AMERICAS & THE CARIBBEAN



ARGENTINA

In 1998, a workshop-seminar on The Role of Social Communications in the Media: Their role in the Disaster Situations, was held in August. It was sponsored by the Alumni Centre of the school of National Defence.

World Disaster Reduction Day joined up with Inter-American Water to form a Water Week from 3 - 10 October. 40 organisations sponsored dozens of events and activities. including the distribution of leaflets to 20,000 households, touching some 200,000 people. The campaign covered a period of four months.

Two workshops were organised and a seminar held on Risk Reduction. From these events the following suggestions were made to improve planning of the Day in future years:

- include the Day in school agendas
- reproduce posters locally
- maintain a website
- encourage earlier availability of resource material for longer exposure
- disseminate calendar of activities

BOLIVIA

The UNDP Resident Coordinator hosted a breakfast and a workshop on natural disaster prevention for 50 senior policy and decision-makers. Key contacts were established between relevant ministries and NGOs during the breakfast to improve coordination in the event of a catastrophy. A Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) video was shown on the 1993 floods in Bolivia's Beni region, caused by El Niño.

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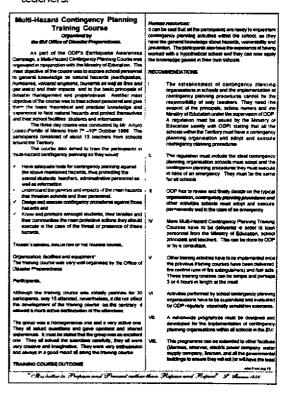
BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

In 1997 the Montserrat volcano forced many people to leave their island and some of them sought shelter in the British Virgin Islands. The BVI community raised funds to assist them. From 6 - 10 October, radio programmes publicised the Day. A radio quiz on station ZBVI, and a panel discussion on ZBVI's Speak Out were broadcast.

A supplement was printed in both BVI newspapers. A Multi-Hazard Contingency Planning Training course was organised by the BVI Office of Disaster Preparedness in conjunction with the Ministry of Education.

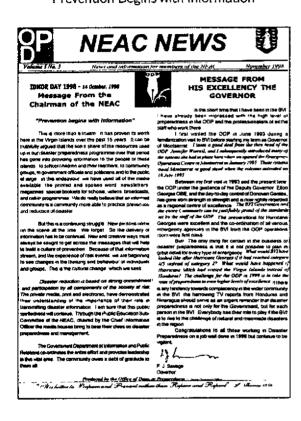
The 3-day course was held between 7-10 October 1998 and was attended by the 15 teachers from around the Territory. Recommendations of participants were:

 That the establishment of contingency planning in schools cannot only be the responsibility of teachers.



- More Multi-Hazard Contingency and other Training Courses must be planned.
- A nation-wide programme must be developed for the implementation of contingency planning.

IDNDR DAY 1998 - 14 OCTOBER 1998 Message from the Chairman of the NEAC "Prevention Begins with Information"



CANADA

In 1998, a special World Disaster Reduction Day event was convened by the IDNDR National Committee for Canada and discussions were held with groups that included participation by teachers, psychologists, and natural disaster experts. They met in a school located in an area of western Canada that had suffered from floods. The Director of the IDNDR Secretariat, Mr. Philippe Boullé,

participated in the awards ceremony, when special certificates were presented to students.

On 14 October, the Canadian National Committee-International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (CNC-IDNDR) marked the 1998 World Disaster Reduction campaign with a breakfast meeting of Members of Parliament, media and key individuals in the emergency preparedness community.

Over 50 people attended the breakfast, which was held at the National Press Club in Ottawa on the 1998 Campaign theme. The aim was two-fold: to focus on efforts to create a national programme and supporting strategy to reduce the devastating effects of natural disasters in Canada and to encourage the media as working partners in promoting natural disaster prevention measures.

Speakers at the event were:

- Jean-Pierre Wallot, President Royal Society of Canada (Welcoming remarks)
- Alain Davenport, chair, CNC-IDNDR, and representing the Canadian Academy of Engineering (CNC Initiatives beyond the Decade)
- André Tremblay, Acting executive Director, Emergency Preparedness Canada (the need for a Natural Disaster Mitigation Programme for Canada)
- John Stone, Director General, Policy, Programme and International Affairs. Atmospheric Environment Service, Environment Canada (Global Change and Natural Disaster Mitigation)
- Richard Haworth, Director General, Sedimentary and Marine Geo-science Branch, Geological Survey of Canada, Natural Resources Canada (The impact of climate change)



Storms: National conference on disasters set for December

Continued from page /

That makes the potential for damage in the avent of a weatherwelsted disaster, a Economic prospectly. With the population synapply wealthier that it has been in the past, "we've got more thangs to be damaged," we write this has been in the past, "we've got more thangs to be damaged," we write this armount.

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rion has the weather is changing, and that some aspects of Gais change are leading to more severe weather than when you can be a complete that the "White the full implications of the man chall publish by Bandles Christop, ment Canada modelling supports the view that Canadam can expect more spanding of extreme weather in the part few decides, and both Soons, InAffairs.
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Mr Kovacs used weather-related claims "are not by enough yet that we re use to servousy now at the cost of imperance," but worsed that that

The assurance industry it wortred enough that it established the leasted for Catestropiac Loss Restaction earlier this year its assistion in to explore ways to reduce the loss of life and property caused by severe weather and enriquished.

the components with autorities, proper and was Canada, the limited the less speak the last few quotin knobling whyshop act one like country with representatives of government, the provide sector, non-pools groups and and all the limited to descript a featurement. crices in the country" said Mr Kovact While these is no spretment unwhat to do be said there was bread conventur among sorts hop particpants that unvestments are needed, entrepate the durange caused by natural

My Kovacs said these sweatments can be very one effective. A man investment initially can lead to major.

For example, the intermed industry has spent as million a year for the past three years to divert histotests away from Calgary using cloud-read the fechniques. As a result, he saud "the dastage cauch by hast in Calgary, her goog down semantally."

The consultations will culminate in a automal conference in Toronto or Dec. 3, at which the results of the workshops will be reported to federal and privateral mainters. Emergenty Propuediess "Mandar a expected to be empowered in investigate man

- Paul Kovacs, Executive Director, Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction, Insurance Bureau of Canada (Acting before the disaster)
- Kathryn White, President, Black and White Communications Inc. (Building Partnerships. Youth, Media, and Industry)

Following the breakfast meeting, CNC-IDNDR member Kathryn White and her Risk & Society Project hosted a roundtable on The Media and Public Trust. This Roundtable brought together a

select group of specialists in news management, journalism, NGOs, and industry to discuss the role of the media in natural disaster. The group examined lessons learned, case studies and best practices from recent research.

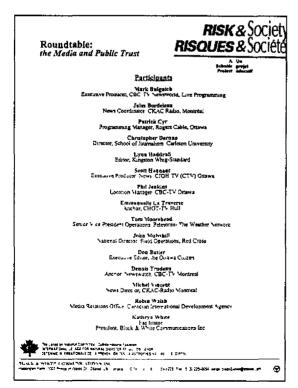
Participants underlined the increasing severity of natural disasters and the changes in the weather: higher heat in summer, colder days in winter and more violent winter storms and their impact on the sea level, the permafrost, ground water and of course on agriculture and infrastructure.

COLUMBIA

A 15-second public awareness announcement concerning water was broadcast at various times of the day over national television from October to December 1997. A video entitled "Let's Prevent Floods" was sent to 32 regional disaster prevention and education committees for broadcast in all municipalities. 10,000 educational flyers, "Calltarin el Arroyo Feliz y Mi Amiga el Agua", were printed and distributed to the regional committees for local distribution to institutions, community and educational authorities.

"La prevencion es una Responsabilidad de Todos" of the municipality of Medellin organised a seminar on 11 October 1998 on the Prevention of Natural Disasters with 4 main themes:

- The seismic risks in cities and seismic microzoning projects,
- Communications resources for the prevention of disasters.
- Social networks in prevention of disasters,
- Intervention in the case of emergencies.



Mr. Gregoria Marulanda Brito Director General National Directory for Disaster Prevention and "ATENCION" Calle 26 No. 13-19 PISO 26 Santafe de Bogota, D.C.

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COSTA RICA

In 1998, 14 NGOs and government institutions conducted an all-day fair in San Jose's Central Park, Primary and secondary schools watched demonstrations on disaster preparedness and all the events were well covered by the media

Civil protection professionals chose a school in San Jose as a site for a publicised emergency drill. The Ministry of Public Education has included emergency evacuation drills in public school curricula since 1991.

The National Emergency Commission organised:

- A National Seminar on Journalism and Disasters
- A workshop in the Nicoya Peninsula on Information and Vulnerability.
- A national information campaign.

A weekly programme will now be broadcast on National Radio and Channel 13 will broadcast spots about disasters prevention and response.

For more information contact:

National Emergency Commission Tel: (506) 220-2064 cnemerens.caspares.go.cr





Communities Manage Early Warning Flood System in Costa Rica, Saving Lives

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CUBA

Architecture students attended lectures on disaster management, hazards, vulnerability and disaster reduction planning. The first National Workshop for Disaster Reduction Engineering and Architecture was scheduled for October 1998

Civil Defence

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ECUADOR

A seminar was organised by the IDNDR Secretariat, Ecuador's National Civil Defence Directorate and the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) between 29 September and 1 October 1998 in Quito