Effective disaster management not only reduces rebuilding cost and ensures the continued operation of Caribbean countries in the event of disaster, but enhances the quality of life for our citizens. Disaster management planning is therefore a critical investment for all Caribbean communities. This was strongly emphasized by Ms Velda Octave-Joseph, CDEMA’s Community Disaster Management Specialist who provides support to Participating States to strengthen disaster resilience at the community level. Her remarks were made as she reported on the progress of the community capacity building initiatives being undertaken by CDEMA through the European Union (EU) funded ‘Disaster Risk Management Sub Regional Programme’. She stated that since the start of the programme in 2010 significant progress has been made in several key areas of community resilience planning including conducting participatory vulnerability and risk assessments, developing vulnerability and risk profiles and capacity building training. Community risk assessments were conducted in ten (10) Participating States through direct interaction and participation of community leaders and groups and by way of town hall/community meetings. Each of the targeted communities was able to identify, analyse and evaluate their vulnerabilities to hazards. The assessments have now resulted in the drafting of Vulnerability and Risk Profiles for seven communities in five States. These are: Island Harbour and East End in Anguilla, Choiseul in Saint Lucia, Rose Hill in Grenada, Mammoral one (1) and two (2) in Trinidad and Old Road in St. Kitts and Nevis. Community risk profiles are also to be prepared for the other communities assessed - Bioche in Dominica, Northern Eleuthra in the Bahamas, Anegada, British Virgin Islands, and Island Harbour Anguilla. Some communities have also benefitted from disaster management workshops. There is now a cadre of 189 persons from Dominica, Saint Lucia, Anguilla, operation, continued on page 2.
More than 400 delegates at 6th CDM Conference

The Annual Caribbean Conference on Comprehensive Disaster Management continues to attract highly influential advocates and professionals in the field of disaster management from across the region and internationally. Over 400 delegates from 41 countries and representing 205 organisations participated in the 6th CDM Conference held at the Hyatt Hotel in Trinidad and Tobago from December 5-9, 2011.

The 6th Conference was an occasion to celebrate 20 years of institutionalized disaster management in the region and was convened under the theme – “CDM: Reflection, Introspection, Moving Forward”. This provided a programming mix that allowed for looking back and assessing what has been done in the region since the establishment in 1991 of CDERA (now CDEMA) and to focus on strategies for managing the changing character of the risk management landscape.

There were a number of high level speakers who set the tone of the Conference at the opening ceremony and this was reinforced through the keynote addresses at the plenary sessions. Amongst those high-ranking speakers were - Sir Lloyd Erskine Sandiford, former Prime Minister of Barbados; Ms Margareta Wahlstrom, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction; the Honourable Adriel Brathwaite, Attorney General and Minister of Home Affairs, Barbados; Honourable Mark Brown, Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Trinidad; Honourable Collin Partap, Minister in the Ministry of National Security, Trinidad; Ms Myrna Bernard of the CARICOM Social Development Directorate; and Her Excellency Karen McDonald, High Commissioner of Canada to Trinidad and Tobago.

One of the key addresses was delivered Ms Margareta Wahlstrom who spoke on the Strategies for Effective Disaster Risk Management Policy and Programming in Small States. This session attracted the participation of ministers of governments and senior officials from the Caribbean and other small island states outside of the region. During this session, there was the ceremonial signing of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction’s Making Cities Resilient Declaration between the United Nations and representatives from the Governments of Haiti and Dominica.

Among the other highlights of the conference were the youth session which saw participants between the ages of 14-25.

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Grenada and St. Kitts and Nevis who have received training in amateur radio basic disaster management, emergency first aid, fire prevention and safety, shelters and shelters management, community disaster planning and basic telecommunication and initial damage assessment.

Further communities will be provided with either basic equipment which they identified as a need and mitigative works. This is valued at over US$500,000.00. The community of Island Harbour has received navigation lights as part of the first installments of items requested. Other key areas being addressed are community programming and evacuation. A toolkit to assist in community programming and a model evacuation policy, informed in part by the community risk profiles are being developed. These are expected to be completed by December 2012 for review and adaptation by all of the CDEMA Participating States.

CDEMA has spent US$85,977.85 between 2010 and 2011 on the community resilience component of the ACP-EU Natural Disaster Facility Sub Regional Programme for the Caribbean.

For details on the Programme please contact Sarah Lionel at E-mail: sarah.lionel@cdema.org
From January 2009 to June 2012, experts from Japan collaborated with their counterparts in the regional institutions, Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), the Caribbean Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH), the University of the West Indies and the University of Guyana, to build capacity and strengthen institutional mechanisms to manage the flood risk.

This partnership was executed through the Caribbean Disaster Management Project Phase 2 (CADM2) under the CARICOM/Japan Technical Cooperation Agreement through the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and with the support of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

The US$3.79 million dollars project established a community-based flood disaster risk reduction model in five (5) Caribbean states, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana and Saint Lucia. The model promotes the integration of community-based disaster management planning, flood hazard mapping and flood early warning systems.

Flood early warning systems were installed in the communities involved in piloting the model. Training was provided for residents of the communities who also participated in simulation exercises to test the flood early warning systems. Approximately 2,000 residents in flood vulnerable areas in the Caribbean region were trained during the CADM2 project.

The Deputy Executive Director of CDEMA, Elizabeth Riley, in her comments on the project pointed out the sustainability value in targeting communities. She said that being involved in the process generated greater interest and understanding of what was being done and the benefits to their communities. She also added that CDEMA believes that building resilience at the community level is really the foundation of national resilience.

JICA has also provided hydrological data collection equipment such as rainfall gauges, water level gauges and telecommunication devices for the countries to further execute the tasks in establishing flood early warning systems and flood hazard mapping in other communities. A hydro-meteorological database was developed for Guyana and a regional one was also developed and is located at CIMH. The Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology supported the development of flood hazard maps and spear-headed the design, procurement, and installation of the flood early warning systems.

According to Dr. David Farrell, Principal of CIMH, JICA’s assistance came at a time when CDEMA was crying out for some technical support in reducing floods in the Caribbean, an area defined by the Caribbean as priority. He observed that sometimes when one gets an injection of technical or financial support it does not always meets the agenda of the receiving state but of the giving state. In this case, he was pleased to note that it was the reverse. JICA funded the Caribbean programme and more importantly brought the technical aspect and utilized the technical support in the region. So from the outset there was a two way relationship that has led to the success of this project. continued on page 4
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At a ceremony marking the end of the project, Akira Hayakawa, JICA Project Manager said that his organization will continue working with the Caribbean to share lessons of the disaster experience in Japan where almost all sorts of hazards exist. He also assured that JICA will continue to have dialogue with the governments of the CDEMA Participating states to find out the best ways to enhance the capacity of communities to mitigate flood risks.

Note: The project preceding, the Caribbean Disaster Management Project (CADM2), was implemented from 2002 to 2004, in Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent and Grenadines, Barbados respectively.
CDERA (now CDEMA) was founded in 1991 by the CARICOM Heads of Government by an agreement anchored in the spirit of cooperation and collaboration on disaster management issues. It is on this foundation that CDEMA has established itself as the leading regional disaster management agency. The developments in disaster management, successes and continuing efforts in building disaster resilience to hazard impacts in the Participating State could not have been achieved without the commitment, hard work, dedication and contribution of numerous individuals, institutions and agencies and development partners.

In observation of the Agency’s 20th Anniversary, regional stalwarts were honored for the significant influence their leadership and commitment have had on the development of disaster management in the Caribbean. The occasion was the 6th CDM Conference in December 2011 at the Hyatt Hotel in Trinidad and Tobago. The CDEMA 20th Anniversary Award was presented to

- (Barbados) Dr. Elizabeth Rose Ferdinand is recognized for her pivotal role in the development and strengthening of disaster management in the public health sector in Barbados and regionally.
- (Jamaica) Mr. Franklin McDonald, a geologist by training who for more than 30 years has pioneered programmes and projects in wide range of areas on disaster management - from landslide and erosion control to emergency response and recovery efforts to economic rehabilitation. Most noteworthy is his conceptualization of CDERA, now CDEMA and his efforts to have it established.
- (Jamaica) Ms Audrey Mullings is recognized for mobilizing the first regional Red Cross response team which laid the foundation for the development of the current Red Cross Regional Intervention Teams. She also served for 10 years as Deputy Coordinator at CDEMA and has pioneered work aimed at bringing focus to gender and disaster management issues.
- (Mexico) Mr. Arturo Lopez-Portillo Contreras – It has been said that he is a Caribbean man who happened to be born in Mexico. Since 1995, he has gone beyond his contractual responsibilities to spread disaster management knowledge in the Caribbean. He has developed, facilitated and implemented many projects in the region aimed towards seeing people and communities better prepared to face disasters.
- (Saint Lucia) Ms A.L. Dawn French – The first female to lead Saint Lucia’s National Disaster Management Programme has focused her efforts on creating and implementing programmes and activities that impact positively at both the national and regional level. She has made significant contribution to response operations in the region.

The Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (ODPM) of Trinidad and Tobago also used the occasion of the CDEMA 20th Awards ceremony to recognize five of its former Directors and Chief Executive Officers - Colonel (Ret’d) Mahendra Mathur, Colonel (Ret’d) Dave Williams, Mr. Myron Chin, Mr. Paul Saunders, former CEO, ODPM, Colonel (Ret’d) George Robinson, and Colonel Rodney Smart.
This year the CDEMA Coordinating Unit (CU) will be in a better position to deliver on its expanded mandate as Phase One of the new organizational restructuring plan gets fully underway. The CDEMA Council approved the new Agency Structure and plan in 2011. Two main areas of the first phase are the strengthening of Technical Capacity at the CU and the establishment of sustainable financing mechanisms.

Last December, we welcomed Dr. Elvis Nurse as Director of the Resource Management and Administration Division. Dr. Nurse previously served as the Deputy Coordinator of CDERA and brings to the post over twenty (20) years of senior management experience in finance, administration, economics and resource management in the public and private sector. He has also been an international consultant in Finance and Management whose clients have included regional and international institutions. He continued on page 11.
Residents of two communities, Rose Hill, Grenada and Bioche, Dominica, have been actively engaged in developing their community disaster plan. This trend is strongly advocated by CDEMA to enhance community resilience in the Caribbean region.

According to Velda Octave-Joseph, CDEMA’s Community Disaster Planning Specialist, “Unless disaster management efforts are sustainable at individual and community level, it is difficult to reduce the losses and scale of tragedies. There needs to be opportunities for participatory planning so that communities identify well in advance, actions to be taken by individuals in the community so that each one is aware of his/her responsibilities and when and how to execute these responsibilities.”

This is the method being used to advance community resilience through the Disaster Risk Management Sub-regional Programme (ACP-EU Project) being implemented by CDEMA. Rose Hill and Bioche were selected to pilot a number of activities geared towards strengthening their local capacities for disaster risk reduction and disaster response. The adaptation of the Community Disaster Plan developed under the project was one of the key activities undertaken during the month of May. Plan adaptation workshops were held in both, Rose Hill and Bioche and provided residents with the opportunity to detail a plan of action to guide the community’s disaster risk reduction initiatives as well as their response to hazards which may affect them.

Rosehill has also benefited from several other interventions under this the project. These include: Community Hazard Mapping, an assessment of the community’s emergency communication systems and arrangements, as well as the conduct of a Community Vulnerability Assessment and Risk Profiling exercise. Training of local residents is also a key component of building capacity within the community. To date 59 persons have also participated in various training workshops to boost skills in Shelters and Shelter Management; Initial Damage Assessment, Telecommunications and Basic First Aid and CPR.

In Dominica, Bioche 22 residents received training in the areas of Fire Prevention and Safety and First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). The CDEMA Coordinating Unit is currently procuring requisite equipment for distribution to these communities to support mitigation and emergency response activities. Micro mitigation community projects have also been identified to start during the latter part of 2012 in both communities.

The feedback from the participants and review of the activities completed so far has been very encouraging. CDEMA will share the model documents developed and lessons learnt with all of its Participating States. The Disaster Risk Management Sub-Regional Programme under the ACP-EU Natural Disaster Facility concludes February 14, 2013.

Residents of Rose Hill, Grenada and Bioche, Dominica getting involved.
Memorandum of Understanding signed between CDEMA and RSS

The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) is pleased to announce that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed between CDEMA and the Regional Security System (RSS) to enhance coordination of the regional response mechanism. The RSS has been a long standing partner of CDEMA, supporting humanitarian response and relief operations to many CARICOM states affected by disasters. This is carried out by the CARICOM Disaster Relief Unit (CDRU), a disciplined forces team of police, fire and military personnel from the CDEMA Participating States. The Unit is mobilized and deployed by the RSS when authorized by the CDEMA Coordinating Unit. The MOU details the areas of collaboration and specific support to be provided by each entity to facilitate efficient use of scarce resources, training, exchange of information and development and maintenance of standards and procedures. Both parties have agreed that disaster preparedness is a critical aspect in ensuring an effective response. This is highlighted in the MOU which addresses the development and review of annual joint training exercises for the CDRU, development and maintenance of the Regional Coordination Plan as well as understanding of roles and obligations. Among areas specified for collaboration under regional response are: initial damage assessment, management of relief supplies and logistical support for operations. The MOU, signed late last year, is one of CDEMA’s ongoing efforts to further strengthen and streamline the response capability of the CDEMA community.

What is the “Disaster risk management strategy and plan for action for the tourism sector in the Caribbean”?

The project “Regional Monitoring and Evaluation System for Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) in the Caribbean Tourism Sector” is aimed at enhancing the capacity to measure performance in the tourism sector for DRM and CCA. This implies an assumption that certain actions are taking place in the Tourism sector that allow for performance measurement. The premise is that the tourism sector has engaged in the inculcation of DRM and CCA in the long term strategic planning thereby making the sector more resilient to hazards and changes in climate. The recommended approach to inculcating DRM and CCA was documented in the “Disaster Risk Management Strategy and Plan of Action for the Tourism Sector in the Caribbean”. This strategy was developed under the previous project “The Regional Disaster Risk Management for Sustainable Tourism in the Caribbean Project” from which the “Regional Monitoring and Evaluation System for Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation in the Caribbean Tourism Sector” follows on. This strategy and plan for action sets not only the foundation on which DRM and CCA can be built into tourism planning and development but also presents a preliminary road map with regard to measuring the performance and determining whether the tourism sector and sub sectors are on course. This strategy is a model approach that has to be adapted and tailored to suit the individual country context and needs.

When countries adapt the “Disaster Risk Management Strategy and Plan of Action for the Tourism Sector in the Caribbean” the monitoring and evaluation system in the project “Regional Monitoring and Evaluation System for Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation in the Caribbean Tourism Sector” will be designed in a way to track and monitor the successes as well as risk and challenges in order to ensure mitigative actions can be taken. The project “Regional Monitoring and Evaluation System for Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation in the Caribbean Tourism Sector” is ongoing and currently on the way to building the monitoring and evaluation system. The Project is funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and is being executed by CDEMA in collaboration with the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO). Other supporting partners are the University of the West Indies (UWI), the University of Guyana (UG), the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC) and CDEMA Participating States.
Students of the SIT (School for International Training) Graduate Institute in Vermont received an orientation on CDEMA’s implementation of the Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy in the region at the Agency’s headquarters on Wednesday, January 11, 2012.

Ms Elizabeth Riley, Deputy Executive Director (ag) and Ms Velda Octave-Joseph, Community Specialist with CDEMA addressed the group of ten (10) students who were particularly interested in CDEMA’s approach in relation to leadership, collaboration and working with communities.

In providing the context for the CDM Strategy and how it is being implemented, Ms Elizabeth Riley, Deputy Executive Director (ag) emphasized the importance of consultations and collaboration of all actors involved.

“CDEMA has found that a democratic/participatory approach works ... any collaboration must be mutually beneficial and reciprocal”, she said.

She explained that the development of the CDM Strategy and framework was built on those principles. Using concrete examples Ms Riley demonstrated how CDEMA was able to garner the support of CARICOM in the adoption of the CDM Strategy and the buy-in of development partners.

The CDM Strategy is the region’s roadmap for building disaster resilience in every sector and community of CDEMA’s 18 Participating States. CDEMA is the primary Agency with responsibility for promoting and guiding the implementation across the region.

In highlighting some of the challenges associated with working with various entities, Ms Riley pointed out that “sensitivity and understanding are key if you are to maintain good relationships as you try to manage constraints.”

Ms Octave-Joseph spoke on community level implementation and provided some insight on the Agency’s management of flexibility in the implementation of its programmes. She also outlined the process CDEMA uses to ensure that the work within communities was relevant to their needs. Part of this process, she explained was through the governance structure of the CDM implementation which allowed for NGO’s and other civil society organizations and community leaders to be engaged in setting priorities for community level interventions.

Dr. Ken Williams, Associate Professor of SIT Graduate Institute expressed his appreciation to CDEMA for accommodating the students. He said, the students now have a better understanding about CDEMA’s collaboration, leadership and partnerships.

“The comprehensive explanations of work done – content, case studies examples presented were fabulous. This was particularly helpful to us and we were able to follow in a very lively manner and learnt much more.”

To sum up, I would say we are now better informed on how organizations can collaborate successfully and how leadership really can position organization to strategically have a successful future.” Said Dr. Williams.

Note: For information on the CDM strategy and implementation, please visit www.cdema.org and www.weready.org/CDM/
CDEMA’s Executive Director, Mr. Jeremy Collymore, participated in the International Recovery Forum 2012 in Kobe, Japan on January 19-20. The Forum is an annual event organized by International Recovery Platform (IRP) partners and Disaster Research Institute Japan focused on mechanisms for regional cooperation for promoting resilient recovery and reconstruction. Participants shared and discussed experiences, lessons learnt and actions for strengthening capacities of regional Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGOs) to better address resilient recovery in countries.

Mr. Collymore delivered presentations at the sessions which looked at Technical Guidance And Support To Countries After Large Scale Disasters – Role Of Ex-Ante Capacities At Regional And National Levels And Mechanisms Of Regional Cooperation: Experiences And Lessons On Recovery & Preparedness. He was also a member of a panel discussion entitled “Ex-ante Regional Cooperation Arrangements for Recovery” which led into group discussions and recommendations. In his presentations he explained the CDEMA Disaster recovery system and highlighted planning initiatives and key areas for enhancing the CDEMA capacity. He also shared some experiences and lessons learned from Caribbean events, such as Hurricane Ivan, in recovery and preparedness and national approaches for recovery planning.

Delegates attending the meeting were from the International Recovery Platform (IRP) community of practitioners including professionals, regional IGOs, national and local governments, and academia.

For more information on the International Recovery Platform and the International Recovery Forum please visit http://www.recoveryplatform.org/
The Climate Smart Community Disaster Management Module, Handbooks and accompanying multi-media materials are intended for community leaders and organizations who are working with local groups to develop community based disaster risk reduction (DRR) plans that incorporate Climate Change Adaptation (CCA). The resources are designed to build capacity of Caribbean communities to increase their resilience to climate change and to reduce the impacts of climate-related disasters. This is emphasized in the six-unit module which focuses on building on and applying the wealth of knowledge, skills and experience that already exists in the community. Community leaders are also encouraged to use the videos and audio materials on television and radio programmes. The videos are available on YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O8tDmdNCACE

The suite of tools have been produced by CDEMA through the Austrian Development Agency funded Mainstreaming Climate Change Adaptation into Disaster Risk Management for the Caribbean Region (CCDM) Project.
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cannot debate the moot “Disaster Mitigation is an expense we afford in the midst of our declining economies”, the Conference Exhibition showcasing tools and products by institutions and private businesses and the Bus Tour to view first hand the vulnerabilities of the Trinidad’s West Coast.
CDEMA expressed its appreciation and gratitude for a successful 2011 Conference to co-hosts the Government of Trinidad and Tobago through the Ministry of National Security, the many partners and sponsors for their continued support, Participating States, speakers, presenters, media, CDEMA Coordinating Staff, and the Office of Disaster Preparedness Management, Trinidad and Tobago, and of course the delegates.

For information on the Annual CDM Conference, please visit www.cdema.org/cdmconference