ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA HEALTH MINISTER REAFFIRMS SUPPORT FOR PAN-CARIBBEAN DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND PREVENTION PROJECT

Health Minister, the Hon. Christopher O’Mard, of Antigua and Barbuda told members of the Project Management Committee, Government representatives, and official observers at the Seventh Management Committee Meeting (MCM) that his country remains as committed to the goals of the Project as it was when it offered to host the project, perhaps even more so. He was, at the time, delivering the feature address.

The Seventh MCM, which was held at the Jolly Beach Hotel in Antigua, 6-8 December, 1984 attracted wide regional and international participation.

Following is the text of the Minister’s address.

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Project Management Committee, distinguished guests.

It is with a sense of deep pride and reassurance that I note the presence of a wide assortment of national, regional, and international experts here today. That sense of pride derives from the fact that this group is here for the purpose of planning, review, and evaluation; activities which, it is claimed, we do not take seriously in the Caribbean.

The feeling of reassurance comes from the knowledge that this group is meeting to further the development of Disaster Preparedness and Prevention, a very recent area of concern for Caribbean Planners and decision makers, nevertheless an area with a very direct bearing on development planning at national and regional levels. Fortunately for this meeting, and for the region, we will hear an address on the relationship between disaster preparedness and economic development, at the closing ceremony on Saturday. Delivering the address will be one of our distinguished Caribbean Leaders, the Rt. Hon. Mary Eugenia Charles, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Dominica. Prime Minister Charles, perhaps more than any other of our leaders has experienced the anguish of pursuing development activities, despite the untimely intervention of a variety of natural disasters.

Against the promise of a valuable programme for this meeting, it gives me great pleasure, on behalf of the Prime Minister and Government of Antigua and Barbuda, and on behalf of my own Ministry, to welcome you to Antigua.

I know it must be a tremendous sacrifice for you all to be here at this time of year, even though, for those coming from the North, a sojourn away from the abnormally early low temperatures, cannot be altogether unwelcome.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Antigua and Barbuda takes very seriously, its unique position as host country of this Project. We remain as committed to the Project and the overall goal of disaster preparedness in the region as were at the time we offered to host the Project, if not more so. Traditionally, the headquarters for international or multi-country projects were located in large capital cities of the world. The striking exception being the recently established United Nations Environment Programme in Nairobi, the first International Organization to set up its headquarters in a third world country.

Later, as regional organisations were established in the Caribbean, their headquarters were set up in the MDCs or More Developed Countries. We of the LDCs are aware of the reluctance to site organizations in our territories, and the impatience with us, when we seem to be a bit behind schedule, in providing that high level of support on a consistent basis, which we are told is necessary for the efficient

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EDITORIAL

The task of editing and publishing a periodical such as the Caribbean Newsletter could prove interesting and challenging for a variety of reasons.

Firstly, this publication deals with a new area of awareness, concern, and more recently, emphasis, in the Caribbean area: Disaster Preparedness and Prevention. Secondly, even though much of the content of the Newsletter may be of interest to technical and other specialist personnel, it is not a technical publication. Rather it is one with a public education bias, aimed at providing information about the work of the Project components and cooperators, in an effort to heighten understanding of this development area.

By the end of our first year of publication, we should be in a position to better identify our readers (not just those on our mailing list. Our target groups however, are:

a. Professionals and decision makers in disaster preparedness, physical planning, health, media, emergency services personnel.

b. The public, with an interest in Caribbean regional development, or disaster-related information.

c. The general public.

d. Students/researchers, mainly in development planning, disaster management, history, technical assistance, international affairs, current affairs, and environmental health.

We believe that we can strike a balance between the needs of our various publics by responding to stated needs of our readers while maintaining a style and format which caters to the entire spectrum.

In addition, we hope that people interested in contributing articles to this publication will send their contributions to us. We will obviously, credit the author of the article, and include his or her name on our mailing list if it is not already there.

We see the Caribbean Newsletter as a contributing to the effort aimed at the removal of various impediments to the dissemination of information in the Caribbean, area through our recognizing the needs and demands of our member countries.

We face this challenge with enthusiasm.

EARTHQUAKE & HEALTH

"Earthquake implications for the Eastern Caribbean are much greater than is generally perceived by Caribbean People," says Dr. James St. Catherine, Medical Officer of Health, St. Lucia.

Addressing a Multi-Island Workshop on Emergency Management of Environmental Health and Water Supply, 20-23 November, Dr. St. Catherine said that to most people in the Caribbean, an earthquake is a six to eight-second experience which occurs every few years. He urged participants to consider the effect of any such seismic activity on structures such as latrines, and on water systems, in islands where safe water and waste systems run close together, and could therefore be damaged, resulting in pollution of the safe water system.

He expressed the view that one of the main reasons why earthquakes or tremors do not have a strong visible impact in the Eastern Caribbean area is that there are very few high-rise buildings, which normally reflect the gravity of the quake through the structural damage they suffer.

He urged the Public Health Inspectors and Water Engineers present, to identify vulnerable areas in their environments, in order to improve their ability to accurately assess the damage suffered by communities within their countries in the event of an earthquake.

MANAGER’S COMMENT

1984 has been a year of rapid growth for the Project.

Our Professional staff has grown to seven, even though our general staff numbers did not follow suit. Our programmes have been extended and much more in-depth, at both the national and regional level, with a consequent increase in the quantity of indigenous material now available.

1984 has also been a year of growing-up for the project. We were operational in a number of areas.

During the October-November rains and flooding in the Eastern Caribbean, for example, the Project, in response to a request from the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Dominica, obtained the services of a helicopter and pilot from the Prefecture of Guadeloupe. This service airlifted 12,000 pounds of food and supplies to districts cut off by landslides.

At the same time the Project provided the services of Prevention Adviser Mr. Alwyn Watson to assist the Governments of Barbados and St. Kitts in damage assessment, while at headquarters, a Project team monitored developments regionally as Telecommunication Consultant Barney Thompson anchored the wireless network from "DISPREP ANTIGUA."

We utilised more consultants, in a wider range of fields this year than in any year previously, and have moved to upgrade our technical literacy by enrolling staff in basic computer courses, in order to utilise fully the facilities of a new and valuable addition, an IBX-XT computer, on which incidentally, staff have prepared the many copies of the Report to the Seventh Management Committee Meeting.

We look forward to 1985, a year in which we would like to grow in the sight of Caribbean regional Coordinators, as a point to which reports of damage, and emergencies, regardless of how small, should be sent, and as their own agency for support in preparing reports on probable causes, assessments, implications and needs, in relation to natural or man-made emergencies or disasters.

This vital preliminary step could well expedite bilateral negotiations with donor countries or agencies which affected countries may contact for assistance.

Even though the Project's activities continue to complement national programmes, disaster preparedness and prevention is a national responsibility. The majority of participating countries appreciate this and have moved to establish disaster preparedness units, even as in the case of Dominica and Antigua, units with one staff member.

We look forward to greater cooperation with our coordinators, and their countries throughout the region.

Deryck W. Heinemann
1979 marked the beginning of an era in Caribbean development. It was the year in which a major volcanic eruption in St. Vincent forced the evacuation of over 20,000 people from the Northern half of the island. Another catastrophe in 1979 was the flooding in Jamaica which left almost 40,000 people homeless. In August, Hurricane David, the most severe for many years devastated most of Dominica, and large parts of the Dominican Republic. The toll over 1400 people dead, 6,000 injured, 250,000 homeless, and estimated overall damage US$380 million.

1979 was also the year when some 150 people including representatives of 22 Caribbean governments, met in St. Lucia to discuss Caribbean Disaster Preparedness.

It was against this backdrop of destructive natural disasters that Caribbean States endorsed the idea of a regional project in disaster preparedness and prevention. While recognizing their national responsibility to improve disaster preparedness measures, Caribbean governments fully appreciated the need for mutual cooperation within the region as well as the necessity to tap expertise and specialized assistance from abroad.

The 1979 disasters illustrated the typical problems of disaster management, including the need to issue warnings widely and rapidly, the difficulties of moving many thousands of people quickly away from the most vulnerable areas, the importance of establishing evacuation centres and feeding programmes, co-ordination centres and emergency communication systems and of setting up damage assessment and reporting procedures. In the case of hurricanes especially, they demonstrated the urgent need to apply simple preventive measures such as anchoring roofs securely to buildings and providing strong shutters to glass windows, in particular for buildings intended as public shelters. These disasters also made it clear, especially in the smaller states where devastation from a single event may extend over the entire territory, that the provision of immediate and continued assistance from neighbouring countries is critically important and much more effective if planned in advance.

The events of 1979 led to a resolution adopted by the UN Economic Commission for Latin America, and endorsed by the General Assembly in November 1979, that "the United Nations, and more particularly the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, should study ways and means of setting up specific machinery to cope with the natural disasters that periodically occur in the Caribbean Basin."

A final endorsement of the need to improve disaster preparedness and prevention was added by the first hurricane of the 1980 season: one of the biggest of the century, it ripped through St. Lucia, southwestern Haiti and northern Jamaica leaving 250 dead, 205,000 homeless, 525,000 deprived of their normal source of food and US$330 million of damage to property, infrastructure and agriculture. This further reminder of the destructive powers of Nature was neither welcome nor necessary: UNDRO was already busy, in close co-operation with CARICOM, CIDA, EEC, ITU, LORCS, OECs, UNEP, UK/BDD, USAID/OFDA, PAHO/WHO and WMO, assembling the "specific machinery" which a year later became the Pan Caribbean Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Project (PCDPPP).

Among the original objectives of the PCDPPP as stated in the 63-page Project Document were, to help governments implement preparedness and prevention programmes on the basis of priorities agreed upon and the availability of resources from within and outside the countries concerned. The fields covered include, but are not limited to, the training of personnel in all aspects of disaster prevention, preparedness and relief, warning systems, vulnerability analysis, land-use legislation, zoning laws, building techniques and codes, public information, and restoration and natural resources so as to achieve maximum protection of the vulnerable population at minimum cost, and to provide a regional "pool of expertise" for relief, co-ordinated by UNDRO whenever a disaster occurs anywhere in the region. Responsibility for monitoring the progress of the Project rests with the Project Management Committee, which is composed of representatives of the participating countries, executing and funding agencies. The Committee meets once every six months to review past activities and approve future work programmes, budgets and staff appointments. Financial support for the project or assistance in kind has come from numerous countries and agencies. The largest contributors to date have been CIDA, the ECC and USAID/OFDA.

UNDRO has received invaluable support from USAID/OFDA, which continues to channel funds through the Office.

The first phase of the project, which ran for 18 months, ending in March 1983, was supervised by UNDRO.

A second phase of the Project based on new funding commitments, began in April 1983 and will run to the end of 1984. Several important changes took place at the beginning of Phase 11. Among them, and in line with the policy of fostering regional self-reliance, the responsibility for administration of the Project passed from UNDRO to the CARICOM (Caribbean Community) Secretariat.

Among UNDRO's many activities in disaster preparedness and prevention, the Pan-Caribbean Project has been considerably larger in scale, longer in duration, and more complex than any previously undertaken. This complexity can be attributed only in part to the large number of missions, workshops, contracts, financial transactions and executing agencies involved. The real problems stemmed from bringing together as many as 28 participating countries and territories, as varied in size as in...
IN FOCUS -

CERO IN BARBADOS

The Central Emergency Relief Organisation (CERO) in Barbados performs the function of coordinating a large number of agencies throughout the country to take care of national emergencies. CERO cannot effectively deal with emergency matters without help from other organisations and individuals such as the team of shelter wardens. It is responsible for emergency activities before, during and after an emergency, island-wide.

At the local level there are several District Emergency Organisations which complement the work being done centrally by Government Departments and national voluntary bodies. An executive committee ensures that the decision of the council are carried out through a number of standing committees. These committees cover all the activities which have to be brought into play in the event of a national emergency.

CERO has a central secretariat with a small staff headed by Ms. Grace Pilgrim, Supervisor of Emergency Services. From time to time, the secretariat is assisted by staff from Government Departments.

The Organisation envisages the need to provide the following services in an emergency-shelters, first-aid treatment, clothing, food, transportation, communications, road clearance, and information relating to personal and property damage. With this in mind it has set up:

(a) A Shelter Committee
(b) First Aid Training Committee
(c) Welfare Services Committee
(d) Food and General Supplies Committee
(e) Tree Trimming and Road Clearance Committee
(f) Telecommunications Committee
(g) Damage Statistics Committee
(h) Public Media and Public Awareness Committee
(i) National Emergency Planning (Committee comprising the Commissioner of Police, the Chief Fire Officer, The Chief of Staff, Barbados Defence Force).

CERO’s planning activities include liaison with various agencies and organisations; disaster preparedness, drills, maintenance of food, drug, and other relief supplies; and the preparation of orders under the Emergency Powers Act in the event of the declaration of a State of Emergency.

CERO’s post-disaster services cover a wide spectrum including, emergency transport, evacuation, pumping of floodwaters, restoration of utility services, erection of temporary shelters, collection of damage statistics and coordination of foreign disaster assistance.

Grace Pilgrim
CERO’s Supervisor of Emergency Services

CERO has published booklets on a wide range of disaster-related subjects, which Emergency Supervisor Ms. Pilgrim says are available to other Caribbean countries either directly or through the PCDPPP Headquarters in Antigua.

The organization is one of the first collaborators in the PCDPPP Network.

Some of CERO’s Activities
1984-1985

<table>
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<th>Course</th>
<th>Duration</th>
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<tr>
<td>a. Emergency Planning for</td>
<td>3 days</td>
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<td>Senior Administrators</td>
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<td>b. Orientation for Departmental</td>
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<td>Coordinators</td>
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<td>c. Mass casualty Care for</td>
<td>5 days</td>
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<td>First Aid workers</td>
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<td>d. Mass Casualty Care for</td>
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<td>Registered Nurses</td>
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<td>e. Mass Casualty Care for</td>
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<td>Medical Practitioners</td>
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<td>f. Mass Casualty Management</td>
<td>3 days</td>
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<td>g. Teaching Disaster Preparedness</td>
<td>4 days</td>
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<td>in Schools</td>
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<td>h. District Emergency Planning</td>
<td>2-3 days</td>
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<td>for Managers</td>
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<td>i. Mass Feeding and Rationing</td>
<td>5 days</td>
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<td>Systems</td>
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<td>j. Welfare and Community</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
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<td>k. Emergency Planning Course</td>
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<tr>
<td>l. Shelter Management Course</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
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The rains began around October 25, and continued, it seemed, forever.

Almost thirty families lost their homes, business places suffered millions of dollars in losses, and crops were destroyed as the Parish of St. Peter recorded its highest rainfall in 83 years. 15 inches of rain was recorded in a 24 hour period.

A man, aged 80, was cooking as his house was washed away some twenty five feet into the centre of the road.

This generation of Barbados had seen nothing like it, and certainly Barbados was not expecting the wide-spread flooding and damage to property and personal effects, which hit the Northern Parishes of St. Peter and St. Lucy between October 25 and November 8.

The Barbados Meteorological office reported that eight inches of rain fell on Friday 2 November, and predicted that there was more to come, but by that time, one man had already lost his life and some thirty families, their homes, as a result of the heavy rains and flooding in St. Peter, and the conditions had spread to other parishes in the country - St. Michael, St. George, St. James and St. Philip.

As bridges became submerged and roads impassable, walls and other revetments collapsed and police issued warnings to motorists. The Ministry of Education closed schools, some buildings of which were later used as shelters.

By November 4, there was a lull, but fallen trees, utility poles, wires, and other debris were strewn everywhere.

Everywhere, too, were representatives of the Central Emergency Relief Organization (CERO), coordinating relief activities, which included contributions from the Barbados Defence Force, the Police Force, Red Cross, Church organizations, the Salvation Army, and the St. John’s Ambulance Brigade.

The Acting Governor-General Sir Arnott Cato, Prime Minister Tom Adams, and other cabinet members visited affected areas with relief teams.

Public concern was high even among those affected. As flood-waters rose to six feet in some parts of St. Peter, young men swam and used small boats to assist women, children, and the aged, many of whom, could not swim, or were confused by the rapid developments.

The Ministry of Health declared some stocks of rice, potatoes, and onions, unfit for human consumption, and urged residents to wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly before eating, and boil drinking water.
LIST OF ACRONYMS
PAN CARIBBEAN DISASTER PREPAREDNESS AND PREVENTION PROJECT

CARICOM - Caribbean Community
CIDA - Canadian International Development Agency
ECCM - East Caribbean Common Market (now OECS)
ECLAC - Economic Committee for Latin America and the Caribbean
EDF - European Development Fund
EEC - European Economic Community
LORCS - League of Red Cross Societies
OECS - Organization of East Caribbean States (formerly ECOM)
PAHO/WHO - Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization
PCDPPP - Pan Caribbean Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Project
SIDA - Swedish International Development Authority
UN - United Nations
UNDP - United Nations Development Programme
UNEPI - United Nations Environment Programme
UNDRO - United Nations Disaster Relief Office
USAID/OFDA - United States Agency for International Development/Office of Foreign
- Disaster Assistance.
BDD - British Development Division in the Caribbean
ITU - International Telecommunication Union
PCDPPP - Pan Caribbean Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Project

FAREWELL

The Project bids farewell to His Excellency Mr. David Dale, Governor of Montserrat.

Mr. Dale, the National Disaster Co-ordinator for Montserrat, who has spearheaded the disaster preparedness and prevention activities on the island, leaves for Britain on 18th December 1984, at the end of his tour of duty.

We will miss this member of the regional network, but look forward to also working closely with his successor.

It has been said that Mr. Dale is going to retirement, but knowing, and having benefitted from his boundless vitality and drive, it is difficult to picture him "retired". Let us therefore be cautious and wish David and Hanna Dale a "happy and productive second career".

CONGRATULATIONS

... to Major Florence Gittens of the Barbados Defence Force, on her being awarded the Silver Service medal on the occasion of the 18th Anniversary of Barbados Independence.

Barbados, a former British Colony, became independent on 30 November, 1966.

Major Gittens is a consultant to the Project, working on plans and training in mass casualty management.
SUPPORT FOR PROJECT

Now a brief word to the Funding and Executing Agencies represented here. The Project host country wishes to place on record its appreciation of the ability of these many Agencies, with nationals of many varied backgrounds, and located in many parts of the world, to work harmoniously together in the interest of the Caribbean. This might well be attributed to the overall policy of the Agencies, but we believe it is also due to the maturity and professionalism of the agency representatives who must straddle that thin line between Agency policy and posture on the one hand, and compromise for the greater good on the other.

We should be grateful if you would convey our appreciation to your respective agencies, and our wish that this harmony, and empathy with the needs of the region, would become a permanent feature of the Project.

Now, the matter of accommodation. Ladies and gentlemen, we have indentified the permanent accommodation for the Project Headquarters, a fact we have already communicated to the Project Manager by letter. My Ministry and the Ministry of Public Works are working together to have the building ready for occupation by the project. I think we can promise that this will be early in 1985. We thank you for your patience and ask you to bear with us just a while longer.

On a national and rather parochial note, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda wishes to reiterate its gratitude to the Project for the sterling assistance rendered to us during 1983-84 drought which occasioned our declaring a National Emergency. The contribution at all levels from the negotiation with donors and verification of contractor compliance with the barge agreement, to the provision of a Public Awareness Consultant and products which were immediately usable for public education, helped us cope with a most uncomfortable period in our history.

Finally I wish to pay tribute to the Project Manager, Dr. Deryck Heinemann, under whose tenure, the relationship between the Project and the host Government truly matured. We have found Dr. Heinemann affable, accessible, and very professional, yet fair, in his dealings with us. We would wish Dr. Heinemann to know that my Ministry is always accessible to the Project.

I wish you all success in your deliberations, and hope that the planners of this Meeting have made some time on your schedule, for you to savour some of the many natural pleasures of the Antigua Environment.

I look forward to seeing you all at the Flamingo Hotel, where we shall be able to socialise.

I am happy to declare this conference formally open.

With sincere wishes for an emergency-free Christmas and a Prosperous 1985

To: All participating Governments, their national coordinators, and international supporters.

From: The Management Committee, Project Manager and Staff of The Pan Caribbean Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Project.

Pan Caribbean Disaster Preparedness & Prevention Project
PAHO UNDRO LORCS CARICOM
DISASTER PREPAREDNESS IN
ST. LUCIA

Disaster Preparedness and Prevention is fairly new as an area of concern in the Caribbean, but is quickly becoming a topic of major concern in relation to economic development.

For the Caribbean Newsletter, Carlton James, talks with Stanislaus James, Disaster Preparedness Coordinator in St. Lucia.

C.J. How would you describe the state of Disaster Preparedness in St. Lucia?

S.J. I would say that there has been considerable improvement over the past two years, with the assistance given in training and other areas, by the Pan Caribbean Disaster Preparedness Project. But, there is still much to be done, especially in the area of training in certain fields. Most of all, I feel that decision makers have not tried to know more about the (St. Lucia) Disaster Plan than they know at present. They have not familiarised themselves with the Plan, and I think they have to be sensitised to disaster preparedness and its implications.

C.J. How old is the St. Lucia Disaster Preparedness Plan?

S.J. We had an old Plan in existence for nearly twenty years. This was revised and rewritten in 1981, to include other types of disaster, and include an emergency operations centre (EOC). There was a second revision since 1981. Since this last revision, the Plan has not been printed but we hope it will be ready early in 1985.

C.J. Do you think that the problem of people not being conversant with the Plan could be connected with its not being available?

S.J. I agree we have not printed a sufficient number of copies for wide circulation, and this has been an impediment to its being known.

C.J. You recently addressed a meeting in St. Lucia at which you talked about the immediate post disaster period, what is your concern?

S.J. I think that governments should be prepared to handle the situation after a disaster. It is true the disaster can be of such magnitude, that external assistance is needed. But regardless of how the relief activity is structured, I think governments should ensure that they know exactly who is doing what in the relief effort, if not there is going to be duplication. There might even be chaos.

For example, I saw it happen after Hurricane Allen, when several agencies came into St. Lucia, and undertook relief work, unknown to the government, resulting in great duplication, persons receiving supplies from more than one agency; others receiving nothing at all. No proper records were kept. Items which were not required came in abundance, while items which were required did not come in.

What was worse, medical personnel from various places came in and immediately assumed that there were health problems which required inoculation of persons in certain areas, and without consultation or reference to the government authorities, I am told, proceeded to administer inoculations. In the case of medical supplies, those items which were not requested, arrived in greater profusion than those needed and requested. This is the type of well meaning but haphazard assistance which can only be avoided by governments of the affected countries being very firm in their control of disaster relief operations.

C.J. Mr. James, St. Lucia suffered hurricane damage in 1979 and 1980, and more recently, flood damage in November 1984. What lessons do you think the local Disaster Preparedness mechanism in St. Lucia, has learned from those events?

S.J. I think our disaster preparedness is still weak. I would like to see top officials, and others in a position to influence, think of disaster preparedness more seriously. There is need for much more commitment including budgeting for disaster preparedness activities.

C.J. Do you think the average citizen of St. Lucia would sanction his Government allocating funds for disaster preparedness in the national budget, bearing in mind that disaster preparedness is often not something visible like road-building?

S.J. Government is so pressed in meeting the needs of the people in social service areas, such as education, health and housing, that it is difficult for them to apply their scarce resources toward coping with events which may never occur. As regards hurricanes, prior to 1979, it was eighty years since St. Lucia experienced a serious hurricane, and in the case of floods, it is true that much can be done, but all this is very expensive and governments and the people will be clamouring more for expenditure on services which they need on a much more regular basis, so it is difficult to say whether the public would approve. What is needed is a massive education programme on disasters in St. Lucia, to heighten public awareness.

C.J. In conclusion, what are your primary training needs in relation to disaster preparedness in St. Lucia?

S.J. Firstly, training in post-disaster management. We have started Emergency First-Aid training, but this is going slowly. I think we have to accelerate this to ensure that in every community, there are persons with basic training in Emergency First-Aid. Training at local emergency committee level is also very important. There are people in districts who are very eager to learn to help themselves, should they be cut off with disaster victims on their hands etc. Therefore they are asking for this type of training to help themselves. Training is urgently needed in the management of disaster shelters, and the compilation of post-disaster statistics. In telecommunications, we face a situation where the emergency operation centre, which is supposed to maintain contact nationally and regionally, was not able to communicate with areas in the out districts, and certain key places, but this is being taken care of, with the arrival of radio equipment supplied by the Pan-Caribbean Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Project. This was a very serious weakness and I am pleased that there will soon be operational improvement. For there to be operational improvement, however, training in the operation of this equipment is necessary.

In closing let me say that we have made some progress in the last few years. Several of our people have been trained in emergency services, and I am confident that with the continued support of the PCDPPP and the publication and wide circulation of our plans for training, we should soon be able to cope better with disasters. I am optimistic that we will improve in our preparedness status within a year or two.
IN BARBADOS

LOCAL ASSISTANCE

Parliament approved $807,000 (US $1.00 = BDS 2.00) for relief assistance. The Welfare Department was allocated $75,000; Ministry of Health $30,000; Ministry of Housing and Lands $400,000; Ministry of Transport and Works, $230,000; and National Assistance, $72,000.

A Minister of State, Mr. Aaron Truss, was appointed by the Prime Minister to oversee the relief operations.

The Broadcasting Company, Voice of Barbados, aired a call-in radio programme "Helping Hands" which raised $23,000 in pledges in a five hour period one Friday evening.

Many people donated food, clothing and blankets, and beverage companies donated soft drinks.

Some displaced families were housed at the island's new luxury resort complex, Heywoods, but were later moved to government housing units as these became available.

REGIONAL ASSISTANCE

The Pan-Caribbean Preparedness and Prevention Project, in which Barbados is one of 28 participating countries, responded to a request from the Barbados Relief Authorities, and assigned Prevention Advisor, Alwyn Watson, to work with the authorities to assess structural damage suffered.

The Interim Government of Grenada also approved Eastern Caribbean $20,000 (US $1 = EC $2.70), for the Barbados Relief effort.

This event was something of a test of the Barbados relief machinery, which proved equal to the task of immediate and sustained response.

(From page 3)

UNDRO

their respective levels of disaster preparedness, some situated as far apart as 3000 km and with four different languages. In fact, in the early days of the project, there were times when it seemed that it would have been more appropriate and effective to promote a number of independent small-scale activities in different parts of the region.

By the end of 1984, nearly US$2 million will have been invested in disaster preparedness and prevention through the PCDPPP. This is a considerable sum, yet it remains very small in comparison with the losses suffered in a single major disaster or, more significantly, with the amount by which these losses can be reduced through good pre-disaster planning.

UNDRO will continue, and expand, its involvement with the PCDPPP, a significant landmark in the history of disaster management in the Caribbean, pointing the way towards a comprehensive approach to the subject which could be of benefit to other developing regions.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

This article is an edited version of the original which appeared in the March/April, 1984 edition of UNDRO NEWS under the title PAN CARIBBEAN.