

United Nations Development Programme

**Barbados and the OECS
&
Cuba**

Caribbean Risk Management Initiative



Quarterly Report

Jan - March 2008

Highlights this trimester:

- *Preparation of external program evaluation*
- *Resource mobilization continues with two new funding proposals submitted*
- *Second and third of a series of regional technical training workshops held successfully*

Section A: Project progress report

Objective 1: Increased Capacity for climate risk management

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

1. Regional and national meetings

Ibero-American Congress on Gender, Science and Technology

At the request of Cuban counterparts, the CRMI Program Manager made a presentation on “Gender and the Science of Climate Change,” at the Ibero-American Congress on Gender, Science and Technology, held in Havana from Feb 18-22. This provided an occasion to share the UNDP position on climate change as an equitable development issue, as well as to promote BCPR’s 8-Point Agenda for Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality in Crisis Prevention and Recovery.

2. CRMI Website and network facility

The web site (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 news releases on the two recent CRMI –sponsored regional technical training workshops; research on a landslide risk index for Cuba; and a Jamaican experience in assessing post-hurricane resiliency.

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 is under way with the document currently at the printers. This initiative builds on work done under the DIPECHO funded initiative “Fostering Knowledge Transfer and Replication of Best Practices in Disaster Preparedness and Risk Reduction within the Caribbean”. This draft was reviewed and commented on by the CRMI program management team, and BCPR regional office and headquarters. The official launch of this publication in Spanish, English and French is planned for mid 2008.

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.

This research is scheduled to be conducted in early 2008. In the remainder of this year, an inventory of potential case studies will be identified, and the final three to be documented will be selected via an internal consultation process.

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 began in Grenada, Jamaica and Guyana during this period.

II. Cadre of climate risk management personnel developed

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.

2. Regional technical training workshops

The 2nd CRMI regional technical training workshop was held in Providenciales, Turks and Caicos Islands, from January 21-24, on the topic of “Risk mapping and development planning in coastal zones.” A total of 42 participants from 16 Caribbean countries

participated, most of them professional planners. The majority reported on the anonymous workshop evaluation form that they had found the workshop highly satisfactory. This was the first CRMI event that was held in an overseas territory, and which did so in order to expose the participants to some of the particular characteristics of these territories, which exacerbate their vulnerability to disaster risks. The UNDP Jamaica office played a very active role in the planning and organization of this workshop, as the Turks and Caicos is covered by this office under its multi-country mandate.

From February 25-29, the 3rd CRMI regional technical training workshop was held in Havana, with the objective of studying the Cuban model for integrated disaster risk management as a “best practice,” and to assess its potential replicability in other countries in the region. A group of 29 participants attended this workshop, representing disaster management offices or civil defenses in their respective countries, altogether from 15 Caribbean countries.

A significant achievement of both of these workshops was their broad inclusive participation, both in terms of gender balance, and in terms of attracting participants from countries often excluded due to language or cultural differences – such as Suriname, Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

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

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

1. Horizontal cooperation

In the context of the recent regional workshops mentioned above in point II.2, a second meeting was held with the Director Civil Protection (DPC) for Haiti, Mme. Alta Jean-Baptiste, to request support from CRMI for a bilateral exchange with Cuban civil defence on evacuation procedures. It was agreed to further explore collaboration on this request, pending a formal written communication from DPC.

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.

Three institutional reviews carried out under the regional Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy were conducted and completed for the Bahamas, St. Lucia and the Turks and Caicos Islands in 2005/2006.

A similar review was undertaken for St. Vincent and the Grenadines utilising the experience of the CRMI and TRAC funds. This activity has largely been concluded with the final report to be distributed.

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

Progress on the operationalization of the gender and risk research activities funded by the GTTF continued during these months. A second PAC meeting was held, resulting in the

selection of the University of the West Indies' Centre for Gender and Development Studies. The team of 5 researchers is led by Dr. Leith Dunn, who has substantial experience and publications in the area of gender and development.

Field work for this research began during this period. Some initial difficulties were encountered in terms of access to the needed information and institutions in Haiti, Dominican Republic and Suriname, and will require further analysis and problem-solving.

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

Other Activities

An extension of DEX authorization for the CRMI was submitted during the reporting period and was approved by the UNDP Associate Administrator. The request needed to specify why DEX was still relevant and indicate what steps were being taken to seek alternatives to this modality. Approval was also based on the Evaluation Process which was ongoing during the period.

In January, a request for bridge funding was submitted to the Director of RBLAC, given that little budget remained for covering ongoing CRMI program management costs, creating a critical situation which jeopardizes the staff continuity. To date, there has been no reply to this letter.

1. Resource mobilization

The first three months of 2008 were an intensive time for CRMI resource mobilization, with the following accomplishments:

- A first meeting with CIDA was held, to start exploration of possible support from Canadian cooperation for the CRMI as a regional program. This meeting was held at the level of the PSC Chair and the CIDA Head of Aid in Cuba with encouraging results. A follow-up meeting will be held with the CIDA Head of Aid in Barbados /OECS, following subsequent guidance on next steps.
- A proposal to the EU for a Euro 1.3 million contribution was finalized and submitted, with initial comments received from this donor. This proposal is pending a decision, and would focus on integrating the overseas territories and countries into CRMI, due to the precise source of the funds.
- On recommendation of the PSC Chair and with support from RBLAC, a proposal for a \$500,000 contribution to CRMI was submitted to the new Spain-UNDP Trust Fund “Towards an Integrated and Inclusive Development.” This funding was secured, and will be used for ongoing key activities as well as new initiatives – such as a stakeholders’ consultation and inter-regional outreach.

2. Regional partnerships strengthened

A positive development in early 2008 was the engagement and mobilization of the various UNDP country offices in the Caribbean region, in particular to ensure the success and inclusiveness of the CRMI regional training workshops. UNDP country level leadership and focal points were called on to identify workshop participants and coordinate their logistics’ arrangements for these workshops. Both operations and program staff contributed their time and expertise to optimize this capacity-building opportunity for their in-country counterparts.

This experience proved the viability of the CRMI as a program with regional ownership and input.

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 definite a regional approach to realising the goals of the Hyogo framework and mainstreaming of DRR.

CRMI is also represented on 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

Extensive media coverage of the CRMI training workshops – including television interviews, press reports and Internet coverage – helped to disseminate the efforts being made by Caribbean practitioners to improve disaster preparedness and response, nationally and regionally.

This media coverage also helped to focus the attention of a broader public on the risk issues being addressed by these activities, particularly the vulnerability of coastal zones and the effectiveness of overall national risk management systems.

4. External evaluation of CRMI

Substantial energy was devoted to organizing and coordinating the external evaluation of the CRMI, as mandated by the PSC. The CRMI program management team developed the terms of reference and organized the competitive selection process to identify the consultant to be hired.

In March, the evaluator conducted field visits to participating Caribbean countries to meet with various stakeholders. The draft evaluation report is expected for the next quarter. Findings and recommendations from this evaluation will be shared and discussed at the next PSC meeting and the upcoming stakeholders' consultation.

Section B: Financial Report

Cuba Country Office				
Source of funds	Planned Budget for 2008 in USD	Actual Expenditures as of 31 March 08 (in USD)	Remaining unspent funds	Projected expenditure 2008
Regional Activities (Line 1.2)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TRAC 3 – Response & Recovery	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Gender Thematic Trust Fund	\$148,787	\$16,000	\$132,787	\$148,787
Cost-sharing (Norway)	\$138,731	\$118,004	\$20,727	\$138,731
Total	\$287,518	\$134,004	\$153,514	\$287,518
Barbados and the OECS Sub-Regional Office				
Source of funds	Planned Budget for 2008 in USD	Actual Expenditures as of 31 March 08 (in USD)	Remaining unspent funds	Projected expenditure 2008
Extended CRMI				
Regional Activities	\$50,000	\$25,993	\$24,007	\$24,007
TRAC 3	\$48,721	\$648	\$48,073	\$48,073
Cost-sharing	1017	80	937	937
Total	\$99,738	\$26,721	\$73,017	\$73,017

Conclusions and Recommendations:

The CRMI has commenced 2008 with momentum, with substantial delivery and attention to fundamental activities, such as resource mobilization to ensure the program's sustainability.

The findings from the external evaluation, and their subsequent discussion at the stakeholders' meeting and the PSC, will provide insights and guidance which determine the priorities for the rest of the year and the program's future.