

# REPORT FROM THE REGIONAL OFFICE FOR LATIN-AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

February - November of 1993

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## Introduction

Since August 1992 the IDNDR Secretariat received an Associated Expert provided by the Swedish Government to be stationed in Costa Rica to support Latin America and the Caribbean in their efforts to fulfil the IDNDR goals and targets. The contract for this Regional IDNDR Program Officer is made with UNDP, including US\$ 4.000 per year for travelling. All additional technical and logistic support is provided by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)- the Program for Disaster Preparedness (PED), such as travel-funds, office-space, administrative support and funding for printing of some promotional and information materials. The IDNDR Secretariat gave a lump sum of 20 000 US dollars for activities in the Region, that was completely spent in September 93.

The headquarter in Washington and the subregional Offices of PAHO-PED (Costa Rica, Barbados and Ecuador) have been extremely helpful in planning every country visit or "open up doors". The OAS Department of Regional Planning and Environment has also helped in providing contacts and information requested, supporting various joint events.

A Summary Report of the achievements of the first year of activities, Aug.92-July 93, was prepared in July.

Main activities carried out by the Regional Programme Officer, according to Work-plan, since Feb. 93 until November 93:

## 1. SUPPORT NATIONAL IDNDR COMMITTEES OR SIMILAR INSTITUTIONS in the region (Sent out two circular letters, 11 country visits, telephone, letter and fax-contacts etc.)

Country visits since Feb. 93:

Costa Rica, duty station, main activities on country level:

Speeches on hazards and vulnerability of Costa Rica and IDNDR in a workshop for hospital maintenance personnel, organized by the Social Security Fond and PAHO and on October-conference with RECOPE (oil company) and the National Emergency Commission in relation to the IDNDR Day.

-Constant contact with CEPREDENAC (Central America) and CNE (National Emergency Commission). Participated in various Workshops on the National Emergency Plan and a Regional Disaster Reduction Plan for Central America.

March, Bolivia: Principal resource person together with PAHO-PED in a National Workshop in Disaster management (DMTP-scheme). Valuable discussions with all sectors.

April, Ecuador: Participated as resource person in DMTP Workshop. Occurred the land-slide and flooding disaster in Paute, Cuenca.

May, Washington: Coordinate with PAHO, OAS and others future activities in the Region.

May, St Lucia: Assist Workshop to adopt 10-year-development plan, including disaster preparedness and mitigation.

May, St. Christopher: Promotion of IDNDR and World Conference, adaptation of school-curricula.

June, Colombia: One-week study tour within the country, obtaining very valuable contacts and experiences.

July, Boulder, USA: Participated as a panelist on the Hazard Research and Applications Workshop in Colorado.

**July, Boulder, USA:** Participated as a panelist on the Hazard Research and Applications Workshop in Colorado.

**September, Andean Meeting in Colombia:** A one week meeting organized as an extended meeting of the health-sector in the Andean Region (Chile, Perú, Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela) with parliamentarians, IDNDR Committees, Foreign Affairs and international agencies. Important recommendations for the future, regarding strengthening the IDNDR work in the region were made, so as preparation for the World Conference. The Colombian Government has convened an Inter American Meeting in March, 94, to review experiences in disaster mitigation, assessment and warning.

**September, Honduras:** Participated actively in the preparation of outlines for a Regional Strategy for Disaster Reduction and a four-day-seminar between CEPREDENAC (practitioners and scientists) and the Network for Social Studies in Disaster Prevention.- Promoted IDNDR and World Conference on vice-minister level (Planning and Environmental).

**October, Trinidad:** Participated in the Caribbean Conference on Natural Hazards, organized by the University of the West Indies and concurrent workshops for Health (PAHO) and Educational (OAS) Sectors. Contacts with various National IDNDR Committees from the Caribbean.

**October, Panamá:** Speech on IDNDR in the First Scientific Congress on Prevention, Mitigation and Management of the Disaster Crisis, organized by the Technological University of Panamá.

## **2. PREPARATION FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE IN YOKOHAMA.**

-Articles in the Newsletter "IDNDR Infoms", mentioned in all speeches and during country contacts. Main subject in the DMTP Workshop in Costa Rica, with participants from Central America.

-Supporting Regional Preparatory Meetings (10-15 Oct. 93 in Trinidad for the Caribbean and 21-24 March 94 in Cartagena, Colombia, for Latin America).

-Supporting the writing of a Regional Report on achievements in the Region, sponsored by PAHO.

## **3. STIMULATE HIGHLIGHTING OF THE IDNDR-DAY, 13TH OF OCTOBER.**

-This Office organized a regional working-meeting in Feb. 93 together with PAHO-Ped, OAS and the Mexican Civil Protection System, to prepare guide-lines for the highlighting of the IDNDR Day in October, focusing on Schools and Hospitals. 30 experts met during four intensive days, that finalized with a session chaired by the Honourable Mr. Miguel de la Madrid. --The Guidelines produced were widely distributed to the Health sector (PAHO), Educational sector (OAS) and IDNDR Committees (IDNDR Reg.Office) and also widely used by the countries.

-Coordinating an interagency effort to produce promotional material for the Region, protagonized by PAHO (video, poster, regional press release) and OAS (press-kit).

- Delivering message on the Caribbean Conference in Trinidad, and later during conference in Costa Rica..

-Sent out a questionnaire in the Region of how this promotional material has been used and what kind of support the countries would wish from IDNDR

## **4. INFORMATION AND DISSEMINATION**

-Production of three issues of the Newsletter "IDNDR Infoms-Latin America and the Caribbean", distribution to approx 10.000 persons in the Region. Financed by PAHO and very well received, according to attached questionnaire.

#### **5. PROMOTE EDUCATION INITIATIVES.**

- Taken advantage of the theme of the IDNDR Day, contacts with educational sector in many countries.
- Promoting design of a Post Grade, shorter course on Disaster Management, together with many Universities in the Region and other organizations.

#### **6. STRENGTHENING THE IDNDR-SUPPORT OR AWARENESS WITHIN UN-AGENCIES OR OTHER BI/or MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS.**

- Participating in DMTP as resource person.
- UNDP and/or other relevant contacts during country visits.

#### **MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS since the Regional Office was established:**

1. Noticed a major awareness within many of the countries (and international agencies) in the Region concerning IDNDR goals and targets, reaching out to a major circle of persons and institutions than before. Regaining some motivation that was being lost regarding the possibilities of the Decade providing an excellent opportunity to link development to disasters, involving Planning and Financing authorities in the countries.
2. Started a Regional Newsletter "IDNDR Infoms - Latin America and the Caribbean" as a facilitator of initiating horizontal contacts between countries and spread information on ongoing mitigation activities, projects, conferences etc. Very well received.
3. Encouraging CEPREDENAC to a major leadership in Central America to achieve Disaster reduction.
4. Stimulating activities in many countries to high light disaster reduction in Schools and Hospital, celebrating the International theme of the year.
5. One Workshop has been hold specifically to review results in achieving the Decade targets and prepare a National Report, combined with an inter institutional and multi-sectorial review of the progress by sector of the National Emergency Plan in Costa Rica (June 93). Present on that Workshop were also representatives from CEPREDENAC (Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala), UNDP-Guatemala and the National Disaster Prevention System of Colombia.
  - Similar Workshops are being planned for Peru, Venezuela, Central America and others.

#### **Preoccupation for the World Conference**

During the Andean Meeting in September, the Trinidad meeting (the Caribbean) in October and in contacts with CEPREDENAC (Central America) the same preoccupations are always expressed:  
-How will the countries benefit from the World Conference and during the event? Who will be able to assist (very few developing countries will prioritize their scarce resources to send someone to Japan)?

This ought to be clarified very soon.

HMV-IDNDR-10/11/93

PROGRAM AND PRIORITIES FOR THE IDNDR-REGIONAL OFFICE FOR  
LATINAMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES, COSTA RICA.  
1993 - 1994

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**PRINCIPAL TARGETS**

- 1 **Raise awareness among decision makers, planners, emergency-agencies and universities of the linkage between development and natural disasters and therefore the necessity of an interinstitutional body at high level to deal with these problems. (Strengthening the National IDNDR Committee or similar institution to monitor risk assessment, mitigation programs and early warning systems.)**

- Activities:**
- 1.1 Visits to the countries. Participate in regular meetings or call for special multisectorial meetings to review the progress on these issues (following the standard for the National Reports to be presented on the World Conference 1994).
  - 1.2 Send Circular Letters to all participant parts in a country together with the Regional Newsletter "IDNDR Informs".
  - 1.3 Support the organization of National Workshops in interested countries, to review their institutional status in disaster mitigation and fulfillment of the Decade-targets and to formulate recommendations for further strategies and programs.
  - 1.4 Support the strengthening of regional disaster-prevention organizations as CEPREDENAC, La Red (Network of Social Studies on Disaster Prevention) etc, in attending meetings and conference, create opportunities for horizontal contacts between countries, disseminate information etc.

2. **Preparation for the World Conference in Yokohama 1994.**

- Activities:**
- 2.1 Support the editing of a Regional Document that gives an overview of risks, achievements in risk assessment, mitigation and warning (PAHO is undertaking this project).
  - 2.2 Support the countries in their efforts of setting up a National Report (see 1.1 and 1.3).
  - 2.3 Support and assist two Regional Preparatory

Meetings: For the Caribbean in October 93, in Trinidad (main organizer is the University of West Indies, also supported by CDERA, PAHO, OAS and others).- For Latin America in March 1994 in Colombia (main organizer is the Colombian Government, also supported by UNDP, DHA, CUSEC, CERESIS, La Red, PAHO, USAID-OFDA, Red Cross and others).

2.4 .....

**3. Stimulate highlighting of the International Disaster Reduction Day, 13 Oct. 1993, "Stop Disasters: Focus on Schools and Hospitals".**

- Activities:**
- 3.1 Follow-up on our recommendations formulated in the Mexico-meeting, Feb. 93.
  - 3.2 Preparation of Poster, Fold-out, Press/kit etc. and its dissemination (supported by PAHO, OAS and CEPREDENAC).
  - 3.4 ....

**4. Information and dissemination:**

- a) Create horizontal knowledge and contacts between the countries in the Region.
- b) Promote the Decade and its targets in mass-medias.

- Activities:**
- 4.1 Write, edit, print and distribute the Regional Newsletter "IDNDR Informs in Latin America and the Caribbean" (the first number was primarily sponsored by PAHO and distributed to aprox. 10 000 of their subscribers. It has been very well received).
  - 4.2 Write articles from the region to STOP Disasters and stimulate other partners of IDNDR to do the same.
  - 4.3 List contacts in different medias (TV, Radio, Press and Magazines) and provide them with information.
  - 4.4 Assist workshops or conferences with medias where disaster is an item on the agenda.
  - 4.5 ....

**5. Actively stimulate the inclusion of knowledge on natural hazards, risk assessment, prevention and mitigation measures, early warning systems in school-curricula and university careers (pre- and post graduates).**

- Activities:**
- 5.1 Use the good examples from Colombia in school-curricula per grade and the methods to establish them.

- 5.2 Keep the already established contacts with UNESCO and OEA.
- 5.3 Visit Universities during country-missions, especially Faculties of engineering, architecture, planning and social studies. Prepare some guidelines and good examples as show-cases.
- 5.4 Maintain a contact-list using the already established rosters of PAHO, ICAP (Central American Institute of Public Administration) etc and new contacts.
- 5.5 Stimulate establishment of an "Investigation Center" (could be National University of Engineering in Nicaragua, where contacts already have been made and efforts are underway for a Central American program).
- 5.6 .....

**6. Strengthening the support for the Decade targets within the UN Agencies field offices and other international or bi-lateral organizations.**

- Activities:
- 6.1 Visit the UNDP office and others during country-missions.
  - 6.2 Serve as resource person during future UNDP/DHA-Disaster Management Training Programme (DMTP).
  - 6.3 ....

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**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES NEEDED**

	<u>US dollar</u>
1. -Travelling for country missions.	20 000.-
2. -Local contract for Information Officer (12 months - Alternative: JPO from Latin Am.)	12 000.-
3. -10 national Workshops x 2 days x \$4 000 (Travelling for 1 convenor + local costs)	40 000.-
4. -Editing + printing 4 issues "IDNDR Informs"	35 000.-
5. -Horizontal contacts for establishing university courses (travelling, contracts)	5 000.-
6. -Producing reports and promotional material	5 000.-
7. -Communication (mail, phone, fax) An important part in the promotion!	10 000.-
8. -Unforeseen expenditures	19 000.-
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<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>140 000.- US dollar</b>

**WORK PLAN FOR NOV 93 - FEB 94,  
IDNDR Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean  
(complement to the PRIORITY PROGRAM of July 1993)**

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**1. COUNTRY SUPPORT:**

	Resourceperson/s
St. Lucia, National Consultation meeting,(NCM) 23 Nov. Preparation World Conference	PAHO-Bar. Jennifer Worrel
Perú, NCM 6-7 Dec.	HNV-IDNDR A. Giesecke, STC
Bolivia, NCM alt. Nov alt. Jan-Feb 94	PAHO-Peru PAHO/IDNDR alt. Giesecke
Venezuela, NCM Argentina, NCM Uruguay, NCM Jan-Feb 94	PAHO/IDNDR

**2. PREP: WORLD CONFERENCE:**

Co-writer of the PAHO financed Regional Report: -Interviews BID, ECLAC, UNDP local offices -IDNDR information from the region, experiences	Nov-Jan 94	PAHO PED Staff
Assistance for the Latin American Prep. Meeting in Cartagena, Col, March 94: -Support selecting papers -Give conference on IDNDR in the Region	Feb-Mar 94	DNPAD-Col
Provide general information through personal contacts, Newsletter "IDNDR Informs" etc.		
Participate in 5th STC-session, Geneva	22-25 Nov	IDNDR, STC

**3. UNIVERSITIES:**

Promote the spreading of the DMTP-produced materials for use in university courses.	94	Contact UNDP, P.W., DHA Geneva N.H. (PAHO & OAS)
Promote the formulation of an Interdisciplinary postgrade in Disaster Management for the Region	94	CEPRENAC, FLACSO, LA RED, (PAHO, OAS)

#### 4. IDNDR DAY

Make a report on activities carried out in the Region 93 1-16 Nov

National Committees  
PAHO/Cor Bar, ECU, HQ  
OAS

#### 5. INFORMATION

Produce Newsletter "IDNDR Informs", No. 3 Jan 94  
No. 4 Apr 94

Write articles STOP Disasters, (Manizales, Col;  
LA RED, Andean Meeting; Caribbean Meeting, Tri) -17 Nov Bring to Geneva

Write an Article about the linkage Environment and  
Natural Disasters in the Magazine ECODECISION Deadline  
4 Jan 94  
-Interviews "Agenda 21", Costa Rica, and BID

#### 6. UN AGENCIES

Explore possibility of funding from UNDP-SPR funds Nov-dec UNDP-Cos, Guat, Hon..  
for Decade Activities (regional/or national).

Visits ECLAC and UNESCO, Chile Dec.  
Regional Offices. Funding? World Conf. support?

*Participate in Regional  
Conference Habitat - for  
Community*

*12/11-2/12 Costa Rica*

HMV-IDNDR, Costa Rica 29 Oct 1993





# Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency

The Garrison, St. Michael Barbados W.I.

CARICOM

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November 9, 1993

Dr Olavi Elo  
Director  
IDNDR Secretariat  
United Nations  
Palais de Nations  
Geneva 10  
Switzerland

Dear Dr Elo

## CARIBBEAN IDNDR ACTIVITIES

Thanks for agreeing to support the Caribbean IDNDR Activities.

The meeting in Trinidad was a very useful benchmark for defining the way ahead for disaster management in the region. Attached are statements and recommendations coming from the parallel workshops of the Conference.

More than 130 persons attended the Conference. There was a consensus that the mitigation activities of the Caribbean are not well identified and that a programme to highlight those ongoing activities would be a useful first step in promoting the mitigation agenda.

The need was expressed for a more pro-active presence of the IDNDR Secretariat in this sub-region through programme support or any other conspicuous method.

CDERA is eager to use the inertia of this meeting to promote sustained action in this area and look forward to working with your office on this mutual agenda.

Yours sincerely

Jeremy Collymore  
Regional Coordinator

JC/eti

# ***SRU CARIBBEAN CONFERENCE ON NATURAL HAZARDS***

***OCTOBER 11 - 15, 1993  
TRINIDAD***

## ***CONFERENCE STATEMENT***

The Caribbean Conference on Natural Hazards: Volcanoes, Earthquakes, Windstorms, Flood having discussed several issues related to sustainable development in small island states and the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction:

### **AGREES:**

1. TO ACCEPT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKING GROUPS ON THE POLICIES AND MEASURES FOR STRENGTHENING DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN.
2. THAT CDERA CONTINUES TO COLLABORATE WITH ITS PARTICIPATING STATES AND OTHER INTERESTS TO ENSURE THAT THE AGENDAS OF THE IDNDR AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN SIDS ARE INTEGRATED IN THE BEST INTEREST OF DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN THE REGION.

### **URGES:**

THE IDNDR SECRETARIAT TO SUPPORT THE PROPOSAL OF THE REGION FOR STRENGTHENING OF ITS IDNDR FOCAL POINT.

### **EXPRESSES:**

A DESIRE THAT THE WORLD IDNDR CONGRESS 1994, WHATEVER ITS FORMAT, PROVIDES A FORUM FOR THE PARTICIPATION OF ALL DISASTER INTERESTS INCLUDING INTERGOVERNMENTAL, NON-GOVERNMENT AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

### **RECOMMENDS:**

1. THAT THE REGION ESTABLISHES A REGIONAL AWARD TO RECOGNIZE AND PROMOTE DISASTER PLANNING AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL.
2. THAT SRU, CDERA, CMO AND OTHER REGIONAL INTERESTS JOIN FORCES TO OFFER A BIENNIAL CONFERENCE ON NATURAL HAZARDS IN THE CARIBBEAN.

# ***SRU CARIBBEAN CONFERENCE ON NATURAL HAZARDS***

***OCTOBER 11 - 15, 1993  
TRINIDAD***

## ***WORKSHOP ON DISASTER REDUCTION IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR***

### **DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Documentation and review of disaster events in order that the experiences and lessons learnt can be shared nationally and regionally and can be used as a basis of considering new projects.
2. Support initiatives for the preparation and dissemination of disaster management and mitigation documentation through computer-based libraries, document repositories, and computer-based reference systems and national documentation centers.
3. Reactivate the initiatives proposed by the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) in 1987 to introduced disaster preparedness and mitigation in the curriculum in appropriate disciplines.
4. Countries should develop clear policies for disaster mitigation and vulnerability reduction for education sector (including all educational institutions).
5. Each Ministry of Education should have a person who is designated as a Disaster and Mitigation Coordinator who operates at the Senior Management Level to be incorporated in the Job Description.
6. The 1993 theme for IDNDR: Stop Disasters! Focus on Schools and Hospitals be used as a continuing theme during the remainder of the Decade with all rights and privileges, etc.
7. That a public education and awareness programme for teachers, parents and students related to disaster preparedness and mitigation be undertaken immediately.

8. Governments should provide the necessary resources for carrying disaster preparedness and mitigation programmes in the Education Sector.
9. Efforts should be made to collaborate with and involve service clubs, the private sector, trade and professional associations in national disaster preparedness and mitigation plans and programme.

# **SRU CARIBBEAN CONFERENCE ON NATURAL HAZARDS**

**OCTOBER 11 - 15, 1993  
TRINIDAD**

## **DISASTER MITIGATION IN THE HEALTH SECTOR**

The participants to the Workshop on Disaster Mitigation in the health sector are recognizing that with the actual status of knowledge a large number of lives lost could have been avoided or that the health services, the water distribution system or sanitation could have been preserved from disaster impact by the implementation of low cost mitigation measures.

At this stage of the Decade the participants to the workshop are considering that a number of positive actions have been taken in the Caribbean that are participating to the reduction of the vulnerability of the Health Sector:

1. Codes have been developed and substantial amount of hazard information is available for the design of new projects as well as for the vulnerability reduction for existing health facilities.
2. Certain risks have been taken into account through regulation in different services such as town planning, public works, or health to discourage deforestation, the use of materials from seashore, and other highly vulnerable construction practice.
3. Government and other agencies have established disaster preparedness programmes that ensure, through simulation exercises, identification of shelters, early warning and other activities that the public is better aware and prepare for disaster impact.

However health facilities, health services, water systems and sanitation remain extremely vulnerable and therefore:

### **RECOMMEND THAT:**

1. The implementation of public awareness programmes aimed to sensitize the population about existence and the type of low cost disaster mitigation measures.

2. Technicians of the health sector inform appropriate political leaders that with the new development in hazard mitigation, every new hospital should be resistant to hurricane and will not collapse in earthquake and that the refurbishment of hospitals should make them significantly safer to natural hazards.
3. Proper technical research should go into the location of new health-care facilities.
4. All technical, administrative and specialized personnel of the health sector, as users of the health-care facilities, should be trained in order to ensure that health service could be provided after the disaster impact and therefore preserve the lives of occupants and the population.
5. Information exchanges on mitigation experiences in the health sector should continue to be promoted and facilitated by PAHO throughout the region.
6. All technical schools and universities in the Caribbean should integrate in their curriculum the basic technical requirements of health-care facilities.
7. Building codes, as is already the case for Bermuda and The Bahamas, must be enforced by legislation in all countries.
8. Vulnerability analysis of existing buildings should be the first step in a national mitigation programme for the health-care facilities.
9. Proper professional monitoring and supervision of the construction process of health facilities should be strengthened in order to ensure that design specifications are complied.
10. All maintenance activity should be used to reduce vulnerability of health facilities.