



**Confronting Gender Disparities  
and Multiple Hazard Events:  
A Caribbean Reality**

# EnGenDER

Newsletter

August 2021  
Edition 3



Canada



World Food Programme





## **INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

- 1. EnGenDER: A Gateway to Gender-Related Impacts!**
- 2. Addressing Vulnerabilities in the Relief and Response Efforts Following the Explosive Eruption of the La Soufrière Volcano**
- 3. Towards a Gender- Responsive Approach to Recovery**
- 4. The Stage is set for strengthening Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery: The Model National Recovery Framework**
- 5. Regional Shock Responsive Social Protection Systems Evolve with Compound Impacts**
- 6. Jamaica Women Craft Vendors Get Business Support to Enhance Resiliency when Disasters Strikes**
- 7. Building Resilience in Coastal Communities with the Belize Association of Planners**
- 8. Insights into the Suriname Referral Pathway Initiative**
- 9. What is Gender Inequality Costing the Caribbean Region?**
- 10. Gender Mainstreaming Takes Center Stage in Jamaica's National Policy Actions**
- 11. Dominica Moves One Step Closer to Engendering its NDC Commitments**
- 12. Future Action**



## INSIGHTS INTO THE GENDER-BASED CLIMATE RESILIENCE ANALYSIS

### EnGenDER: A Gateway to Gender-Related Impacts!

The Enabling Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery, Climate and Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean (EnGenDER) Project, through the implementation of the Gender-based Climate Resilience Analysis (GRCA) endeavoured to look to the future, rather than doubling down on the gender mistakes of the past. The GRCA opened a gateway of opportunity to mobilize actions to improved outcomes in adaptation and resilience to climate change by dissecting the gender-based needs and capacities of those highly vulnerable groups.

The juxtaposition of the narrative and data produced by the GCRA to the current state of affairs, paints a holistic picture of a gender-blind society within which we live. In the 21st Century, where data and analysis are king, the recommendations generated from the GRCA serve as a launching pad for ensuring direct benefits to the most vulnerable groups. One of the main recommendations from the GRCA is the investment in Gender Responsive Budgeted (GRB) Sectoral Adaptation Strategies and Action Plans (SASAPs). This validates the implementation vision that EnGenDER has undertaken. The pursuit of the implementation of the adaptation actions proposed in the GRB Project Proposal for Saint Lucia will target the marginalised within the Agriculture Sector – women and youth farmers and farmers with disabilities – as well as develop business-oriented trainings for aquaculture and fisher-folk to enhance individual and sector-wide capacities.

The proposed community aquaponics system emerging from the development of the GRB Project Proposal for Saint Lucia will showcase the use of aquaponics as a local food source, increase aquaponics and the business capacities of local farmers while providing an additional income stream for farmers and strengthening ties within the community. The ability for women and youth farmers and farmers with disabilities to grow and sell their own food including protein sources will contribute to food security and increase self-sufficiency through providing livelihood enhancement and income generating opportunities.

EnGenDER aims to support the design for a just future by investing in the development of gender responsive policy-based interventions. Recommendations emerging from the GRCA focused on working towards making sector policies gender responsive. Jamaica's actions to gender proof the Transportation and Climate Change Policies through the EnGenDER Project increases the gender responsive robustness of the governing policies, adding to the movement to ensure that the improved policies are enacted, and actions implemented in the future.

Formulating solutions that are inclusive and gender responsive is not a onetime affair, and the persistence of gender inequalities attests to the usefulness of the GRCA's evidence-based approach to understanding gender inequalities and as such the uptake of the data and information will inform other implementation actions beyond the EnGenDER Project which supports synergistic activities being undertaken in the Caribbean Region by other development agencies.

The GRCA coupled with the development and implementation of GRB SASAP is a momentous turning point to understanding the nuances of men's and women's experiences that result in crafting strategies and establishing partnerships that leave no one behind. As Antonio Guterres, United Nations Secretary General iterated "For the United Nations Gender Parity is both a moral imperative and an operational necessity". EnGenDER is paving the way to ensure that this is a reality in the future, to avoid repeating the gender mistakes of the past.

**Author:** Marium Alleyne, EnGenDER Technical Specialist -Climate Change



*Photo Credit:  
Marium Alleyne,  
2019*

## GENDER DIMENSIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE LA SOUFRIÈRE VOLCANO

### Addressing Vulnerabilities in the Relief and Response Efforts Following the Explosive Eruption of the La Soufrière Volcano

St. Vincent and the Grenadines like other SIDS in the Caribbean entered 2020 with many hopes of revival and renewal of our social and economic sectors. This was severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic that continues to cause unprecedented global challenges. As a response, the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines developed and passed in Parliament a Recovery and Stimulus Package of over US\$27.5 million to strengthen the healthcare, bailout and economic stimulus that invested heavily in staffing capacity, new facilities and equipment towards bolstering the public health system.<sup>1</sup> It also provided cash grants to affected and vulnerable citizens, small and Micro Enterprises.

This effort was further supported by the UNDP EnGenDER Project that had injected US\$125,000 towards the COVID-19 response initiatives that focused on the socio-economic needs of the most vulnerable and to enhance gender-responsive recovery in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.<sup>2</sup> As such, seven hundred and ninety-

two (792) vulnerable persons were provided with access to essential goods and services through the provision of food and medication vouchers. Furthermore, caregivers on the Home Help for the Elderly Programme were provided with Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) to continue providing their services to elderly and persons with disabilities.

On the eve of 2021, the La Soufrière Volcano woke out of a forty-one (41) year slumber when it began erupting effusively. This new development resulted in the development of a National Volcano Emergency Plan and Standard Operating Procedures to address the evacuation of those communities in the North Leeward and North Windward where lead time may be given before an evacuation decision.<sup>3</sup>

In addition, an intervention plan was developed that took the vulnerable population of the elderly shut-ins, disabled, and terminally ill persons into serious consideration.

Sadly, on April 9, 2021, the La Soufrière Volcano erupted explosively that resulted in pyroclastic flows, ashfalls, and the displacement of persons from the orange and red zones.

Initial reports indicated that 16,000 – 20,000 were displaced and 85 public shelters were activated. However, by May 28, 2021, there were approximately 5,311 households or 18,761 individuals displaced from the orange and red zones, with 3,630 individuals housed in public shelters and 15,131 individuals in private residence and rented accommodations.

The eruption of the La Soufrière Volcano had collided with the largest COVID-19 surge and dengue outbreak in St. Vincent and the Grenadines that is referred to as the ‘triple threat’, which has impacted the productive and social sectors, and which can regress years of progress made in the area of gender equality. This shall surely be

compounded by the 2021 Hurricane season.

In this humanitarian context, women and girls would be disproportionately affected, and the risk to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) would be heightened due to the weakening of the national systems including health justice and social sectors.<sup>4</sup> As such, the Gender Affairs Division within the Ministry of National Mobilisation, Social Development, etc. had requested GBV technical assistance and guidance from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Sub-Regional office for the Caribbean to conduct a GBV Safety Audit in public emergency shelters during the period April 10 – 27, 2021.



1 St. Vincent and the Grenadines recovery and stimulus Package. “Together, we can beat COVID-19!”, 2021.

2 EnGender Newsletter 2020 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition: “Unraveling Gender Inequalities Across the Caribbean”.

3 St. Vincent and the Grenadines Volcano Emergency Plan and Standard Operating Procedures, NEMO 2021

4 St. Vincent and the Grenadines Gender-Based Violence Safety Audit Report: La Soufrière Volcano, 2021

A report was generated that highlighted the GBV risks fourteen (14) days after the volcanic eruptions, and any future risks in the shelters. In addition, specific recommendations by sector of work were made, highlighting ways in which GBV can be mitigated, and the most vulnerable populations at risk be better prepared.

In response to the findings, the following actions were taken:

Conduct of GBV awareness workshops in the emergency shelters to ensure the dissemination of updated information around GBV and referral systems available.



Distributed dignity and hygiene kits to women and girls linked to GBV response services and key information. These kits were donated by UNFPA and UN Women and comprised basic items that women and girls would need to protect themselves and maintain hygiene and respect during this and any emergency crisis.



In the aftermath of the La Soufrière Volcanic eruptions, the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines shall be undertaking a Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) that shall gather information on the effects of a disaster, damage and loss in socio-economic sectors, and its impact on communities and individuals. This PDNA shall focus on the areas of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Housing, Tourism, Public Infrastructure, Health, Education, Water and Sanitation, Electricity, construction, Transport, Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction.

**Author:** Ms. La Fleur Quammie- Senior Assistant Secretary (Ag.) Ministry of National Mobilisation, Social Development, The Family, Gender, Persons with Disabilities, Youth, Housing and Informal Human Settlements

## Towards a Gender-Responsive Approach to Recovery

Amidst the challenging COVID-19 pandemic coupled with a dengue crisis, the La Soufrière volcano erupted in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) on April 9, 2021. Since then, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) elaborated its gender-responsive approach to the recovery efforts by advancing Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) initiatives and interventions for the country to “build back better.” This approach has been evolving as the need for the integration of gender considerations is more recognized in the development of policies and programmes for the agency’s Caribbean Resilience Pathway to promote the development of more resilient states after the impact of a disaster event.



CDEMA RCC team member, Capt. Robert Harewood (right), was deployed as part of the CARICOM Operational Support Team to assist in St. Vincent's Emergency Operations Centre.

"CDEMA has been very instrumental in getting us where we are today in terms of our Post Disaster Needs Assessment." - Mr. Edmond Jackson, Director of Finance Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning, and Information Technology Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

CDEMA's gender responsive actions to date include:

### **Planning for Gender-responsive Recovery**

Through its Regional Coordination Centre (RCC), the CDEMA Coordinating Unit (CU) activated and organized a strategic planning process, in keeping with its mandate of maintaining a coordinated emergency operations system. The RCC provided an entry point for advancing a gender sensitive approach to the unfolding emergency situation(s) in SVG. Applying the gender lens provided a spotlight on the diverse needs of the women, men, boys, and girls of the impacted population and enabled the CU to contribute to a faster, more-inclusive, and more-effective gender-responsive recovery process.

### **Sex-Disaggregated Data Collection**

It was essential to start the process by collecting sex disaggregated data to address the differential needs, whether in the form of food assistance for men and women, differences in nutritional needs, or request for dignity kits to address gender-based differences in loss of livelihoods (pertaining to higher unemployment rates for women and therefore access to fewer economic opportunities, lower wages and vulnerable employment compared to men - IADB 2020). Additionally, the Country Gender Assessment indicated that teenage pregnancy is prevalent - 49.3% of women have their first child between 15-19 years of age therefore medical services was an important focus area to mitigate gender differentials in psychosocial and sexual and reproductive health issues.

Women and girls were especially subject to indirect impacts that arose in the aftermath such as sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) – Measures for improved access to toilets to address the issue of gender-based protection and support suggested that male only security/military officers did not usually increase safety and security. There was a need for equality of the sexes in this area. In addition, sex disaggregated data can help to inform effective in-shelter educational assessments to prevent youth permanent school drop-outs and contribute positively to reducing vulnerability and enabling greater adaptive capacity.

Access to disaggregated data can be daunting, given the aversion to the routine provision of disaggregated data Generally, and sex disaggregated data in particular. However, collecting and analyzing gender-differentiated data is particularly effective especially if the entire recovery process, including the shelter management environment, is analyzed from a gender perspective. This helps to ensure that the right questions are asked to capture gender-specific needs, capacities and gaps.

If/when these gaps are allowed to continue, they tend to compound the gender-specific impacts (as mentioned above).



CARICOM Disaster Relief Unit team member (in vest) working with volunteers on the ground to coordinate the distribution of relief supplies.

“The Gender Affairs Division and the Ministry of National Mobilisation, Social Development, etc. by extension, is grateful for the support of CDEMA in ensuring that a gender perspective is integrated into the response and relief efforts following the explosive eruptions of the La Soufrière Volcano.” - Ms. Jemima George, Assistant Coordinator, Gender Affairs Division Ministry of National Mobilisation, Social Development, the Family, Gender Affairs, Youth, Housing and Informal Human Settlements Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

### **Identifying Gender Specific Recovery Needs**

It was therefore anticipated that the volcanic eruption would have a differential impact on the population. It would affect women, men, girls, and boys differently due to gender inequalities caused by socioeconomic conditions, cultural beliefs, and traditional practices, which would put some members of the population at a greater disadvantage. Vulnerability to risk from natural hazards differs between women and men, and is often exacerbated by marginalization due to age, race, ethnicity, disability, and sexual orientation, as well as socioeconomic status, geographic context, cultural and religious beliefs, and migration status. Similarly, anecdotal evidence from the field in SVG suggested a predominance of women, elderly persons, and children in shelters. This in turn determined how the CDEMA CU identified gender-specific recovery needs for that population to better recover.

### **Strengthening Gender-responsive Recovery Efforts**

The La Soufrière volcano disaster presents an opportunity to more effectively integrate actions to promote gender equality considerations into preparedness and recovery processes and strengthen the gender-responsive recovery efforts going forward.

Here are some of the ways the CDEMA CU is strengthening its gender-responsive recovery systems:

- Investing in actions that promote gender equality in CDM such as liaising with gender experts and the National Gender Machinery in SVG to ensure humanitarian gender-responsive actions/initiatives are captured in the recovery efforts as well as highlighted in CDEMA's Situation Reports (Sit Reps).
- Providing psychosocial support in the multi-hazard disaster context through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Caribbean Alliance of National Psychological Association (CANPA) for disaster and emergency management situations.
- Providing capacity-building on prevention of SGBV to Shelter Managers in advance of and during disasters.
- Working with Participating States to gather disaggregated data from baseline statistics to include sex, age, and disability differentiation in advance of disasters. This is expected to strengthen the national capacity and systems for the routine collection of sex/gender disaggregated data in pre- and post-disaster assessments.
- A UNICEF supported consultancy for Model Shock-responsive Social Protection Guidelines to assist SVG and other Participating States in adapting policies to be shock-responsive.

**Acknowledgement:** Team CDEMA – Author: Ms. Karen Small, Gender Specialist; Editors Dr. Deborah Brown, Disaster Recovery Specialist, Ms. Khrystal Walcott, Communications Consultant and Ms. Andrea Austin, Communication and Public Relations Specialist.

# GENDER, INTERSECTING IDENTIFY FACTORS, NATURAL HAZARDS AND DISASTERS

## The Stage is Set for Strengthening Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery: The Model National Recovery Framework (MNRF)



Resident of the Orange Zone in St. Vincent and the Grenadines clearing ash from her property following the explosive eruption of the La Soufriere volcano.

Photo Credit: CDEMA

The vulnerability of the Caribbean to multiple hazards and the severe impacts suffered by the region, have given impetus to rethinking the approach to disaster risk reduction and development of practical tools. This is necessary to reduce disaster impacts and shorten recovery time, while ensuring the needs of all people including key vulnerable groups and women and men are incorporated into the recovery process.

Under the Enabling Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery, Climate and Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean (EnGenDER) Project, which is funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC) and the United Kingdom's Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), CDEMA received funding to update the 2015 regional MNRF and support the adaptation and adoption of the framework in five (5) countries.

### What is the Model National Recovery Framework (MNRF)?

The recently updated MNRF 2021 is an ex-ante (or before the event) disaster recovery framework that provides guidance for CDEMA Participating States (PS)<sup>1</sup> to address recovery in a wholistic manner, given the multi-hazard nature of the Caribbean. It is a highly adaptable and versatile tool that can be adjusted to an individual country's conditions and can be revised on a regular basis.

The MNRF chronicles the key components for the proper implementation of disaster recovery within the Caribbean. These include:

- Pre-disaster recovery planning
- Legal and institutional requirements
- Disaster recovery financing mechanisms
- Recovery execution and implementation
- Gender-responsive livelihood restoration
- Multi-sector recovery
- Social protection
- Poverty reduction and social inclusion efforts
- Environmental rehabilitation

These key components have incorporated a gender-sensitive and human rights-based approach to accelerate the mainstreaming of gender equality in recovery activities. This gendered perspective is an essential ingredient for the recovery process as it responds to the needs of both women and men. Recovery has the potential to transform unequal power relations that contribute to gender-differentiated vulnerabilities as it provides a “window of opportunity” to promote gender equality. The MNRF is also aligned with the Caribbean region's CDM Strategy 2014 – 2024 championed by CDEMA, the Sustainable Development Goals, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

<sup>1</sup>CDEMA presently comprises nineteen (19) Participating States (PS): Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Cayman Islands, Commonwealth of the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Republic of Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname, Republic of Trinidad & Tobago, Turks & Caicos Islands and the Virgin Islands.



*Relief volunteers at the Arnos Vale logistics hub in St. Vincent and the Grenadines following the explosive eruption of the La Soufriere volcano.*

Photo Credit: CDEMA

**What are the MNRF gender-responsive objectives?**

To enhance the resilience of local communities to extreme climate events, natural disasters, and other hazards, the updated MNRF strengthens women’s, men’s and other at-risk and vulnerable group’s participation and capacity to prevent, prepare for and recover from emergencies. Specifically, the Adaptation Guide and the planned National Country Workshops call for a whole-of-society approach which includes the full participation and contribution from women’s groups, civil society and non-state actors which represent at-risk and vulnerable communities such as the elderly, people living with disabilities, the youth and other marginalize groups as well as agencies and/or divisions in the public sector with responsibility for advancing the gender response. It is increasingly recognized that real community resilience to disaster recovery simply cannot be achieved without an inclusive human-rights based approach, involving the participation of women, men, boys and girls. Such is the approach ‘EnGenDER-ed’ by the 2021 MNRF.

**The Benefit of the MNRF**

The MNRF is a very important tool that CDEMA PSs can leverage to formulate a comprehensive framework for nationally and locally driven disaster recovery. The MNRF is accompanied by an Adaptation Guide that allows states to adopt the tenets of the framework to specific disasters and domestic conditions. It is expected that the MNRF will be considered for adoption by all CDEMA PSs to enhance national competence and capacity to mainstream gender-responsive disaster recovery and strengthen innovative approaches that integrate gender dimensions, human rights and social inclusion in disaster Recovery in the region.

Traditionally, post-disaster recovery has been dominated by infrastructure reconstruction. By employing a human-rights-based approach, the MNRF positions the recovery of the lives and livelihoods in disaster-affected communities as equally important and brings this to the forefront as prioritized within the framework. The adoption of a gender sensitive approach also allows for the gender differentiated needs and impacts of women, men, boys and girls as well as other at-risk groups to be now effectively considered in disaster recovery efforts.

The expected implementation outcomes include:

- Informed gender-responsive institutional and policy-setting for recovery efforts
- Prioritization and programming based on an inclusive, gender-sensitive transparent process that ensures participation of all stakeholders and use of national and international best practices
- Effective coordination among all parties during the recovery and reconstruction processes which now considers the gender differentiated needs and impacts on key vulnerable groups and at risk-communities.
- A comprehensive framework for recovery financing which considers gender-responsive budgeting in addressing gender inequalities and vulnerabilities in disaster recovery efforts.
- Increased speed of implementation and improved monitoring and evaluation systems for recovery programs which now integrates and considers specific gender dimensions.

By successfully achieving these outcomes, the framework will provide a strategic continuum between pre- and post-disaster recovery planning, with differentiated gender needs embedded to enable countries to build back better and bounce forward.

### Learning lessons from disasters

The recent volcanic eruptions of the La Soufrière volcano in St. Vincent and the Grenadines provided a unique opportunity for CDEMA, through the EnGenDER project, to identify gaps, support and promote the centrality of gender considerations in disaster recovery. At the recent launch of the updated MNRF, Executive Director of CDEMA, Elizabeth Riley asserted that the updated MNRF draws on lessons learnt to strengthen governance and enhance disaster recovery resilience in Caribbean States, focuses on gender responsiveness and pays greater attention to the inclusion of vulnerable groups, and human rights-based approaches to Disaster Recovery.

Additionally, at the first of five MNRF Country Adaptation Workshops with stakeholders from Antigua and Barbuda, Deputy Executive Director (a.g.) of CDEMA, Andria Grosvenor underscored the importance for PS to adopt and adapt the updated MNRF “...to guide in-country recovery and capacity

building interventions in a proactive, integrated and gender-responsive manner.” She further explained that a “deliberate effort” was made to ensure that disaster recovery initiatives in PS are gender-responsive and aligned with key regional and international agendas which consider gender, notably the CDEMA CDM Strategy 2014–2024, the Sendai Framework on DRR and UN SDGs.

As one of the countries selected for the adaptation of the MNRF, St. Vincent and the Grenadines is poised to engage stakeholders from the private and public sectors as well as representatives from civil society to adapt and adopt the MNRF as the driver of gender-responsive implementation efforts in recovery. Relatedly, CDEMA is also offering support for the completion of the Recovery Capacity Assessment as part of the CDM Audit tool that will also support strengthening the institutional framework for recovery so that response efforts are more gender responsive.

**Author:** Dr. Deborah Brown (TS-Recovery, CDEMA, with contributions by Ms. Elizabeth Charles-Soomer (TS-Recovery UNDP) and edited by Ms. Andrea Austin (Communication & Public Relations Specialist, CDEMA) and Ms. Khrystal Walcott (Communications Consultant, CDEMA)

## Regional Shock Responsive Social Protection Systems Evolve with Compound Impacts

The use of social protection as a tool for poverty alleviation in support of the poorest and most vulnerable is not new to the Caribbean. However, research and documentation on its use in a disaster context has revealed varying levels of experience across countries in the Caribbean.

Under the EnGenDER programme the United Nation's World Food Programme (WFP), working in collaboration with Oxford Policy Management, curated these experiences and provided a platform for developing an evidenced-based and robust strategic discussion on shock responsive social protection, including exchange between countries and other institutions.



*Gathering information from community members  
Photo Credit: WFP/ Sarah Bailey*

Advocacy and strategic partnerships across UN agencies, regional bodies and governments are helping to create a shift in the methods of making social protection systems more responsive in an emergency. These efforts have contributed to awareness of the power of social protection programmes and systems to build climate resilience and address vulnerability and equality in the society.

Prior to 2020, shock responsive social protection was primarily used following the impact of a natural hazard. The novel coronavirus (COVID-19) has had a significant impact on livelihoods, income and people's access to food. The three rounds of CARICOM's Food Security and Livelihoods Survey, conducted by WFP, revealed growing food insecurity despite access to markets. In short, an increasing number of people simply cannot afford to eat. It is most difficult for persons earning below average wage. The number of people in the region estimated to be moderately food insecure has decreased slightly from 2.5 to 2.2 million between June 2020 and February 2021, but the number of those estimated to be severely food insecure has risen from 407,000 to 482,000 in this period. The total of 2.7 million people currently estimated as food

insecure represents an increase of 57%, compared to 1.7 million food insecure from April 2020.

Governments all across the Caribbean turned to social protection during the pandemic to meet rising needs.

While a promising development, there are various elements that are considered in strengthening the use of existing programmes and systems that can ensure the shift is swift, efficient and effective, in response to a crisis. WFP's work beyond the EnGenDER project adopts a tailored approach to strengthening and leveraging social protection systems to improve how data is collected, managed and analysed, targeting criteria, coordination, and even considerations for financing.

In the context of the Caribbean, one area of support has been in the digitalisation of registration and other processes that allow for the collection and analysis of sex and age disaggregated data. Collecting, digitalising, analysing and using this kind of data gives way to understanding the depth of vulnerability in a population and puts a face to the impact of a disaster. By extracting and examining data from sub-groups in the population, a more in-depth understanding of the context of the crisis is feasible and it permits an analysis that is intersectional in nature. Factors such as gender, age, ethnicity, and location all come to bear in the design of social protection programmes regardless of the disaster response.

As countries across the Caribbean manage compound risks of economic, pandemic and climatic crises, the strengthening of information management is one of the first steps in equipping national social protection systems to be more gender-responsive, and possibly gender transformative, in an emergency.



*Direct Cash transfers to affected people can be part of social protection efforts*

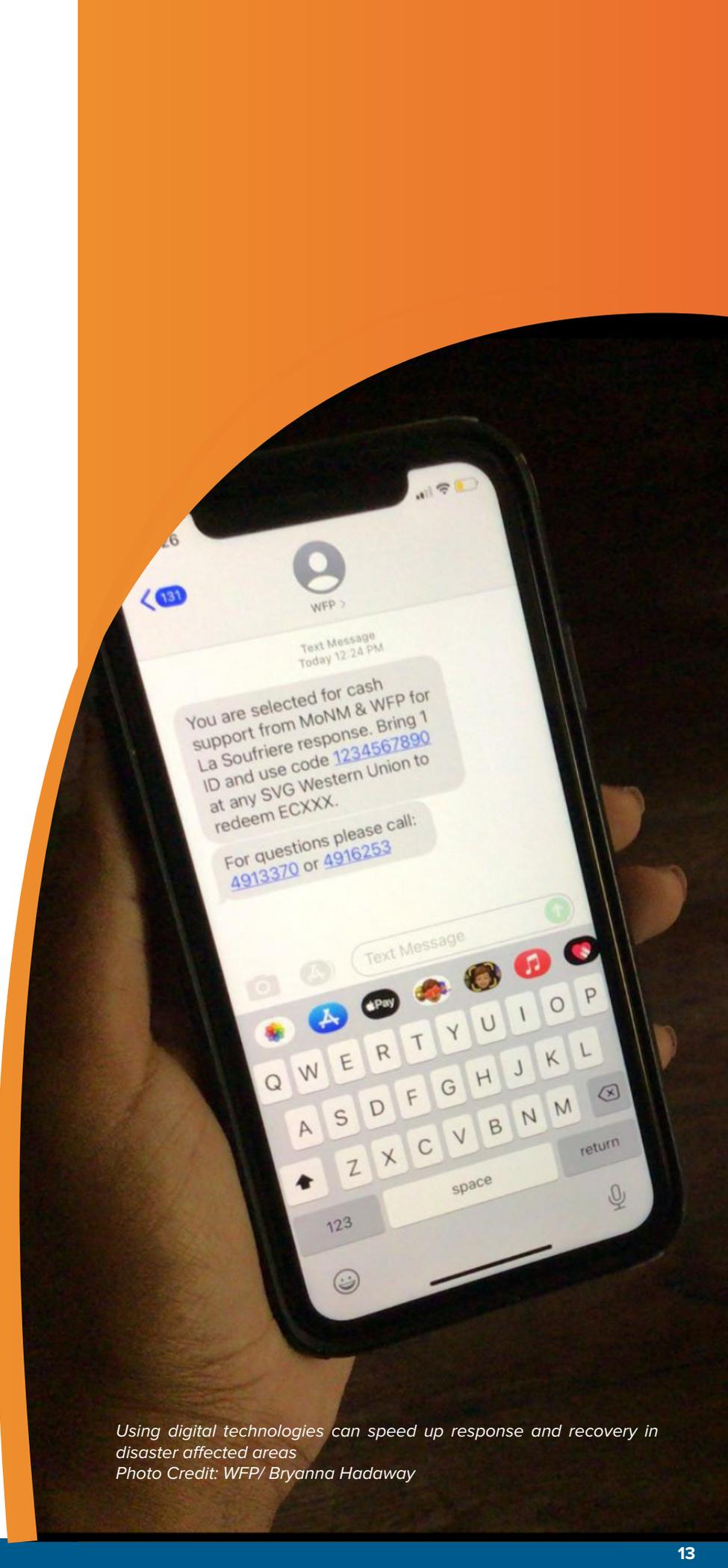
*Photo Credit: WFP/ Bryanna Hadaway*

La Soufrière volcano eruption provides a case study of drawing on social protection systems to meet immediate needs in a disaster situation where 15-20% of a population is displaced and where women were among those impacted. The most recent emergency response in St. Vincent and the Grenadines attends to the double impact of COVID-19 and La Soufrière Volcano eruption. These efforts will also link to the transitional and recovery support provided by other UN agencies. WFP is working with the Ministry of National Mobilization to provide cash transfers to the most vulnerable among those who were forced to evacuate the zones with the greatest impact, drawing on the ministry's social protection staff and processes, while developing new data collection and monitoring processes that will inform future social protection efforts in the recovery phase, including utilizing the power and simplicity of technology to gather critical data on impact, vulnerability and the movement of evacuees. The support efforts have also identified gaps that could be addressed in future strengthening efforts, including tailoring payment delivery systems and alternatives to quickly reach persons.

Social protection systems in the region are evolving to become more shock-responsive, building on the data analysis and multi-hazard responses like the case of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. This creates scope for continued learning on how to make social protection more adaptive and attuned to the unique vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States of the Caribbean.

**Contributors:**

Juliette Maughan - Partnerships Officer  
Sarah Bailey – Head of Programme  
Carla Alleyne - Communication Officer



*Using digital technologies can speed up response and recovery in disaster affected areas  
Photo Credit: WFP/ Bryanna Hadaway*

# ENGENER IN ACTION

## Jamaican Women Craft Vendors get Business Support to Enhance Resiliency when Disaster Strikes

Search the hashtag "Jamaica" on Instagram and you will be greeted by an endless number of photographs and videos of white sandy beaches, people dancing to the latest dancehall beat, perfectly plated traditional meals and local influencers showcasing their daily lives. However, a key subsector of the tourism and hospitality industry which employs more than 8,000 people is missing: the craft industry.



This past year, the COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted the tourism and hospitality sector – one of the key economic drivers of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) – due to border closures or restricted movement. This economic shock also extended to craft traders, many of whom are responsible for their families' livelihoods and are women. What did this mean for those whose livelihoods were reliant on tourist arrivals?

Ms. Clare Bruce, a craft trader from the Pineapple Craft Market in the tourist town of Ocho Rios, recounted her experience over the last 15 months:

“It was devastating because we just had to go home, relying on whatever resources we had. So that meant if we had a little savings then that is what we lived on and just kept hoping for the best. We returned to work a month ago. We are not operating at full capacity because a lot of traders are still home saying that it doesn't seem fruitful to return to work; but for some of us, we are just holding on to our businesses for dear life.”

Farrah Blake, Director of the St. Ann Development Company, a subsidiary of Jamaica's urban development planning entity - the Urban Development Corporation (UDC) - said the experiences were the same for those operating at the Dunn's River, Ocho Rios and other craft markets.

“The tourism industry took a direct hit. What keeps Ocho Rios alive is tourism and picture this vivid picture, what was keeping you alive, just stops! If they did beadings, paintings, sculptures, or whatever way they earned a living, it all came to a complete halt. Individuals and their families were directly affected because one day they were earning and then another day they were not,” Ms. Blake said.

Under the Enabling, Gender Responsive Disaster Recovery, Climate and Environmental Resilience

(EnGenDER) Project and through a broader partnership with the UDC, UN Women distributed cash subventions to provide a temporary safety net to the vendors. Global Affairs Canada readily agreed to the repurposing of the EnGenDER funds for the subventions, to support the most vulnerable in response to the economic disruptions caused by COVID-19.

The subventions were presented to 417 women craft vendors operating under lease arrangements across the six (6) craft markets managed by the UDC: Kingston Craft Market, Kingston; Dunn's River Falls Craft Market, St. Ann; Ocho Rios Craft Market, St. Ann; Pineapple Craft Market, St. Ann; Success Craft Market, St. James and Rutland Point Craft Market, Westmoreland.

Ms Bruce who also serves as the secretary for the Craft Traders Association at the Pineapple Craft Market said, “We were excited to be receiving the grant which came just in time. The traders were grateful that somebody remembered us in craft. I remember one trader saying when they received the grant that they will use it to go to the supermarket because at least 'I will have food'.”

Ms Blake said the initiative was the first of its kind during her tenure to recognise the needs of women in craft. Both women encouraged craft traders to become better equipped for future economic shocks by saving, investing



and maximizing on available resources to keep their businesses alive, such as using social media to access local and global marketplaces.

Ms Bruce concluded with this advice, “I have learned as well as other traders a drastic lesson that it will not be roses every day and we are not to take a job for granted. If you can, do more saving; if you can, invest in something else as “old time people” used to say don't put your eggs in one basket. I would encourage traders to save, have an investment and do something else outside of the craft sector to have a backup.”

The EnGenDER project is supporting nine (9) participating Caribbean countries improve their climate change adaptation and disaster risk resilience by utilising an inclusive and gender-responsive approach to make the Caribbean region become more resilient, thereby reducing the impact of natural and health hazards.

**Author:** UN Women MCO Caribbean - Sheryl-Ann Thomas-Scott, Communications Analyst; edited by Sharon Carter-Burke, Communications Analyst and Kyana Bowen, Programme Officer - Humanitarian, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Resilience

## Building Resilience in Coastal Communities with the Belize Association of Planners

It was April in Dangriga, Belize; dry season. The sun rises early and before 6:00 am, it is already high on the horizon perched above the shimmering Caribbean Sea; a most beautiful sunrise to witness from one of Belize's coastal communities. Today, though, the serenity of the early morning is noisily interrupted by an incessant mechanical buzzing that draws the attention and audience of three young boys. They come running from somewhere close by and as they near where the sound was coming from, their eyes fixated on the small, bee-like drone rising purposefully into the skies. Their fascination peaked, they rushed closer to watch the drone pilot remotely maneuvering the tiny aircraft and to ask eager questions, for which responses were provided that seemingly satisfied their bubbling curiosity. For the Belize Association of Planners (BAP), interactions like these when working in communities reinforces the purpose of the ground-breaking work in which BAP is engaged. These children and their families are the ultimate beneficiaries of the work we do which underscores the importance of the organization continuing to assert its crucial role in creating a future that is sustainable and resilient for Belize.



*Dangriga Drone Mapping – April 2021  
Photo Credit: Alson Obando*



*Photo Credit: BAP*

*Hopkins Village – January 2021*

This ethos is powerfully echoed in BAP's vision as "a proactive professional planning organization committed to assuring social justice and promoting sustainability in the natural and built Environment". Founded on April 4, 2013 by ten planners led by Carolyn Trench-Sandiford, current President and Executive Director; BAP was a direct response to intensifying contemporary development challenges impacting our local communities including large segments of their populations living in poverty; glaring income inequality; unplanned and unregulated development, unsound and deteriorating building stock and infrastructure; health and educational services bursting at their seams, pollution and environmental degradation. Compounded by emerging challenges such as Climate Change which brings higher temperatures, sea level rise and more intense weather events, communities are grappling with increasing vulnerability and a paucity of viable and accessible solutions. As a professional membership and non-profit organization, BAP created a space to elevate planning as a practice that operationalizes sustainable development particularly within urban environments and human settlements. Over the last eight years, BAP has consistently brought value and legitimacy to professional planning practice in Belize by successfully implementing its mission, "To address relevant planning and development issues in Belize by working in partnership with the public and private sector and civil society organizations, and the people of Belize through research, education, advocacy and action." Recognizing that 'action' was perhaps the best means of demonstrating the need for proper planning, BAP embarked on a pioneering route for professional organizations choosing to design and develop innovative, data-driven programs and projects in partnership with communities, local authorities, other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and local and international funding agencies.



Dangriga – April 2021  
Photo Credit: BAP

Intent on scaling-up its work for sustained impact and visibility and ensuring that innovative technologies for data collection and mapping are key aspects of its work; the drone operations in Dangriga in April was and still currently is a key component of one of BAP's most recent collaborations. Through a partnership with the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management, through the National Climate Change Office (NCCO) and the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (5Cs) under the EnGenDER (Enabling Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery, Climate and Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean) project, the Belize Association of Planners is currently piloting the, "Enhancing the Climate and Coastal Resilience of Dangriga and Hopkins" project. Dangriga town and Hopkins village are coastal Garifuna communities in the Stann Creek District. As homes to a large number of one of Belize's indigenous populations, they were traditionally fishing and farming communities with strong cultural influences and ongoing practices. Dangriga Town, is one of Belize's nine municipalities and is the largest settlement in Southern Belize with about 9,000 residents; known as the Culture Capital, livelihoods are grounded in the use of coastal resources. While Hopkins, with a population of over 1000 villagers, is a rural community contending with the benefits as well as the negative pressures of rapid tourism development.

The impacts of climate change directly threaten the livelihoods, industries and way of life of the residents of these communities and are expected to be more devastating to households with low socio-economic status, those in the informal sector who rely heavily on coastal resources, and for women and other vulnerable grouping such as youths, the elderly and persons with disabilities. The project aims to increase the adaptive capacity of these two communities through the identification of adaptation barriers caused by inadequate social infrastructure related to the convergence of climate change and urbanization on coastal communities. Response options will be identified and designed through an inclusive, gender responsive and participatory process at the community level. In an effort to systematically build resilience through the development and execution of community climate responsive strategies, plans, and demonstration projects. The overarching outcome of the proposed activities is to fully promote human welfare and equal access to life-sustaining resources needed to strengthen the adaptive capacity of communities to climate change impacts.

Current activities of the project include the on-going GIS mapping of both communities which seeks to analyse spatial patterns within the natural and built environment; a gender-responsive, Climate Change KAP (Knowledge, Attitude, Practice) survey being conducted in collaboration with the Statistical Institute of Belize (SIB) and the formulation of the Community Working Groups (CWG) which are fundamental to the participatory planning approach. The Belize Association of Planners greatly appreciates the opportunity provided through the EnGenDER project to engage with our local communities in building their resilience to disasters and climate change and look forward to sharing the successful outcomes, positive impacts and best practices of this project nationally and regionally.



Hopkins Community Meeting – March 2021

Photo Credit: BAP



## Insights into the Suriname Referral Pathway Initiative

The measures taken to combat the Covid-19 pandemic have undoubtedly had several negative knock-on effects. One being the rise in the shadow pandemic, also known as domestic partner abuse. The government imposed total lock downs coupled with its freedom of movement limitation led to an increase in the number of cases of domestic violence experienced in Suriname during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Other notable contributory factors were linked to the devaluation of the Surinamese Dollar and the high probability that the decrease in household income had a direct negative social impact on family units across Suriname. Families that were already vulnerable, are at greater risk of escalating tensions that can result in domestic violence.

With Suriname now experiencing its second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, the end is not yet in sight for many Surinamese. For those which represent the most vulnerable and at risk-groups in society the situation is even more dire. It is therefore important that support be given to victims of domestic violence, and that this support be adapted to the current circumstances. According to Carla Bakboord from Women's Rights Center, *"the Referral Pathway Project in Suriname underscores this and recognizes that Aid workers need to be flexible and aid agencies need to adapt to this new reality. In the past the method used to carry out social work was based on the social worker's individual vision and not so much structured on a victim-oriented approach."* The Referral Pathway initiative under the EnGenDER project, brought a more standardized and victim-oriented procedure to the response mechanisms in place to treat to domestic partner abuse in Suriname.

The Referral Pathway Initiative, was an unique in that it brought together development agencies which included UNDP with funding support from Global Affairs Canada and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and UNFPA along with Government counterparts in Suriname namely; the Ministries of Internal Affairs and Justice and Police as well as non-governmental organizations to immediately address the challenge of domestic violence and provide a solution to the situation that has arisen. It has done this by ensuring that the Surinamese community is informed in various ways about the provision of assistance and about the prevention of domestic violence. This will help the average Surinamese in being able to better disclose cases of domestic abuse, by safely and confidently asking about it and being better informed on how to best make safe inquiries. This ensures that victims of abuse feel safe to report such cases and neither the victim nor the reporter is put at risk.

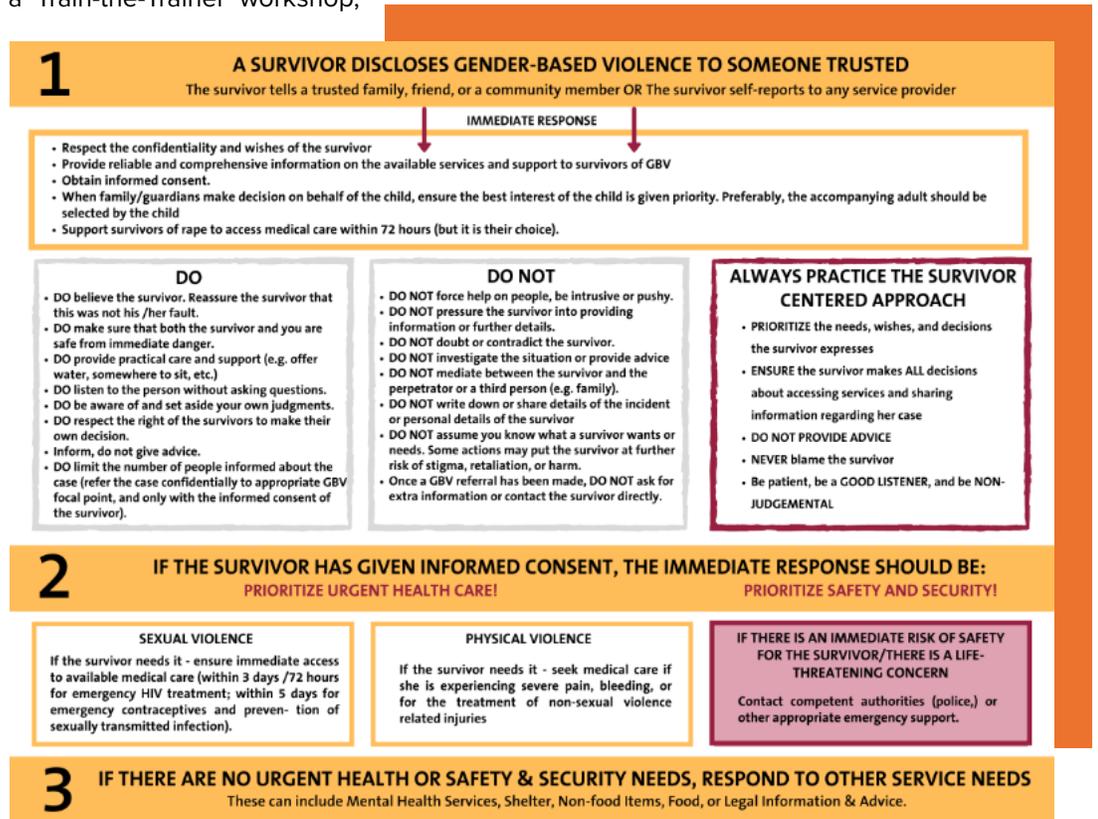


Photo Credit: Irvin Ngariman for De Ware Tijd, December 2020

The EnGenDER Project Hand-over of the Suriname Referral Pathway Guide to the Ministers of Internal Affairs and Justice and Police



Secondly, it supports providing guidance on carrying out risk assessments and how and where to make **referrals** according to the levels of risk and vulnerability. The support provided under this initiative ensured that respondents and social workers were provided with the technical skills and necessary support tools to assist those most in need. In-addition to the technical support provided, which led to development of the Referral Pathway Guide, stakeholders also benefited from a Train-the-Trainer workshop, where knowledge was shared and information exchanged through the interactive session provided by professionals across various aid institutions. This enabled workshop participants (i.e. social workers and care providers) to accurately use the method of victim-oriented assistance/help to ensure those most impacted benefit from a structured approach which is victim centered and is non-reliant on the independent insights of a social worker or care provider. This increases the likelihood of domestic partner abuse being better reported and enhances the overall level of care and support services being provided to the victim.



An Infographic of Suriname's Gender Based Violence Referral Pathway Guide

One of the care providers who was also a trainer indicated that, *“the Referral Pathway Guide is not only useful for care providers, but also for social work students as the need for such guidance is high.”* she quoted. Added to this, the project also provided insights into the range of support services offered to victims of gender-based violence in Suriname. This was instrumental in the creation of a Roadmap for the provision of assistance for gender-related violence in Suriname. This is important as most protocols for action are not laid down in writing; and the continuous updating of existing contact details, days and times of accessibility is necessary in victim-oriented assistance/help approach.

Moreover, the financial support provided under the EnGenDER Project through this initiative, has also contributed to expansion of future Referral Pathway initiatives needed for other at risk-communities and vulnerable groups across Suriname. The EnGenDER project has therefore laid the foundation for victim-oriented assistance to be streamlined across local communities so that those most impacted and in need can receive support. This activity marks the first step in achieving this and in ensuring that “no one is being left behind”.

## What is Gender Inequality Costing the Caribbean Region?

As countries continue to recover from the impact of the recent La Soufrière volcano eruption, and navigate the 2021 hurricane season, and with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic ripping away the shroud over the extent of inequalities in the Caribbean region, now more than ever, gender inequality must be addressed not only as a human right issue, but also as an economic one.

Under the EnGenDER Project, “**Gender Inequality of Risk and Cost of Inaction Studies**” were conducted across eight Caribbean countries. The impacts of climate change have extensively affected vulnerable sectors such as Tourism, Agriculture (main contributors to GDP), Fisheries & Marine Resources, Water, Health and Transport.

Within these sectors, the vulnerable groups identified were women, children, the elderly, the LGBTQIA community, and Persons with Disabilities. Despite the type of disaster, whether a drought, flood, storm, hurricane or volcano, there are commonalities in the impacts across the Caribbean:

- Livelihoods on the whole are affected as a result of decreasing economic activity and income generation, particularly so in informal work which is dominated by women;
- Flooding events, hurricanes and most recently the volcano eruption particularly impact small-scale women farmers in rural and coastal areas who have limited access to finance and resources to recover from crop and livestock losses;
- Migration of working-age men and women because of reducing earning opportunities;
- Reduced access to health facilities and supplies which increases risk for the elderly, pregnant women, and children;
- Gender inequality in the early warning and communications systems, where lower income women may not have access to smart phones and the weather systems apps.

Therefore, when answering the question of “What is Gender Inequality Costing the Caribbean Region?” all of the above impacts and more, must be considered. Decreasing economic activity and income can result in communities (female-headed households & LGBTQIA) becoming poorer and more vulnerable to marginalisation. Disadvantages for women are also intensified with increased caretaking roles and less hours available for work. Even for those who can work, limited work opportunities might compel them to engage in sexual transactions to provide for themselves and families, resulting in cases of sexual trafficking and exploitation. Limited income generation can also result in the migration of men and women in search of work, which results in the elderly becoming caregivers for children left behind. In addition, to children being separated from parents because of disasters, there are other impacts like reduced educational opportunities because of the destruction of schools and supplies. In fact, there are also disaster impacts where child marriages for young girls from low-income backgrounds increase as an option for families to reap economic benefits.

Nevertheless, despite the financial losses for small-scale women farmers and other vulnerable groups, their resilience was demonstrated through the coping mechanisms they adopted in various disaster events including changes in farming and fishing techniques; upscaling to agro-processing; diversifying into creating food by-products and adopting climate-smart practices such as rainwater harvesting. Further resilience can be fostered through developing and applying gender-responsive policy planning and coping mechanisms at the national and community level. For example, provisions for climate smart farming and fishing techniques can be subsidised; increased provision of and accessibility of microfinancing schemes for low-income women and increased education and awareness raising on the interlinkages of gender-related issues in climate change and disaster risk management.

Gender equality must also be factored into the design of communication and early warning systems and other key networks. Though the system of notification is available to both men and women in some countries, women in the lower economic bracket are at a disadvantage where they do not have smart phones and cannot access the features utilized by service agencies. Further consideration must also be given to age (elderly as opposed to adolescent) and the difference in risk-levels and needs, in terms of early warning systems. Transportation is also an additional risk factor for vulnerable groups particularly in rural areas with no access to private transportation and heavy reliance on public transportation. Hurricane Irma in 2017 highlighted that transportation for the elderly and those with disabilities can pose challenges, since the ability to move these vulnerable groups from hazardous circumstances were hampered due to the lack of specialized equipment to transport them.

The sector-specific analysis and review of the cost of inaction on different vulnerable groups provided important insights to their gender-differentiated coping and capacity to adapt. UN Women will continue to work with the stakeholders in the countries and with UN partners to ensure that the data captured in the studies is used efficiently across the sectors, including to inform policy, for the people it is intended to serve and understood by them in order to build forward equal.

**Author:** UN Women MCO Caribbean - Renella Thomas, Gender & Resilience Intern; edited by Sharon Carter-Burke, Communications Analyst



## Gender Mainstreaming Takes Center Stage in Jamaica's National Policy Actions

With the advent of increasing impacts of climate change affecting Jamaica and other Small Island Developing States (SIDS), greater focus needs to be placed on the gender differentiated impacts of climate change. The recent presentation of findings of a Gender-based Climate Resilience analysis for Jamaica on June 7, 2021 highlighted the progress of an important path to gender equality and climate action in the Jamaican gender architecture.

Jamaica has been advancing on this path for some time. In March 2011, the National Policy for Gender Equality was approved, and its implementation has been one of the primary focuses of the Bureau of Gender Affairs. The Climate Change Policy Framework approved in 2015 also set the framework for climate action. A Gender Focal Point Network was established with Focal Points present across several Government Ministries, Agencies and Departments. The existing Gender Focal Point Network was used to create a Gender & Climate Change Focal Point Network. These two networks have worked closely together as it relates to ensuring gender and climate considerations are taken into account in the planning and implementation of work being done and also in the institutional structure that exists.

Projects such as the *Enabling Gender-Responsive Disaster Recovery, Climate and Environmental Resilience in the Caribbean (EnGenDER)* and the recently launched *Facilitating a Gender-Responsive Approach to Climate Change Adaptation & Mitigation in Jamaica* among others continue to provide support in the advancement of a gender-responsive approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation.

While it is important to implement actions that strengthen the vulnerable and reduce inequalities, these actions need to be guided by research and clear plans of action seated in the policy and planning framework of the country.

The Gender-based Climate Resilience analysis conducted by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) added particularly clarity and insight as it examined the policy and institutional framework in the Transport and Agriculture sectors as well as the overall gender and climate change frameworks in Jamaica. They also examined the gender differentiated impacts of climate change on Jamaicans involved in the Transport and Agriculture sectors.

Of note in the findings related to policy and institutional structure is that a clearly articulated mandate for gender inclusion was present in all the policies examined. This is a

positive foundational step in the move to inclusive gender-mainstreaming as it sets the stage and framework for specific actions to be developed and implemented which will improve the livelihoods of women and girls

The strategic business plan for the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries (2019/2—2022-23) spoke specifically to ensuring women and youth involvement in sectoral programmes and projects and also ensured budgeting for training women and other vulnerable groups as well as financial support for women entrepreneurs. This training and financial support is expected to improve livelihoods of female farmers and fishers by improving their skills and techniques and helping to meet the gap in accessibility to funding faced by women. Additionally, a Gender Focal Point is present in the Ministry, and the Rural Agriculture Development Authority's Agriculture Extension Officers received specific gender sensitive training to support their work with farmers in the field.

The Ministry of Transport and Mining also has a Gender Focal Point present in the Ministry and has started taking gender considerations into account. The analysis indicated that the existing Transport Sector Policy had gender considerations included in its mandate and recommended that further strengthening of the gender considerations in the policy were needed as the Ministry undertakes the revision of its National Transport Policy. This strengthening is expected to lead to inclusion of gender differentiated needs in planning and budgeting, strengthening of the institutional framework and budgeted support to gender mainstreaming, and an improvement of the service provided to women, men, youth, the elderly and other vulnerable groups.

The Climate Change Policy Framework also took gender considerations into account. The close work of the Gender and Climate Change Focal Point networks was highlighted, and indeed the representation provided by the leadership of the Climate Change Division on gender equality is commendable. Further gender mainstreaming work was identified as a need in the policy to increase effectiveness of planning and implementation. The Framework is currently being updated.

The Bureau of Gender Affairs provides secretariat support to the Gender Advisory Council (GAC) and has oversight for the Gender Focal Point Network. Under the Community Outreach for Partnership for Empowerment (COPE) Initiative, the BGA provides considerable support to community-based organizations and advocacy groups

through technical and financial support. Training and sensitization are also provided to the public and private sector as well as other key stakeholders.

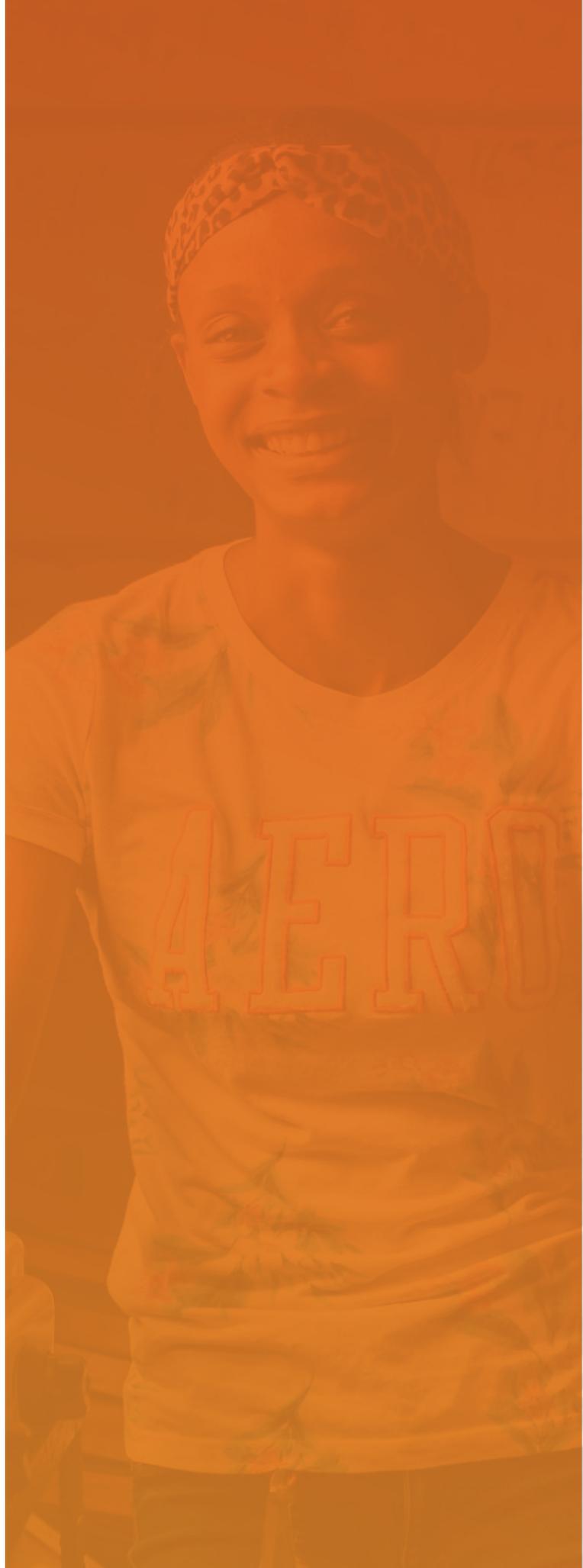
This research has highlighted the importance of the work being undertaken by the EnGenDER Project in Jamaica. The project is partnering with the Ministry of Transport and Mining in the revision of the existing National Transport Policy while including gender and climate change considerations. In revising the Policy, a Sector Strategy and Action Plan will be developed to guide the Ministry in its implementation of the Policy. The project is also slated to conduct gender analyses of the Climate Change Policy Framework, and the National Housing Policy. This critical work will ensure that Jamaica's policies and institutions are strengthened, and will facilitate more inclusive gender-responsive planning, and help to guide the development of programmes that respond to climate change while considering its gender-differentiated effects.

As we move forward in this new normal, it cannot be business as usual. We need to continue to strengthen gender-responsive planning through the Gender Working Group, strengthen partnerships and collaboration to facilitate the meaningful engagement of men and boys, and bolster support offered to vulnerable groups, with a special focus on the unattached and unemployed. We need to continue to promote gender-responsive budgeting to facilitate the achievement of the SDGs, particularly Goal 5 which addresses the achievement of gender equality for all women and girls.

Promoting country ownership of the process is important to ensure that we can attract additional financial and technical support to carry on this very important work of integrating gender and climate change. Through the Offer of Complimentary Finance submitted by the Climate Change Division under the EnGenDER Project, technical assistance to be provided with a gender analysis of the Housing Sector Policy and vulnerability assessments will support GCF readiness funding already approved and can leverage additional funding to support gender mainstreaming and climate resilience.

Finally, the sustained and smart mainstreaming of gender and climate change is critical to yielding cross-cutting outcomes. The research highlighted practical recommendations, many coming out of the analysis can indeed serve to sharpen the programming and activities of the Transport and Agriculture Ministries and put Jamaica more securely on the path to leave no one behind.

**Author:** Ms. Sharon Coburn Robinson with technical inputs from Mr. Jeffrey James- EnGenDER Project Assistant for Jamaica



## Dominica Moves One Step Closer to Engendering its NDCs Commitments



September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017 will forever be etched in the history of the Commonwealth of Dominica. On that day, Hurricane Maria, a deadly Category 5 hurricane devastated, one of the Caribbean region's most naturally lush and untouched small islands states. Packing wind speeds of up to 174 mph which resulted in over 30 fatalities (24 missing), the displacement of lives and livelihoods for many. What would have been characterised as a unique and unpredictable phenomenon has now unfortunately become a Caribbean reality. Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit, in his address at 72<sup>nd</sup> United Nations General Assembly, described the devastation that Dominica and Dominicans faced from Hurricane Maria and two years prior from Tropical Storm Erika, which produced substantial physical infrastructural damage from the ravages of floods and mud slides, as: **"The stars have fallen...! Eden is broken!!"**

Fast forward to 2021, and in-addition to battling the impacts of climate change and the pursuant hurricane season. Dominica much like its other Caribbean small island developing states (SIDS) is forced to do so, while dealing with the significant social and economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has served to compound the existential threats caused by climate change forcing already vulnerable groups (such as women and girls, persons living with disabilities, the elderly and indigenous people) into further poverty. Confronting gender disparities and multi-hazards has now undoubtedly become a Caribbean reality.

Initiatives such as the UNDP Climate Promise Programme and the EnGenDER project are timely, as they serve as catalyst in supporting the Government's efforts to address issues relating to climate change specifically through the country's NDC commitments while also confronting gender disparities and inequalities within country. In conjunction with the support of the Ministry with responsibility for Youth Development and Empowerment, Youth at Risk, Gender Affairs, Seniors Security and Dominicans living with Disabilities, the Ministry of Environment, Rural Modernisation and Kalinago Upliftment has led the Government's efforts in the development of a **NDC Gender Mainstreaming Roadmap for the Commonwealth of Dominica**.

The Roadmap, the first of its kind, was designed with the aim of strengthening the institutional and coordination mechanisms between the various Ministries and Departments which play an active role in the advancing the country's climate change and gender equality agendas.

Recognising that the lack of/or poor institutional coordination is one of the bureaucratic bottlenecks and barriers preventing the acceleration of gender-responsive climate change implementation in Dominica. The Government saw a critical need for such a support tool, to be developed to help guide and inform an inclusive **whole-of-government approach**.



*The NDC Gender Mainstreaming Virtual Validation Session*

The Roadmap therefore provides guidance on how various Ministries and departments within Dominica's Ministerial construct can coordinate and better streamline efforts to ensure the NDC process is enhanced. Institutional coordination is at the heart of effective government implementation.. The development of the Roadmap marks a concerted effort to build institutional ownership and participation in the NDC process. The inclusion of the Ministry of Finance was especially important given, the crucial role that Finance Ministries can play in accelerating the shift to low-carbon, climate resilient growth and in ensuring that climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts are appropriately finance through a process of **gender-responsive budgeting**.

Furthermore, the development of the Roadmap also ensures that a gender-responsive approach is also systematically employed within the NDC processes, policies, and programming. As part of the Roadmap a sectoral analysis is undertaken, and guidance provided on how gender can be effectively mainstreamed across the priority sectors identified in Dominica's NDC commitments. The use of an in-depth gender analysis allows for better understanding of, and more informed responses to, the gender-differentiated impacts of climate change across the key sectors for which a gender sector analysis was provided.

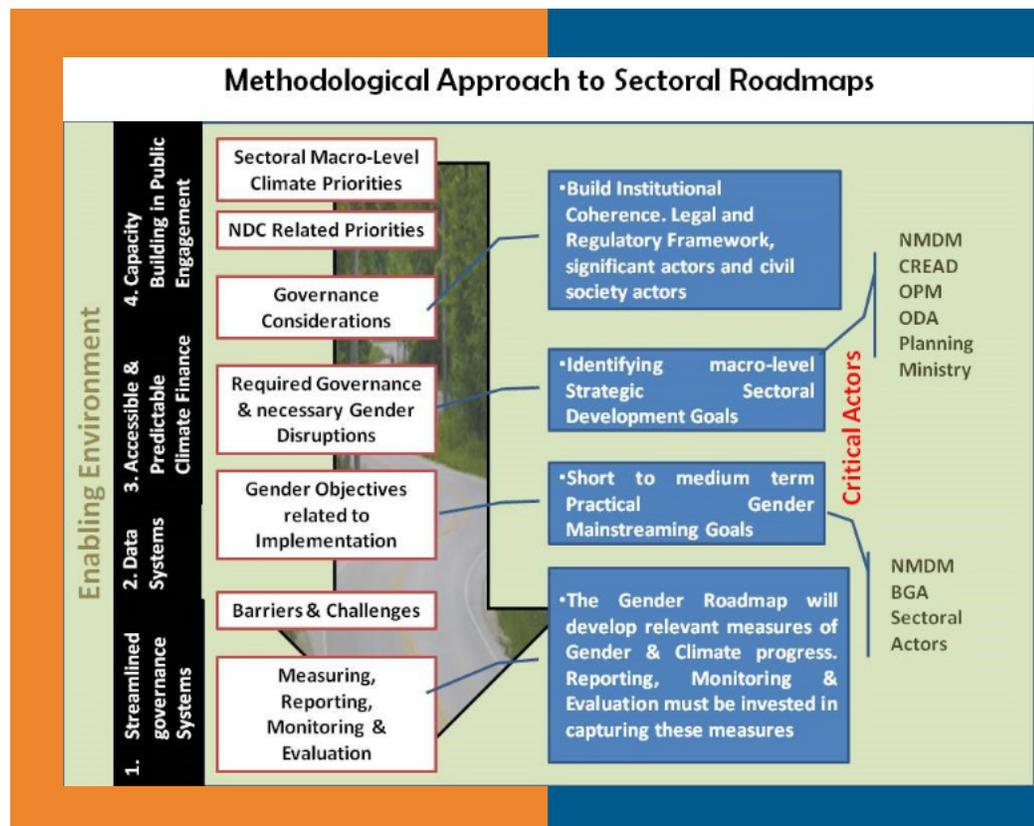
Moving beyond the **whole-of-government approach**, the Roadmap also provides the framework that promotes a **whole-of-society** platform that provides for inclusive and transparent participation of all country citizens on climate action. It does so by outlining how engagement with key societal actors such as civil society organisations, non-state actors and academia can be involved in this process. To support such efforts, an inclusive stakeholder approach was undertaken in the development of the Roadmap document which features input from women’s groups, youth organisations and other at risk and vulnerable communities such as those persons living with disabilities, women farmers, indigenous persons as well as person living with HIV/AIDS. Acting Director, of the Bureau of Gender of Affairs and Chair of the Cabinet Endorsed National Mechanism for Decision Making (NMDM), Ms. Melissa Morgan noted, that the Roadmap will “provide tangible priority measures and actions to facilitate implementation of national gender inclusive climate and development policies while prioritising vulnerable populations, women, men, youth and persons with disabilities among others and to ensure that they are equal and full-fledged collaborative partners and citizens. The NMDM will benefit from the extensive research, recommendations and practical guides and proposals to

support various line ministries with gender inclusion in climate related projects and vice versa.”

The Roadmap also outlines a series of detail recommendations and proposals which are meant to strengthen the institutional capacity of the lead ( Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Gender) and supporting (Ministry of Finance) Ministries to better ensures that the proposals outlined within the Roadmap document are appropriately adopted. Senior Policy Adviser in the Ministry of Environment, Ms. Kimisha Thomas in her remarks on the Roadmap stated, “The Gender Mainstreaming Roadmap is not intended to be a document which sits on a shelf. It is intended to be a movement, a transition, feasible actions that we can and must take to further solidify our commitment to combating climate change, across various sectors.”

The NDC Gender Mainstreaming Roadmap for the Commonwealth of Dominica is a critical support mechanism which will ensure a participatory and inclusive approach is taken in Dominica’s NDC review and updating process, it will also ensure that in the development of NDC programming that the climate change actions are not only resilient but gender responsive as well.

**Author:** Mr. Edgar Hunter Senior Technical Adviser- Ministry of Environment, Rural Modernisation and Kalinago Upliftment and Ms. Melissa Morgan Director (Ag). Bureau of Gender Affairs with contributions from Ms. Meshia Clarke- Technical Specialist Gender Equality and Ms. Shanna Prevost- Focal Point



Infographic showing the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) Roadmap Methodological Approach for the Commonwealth of Dominica



1

## **The Offer of Complementary Funding (OCF)**

With the momentum for the implementation of the OCF picking up Saint Lucia, Belize and Antigua and Barbuda are leading the process with the completion of Gender Assessments and Gender Action Frameworks. The focus is on a multiplicity of sectors and project concepts that will contribute by enhancing gender mainstreaming efforts in country, through the leveraging of additional climate funds. Grenada and Jamaica are the latest countries on board to benefit from the Offer of Complementary Funding.

2

## **Gender-Responsive Budgeting Sectoral Adaptation Strategies and Action Plans (GRB SASAPs)**

A gender-responsive and inclusive approach for adaptation actions among the most vulnerable was developed for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Saint Lucia. The next phase for these two countries is the implementation of prioritised gender-responsive adaptation options that is expected to be finalised by September 2021.

3

## **Behavioural Change GAP Analysis**

Building on the recommendations to improve national capacities and gender-responsiveness as an output of the KAPB Study. The Behavioural Change GAP Analysis utilises a combination approach analysis (which incorporates the use of primary and secondary data sources) as part of its methodology to determine the best communication strategy approach to engage decision makers. An output of this process is the development of Guidance Framework Document which will support the EnGenDER participating countries in this effort as well as a Regional framework which supports the development of communication recommendations or proposals that countries can utilise in the implementation of their national communication action plans which will follow. The Gap Analysis will therefore outline the communication framework and recommendations needed to support gender-responsive behavioural change among decision makers.



4

### **The Technical Paper on Gender Responsive Actions in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) & The Gender Mainstreaming NDC Best Practice Tool Kit for the Caribbean Region.**

In preparation for the Road to COP 26<sup>th</sup>, the UNDP under its EnGenDER Project is currently providing support to the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) in the development of a Technical Paper on Gender-responsive actions in small island developing states (SIDS). The paper is being prepared and will be used to provide background information to SIDS countries on the gender responsive actions taken in climate change and in showing countries how to implement and advance actions related to the Enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender. It will further act as broad “stock-taking” document that will be used to help inform the AOSIS’ overall position paper and thereafter COP messaging and negotiating position as it relates to gender-responsive climate change actions in small island developing states. The Technical paper is expected to be completed, approved and submitted to AOSIS by the end of September in preparation for the COP 26<sup>th</sup> Conference.

The Gender Mainstreaming Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) Best Practice Toolkit is another output of this broad area of technical assistance support being provided by EnGenDER and will be highlighted in greater detail in the upcoming editions of the newsletter. The toolkit the first of its kind, specifically for the Caribbean region, will provide additional capacity building support to the EnGenDER participating countries in ensuring that countries are better equipped with the knowledge, understand and tools to ensure that in the implementation of their NDC commitments that the actions and steps taken are gender-responsive.



5

### **CRRF/ CDEMA Collaboration**

The Caribbean Resilient Recovery Facility (CRRF) is a major initiative of the Caribbean Community and is designed to strengthen recovery, support building back better, and resilience planning in the region. The Facility is to provide strategic guidance and support for recovery efforts across the whole Caribbean region, in respect to both economic and development drivers as well as affected populations at the regional, national and community level. The CRRF will guide, advocate for, and provide solutions to recovery challenges of the Caribbean region under the overall leadership of CARICOM, with implementation by CDEMA. The Facility is to be guided and driven by the region and is open for funding, co-funding, and parallel programming with synchronised efforts between various development partners. The Facility is to be rolled out over a period of 3 years and is to be guided by Recovery Technical Working Group (RTWG) to be established to report to the CDEMA Coordination and Harmonization Council (CHC). The RTWG will include membership from key regional and international institutions.

The First meeting of the RTWG was held on the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021. The meeting was attended by regionally based agencies and development partners. CDEMA presented the broad CRRF concept to solicit the participation of regional agencies and support from development partners based on their skills, resources, programmes and mandates. The Terms of Reference for and the composition of the RTWG was also discussed along with the alignment of the CRRF to the CDEMA Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) governance structure. Also tabled was the rostering of early recovery teams to support early recovery under the CRRF. A second meeting of the RTWG is tabled for early September 2021.



6

### **Adaptation of the Model National Recovery Framework to Countries**

The Model National Recovery Framework to support gender sensitive resilient recovery developed in May 2021, is now being adapted through a consultative process within select participating states under the EnGenDER Project. At current, consultations and draft adaptations are underway for Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica and Guyana. Other target countries include Jamaica and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Overall, the benefits of having an adapted country recovery framework was seen as necessary by national stakeholders for recovery planning and post recovery efforts. The adaptation of the MNRF is to be extended to all participating states under other projects within the CDEMA Coordinating Unit.

**EnGenDER**  
Newsletter  
August 2021  
Edition 3