

Role of Media in Disaster Preparedness

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Hurricane impact

The 2017 Atlantic hurricane season was extremely destructive featuring 17 named storms, multiple landfall

- Highest total accumulated cyclone energy AND highest number of major hurricanes since 2005
- Millions evacuated, massive damage across 11 islands
- By far the costliest season: damages over US \$292 billion



A year on...

UN Emergency Relief Coordinator:

- Still large-scale needs in some countries, so recovery will take time
- Despite insurance payouts resources for recovery remain inadequate
- Solutions around will take years, decades
 - development of more diversified, prosperous economies
 - application of higher building standards
 - institutional preparedness
- Large storms will present similar problems; need to remain alert

Preparing now

Disaster preparedness activities are fully underway across the Caribbean

Preparedness = time to join up contingency planning, especially for the most vulnerable; pre-position supplies, staff; mobilize the money!

Caribbean emergency responders, disaster management agencies:

- *Tailored plans for communicating with affected communities*
- *Baseline data and Information Management tools*

Role of Caribbean media?

What was different about reporting on the storm season last year?

Have there been changes in how you engage with local audiences?

How is the media reporting since then on critical issues affecting progress?



Reporting on disasters

Lessons from last year to apply now?

Where you felt your reporting was really useful?

EARLY WARNING

LIFE-LINE INFORMATION

Where could the media do more?

CONTEXT

TWO-WAY DIALOGUE

Innovative approaches to repeat or avoid?

PARTNERSHIP WITH PRIVATE SECTOR

DIASPORA NETWORKS

Engaging with communities

- *PM Skerrit in Dominica: communicating with citizens via Facebook*
- *CDEMA: communicating with affected communities via Twitter*
- *Caribbean Voice: crowdsourcing platform on hurricane recovery*

More experience, more best practices emerging = better preparedness

- *What channels or institutions do people trust*
- *What messages are most likely to be listened to*
- *How rumours are spread*
- *Power, gender dynamics within communities*

- *Vulnerable groups*
- *Communities engaged in planning*
- *Providing a feedback loop*

Making progress?

“Most importantly, it is the HUMAN COST of disasters that is the most compelling argument for action. Real progress will bring down the numbers of families and people internally displaced by disasters.”

Special Representative on Disaster Risk Reduction, Mami Izutori

Preparing for and responding to disasters require SIGNIFICANT FINANCING
- *Some Caribbean countries have limited access due to middle-income status*

Countries need support to take effective CLIMATE ACTION
- *Risk-informed infrastructure for resilient economies and communities*

Media role in DISASTER RISK REDUCTION, in reporting on, making progress
- *Sendai Framework 2015-2030*

Reporting on recovery & resilience

How do you see reporting since then on critical underlying and longer term issues?

- *Investment in climate resilient economies, communities*
- *Disaster risk reduction policies and practices*
- *Sustainable development goals*
- *Enforcing building codes*
- *Preparing the most vulnerable communities*
- *Applying best practices learned from other countries*

Risk Reduction: media role

Sendai Framework 2015-2030

“Media to take an active and inclusive role in local, national, regional and global levels in contributing to raising of public awareness and understanding, and disseminate accurate and non-sensitive disaster risk, hazard and disaster information, including on small-scale disasters, in a simple, transparent, easy-to-understand and accessible manner, in close cooperation with national authorities”

- *Adopt DRR communications policies*
- *Support early warning systems and*
- *life-saving protective measures*
- *Stimulate culture of prevention and strong community involvement in sustained public education campaigns*
- *Public consultations at all levels of society, in accordance with national practices*

Thank you!

