OCHA - CDEMA
Joint Interoperability Manual

- Interoperability in Action
- What you Need to Know
- Gender Matters

- Lessons Learned
- Case Studies
- Remember
This document covers humanitarian aid activities implemented through the project “Strengthen integrated and cohesive preparedness capacity at a regional, national and community level in the Caribbean”. This project is a joint initiative with the Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). Financial assistance was provided by the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO).

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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>345W</td>
<td>Who does What, Where, When and for Whom</td>
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<tr>
<td>A&amp;A</td>
<td>Assessment and Analysis cell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARICOM</td>
<td>Caribbean Community</td>
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<td>CARPHA</td>
<td>Caribbean Public Health Agency</td>
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<td>CDAC</td>
<td>CARICOM Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team</td>
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<td>CDB</td>
<td>Caribbean Development Bank</td>
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<td>CDEMA</td>
<td>Caribbean Disaster Management Agency</td>
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<td>CDM</td>
<td>Comprehensive Disaster Management</td>
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<td>CDRU</td>
<td>CARICOM Disaster Relief Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>CERF</td>
<td>Central Emergency Response Fund</td>
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<td>COST</td>
<td>CARICOM Operational Support Team</td>
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<td>CRIS</td>
<td>Caribbean Risk Information System</td>
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<td>CTO</td>
<td>Caribbean Tourism Organization</td>
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<td>CU</td>
<td>CDEMA Coordinating Unit</td>
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<td>DaLA</td>
<td>Damage and Loss Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>DANA</td>
<td>Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>DRM</td>
<td>Disaster Risk Management</td>
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<td>EC</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
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<td>ECDPG</td>
<td>Eastern Caribbean Development Partner Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECDPG/DM</td>
<td>Eastern Caribbean Development Partner Group for Disaster Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECHO</td>
<td>European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations</td>
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<td>ED</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
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<td>ESF</td>
<td>Emergency Support Function</td>
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<td>GA</td>
<td>UN General Assembly</td>
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<td>GDACS</td>
<td>Global Disaster Alerting Coordination System</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Name</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIS</td>
<td>Geographical information systems</td>
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<td>Humanitarian Advisory Team</td>
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<td>Humanitarian Coordinator</td>
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<td>HPC</td>
<td>Humanitarian Programme Cycle</td>
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<td>IFRC</td>
<td>International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies</td>
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<td>IM</td>
<td>information management</td>
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<td>IMO</td>
<td>Information Management Officer</td>
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<td>IMU</td>
<td>Information Management Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISO</td>
<td>Initial Situation Overview</td>
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<tr>
<td>MIRA</td>
<td>Multi-Cluster/Sectoral Initial Rapid Assessment</td>
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<td>MNCCC</td>
<td>Multinational Caribbean Coordination Cell</td>
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<tr>
<td>MNRF</td>
<td>Model National Recovery Framework</td>
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<td>MoU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
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<td>NDC</td>
<td>National Disaster Coordinator</td>
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<td>NDMO</td>
<td>National Disaster Management Organization</td>
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<td>NEMA</td>
<td>National Emergency Management Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEOC</td>
<td>National Emergency Operations Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>non-governmental organization</td>
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<td>OCHA</td>
<td>UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>OCHA ROLAC</td>
<td>UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECS</td>
<td>Organization of Eastern Caribbean States</td>
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<tr>
<td>OSOCC</td>
<td>On-Site Operations Coordination Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>OTs</td>
<td>Overseas Territories</td>
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<tr>
<td>PDC</td>
<td>Pacific Disaster Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>PDNA</td>
<td>Post-Disaster Needs Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>PS</td>
<td>CDEMA Participating State</td>
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<tr>
<td>RC</td>
<td>UN Resident Coordinator</td>
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<td>RCC</td>
<td>Regional Coordination Centre</td>
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<td>RCO</td>
<td>UN Resident Coordinator Office</td>
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<td>RCP</td>
<td>Regional Coordination Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>RDC</td>
<td>Reception Departure Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>REDLAC</td>
<td>The Regional Group for Risk, Emergencies and Disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean</td>
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<td>RDRSD</td>
<td>Regional Disaster Response Support Doctrine</td>
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<td>RNAT</td>
<td>Rapid Needs Assessment Team</td>
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<td>RRM</td>
<td>Regional Response Mechanism</td>
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<tr>
<td>RSART</td>
<td>Regional Search and Rescue Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSS</td>
<td>Regional Security System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSTS</td>
<td>Relief Supplies Tracking System</td>
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<tr>
<td>SADD</td>
<td>Sex and Age Disaggregated Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDA</td>
<td>Human Needs Assessment and Socio-Demographic Assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SGBV</td>
<td>Sexual and gender-based violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOPs</td>
<td>Standard Operating Procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SRFP</td>
<td>Sub-Regional Focal Point</td>
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<tr>
<td>TAC</td>
<td>Technical Advisory Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN-CMCoord</td>
<td>UN Civil-Military Coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNCT</td>
<td>UN Country Team</td>
</tr>
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<td>UNDAC</td>
<td>UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNETT</td>
<td>UN Emergency Technical Teams</td>
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</table>
The Caribbean is one of the most hazard-prone regions in the world. It is exposed to a wide range of natural hazards, including tropical cyclones (hurricanes and tropical storms), earthquakes, tsunamis, landslides, floods and volcanoes, which have significant economic, social and human costs across the region. Since 2000, the Caribbean has been impacted by more than **300 natural disasters which have affected some 39 million people and caused over US$114 billion in total damage.**\(^1\) The annual losses from catastrophic climate events alone are estimated at $3 billion.\(^2\)

Storms are the most significant natural hazards affecting Caribbean countries. The storms impacting the region are becoming increasingly more powerful, producing increased rainfall and higher storm surge due to climate change. More frequent and intense storms in the region mean less time for recovery between disaster events, making the transition from emergency relief operations to post-disaster recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction increasingly more difficult for impacted countries and people.

The 2017 hurricane season was highly active and extremely destructive, featuring 17 named storms and multiple Category 5 hurricanes. In 2019, Hurricane Dorian made landfall in the north-western islands of The Bahamas as an extremely powerful Category 5 hurricane, becoming the strongest Atlantic hurricane on record to directly impact a landmass. A key feature of these hurricanes was their rapid intensification, sustained strength and catastrophic impact on Caribbean countries.

In the Caribbean, more than 70 per cent of residents reside in low-lying coastal areas and the region's urban population is growing two to three times faster than the current average for Central and South America, increasing its physical vulnerability to climate change and disaster impacts. Caribbean countries are highly vulnerable to external shocks in commodity prices, remain dependent on the highly volatile tourism industry, and are among the most highly indebted in the world. In addition, poverty and economic inequality remain high and persistent throughout the region, hindering the capacity to prepare for, cope with, and recover from the impact of disasters, which often exacerbate and deepen existing vulnerabilities.

As recurring climatic shocks will likely bring greater impacts on communities, economies and livelihoods throughout the region, the effective coordination of emergency preparedness and response is a key priority for humanitarian stakeholders in the Caribbean. The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (OCHA ROLAC) are working together to strengthen coordination among humanitarian actors to ensure better preparedness for, and a coherent and efficient humanitarian response to, disasters and emergencies across the region.

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Most common type of natural disaster events since 2000

NUMBER OF PEOPLE AFFECTED BY DISASTER TYPE

- **25.9M** STORMS
- **7.5M** EARTHQUAKES
- **4.8M** DROUGHTS
- **4.7M** FLOODS
- **700K** EPIDEMICS

MOST COMMON TYPE OF NATURAL DISASTER EVENTS
- Drought
- Flood
- Storm

4 CRED EM-DAT
What is the purpose of this Manual?

The purpose of this Manual is to promote a better understanding of how CDEMA and OCHA work both on an individual and collective basis in disaster preparedness and response in the Caribbean. The Manual attempts to outline some of the similarities and differences between these key coordination actors in supporting humanitarian partners and governments to better prepare for and respond to emergencies. This will help to better define and clarify procedures, roles and responsibilities as well as enhance the interoperability of teams, tools and services. The Manual also aims to raise awareness of the existing regional coordination architecture in the Caribbean.

Why now?

Recent lessons learned point to the need for enhanced interoperability between CDEMA and OCHA as the key coordination actors in the Caribbean. As the dynamics of humanitarian action continue to evolve, and new players enter the field, better coordination through the Regional Response Mechanism (RRM) will be needed to ensure the effective and efficient use of limited human and financial resources to take actions to save lives, get communities back on their feet, and restore daily life and activities.

Why CDEMA and OCHA?

CDEMA and OCHA have similar mandates in mobilizing and coordinating the regional and international response to emergencies in support of national authorities and strengthening disaster preparedness in the Caribbean. In working together to achieve greater preparedness and coordinated operational response, they capitalize on inherent operating synergies to make for a more efficient use of scarce financial and human resources, minimizing duplications in assessments and relief efforts, and managing donor aid more effectively. In this way, preparedness and response efforts are harmonized with the differentiated needs of affected populations, providing lifesaving assistance and effectively facilitating the transition from response to recovery in impacted countries.

Who is this Manual for?

This Manual is intended for the diverse range of stakeholders engaged in disaster preparedness and response in the Caribbean. These stakeholders include, but are not limited to, the international humanitarian community, donors, CDEMA Participating States (PSs), UN Member States, private sector entities, governments, international and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), regional intergovernmental institutions, civil and military actors, and national disaster management organizations (NDMOs).
How to use this Manual?
This Manual has been purposefully designed to allow readers to use it in a variety of different ways which suit their respective purposes.
Use this infographic as a guide for reading the Manual, as it highlights the information which can be found in different sections.

For more information, click on the buttons presented in the different sections of the Manual and have a look at the annexes and weblinks sections at the end.

KEEPS AN EYE FOR THE SIX COLOR-CODED TEXTBOXES...

Interoperability in Action
Provide concrete examples of interoperability between CDEMA and OCHA in assessment, coordination and information management in both the preparedness and response phases, as well as proposals for enhancing interoperability.

What you Need to Know
Highlight key information on agreements and protocols, mechanisms, tools and services, as well as other information you need to know.

Gender Matters
Outline key gender policies, programmes and mechanisms of CDEMA and OCHA.

Case Studies
Illustrate concrete examples of preparedness and response actions performed in the Caribbean.

Remember
Serve as reminders of important information stakeholders should keep in mind when preparing for and responding to emergencies in the region.

Lessons Learned
Call attention to key lessons learned with regard to interoperability in different areas from past humanitarian responses.
CDEMA and OCHA’s partnership: Principles, procedures and protocols

In November 2017, CDEMA and OCHA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to further strengthen collaboration and cooperation in operational readiness and response at the national and regional level in the Caribbean. In 2019, they jointly constructed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to provide greater predictability, structure and a common understanding of their respective actions, roles and responsibilities in the region based on the principles of complementarity, competitive advantage and the sovereignty of affected states.

Even though CDEMA and OCHA occupy what appears to be the same operational space in the Caribbean, there is a significant distinction in how their respective operations in the region are executed.

- CDEMA has been mandated by CARICOM governments as the lead regional entity for response coordination in the Caribbean.
- OCHA has been mandated by General Assembly resolution 46/182 to support Member States and international humanitarian stakeholders to ensure effective emergency preparedness, as well as coordinated and timely emergency response, based on the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence.

It is important to remember that enhanced interoperability between CDEMA and OCHA must have as its aim the harmonization of global mechanisms and tools with those of the Regional Response Mechanism (RRM), as the most appropriate mechanism for the operating context and cultural nuances of the CDEMA system and its Participating States. With that said, the fundamental principle governing interoperability between CDEMA and OCHA is that regional systems must be given priority and global tools are used to enhance those systems, not replace them.
**Where do CDEMA and OCHA work?**

Both CDEMA and OCHA have a mandate to support disaster preparedness and response in all 18 CDEMA Participating States (PSs) in the Caribbean. However, OCHA’s geographical coverage stretches further to encompass all UN Member States and their territories. For more information on the operational presence of NGOs and UN agencies in the Caribbean, see Annex 2.

In recent years, CDEMA and OCHA have jointly coordinated the humanitarian response to major hurricanes in the region, including: Hurricane Irene in 2011 in The Bahamas; Hurricane Joaquin in The Bahamas and Tropical Storm Erika in Dominica in 2015; in 2016, following Hurricane Matthew in Haiti; in 2017, in the multiple states impacted by Hurricanes Irma and Maria; and most recently, after the impact of Hurricane Dorian in The Bahamas. For an overview of OCHA ROLAC’s deployments in the Caribbean since 2004, see Annex 3.

**REMEMBER**

CDEMA and OCHA have similar mandates for coordinating international assistance in the Caribbean region. CDEMA has a mandate to coordinate all international assistance for an emergency or disaster coming from the Participating States of the CDEMA system. However, when a country requests international assistance from outside the region, such assistance also falls under the mandate of OCHA. For this reason, strong interoperability between CDEMA and OCHA is key to the effective and efficient coordination of preparedness and response efforts in the region.

CDEMA and OCHA are working together to improve operational readiness and response through the Regional Response Mechanism (RRM) and to strengthen national capacities where needed. Much of this work has been carried out through the joint 2018 Caribbean project, funded by European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). 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, and aims to strengthen information management and operational capacity to improve the disaster preparedness mechanism for regional response in the Caribbean.
As of March 2019

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

- **16** Independent states
- **15** CARICOM members
- **18** CDEMA Participating States
- **8** UN Resident Coordinators
- **15** Territories
- **5** CARICOM associate members
- **4** CDEMA sub-hubs
- **25** Countries and territories covered by RCs

**CARICOM & CDEMA**

- **CARICOM HQ**
- **Member**
- **Associate**

**CDEMA Headquarters**

- **Sub-regional hub**
- **Coverage**

**UNited Nations System**

- **UN RC**
- **Coverage**
- **UNETT**
- **HCT**


*Feedback: ocha.rolac@un.org*

Map for reference and not in scale or georeferenced. The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.
## OCHA & CDEMA AT A GLANCE

### Comparing CDEMA and OCHA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mandates &amp; Actions</th>
<th>OCHA</th>
<th>CDEMA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mandate</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Support governments</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Adhere to humanitarian principles</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Coordinate humanitarian partners</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Manage information</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Advocate for relevant themes and issues</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Create policy</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Manage funding mechanisms</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Operational Readiness</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Update and share operational datasets</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Follow Standard Operating Procedures</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Follow regional contingency plans</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Assessments</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Conduct rapid initial assessment</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Conduct sectoral assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Conduct Post-Disaster Needs Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Operations</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Activate Civil-Military Cell</td>
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<td>- Activate Assessment &amp; Analysis Cell</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Activate cluster/sector system</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Conduct monitoring and evaluation</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td><strong>Crosscutting and other issues</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Ensure gender mainstreaming in preparedness and response</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Promote environmental sustainability</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Provide support in information and communications technologies</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<td>- Promote adaptation to climate change and climate variability</td>
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<td>- Support poverty reduction and sustainable development measures</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Monitor social protection and livelihoods interventions</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Consider early recovery interventions</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Promote disaster risk reduction</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CDEMA is the regional inter-governmental agency for disaster management in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and is comprised of 18 Participating States (PSs), with its headquarters in Barbados supported by the Sub-Regional Focal Points (SRFPs) in Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. CDEMA was established on the principles of inter-governmental cooperation among small states exhibiting high levels of exposure and vulnerability to disasters, but with limited individual capacity to effectively prepare for and respond to them.

### a. CDEMA’s mandate

According to Articles V and XIII of the Agreement Establishing CDEMA, the Agency is mandated to provide immediate and coordinated response to any affected Participating State (PS). CDEMA has been mandated as the regional disaster management body which performs the role of facilitator, driver, coordinator, and motivating force for the promotion and integration of Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) in all PSs (see sub-section d on p.15).

**CDEMA’s functions are as follows:**

1. Mobilizing and coordinating disaster relief.
2. Mitigating or eliminating, as far as possible, the immediate consequences of disasters in PSs.
3. Providing immediate and coordinated response by means of emergency disaster relief to any affected PS.
4. Securing, coordinating and providing to interested inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations reliable and comprehensive information on disasters affecting any PS.
5. Encouraging (i) the adoption of disaster loss reduction and mitigation policies and practices at the national and regional level, and (ii) cooperative arrangements and mechanisms to facilitate the development of a culture of disaster loss reduction.
6. Coordinating the establishment, enhancement and maintenance of adequate emergency disaster response capabilities among PSs.

### b. CDEMA governance mechanism

The CDEMA governance mechanism supports the principles of CDM within the context of a broad stakeholder participation. It also ensures that the different roles and responsibilities of the various organs that makeup the Agency are clearly defined for enhanced accountability and transparency in decision-making.

CDEMA is governed through its Council, a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Coordinating Unit (CU).

#### i. The Council

The Council is comprised of the Heads of Government of PSs or their nominees, usually Ministers of Government, responsible for disaster management. Its main function is shaping the policies of CDEMA.
ii. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

The TAC is the technical and programmatic advisory arm of CDEMA. The TAC is comprised of National Disaster Coordinators (NDCs), or Directors of National Disaster Management Organizations (NDMOs), and representatives of specialized regional organizations, such as those engaged in the technological, meteorological and seismological fields, whose programmes are directly related to the regional disaster management agenda.

In jointly constructing their SOPs, CDEMA agreed that OCHA would participate in TAC meetings as an observer, depending on the areas of concentration. In 2019, OCHA ROLAC staff participated in the TAC meeting at CDEMA Headquarters.

iii. Coordinating Unit (CU)

The CU is managed by the Executive Director (ED) who is appointed by the Council. The CU functions within a framework that fully embraces CDM and deals with longer-term mitigation issues. The responsibilities and operating functions of the CU are centered primarily around four programming areas:

1) Education, research and information
2) Finance and administration
3) Preparedness and response
4) Mitigation and research

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

CDEMA’s mandate

CDEMA has a broader mandate than OCHA in the Caribbean region. Its mandate extends beyond the roles and responsibilities it shares with OCHA in assessments, coordination and information management, as CDEMA engages in activities on sustainable development, community-based disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and resilience, as well as sector-based interventions, among others. In addition, CDEMA’s mandate differs from that of OCHA in that the latter’s mandate is globally focused whereas CDEMA’s is completely regional in scope.

c. Basic principles of the Regional Disaster Response Support Doctrine (RDRSD)

The RDRSD was developed to strengthen regional coordination and increase awareness of, and provide the foundation for, the RRM.

The overall aim of the RDRSD is:

“To provide effective and efficient coordinated disaster response support to CDEMA PSs requiring regional and/or international assistance for their response to the consequences of an event based on regionally agreed Principles, Concepts and Realities”.

d. Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM)

CDEMA’s mandate fully embraces the principles and practices of CDM, a holistic approach which seeks to reduce the risks and losses associated with natural and technological hazards, as well as the effects of climate change, to enhance sustainable development in the region. The CDM Regional Goal is to build safer, more resilient and sustainable CDEMA PSs through CDM. The strategy places focus on the integration of key cross-cutting issues, such as gender, climate change, information and communications technologies and environmental sustainability, across all sectors.

### GENDER MATTERS

**CDEMA Comprehensive Disaster Management Coordination and Harmonization Council (CDM CHC) Gender Working Group**

Gender has been identified as one of the key cross-cutting themes to be integrated into all CDM programme areas in CDEMA PSs. In line with the CDM Framework (2014-2024), gender mainstreaming involves the assessment of the different vulnerabilities faced by women and men, girls and boys, and how these vulnerabilities can be integrated into disaster risk management (DRM) in the Caribbean.

The key purpose of the Gender Working Group is to provide a mechanism by which regional experts can support CDM implementation. The Gender Working Group consists of a pool of experts from across the Caribbean region whose role is to provide policy and technical guidance on and promote the mainstreaming of gender considerations in DRM initiatives conducted by CDM stakeholders.
In December 1991, the UN General Assembly (GA) adopted resolution 46/182, which had wide-ranging effects and established the following UN mechanisms to strengthen the effectiveness of international humanitarian action: The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).

**REMEMBER**

OCHA is not an operational agency directly engaged in the delivery of humanitarian programmes. Rather, its added value is as an honest broker, facilitator, thought leader and global advocate, providing support to the humanitarian system, promoting solutions to reduce humanitarian need, risk and vulnerability, and amplifying the voices of affected people.

**a. OCHA’s mandate**

OCHA’s mandate is derived from GA resolution 46/182, which states:

“The leadership role of the Secretary-General is critical and must be strengthened to ensure better preparation for, as well as rapid and coherent response to, natural disasters and other emergencies”.

GA resolution 46/182 assigns a clear leadership and coordination role to the ERC for international humanitarian assistance to respond to the needs of affected people. As such, OCHA plays a key leadership role in mobilizing assistance and resources, in collaboration with its partners, to provide a coordinated, strategic and accountable delivery of humanitarian action which aims to minimize duplication and ensure that crisis-affected people receive the assistance and protection they need.

**What does resolution 46/182 say about national sovereignty?**

“Sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity of States shall be fully respected in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. In this context, humanitarian assistance should be provided with the consent of the affected country and in principle on the basis of a request by the affected country”.

"Sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity of States shall be fully respected in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. In this context, humanitarian assistance should be provided with the consent of the affected country and in principle on the basis of a request by the affected country".
**GENDER MATTERS**

**OCHA’s gender equality policy and programming**

Given OCHA’s mandate as a humanitarian coordinating agency, it plays a unique role in ensuring coherent responses to emergencies that are pivoted on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. This includes highlighting funding needs and prioritizing gender-based violence (GBV) programmes. OCHA is responsible for ensuring that GBV prevention, risk mitigation and response are prioritized as immediate life-saving priorities across all sectors and clusters.

The OCHA Policy Instruction on Gender Equality (2016-2020) defines a shared vision on gender equality by all staff. It focuses on a gender-responsive approach that aims to facilitate a better examination of gender inequalities through a meaningful gender analysis. The Policy Instruction outlines OCHA’s seven Priority Commitments on Gender Equality, which aim to strengthen OCHA’s delivery on gender-equality programming in humanitarian action.

**d. Humanitarian principles**

All OCHA activities are guided by the four humanitarian principles formally enshrined in GA resolution 46/182 (humanity, neutrality and impartiality) and GA resolution 58/114 (independence), which provide the foundations for humanitarian action. The promotion of, and adherence to, these principles by humanitarian organizations is essential for gaining the acceptance and trust of relevant actors carrying out humanitarian action on the ground. It also ensures that humanitarian personnel have safe and sustained access to affected people and helps guarantee that aid is distributed impartially and to those most in need.
e. OCHA Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (OCHA ROLAC)

Based in Panama, OCHA ROLAC provides support in disaster preparedness and response to countries and overseas territories (OTs) in the Caribbean region, including the 18 CDEMA Participating States (PSs). Since its establishment in 2003, OCHA ROLAC has worked towards:

• Providing immediate response to emergencies.
• Improving the collective preparedness and response of the humanitarian community.
• Strengthening Member States’ capacity to work effectively with international partners.

In the Caribbean, OCHA’s dedicated team works closely with UN Country Teams (UNCTs) and CDEMA in the areas of emergency response preparedness, operational readiness, information management, advocacy and humanitarian financing. In collaboration with its partners, OCHA aims to coordinate humanitarian action in the Caribbean to ensure its consistency and efficiency, and to support life-saving preparedness and response efforts.

**OCHA ROLAC focuses its work with Caribbean partners on two main priorities:**

1. Strengthening regional coordination mechanisms between international partners and CDEMA.
2. Improving operational readiness and contingency planning by supporting UN Resident Coordinator Offices (RCOs) and UNCTs together with their respective humanitarian coordination structures.
OCHA contributes to the coordination of an effective and principled humanitarian response through its five core functions:

**Coordination:** OCHA coordinates humanitarian response to expand the reach of humanitarian action, improve prioritization and reduce duplication, ensuring that assistance and protection reach the people who need it most.

**Humanitarian Financing:** OCHA aims to mobilize and engage the full range of financing instruments, mechanisms and partners to ensure that growing humanitarian needs are met, humanitarian leadership and coordination mechanisms are promoted at the country level, and the large array of global humanitarian financing mechanisms are complementary among themselves and coherent with development funding.

**Policy:** Through leadership in developing humanitarian policy, OCHA helps set the agenda for humanitarian sector reform and effectiveness in response to a shifting global landscape, new global frameworks, and increased capacities of national governments and local actors.

**Advocacy:** OCHA’s public and private advocacy raises awareness of forgotten crises, promotes respect for international humanitarian law, brings the voices of crisis-affected people to the forefront, and helps obtain access to humanitarian assistance.

**Information Management:** OCHA provides information management services to the humanitarian community to inform a rapid, effective and principled response. It gathers, shares and uses data and information, underpinning coordination, decision-making and advocacy.
In the Caribbean, there is a plethora of actors involved in disaster preparedness and response, including NGOs, civil defense and military actors, private sector entities and assisting governments from within and beyond the region. In this section, CDEMA and OCHA’s key regional partners as well as active forums for the coordination of disaster preparedness and response are outlined.

**Partners:**

a) National Disaster Management Organizations (NDMOs)

b) United Nations agencies

c) International Red Cross and Red Crescent (RCRC) Movement

**Forums:**

d) The Regional Group for Risk, Emergencies and Disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean (REDLAC)

e) The Eastern Caribbean Development Partner Group (ECDPG)

a. National Disaster Management Organizations (NDMOs)

**What are they?**

NDMOs are umbrella networks of units and authorities concerned with various aspects of disaster management. Through the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC), **NDMOs act as the national coordinating and control facility in the event of a disaster or emergency.**

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**REMEMBER**

National Disaster Management Organizations (NDMOs) are responsible for the coordination of all resources in times of emergency or disaster, and all relief requests to and from high levels of government, NGOs, and private entities at the national level. CDEMA and OCHA support NDMOs in carrying out their responsibility for coordinating humanitarian action to respond to the needs of affected populations. National Disaster Plans, therefore, must include contingencies for triggering regional emergency response assistance, including the Regional Response Mechanism (RRM) and its response teams.
b. United Nations agencies

Who are they?

The main UN agencies with humanitarian mandates include:

- Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR)
- UN-Habitat
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- UN Women
- World Food Programme (WFP)
- World Health Organization (WHO)

How do they work with governments?

At the country level, the UN system works in partnership with NDMOs and with respective government line ministries on emergency preparedness and response.

c. International Red Cross and Red Crescent (RCRC) Movement

What is it?

The RCRC Movement is the world’s largest humanitarian network with more than 100 million members, volunteers and supporters across its 192 National Societies.

The RCRC Movement is made up of three core structural components:

1) National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
2) International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)
3) International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

The IFRC and ICRC are standing invitees of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC).

d. The Regional Group for Risk, Emergencies and Disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean (REDLAC)

What is it?

REDLAC is the adaptation of the IASC at the regional level. It is not an operational team but rather, a regional coordination forum comprised of 34-member organizations and five special guests with a shared objective of coordinating actions to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action. REDLAC provides a forum for the coordination of all phases of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC), promoting inter-agency and inter-sectoral coordination in preparedness and response measures from the regional to the country level. OCHA acts as the secretariat of REDLAC.
What is its purpose?

REDLAC provides a forum for information exchange, reflection and activities. This forum allows for the optimization of actions in preparedness and response aimed at reducing and meeting humanitarian needs in Latin America and the Caribbean. In an emergency or disaster situation, REDLAC provides support to teams in the field and ensures inter-agency coordination. Through information sharing, REDLAC members identify key challenges and develop advocacy strategies to address them. OCHA actively facilitates strategic conversations and information sharing with regional partners through this forum.

The group also shares regional logistics support information during an emergency response, particularly with regard to cargo and charter flights from Panama to the affected country. Sectoral leaders at the regional level facilitate the response at the country level and support the mobilization of technical, material and financial resources.

How does it work with governments and CDEMA?

One of the main functions of REDLAC is to facilitate the exchange of operational information during the first hours of an emergency. REDLAC supports national counterparts with tools, training and missions. OCHA will ensure that REDLAC partners are updated on an unfolding emergency in any CDEMA Participating State (PS) and will forward any correspondence received from CDEMA and distribute information products through existing communication channels. OCHA will also ensure that REDLAC partners are kept up-to-date on pre-deployment requests.

LESSONS LEARNED

Regional Group on Risks, Emergencies and Disasters for Latin America and the Caribbean (REDLAC): How can this forum better respond to emergencies?

Based on recent lessons learned, the following have been identified as areas in need of improvement for REDLAC:

- Link between REDLAC and field operations during an emergency need to be strengthened.
- Greater engagement on the part of REDLAC partners to facilitate information sharing in emergencies.
- Alternative communications channels need to be explored to overcome technical/technological challenges.
- SOPs need to be revised to pre-establish communication and reporting mechanisms to avoid the use of ad hoc methodologies and tools in emergencies.
e. The Eastern Caribbean Development Partner Group (ECDPG)

What is it?

The ECDPG is a partners’ forum for the RRM, which includes CARICOM institutions, UN agencies and other specialised agencies, that aims to facilitate information sharing among donors and development partners, and to make strategic decisions regarding programme development and coordination. It is chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) and is comprised of donor and development partners covering Barbados and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

i. ECDPG for Disaster Management (ECDPG/DM)

What is it?

The ECDPG/DM has been established as one of six thematic groups of the ECDPG to facilitate coordination of external emergency assistance to impacted states in the Eastern Caribbean. The ECDPG/DM is co-chaired by the ED of CDEMA and the UN RC in Barbados. Its aim is to conduct initial assessments after a disaster, to support affected governments in coordinating humanitarian assistance in an emergency, and to enhance and support CDEMA as the regional entity for coordinating disaster response. The ECDPG/DM covers CDEMA Participating States (PSs) in the Central and Eastern Sub-Regions of the CDEMA system.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Eastern Caribbean Development Partner Group (ECDGP) coordination meetings

When an imminent impact is confirmed and/or following an impact on any CDEMA Participating State, the ECDPG holds daily coordination meetings with donors and partners, including OCHA and other UN agencies as well as NGOs and representatives of governments, to share information, harmonize activities and coordinate regional and international assistance in support of national governments.
a. CDEMA Participating States (PSs)

Who are the PSs?

CDEMA currently consists of 18 PSs:

- Anguilla
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Barbados
- Belize
- British Virgin Islands
- Commonwealth of The Bahamas
- Commonwealth of Dominica
- Grenada
- Haiti
- Jamaica
- Monserrat
- Republic of Guyana
- Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
- Saint Lucia
- St. Kitts and Nevis
- St. Vincent and the Grenadines
- Suriname
- Turks and Caicos Islands

All CARICOM and non-CARICOM Member States of the Caribbean region are eligible for CDEMA membership.

b. CDEMA Sub-Regional Focal Points (SRFPs)

What are they?

The CDEMA Coordinating Unit (CU), located at CDEMA Headquarters in Barbados, is the focal point for managing the RRM. It is supported by four SRFPs in Jamaica, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago, each of which have a distinct geographical area where they are responsible for providing essential support to the CU in the coordination of response initiatives.

The SRFPs are located within the National Disaster Office of the countries in which they reside and should have disaster resource inventories for the participating countries falling within their sub-group. The SRFPs continue to be effective in supporting emergency response through management and logistics reinforcement.
Located in the SRFPs of the CDEMA system are four sub-regional warehouses stocked with basic levels of first response as well as search-and-rescue items. With the aim of efficiently managing and tracking disaster relief supplies, CDEMA has created the Relief Supplies Tracking System (RSTS) online database.

**c. The Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis (DANA) Continuum**

**What is it?**

The DANA Continuum is a systematic approach to conducting damage assessment, processing the data collected and determining needs in an effective and timely manner to support response and recovery actions in an impacted country. It ensures the collection of damage data after any hazard impact to inform immediate needs; standardizes the procedures used for damage assessment and needs analysis; and facilitates the recovery phase by identifying the facilities in need of urgent rehabilitation and longer-term reconstruction.

Recognizing the diversity in approaches to DANA in the region, the CDEMA CU, in collaboration with regional partners, identified the need for a consolidated approach to ensure that the data collection process is singularly managed and executed to avoid it becoming burdensome for affected populations.

The revised DANA process implemented by the CDEMA CU and regional partners includes:

- One multi-sectoral group to conduct DANA, including the requirements for the Damage and Loss Analysis (DaLA), Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA), Human Needs Assessment and Socio-Demographic Assessments (SDA).
- One multi-dimensional process by which data is collected, compiled, analyzed and stored.
**DANA Continuum**

Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis

**Key Characteristics**

- Estimates projected impact
- Estimates population needs (food and water) according to the Sphere Standards
- Subject to verification in the ISO and IDHNA phases
- Reports produced before the impact

**Initial Situation**

Overview

Mobilization within 24hrs *

**ISO**

- Provides general overview
- Seeks areas of higher impact
- Qualitative results
- Reports available within 3 days and shared at the convenience of National Emergency Operation Center (NEOC)

**ISO**

Rapid Overview

Mobilization within 14 days*

**IDHNA**

Initial Damage Human Needs Assessment

Mobilization within 7 days *

**PIDA**

Pre-Impact Data Analysis

Mobilization after 21 days*

**PDNA**

Post Disaster Needs Assessment

Mobilization after 21 days*

**TIMELINE**

For detailed information about DANA continuum and CDEMA, visit: http://www.cdema.org Questions or feedback: rccuser@cdema.org

**Conducted by**

NATIONAL AUTHORITIES & CDEMA RCC

Regional Coordination Centre

- RNAT
  - Rapid Needs Assessments Team
- National and local authorities.

- CDAC
  - CARICOM Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team
- National and local authorities.

National Authorities & sectors

(health, utilities-power, communications, water, etc)

- National Officials, UNDP, World Bank

Team compositions may change depending on the emergency and partnerships in place.

* Times presented are flexible and can change in each emergency according to the criteria of disaster management authorities.
d. The Regional Response Mechanism (RRM)

What is it?

The RRM is an evolving operational mechanism through which CDEMA coordinates disaster response and relief operations in collaboration with its partners at the national, regional and international levels. The RRM provides a platform for coordinating the various emergency support mandates of the RRM partners and seeks to eliminate the duplication of efforts and make efficient use of regional resources during emergency operations. It is through the RRM architecture that CDEMA delivers coordinated, effective and timely response to affected PSs in support of national response mechanisms and procedures.

The CDEMA CU is the focal point for managing the mechanism and is supported by the four SRFPs. The RRM is supported by SOPs, plans, MoUs, guidelines and legislation, and is comprised of a group of response teams, agencies and organizations which carry out its functions. The RRM is guided by the principles of sovereignty, solidarity, partnership, and fully embraces international humanitarian principles and standards.

i. Regional Coordination Centre (RCC)

What is it?

The RCC is the central focal point for coordinating and managing any declared emergency or disaster event in an impacted Participating State (PS). In addition, each SRFP has its own Sub-Regional Coordination Centre from where early warning, response and relief activities are coordinated in the event of an emergency or disaster which could impact or has impacted the Sub-Region.

The RCC is located within the CDEMA CU in Barbados and is responsible for coordinating all aspects of response operations when the RRM and Regional Coordination Plan (RCP) are activated. The RCC is activated upon the directive of the CDEMA ED and deactivated only when it has been established that regional level support is no longer required.

How does it function?

The RCC is led by a director who oversees and coordinates the operations of eight thematic cells.

1. The Operations Cell
2. The Information Management Cell
3. The Analysis and Assessment Cell
4. The Logistics and Procurement Cell
5. The Administration, Human Resource and Finance Cell
6. The Communications Cell
7. The Emergency Telecommunications Cell
8. The Multinational Civil Military Coordination Cell
ii. Regional Coordination Plan (RCP)

What is it?

The RCP, which covers all CDEMA PSs, aims to facilitate the coordination of the RRM. The RCP defines the framework for effecting the multi-lateral agreements of CDEMA PSs to assist each other in disaster and emergency situations.

The objective of the RCP is to:

- Provide guidelines for implementing the RRM in support of national efforts.
- Secure, coordinate and channel reliable and comprehensive information on any disaster that is threatening or has/may affect any PS to interested parties.
- Mobilize and coordinate disaster assistance from national, regional and international humanitarian actors for affected PSs.
- Assist affected PSs to return to a state of normalcy.

The CDEMA CU is the focal point for effecting the RCP which aims to support national coordination plans and therefore, requires that national plans include procedures for triggering the RRM.

e. Triggering the RRM

How is the RRM activated?

The RRM is activated when a PS notifies the CDEMA CU of the scope and magnitude of a disaster or emergency and makes a formal request for regional assistance. Alternatively, the RRM may also be triggered by verified reports from credible sources received by the CDEMA CU. If neither of the above is available, the CU will deploy a reconnaissance mission to verify the status of the impacted PS.
**WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**

**OCHA's role in the Regional Response Mechanism (RRM)**

OCHA is a member of the Eastern Caribbean Development Partner Group for Disaster Management (ECDPG/DM) and supports the RRM when activated. It provides support to the thematic cells of the Regional Coordination Centre (RCC), actively participates in the ECDPG/DM coordination meetings, integrates staff into the Rapid Needs Assessment Team (RNAT) to bolster surge capacity, and develops information products and tools in support of the RRM.

Under the 2018 Caribbean project funded by European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), OCHA provided national and regional actors in the Caribbean with training in assessments, coordination, and information management to strengthen the RRM. Over the past three years, CDEMA and OCHA have discussed joint deployments at length and explored opportunities to further enhance interoperability, keeping in mind that global mechanisms and tools must be adjusted and adapted to the regional structures already in place.

### i. Levels of response

The RRM is based on a three-tiered response system. The extent of CDEMA’s involvement in disaster response operations depends on the severity of the situation and the type of assistance required by PSs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Extent of Regional Involvement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td><strong>Local incidents within a Participating State are dealt with in the regular operating mode of the emergency services.</strong> The local national focal point is required to submit, on a timely basis, information on the emergency event for the purposes of consolidating regional disaster records.</td>
<td>No regional response required</td>
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<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td><strong>Disasters taking place at the national level which do not overwhelm the socio-economic structure or capacity to respond within the affected state.</strong> In such cases, the primary assistance at the regional level will be limited to providing technical expertise to National Disaster Organizations or facilitating their access to specific resources which may be required due to the particular disaster event. <strong>The whole operation is still managed by the national disaster focal point.</strong></td>
<td>Limited or specialized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td><strong>Disasters which overwhelm the capacity of the affected state(s) to respond.</strong> In such instances, the Regional Response Mechanism (RRM) is activated. This includes the activation of the CARICOM Disaster Relief Unit (CDRU), a specialized unit made up of military, fire and police assets from within CARICOM responsible for providing logistical support for the receipt and dispatch of relief supplies.</td>
<td>Full activation</td>
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</table>
The Regional Response Mechanism (RRM) is composed of response teams which each play a specific role in supporting impacted states and partners during a humanitarian response to an emergency or disaster in a Participating State (PS). The response teams of CDEMA integrate gender into their assessment methodologies and, when possible, the composition of teams on the ground.

The RRM has five standing response teams which provide surge capacity to support disaster response and relief operations in any impacted CDEMA PS upon request. All the regional response teams are deployed self-sufficient and report to the National Disaster Coordinator (NDC) in the impacted state, providing direct support to the state’s national emergency operations.

The five standing response teams of the RRM are: The CARICOM Disaster Relief Unit (CDRU), the CARICOM Operational Support Team (COST), the CARICOM Disaster Assessment and Coordination (CDAC) Team, the Rapid Needs Assessment Team (RNAT) and the Regional Search and Rescue Team (RSART). The Regional Security System (RSS), an integral part of the RRM and the critical link between the disciplined forces and CDEMA, provides crucial logistics support, supplies and equipment to these response teams and performs reconnaissance missions over impacted areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Response Teams of the Regional Response Mechanism (RRM)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CARICOM Disaster Relief Unit (CDRU)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CARICOM Operational Support Team (COST)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CARICOM Disaster Assessment and Coordination (CDAC) Team</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rapid Needs Assessment Team (RNAT)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Search and Rescue Team (RSART)</strong></td>
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</table>
CASE STUDY 1. OCHA/United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team integration into the Rapid Needs Assessment Team (RNAT)

OCHA/UNDAC surge teams can be integrated as Team Members into the RNAT structure in response to an emergency, as shown in the diagram above. OCHA integrated surge team members into the RNAT during the response to Hurricane Matthew in 2016, Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017, and again in 2019 in response to Hurricane Dorian. This approach has garnered mixed results, with the response to Hurricane Matthew being considered a positive example of interoperability between response teams, whereas a similar inter-agency approach to needs assessment missions failed to bring about the same degree of cooperation and collaboration during Hurricanes Irma and Maria as well as Hurricane Dorian.

Interoperability in assessments, and between response teams, is hindered by the different functions of and methodologies employed by RNAT and UNDAC. UNDAC is designed to support assessments, coordination and information management, whereas for the Regional Response Mechanism (RRM), these functions and responsibilities are carried out by national authorities and the different CDEMA response teams. Assessments fall within the Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis (DANA) Continuum, where the stage 2 Initial Situation Overview (ISO) is supported by RNAT, if required by the impacted country; coordination is supported by the CARICOM Operational Support Team (COST) directly liaising with the National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC); and information management is undertaken by the NEOC.

In response to Hurricane Dorian, OCHA ROLAC integrated two staff members into the RNAT during the initial response phase. The different mandates of CDEMA and OCHA, as well as the methodologies employed by the RNAT in conducting needs assessments, presented barriers to joint assessments and information sharing. The RNAT report focuses primarily on damages after a disaster and does not provide enough information on the humanitarian needs of affected populations to guide early relief operations. Operational constraints arose due to the inaccessibility of the RNAT report by OCHA/UNDAC and humanitarian partners caused by a delay in the formal approval of the report at the national level.
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

CDEMA Specialized Support Teams

CDEMA, through the Regional Response Mechanism (RRM), has the capability to deploy Specialized Support Teams upon request from an impacted Participating State (PS), including teams of hazardous materials (HAZMAT) specialists, psycho-social support specialists and artisans. In addition, upon request from a PS, CDEMA can deploy ad hoc technical response teams to provide support in specific sectors where a need for technical assistance has been identified by the impacted country.

In response to Hurricane Dorian, at the request of the Government of The Bahamas, CDEMA deployed for the first time an ad hoc Detail Damage Sector Assessment (DDSA) team, which conducted a specified assessment mission with the guidance of CDEMA, where it received additional support from the CARICOM Operational Support Team (COST) already on the ground. The DDSA team had a mission outlined by CDEMA with very clear objectives and was provided with a guiding document before deploying. The DDSA team also met with the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) Team Leader to discuss the areas which needed to be assessed in various communities across the island of Abaco.

The DDSA falls under the fourth phase of the Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis (DANA) Continuum (usually mobilized within 14 days) and is conducted by national authorities and sector leads (i.e. health, utilities, communications, water, etc.) to identify sectoral damage details, produce reports on the extent of damage, and provide estimates of the cost for early recovery by sector.
a. UN operational presence in the Caribbean

There are six UN Resident Coordinator Offices (RCOs) in the Caribbean. The UN Resident Coordinators (RCs) in Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados collectively provide coverage to 17 CDEMA Participating States (PSs) and the UN RC in El Salvador covers neighbouring Belize. In addition, there are two Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs) in Haiti and Jamaica and five United Nations Emergency Technical Teams (UNETTs) in Belize, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago. The UN System also provides coverage to non-CDEMA PSs in the region, including Aruba, Bermuda, Curaçao, Cayman Islands and Sint Maarten.

b. UN Resident Coordinator (RC)

Who is it?

The UN RC is the designated representative of the UN Secretary-General in a country and leads the UN Country Team (UNCT). The RC system encompasses all organizations of the UN system dealing with operational activities for development, regardless of their formal presence in the country. The RC leads and strategically positions the UNCT in support of national priorities, development strategies, and plans. The UN RC is also responsible for the strategic and operational coordination of response efforts of UNCT member agencies and other relevant humanitarian actors.

What do they do?

RCs and country teams advocate the interests and mandates of the UN system while drawing on the support and guidance of the entire UN family. Their main goal is to bring together the different UN agencies to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of operational activities at the country level.
c. Humanitarian Country Team (HCT)

What is it?

The HCT is composed of organizations that undertake humanitarian action in-country and that commit to participate in coordination arrangements. It should include UN agencies, OCHA, national and international NGOs and, subject to their individual mandates, National Red Cross Societies, as well as the United Nations Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS) Chief Security Adviser as an observer. The HCT is led and chaired by the RC, with the exception of large-scale and/or sustained international humanitarian assistance efforts in which case a Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) is appointed by the ERC in consultation with the IASC.

What is its purpose?

The HCT's overall goal is to ensure that inter-agency humanitarian action alleviates human suffering and protects the lives, livelihoods and dignity of populations in need. The HCT makes decisions to ensure that country level humanitarian action is well-coordinated, principled, timely, effective and efficient. It also ensures that adequate prevention, preparedness, risk and security management measures are in place and functioning.

How does it work with governments?

The affected state retains the primary role in the initiation, organization, coordination, and implementation of humanitarian assistance within its territory. Whenever possible, the HCT operates in support of and in coordination with national and local authorities.

d. Humanitarian Advisory Team (HAT)

What is it?

The HAT, which is embedded in the RCO, plays a key role in boosting localized readiness and response capacity. The HAT is flexible, agile and able to provide support at the national, regional and international levels.

LESSONS LEARNED

UN Resident Coordinators (RCs), CDEMA and OCHA: How can their interoperability be improved?

Recent lessons learned have demonstrated that there is a need to:

• Provide a better understanding to RCs of CDEMA’s structure.
• Support RCs in understanding how CDEMA and OCHA mutually support each other.
• Designate a focal point within Resident Coordinator Offices in the region to engage with OCHA ROLAC on a more regular basis regarding operational preparedness activities for response.
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

OCHA ROLAC's Humanitarian Advisory Team (HAT) in the Caribbean

In 2020, OCHA ROLAC will strategically place a HAT in Barbados to contribute to the UN’s support of governments and regional bodies in emergency preparedness and response in the region. The OCHA ROLAC HAT will work closely with the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) and the United Nations Emergency Technical Team (UNETT), when established, and will provide technical assistance to CDEMA, government institutions and other regional bodies, and promote international humanitarian standards and principles adapted to national and regional contexts. It will also provide support to the UN RC in developing a coordinated and integrated approach to UN agencies’ cooperation with CDEMA by facilitating the communication and planning of the UN’s programmatic support of CDEMA.

e. Information Management Unit (IMU)

What is it?

The IMU plays a crucial role in enabling OCHA's function in the humanitarian system, which is to bring together humanitarian actors to ensure a coherent and coordinated response to crises and emergencies. OCHA's IMU is made up of Information Management Officers (IMOs) who possess a wide variety of skills and expertise. IMOs have advanced skills in key software and setup and manage key OCHA information platforms and tools, advocating for their use and training users.

What is its purpose?

Essentially, OCHA's IMU gets the right information to the right people at the right time. IMOs ensure the accurate and timely delivery of critical information to inform strategic decision-making and to achieve better outcomes in a humanitarian response.

The OCHA IMU:

- Coordinates with humanitarian partners on common data systems and through Information Management (IM) working groups.
- Makes information easy to find, manage and share with humanitarian partners.
- Improves situational awareness and supports evidence-based planning and operations, including through the collection and analysis of sex and age disaggregated data (SADD).
- Uses geographical information systems (GIS) and other tools to analyze and present spatial data, including Common Operational Datasets (CODs), reference and operational maps, and spatial analysis.
- Takes complex data and presents it in a format that is easy to understand and tailored to a specific audience through visual snapshots, dashboards and infographics.
f. The Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC)

The HPC is a coordinated series of actions undertaken to help prepare for, manage and deliver humanitarian response. It consists of five elements, Needs Assessment and Analysis, Strategic Planning, Resource Mobilization, Implementation and Monitoring and Operational Peer Review and Evaluation, which are coordinated in a seamless manner, with one step logically building on the previous and leading to the next.

CASE STUDY 2. Hurricane Dorian: Pre-deployment of OCHA Information Management Officer (IMO) to support CDEMA’s Regional Coordination Center (RCC)

CDEMA and OCHA’s SOPs stipulate that when the RCC is either partially or fully activated, OCHA will provide support to its operational cells where possible. The RCC’s Information Management (IM) Cell, which conducts information processing and analysis in the RCC, has inherent synergies with OCHA’s Information Management Unit, and the role played by its IMOs, which should be capitalised on to enhance information management products and services in emergencies.

In response to Hurricane Dorian, OCHA pre-deployed an IMO into the RCC to provide support to the IM cell in information management and reporting, including managing the Who Does What, Where, When and for Whom (345W) process and assisting with the integration of a sector-based approach into CDEMA’s regional Situation Report. This has been identified as a best practice from the Dorian response that should be replicated in the future as a means of enhancing the interoperability of information products, processes and teams during emergencies.

INTEROPERABILITY IN ACTION

Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) workshops in the Caribbean

In 2018, OCHA ROLAC carried out two HPC workshops in the CDEMA sub-regional hubs of Barbados and Jamaica. The workshop in Barbados was attended by more than 20 agencies with an operational presence in the Caribbean, as a means of supporting the development of a regional contingency plan for the UN system as well as for individual islands. In Jamaica, OCHA facilitators worked closely with the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) to reinforce knowledge of the HPC and build upon prior training. Cross-training national counterparts and CDEMA staff on the HPC is important for promoting a better understanding OCHA’s framework for humanitarian action, and its relevant processes, mechanisms and tools, which will ultimately contribute to enhanced interoperability in the region.
Successful implementation of the HPC depends on effective emergency preparedness, coordination with national/local authorities and humanitarian actors, and information management. The HPC is at the core of every humanitarian response. It provides the framework for identifying needs, planning an appropriate response, funding and implementing this plan, monitoring its progress and evaluating its impact. Without this framework, humanitarian activities risk being uncoordinated, inappropriate, unnecessary and at worst, counter-productive.

GENDER MATTERS

Gender equality and the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC)

OCHA promotes humanitarian action that is accountable to affected people and facilitates approaches to coordination which integrate gender, age, disability and other vulnerability considerations into all aspects of preparedness and response. The promotion of gender equality and strengthening the participation of affected people in the HPC is at the heart of OCHA’s approach.

OCHA integrates gender into all areas of its core mandate: in the planning and implementation of programmes, policies and procedures, and in reporting and results assessments. It also employs a meaningful gender analysis, including the collection and use of sex and age disaggregated data (SADD), and ensures that all its information products, communications and advocacy, and humanitarian financing tools are gender responsive.
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis (DANA) Continuum and the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC)

The DANA Continuum and the HPC are similar in that both provide a framework and timeline for action in disaster response.

The **DANA Continuum** is a systematic approach which follows a logical progression through the different phases of an emergency, beginning from a pre-impact analysis and ending with a Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA). The DANA Continuum is one component of the wider response mechanism managed by CDEMA, which focuses specifically on the assessment of damages and needs following a disaster event.

The **HPC** is a coordinated series of actions to help prepare for, manage and deliver humanitarian response. The five elements of the HPC – Needs Assessment and Analysis, Strategic Response Planning, Resource Mobilization, Implementation and Monitoring and Operational Peer Review and Evaluation – are coordinated in a sequential and iterative manner.

What is the difference between the DANA Continuum and the HPC?

The fundamental difference between the two is the scope of their respective activities and the timeline for carrying out those activities.

The DANA Continuum is **not a programme cycle** is the same way the HPC is but rather, it is a process for damage assessments and needs analysis within CDEMA’s Response Programme which is part of the broader Regional Response Mechanism (RRM) process.

The HPC encompasses many of the components of the DANA Continuum but extends beyond damage and needs assessments into resource mobilization to fund strategic response plans and implementation and monitoring of humanitarian assistance to affected populations.

The HPC, however, does not include a PDNA like that which is carried out by national officials, UNDP and World Bank, including the Damage and Loss Assessments (DaLA) and the Human Recovery Needs Assessments (HRNA), using a framework that quantifies financial needs for recovery.

### Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)

Established by UN General Assembly (GA) resolution 60/124 in 2006, CERF is a stand-by fund made up of unearmarked contributions pooled from donors around the world. It is one of the fastest and most effective ways to support rapid humanitarian response for people affected by humanitarian crises through the timely provision of life-saving assistance, including supplies, basic services and protection, to people in need. CERF provides rapid initial funding for life-saving actions at the onset of emergencies and for poorly funded, essential humanitarian operations in protracted crises. Contributions received from donors, mainly governments but also foundations, companies, charities and individuals, are pooled into this single fund which has an annual funding target of US$1 billion.

In emergencies, humanitarian organizations apply jointly for funding. Funds are immediately released if these proposals meet CERF's life-saving criteria; that is, the proposed activities will address urgent humanitarian needs to save lives. The immediate disbursement of funds allows humanitarian organizations on the ground to deliver food, safe drinking water, medical supplies and other life-saving aid fast and more efficiently.

Since 2011, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Gender Marker has been mandatory for CERF projects, ensuring that the distinct needs of women, girls, men and boys are met. In addition, the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) has outlined the following four priority areas for CERF:

a) support for women and girls, including tackling gender-based violence, reproductive health and empowerment;
b) programmes targeting disabled people;
c) education in protracted crises; and
d) other aspects of protection.

### Emergency Cash Grant

OCHA Emergency Cash Grants are used for first-aid activities and immediate response after a disaster. Established by UN GA resolution 59/141 (2004), the maximum amount which can be disbursed through this financing mechanism is $100,000. The funds are accessed when a disaster exceeds the country’s or agency’s capacity to respond or when the UN Resident Coordinator (RC)/Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) deems it necessary. The RC/HC, the national or regional OCHA office and the government of the country concerned can file a request for funds through its permanent UN mission.

**The fund can be used to:**

- Cover the most urgent needs of populations affected by natural, environmental and technological disasters.
- Provide an initial injection of capital so that agencies can launch humanitarian assistance.
- Facilitate local purchases of relief supplies, logistical support and short-term recruitment to assist the RC/HC in relief coordination on rare occasions.

### Flash Appeal

A Flash Appeal is a concise analysis of the scope and severity of a humanitarian crisis, which clearly articulates needs, priority sectors for response and actions of key humanitarian organizations, as well as preliminary requests for the response. Ideally, it is based on a contingency plan and draws on baseline information gathered during the preparedness phase. A Flash Appeal is issued three to five days after a sudden-onset emergency.

**The Flash Appeal aims to:**

- Provide an initial joint analysis of the situation.
- Build broad support for the direction of the response.
- Highlight the plan for scaling up the response.
- Ensure that contextual, institutional and programmatic risks to the achievement of the collective response priorities are identified.

In a Flash Appeal, the differentiated needs and priorities of women, girls, men and boys are identified across all clusters/sectors. Gender-related issues may also be integrated into a Flash Appeal’s strategic objectives which, based on existing baseline information and field observations, identify and prioritize the most immediate threats to life.
How are clusters activated?
Where there is a need to strengthen sector coordination, the UN RC can ask for activation of the cluster system. The procedure for activating one or more clusters includes consultation between the RC and the HCT, and then correspondence with the ERC on the rationale for each cluster and the selection of cluster lead agencies based on coordination and response capacity in the affected country.

CASE STUDY 3. Hurricane Dorian in The Bahamas: $US1 million released from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to kick-start relief efforts

At its peak strength, Dorian, a Category 5 hurricane, brought winds in excess of 220mph and 23ft. storm surge as it barreled over north-western Bahamas. The $1 million in CERF funds allowed the United Nations and humanitarian organizations to support government-led efforts to immediately expand relief efforts. CERF funds were directed toward two priority clusters/sectors identified by needs assessments, which were Logistics ($400,000) and Protection ($200,000 for gender-based violence and $400,000 for shelter).

- **Sector or cluster approach**

When emergencies occur, coordination of the humanitarian response is essential. Good coordination means less gaps and overlaps in the assistance delivered by humanitarian organizations. In a humanitarian response, this is achieved through inter-cluster/sector coordination.

What are clusters/sectors?
Clusters are groups of humanitarian organizations, both UN and non-UN, in each of the main sectors of humanitarian action, for example, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), health and logistics. They are designated by the IASC and have clear responsibilities. Responders working in each of these sectors are usually accountable to a ministerial lead at the national level.

- **i. Inter-Cluster/Sector Coordination**

Inter-cluster (or inter-sector) coordination is critical to achieve common objectives, avoid duplication and prioritize areas of need. Guided by the HCT, the inter-cluster coordination platform is usually chaired by OCHA and comprised of cluster coordinators. This platform encourages synergies between sectors, ensuring roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, closing potential gaps and minimizing duplication.

- **ii. Cluster activation**

How are clusters activated?
Where there is a need to strengthen sector coordination, the UN RC can ask for activation of the cluster system. The procedure for activating one or more clusters includes consultation between the RC and the HCT, and then correspondence with the ERC on the rationale for each cluster and the selection of cluster lead agencies based on coordination and response capacity in the affected country.
The criteria for cluster activation are met when:

1. Response and coordination gaps exist due to sharp deterioration or significant change in the humanitarian situation.
2. Existing national response or coordination capacity is unable to meet needs in a manner that respects humanitarian principles, due to the scale of need, the number of actors involved, the need for a more complex multi-sectoral approach, or other constraints on the ability to respond or apply humanitarian principles.

By activating the cluster approach, a clear lead for sector coordination is established, which in most cases is the global cluster lead in a that sector responsible for the core functions in their respective cluster/sector (see infographic on p. 39), which includes setting the sector strategy, supporting national capacity, and advocating for meeting needs.

CASE STUDY 4. Cluster activation: 2010 Haiti earthquake

On 12 January 2010, a shallow 7.0-magnitude earthquake rocked the Ouest Province of Haiti, with the epicentre some 17km southwest of the capital, Port-au-Prince. The catastrophic earthquake killed 222,570 people and left some 300,000 injured. Given the scale of the disaster, the cluster approach was activated to respond to large-scale, multi-faceted humanitarian needs, as the national capacity to coordinate the humanitarian response had been overwhelmed. Five clusters/lead agencies were immediately activated: Logistics/World Food Programme (WFP), Emergency Shelter/International Organization for Migration (IOM), WASH/United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Health/World Health Organization (WHO), and Nutrition/UNICEF.


How does the cluster approach integrate into national coordination structures and procedures?

The establishment of clusters should support national mechanisms for sectoral coordination and take into consideration issues which cut across clusters, such as age, gender, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), HIV/AIDS and protection, among others. The cluster approach is not imposed on governments, nor does it seek to replace existing national coordination mechanisms if they are in place and functioning. Rather, OCHA aims to adapt and create linkages between this approach and existing government functions and structures at the national level to support better coordination of humanitarian assistance for affected populations in need.

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Data retrieved from CRED EM-DAT
How does CDEMA fit into the cluster/sector approach?

CDEMA does not follow the cluster/sector approach but rather, it adheres to the existing functions and structures in place at the local and national levels in providing support to governments. However, there are CARICOM and other Caribbean-based agencies and organizations that support the CDEMA system which have a mandate in specific sectors or thematic areas, somewhat resembling the cluster/sector approach followed by OCHA and other UN agencies.

These agencies and organizations include the Regional Security System (RSS), the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA), the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), among others. While they do not have a mandate for disaster preparedness and response, the exposure and vulnerability of the Caribbean region to natural hazards has necessitated the establishment of emergency mechanisms and designated disaster focal points within these agencies and organizations.
LESSONS LEARNED

The cluster/sector approach: CDEMA and national authorities

Lessons learned from recent humanitarian responses to disasters/emergencies in the region have revealed that:

- National disaster management authorities and CDEMA are not familiar with sector-based response system or inter-sector coordination.
- It is difficult for international responders and the United Nations Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team to receive ‘buy-in’ from national and regional authorities to use these coordination mechanisms.
- There is a need to provide training on the cluster/sector system to national and regional disaster management authorities in the region.

Are national/regional coordination structures interoperable with the cluster/sector approach? Yes. The humanitarian response to Hurricane Dorian showed that the cluster/sector approach is similar to that of the Emergency Support Function (ESF) system utilized in many CDEMA Participating States (PSs), and that the two systems are in fact interoperable. Therefore, creating linkages between them, through the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) and On-Site Operations Coordination Center (OSOCC), when activated, should be relatively uncomplicated if all actors involved have a prior understanding of who leads the different clusters/sectors and ESFs (or their equivalent at the country level), and how they should work together in an emergency response in the region.

Proposal: Introduce in-person training exercises or webinars for international, regional and national actors to promote enhanced interoperability of the cluster/sector approach and national coordination mechanisms, so that the coordination structure can be in place and operational, without extensive delays, from the outset of humanitarian responses to disasters/emergencies in the region.
OCHA Emergency Surge Mechanisms are the means by which experienced coordination experts and other specialized humanitarian personnel can be rapidly deployed to address critical new or unforeseen humanitarian needs in the field. Surge capacity is used where there are unforeseen emergencies and disasters, when a crisis deteriorates, or when a force majeure affects an office.

REMEMBER

States which may require regional and international assistance to respond to a disaster/emergency should:

1) Develop detailed National Disaster Plans which outline the number and types of response teams and technical experts they are likely to accept in a disaster situation.
2) Work with CDEMA and OCHA to agree on the composition, terms of reference and period of activation for response teams in an emergency.

a. United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC)

What is it?

UNDAC is a stand-by team of specially trained international disaster management professionals from UN Member States, UN agencies and other disaster response organizations. The UNDAC system is managed by the Response Support Branch in OCHA Geneva, with the Americas and Caribbean regional focal point based in OCHA ROLAC in Panama. UNDAC team members are made available by member and participating states of the UNDAC system, as well as by OCHA, UN agencies or international, regional and non-governmental organizations. **UNDAC is a UN response team managed by OCHA, not an independent organization.** OCHA ROLAC deploys a significant part of its staff with UNDAC teams and generally provides Team Leaders.

In the Caribbean, there are currently **10 active UNDAC members**, two of which are from English-speaking countries (one from St. Lucia and one from Trinidad and Tobago) and eight from the Spanish-speaking Caribbean (six from the Dominican Republic and two from Cuba). Due to the lack of membership in the English-speaking Caribbean, the UNDAC system draws on members from the Americas and Europe for deployment in the region. The objective, however, is to increase the number of Caribbean UNDAC members to establish a Caribbean team which can be mobilized in response to disasters and emergencies in the region.
What is its purpose?

The main role of the UNDAC team is to give the ERC the capability to support a UN Member State affected by an emergency by providing technical support. The UNDAC team is a rapid response team of the UN, managed by OCHA, which can be deployed in sudden onset and/or escalating emergencies within 12-48 hours of impact, or in situations such as tropical cyclones, pre-positioned upon early warning of an emergency, to establish or support a coordination mechanism for international response.

An UNDAC team on mission should be flexible enough to carry out or be involved in a wide range of activities, depending on the nature and scale of the disaster/situation. UNDAC teams will mostly focus on and support field-based coordination structures in support of the national authorities, information management and reporting, as well as the needs assessment and analysis element of the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC), informing Strategic (Response) Planning, Resource Mobilization and Implementation. UNDAC teams provide international capacity to support initial rapid assessments, drawing on the Multi-Cluster/Sectoral Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) Framework, and assists in the coordination of relief, information management and liaison activities at the national and local levels. UNDAC teams, however, do not make detailed or sectoral evaluations, deliver humanitarian aid or carry out sectoral coordination.

UNDAC teams also setup facilities for incoming Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams and, when required, establish and run an On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC) and a Reception Departure Centre (RDC) to act as a link between international responders and national authorities, to facilitate coordination of international response, and to provide a platform for cooperation, coordination and information management amongst international humanitarian responders.

REMEMBER

Today, the UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) teams – coming from a roster of over 200 trained emergency specialists – are strengthened by a number of partner organizations providing specialized support to the work of OCHA in sudden onset disaster settings. The operational partners which enable UNDAC teams to hit the ground running and provide swift situation analysis and coordination services are: ACAPS, Americas Support Team (Fairfax County), atlas logistique, Cascos Blancos, Deutsche Post DHL Group, Fuel Relief Fund, International Humanitarian Partnership, Map Action, REACH, Telecoms Sans Frontieres and UN Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT). For more information on UNDAC’s operational partnerships, consult the UNDAC Operational Partners brochure.
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team members in the Caribbean

Successful UNDAC team members must be:

- Prepared to actively participate in CDEMA orientation on the Caribbean context and the Regional Response Mechanism (RRM)
- Mindful of the nuances and specificities of the Caribbean context
- Ready to adjust and adapt to different cultural norms and modes of operation
- Willing to adhere to established coordination structures and procedures at the national and region levels
- Familiar with the processes and tools used in the Caribbean

Soft skills UNDAC team members need to be successful are:

- Communication skills
- Leadership
- Positive attitude
- Emotional intelligence
- Flexibility/adaptability
- Teamwork
- Conflict resolution
- Problem-solving

How does it work with governments?

An UNDAC team may be requested by a government, a UN RC/HC or a UN agency, including OCHA, and works under the authority of the RC/HC. In situations where there is no UN presence, the UNDAC team may work in direct support of the government of an affected country. UNDAC teams work under the same mandate as OCHA and are often OCHA’s first presence on the ground. On a case-by-case basis, the deployment and detailed tasks of an UNDAC team are agreed to by OCHA, the RC/HC and/or the requesting government in the mission’s Terms of Reference. The team normally stays in the affected area for the initial response phase of two to four weeks. An UNDAC team deployment is free of charge. Team members are funded through preliminary agreements made with agencies and governments.

How does it integrate gender?

The UNDAC team integrates gender into humanitarian response by collecting and analysing sex-, age- and disability-disaggregated data as well as other relevant forms of diversity, and comparing data with pre-crisis information; conducting a gender analysis of the situation of women, girls, men and boys; and analyzing secondary and primary data to identify the different dimensions of a crisis and how it affects women, girls, men and boys differently.
INTEROPERABILITY IN ACTION

Coordination and collaboration among CDEMA and OCHA response teams

The coordination of humanitarian action is always context-specific and therefore, the situation on the ground, as well as national authorities’ capacity to deal with a disaster/emergency, largely determines the level of engagement of CDEMA and OCHA, both on an individual and collective basis.

Based on their SOPs, OCHA surge teams, including UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) teams, and CDEMA’s response teams should be deployed based upon an agreed modality and in a coordinated fashion in support of the respective national authorities and partners. OCHA can deploy staff and/or UNDAC members to integrate as associate team members into CDEMA’s response teams, such as the Rapid Needs Assessment Team (RNAT), to enhance communication and coordination in carrying out assessments on the ground. OCHA can also co-deploy their response teams, including the UNDAC team, alongside the response teams deployed through CDEMA.

Concrete actions in emergency response:

- Continuous information sharing between OCHA and CDEMA in the event of potential or actual emergencies to discuss best options for responding, taking into consideration the needs and requests of the respective Member States and UN system in-country.
- Should a surge mechanism by one of the parties be activated, immediately discuss options and consider an associate deployment* of experts from the other party. For instance, an associate deployment of OCHA staff/UNDAC members with a CDEMA-led RNAT or CARICOM Disaster Assessment and Coordination (CDAC) team.
- Should the situation require both parties to activate their surge mechanism, immediately discuss and share information and ensure that these are coordinated deployments**, including through the respective designation of specific liaison persons on the deployed teams.

Concrete actions in the preparedness phase:

- OCHA is pre-identifying staff and UNDAC members who could potentially deploy to the Caribbean due to their knowledge of the context, or previous work in the region, and sensitizes them to the operational context of the Caribbean.
- CDEMA and OCHA are planning joint trainings between members of respective response teams.

*Associate deployment

- The associate deployee(s) form part of the deployment team and report to the Team Leader on all substantive matters, with administrative support being provided by the sponsoring organization.
- Information products, in both draft and final versions, are shared with the sponsoring organization of the associate deployee(s) in real-time.

**Coordinated deployment

- Both teams follow their own reporting lines.
- Each team designates a liaison person.
- Respect each other’s mandate. Both teams work together in a coordinated fashion to provide coordination support to national authorities and in information management, assessments, response planning and humanitarian financing.
- Information products are being shared with each other and on certain products, co-branding can be decided on a case-by-case basis.
b. United Nations Emergency Technical Team (UNETT)

What is it?

The UNETT is a UN inter-agency group that assists the UN Country Team (UNCT) in emergency preparedness and response. The team is the technical and operational tool of the UN System to prepare for emergencies and to provide a coordinated response during a disaster or emergency. The Head of each Agency designates an emergency focal point to become a member of the team, which reports directly to the United Nations Disaster Management Team. The UNETT collaborates with humanitarian partners and relevant government actors, such as the Directorate of Civil Protection and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, among others, at the level of preparedness and emergency response.

What is its purpose?

The UNETT participates in the development and/or updating of the Inter-Agency Contingency Plan, promotes preparedness measures for emergency and disaster situations, sets up the Information and Disaster and Emergency Operation Center in a UN building to support coordination and prioritize interventions, and participates in inter-agency missions to assess damages in affected areas and facilitate the coordination of relief operations.

How does it work with governments?

The UNETT works closely with the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) to support national authorities during crises and to build their disaster management capacity at all levels of preparedness and emergency response.

c. UN Environment/OCHA Joint Unit (JEU)

What is it?

The JEU is the UN's mechanism to mobilize and coordinate emergency assistance to countries facing environmental emergencies and disasters with significant environmental impacts. Environmental emergency specialists, such as chemists, water management experts, geologists and engineers, can be deployed individually or as part of a larger UNDAC team. These specialists work with national agencies and often the military to identify and prioritize environmental risks using the Flash Environmental Assessment Tool (FEAT), which is an accurate and practical tool to assist initial response teams in identifying and responding quickly to environmental impacts following sudden-onset natural disasters.

What is its purpose?

The JEU responds to environmental emergencies by coordinating international efforts and mobilizing partners to assist affected countries requesting assistance. It does so by effectively pairing the environmental expertise of UN Environment and the humanitarian response network coordinated by OCHA.
How does it work with governments?

Support for an environmental emergency and/or a disaster with secondary environmental consequences can be requested by a government through pre-identified JEU National Focal Points, or through the Environmental Notification/Request for International Assistance form, which can be found on the OCHA website.

d. Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) and the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG)

What is it?

USAR teams are comprised of trained experts who provide urban search-and-rescue assistance in an emergency, as well as targeted medical assistance as part of the rescue process. USAR teams support the search-and-rescue efforts of national governments, particularly in urban areas where there are collapsed structures. Teams that are trained for international deployment, and adhere to the INSARAG guidelines and methodology, can be operational in the affected country within 24-48 hours of the disaster and are self-sufficient throughout the duration of their deployment (usually seven to 10 days).

INSARAG is a global network of more than 90 countries and organizations dedicated to urban search-and-rescue and operational field coordination. INSARAG member countries and organizations follow the INSARAG guidelines and methodology endorsed by UN General Assembly (GA) 57/150 of 2002 on “Strengthening the Effectiveness and Coordination of International Urban Search and Rescue Assistance”. Since then, the INSARAG guidelines have been constantly updated, with the most recent version updated in 2020. INSARAG has designed a quality assurance process known as INSARAG External Classification for USAR teams with the mandate to deploy internationally. In the Americas, as of March 2020, four teams are classified (two in the USA; one in Colombia and one in Chile). OCHA acts as the INSARAG Secretariat with the global secretariat based in OCHA Geneva and the regional secretariat based in OCHA ROLAC in Panama.

What is its purpose?

Local and national search-and-rescue teams are generally the ones rescuing most victims due to their proximity to the disaster site. INSARAG recommends that all countries establish USAR capacity based on their own risk profile. The INSARAG Guidelines provide dedicated guidance on this and how to establish national USAR team accreditation processes.

Emergencies with collapsed structures can easily overwhelm local capacities which is why the support of well-trained, INSARAG-classified international USAR teams may be crucial to rescue trapped victims. Having international USAR teams certified by INSARAG and operating by its standards is essential in allowing national authorities to establish effective coordination platforms for incoming USAR teams even before the arrival of an UNDAC team.
How does it work with governments?

In order to ensure an information flow and exchange at the right level and in a time-critical fashion, INSARAG recommends all countries designate INSARAG policy and operational focal points and inform OCHA as the INSARAG Secretariat (insarag@un.org).

According to the INSARAG methodology, international USAR teams are to deploy only at the request or the acceptance of the affected country and they commit to work under the leadership of the affected country and coordinate with other teams.

When several international USAR teams and other response teams deploy, it is recommended to establish a Reception and Departure Center (RDC) as the first coordination platform at the point of arrival and a USAR Coordination Cell for the operational coordination and tasking of teams. Both INSARAG teams and the UNDAC team are trained to support the affected Government in USAR coordination and are mandated to do so by UN General Assembly resolution 57/150.
Both CDEMA and OCHA have mandates for supporting assessments, coordination and information management services to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of disaster preparedness and response in the Caribbean region. This section highlights the different products, tools and services managed by CDEMA and OCHA and, where applicable, how they have been working toward strengthening their interoperability and what actions can be taken to promote greater harmonization.

**Assessment**

**a. ASSESSMENT REGISTRY**

**What is it?**

The Assessment Registry provides a way for organizations to share the details and results of humanitarian assessments. The coordinated assessment process targets decision-makers across the humanitarian community. The Assessment Registry is hosted on a website that can be easily accessed by all partners, such as HumanitarianResponse.info.

**What is its purpose?**

The Assessment Registry provides this service so that agencies can easily access assessments which have already been conducted and avoid unnecessary survey fatigue. Partners planning an assessment or activities in a specific location and/or sector can see which partners have already conducted relevant assessments and use the results for their own planning purposes.

The HumanitarianResponse.info country website has an integrated assessment registry. It sorts assessments undertaken by title, location, leading and participating agencies/organizations, sectors and assessment status. In addition, it provides the link to assessment reports, questionnaires and data if made publicly available.
b. KOBO TOOLBOX

What is it?

KoBoToolbox is a free open-source suite of tools for mobile data collection and analysis in humanitarian emergencies and other challenging environments. It allows users, most of whom are people working in humanitarian crises and aid professionals and researchers working in developing countries, to quickly collect reliable data in the field using electronic devices. The adaptation of KoBoToolbox for humanitarian use is a joint initiative between OCHA and the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative.

What is its purpose?

KoBoToolbox supports needs assessments, monitoring and other data collection activities carried out by humanitarian actors in emergencies. It provides a means of rapidly collecting and analyzing crucial information to develop an understanding of the affected population's needs in a disaster or emergency. The platform provides a simple and intuitive interface to create forms and enables users to develop and share libraries of validated and standardized questions. It facilitates the sharing of data, questions and forms permitting users to work faster and more effectively and allows for the adoption of standard indicators and questions, which allows for the harmonization of assessments and improved comparability between datasets, reducing the duplication of efforts and the burden of assessments on affected populations.

CASE STUDY 5. Piloting KoBoToolbox (KoBo) at the Information Management and Assessment Workshops in CDEMA’s Sub-Regional Focal Points (SRFPs)

Efficient data collection, analysis, storage and sharing is essential to effective information management and coordinated assessments during a humanitarian response. As part of the 2018 Caribbean ECHO project, the OCHA Information Management Unit, together with CDEMA, promoted the use of digital data collection through KoBo among national disaster management authorities in CDEMA’s Participating States. The transition from paper-based assessments to KoBo would facilitate the compilation and sharing of information among national authorities and humanitarian partners, allowing for better informed decision-making and more efficient and effective delivery of humanitarian assistance to those in need.

At the workshops held in CDEMA’s SRFPs in 2018-19, the Disaster Assessment and Needs Analysis (DANA) survey was uploaded into KoBo to demonstrate for participants how the application is used and to assess its effectiveness in conducting assessments. The response from technical staff at the national level was very positive although some questions and concerns were raised regarding the structure of surveys, for example, the appropriate level of analysis for assessments. The DANA committee has reviewed and tested the KoBo application with some success, but the main challenge remains the lack of a technological interface to effectively capture and present findings. Going forward, technical specialization is needed to restructure complex excel spreadsheets produced through KoBo to facilitate the analysis and interpretation of the information collected.
c. MULTI-CLUSTER INITIAL RAPID ASSESSMENT (MIRA)

What is it?

MIRA is a joint needs assessment methodology that can be used in emergencies, which provides information to inform strategic planning. MIRA is implemented through a phased process of secondary and primary information, joint analysis and reporting. It is an inter-agency process enabling actors to react to a common understanding of the situation and its evolution, integrating an age and gender analysis to ensure the delivery of programs and services which meet the differentiated needs and priorities of women, girls, men and boys in a crisis.

What is its purpose?

The main objectives of the MIRA are:

- To identify needs as expressed by affected communities.
- To determine key humanitarian issues based on several data sources.
- To provide an analysis of need to underpin the humanitarian response plan.
- To identify gaps in needs assessments which need to be filled.

How does it integrate gender?

A gender equality approach informs the selection of key informants as well as the composition of assessment teams. The pool of key informants should be made up of men and women across age groups and representatives from religious and/or ethnic minorities when relevant to ensure a full picture of the affected community is captured. Gender and power dynamics are taken into consideration when conducting assessments to ensure that all social groups are consulted, especially the poorest and most socially excluded. Similarly, assessment teams must ensure a gender balance of assessors and translators to enable access to both female and male members of communities by conducting same sex interviews.

LESSONS LEARNED

Multi-Sectoral Rapid Needs Assessment (MIRA) methodology

Recent lessons learned have identified the following challenges related to the MIRA methodology in the Caribbean:

- In supporting the Rapid Needs and Assessment Team (RNAT), OCHA/UN Disaster Coordination and Assessment (UNDAC) teams and partners follow CDEMA's Disaster Assessment and Needs Analysis (DANA) as the standard Rapid Assessment Model.
- It is challenging for any organization to carry out multi-sector, coordinated assessments when human resource capacity is limited.
- With no extensive training on coordinated assessment, it is difficult to consolidate the methodology.

Proposal:

- Incorporate elements from MIRA that can complement or strengthen DANA continuum, such as the application of the MIRA analytical framework in the Initial Situation Overview (ISO) and the Initial Damage Human Needs Assessment (IDHNA) conducted by the RNAT and CARICOM Disaster Assessment and Coordination (CDAC) teams, respectively.
- Continue training programme on Rapid Coordinated Assessment with as many partners as possible so that we can increase human resource capacity to support Assessment Teams.
d. POST-DISASTER NEEDS ASSESSMENT (PDNA)

What is it?

The PDNA methodology is a government-led process supported by the EU, UN system and the World Bank for determining the physical damages, economic losses and costs of meeting recovery needs after a disaster impact. The PDNA methodology is the approach CDEMA recommends for assisting affected states in the identification and prioritization of needs after a disaster. The PDNA and the Damage and Loss Assessments (DaLA) processes are both incorporated into the DANA Continuum to demonstrate for countries that it is up to them to determine which is the most appropriate method for their specific context and needs. The data collected in the other stages of the DANA Continuum can be useful to inform the PDNA process.

What is its purpose?

The PDNA serves as a platform for bringing together national and international stakeholders to better coordinate assistance to affected governments and focuses mainly on the collection of information on economic damages and losses and recovery priorities, as well as the human development needs of the affected population and its vulnerable groups. The information gathered during the PDNA process is integrated into a single consolidated assessment report used as a basis for formulating a comprehensive recovery strategy, which should guide the design and implementation of recovery initiatives.

What is CDEMA’s Model National Recovery Framework (MNRF)?

CDEMA specifically designed the MNRF to guide disaster recovery in its Participating States (PSs). This framework serves as the essential supporting structure for disaster recovery within CDEMA’s domain, and contains the essential definitions, policies and supporting actions to facilitate effective and efficient recovery. It may be used to enhance existing recovery plans – given the wide scope of hazards and novel approach to measuring recovery presented – or may serve as a stand-alone guide.

Coordination

a. ON-SITE OPERATIONS COORDINATION CENTRE (OSOCC) AND NATIONAL EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTRE (NEOC)

On-Site Operations Coordination Centre (OSOCC)

What is it?

The OSOCC is a both a cooperation, coordination and information management platform and a physical space for humanitarian coordination, but most importantly, it is methodology for onsite coordination of emergency response. It is important to note the flexibility and scalability of the OSOCC concept which means that it should be established as a coordination platform only in the absence of a pre-existing coordination platform. In some cases, there may be no need to establish an OSOCC but simply to apply all or parts of the OSOCC methodology to an existing coordination structure, such as a local Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
The OSOCC provides on-site operational coordination in a disaster area when other structures for international assistance and coordination, such as clusters or a nationally established structure which incorporates international actors, are not yet functioning or require enhancement. When an OSOCC is established, it is usually operational during the first phase of emergency response until the government of the country concerned, in collaboration with UN agencies and NGOs, has taken over the coordination of international teams.

**What is its purpose?**

When established as a physical coordination platform, the OSOCC has two core objectives:

- To provide a means to rapidly facilitate on-site cooperation, coordination, and information management between international responders and the Government of the affected country in the absence of an alternate coordination system.
- To establish a physical space and act as a single point of service provision for incoming response teams.

**How does it work with governments?**

The OSOCC is designed as a platform and/or methodology to assist the national authorities of the affected state in channeling and coordinating the international assistance at the site of the disaster. If established separately, it should be closely aligned with the national or local coordination platform, such as an EOC. It may also take the form of one component of the EOC. The OSOCC does not replace existing mechanisms of coordination but rather, facilitates the integration of international actors into the national response system.

Within the affected country, the National Disaster Management Organization (NDMO) is responsible for the overall command, coordination and management of the response operation and therefore, the OSOCC maintains a strong connection to the NDMO throughout operations. The OSOCC is normally dissolved following the departure of international actors.

The UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team, members of an Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) team or OCHA, as well as trained staff from partner humanitarian agencies, can handle the installation and management of an OSOCC in the first weeks on an emergency until international actors depart and authorities assume full control of operations.

**National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC)**

**What is it?**

The NEOC is a designated hub for the coordination of emergency response and relief operations, as well as the collection, analysis and management of disaster information, at the national level in the Caribbean. The NEOC is established and supported by the NDMO.
What is its purpose?

The functions of the NEOC are:

- To provide a central coordination point for emergency response.
- To monitor and assess developing disaster situations.
- To enhance coordination among all responding agencies/organizations.
- To collect, analyze and disseminate data on disasters/emergencies to stakeholders.
- To coordinate reconnaissance and post-impact missions.
- To undertake planning, operations and logistics functions at the national level.
- To develop, manage and issue public information during a disaster/emergency.

How does CDEMA work with NEOCs?

The Regional Coordination Centre (RCC) liaises directly with the NEOC of any impacted Participating State (PS) and provides surge support to its operations. The response teams of the RRM provide critical support to the NEOC in leading national coordination as well as organizing and facilitating assessments and information management.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC) & On-Site Operations Coordination Center (OSOCC)

CDEMA and OCHA have agreed that adjusting and adapting certain aspects of the OSOCC methodology to the NEOC model, including the Reception and Departure Desk (RDC), which is usually the first OSOCC component established in-country during an emergency, could make for more effective and efficient coordination in emergencies. The RDC facilitates the efficient arrival of international response teams and assists in coordinating their deployment to the field. Following the 2018 Hurricane Preparedness Workshop in Barbados, CDEMA expressed an interest in further exploring the activation of RDCs in response to emergencies in the region.

With regard to the OSOCC, CDEMA has raised concerns that establishing an OSOCC in a country where the NEOC is in place and fully functional creates the potential for parallel coordination mechanisms. However, the establishment of the OSOCC, which the international humanitarian community has come to expect from OCHA in emergencies, provides a much needed buffer between the international community and national authorities, making sure that they are not overwhelmed by the large influx of international actors, that gaps are quickly identified and covered in a predictable way, and that links are easily created between the lead agencies/organizations of the different sectors/clusters and their counterparts within the national coordination structure, for example, the Emergency Support Functions (ESFs) or their equivalent.

CDEMA and OCHA have agreed to collectively discuss and determine on a case-by-case basis whether or not an OSOCC and/or RDC should be activated. Ultimately, however, the decision to implement an OSOCC and/or RDC in a country is made by the affected government. CDEMA and OCHA will continue to explore this issue in the process of revising and updating their SOPs.
b. MULTINATIONAL CARIBBEAN COORDINATION CELL (MNCCC) AND UN CIVIL-MILITARY COORDINATION (UN-CMCOORD)

Military forces play an active role in supporting humanitarian action on the ground. Experience has shown that in all major emergencies, some level of civil-military coordination is required and that failure to establish effective and appropriate civil-military relations may have severe consequences both in current operations and in the latter stages of the emergency. Therefore, it is essential for local and international humanitarian organizations also involved in response to operate in the same space without detriment to the civilian character of humanitarian assistance.

**Multinational Caribbean Coordination Cell (MNCCC)**

**What is it?**

The United Kingdom, Netherlands and France established the MNCCC to enhance the coordination of military assets, including ships and aircraft, delivering emergency aid to affected countries. By collaborating with close allies and partners, including the US and Canada, the military cell aims to improve the efficiency of humanitarian relief operations in the region.

**What is its purpose?**

The main objective of the MNCCC is to act as a liaison between international military actors, governments and regional bodies to ensure coordination of efforts. The MNCCC provides support to humanitarian organizations through the unique military capabilities of all participating foreign militaries in the areas of transportation, communications, engineering, security and health, among others.6

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**UN Civil-Military Coordination (UN-CMCoord)**

**What is it?**

UN-CMCoord delivers a coherent and consistent humanitarian approach to military interaction, enhancing a broad understanding of humanitarian action, and guiding political and military actors on how best to support that action. Military actors are a crucial asset since they can rapidly mobilize and deploy unique assets. They develop their work within the framework of international guidelines in civil-military coordination (*Oslo Guidelines*).

**What is its purpose?**

UN-CMCoord facilitates dialogue and interaction between civilian and military actors in humanitarian emergencies which is essential for protecting and promoting humanitarian principles, avoiding competition and duplication, minimizing inconsistency and, when appropriate, pursuing common goals.

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

CDEMA and OCHA: Communication in emergencies

Communication and coordination between CDEMA and OCHA during the operational phase of a humanitarian response is crucial to coordinating efforts and effectively and efficiently supporting affected governments and populations in need.

Lessons learned from Hurricane Dorian indicate that CDEMA and OCHA staff on the ground were not always aware of each other’s actions in the impacted islands of The Bahamas. Coordination meetings were being carried out at different locations and times, with limited participation from CDEMA and OCHA in one another’s meetings, as communication proved to be a challenge from the outset.

Proposal:

- Daily in-person briefing and de-briefing coordination meetings between CDEMA and OCHA together with a focal point from the National Disaster Management Organization (NDMO).
- CDEMA and OCHA will create their own WhatsApp and/or Skype Groups to facilitate communication and coordination during an emergency, which will include the NDMO focal point.

Information Management

a. ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT (A&A) CELL

Both CDEMA and OCHA have A&A cells which perform data analysis to produce timely and usable information to inform strategic decision-making.

CDEMA’s A&A cell is one of eight operational cells of the RCC which remotely supports the analysis of data together with the Information Management and Logistics cells, preparing geographical representation products, among other tools, for data analysis and decision-making purposes.

OCHA’s A&A cell is an essential component of an UNDAC mission and is part of the Situation Function of the OSOCC, where assessment and analysis are managed in the impacted country. During an UNDAC mission, the A&A function may also be established virtually, drawing on the capacities of OCHA specialized sections, regional and/or country offices, and UNDAC’s operational partners. The aim of the UNDAC A&A cell is to support OSOCC management (and the RC/HC as required) in developing an operational picture of the humanitarian situation to inform multi-sectoral decision-making and to assist in the coordination of ongoing assessments and facilitate joint analysis among humanitarian partners.

How should the A&A cells work together?

At the country level, an A&A cell should be established at the field level in response to disasters/emergencies, based on an agreement between CDEMA, OCHA and the affected government, which is jointly staffed by CDEMA, OCHA and NDMO staff as well as humanitarian partners. Recent lessons learned in the region indicate that a jointly staffed A&A cell is crucial to assisting in the coordination of ongoing assessments, facilitating joint analysis among humanitarian partners, and avoiding a duplication of efforts on the ground.
The responsibility to activate the A&A cell rests with the first arriving team(s) on the ground in an impacted county under the guidance of CDEMA and/or OCHA. When deployed, a joint A&A cell should:

- Arrange daily remote calls and operational meetings to coordinate individual and collective actions.
- Create a common electronic space for sharing information and producing collaborative information products based on agreed standards.
- Establish collective agreements on who is going to produce what and when to avoid duplication and capitalize on the complementarity of information products and services.

b. CARIBBEAN RISK INFORMATION SYSTEM (CRIS) AND HUMANITARIAN DATA EXCHANGE (HDX)

Caribbean Risk Information System (CRIS)

What is it?

CRIS is a multi-faceted virtual platform that hosts risk management data and information accessible to stakeholders to facilitate analysis, research, greater awareness of risk management and climate change in the region. The CRIS platform includes data and information from various sources, including but not limited to, PSs, other national and regional disaster risk management and climate change adaptation entities, international partners and academic/technical institutions, among others.

What is its purpose?

CRIS facilitates information and knowledge sharing throughout the CDEMA system. Through the CRIS platform, the CDEMA CU provides all relevant stakeholders with access to information on hazards to inform decision making at all levels, with the aim of reducing risk, building more resilient states, promoting regional sustainable development, and ensuring better execution in preparedness and response.

Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX)

What is it?

HDX is an open-source platform for sharing data among UN agencies, NGOs and governments. HDX functions as a data repository where information, such as population statistics and administrative boundaries, including Common Operational Datasets (CODs), can be easily accessed. A team within OCHA manages HDX.

What is its purpose?

The goal of HDX is to make humanitarian data easy to find and use for analysis. Launched in July 2014, HDX has been accessed by users in over 200 countries and territories and brings together 4,000 datasets from over 200 partner organizations.
How are they interoperable?

CRIS and HDX use the same operational datasets but present them in different formats which compliment and reinforce one another. HDX hosts datasets in Excel and GIS format whereas CRIS is a more visual platform. To enhance their interoperability, CDEMA and OCHA must ensure that there is continual data sharing, including an alert for the uploading of new datasets, of all core and country-specific CODs. In addition, exploring application programming interfaces to facilitate data sharing will be important moving forward. OCHA will continue to work with governments on getting information and sharing it within the UN system.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

What are Common Operational Datasets (CODs)?

CODs are critical datasets that are used to support the work of humanitarian actors across multiple sectors. They are considered a de facto standard for the humanitarian community and should represent the best-available datasets for each theme. When properly updated, CODs provide a common framework enabling data from different sources to be combined and analyzed. CODs are used to support technical standards, improve the quality of data and strengthen interoperability in emergencies. As of March 2020, there are CODs for 31 Caribbean countries and territories on Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX), with more than 7,000 downloads of both core and country-specific CODs from HDX.

There are two types of CODs:

Core CODs

- Core CODs provide demographic and location data.
  - Administrative boundaries
  - Population figures
  - Caseload figures

Country-specific CODs

- Country-specific CODs consist of other operational data such as:
  - Roads
  - Hurricane path
  - Internally Displaced Person (IDP) camps
  - Checkpoints
  - Demographics

OCHA maintains CODs and coordinates their distribution and updating in emergencies. Each dataset has a designated ‘sponsor’ who is responsible for identifying and liaising with relevant ‘sources’ or owners to analyse, collate, clean and achieve consensus around a specific operational dataset. Each dataset will have designated source(s) or owner(s). OCHA maintains lists of dataset ‘sponsors’, at both the country and global levels, and coordinates relations between them.
What are the challenges for consolidating and updating CODs in the Caribbean?

The OCHA Information Management Unit has consolidated and updated more than 150 CODs in the Caribbean Risk Information System (CRIS) and HDX. However, there still remain significant gaps in the availability of data in the Caribbean, especially in administrative boundaries and population figures disaggregated by age and sex. In most instances, the data does exist, but may be stored in various ways and across multiple institutions.

Building trust around data collection and sharing in the Caribbean is a persistent challenge. In the workshops of the 2018 Caribbean ECHO project, different ministries mapped the datasets they were collecting and quickly came to the realization that they needed access to data ‘owned’ by other ministries; however, without Memoranda of Understanding in place, this data cannot be shared.

Proposal:

- Promote a culture of data sharing and raise awareness on the importance of baseline data at the government level in the region.
- Create a community of practice where GIS/IM specialists share best practices and lessons learned around data collection and analysis.
- Build a knowledge management platform to increase the availability of operational readiness data.
INTEROPERABILITY IN ACTION

How are CDEMA and OCHA improving baseline and disaggregated data?

In a humanitarian response, it is essential to understand precisely which people have been most affected, where they are located and what are their distinct needs. In the absence of such information, the services provided to the affected population may be off target, failing to reach those most in need of assistance. Therefore, the collection of sex and age disaggregated data (SADD) is crucial as it allows for actors on the ground to adjust their programmes to better align them with the specific needs of women, girls, men and boys in different contexts. (for more information, see the IASC Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action).

As part of the 2018 Caribbean ECHO project, a series of Data and Information Management workshops were conducted by the OCHA Information Management Unit to enhance data and information management capacity at the regional and national levels in the CDEMA Sub-Regional Focal Points and Participating States (PSs). These workshops have emphasized the importance of data collection and sharing, with a specific focus on the development and use of Common Operational Data-sets (CODs), including SADD.

By collaborating on CODs, CDEMA and OCHA are filling critical information gaps and strengthening the preparedness and response capacity of CDEMA, its PSs and the Regional Response Mechanism, providing for a more effective, efficient and coordinated humanitarian response which addresses the differentiated needs of women, girls, men and boys in the Caribbean.

c. SITUATION REPORT (SITREP)

In response to sudden-onset emergencies, SitReps are produced to capture the overall scale of the disaster and humanitarian needs, the response given, funding of the emergency and gaps identified. SitReps are key humanitarian information products which help coordinate efforts, avoid duplication and fill critical gaps in response.

Given their common mandate for information management products and services, both CDEMA and OCHA (or UN Country Teams) produce SitReps during the acute phase of a disaster/emergency in the Caribbean. While the audience of SitReps may differ slightly, with CDEMA’s audience being mainly RRM partners and OCHA’s the broader international humanitarian community, the SitRep methodology employed by both agencies ultimately aims to ensure that a comprehensive overview of humanitarian needs and partners’ actions is captured, providing a common analysis of the situation.
INTEROPERABILITY IN ACTION

Collaboration on humanitarian reporting

CDEMA has been exploring ways to integrate a sector-based approach into its regional Situation Reports (SitReps), making it easier for humanitarian partners to incorporate their inputs and providing a more integrated overview of the emergency response.

During the response to Hurricane Dorian, OCHA ROLAC deployed an Information Management Officer to support the Regional Coordination Centre with information management and reporting. With the guidance of OCHA, CDEMA organized its SitReps according to a sector-based approach, reflecting the actions being taken by humanitarian organizations active in different sectors of the response.

This is a positive example of enhanced interoperability between CDEMA and OCHA in information management and reporting. Going forward, the sectoral approach to reporting must be adjusted to fit the nuances and specificities of the Caribbean context, where there are important sectors, such as tourism, which are not included in the 11 main clusters/sectors of humanitarian action adhered to by OCHA.

Proposal: Given the similarities between CDEMA and OCHA’s SitReps, a proposal has been tabled to produce SitReps on a rotating basis (i.e. every other day) to capitalize on the complementarities of the respective reports, avoiding duplication and providing humanitarian partners with a more comprehensive overview of the evolving emergency situation.

d. WHO DOES WHAT, WHERE, WHEN AND FOR WHOM (345W)

What is it?

The 345W is a core information management tool for coordinating humanitarian action, which is critical for knowing where humanitarian organizations are working, what they are doing and their capacity in order to identify gaps and plan for future humanitarian response.

OCHA’s 345W is an information management tool which highlights the operational presence and capacity of humanitarian stakeholders across the 11 clusters/sectors both at the country and regional level.

What is its purpose?

The 345W aims to compile, in a structure way, data which indicates where partners are doing their activities in order to identify operational gaps and plan for future response.

Who initiates the 345W process?

The 345W process should be initiated by the first team(s) to arrive on the ground in order to begin collecting contacts and accounting for the presence of humanitarian actors in an impacted country.

At the start of an emergency, the 3W (Who does What, Where) should be kept as simple as possible, focusing on coordination and gap analysis; however, as the situation evolves, additional Ws may be added to cover ‘When’ and ‘for Whom’ humanitarian activities and projects are being implemented. OCHA manages an online 345W system in emergencies.
CASE STUDY 6. Using collaborative information management tools in emergencies: Google Docs Who does What, Where, When and for Whom (345W) for Hurricane Dorian

In an emergency, it is critical that practical tools which enable effective coordination, communication and collaboration in information management be agreed upon by partners and introduced at the outset of the response. In the Operational Readiness workshops under the 2018 Caribbean ECHO project, CDEMA and OCHA worked together with national authorities to facilitate the collection and updating of information, and to raise awareness of when and where to input information during emergencies, with particular focus given to the 345W process. Given the plethora of actors involved in a humanitarian response, and the complex and evolving nature of circumstances on the ground, the 345W is a crucial information management tool in emergencies. Google Docs is an effective instrument for managing the 345W process, albeit not without its own set of limitations.

During the response to Hurricane Dorian, CDEMA and OCHA introduced a Google Doc to openly share a live spreadsheet which tracked the arrival and activities of humanitarian partners on the impacted islands of The Bahamas. The Google Doc proved to be very useful during the initial phase of the response; however, as the response evolved, the Google Doc needed to be replaced by a more robust 345W information management tool. The data migration of the Google Doc spreadsheet to the 345W online system, requested by the Government of The Bahamas, required greater communication to mitigate potential confusion among information management staff and partners.

Pros:

- Quick and easy to share live documents which can be accessed by all humanitarian partners during an emergency.
- Accurate and timely updating of information provides enhanced awareness of the operational presence and activities being carried out on the ground.

Cons:

- Only effective during the initial phase of an emergency response.
- Many users simultaneously working in Google Docs greatly complicates the information management process.

Proposal:

- Protocols must be established when introducing collaborative information management tools, such as Google Docs, to ensure that both CDEMA and OCHA are clear on when, how, and by whom, the decision can be made to migrate from one platform to another, maintaining clear lines of communication and avoiding unnecessary confusion and delays in the information management process.
e. HUMANITARIAN ID

What is it?

Humanitarian ID is an online tool for managing humanitarian contact lists in large scale emergencies. Today over 60,000 humanitarian responders connect with each other on Humanitarian ID.

What is its purpose?

In humanitarian crises and disasters, an accurate contact list is critical to help ensure effective response. Unfortunately, managing such a contact list is nearly impossible, resulting in many outdated lists and frustrated responders. Humanitarian ID provides a ‘self-managed’ approach to contact lists. It allows humanitarian responders to ‘check in and out’ of contact lists during an emergency, helping responders to better coordinate during disasters and crises by providing the most up-to-date contact lists.

CASE STUDY 7. Hurricane Dorian: Useful Links

During the first days of the humanitarian response to Hurricane Dorian, a Useful Links page was launched by OCHA online and made accessible to all agencies and organizations with an operational presence in The Bahamas, as well as those providing support remotely from within the region and at the global level. This online resource provided a quick and effective solution to allow partners to access and share important information which could then be updated in real-time without being dependent on specialized technicians to perform these time-sensitive updates.

Through the Useful Links page, humanitarian responders were provided with access to links for Operations and Reporting, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) Updates and Additional Resources and Maps. These included links to: The Contact List, Identification of Needs Form, Who does What, Where, When and for Whom (345W) Excel spreadsheet and interactive dashboard, Meeting Calendars, the Emergency Support Functions (ESF) architecture, and other useful websites and online resources.

Useful Links is a very effective information management tool which can and should be replicated in future humanitarian responses in the region. Even though it was an initiative of OCHA in The Bahamas, in future emergencies the tool could be managed as a collaborative platform through the Information Management Working Group together with CDEMA and the NEMA. In this way, filtering the information received from partners, and defining what is the most important information which should be displayed on the main page, will be a collective effort based on the inputs of all main coordination actors involved in the response.
### Web-Based Information Tools for Disaster Preparedness and Response

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<td><strong>CDEMA website</strong></td>
<td>The CDEMA website is the principal tool for sharing knowledge and delivering on the mandatory clearing house function for information on disasters and disaster risk reduction. It serves as an effective organizational management and communication tool for disseminating information, extending knowledge and facilitating interaction and exchange of ideas among stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Global Disaster Alerting Coordination System (GDACS)</strong></td>
<td>GDACS is a cooperation framework between the United Nations and the European Commission (EC). By providing real-time access to web-based disaster information systems and related coordination tools, it aims to fill information and coordination gaps in the first phase of disaster response. The integrated GDACS website offers the following disaster information system and online coordination tools: <strong>GDACS Disaster Alerts</strong> which are issued and disseminated to some 25,000 subscribers immediately after a sudden-onset disaster, providing automatic estimates and risk analysis from the EC Joint Research Centre; <strong>Virtual OSOCC (VOSOCC)</strong> (see below); <strong>Satellite imagery and mapping</strong> <em>(see sub-section f below)</em> from various providers are shared on the VOSOCC through the GDACS Satellite Mapping and Coordination System.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Humanitarian Response.info</strong></td>
<td>HumanitarianResponse.info is a website to support inter-cluster coordination and information management in line with Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Guidance on Responsibilities of Cluster/Sector Leads and OCHA Information Management. The main objective of this web-based platform is to provide the core features for all countries and to allow clusters to launch sites dedicated to specific disasters and/or countries should they have specific requirements that the main site does not meet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Index for Risk Management (INFORM)</strong></td>
<td>INFORM is a global, open-source risk assessment for humanitarian crises and disasters. It can support decisions about prevention, preparedness and response. INFORM is a collaboration of partners led by the IASC Team for Preparedness and Resilience and the EC. For Latin America and the Caribbean, a regional adaptation of the global INFORM model (LAC-INFORM) uses a risk tool that incorporates a set of risk indicators that capture the realities of Latin America and the Caribbean and provides a realistic comparison of the countries within the region.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ReliefWeb</strong></td>
<td>ReliefWeb is a website that provides timely, reliable and relevant information on new developments during emergencies worldwide. It is the leading English website for online information on humanitarian emergencies and disasters and it is updated on a 24/7 basis. It provides the most up-to-date information about emergencies, allowing users to access the latest reports, news and events related to humanitarian activities, facilitating coordination, situational awareness and offering visibility to humanitarian partners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Virtual OSOCC (VOSOCC)</strong></td>
<td>VOSOCC is a real-time online coordination platform that allows information exchange in the early stages of an emergency. It is used to activate real-time “emergency discussions” when emergencies occur or are likely to occur requiring a regional or international response. Specific features of the VOSOCC allow responders to exchange information such as baseline country information, entry points and other logistical aspects, relief team status, assessment information, cluster activities, civil-military coordination arrangements, environmental risks and security. It is also used as the activation platform for UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) teams and it is the principal information exchange platform in the first days of an emergency for Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
f. SATELLITE IMAGERY AND MAPPING

Satellite imagery can be a powerful tool for analyzing the effects of a disaster quickly and over a large area. Mapping is an effective means of analyzing and sharing information about the effects of an emergency. Both CDEMA and OCHA, in collaboration with strategic partners, have the capacity to map data and use satellite imagery.

During the acute phase of an emergency, CDEMA carries out sectoral mapping to identify damage to critical infrastructure within various sectors as well as housing and humanitarian needs mapping to identify the level of damage to residential structures and the immediate needs of the impact population in a PS.

OCHA, through UN Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNOSAT) mapping and satellite imagery services, provides timely and high-quality geospatial information to UN decision-makers, Member States, international organization and NGOs. In addition, GDACS provides a communication and coordination platform where organizations can monitor and inform stakeholders of their completed, current and future mapping activities during emergencies.

Reference maps

Under the 2018 ECHO Caribbean project, a GIS specialist created reference maps on behalf of CDEMA and OCHA. Reference maps, which are produced using consolidated and updated CODs, provide all essential baseline information regarding administrative boundaries, transportation, hydrology, vegetation, schools, health infrastructure and other relevant information at the country level. As of March 2020, there are reference maps and PowerPoint maps with editable vectors for 31 Caribbean countries and territories available at https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/.

References maps provide information on countries’ administrative data and infrastructure, providing a base to produce thematic (impact) maps and graphics. These maps are crucial during an emergency response operation, as they provide a visual reference which accurately identifies the location of airports, health centres, ports of entry, schools and shelters, which can then be updated with data and information from the field to illustrate the status of infrastructure, impacts of a hazard, as well as who/what/where activities and presence in affected areas.

Both CDEMA and OCHA have a strategic partnership with MapAction. MapAction’s geographical information systems (GIS) professionals, specifically trained in humanitarian response, deliver vital information in mapped form during emergencies based on data gathered from the field. In response to Hurricane Dorian, CDEMA, OCHA and MapAction, using the data collected through the 3W collaboratively managed by CDEMA and OCHA, worked together on mapping the activities and operational presence of organizations across the impacted islands of The Bahamas.

Knowing who is doing what and where in an emergency response is critical to effectively coordinating relief operations, identifying and closing gaps in response efforts, as well as avoiding the duplication of efforts, ensuring that affected populations receive the assistance they need. By mapping this information, humanitarian responders are provided with a quick visual ‘snapshot’ of the presence and activities of partners, displaying crucial information in a way that is much faster and easier to process. This demonstrates the importance of having strong GIS and data analysis capacities during a humanitarian response, both on the ground and through remote support, as it allows for data collected from the field to be quickly and effectively analyzed which can significantly influence the decisions being made on the ground.
Effectively responding to an emergency requires that proper measures are implemented in the preparedness phase to ensure operational readiness. CDEMA and OCHA, together with their partners, work on an individual and collective basis toward ensuring preparedness at the local, national and regional level in the Caribbean. They are actively collaborating to strengthen readiness and response in CDEMA's four Sub-Regional Focal Points (SRFPs) in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

In the preparedness phase, CDEMA and OCHA should share annual operations plans to identify areas for collaboration and opportunities for joint activities, and both agencies should share information product catalogues to increase the harmonization and predictability of information products and services. CDEMA conducts training sessions for its response teams and OCHA offers the UNDAC training programme consisting of Induction Courses to train new members, as well as refresher and specialized courses for existing members and partners. CDEMA and OCHA conduct training sessions and induction courses for their response teams, collaborate on regional contingency planning, and carry out desktop simulation exercises or webinars. In addition, they work together on improving baseline data by ensuring that CODs are updated and consolidated in open-source platforms, such as CRIS and HDX, and attend regional coordination meetings, including the Regional Group for Risk, Emergencies and Disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean (REDLAC) hurricane preparedness meeting.

Effective and efficient humanitarian response requires open two-way communication and a willingness to work together in coordinating individual and collective actions. With that said, however, there is no rigid blueprint for coordinating humanitarian action; each emergency brings with it context-specific challenges to and opportunities for better coordination in responding to the needs of affected populations, so flexibility is necessary to adapt and adjust to circumstances on the ground, though predictability and pre-established roles and responsibilities among partners and mechanisms is needed.


At the Prime Minister’s request, UNDP and OCHA established the CMU to support the Government of Dominica to coordinate relief efforts and implement recovery initiatives following the impact of Hurricane Maria. The CMU, located in the Prime Minister’s Office with Senior Ministers and CARICOM officials, reported directly to the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the United Nations Development Group Chair.

The CMU was composed of OCHA and UNDP staff who liaised closely with CDEMA, government counterparts and other UN agencies, NGOs and regional institutions, to ensure that relief operations integrate long-term recovery needs. This innovative coordination structure, inspired by the New Way of Working, created key linkages between humanitarian and development actors to help Dominicans ‘build back better’.

Despite its strengths, however, the CMU structure presented some coordination challenges as roles and responsibilities were not clearly defined, leading to confusion in terms of lines of authority and accountability. The CMU would have to be reviewed before being implemented in future emergencies to ensure greater accountability and predictability.

CDEMA and OCHA continue to revise and update their jointly constructed SOPs to reflect lessons learned and best practices. The SOPs are the guidelines which provide predictability, structure and a common understanding of CDEMA and OCHA’s respective actions, roles and responsibilities through the different phases of disaster management, strengthening preparedness and operational coordination in the region. They outline CDEMA and OCHA’s individual and collective actions from preparedness/operational readiness and early warning/action through to response and post-disaster recovery.

Given the similarities in the mandates of CDEMA and OCHA, both carry out similar actions across the different phases of disaster management, making cooperation and collaboration essential to enhanced interoperability to minimize duplication and capitalize on synergies. However, the nuances in their respective mandates also require them to perform distinct actions in achieving the common goal of supporting governments to provide assistance to affected populations. In doing so, CDEMA and OCHA plan and implement actions that reflect their individual mandates, response programme cycles, capacities and resources. Their individual and collective actions during the different phases of disaster management have been visualized on p. 71.

CASE STUDY 10. Coordination structure: Hurricane Dorian

Hurricane Dorian caused an unprecedented emergency in terms of impact and scale in The Bahamas. The Bahamas had never been faced with the difficult task of coordinating such a large influx of regional and international humanitarian partners, as well as local private sector and civil society actors, which posed coordination and logistics challenges for national authorities. Prior to Dorian, only a few international agencies had a presence in The Bahamas and there was no pre-existing humanitarian coordination platform through which humanitarian assistance was coordinated. The National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) received much needed coordination support capacity from CDEMA and OCHA.

NEMA, in consultation with CDEMA and OCHA, established a partner coordination structure which adapted the cluster/sector approach to the Emergency Support Function (ESF) model already in place, reinforcing it with the capacities of regional and international partners. This coordination structure was based on co-leadership between regional/international agencies and the ministerial lead(s) of the ESFs, with each ESF designating a focal point. To facilitate partner coordination, some ESFs were combined (e.g. ESF 1 “Transportation” and ESF 7 “Relief Supplies”) to better align them with the regional/international co-lead agencies.

On 9 September 2019, the Government of The Bahamas made the decision to establish an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Partner Coordination Office in the National Training Agency and requested that OCHA support the management of this coordination space for humanitarian partners. This provided a common space for humanitarian partners to operate, facilitating joint planning and coordination of activities. CDEMA and OCHA supported NEMA in running regular general partner coordination meetings as the main forum for inter-sectoral information exchange and coordination, as well as in convening an information management working group in support of ESF 5 (Planning and Information). In support of NEMA, CDEMA and OCHA, together with the Pacific Disaster Center (PDC) and MapAction, managed the coordination of humanitarian partners through ESF 4 (International Assistance).

For more on the lessons learned, as well as the opportunities identified and actions proposed following the humanitarian response to Hurricane Dorian, see Annex 4.
**CDEMA & OCHA AT A GLANCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CDEMA and OCHA’s roles in a humanitarian response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CDEMA</strong></td>
<td><strong>OCHA</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinates an immediate response to any event affecting any of the Participating States (PSs), once the state requests such assistance</td>
<td>Coordinates international humanitarian response to disasters and emergencies, following a request from an affected state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobilizes and coordinates regional disaster relief from government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for affected PSs</td>
<td>Mobilizes surge capacity and deploys technical teams to conduct a multi-sectoral rapid assessment and analysis of humanitarian needs, as well as response teams, such as Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams, among others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifies, locates, acquires, distributes and accounts for services, resources, material, and facilities required to adequately support disaster management activities</td>
<td>Provides critical information management services to coordinate inter-agency strategic planning and inter-sectoral response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disseminates data and information pertaining to the relief response activities of the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC), NGOs and all other stakeholders</td>
<td>Mobilizes full range of humanitarian financing partners and mechanisms (i.e. Flash Appeal or Central Emergency Response Fund) to ensure humanitarian needs are met, managing humanitarian donations through the Financial Tracking Service (FTS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deploys response teams and sub-regional resources</td>
<td>Chairs coordination meetings with regional partners to ensure coherent support and assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourages the cooperation and consultation of the appropriate public, private and non-governmental entities in ensuring the provision of relief assistance</td>
<td>Follows-up with humanitarian coordination teams in the affected country to provide a humanitarian needs update</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
OCHA and CDEMA actions in preparedness, response and recovery

**Operational readiness**
- **OCHA**
  - OCHA staff register in CDEMA
  - UNDAC Induction Course
  - Raise awareness with all partners on UN tools, services and mechanisms
  - Establish contacts with NDMOs and Eastern Caribbean Development Partner Group for Disaster Management (ECPG/DM) to promote information sharing between coordination structures/partners

**Early warning and action (72 hrs-impact)**
- **OCHA**
  - Support Resident Coordinator (RC) by activating response protocols and mechanisms

**24-72 hrs**
- **OCHA**
  - OCHA participates in the ECDPG/DM daily coordination meeting
  - OCHA will provide support to RCC cells where possible
  - Support RC in the coordination of humanitarian assistance

**72 hrs-1 week**
- **OCHA**
  - Support cluster leads to develop a Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) proposal and/or Flash Appeal

**Week 2-4**
- **OCHA**
  - Produce Multi-Cluster/Sectoral Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) report

**1 month**
- **OCHA**
  - Humanitarian needs update
  - OCHA staff follow-up on response in impacted country

**Regional Contingency Planning (72 hrs-impact)**
- **CDEMA**
  - Regional Coordination Centre (RCC) partially activated with key operational cells

**24-72 hrs**
- **CDEMA**
  - CDEMA co-chairs ECDPG/DM daily coordination meeting
  - RCC fully activated with key operational cells

**72 hrs-1 week**
- **CDEMA**
  - Rapid Needs Assessment Team (RNAT) report
  - Initial Damage Human Needs Assessment (IDHNA) conducted by CARICOM Disaster Assessment and Coordination (CDAC)

**Week 2-4**
- **CDEMA**
  - Conduct:
    - Detail Damage Sector Assessment (DDSA)
    - Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA)
    - Human Recovery Needs Assessment (HRNA)
    - Damage and Loss Assessment (DaLA)

**1 month**
- **CDEMA & OCHA**
  - Lessons Learned exercise
  - After Action Review (AAR)
  - Revise and update SOPs as needed
Annex 2

THE CARIBBEAN
3w Operational Presence
As of June 2019

This map is for illustration purposes and is not to scale nor do the boundaries or designations imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Creation date: June 2019
Sources: OCHA with humanitarian partners
Feedback: ocha-rolac@un.org
For more information visit: www.unocha.org • www.reliefweb.int

*Haiti is not included in this product as the OCHA Haiti office produces a 3W.
## THE CARIBBEAN
3w Operational Presence
As of June 2019

### Map Illustration

[Map of the Caribbean region showing the presence of humanitarian organizations and national disaster management authorities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>National Disaster Management Authorities</th>
<th>Subregional Offices</th>
<th>Country Office</th>
<th>Focal Point or Liaison Person</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antigua and Barbuda</td>
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<td>Barbados</td>
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<td>Belize</td>
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<td>British Virgin Islands</td>
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<td>Curacao</td>
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<td>Curaçao</td>
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<td>Dominica</td>
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<td>Estonia</td>
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<td>Grenada</td>
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<td>Jamaica</td>
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<td>Montserrat</td>
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<td>Netherlands Antilles</td>
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<td>Nepal</td>
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<td>Paraguay</td>
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<td>St. Lucia</td>
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<td>St. Vincent and the Grenadines</td>
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<td>Suriname</td>
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<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
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<td>Turkey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turks and Caicos Islands</td>
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*Haiti is not included in this product as the OCHA Haiti office produces a 3W.

This map is for illustration purposes and is not to scale nor do the boundaries or designations imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Creation date: 28 June 2019  Sources: OCHA with humanitarian partners  Feedback: ocha-rolac@un.org

For more information visit: [www.unocha.org](http://www.unocha.org)  •  [www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int)
Annex 3

2004
01. Dominican Republic Floods - May
02. Haiti Floods - May
03. Dominican Republic Tropical Storm Jeanne - September
04. Grenada and Cayman Islands Hurricane Ivan - September
05. Haiti Tropical Storm Jeanne - September
06. Jamaica Hurricane Ivan - September

2005
07. Guyana Floods - January

2006
08. Suriname Floods - May

2007
09. Jamaica Hurricane Dean - August
10. Belize Hurricane Dean - August
11. Dominican Republic Hurricane Noel - October

2008
12. Cuba Hurricane Gustav - August
13. Jamaica Hurricane Gustav - August
14. Haiti Hurricane Hanna - September
15. Turks and Caicos Hurricane Ike - September

2010
16. Haiti Earthquake - January
17. Saint Lucia – Hurricane Tomas - November

2012
18. Haiti Tropical Storm Isaac - August
19. Cuba Hurricane Sandy - October

2015
20. Bahamas Hurricane Joaquin - October

2016
21. Belize Hurricane Earl - August
22. Haiti Hurricane Matthew - October
23. Cuba Hurricane Matthew - October

2017
24. Barbados Hurricane Irma - September
25. Cuba Hurricane Irma - September
26. Dominica Hurricane Maria - September
27. Turks and Caicos Hurricane Irma - September

2018
28. Guayana Migration - May
29. Barbados Hurricane Isaac (pre-deployment) - September
30. Trinidad and Tobago Floods - October

2019
31. Cuba Tornado - February
32. Bahamas Hurricane Dorian - August

OCHA ROLAC deployments in the Caribbean

- Natural disaster events
- Migration and/or political conflict
# Lessons learned from Hurricane Dorian

## Lessons Learned

### CHALLENGES

1. **Need for greater collaboration and cooperation between CDEMA and OCHA**
   - Both inter-governmental organizations with similar, yet nuanced, mandates with different response triggers (i.e. government for CDEMA and government and/or UN for OCHA)
   - Differences in mandates and mechanisms. CDEMA works internally with governments, National Disaster Management Organization (NDMOs) and Participating States (PSs) and while OCHA does the same, it also works externally with humanitarian organizations to channel assistance to governments
   - Different approaches and roles in supporting coordination
   - Need for a more concrete understanding of each other’s capacities

2. **Need to improve baseline data and information management**
   - Data is not centralized or easily accessible
   - Data is outdated and/or not disaggregated by administrative boundaries, age and sex

3. **Need for greater collaboration on assessments and information sharing**
   - Mobilizing personnel with understanding of existing modalities, protocols and procedures in the Caribbean
   - Similar information products and reports in support of similar mandates, thus opening up the possibility for duplication
   - Validated assessment reports are difficult to obtain, delaying access to information needed to guide strategic decision-making

### OPPORTUNITIES

1. **Strengthen communication**
   - Enhance data sharing
   - Actively participate, to the extent possible, in each other’s governance mechanisms for response teams
   - CDEMA and OCHA to consider carrying out joint UN Disaster and Assessment Coordination (UNDAC)-CARICOM Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team (CDAC)-CARICOM Operational Support Team (COST) training in the Caribbean with the objective of strengthening surge teams available to respond in the region

2. **Continue to update and centralize data in Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX) and Caribbean Risk Information System (CRIS)**
   - Communicate a schedule for the publication of Situation Reports (SitReps) that avoids overlap and builds on the complementarity of information products

### ACTIONS

1. **Continue with the revision and updating of SOPs based on lessons learned and best practices**
2. **Ensure that CDEMA and OCHA maintain strong relationship with the Eastern Caribbean Development Partner Group for Disaster Management (ECDPG/DM)**
3. **Interoperability and Lessons and Learned workshops**
4. **OCHA-led information management workshops**
   - Update and consolidate Common Operational Datasets (CODs) & sex and age disaggregated data (SADD) for the region
   - OCHA staff pre-deployment into Barbados Regional Coordination Centre (RCC)
   - CDEMA continues to organize SitReps according to a thematic/sectoral approach rather than by individual agencies/organizations
   - OCHA team will continue to provide support and advise the CDEMA team on the development of new or adjusted Information Management (IM) products tailored to CDEMA’s audience

5. **CDEMA and OCHA conduct desktop simulation exercise (or webinar) to promote cross-training of staff and partners to ensure familiarity with existing protocols established for RCC and National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC), information products and data methodologies and tools**
6. **Information Management and Assessment workshops**
Caribbean Disaster Management Agency (CDEMA)
• Caribbean Community (CARICOM):
  https://caricom.org/

CDEMA’s mandate
• About Us:
  https://www.cdema.org/about-us
• Agreement Establishing CDEMA:
  https://www.cdema.org/cdema_agreement.pdf
• What is CDEMA (YouTube video):
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hwmed7OVC-I&t=9s

Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM)
• Regional Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) Strategy and Results Framework (2014-2024):
• CDM Database Sub-Committee Documents:
  https://www.cdema.org/161-cdm
• CDEMA Regional Training Center (RTC):
  https://www.cdema.org/cdema-regional-training-center-rtc
• What is Comprehensive Disaster Management? (YouTube video):
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hwmed7OVC-I&t=9s

Gender and CDM:
• CDM CHC Gender Working Group:
  https://www.cdema.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=948&Itemid=480
• CDEMA and UN Women MoU:

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
OCHA’s mandate
• OCHA on Message: General Assembly resolution 46/182:
• Who We Are:
  https://www.unocha.org/about-us/who-we-are
• OCHA Strategic Plan 2018-2021:
• The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC):
  https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/about-inter-agency-standing-committee

• Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC):
  https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/content/emergency-relief-coordinator

• Humanitarian principles:

• Guide for Governments: International Humanitarian Action:

• OCHA Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ROLAC):
  https://www.unocha.org/rolac

**OCHA’s Gender Equality Policy and Programming:**

• Gender Equality Programming:
  https://www.unocha.org/es/themes/gender-equality-programming

• OCHA on Message: Gender in Humanitarian Action:

• OCHA on Message: Gender-Based Violence:

**Key Regional Forums and Partners**

• ISAC Membership:
  https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-about/iasc-membership

• International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC):
  https://www.icrc.org/en

• International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC):
  https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc

• International Red Cross and Red Crescent (RCRC) Movement:
  https://www.icrc.org/en/who-we-are/movement

• National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies:
  https://familylinks.icrc.org/en/Pages/AboutUs/national-societies.aspx

• IFRC National Societies directory:
  https://media.ifrc.org/ifrc/who-we-are/national-societies/national-societies-directory/

• Terms of Reference of the Regional IASC – Risk, Emergency & Disaster working group for Latin America and the Caribbean (REDLAC):

• REDLAC Directory of Organizations 2019 Edition:
CDEMA’s Regional Coordination Architecture and Mechanisms

- CDEMA Participating States (PSs):
  https://www.cdema.org/participating-states
- CDEMA Sub-Regional Focal Points (SRFPs):

Regional Response Mechanism (RRM)

- The RRM, its Governance Structure and Regional Response Units:
  https://www.cdema.org/regional-response-mechanism-rrm
- RRM Booklet:
  https://www.cdema.org/RRM_Booklet_Final_PDF_version.pdf
- The RRM (YouTube video):
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_I6Vzgro4yQ
- Response Teams of the RRM (YouTube video):
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IBQmQtfo5ls
- Regional Coordination Centre (RCC) (YouTube video):
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fBk4d3x6CHg
- The Regional Security System (RSS) (YouTube video):
  https://www.rss.org.bb/home/

OCHA’s Regional Coordination Architecture and Mechanisms

- Resident Coordinator System:
  https://rmw.one.un.org/rc-system/
- Humanitarian Coordination Leadership:
  https://www.unocha.org/our-work/coordination/humanitarian-coordination-leadership
- What is the Cluster Approach?
  https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/about-clusters/what-is-the-cluster-approach
- Humanitarian Country Team (HCT):
  https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/cameroon/humanitarian-country-team-hct

OCHA Response Teams and Technical Expertise

United Nations Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC)

- UNDAC Concept Note:
- UNDAC Strategy 2018-2021:
• UNDAC Team – Terms of Reference:
• UNDAC Induction Selection Criteria (non-OCHA staff):
• UNDAC Operational Partners:
• UNDAC 25 – Being an UNDAC member (YouTube video):
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cF7HsCMh3Xg

**OCHA Humanitarian Assessment, Financing and Planning Tools**
• Flash Appeals – Frequently Asked Questions:
  https://www.unocha.org/sites/dms/CAP/FAQs_What_you_need_to_know.pdf
• Flash Appeal guidance and templates:
• Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF):
  https://cerf.un.org
• CERF Pooled Fund Summary:
  https://fts.unocha.org/pooled-funds/cerf/summary/2019

**OCHA’s Gender Equality Guidelines and Tools**
• Gender resources and updates:
  https://reliefweb.int/topics/gender
• OCHA gender toolkit:
  https://reliefweb.int/report/world/ocha-gender-tool-kit
• ISAC Guidelines for Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings:
  https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/IASC-Guidelines-Integrating-Gender-Based-Violence-Interventions
• ISAC Gender with Age Marker:
• The ISAC Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action:

**After Action Reviews and Lessons Learned**
• Rapid Review of the Regional Response in the Hurricanes Irma and Maria Events:
• Regional Overview: Impact of Hurricanes Irma and Maria:
• Irma and Maria by the numbers:
  https://repositorio.cepal.org/handle/11362/43446
• Dominica: Lessons Learned from Tropical Storm Erika:
• Dominica: Lessons Learned from Hurricane Maria:
• Post-Disaster Needs Assessment Dominica Hurricane Maria 2017: