

## FROM CDERA TO CDEMA

# The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency

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### WHAT IS CDEMA?

CDEMA is the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency. This is the new name of the regional disaster management body formerly known as CDERA, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency.

September 1, 2009 is the official date of transition to CDEMA.

### IS CDEMA MORE THAN A NAME CHANGE?

Yes, CDEMA is more than a name change.

CDEMA will replace and advance the work of CDERA. CDEMA will fully embrace the principles and practice of Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) which is an integrated and proactive approach to disaster management. CDM seeks to reduce the risk and loss associated with natural and technological hazards and the effects of climate change to enhance regional sustainable development.

CDEMA will have:

1. An expanded mandate;
2. A broader stakeholder base; and
3. An improved governance structure

### WHAT IS CDEMA'S MANDATE?

The expanded mandate positions the regional disaster management body more strategically to fully take up its role as facilitator, driver, coordinator and motivating force for the promotion and engineering of Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) in all Participating States.

CDEMA's functions are as follows:

- (a) mobilising and coordinating disaster relief;
- (b) mitigating or eliminating, as far as practicable, the immediate consequences of disasters in Participating States;
- (c) providing immediate and coordinated response by means of emergency disaster relief to any affected Participating State;
- (d) securing, coordinating and providing to interested inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations reliable and comprehensive information on disasters affecting any Participating State;
- (e) encouraging –
  - (i) the adoption of disaster loss reduction and mitigation policies and practices at the national and regional level;
  - (ii) cooperative arrangements and mechanisms to facilitate the development of a culture of disaster loss reduction; and

- (f) coordinating the establishment, enhancement and maintenance of adequate emergency disaster response capabilities among the Participating States.

## **WHAT DO WE MEAN BY BROADENING THE STAKEHOLDER BASE?**

CDEMA will facilitate a wider base of stakeholders and increased engagement of the public and private sectors as well as all segments of civil society and the general population.

Forging strategic partnerships with a greater range of actors will support the programming process of CDM. These include development, environmental and financial planners, architects, engineers, transportation services financial sectors, insurance industries and educators.

Broadening the stakeholder base will also facilitate a more structured and effective collaboration among organizations with overlapping interests and ensure the provision of high quality technical assistance, with agencies taking the lead in their areas of expertise.

## **HOW WILL CDEMA BE GOVERNED?**

The governance mechanism of disaster management in the region will be strengthened under CDEMA. The new structure will embrace the principles of Comprehensive Disaster Management within the context of broader stakeholder participation, whilst ensuring that the roles and responsibilities of the various organs are clearly defined for enhanced accountability and transparency in the areas of decision making.

CDEMA will be governed through the Council, a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Coordinating Unit.

### **(a) THE COUNCIL**

The **Council** will comprise of the Heads of Government of the Participating States or their nominees and will determine the policies of CDEMA.

### **(b) TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)** is the technical and programmatic advisory arm of the CDEMA. This organ of CDEMA recognizes the integrated approach to disaster management and the pivotal role of stakeholder contribution to the programming process of the CDM Agenda.

The **TAC** will 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.

### **(c) THE COORDINATING UNIT**

The Coordinating Unit will be managed by an Executive Director who is appointed by the Council.

The Coordinating Unit will function within a framework that fully embraces CDM and deals with longer-term mitigation issues. As such, the responsibilities and operating functions of the CDEMA Coordinating Unit will be centered primarily around four (4) programming areas, namely:

1. education, research and information;
2. finance and administration;
3. preparedness and response; and
4. mitigation and research

The Council also has the power to add other programming areas.

## **WHO CAN BE MEMBERS OF CDEMA?**

All CARICOM and Non-CARICOM Member States of the Caribbean region are eligible for CDEMA membership.

September 1, 2009