

CONCEPT NOTE

Second Caribbean IDRL Workshop
November 7-8, 2023

BACKGROUND

Over the last decade, the Caribbean has experienced a dramatic increase in the number of disasters and crises requiring regional and international humanitarian assistance. Stronger heatwaves on land and sea have resulted in more powerful storms, landslides, severe flooding and other kinds of threats. The impacts of climate change coupled with increases in unplanned urbanization, environmental degradation, and lack of proper land use management have also contributed to significant increases in the scale of destruction following a disaster. In some cases, damages have increased from hundreds of millions to billions of dollars, with tens of thousands being affected and displaced.

The number and variety of humanitarian actors, both domestic and international, have also increased over time. While this has provided more opportunities for meeting the humanitarian needs of disaster-affected populations, it has also strained the legal, physical, economic and operational infrastructure of Caribbean countries, which are generally not scaled to receive large inflows of humanitarian goods, personnel and equipment following a major disaster.

Recognizing the need to prioritize laws, policies and plans that institutionalize and operationalize an effective framework for delivery of international humanitarian assistance, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) in partnership with the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and the French Red Cross through its Regional Platform of Intervention for the Americas and the Caribbean (PIRAC) facilitated the *Caribbean International Disaster Response Law (IDRL) Workshop* in November 2021. This first workshop was organized in the framework of the READY Together/3 Oceans project co-funded by the INTERREG Caribbean Program under the European Regional Development Fund, the French Agency of Development and the Guadeloupe Region. The main objective was to address the urgent need to strengthen legal preparedness at national and regional levels to overcome regulatory challenges faced during large-scale emergencies.

A key outcome of this workshop was the joint commitment of CDEMA and IFRC to establish a Regional International Disaster Response Law (IDRL) Working Group to provide Caribbean-specific perspectives, insights and recommendations for improving the regional regulatory framework for the facilitation and coordination of international disaster relief, based on international best practices such as the *IDRL Guidelines*.¹ In September 2022, this commitment was realized with the establishment of the Regional IDRL Working Group as a Working Group of the Technical

¹ [Guidelines for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance \(IDRL Guidelines\)](#)

Advisory Committee of CDEMA². Subsequently in April 2023 the IDRL Working Group was assigned to the Work Programme Development and Review Sub-Committee (WPDRSC). This Sub-Committee has oversight responsibilities for the Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) Blueprint which provides the conceptual framework needed for the effective delivery of CDM at the national level.

In May 2023, the Regional IDRL Working Group finalized its workplan for 2023-2024 with two main outcomes: (i) Strengthened national capacity to develop laws, policies and plans to address the issues of international disaster relief; and (ii) Strengthened coordination of the Regional Response Mechanism and national mechanisms for IDRL. Within the context of these outcomes, the Working Group identified nine outputs and approximately thirty activities to support the delivery of those outputs.

Specifically for *Output 1.1 and 1.2: To strengthen IDRL provisions for the Revised Model CDM Policy and the Revised Model CDM Legislation*, the key activities that will support are identification of the revisions required to strengthen the provisions. This will include a consultancy that would review the gaps within the legal and policy framework in relation to CDM with a view to identifying the IDRL requirements in CDEMA Participating States; developing evidence-based recommendations for addressing those gaps; and preparing revisions to the model national CDM Policy and model national CDM Legislation to implement those recommendations. It will also involve the development of an IDRL Gap Analysis Report and recommendations for the CDM Legal and Policy Framework in CDEMA Participating States and gathering validation of and buy in for these. This is being achieved through a series of consultations including with the IDRL Working Group and regionally through the Second Caribbean IDRL Workshop.

THE SECOND CARIBBEAN IDRL WORKSHOP

The theme of the workshop is ***“Re-engineering the Caribbean regulatory framework for international disaster relief and humanitarian assistance in the context of comprehensive disaster management- A Call to Action!”***

Within this context the main objective is to build awareness and foster buy-in on the recommendations for improving the CDM legal and policy framework for international humanitarian assistance and to learn from recent experiences and foster high level engagement for IDRL in CDM Policy and Legislation.

This workshop is being organized by the IDRL Working Group with the support of the IFRC and CDEMA. It is being funded by the **“READY 360” Project** which is led by the French Red Cross, through its Regional Intervention Platform for the Americas and the Caribbean (PIRAC), co-funded by the INTERREG Caribbean Program under the European Regional Development Fund.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

Objectives

- 1. To provide an update on the mechanism that has been set up to provide Caribbean-specific recommendations for improving the regulatory framework for the**

² The CDEMA TAC comprise of the National Disaster Coordinators and representatives of specialized regional organizations, such as those engaged in technological, meteorological and seismological fields whose programmes are directly related to the regional disaster management agenda.

**facilitation and coordination of international disaster relief within the context of CDM
- The Regional IDRL Working Group.**

Key sessions under this objective include:

- Sensitization on the rationale for the Regional IDRL Working Group (IDRL-WG) and its establishment since the First Caribbean IDRL Workshop (2021).
- General overview of the IDRL-WG's workplan highlighting expected outcomes, intended outputs and activities.
- Showcasing key initiatives of the IDRL-WG, progress and implementation.

2. Promote the findings and recommendations of the IDRL Gap Analysis Report to key stakeholders (including high level decision-makers at the political and technical levels) for the implementation of IDRL in the CDM Legal and Policy Framework in CDEMA PS.

Key sessions under this objective include:

- Sensitization, validation and buy-in on the findings and recommendations of the Gap Analysis Report amongst high level and technical level stakeholders with roles and responsibilities in providing/ facilitating humanitarian assistance in times of disaster.
- Interactive sessions to discuss proposed recommendations and next steps required to enhance IDRL provisions in the CDM Model policy and legislation.

3. Foster high level engagement among CDEMA PS to discuss ideas and share experiences in developing a CDM policy and legislation that incorporates IDRL principles.

Key sessions under this objective include:

- Panel discussions among high level delegates on challenges and successes in developing a CDM policy and legislation that includes IDRL considerations.
- Peer to peer discussions among National Disaster Offices and National Societies to examine opportunities for collaboration in developing and advocating for laws and policies that enable the entry of timely and effective international humanitarian assistance.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- **Clear understanding of the gaps** within the legal and policy framework at the regional and national levels of CDEMA Participating States in relation to CDM and IDRL requirements in the Caribbean.
- **Validation and buy-in on recommendations** to address the gaps identified in the legal and policy framework and to gather feedback for the participatory development of the recommendations and revisions to the model national CDM Policy and model national CDM Legislation.
- **Identification of key areas and opportunities for collaboration** in CDEMA Participating States for the strengthening of CDM policy and legislation through the adoption and implementation of recommendations and best practices in IDRL.

TARGET AUDIENCE

- National Disaster Offices,
- Red Cross National Societies,
- Members of the IDRL Working Group- CDEMA CU, IFRC, Representatives of National Disaster Organisations of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Dominica and Guyana, Representatives of Red Cross National Societies from Belize, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Dominica; Caribbean Customs Law Enforcement Council (CCLEC), The Port Management Association of the Caribbean (PMAC) and The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS)
- Regional and sub-regional organisations with interest in international disaster relief, and government officials (high-level and technical level) from across the region with responsibility for ports (air and sea), foreign affairs, immigration, customs and taxation, national security and other key aspects of disaster response.
- USAID PROSE project- POLICY AND REGULATORY REFORM FOR RESILIENCE ACTIVITY (PROSE) Advancing Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) Across the Eastern and Southern Caribbean (ESC) Region.
- French Red Cross PIRAC (development partner)

FORMAT AND REGISTRATION

The Second Caribbean IDRL Workshop will be held on 7-8 November, 2023 from 9 am to 1 pm (AST). It is a virtual event being conducted over two half days. It is jointly facilitated by CDEMA and IFRC which serve as the secretariat for the IDRL Working Group. Participants will be engaged in virtual sessions via Zoom and will include presentations, panel discussions, working sessions and interactive discussions.

To register for the Workshop, and to view the Agenda, kindly use the following link:

<https://www.caribbeanidrlworkshop.org/>

CONTACT

For more information or questions about the event, please contact:

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