

OFFICE OF DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

NATIONAL REPORT FROM JAMAICA FOR WORLD CONFERENCE ON DISASTER REDUCTION

Component 1

- 1.1 Yes – National Hazard Mitigation Policy (Draft). No enforcement document
Disaster Preparedness Act 1993 - No need so far to enforce.
- 1.2 Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management
A Statutory Body under the Ministry of Land Environment
See attached organizational chart.
- 1.3 Written sectoral plans are not well developed, however all sectors have
procedures related to hazard management, including preparedness, response,
recovery and mitigation. There are also several ongoing initiatives which will
support disaster risk reduction, e.g. Water Sector Policy, Flood forecasting and
risk mapping, Flood management control plan, Inclusion of hazard assessment in
the development approval process, inclusion of hazard assessment in
environmental impact assessments. One of the challenges is that hazard maps do
not exist for the entire country. Another is that incorporation of risk reduction in
planning is not systematically applied at all levels.
- 1.4 Yes. The Ministry of Land and Environment is the main contact for
environmental matters and the Planning Institute of Jamaica for Socio-economic
issues.
- 1.5 Yes. Since the 1950s. Code not passed into law. Lack of personnel e.g. building
inspectors to monitor compliance. Large informal building sector which is not
captured in the formal approval process. The Code is now being reviewed and
updated.
- 1.6 Yes. Represented as part of national budget. Also project-based funding through
UNDP, USAID/OFDA, DIPECHO, Caribbean Development Bank. Other
mechanisms also exist, for example support from partnerships with private sector and
NGOs and Corporate Sponsorships.
- 1.7 Yes.
Private Sector – sponsorship of national programmes through the National
disaster office,, development of their own in-house programmes, participate in
Disaster Preparedness Week for Businesses activities.

They also attend training seminars and workshops.

Civil society – communities participate in mitigation activities for their communities, several community based disaster preparedness teams established. Several community based flood management teams established.

NGOs – Training programmes and community interventions in partnership with the national disaster office. In one case the Red Cross has taken the successful model of community disaster preparedness of the national disaster office and is using it as their model.

Academia – Courses at undergraduate and post-graduate level, research into hazards and carrying out hazard mapping.
Use of disaster management personnel as lecturers.

Media – Assist with public awareness and outreach, sit on national sub-committee for public awareness,

Media also seek sponsorship of air-time for disaster management programmes on behalf of the national disaster office. Newspapers seek sponsorship for supplements on disaster management.

Cable companies run disaster prevention related material free of cost.

Magazine-type and news programmes are accessible at no cost to national disaster management office.

Component 2

- 2.1 Yes. Hazard mapping has been done
Floods – Parish and community level 1: 4000
Landslides – Parish level and community level 1:50 000
Seismic – Parish level 1:50 000
Storm surge – Parish level , 1:50 000

Maps available to national and local planning authorities and communities.
Results used by technical agencies, disaster management agencies, local planning authorities to guide development approval process. Also used by insurance sector.

- 2.2 Only on limited basis, for non-structural hazards in buildings.
- 2.3 Yes. Coordinated by ODPEM, carried out by Government technical agencies and University of the West Indies
- 2.4 Yes. Yes, reports are available.

- 2.5 Yes. For floods. For one major river basin and four at community level. Community systems started in 1987. Main institutions : National Meteorological Service, Water Resources Authority, Office of Disaster Preparedness, Community flood teams. Reaction is varied, however, in general more persons are heeding advice to prepare early, and not wait till crisis occurs.

Component 3

Knowledge Management

3.1 Yes. Information on precautions, vulnerability reduction activities, where information can be found.

Information collected by technical agencies, universities, NGOs at community level, private sector e.g. insurance cos.

Dissemination through seminars, training, public awareness programmes, community meetings, conferences, agency websites, Libraries

3.2 Yes. Information shared through workshops, participation in seminars, conferences, public awareness and training activities, membership of committees etc.

University of the West Indies – research guides inputs into development planning, and public awareness activities as well as preparedness planning.

3.3 Disaster management concepts infused into curricula across education spectrum. Specific booklet for earthquakes.

3.4 Training Programmes available as part of undergraduate and post graduate degrees as well as summer courses.

No research done on courses as agents of change.

3.5 Whatever is relevant in the targeted community.

3.6 Yes. Main players include scientists, technocrats, and disaster management personnel. Well-known personalities and artistes are also used. Mass media continuously used through dedicated broadcasts, cable television. There are specific weeks dedicated to disaster risk reduction in schools and businesses, and a specific month dedicated to disaster preparedness. All groups are targeted. One survey has been done to gauge public perception of messages.

Non-traditional programmes for increasing awareness include a segment on development of recipes and cooking competition for schools. Recipes MUST be based on non-perishable food items. This has been incorporated into the annual Independence Celebrations Culinary Competition as a discrete category.

Another is a poetry, song and dance competition for schools. All themes must relate to some aspect of disaster preparedness.

Component 4

- 4.1 Inclusion of hazard assessment in the Environmental Impact Assessment Process.
- 4.2 Insurance is available
- 4.3

Component 5 Preparedness and Contingency Planning

5.1 Yes at national, parish and community levels.

Components: Monitoring, Forecasting, Alerting, Activation, Response,. National plans activated by Prime Minister on advice of National Disaster Coordinator, Parish plans by Parish Disaster Committees, community plans by community committees.

Not all plans are updated annually.

Plans have been used, and are revised based on experience from using them or from simulation exercises.

5.2 National disaster fund exists

Warehouses/storage exists at national and regional levels. Also in some parishes. Items stocked include bedding, utensils, lighting, tents, sanitation supplies. Level of stocking is inadequate for a medium to large event.

5.3 ODPEM is responsible. Annual budget is not adequate. Human Resource constraints exist, but are partially overcome through partnerships.

Component 6 Call for good practices in disaster risk management

Community based interventions

Flood early warning systems

Relocation of vulnerable communities both pre and post-impact. The challenge is to prevent re-occupation of these areas.

Component 7 Priorities to be addressed at World Conference on Disaster Reduction

Priorities to be addressed at Conference

Debt, poverty and hazard mitigation/vulnerability reduction

Hazards and Environment

Vulnerability indices and their development and use.

Disaster management for the 21st C in the face of new and emerging threats