

Among the submitted practices, 6 will be chosen to participate in a series of webinars. Participants to the webinars will be invited to vote the best 'best practice'. The selected best good practice will win the production of a video to showcase his/her experience. Partners will be asked to encourage national systems application to the contest. Additionally, partners should support the follow up on the dissemination and participation of interested stakeholders in the Webinar for choosing the winner.

- *Pictures: High quality/resolution photos should be taken at events where the project, progress and achievements are promoted. Efforts should be made on having pictures with engaged participants and official event pictures. All other pictures from the project are relevant for promotion, dissemination and the making of the video of systematization. All partners are encouraged to share pictures after each action and activity organized. An album on FLICKR will be created with all project activities.*

- *Website: As part of the sustainability strategy of phases I and II of the project, a repository will be made on the UNDP Regional Hub website with all the main products developed by all partners.*

- *Post on Social Media: Twitter, Facebook and Instagram: posts will inform on the general video of the project. Additionally, social media will serve as dissemination tool for the contest on EWS best practices, its webinar and the promotion of the winner. Messages should be different on each social media; in case the same picture is used.*

- *Press Release: see detailed info in Result 1*

- *Video case studies: See above R2 & R3*

- *Cuba Case Study – The case study will be systematized through an audiovisual product. The product should properly follow and comply with the graphic line of the project and the visibility guidelines of partners and donors.*

- *Communication Campaigns: The campaign for the Hurricane Season and the COVID19 campaign have to be disseminate in a common strategy with the rest of the partners through the Social Media and their websites. The information has to be accompanied by the Social Media Packages.*

All steps and tips undertaken for improving the project implementation and its communication strategy and its dissemination strategy amongst implementing partners and towards key stakeholders will be contributing to strengthen the existing regional coordination and most importantly raising knowledge and awareness on disaster preparedness.