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# UNDP's Role in Increasing Understanding and Promoting Country-Level Action on Reducing Risks From Extreme Weather Events and Slow Onset Events

UNFCCC expert meeting on a range of approaches to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including impacts related to extreme weather and slow onset events, small island developing states

**9 October 2012, Bridgetown, Barbados**



# Overview

- UNDP Barbados and the OECS has been proactive to support the SIDS in the Caribbean Community, and by extension AOSIS, to
  - advocate for recognition of impacts of Climate Change
  - assist countries in the reduction of the vulnerability of assets and human life to climate change impacts by implementing programmes and projects.

# Overview

- UNDP, from an early stage in the global dialogue on climate change, has worked with different partners, in particular the EU, UK, Italy, Sweden, Norway, and more recently Australia to increase understanding on the issues and transparency among the partners, to assist SIDS in their efforts to reduce vulnerabilities and enhance their resilience.

# UNDP Support to Caribbean SIDS

- For example, from Tianjin – working with AOSIS and academic partners like Oxford University and at the request of EU to support a dialogue to increase understanding of this issue leading to Cancun. This dialogue also was possible through the financial assistance of Sweden and Norway, and I also thank the Government of Australia for now agreeing to facilitate expert assistance to the SIDS in Doha

# UNDP Support to Caribbean SIDS

- Also, UNDP considered it important to provide Caribbean SIDS with technical and scientific analysis to demonstrate there is a real issue to be addressed, as it concluded that temperature rise must be stabilised at 1.5 degrees to secure the survival of SIDS.
- This analysis was facilitated by DfID financing, and has provided the basis for continued work.
- Note: Reference presentation from Dr. Murray Simpson

# UNDP Support to Caribbean SIDS

- In complement to the scientific, analytical work and advocacy effort, UNDP also initiated the following three approaches at country level to contribute to the reduction of vulnerabilities in the region:
  - Strengthening disaster risk reduction capabilities of programme countries
  - Putting in place early warning systems, which are critical to reducing casualties and impacts on human life and livelihoods
  - Youth programme to engage young people by increasing their understanding of climate change impacts and extreme weather events and to train them as volunteers to respond in crises, while building national capacities for climate proofing the development process.
- These projects are open for replication in other SIDS, which could be an important contribution to this process.

# Strengthening disaster risk reduction capabilities of programme countries

- Institutional strengthening (CDEMA, NEMOs)
- Hazard Mapping and Vulnerability Assessment (R3I and ERC projects 2009 – present in OCTs, OECS)
  - Flood and storm surge hazard mapping and community disaster risk management within the last 5 years in OCTs, Barbados and the OECS
- Detailed country DRR assessments using a common benchmarking tool (R3I and ERC projects 2009 – present in OCTs, OECS)

# Strengthening disaster risk reduction capabilities of programme countries

- Post disaster recovery through damage and loss assessment - DaLA (Hurricanes Ivan, Dean, Thomas)
- Economic loss accounting to build on DaLA
- Advocacy and support to HFA and CDM Implementation

# Early Warning Systems

- Dewetra Platform – forum for discussion between hydrometeorological and DM community; decision support system that provides information on the nature and scale of the event and likelihood of the event). What is new is strengthening the early warning of precipitation (STL 1in 200 year rainfall event)
- Risk Communication, Public Education and multi-hazard Early Warning Systems in multiple languages and using several media to put out info, and builds in redundancy (R3I project 2009 – present in OCTs)

# Youth Programme

- Youth participation in climate change negotiations
- Youth advocacy of climate resilient development (various media)
- Youth volunteerism in disaster response, community vulnerability assessments
- (Youth-In, ERC in Barbados and OECS)

# UNDP and South-South Exchange

- Pacific-Caribbean South-South Project
- Organise additional opportunities for the continued exchange of ideas, to share our experience of the programmes and projects that have demonstrated concrete results in reducing vulnerabilities, strengthening resilience in the Caribbean and that are readily replicable in the Pacific and Indian Ocean
- Continued partnership with our international and bilateral partners to make this happen.

# Moving to a Sustainable Future

- Economic and social profile of the countries - if we are asking governments to make investments in adaptation and mitigation, we need to release them of the financial burdens and high indebtedness so they can invest in vulnerability reduction.
- In this thinking process, UNDP zoned in on the very high importation of fossil fuels in the Caribbean, as the Executive Secretary noted in her lecture on Monday night. This is a heavy development burden for countries that have worked hard to achieve middle income status, and want to stay on track with the regional MDG targets they have set themselves.

# Moving to a Sustainable Future

- Even though SIDS contribution to GHGs is negligible, they accept their responsibilities also to make efforts at mitigation
- In that context, UNDP assessed where it could add value to national efforts, and undertook with the assistance of OFID, feasibility studies of alternative energy options that could reduce the importation of fossil fuels in given sectors and create a more independent energy base to drive growth and development.

# Moving to a Sustainable Future

- The Feasibility study identifies
  - potential investment projects,
  - the required technology that can replace energy consumption in given sectors.
- Key – must move to the implementation stage.
- Final feasibility study to be shared with Governments next week, and we hope they will take the necessary steps towards development of the investment projects.

# Moving to a Sustainable Future

- In this regard, UNDP Barbados and the OECS is an implementing partner of SIDS DOCK, along with the World Bank, which offers a platform for finding investment to bring projects like these to fruition.
- UN Secretary-General's SE4ALL Initiative

# Moving to a Sustainable Future

- UNDP is pleased to have been able to:
  - broaden the knowledge on the impacts of climate change and its implications for the development process;
  - offer clear, realistic options, to governments to help make the transition to more climate resilient development;
  - and while countries try to deal with mitigating impacts and reducing vulnerabilities, to also seize opportunities that a new and more sustainable future may present for more sustainable islands.

# Conclusion

- While dealing with CC, we have to bear in mind that we are required to consider many options, many activities, often interrelated to achieve the goal of climate resilient development.
- Requires cross-ministerial and cross-sectoral work;
- Requires us to look at how SIDS could receive appropriate financial support for implementing adaptation measures,
- guidance as to key elements to be incorporated into programme design

# Conclusion

- The importance of data availability cannot be understated, and ensuring the capacities to update and use data to assess the negative as well as positive impacts to inform programme design.
- These are some of the key deliverables from our 3<sup>rd</sup> study, which is intentionally more operational in nature, and aims to offer guidance and approaches to countries for national level adaptation
- UNDP is prepared to work together with AOSIS and the partners to look into the development of an international mechanism to facilitate advancement of the work programme on losses and damages

# UNDP Team in Barbados and the OECS

- National Counterparts
- Regional Institutions – OECS, CARICOM, CCCCC, CARICOM Climate Change Task Force
- Dr. Tcheknavorian, Senior Advisor on Climate Change
- UNDP Colleagues