

United Nations Development Programme

**Barbados and the OECS
&
Cuba**

Caribbean Risk Management Initiative

Quarterly Report
July to September 2006

Section A: Project progress report

Obj.1: Increased Capacity for climate risk management

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

1. Regional and national meetings

The UNDP Barbados and the OECS Office through the CRMI participated in the testing of the USAID/Caribbean Development Bank Introductory Course in Natural Disaster Management in August. This course is a revision of an existing initiative and has the goal of introducing concepts of disaster management and risk reduction. From a UNDP perspective, this course can be utilized to assist in the mainstreaming of disaster management in countries with a focus on differing sectors as opposed to a traditional focus on disaster managers. As a result of this involvement, UNDP will support the implementation of this course in at least two countries that it serves.

The CRMI Project Manager participated in CDERA convened Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) Expert Group to review the CDM Strategy during September. The meeting review preliminary reports of the consultants. The CDM Strategy was developed through the support of the UNDP and USAID and was adopted by the 16 CDERA member states and developing partners in the region. CIDA is supporting the strategic review which includes the establishment of new priority outcomes and which will culminate with the hosting of the CDM Conference in Barbados in December 2006.

The CRMI was also represented at the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation (CTO) and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) Caribbean meeting on ICT and Disaster Management held in Ocho Rios, Jamaica in September 2006 by the Project Manager, who participated. The meeting built on other regional meetings previously held by the CTO and ITU in Asia and Africa. The purpose for participating in the meeting included:

- Participating in and informing the process for the effective application of ICT in Disaster Management in the Caribbean with a focus on Barbados and the OECS
- Share UNDP Barbados and the OECS SRO's experience in the application of ICT's with a focus on Disaster Management
- Promotion of the CDM Strategy as the context for the evolution of DRR initiatives in the Commonwealth Caribbean
- Confer with UNDP colleagues regarding common areas of interest including CDM; CRMI activities; DIPECHO/UNDP project activities.

In another regional activity designed to strengthen networks for cross-cultural risk management, the CRMI Program Manager participated in a workshop on “Disaster Information Management” jointly organized by the Caribbean Disaster Information Network (CARDIN) and the Latin American Centre for Disaster Medicine (CLAMED). This workshop was held in Havana, with participants from various OECS and other Caribbean countries. The objective of this workshop was to review best practices and methodologies for the protection and management of public information and archives, in the event of disasters.

This workshop helped to raise profile and visibility of cross-Caribbean collaboration in relation to disasters. A clear indication of the importance accorded by the Cuban hosts to the re-invigoration of regional collaboration was the keynote address made by Dr. Eusebio Leal Spengler, Havana City Historian and one of Cuba’s most internationally renowned public figures, due to his leadership and innovation on social and economic development mechanisms. Another distinguished speaker, who gave the closing address, was Dr. Eliades Acosta, Director of Cuba’s National Library. Participants demonstrated their ongoing commitment to continued collaboration in this area, above and beyond cultural and linguistic differences.

At this workshop, the CRMI Program Manager made a presentation on the CRMI as a regional platform for cross-cultural integration around risk management. She also offered some guidelines on fund-raising specifically for disaster information management projects, on request from the workshop organizers.

2. CRMI Website and Improved Havana Risk Web Page

The web site (www.onu.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.

During this period, initial improvements were implemented to enhance the CRMI website, with a view to making the site more accessible and more attractive to a cross-Caribbean constituency. As the first assessment made by the incoming CRMI Program Manager of the website design and contents revealed a shortage of materials in French language, priority was given to translating all posted and new materials into French. This effectively increases the relevance of the CRMI programme as a whole to the francophone Caribbean risk management practitioners and communities.

A first website alert on materials newly posted was sent out to mailing lists differentiated by language groups, and the tracking mechanism indicated that this alert generated a substantial increase in hits to the website, expanding its public.

Adjustments were also made to colors and graphics to ensure a more engaging presentation of the website, pending a comprehensive overhaul of the site’s design planned for the future.

3. Network Facility

For the time being, the Programme Manager will also serve as CRMI Network Administrator and to this role she brings her previous experience as multi-lingual Communications Officer with an Afro-Caribbean Women's Network based in Costa Rica.

A National Working Group (GNT) has been created in Cuba, and its TORs negotiated, in order to facilitate Cuban participation in technical discussions under the CRMI network. This group is comprised of the key national institutions and the experts involved in disaster risk reduction and climate change at the country level.

The National Working Group in Cuba met for the 3rd time in September, to review the CRMI workplan and in particular to identify and plan the documentation of Cuban best practices as a contribution to the regional programme. As this activity is behind schedule in the case of Cuba, the group recommended hiring the consulting firm GREDES to take charge and expedite the process, in order to have these best practices ready in time to present at the upcoming UNDP-sponsored sub-regional Knowledge Fairs.

4. Documentation of a Best Practice

The evaluation and documentation of a best practice case study demonstrating the British Virgin Island's experience in the integration of risk reduction into the development agenda is available through the CRMI website (http://www.onu.org/cu/crmi/docs/country_st/best_pract_barb.pdf) and the UNDP CPR Network.

A consultant was hired to reformulate the BVI case study as a systematization, using the BCPR methodology developed to highlight best practices. This was initiated as part of a broader effort to by the CRMI leadership to prepare a series of key materials for publication and dissemination at the upcoming Knowledge Fairs, given that these events provide an excellent opportunity to promote the CRMI as a space for knowledge sharing in the field of risk management.

II. Cadre of climate risk management personnel developed

1. Tertiary Level Capacity Building

The extended CRMI has included additional support to the development of a cohort of regional professionals in the field of climate risk management by extending Memorandum of Understanding with the University of West Indies (UWI) regarding the

latter's Climate Adaptation Programme. In the past, this support included scholarships for four students, facilitating visiting scholars and hosting student interns at the UNDP to satisfy their Masters' requirements. The extended agreement involved the same elements, but also added resources to support the development of the disaster risk reduction curricula and research. This latter element is expected to be programmed through the Disaster Risk Center based the UWI's Mona Campus in Jamaica and which has already received support from the UNDP Jamaica CO. The amended MOU was signed in September 2006.

Obj. 2 Risk reductions and climate change adaptation integrated into development

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

1. Horizontal cooperation

As a result of the Regional Workshop for National Authorities held in Havana in May 2005, horizontal cooperation between national governments in the Caribbean is being promoted through UNDP Cuba as a systematic and comprehensive effort to utilize the capacities, experiences and resources of developing countries. Methodology and terms of reference of the south-south actions has been developed. The Cuba UNDP office expects that in 2006/2007 the network implementation will promote new opportunities for horizontal cooperation, particularly in countries that have expressed their interest, such as Honduras, Haiti and Uruguay.

The CRMI contacted UNDP offices in the region to gather input on possible horizontal exchanges that could be supported, but in most cases the information provided has not yet been conclusive. The DRR of the Barbados CO helped to identify an exchange requested between the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC) and the Cuban Institute of Meteorology (INSMET) on the topic of "using the MM3 model for weather forecasting in the Caribbean countries." This exchange has been scheduled for December 2006, with the CRMI Program Manager and Project Manager in charge of its organization.

The contacts between UNDP-Cuba, UNDP-Honduras and the Honduran national authorities have been activated again and updated TORs were prepared by the Honduran authorities. The official mission of Honduran experts to Cuba was tentatively scheduled for fall 2006, but later postponed due to hurricane alerts affecting the coast of Honduras,

The inventory of the Cuban best practices on disaster preparedness and risk reduction at the local level is under way, with the main national institutions in charge of this activity compiling the relevant information. Outputs of this effort will complement the regional

inventory on best practices that is carried out by the DIPECHO Regional Project on knowledge transfer in the Caribbean region covering Haiti, Dominican Republic and the English-speaking Caribbean. The Barbados SRO is also preparing an inventory of best practices and developing associated case studies under the DIPECHO/UNDP initiative for the English-speaking Caribbean.

Also associated with the DIPECHO/UNDP initiative are the Knowledge Fairs to be held in Barbados and the Dominican Republic at the end of the year. The Barbados SRO is currently in discussions with CDERA to combine the Knowledge Fair with a Comprehensive Disaster Management Conference planned by that agency for December 2006.

As one of the components of the Knowledge Fairs will be negotiating tables for horizontal cooperation, this presents an opportunity to gather information on specific interests in horizontal cooperation activities from organizations throughout the Caribbean. In a visit to the regional BCPR team in Panama in September, the CRMI Program Manager worked with the Coordinator of the Knowledge Fairs to develop an appropriate methodology for these negotiating tables. The expectation is that one of the more valuable outcomes of the Knowledge Fair will be these expressions of interest in specific horizontal exchanges, which the CRMI can then follow up on for their facilitation and implementation.

2. 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. This activity was concluded by the end of 2005 and are available on the CRMI website. A composite of the executive summaries of the reports on these countries is being prepared by the CRMI for publication and distribution at the Knowledge Fairs, with an introduction explaining their significance for Caribbean countries in general, in terms of piloting CDM at the national level.

The Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines is seeking the UNDP's support to conduct a similar CDM review of that country utilising the experience of the CRMI and TRAC funds.

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

1. Completion of disaster inventories in the region

A comprehensive, detailed and geo-referenced inventory of disaster occurrence and loss in the Caribbean over the last 30 years was prepared to provide essential baseline information. This inventory will allow an assessment of serious data gaps in this area in the region. DESINVENTAR first results have been delivered to enable its integration in the Havana Risk web page.

The Cuban input for DESINVENTAR has not yet been completed. Contacts have been made with Civil Defense to encourage completion of data input within a manageable timeframe.

2. Apply adaptation policy framework (APF) in Cuba and Dominican Republic

This framework, prepared by the UNDP in association with GEF, links climate change with development planning and addresses short term issues related to climate variability and extremes, as well as those associated with longer term climate change.

This activity initially integrated into PA, has been implemented since 2003 as a separate DEX project but was considered under the umbrella of CRMI, with activities carried out in Cuba and Dominican Republic through close collaboration and interchange of experts from both countries. Both in Cuba and Dominican Republic, the field activities for APF testing have now been finalized.

The final report on this scientific research has been concluded, its publication is in process and it will be soon available on CRMI website. The project's final workshop took place on 14th and 15th of November in Cuba, and in that forum the findings obtained by Cuba and the Dominican Republic respectively were presented, discussed and subsequently documented in a CD-ROM.

The research conducted applying the APF tool achieved the following key results:

- a. Establishment of a network of experts trained in the application of this innovative tool and potentially available to share this capacity with other countries in the region
- b. Recommendations (130-140 in each country) to governments indicating specific measures to strengthen adaptive capacity to climate change especially in case of drought risk
- c. Strengthened collaboration with other regional initiatives (especially the ACCC Project) toward the implementation of a common tool for climate modeling

Technical assistance for the publication and dissemination within the region of the main results and impacts emerging from this project implemented in Cuba and Dominican Republic has been agreed on and is in progress. As a result, an executive summary of the project findings will be printed in a brochure format and shared throughout the region via the CRMI network and website, initially in English and later in French and Spanish.

The summary of this report has been designed and is ready for translation and publication. Plans are to have it published and distributed by the end of 2006.

3. Study on the effects of climate forecasting and drought risk management efforts in agricultural planning in Cuba and Dominican Republic

The aim of this activity is to contribute to ongoing efforts to link climate monitoring and forecasting with risk information, in order to underpin effective risk management efforts in the region. Drought is widely considered to be a priority for work in this area; therefore, a study of drought risk management and its effects on agriculture will be carried out.

Like the previous one, this activity was initially integrated into the PA. It has been implemented since 2003 as a separate DEX project jointly with the APF testing, but is considered to be under the CRMI umbrella, with activities carried out in Cuba and Dominican Republic. In both countries, data collection activities have now been completed, and preliminary data analysis produced.

The project's final workshop took place on 14th and 15th 2005 of November in Cuba, and in that forum the findings obtained by Cuba and the Dominican Republic respectively were presented, discussed and subsequently documented in a CD-ROM..

The studies conducted permitted the collection and processing of all available information on both climatic and agricultural drought over the last 40 years, and generated relevant outputs in both countries:

- Early warning and monitoring systems both on climatic and agricultural drought
- Mapping (using a GIS platform) of spatial and chronological distribution of drought in both countries
- Manual on climatological techniques and procedures for addressing agricultural drought in Cuba and Dominican Republic
- CD-ROM on climatology of meteorological and agricultural drought in Cuba and Dominican Republic
- Numerous scientific articles produced and published

The final report of the above-mentioned initiative on Adaptation Policy Framework, as well as on the Agricultural and Meteorological Drought, have already been posted on the CRMI website. Both documents can be accessed through http://www.onu.org/cu/crmi/proj_list.html

4. Apply Integrated Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) 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

VCA, with other Caribbean countries benefiting from that country's experience. This benefit was seen with the experience and expertise gained by the UWI Intern who supported the VCA and was later contracted until June 2006, in support of the process. He was able to support St. Lucia in its implementation as well as St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana.

In St. Lucia, progress has been made with the collection of information and community-based discussions. A Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) survey was conducted in the study area and community meetings held. These activities will inform the perceptions of vulnerability and risk as well as an understanding of capacity. Climate data was made available through the Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH), which has been used by the UWI Barbados campus to produce scenarios of future climates. This activity, though well overdue is schedule to conclude by the end of 2007 with a draft final report. This report will form an input to the Second National Communications under the UNFCCC and also the SPAC project being implemented by the CCCCC.

Obj. 3 Increase investments in climate risk management

II. Partnerships established and strengthened

Other Activities

The Project Manager also continued to support DRR activities in the Barbados SRO, including development of disaster management program activities for countries including St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Technical support was also provided for the disaster risk reduction program for the OECS, which was approved in principle by an LPAC in July 2006.

Another area of support was in coordination with the Eastern Caribbean Donor Group for Disaster Management (ECDGDM), in preparation for the 2006 hurricane season and the UN system Contingency Planning with emphasis on the HPIA virus.

With the objective of securing a key partnership which would be fundamental to any sizeable initiative on climate change in the Caribbean region, during this period the incoming CRMI Program Manager initiated a dialogue with the recently established Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC). She travelled to Belize to meet with this organization and observe a regional workshop on climate modelling hosted by the CCCCC.

From this preliminary contact, which proved quite positive, the CRMI Program Manager out forward some recommendations on how to take this partnership forward:

- The UNDP under the CRMI program should continue to support regional collaboration on climate forecasting and modelling using the Precis model and led by INSMET, given

that this is strategic as it builds capacity in the region which is ultimately of great benefit in improving risk management and adaptation to climate change.

- The UNDP under CRMI should continue to explore the potential for supporting a regional project, and seeking additional resources, to further this very valuable initiative.
- Now that the contact with CCCCC, UWI, CDERA and other key regional actors in the field has been made by the CRMI Program Manager, there should be systematic follow-up in terms of participation in the CRMI. The upcoming sub-regional Knowledge Fairs (under the Transfer Caribe project) can serve as a good opportunity to motivate this continued participation.

One of the main results of this dialogue was the commitment to support, under the CRMI umbrella, an exploratory mission by CCCCC to Cuba in December 2006. The purpose of this mission would be to establish a tripartite platform between UNDP/CRMI, CCCCC and Cuban national institutions, to enable a more sustained partnership and the identification of potential joint initiatives in the field of climate change risk management, given that the CCCCC is a key regional actor on climate change issues

1. Inter-sectoral and inter-institutional communication strengthened between National Civil Defence, the provinces, municipalities and the population, including the creation of a National Reference Centre on Risk Management

Cuba possesses a varied range of experiences and knowledge in the area of risk management, and in initiatives for reducing vulnerabilities, based on a well-developed legal foundation. This type of information, however, to a large extent is distributed in an ad hoc manner only to relatively few institutions. This limited information flow often leads to duplication of efforts and thinly funded efforts to find adequate solutions. For example, a geo-referenced system (GIS) has been initiated but not fully integrated, nor can it make full use of risk studies and other new knowledge. In addition, it has not been extended to the entire country but prioritised only for coastal zones directly vulnerable to flooding. An Early Warning System (SAT) has also been developed and introduced by the National Civil Defence institution. This system, however, has mainly been limited to the national level and so far there are no institutional linkages between the geo-referenced system and the early warning system.

Under the CRMI, there are plans to centralize all of the existing knowledge and resources in one reference point in the form of a web site (intranet), which would allow for improved quality and quantity of the information provided -- both at national and regional levels -- through a process of continuous information updating, and would ensure the necessary linkages between the two systems tools (GIS and SAT). Both tools will be provided to vulnerable communities of Guama Municipality, in Santiago de Cuba province. The access to high quality information -- through the intranet - will furthermore meet the need for regular updating and real

time dissemination of critical information through GIS and SAT, and will facilitate and strengthen the decision-making processes of participating institutions. This activity will require training for relevant institutions in the development and use of the GIS and SAT systems.

2. Risk management capacities strengthened at provincial and local levels

This result aims at developing the early warning system as a decision-making tool in development planning, investment and in the management of disaster situations. Accordingly, the National Civil Defense is being supported in undertaking risk studies in selected communities and establishing a Risk Reduction Management Centre in Guama, and 7 Early Warning Systems in selected vulnerable communities.

This initiative complements another intervention by UNDP Cuba, to support the establishment of 18 risk management centres in the country's most vulnerable municipalities, with the purpose of strengthening local institutional capacity and the effectiveness of early warning systems.

In September 2006, the CRMI Program Manager toured 4 Risk Reduction Management Centres in Pinar del Rio province, accompanied by representatives from Civil Defense and MINVEC. This field visit was quite useful to help understand the significance of these centres for local populations, and observe how they are organized.

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

Methodologies and supporting materials for managing risks and natural disaster situations will be developed. The main activity will be the organization of national and regional workshops together with National Civil Defense, MINVEC, Housing Institute (INV) and the Institute of Meteorology.

In September 2006, a closed-door workshop was held between UN System representatives and Cuban authorities involved in the post-disaster damage assessment process in Cuba. The damage assessment methodology currently used in Cuba was presented, discussed and critiqued in an effort to render it more agile. A constructive discussion took place about the UN system's need for timely information post-disaster in order to mobilize funds for relief and reconstruction, and possible tensions that this poses to Cuban policies on information management and protocols.

The CRMI Program Manager participated in this meeting, given that this methodology could be considered a “best practice “ worthy of documentation and wider dissemination.

4. Implementation of the integrated strategy for post-disaster recovery and reconstruction following Hurricanes Ivan and Charley

A strategy for long term recovery and reconstruction has been developed together with the government of Cuba, in particular with National Civil Defense; with the purpose of more effectively aligning UNDP support with that provided by the government prior, during and after natural disasters, given the need to quickly move from the emergency phase towards recuperation and rehabilitation. This integrated strategy will enhance implementation and ensure that emergency actions are coordinated and linked to long term reconstruction processes. Activities will also create synergies among existing and new projects in the area of housing and risk, implemented with UNDP, and strengthen UNDP capacity to implement this strategy and specific risk-related projects in the provinces.

Section B: Financial Report

Cuba Country Office				
Source of funds	Planned Budget for 2006 in USD	Actual Expenditures as of 30 June 2006 (in USD)	Remaining unspent funds	Projected expenditure 2006
Regional Activities (Line 1.2)	27,376.09		27,376.09	27,376.09
TRAC 3 – Recovery	97,681.07	22,990.54	74,690.53	97,681.07
TRAC 3 – Response & Recovery	2,227.68	-352.08	2,579.76	2,227.68
Development Advisory Services	50,000.00	3,711.27	46,288.73	50,000.00
Cost-sharing (Italy)	62,660.62	4,255.29	58,405.33	62,660.62
Total	239,945.46	30,605.02	209,340.44	239,945.46
Barbados and the OECS Sub-Regional Office				
Source of funds	Planned Budget for 2006 in USD	Actual Expenditures as of 30 March 2006 (in USD)	Remaining unspent funds	Projected expenditure 2006
Regional Activities (Line 1.2)				
TRAC 3 – Recovery				
Regional Activities				
TRAC 3				
Total				

Conclusions and Recommendations:

Most activities under the CRMI Phase I led by the Barbados and Cuba COs have been completed by the end of the second quarter of 2006. The main outstanding activities are:

conclusion of the VCA; surge capacity training; and the documentation of the Cuban best practices in risk management. All of the latter should be completed by mid-2007 at the latest. However, the commencement of the extended CRMI has provided the opportunity to build on some activities, with the Caribbean Reducing Disaster Risk Report taking most of the initial attention, as its preparation will constitute a significant contribution to framing policy formulation on integrated climate risk in the Caribbean region.

A decisive step forward by the UNDP Cuba CO is the successful incorporation of the new CRMI Program Manager during this period, an essential pre-condition which rounds out the skills set of the CRMI team and ensures that steady progress towards results can be made during the next quarter.