



CONCEPT NOTE

Title: Special session 2, A regional approach to coordination on multi-hazards: 2020 lessons from the Caribbean

Date and time: Tuesday, November 2, 2021 (Day 2)

2:00 PM - 3:30 PM Jamaica time, Eastern Standard Time Zone (Jamaica, Panama, Mexico, Peru)

Venue: Virtual

Lead organization: Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA)

Co-lead organization: Government of Jamaica

Contributing Agencies: ODPEM, ECLAC, PAHO, UNDP

GOALS

The main objective of this special session is to highlight how the entire Caribbean region has dealt with a multi-hazard environment in 2020 with the aim of improving regional coordination across the entire disaster risk management cycle. More specifically, the session will:

1. Share the lessons learned on impacts, response modalities, early recovery, prevention, mitigation, risk reduction and resilience that emerged from the Caribbean experience in 2020.
2. Review country experiences in addressing the impacts of multiple hazards during 2020 (COVID-19, major hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanoes, displacement, etc.).
3. Improve understanding of the needs for countries and populations to better prepare, mitigate and respond to multiple hazards.
4. Enhance understanding and build awareness of different regional coordination mechanisms for managing multiple hazards in the whole disaster cycle.
5. Facilitate discussions on multi-hazard disaster risk reduction financing strategies, involving the private and public sector.

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

1. Experiences, best practices, and lessons learned from the multi-hazard impacts in 2020 on specific States and regional institutions from within the extended Caribbean region shared and documented.
2. Recommendations on actions that may be undertaken by States within the Caribbean to strengthen regional coordination for resilience in a multi-hazard context proposed and captured.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The 2020 emergency events in the entire Caribbean region comprised hydro-meteorological, seismic, environmental, volcanic, biological/pandemic and societal hazards. The 2020 Atlantic hurricane season was indeed a hyperactive season as forecasted, producing thirteen systems that developed into hurricanes, six of which became major hurricanes. Two of them, Eta and Iota, triggered major disasters in Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala. September 2020 also saw the threat of an FSO Nabarima oil spill potentially triggering an environmental disaster in the region. This led to the setting up of a Regional Response Mechanism (RRM) and the convening of Caribbean Development Partner Group (CDPG) meetings. The La Soufrière Volcano in St. Vincent and the Grenadines continues to be at orange alert level with an ongoing effusive eruption in 2021. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has persisted throughout the entire Caribbean region, causing the closure of borders, lockdowns, and the implementation of curfews across Central America and the Caribbean.

The disasters triggered by hurricanes Eta and Iota in Guatemala and Honduras led to responses being implemented by national authorities in partnership with the international community. In the Caribbean, the diversity of emergency events faced in 2020 (and ongoing) has led to a further strengthening of the CDEMA CU Regional Response Mechanism. New DRM cells have been developed, the Regional Coordination Center (RCC) has adapted to operations fully and remotely, and numerous regional plans have been developed and updated. Furthermore, the CDEMA CU has adapted to operating in a multi-hazard context. The hyperactive hurricane season also led to the CDEMA CU refining its regional deployment protocols for multi-hazard scenarios. In the other part of the Caribbean region, CEPREDENAC has promoted regional coordination mechanisms to secure an effective response, while continuing to focus on activities aiming at substantially reducing disaster risk triggered by multiple hazards.

QUESTIONS THAT THE SESSION WILL SEEK TO ANSWER

1. What were the impacts of the hazards observed? What were their cascading effects?
2. What were the major challenges of the authorities of the Caribbean and Central America in dealing with the effects and impacts of multiple hazards?
3. What were the challenges unique to Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and how can they thrive?
4. What have been the major lessons learned from the 2020 multi-hazard context?

5. How have CDEMA and CEPREDENAC adapted their regional coordination mechanisms to tailor to the multi-hazard context?
6. What can others learn from the Central America and Caribbean experience on the coordinating mechanism for response and for the entire disaster risk management cycle?
7. What are the major needs of governments and communities to design policy and regional coordination mechanisms capable of facing multiple hazards and cascading effects?
8. How do we define a resilient Caribbean region moving forward?