

**Overall disaster management
from a health sector po-
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This paper identifies the main trends in overall disaster management in the Caribbean regional and national levels from a health sector perspective. It highlights the main reasons why and how the region moved from an "ad hoc" response which existed in the sixties, to an organized system by the middle of the nineties. It also proposes some areas which will need special attention in order to improve regional and national overall disaster management in the future.

1. Introduction :

In this article the word Caribbean refers to the Caribbean Sea and its islands, limited in the north west by Cuba and the Bahamas islands and in the south east by Trinidad and Tobago. Furthest to the east is the island of Barbados. The southern limit of the region is formed by Venezuela and the western one by Central America. (Figure 1)

A number of small islands belonging to mainland countries such as the ones which are dependents of Colombia, Honduras, Mexico or Venezuela are not considered in the discussion since their political and administrative organisation are too different in their evolution and disaster management



Thirty four countries are considered in this paper. Although, Bermuda is not geographically in the Caribbean Sea, and Guyana, Surinam, French Guyana and Belize are part of the mainland, they are included

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The opinion expressed in this paper reflects only the point of view of the author and not the one of Panamerican Health Organization