

Capacity Building Initiative for **Disaster Preparedness and Response in Caribbean National Societies**

OVERVIEW

The OFDA project falls under the Caribbean Communities Organised and Prepared for Emergencies (CCOPE) Programme which is funded through three other initiatives:

- i) Early Warning Systems (EWS) partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- ii) The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
- iii) Global Affairs Canada (GAC)

The IFRC has collaborated with the United States Agency for International Development Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA) to address the capacity challenges faced by Red Cross National Societies in preparing and responding to disasters and emergencies within their communities and nationally. USAID/OFDA's Latin America and Caribbean Disaster Risk Reduction Plan 2015—2019 places priority on building national level capacity by strengthening the local disaster management structure which includes the national disaster office as well as key players such as the Red Cross; and it also speaks to community-based disaster risk-reduction initiatives which focus on the most vulnerable. These priorities are congruent with the strategic aims and values of the Red Cross and provides the basis for cooperation between the two organizations; moreover, this project is aligned to USAID/OFDA's Risk Management Policy and Practice sector.





COUNTRIES ENGAGED

PHASE 1

Barbados
Belize
Bahamas
Dominica


PHASE 2

Barbados
Belize
Bahamas
Dominica
St.Vincent and the Grenadines
St.Kitts and Nevis

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In 2013, an internal mapping and analysis of the capacity of Caribbean NSs was conducted and highlighted common internal challenges related to National Society Development (NSD) which impede their ability to meet these commitments and to effectively address the needs of the communities they serve. Considering these challenges, the IFRC drew on a global National Society Development Framework which addresses capacity building and institutional strengthening of NSs so that they can become 'organisations that consistently deliver, through volunteers and staff, relevant countrywide services to vulnerable people sustained for as long as needed and that contributes to the strength of the IFRC and the Movement' (IFRC National Society Development Framework, 2013).

At the Regional Humanitarian Response meeting held in July 2016, Caribbean Red Cross National Societies (NSs) prioritized disaster response and community resilience as a means of continued promotion of a culture of learning, knowledge-sharing, innovation and use of technology to better serve communities and remain relevant, adapting to a changing environment and responding to their humanitarian mandate in a more efficient and effective way. The Presidents and Directors General from thirteen (13) of Caribbean NSs met in March 2017 and identified areas which their NSs wished to strengthen to improve the effectiveness and impact of the organisation in their respective country.



AMONG THE CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED WERE ISSUES PERTAINING TO:

STRATEGIC PLANNING
RESOURCE MOBILISATION
VOLUNTEER AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
ACCOUNTABILITY
GOVERNANCE

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
DISASTER RESPONSE CAPACITY
FULFILLING THEIR AUXILIARY ROLE
LEADERSHIP
MANAGEMENT

OVERALL GOAL

To build the capacity of Caribbean Red Cross National Societies to support the enhanced resilience of communities to prepare, respond and recover from emergencies. Further, two main outcomes highlighted under this project are to:

- Enhance National Society institutional readiness to prepare for and manage emergencies.
- Improve capacity for disaster preparedness and response at the community, national and regional levels.

TOGETHER WE WILL:



Training - Enhance access to and skills training related to Community Early Warning Systems (EWS); Community Disaster Response Teams (CDRTs), National Intervention Teams (NITs) response and contingency planning, as well as Emergency Operations Centre training; including training on IFRC tools and expertise developed over decades to train communities and NS stakeholders, facilitate transfer of skills and exchange of knowledge.



Assessments – Introduction to the Preparedness for Effective Response Approach to conduct assessments of the NSs response capabilities and take corrective measures to address gaps identifies. Other assessments considered are Organisational Capacity Assessment and Certification (OCAC)/ Branch Organisational Capacity Assessments (BOCA), OCAC BOCA, Disaster Response Capacity Enhancement (DRCE); as well as development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).



Planning – enabling the development and/or the updating of response and contingency plans to strengthen operation procedure within the NSs.



Stronger Volunteer Management – Red Cross volunteers are the bedrock of the IFRC movement and building a cadre of volunteers with the necessary skills, as well as competencies to support operational capacities is encourage through the activities of volunteer management, orientation, training and events of recognition.

A STRONGER CARIBBEAN

This initiative with USAID/OFDA supports the IFRC's CCOPE programme and will build upon its achievements to avoid duplication of efforts and to create synergies around targeted outcomes. The focus of the project lies in the development of capacity at the community and national level enabling Red Cross National Societies and the communities they serve to have the skills, knowledge and resources needed to increase resilience and to utilise their own capacities as first responders to an emergency or disaster in their community. It considers the challenge of many NSs which struggle to fulfil their mandates because of structural, financial and human resource limitations and gives attention to strengthening their ability to work closely with communities before, during and after emergencies. Given the extensive work of NSs in communities, and their proven track-record in disaster preparedness and response, it is expected that greater internal capacity within these organisations will directly contribute to loss reduction and faster recovery in the communities which they serve. It also addresses the interlinkage needed with NSs' auxiliary role and strengthening the support they give to national response frameworks/systems.

PARTNERS

Technical expertise and support will be provided by the IFRC Country Cluster Support Team in Trinidad, as well as from the Americas Regional Office in Panama, the Caribbean Disaster Risk Management Reference Centre in Barbados, and the Disaster Preparedness Reference Centre in El Salvador. The IFRC's regional and global networks also represent a resource and opportunity to access additional skills and to adapt and apply tools within the Caribbean context as well as to uptake innovative tools and ideas developed within this region for sharing globally.

In addition to, National Disaster Organisation (NDOs) nationally and regionally through CDEMA with which the IFRC has a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for a more targeted contribution by the IFRC and NSs to the CDM Strategy. In addition, partnerships and collaborations have been established with governments, private organisations and international agencies. These partnerships will play an important role in the implementation of the actions as well as in promoting sustainability of the efforts by integrating actions into national and regional processes.

TIMELINES

PHASE 1

23/08/2018

TO

28/02/2020

PHASE 2

24/09/2018

TO

23/03/2020