

**United Nations Development Programme**

**Barbados and the OECS  
&  
Cuba**

**Caribbean Risk Management Initiative**



**Quarterly Report**  
April - June 2008

***Highlights this trimester:***

- *Results obtained from external program evaluation*
- *Project Steering Committee meeting held*
- *Funding proposal re-submitted to European Union*

**Section A: Project progress report**

**Objective 1: Increased Capacity for climate risk management**

**I. Integrated, cross cultural risk management and adaptation knowledge network developed**

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**1. Regional and national meetings**

UNESCO regional workshop

In the spirit of inter-agency collaboration, the CRMI Program Manager made a presentation on “Climate change and vulnerability in the Caribbean,” at a regional UNESCO-sponsored workshop on disaster risk management in relation to world heritage sites held in Havana from June 23-27. Participants from the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Bahamas, Suriname, Cuba and Curacao were in attendance and engaged in lively debate.

BCPR workshop in El Salvador

The CRMI Project Manager attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sub-Practitioners’ Workshop on Disaster Risk Reduction for Latin America and the Caribbean, convened by the BCPR Regional Advisor in El Salvador on May 20-21. Both the Project Manager and the Program Manager participated in the Central American sub-regional Knowledge Fair on Disaster Risk Reduction linked to this workshop, and CRMI publications in Spanish were distributed to the participants from the numerous countries represented.

Implementation Committee Meeting

A meeting of the CRMI’s Implementation Committee, comprised of the DRR focal points from the UNDP COs in the region, met in El Salvador on 21 May. While the full committee was not present, those in attendance held a fruitful discussion on the current challenges facing the CRMI, and improvements needed from their CO perspectives. Agreements for follow-up by this committee include the following:

- Undertake a mapping of the links between Caribbean CPDs and the CRMI, for the next Implementation Committee meeting.

- Develop mechanisms for the focal points to be more systematically involved in the CRMI, and also for the latter to ensure that governments are informed and on board.
- Prepare and circulate a schedule of CRMI activities for 2008/2009.
- Coordinate closely with Belize CO for logistics of the upcoming stakeholders' consultation.
- Once the new webmaster is hired, incorporate links to relevant country projects and frameworks into the CRMI website.

The next Implementation Committee meeting will be held in the fall, with the presence of all members.

### Project Steering Committee Meeting

The Project Steering Committee meeting was held in Costa Rica on May 23, in coordination with RBLAC's Caribbean Cluster. All Caribbean COs were represented, in addition to RBLAC, BCPR and BDP. This proved to be a highly productive work session, with a focus on the strategic future directions and configuration of the CRMI. The findings from the program's external evaluation were reviewed and approved. Key decisions made by this Committee include:

- Consensus indicates that the CRMI should continue, with an adjusted thematic focus and possibly on a larger scale. The Stakeholders' Consultation will be an important moment to determine the scale and thematic emphasis of the CRMI.
- More scope should be taken within CRMI to focus on climate change adaptation, and to continue linking the disaster risk reduction and climate change communities.
- Expanded geographical coverage for CRMI, specifically including Central America, should be considered.
- The CRMI should initiate a program design phase, with a proper sequence of consultation with counterparts and governments, leading to formulation of a new Project Document for December 2008.
- Based on new programme, the implementation modality should be defined.
- In addition to the Stakeholders' Consultation, there should be a consultation with governments to build greater ownership and obtain their endorsements.
- While this new program development phase is starting, the CRMI should shortly present a 6-month bridge funding proposal, to seek core funds which would cover going program management costs, until the new Project Document is presented.

- The CRMI should have core funding from RBLAC and BCPR, in combination with outside funding. New resources possibly coming in should be tied to CRMI Phase 2.
- Operational support for CRMI Phase 2 will be provided from Panama regional centre, and technical support from Trinidad and Tobago sub-regional centre or the Barbados Sub-regional Office.
- Another PSC meeting will be convened to facilitate the formulation process.
- The Regional Service Centre will ensure links to the regional discussion and allocations process.

## **2. CRMI Website and network facility**

The web site ([www.undp.org/cu/crmi](http://www.undp.org/cu/crmi)) remains active and continues to provide visibility to the CRMI. The website has been continuously updated to incorporate relevant past and upcoming events, as well as newly produced documents and reports. All documents are posted in Spanish, English and French, to reach the largest number of risk management practitioners in the Caribbean region.

New documents posted during this period include a news release on the recent CRMI – sponsored regional technical training workshop in Guyana; an interview with the Director of Haiti’s Civil Protection Department; and a report on Cuba’s national simulation exercise prior to the hurricane season, “Meteoro” 2008.

## **3. Documentation of Best Practices**

### Early recovery case study in Grenada

The publication on lessons learned in the early recovery experience in Grenada following hurricanes Ivan and Emily has been published in English with the Spanish and French speaking versions soon to be available. The Case Study has been shared with the BCPR Early Recovery Team in Geneva to support capacity development activities being implemented.

The next steps involve finalising a dissemination plan and launch of the Case Study.

## Climate change adaptation with a gender focus

One of the components of the initiative approved by the Gender Thematic Trust Fund (GTTF) under the CRMI framework entails three case studies documenting climate change adaptation practices in the Caribbean region with a gender focus. This research will help not only to mainstream gender concerns into climate risk adaptation in the region, but will also provide much-needed information on a field in which scant documentation is currently available.

A 5-person team at the University of the West Indies' Centre for Gender and Development Studies was selected via a competitive process to conduct this research. Field work was conducted in Grenada, Jamaica, Dominica and Guyana during this period. The research to be undertaken in Suriname, Haiti and the Dominican Republic is in the planning phase. Negotiations with Cuban authorities to obtain permission for research on climate change adaptation with a gender perspective in Cuba have been unsuccessful so far.

## **II. Cadre of climate risk management personnel developed**

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### **1. Tertiary Level Capacity Building**

The project has consolidated its support to the development of a cohort of regional professionals in the field of climate risk management through the University of West Indies MSc in Natural Resource Management - Climate Adaptation specialized stream. Discussions have been held with the Pro Vice Chancellor (PVC) of the UWI regarding the programming of additional resources with a focus on support to the disaster risk reduction curriculum including cooperation under the SIDS University Consortium.

There has been no additional activity in this area this quarter. Further activity in this area will be based on concluding resource mobilisation activities.

### **2. Regional technical training workshops**

In collaboration with the CARICOM Centre on Climate Change (CCCCC), the CRMI co-sponsored a regional workshop on "The Use of Biophysical Models to Assess Climate Change Impacts in Agriculture", which was held in Georgetown, Guyana, from April 14-25. This training event was also co-sponsored by the Commonwealth Secretariat, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the University of Guyana. Participants engaged in intensive hands-on training for the two week duration, using outputs from the PRECIS Caribe on-line climate modelling database. The training was led by a team of experts from Cuba's National Meteorology Institute (INSMET).

The CRMI Program Manager spoke at the workshop's inauguration, as part of a panel. A total of 38 agro-meteorologists and other scientists from 17 Caribbean countries received

this training, with a good gender balance among the group. The countries benefiting from this training included: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

The skills acquired under this training will enable specialists to more accurately inform their governments of future risks deriving from climate change trends, thereby facilitating planning decisions which protect the population and enhance each country's resilience in the face of accelerating climate change in the Caribbean.

**Objective 2: Risk reductions and climate change adaptation integrated into development**

**I. Policies, institutional structures and legislative systems developed and strengthened**

**1. Horizontal cooperation**

Activities promoting horizontal cooperation were carried out during this period, including planning, communications and logistics support to facilitate participation in UN-SPIDER (UN Space-based Solutions and Information for Disaster and Emergency Response) regional workshop held in Barbados and co-hosted by UNDP Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean. Additionally, participation in the pending biennial Caribbean URISA (Urban and Regional Information Society of America) meeting was also under review.

In Cuba, the CRMI facilitated a meeting between the regional representative of French NGO ACTED and Cuban government authorities, to explore pilot collaboration on local disaster risk management mechanisms.

Budget limitations restrict support to specific horizontal exchanges for the moment.

In a general sense, the regional training workshops are considered a contribution to horizontal cooperation, as these are based on south-south knowledge transfer among the region's professionals. They also facilitate a networking opportunity in this sector, which can provide opportunities for initial contacts on which to build bilateral exchanges.

**2. Caribbean Reducing Disaster Risk Report**

A Concept Note (CN) for the CRDR has been developed. This process is expected to be advanced with additional resource mobilisation to include a focus on the sustainability and integration with planned DRR mainstreaming and advocacy initiatives.

### **3. Support of Institutional Structures.**

UNDP has provided support in the past in this area through institutional reviews carried out under the regional Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy for a number of SIDS including the Bahamas, St. Lucia, the Turks and Caicos Islands and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The first three assessments utilised CRMI resources and the last national TRAC funds complemented by the experience and supervision of the CRMI staff. These activities were completed between 2005 and 2007 and the results published and circulated through the CRMI website.

On the national level in Cuba, the CRMI Program Manager designed and facilitated a “lessons learned” exercise for the Inter-Agency Group on Disaster Reduction (GIDNR) with GI-DNR on April 29. This exercise was structured to promote creative reflection on how this group could improve its functioning as a team, so as to better positioned for the upcoming hurricane season. A key output of this workshop was a detailed action plan to help streamline the group’s operations.

## **II. Risk reduction and climate change adaptation tools developed and applied**

### **1. Apply Integrated Vulnerability Assessment Methodologies**

In order to exploit the synergies between reducing vulnerability to climate-related disasters and adapting to climate change, the objective of this activity is to adopt a common methodology for assessing climate risk -- from current risk posed by present-day extreme weather, to medium and long term risk from climate variability and change - - and to apply this methodology in two selected countries in the Caribbean in order to identify cost-effective interventions for reducing climate risk.

The CRMI has collaborated with the MACC project to implement this activity as has been illustrated through this report. St. Lucia was the lead country implementing the Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments (VCA), with other Caribbean countries benefiting from that country’s experience. Other countries have advanced the VCA through the direct support of the Mainstreaming Adaptation to Climate Change (MACC) Project.

The Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment activity in St Lucia was largely concluded in early 2007 with a draft report. This document is expected to inform the second National Communications report under the UNFCCC as well as the Special Project on Adaptation to Climate Change (SPACC).

## **2. Gender and climate risk research activities**

Field work for this research continued during this period. Some ongoing difficulties have been encountered in terms of access to the needed information and institutions in Haiti, Dominican Republic and Cuba, and extensive flooding in Suriname forced postponement of the research in that country. The CRMI team has proposed strategies for addressing each of these issues, and timelines for the various products are being renegotiated accordingly. As part of the problem-solving process, a joint visit of the UWI and CRMI teams to the Dominican Republic is being organized for mid July.

Altogether, the research coordinated under CRMI will make a significant contribution to climate risk management and governance in the Caribbean region, mainly in terms of breaking new ground in areas of increasing concern, such as the documentation of actually existing climate change adaptation practices and their gendered dimensions. The assessments of national risk management mechanisms will also help to establish a baseline against which to assess future progress in this area.

Significant value added also resides in the broad consultative process in place to define and refine instruments and for ongoing planning, involving several relevant UN agencies and key regional counterparts. This aspect of the process will be key to ensuring the sustainability and a solid foundation for continued gender mainstreaming in Caribbean risk management.

One of the key products of this research initiative will be a set of recommendations for policy-makers, to be presented following group discussion, at the end of 2008.

### **Objective 3: Increase investments in climate risk management**

## **II. Partnerships established and strengthened**

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### **Other Activities**

Based on instructions from the Project Steering Committee (PSC), in June a bridge funding proposal was submitted to RBLAC, with a resource analysis as accompanying documentation. The purpose of the bridge funding would be to cover basic management costs for the CRMI during the wrap-up of phase 1 and the formulation of phase 2, to avoid disruption the momentum of the work.

## **1. Resource mobilization**

The full Project Document required by the Spain-UNDP Trust Fund for its \$500,000 USD contribution to CRMI was finalized and submitted to the fund's coordinator during this period. Approval and activation of these funds is expected for the next quarter.

The proposal for the EU was revised based on feedback from the donor and re-submitted. Discussions are ongoing regarding a sharpened focus, timing for implementation and a possible consultation workshop with OTC governments.

## **2. Regional partnerships strengthened**

A meeting was held with the Scientific Director of Cuba's National Institute of Meteorology (INSMET) and the CCCCC's Executive Director on June 16, to brief these key partners on the outcome of the PSC and the external evaluation, and outline planned next steps. Ideas for integrating this partnership into a phase 2 of CRMI were put forward, with some follow-up activities agreed on.

The CRMI continues to support the CDERA led regional disaster management process with membership on the Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) Harmonisation Council (CHC). The CHC is meant to drive the implementation of the CDM, which is an approach among the 16 CDERA member states to define a regional approach to realising the goals of the Hyogo framework and mainstreaming of DRR.

CRMI also supports UNDP representation on a number of CDERA regional committees including the CDM Database committee – which will enable a comprehensive review of all DRR activities in the 16 CDERA member states.

## **3. Systematization and dissemination of experiences in risk management, including disaster preparedness and response, nationally and regionally**

The CRMI Program Manager was interviewed by NBC television on hurricane season preparations in Cuba, with reference to a range of experiences across the region. An interview was also done on this topic with MEDICC Review, and English language publication which provides highly informative perspectives on the Cuban social model in an international context.

In another opportunity to highlight regional issues related to disaster preparedness and response, the CRMI Program Manager made a presentation on behalf of UNDP to students at the Havana International School. On the occasion of World Environment Day, this presentation focused on the impacts of climate change in hampering human development.

#### **4. External evaluation of CRMI**

The external evaluation of the CRMI was finalized on schedule, and provided a wealth of findings and recommendations, which were subsequently brought to the Project Steering Committee for its consideration.

The evaluator determined that: *“Once the CRMI began to establish a stronger regional presence, its relevance and importance came into clearer focus for CRMI’s stakeholders. While not totally unanimous, there is broad support for seeing CRMI continue. This support is qualified by a desire to see changes take place in the direction of CRMI towards establishing mechanisms that would provide greater autonomy and flexibility to establish country to country relationships that build relevant capacity. .... To this end, the report highlights new possible programming directions including more strongly linking CRMI to development decision making. The report recommends that CRMI continue to play a leadership role in identifying and promoting greater understanding on key issues and the tracking and promotion of best practices largely through the CRMI website....”*

*“In the next two years an exercise should be undertaken to identify a suitable institution to replace the UNDP. A key issue moving forward is the question of staffing and the monetary and personnel resources required by the CRMI. The recent success of CRMI demonstrates the potential for it to become a more important regional entity with a strong foundation and broad-based stakeholder support.*

*“The CRMI is a programme that has encountered considerable obstacles especially during the early years. However at the time of writing this evaluation the atmosphere surrounding the programme had entered into a period of relative stability. Stakeholders have come to increasingly embrace the CRMI. This more positive state of affairs was brought about in a relatively short period of time and without having to dispense a large amount of financial resources.*

*“....Despite its potential, the CRMI remains a somewhat fragile entity. This includes its place in the UN family. Hence the near future has to be as much about solidifying political and financial support for the programme as expanding into new frontiers.”*

The main findings from this evaluation were presented and discussed at the Project Steering Committee, and circulated at the Implementation Committee. At the Stakeholders’ Consultation scheduled tentatively for September, they will be discussed more in depth.

## Section B: Financial Report

<b>Cuba Country Office</b>				
<b>Source of funds</b>	<b>Planned Budget for 2008 in USD</b>	<b>Actual Expenditures as of 30 June 08 (in USD)</b>	<b>Remaining unspent funds</b>	<b>Projected expenditure 2008</b>
Regional Activities (Line 1.2)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TRAC 3 – Response & Recovery	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Gender Thematic Trust Fund	\$148,787	\$17,870	\$130,917	\$148,787
Cost-sharing (Norway)	\$138,731	\$138,731	\$0	\$138,731
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$287,518</b>	<b>\$156,601</b>	<b>\$130,917</b>	<b>\$287,518</b>
<b>Barbados and the OECS Sub-Regional Office</b>				
<b>Source of funds</b>	<b>Planned Budget for 2008 in USD</b>	<b>Actual Expenditures as of 30 June 08 (in USD)</b>	<b>Remaining unspent funds</b>	<b>Projected expenditure 2008</b>
Extended CRMI				
Regional Activities	\$50,000	\$40,168	\$8,832	\$8,832
TRAC 3	\$48,721	\$34,930	\$13,791	\$13,791
Cost-sharing	1017	\$168	\$849	\$849
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$99,738</b>	<b>\$75,266</b>	<b>\$73,017</b>	<b>\$24,472</b>

## **Conclusions and Recommendations:**

The external evaluation has confirmed the continued relevance of the CRMI in the regional context and the need to engage with stakeholders at a higher level. The second half of 2008 will involve intensive work to prepare the groundwork for the formulation and proposal of CRMI phase 2, which must be optimally positioned via stakeholder consultation, dialogue with governments, organizational buy-in and clear linkages to the RBLAC regional program. The strengthened UNDP mandate regarding climate change as a development issue helps to frame this opportunity.