

FIFTH SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE AND/OR GOVERNMENT OF THE STATES,  
COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES OF THE ASSOCIATION OF CARIBBEAN STATES

DRAFT STRATEGIC DOCUMENT – Annex III

***INPUT***  
***DIRECTORATE OF DISASTER RISK REDUCTION***

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## **LIST OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

| <b>ACRONYM</b> | <b>MEANING</b>   |
|----------------|--|
| CAPRADE        | Andean Committee for Disaster Prevention and Relief  |
| CDB            | Caribbean Development Bank   |
| CDEMA          | Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency   |
| ECLAC          | Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean  |
| CEPREDENAC     | Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America   |
| CIMH           | Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology  |
| CMO            | Caribbean Meteorological Organisation  |
| CRMI           | Caribbean Risk Management Initiative   |
| DTDRR          | Directorate for Transport and Disaster Risk Reduction  |
| ISDR           | International Strategy for Disaster Reduction  |
| FMI            | Finnish Meteorological Institute   |
| IDRL           | Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance |
| IFRC           | International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies   |
| NMHS           | National Meteorological and Hydrological Services  |
| OCHA           | Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs  |
| WMO            | World Meteorological Organisation  |
| PAHO           | Pan-American Health Organisation   |
| UNDP           | United Nations Development Programmes  |
| DRR            | Disaster Risk Reduction  |
| SHOCS          | Strengthening Hydrometeorological Operations and Services in the Caribbean Small Island Developing States                |
| SIDS           | Small Island Developing States   |

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Convention Establishing the ACS acknowledges Member States' vulnerability to Natural Disasters, thus, natural disaster management has been established as one of the focal areas of the organisation. Therefore, in 1999, the Special Committee on Natural Disasters was created<sup>1</sup> and was subsequently changed to the Special Committee for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)<sup>2</sup>.

In that respect, during the 18 years of existence of the Association of Caribbean States, emphasis has been placed on the importance of regional co-operation in the area of natural disasters (specifically through the call made to Member States to ratify the *Agreement for Regional Co-operation in the area of Natural Disasters*, so that it could enter into force); support for national, regional and international organisations and entities dedicated to disaster reduction (focussing especially on the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency - CDEMA and the Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America - CEPREDENAC); and the strengthening of Members' capabilities by way of training and instruction.

## **Mandates**

As a result, the Declaration of Panama, emanating from the 4<sup>th</sup> Summit of Heads of State and/or Government convened in Panama City, Panama, on July 29, 2005, outlined the following mandates<sup>3</sup>:

**20** We acknowledge the vulnerability of our countries and territories to natural disasters and their negative impact on our efforts to ensure sustainable development; we also share the idea that the best way to combat vulnerability to natural disasters is to integrate disaster management and risk reduction into development policies and plans at all levels of our governments. We further reaffirm the importance of international co-operation, particularly at the regional level, in order to strengthen the national and regional bodies dedicated to the prevention and mitigation of risks and natural disasters.

**20 a** We urge the Member States and Associate Members who have not yet done so and who are in a position to do so, to consider the possibility of signing or ratifying, as the case may be, the ACS Agreement for Regional Co-operation in the area of Natural Disasters, so that it may enter into force as soon as possible.

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<sup>1</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council, Panama City, Panama, on December 13, 1999, Agreement No. 3/99 that creates the Special Committee on Natural Disasters

<sup>2</sup> 14<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council, Port au Prince, Republic of Haiti, January 30, 2009, Agreement No. 6/09 on the Institutionalisation of the Results of the ACS High Level Conference on Disaster Reduction

<sup>3</sup> Note in particular that points **20 b** and **20 c** are not mandates and that **20 d** includes several mandates.

**20 b** We express our appreciation for the support and humanitarian relief provided by the international community, particularly ACS Members, to those countries in the region affected by hurricanes in 2004. In this regard, we welcome the establishment of the Hurricane Relief Fund, as proposed by Venezuela within the framework of the Caribbean Development Bank, in April 2004.

**20 c** We welcome the Declaration of Kobe adopted during the Second World Conference for Disaster Reduction, held in Japan in January 2005, which reaffirms the importance of integrating disaster management and risk reduction into development policies and plans at all levels of our Governments, particularly the need to promote international financial assistance and the transfer of technology necessary to strengthen risk management capabilities in vulnerable countries.

**20 d** We pledge to foster international co-operation and capacity-building in the area of natural disasters, in enhancing the provision of humanitarian assistance at all stages of a disaster and in promoting a culture of prevention and early warning systems

In order to fulfil these mandates, the ***High Level Conference on Disaster Reduction of the Association of Caribbean States*** was convened and it represents a milestone in the history of the ACS Special Committee for Disaster Risk Reduction. Said event was held on November 14-16, 2007, in Saint-Marc, Republic of Haiti and was the first meeting of its kind to be convened among the countries of the Greater Caribbean, with participation from delegations from 21 ACS Member Countries (including Ministers, high level specialists in disaster reduction and experienced diplomats), as well as 18 regional and international organisations, in addition to members of the civil society.

The Conference represented the quantifiable strengthening of the institutional relationship with the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction - ISDR, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean - ECLAC and the Inter-American Development Bank, CDEMA, CEPREDENAC, the United Nations Development Programme - UNDP and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies - IFRC, together with the Pan-American Health Organisation - PAHO.

This meeting produced the ***Saint-Marc Plan of Action***, a document containing 27 points that steer the ACS Work Programme in the area of disaster risk reduction for the period 2007-2012.

In that regard, the Directorate for Disaster Risk Reduction (DDRR) will present the following draft of its proposed input for the strategic document for the 5<sup>th</sup> Summit of the ACS.

This document comprises four parts: in the first part, it will seek to evaluate the relevance and implementation of the mandates of the 4<sup>th</sup> Summit concerning DRR, in order for a series of recommendations to be subsequently presented. The second part will present the main issues of the Directorate, as well as a work agenda with results to be delivered by February 2013. The third part will outline the complementary issues and

projects of prime importance for the Directorate, which are planned for its implementation. Finally and in order to share and exchange ideas, the communication strategy on which the DDDR is working will be presented

## **1. EVALUATION OF THE RELEVANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MANDATES EMANATING FROM THE 4<sup>th</sup> SUMMIT**

### **1.1. Entry into force of the ACS Agreement for Regional Co-operation in the area of Natural Disasters (see 20 a)**

#### **1.1.1. Relevance**

The objective of this agreement is defined in its art. 2, "develop legally binding mechanisms that promote co-operation for the prevention, mitigation and management of natural disasters, through the collaboration of the contracting parties among themselves and with organisations that work in the field of natural disasters in the region".

This instrument in turn agrees to, "mutual co-operation and assistance" (art.4), the carrying out of "scientific and technical activities" by creating an "inventory of experts..." (art.5), the adoption of all measures required for "prevention and mitigation" (art. 8), as well as the promotion of the "relationship with other organisations" in order to enter into regional and international agreements" (art.9), among other provisions.

It should be underscored that the aforementioned points are reflected in the ***Saint-Marc Plan of Action***.

#### **1.1.2. Implementation**

This agreement has not yet entered into force since it requires two thirds or 17 States of the 25 Members to deposit the instruments of ratification. As at March 25, 2012, 16 countries deposited their ratifications, according to the records of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the depositary country (Colombia), 14 of these come from Member States, leaving 3 more ratifications outstanding. The last ratification recorded took place in 2011, by Costa Rica.

Since the 2<sup>nd</sup> Summit of ACS Heads of State and Government (April 17, 1999, Santo Domingo de Guzmán, Dominican Republic), where this Agreement originated, as well as in successive summits, several Ministerial Agreements<sup>4</sup> and also point 26 of the abovementioned ***Saint-Marc Plan of Action*** have been calling for the ratification of the Agreement and also for the promotion of co-operation in the area of disasters among Member States.

#### **1.1.3. Results**

Despite the difficulties in achieving the full effect of this legal instrument, the Directorate, in the framework of participating in the workshops on "Laws, Rules and

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<sup>4</sup> Agreement No. 1/95, Agreement No. 7/98, Agreement No. 3/99, Agreement No. 5/08, Agreement No.6/09.

Regulations governing the international response to disasters”, has done its utmost to promote said Agreement and has presented the other legal instruments of the ACS in the field of disaster risk reduction, in addition to a draft ministerial agreement on the evolution and future of said instrument, and also of the ***Saint-Marc Plan of Action***, which were to be presented during the 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Ministerial Council, with their presentation being postponed to the Meeting of the Special Committee on Disasters.

Similarly, the ACS and the IFRC have been working together toward strengthening a legal framework in the area of disasters and developing various projects such as: “Urban Risk” and “Green Response”. In that context, it must be borne in mind that a meeting will be convened soon with support from the IFRC regarding these issues and that occasion would be a good opportunity to once again include among the key points to be considered, the matter concerning the ratification of the Agreement for Regional Co-operation in the area of Natural Disasters.

Moreover, the ACS Special Committee for DRR, as the principal forum of the Greater Caribbean for the exchange of experiences, lessons learnt and best practices, has served as a guide and will continue to play that role, so that the governments of Member States could strengthen their legal frameworks directly at the national level, even though the Agreement for Regional Co-operation in the area of Natural Disasters has not entered into force. It can be cited as an example, the work currently being undertaken by Jamaica and Colombia in coordination with the Federation and the fact that more states in the region are interested in preparing their legal frameworks in the event of possible international co-operation following a disaster. In that regard, the IFRC, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - OCHA and the Inter-Parliamentary Union - IPU<sup>5</sup>, have been working on the development of a “Draft Law for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance”, following the regulations of the IDRL<sup>6</sup>. In the preparation of this Draft Law, the DRR has participated actively in meetings, seminars, Workshops and preparatory documents.

In closing, it should be underscored that the DRR, in order to “*Promote the definition and adoption of a conceptual framework on disaster risk reduction and relief that would facilitate the development of this area at the regional level, as well as the promotion of South-South co-operation and the formulation of projects of common interest among the countries of the region*”, continues to promote said Agreement and mainly the strategic objectives of the Hyogo Framework for Action<sup>7</sup> of the ISDR, in addition to the

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<sup>5</sup> The Inter-Parliamentary Union serves as a focal point in the world for parliamentary dialogue and works toward peace and co-operation among peoples and the consolidation of representative democracy.

<sup>6</sup> “The IDRL Guidelines (“Guidelines for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance”) are geared toward helping governments to be better prepared for common legal problems in international response operations in the event of disasters. By using the Guidelines, governments can avoid unnecessary delays in the distribution of humanitarian aid, while simultaneously achieving improved coordination and quality of the assistance rendered”.

<sup>7</sup> “In 2005, the Hyogo Framework for Action highlighted the importance of having proper legislation to support disaster risk reduction (DRR); since, without specific regulatory frameworks, the very activities of the government and the support efforts of community organisations such as the National Societies can be affected”.



aforementioned "Draft Law for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance" of the IFRC.

The analysis of the following **mandate 20 d** will focus on the way in which the ACS has pledged to "foster international co-operation and capacity-building in the area of natural disasters" primarily in the following issues:

- Improved rendering of humanitarian assistance at all stages of a disaster
- Promotion of a culture of prevention
- Promotion of early warning systems.

## **1.2.Promotion of early warning systems (see mandate 20 d)**

### **1.2.1. Relevance**

The statistics on natural disasters in Central America, North America and the Caribbean, indicate that most events, victims and economic losses are related to meteorological-hydrological and climate hazards and the effects associated with these. In order to reduce the risks of natural disasters and to mitigate their impact, the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services— NMHS, have assumed the active role of obtaining reliable information on statistics regarding hazards, risk assessment, the strengthening of multi-hazard early warning systems<sup>8</sup>, as well as the improved dissemination of information among the public in general<sup>9</sup>.

The World Meteorological Organisation – WMO – recommends that: "In order to ensure that early warning systems are implemented as an integral part of disaster risk reduction strategies in all countries, there needs to be capacity development in all the components of the MHEWS and in the preparedness process, eg.: in hazard detection, monitoring and forecasting; incorporation of risk information into planning and emergency warnings; issuing of authorised warnings and in emergency planning and preparedness."<sup>10</sup>.

Therefore and in order to contribute to these efforts, the Association of Caribbean States continues to foster co-operation in the promotion of an early warning system, especially through the implementation of the project: "Strengthening Hydrometeorological Operations and Services in the Caribbean SIDS", so that "the societies of the Caribbean would be better prepared to face the adverse effects brought about by natural disasters and the damaging impact of climate change".

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<sup>8</sup> "Early warning systems allow the persons and communities exposed to hazards to act in a timely and appropriate fashion, in order to reduce the possibility of personal injury, loss of life, damage to property, deterioration of the environment and loss of means of survival (Chapter 2.3 of the Hyogo Framework for Action)."

<sup>9</sup> "Effective communication and dissemination strategies for risk reduction ensure that information is intelligible and arrives in time for all those who need it to adopt wise decisions (Chapter 2.4 of the Hyogo Framework for Action)."

<sup>10</sup> WMO, 2010: Final report: Training Workshop on Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems with focus on Institutional Partnerships and Coordination March 22-25, 2010 Radisson Europa Hotel and Conference Centre, San José, Costa Rica.

This project has been justified by points 1, 5, 8, 10, 25 and particularly 16 of the ***Saint-Marc Plan of Action*** -. The last of these points indicates: "Encourage and contribute to the strengthening of the regional capacity of cultural and scientific communities to create and improve the early warning systems in the region".

### **1.2.2. Implementation:**

From 2001 to 2004, a project was financed by the Government of Finland, in coordination with the WMO and with support from the Association of Caribbean States, entitled "Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Project", whose objective was to provide tools to better plan sustainable development in the Caribbean region, placing emphasis on strengthening National Meteorological Services, in such a manner that they would be capable of providing the information necessary for planning at the national and international levels and making it possible for the respective countries to be in a position to honour their international commitments.

Subsequently, the Finnish Meteorological Institute – FMI and the ACS held coordination meetings (the first was organised as a side event on April 28, 2009, related to the 15<sup>th</sup> Session of the RAIV - Regional Association of the World Meteorological Organisation - WMO, in Nassau, Bahamas; the second was organised in San José, Costa Rica, just after the WMO training workshop and the coordination meeting on the development of Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems - MHEWS in Central America and the Caribbean, March 22-26, 2010), which led to the definition of a process for planning co-operation among other NMHS that are not of the Caribbean, international organisations and regional organisations, thereby contributing to capacity development in the region.

Consequently, during the 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Special Committee for Disaster Risk Reduction, convened in the Dominican Republic on September 9-10, 2010, the project concept document entitled: "Strengthening Hydrometeorological Operations and Services in the Caribbean SIDS" was presented.

The main beneficiaries of the project are the NMHS and the Civil Protection Agencies of the ACS Member States in the Greater Caribbean. The Member States (Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela) can be involved in the capacity development activities.

The project was well received by the Member States and also by the regional and international organisations specialising in Disaster Risk Reduction<sup>11</sup>. As a result, the project was officially approved during the 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ACS Ministerial Council, on

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<sup>11</sup> In fact, the Executive Board of the SHOCS project is made up of CDEMA as Chair (represented by Jeremy Collymore, Executive Director); the WMO (represented by Oscar Arango, representative of the WMO for the Americas); the CMO (represented by Tyrone Sutherland, Director of the CMO); the ACS (represented by Alfonso Munera, Secretary General and Eduardo González, Director of Transport and Disaster Risk Reduction) and the FMI (represented by Martti Heikinheimo, Director of Service Development).

January 27, 2011, for inclusion in the ACS work programme in the area of Disaster Risk Reduction.

The project has a total budget of 490,000 Euros and an execution period that will end at the close of 2012, in which the following main phases are defined:

- The ACS and the FMI signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in March 2011, to define the co-operation team for the implementation of the SHOCS project.
- Workshops on the implementation of a Quality Management System for Aeronautical Meteorological Services, the first of which was held on May 9-13, 2011, at the CIMH – Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology - in Bridgetown, Barbados, while the second took place in Rodney Bay, St. Lucia, on December 5-9, 2011. Participating in these workshops were Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, as well as Aruba, Curacao, the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands. These training workshops have focussed on Aeronautical Meteorological Services since, according to the rules of the International Civil Aviation Organisation - ICAO – the Quality Management System - QMS – needs to be in force in 2012.
- An evaluative feasibility study on the Caribbean SIDS with recommendations and a plan of action on concrete steps in the area of development. This 41 page report was shared with the relevant government ministries, directors and experts of the NMHS and government agencies responsible for civil protection in the 16 countries involved in the project. The study summarises the current situation regarding the vulnerability of the Caribbean SIDS to natural hazards, including their level of preparedness, particularly regarding their monitoring and forecasting capabilities, commencement and issuing of early warnings and interaction and communication among the agencies responsible for disaster management in the risks communicated. The study also gives an idea of the projects and activities carried out by the various parties, such as CDEMA, UNDP and the WMO. Lastly, this document provides a generic multi-hazard early warning map – DRR process, and describes that process as carried out in the Caribbean.
- Missions in 16 Caribbean SIDS (Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago), with meetings, discussions and interviews with representatives of the relevant government ministries, directors and experts of the NMHS and government agencies responsible for civil protection, for the purpose of proceeding with the Evaluations of the Capabilities of the Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems - MHEWS and DRR in the Caribbean SIDS with emphasis on disaster risk management. Said evaluations gave rise to individual reports (10-15 pages each) with analysis and recommendations on strengthening.

This project has been developed successfully during the period 2010-2012. The results of phase I will be presented in the framework of the final meeting of the project on

November 20-21, 2012, as the opening for the 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the SCDRR carded for November 22-23, 2012. During the final meeting of Phase I of the project, the achievements made throughout the execution of the project will be presented, as well as the challenges that must still be tackled by the region. Thus, it is being awaited for the 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Special Committee, the presentation of the proposal for Phase II of the SHOCS project, which will consist of providing the Caribbean SIDS with the means for strengthening hydrometeorological operations and services, according to the results of the evaluation performed during the course of Phase I.

### **1.2.3. Recommendations**

Moreover, there is no doubt regarding the need to continue "Encouraging and contributing to the strengthening of the regional capacity of cultural and scientific communities to create and improve the early warning systems in the region". In fact, climate change is expected to further raise societies' vulnerability to extreme hydrometeorological phenomena, such as strong winds, marine-coastal conditions, tropical storms, heavy rains/flooding and heat waves. Thus, the Greater Caribbean needs to continue strengthening Hydrometeorological Operations and Services in the Caribbean SIDS.

## **1.3. Promotion of a culture of prevention (see 20 d)**

### **1.3.1. Relevance**

The Caribbean region is exposed regularly to various hazards, particularly meteorological hazards, the main one being hurricanes, whose season runs from June to November. Although there's no stopping such phenomena, it has been recognised however that better prevention and preparedness would reduce their impact on the societies affected.

Improving knowledge of hazards in order to build a culture of safety and resilience, is one of the objectives pursued by the **Hyogo Framework for Action** (priority 3<sup>12</sup>), and also by the **Saint-Marc Plan of Action** (point 17<sup>13</sup>). This involves the development of a culture of prevention and awareness among the population regarding disaster risks, insisting especially on support from the media in this respect.

In order to fulfil this objective, the SCDRR has been developing a radio soap opera entitled: « **Rough Season** », whose goal is to sensitise and reinforce the knowledge of Caribbean populations, as well as improve their behaviour in the face of meteorological phenomena.

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<sup>12</sup> "Use knowledge, innovation and education to build a culture of safety and resilience at all levels" (Priority 3 of the Hyogo Framework for Action).

<sup>13</sup> "Encourage and contribute to engage the media and information and communication technology entities in developing educational activities aimed at increasing knowledge about disaster risk reduction with the support of the scientific community, while creating and strengthening early warning systems" (point 17 of the Saint-Marc Plan of Action).

### 1.3.2. Implementation

Produced by the Centre for Creative and Festival Arts (Arts in Action) of the University of the West Indies - UWI, the radio soap opera was created bearing in mind the cultural and social factors of the Caribbean (especially the Caribbean islands), which was a crucial element for its success and facilitation in spreading the message.

This project, which was formulated by the ACS and the IFRC<sup>14</sup>, with participation from the ISDR, PAHO and the Caribbean Development Bank - CDB, was a powerful example of co-operation in the area of disasters among international organisations working on these issues, as well as co-operation with the private sector by way of its participation in the general effort on risk prevention, as mentioned in point 17 of the Saint-Marc Plan of Action.

The project was initially proposed in May 2004 during the 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Special Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction and officially launched on August 19, 2005 at the ACS headquarters and was originally created for the English-speaking Caribbean.

It was developed in three Phases:

- Phase I, 2004-2005: design and production in CD format, of the radio soap opera « *Rough Season* »

Financing: US\$21,700 (US\$17,700 from the IFRC, the ISDR, PAHO and the CDB and US\$4,000 from the ACS, through the Italian Trust Fund of the Inter-American Development Bank.

- Phase II, 2006-2009: Search for additional financing and broadcast of the soap opera

Financing 2005-2008: TT\$80,500 from the Canadian High Commissioner to broadcast the radio soap opera on three Trinidadian radio stations during the hurricane season. Financing 2009: US\$3,000 from the Kingdom of the Netherlands, to broadcast the radio soap opera on three Trinidadian radio stations, during the period October-December 2009.

- Phase III, from 2010: Sustainability of the project

Since 2010, radio Talk City 91.1FM (Trinidad and Tobago) broadcasts the radio soap opera on an annual basis during the hurricane season, at no charge.

In order to have a more diverse audience, since 2007, the soap opera was also disseminated and used as a teaching tool in schools in Trinidad and Tobago.

In 2011, collaboration was established with an institute in Martinique and the Regional Documentation Centre of Martinique, for the purpose of disseminating the radio soap opera and reproducing a part of it in a linguistic piece targeting French students.

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<sup>14</sup> In the context of the Memorandum of Understanding in the area of co-operation for disaster risk reduction, signed on February 14, 2004, between the ACS and the IFRC.

### **1.3.3. Results**

The broadcast of the radio soap opera in Trinidad and Tobago was a decisive factor for the success of the project. The radio stations in Trinidad have a large audience that extends beyond the borders of the country, which resulted in considerable assistance for the partners of the project, especially for the National Red Cross Societies, and also for the success of the efforts of the Directorate, with broadcasts being received in several English-speaking countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis and St. Vincent and the Grenadines).

Furthermore, the radio soap opera enjoyed significant popular support. According to the reports provided by the radio stations, the broadcasts led to hundreds of telephone calls.

### **1.3.4. Recommendations**

Three main recommendations that are presented for this project are;

1. Translate the radio soap opera into French and Spanish so that it could be broadcasted throughout the entire Caribbean region.
2. Continue the broadcast on more radio stations in Trinidad and Tobago, and also reactivate the network and broadcast in the English-speaking islands in order to continue efforts to create awareness of hurricane and disaster risk in general.
3. Extend the broadcasts and possible usefulness of the radio soap opera, especially in the field of education, as mentioned in the ***Saint-Marc Plan of Action*** (point 14<sup>15</sup>). In pursuing the objective to create awareness throughout the community, it would be important to use this radio soap opera as a teaching tool in the education system of countries as activities for introduction to the topic of disaster risk reduction.

In that regard, all of these points will be considered during the next meeting of the Special Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction, as well as plans for its financing.

In addition to the Memorandum of Understanding, the ACS and the IFRC signed a Letter of Intent on August 3, 2011, for the purpose of defining the objective of their co-operation in the area of risk management in Greater Caribbean countries. This document also addresses the implementation of projects and activities related to simulations and drills, not only for prevention by the population, but to also strengthen the capabilities of the governments of the region

## **1.4.Improved provision of humanitarian assistance at all stages of a disaster (see 20 d)**

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<sup>15</sup> "Encourage and contribute to the exchange of national experiences in introducing disaster risk reduction subject matter in educational activities at all levels (primary, secondary, university, academic and scientific) as well as formal and non-formal training activities." (point 14 of the Saint-Marc Plan of Action).

#### **1.4.1. Relevance:**

In the Caribbean Region there is a growing observance of the existence of different intergovernmental organisations working on humanitarian action, due to the increase in recent years of disasters brought about by natural phenomena in the Latin American and Caribbean Region. This has generated the possibility of working jointly to improve the coordination of humanitarian assistance in emergency and disaster situations.

The Plan of Action approved at the 5<sup>th</sup> Regional Meeting on International Humanitarian Assistance Mechanisms (MIAH), considers as one of the main activities, the creation of a working group to conduct a study on the intergovernmental organisations that work on the management of disasters and humanitarian crises in the Americas and the Caribbean, whose objective is to improve the coordination of humanitarian assistance in the region.

In that regard, both the ACS Secretariat and the Disasters Directorate are invited to participate in this process to formulate the "Preliminary Study on Intergovernmental Organisations for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance in Latin America and the Caribbean", in order to analyse the mandates, functions and roles of the Organisations participating<sup>16</sup>, so as to identify the possible problems that may be hindering the proper coordination of humanitarian assistance. Furthermore, and with a view to arriving at a common legal framework and aligning efforts in the area of humanitarian assistance in the Region, the IFRC, OCHA and the IPU have been working on the development of a "Draft Law for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance", following the rules of the IDRL, where the ACS Disasters Directorate has participated actively in the various preparatory meetings.

It should also be highlighted that the Saint-Marc Plan of Action, especially its point 4, urges States to "encourage and contribute, as appropriate, to the integration of disaster risk reduction into sustainable and safe humanitarian and development planning, programmes and frameworks, including the strategic poverty reduction frameworks".

#### **1.4.2. Implementation:**

Through the signing of the Letter of Intent between the ACS and the IFRC on August 3, 2012, taking into account the Memorandum of Understanding signed on February 14, 2004, they have been identified, the common elements existing in the strategic documents for co-operation, where the sub-regional risk management systems in Latin America are established, such as CDEMA, CAPRADE, CEPREDENAC and APEC (Asia-

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<sup>16</sup> Association of Caribbean States (ACS), Ibero-American General Secretariat (SEGIB), Organisation of American States (OAS), Economic Community of Latin America and the Caribbean (CELAC), Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), Central American Integration System (SICA)-CEPREDENAC, Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM)-CDEMA, Andean Community (CAN)-CAPRADE, Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR)-REHU.

Pacific Economic Co-operation), to name a few<sup>17</sup>. In that respect, agreement has been reached on the implementation of a "road map", which will be the guideline to be followed for both organisations.

Another point outlined in this Letter of Intent is that related to the "Logistical Mapping of the Region", with which the parties are also seeking to "identify the logistical capacity of ports to receive international humanitarian assistance in the event of a disaster, including scenarios where ports are directly affected", this in accordance with points 7, 10, 11, 18, 24 and 25 of the Saint-Marc Plan of Action.

Lastly, this Letter of Intent regarding "Laws, Rules and Regulations governing international response during disasters" strives essentially to provide support to the governments of Member States that are interested in revising their current legislation on international humanitarian assistance in the event of disasters, in order to identify the inadequacies, plan possible improvements and in that way strengthen governments' capacity to coordinate international humanitarian assistance.

Currently and as mentioned in the first part of the document, it has been planned among the joint efforts between the ACS and the IFRC, the convening of a meeting in the near future that will discuss different issues, among them those mentioned previously. Moreover, the Directorate for Disaster Risk Reduction has been participating in 3 meetings that were convened, one in Barbados and 2 in Panama between 2011 and 2012, regarding the formulation of the "Draft Law for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance".

### **1.4.3. Recommendations**

With respect to the proposed "work plan of the study on intergovernmental organisations for management and humanitarian assistance in Latin America and the Caribbean" presented by OCHA, to be developed by the Working Group of Intergovernmental Organisations - WG, considered in the Plan of action approved in Panama, active participation in the continuation of this process is recommended, for the purpose of standardising objectives and strategies, complementing efforts and avoiding possible duplication of mandates, functions and roles.

As regards the work being carried out between the ACS and the IFRC, it is proposed that efforts continue toward the development of the two initiatives that have begun: "Urban Risk" and "Green Response" (which will be described in the following point).

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<sup>17</sup> Central American Comprehensive Risk Management Policy (PCGIR), Andean Risk Management Strategy, Comprehensive Disaster Management Framework (CDEMA), Cusco Meeting (June 2009), Buenos Aires Meeting (June 2010).



## **2. IDENTIFICATION OF MAJOR ISSUES AND FLAGSHIP PROJECTS FOR THE ACS FOR THE FORMULATION OF A FUTURE WORK AGENDA WITH SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES AND DELIVERABLES**

### **2.1. Early warning systems (see mandate 20 d)**

#### **Activity:**

**"Strengthening Hydrometeorological Operations and Services in the Caribbean SIDS" (SHOCS)** – promoted by the Finnish Meteorological Institute with an initial cost of 490,000 Euros.

#### **Results by February 2013:**

The Government of Finland is formulating a project for the Second Phase of the SHOCS, with possible financing in the amount of 1 million Euros. In detail, the following has been planned:

##### **2.1.1. Present the individual reports to the 16 SIDS participating, via telephone or skype with a two fold purpose**

- Present the results of Phase I and consult the stakeholders in order to validate the conclusions and recommendations issued.
- Consult the stakeholders of each country regarding the SHOCS II project proposal.

**Deliverables by February 2013:** Individual reports from each of the participating states will be ready and approved by the stakeholders. These reports will be sent via official mail to the respective government ministries, Directors and experts of the NMHS and government agencies responsible for civil protection in the 16 countries involved in the project.

##### **2.1.2. Present the final results of the SHOCS I project at the following meetings:**

- Meeting of the Directors of the Meteorological Services during the 52<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Caribbean Meteorological Council, organised by the CMO.
- Final Meeting of the SHOCS project carded for November 21-22, 2012, at the ACS headquarters in Port of Spain.
- 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the ACS Special Committee for DRR scheduled to take place on November 23-24, 2012.
- Annual CDEMA Meeting to be convened in December in Jamaica.

#### **Deliverables by February 2013:**

Final report of Phase I of the SHOCS project, a declaration of thanks on the SHOCS project by the relevant government ministries, Directors and experts of the NMHS and government agencies responsible for civil protection in the 16 countries involved in the project.

### **2.1.3. Have the SHOCS II project approved and begin its execution**

- Receive from Finland at the end of September, the Project Concept Document for Phase II.
- Circulate it to Members at the end of October for their comments.
- Present it to the 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Special Committee for DRR carded for the end of November.
- Have it approved at the start of 2013 for its immediate implementation.

### **Deliverables by February 2013:**

Project Concept Document approved by the Special Committee for DRR and by the Ministerial Council of the ACS, having obtained funding and presentation of a clear road map for implementing the project within a period of 2 years.

## **2.2. Awareness and culture of prevention**

### **Activity: *Project on a radio soap opera entitled "Rough Season"***

### **Results by February 2013:**

Each of the three recommendations (point 1.3.4) for the continuation of the project will be **presented for the consideration of the Members during the next meeting of the Special Committee for DRR.**

By February 2013, and according to the decisions of the Special Committee, the activities for each of the recommendations identified may be developed as follows:

### **2.2.1. Translate the radio soap opera into French and Spanish so that it could be broadcasted throughout the Caribbean region**

Efforts will be undertaken to explore the options for financing and to identify partners who may be interested in financing the translations:

- Into French: the International Francophone Organisation, the Alliance Francaise, the French Institute, etc.
- Into Spanish: the Embassy of Spain in Trinidad and Tobago, the Cervantes Institute, the Spanish Agency for International Development Co-operation, etc.

### **Deliverables by February 2013:**

Formulation of a detailed budget for the financing of the translations and presentation of the advancements made in the quest for possible candidates to provide funding.

**2.2.2. Continue the broadcast on more radio stations in Trinidad and Tobago, and also reactivate the network and broadcast in the English-speaking islands in order to continue efforts to create awareness of hurricane and disaster risk in general**

- Update and expand the existing database of radio stations in Trinidad and also in the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean.
- Contact the radio stations and propose their collaboration on the broadcasting of the soap opera.

**Deliverables by February 2013:**

Formulation of a detailed budget for the financing of the broadcasts and presentation of the advancements made in the quest for possible radio stations that wish to collaborate.

**2.2.3. Extend the broadcasts and possible usefulness of the radio soap opera, especially in the field of education**

- Identify the schools in Trinidad and Tobago and approach them (presenting a letter from the Secretariat), for the purpose of proposing to them the free use of the soap opera to create awareness among the students,
- Contact the Office of Disaster Preparedness of Trinidad and Tobago, to propose their collaboration in this regard,
- In conjunction with the communication service of the ACS, facilitate access to the soap opera at the ACS website.

**Deliverables by February 2013:**

Internet Access to the soap opera "Rough Season" available at the ACS website.

**2.3. Humanitarian assistance (see mandate 20 d)**

**Activity 1: Participation in the Working Group of International Organisations for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance in Latin America and the Caribbean, proposed by OCHA (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs)**

**Results:**

Participate in the conducting of a study and analysis of the mandates, functions and roles in the area of disaster management and humanitarian crises, of the intergovernmental organisations of the region, with emphasis on preparedness, response and transition, so that these results could contribute to the adoption of decisions to strengthen humanitarian action in the Region.

**Deliverables by February 2013:**

Firstly, with support from the Secretariat, a response is expected to be given to the invitation to create the Working Group – WG. Secondly, gather and submit information on the mandates, functions and roles of the ACS, together with the analysis of said information. Subsequently, once approved by the SCDRR, incorporate the work schedule proposed into the work agenda of the Directorate for Disaster Risk Reduction, as well as the carrying out of the consultation processes via computerised channels (e-mail, skype) in coordination with and with support from the OCHA advisory team.

Lastly, the formulation of the conclusions and recommendations and the general analysis, will be carried out during an onsite meeting planned for the members of the Working Group, which will take place in October 2012, in Panama City, Panama.

**Activity 2: Participate in activities mutually agreed to with the IFRC toward the development of a "Draft Law for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance"**

**Results:**

Participate in the development of a "Draft Law for the domestic facilitation and regulation of international disaster relief and initial recovery assistance", to help States incorporate the recommendations of the IDRL18 Guidelines into their national legislation.

**Deliverables by February 2013:**

Taking into account that the Special Committee for Disaster Risk Reduction of the ACS serves as a major forum for the transmission of information and the exchange of experiences, it is expected that by the next meeting of the SCDRR carded for the second fortnight in November 2012, all of these advancements would be presented, information shared with the Members States and advice offered with support from the IFRC, to those who are interested in incorporating them into their legislation.

**Activity 3: Urban Risk**

Project in collaboration with the Red Cross and based on the MOU in force, presented by the Red Cross of Colombia and the National Risk System, at a cost of US \$120,000.00. Awaiting the endorsement of the Special Committee.

**Results:**

Develop guidelines with a series of standard indicators, as well as regulations and rights, which could be used by the ACS Member States and Associate Members to support their respective prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and post-disaster measures, so that specifically, owners of homes located in buildings, following massive disasters, could have access to land in order to satisfy the needs for immediate shelter after the occurrence of a disaster.

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<sup>18</sup> Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance.

**Deliverables by February 2013:**

The final Concept Document for the Urban Risk Project, as well as the "Road Map" to be followed for the development of said project.

**Activity 4: Green Response**

Project presented by the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (ODPM) of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the Federation of the Red Cross. The ACS has seven additional institutions to manage this issue. It is planning a Seminar in Panama to agree on it. The ACS will mark a global milestone in this issue and it is hoped that the project would be approved at the next meeting of the Special Committee.

**Results:**

Highlight the environmental and economic benefits in order to determine the availability and effectiveness of the green products and technologies that could be used in response to emergencies and in the recovery process, in the case of disasters in ACS Member States, for the construction of shelters, lighting, heating, as the case may be, and also for food preparation, water supply and food for the injured.

**Deliverables by February 2013:**

The final Concept Document for the Urban Risk Project, as well as the "Road Map" to be followed for the development of said project.

**3. OTHER PROJECTS OF PRIME IMPORTANCE**

Three very important projects of the DRRR are worthy of mention, since they represent a significant impact for Member Countries with respect to strengthening their capabilities and regarding the culture of prevention, as well as the incorporation of the gender perspective into DRR management.

- **"Virtual International Diploma in Disaster Risk and Reduction Management in English, Spanish and French"**; Project supported by the Advanced School of Public Administration of Colombia (Escuela Superior de Administración Pública de Colombia) and presented by the Government of Colombia. The idea is to be able to train 120 persons, with three or four delegates coming from each country, so that they could obtain this virtual diploma, at no cost to the ACS.
- **"Establishment of a Regional Risk Training Centre"**, presented by the Government of the Dominican Republic through its National System Directorate. The Project has a cost of US\$5.3 million, of which the Dominican Republic will provide US\$1.7 million for its activation. Awaiting the endorsement of the Special Committee at its next meeting.
- **"Incorporation of the Gender perspective into Disaster Risk Reduction"**;

- This is an initiative of the Colombian Government and the ACS is awaiting confirmation for its financing. It is a rather ambitious initiative, which needs technical support from various International Organisations and which has Tourism, Trade, Disaster and Transport components.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Directorate for Disaster Risk Reduction of the Association of Caribbean States is of the view that mandate 20d continues to be relevant and it believes that it is important that it be renewed, in order to continue supporting the activities, projects and programmes that are underway, as well as those that can possibly be carried out. The Directorate also believes that it is important to add to the ACS Plan of Action in the area of Disasters, issues pertaining to "disaster risk reduction subject matter in educational activities as well as formal and non-formal training activities" (point 14 of the ***Saint-Marc Plan of Action***), and the crosscutting nature of integrating the gender approach into disaster risk reduction policies, plans and actions in the Greater Caribbean region (point 6 of the ***Saint-Marc Plan of Action***).

In general, it considers it extremely important that the Special Committee for DRR and the Secretariat continue to strengthen the implementation of the ***Saint-Marc Plan of Action***, as the main guide for work in this field.

## **4. LINKING THE ACS TO COUNTRIES THROUGH A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

### **4.1. Communication strategy**

The Directorate for Disaster Risk Reduction is currently working on a communication strategy to sensitise the public concerning its projects, and above all, to provide up to date information. The Directorate is currently preparing new web presentations, which

are quite reflective of the projects being executed and which will be available in the three languages of the organisation. Annex II contains a draft of these presentations.

In addition, an information bulletin dedicated to the transmission of information pertaining to Disaster Risk Reduction in the Greater Caribbean is expected to be created, for the purpose of continuing the ongoing exchange of information among the Conference Bodies, international co-operation entities, Ministries responsible for planning and finance, as well as organisations specialising in disaster risk reduction.

Bearing in mind that the SCDRR serves as a major forum for exchanging experiences and transmitting information and lessons learnt, efforts are being undertaken to highlight its function, reactivate it and use it as the primary communication mechanism.

Lastly, it is striving to expand the media coverage in order to greater publicise the activities and events of both the Association and the Special Committee for Disaster Risk Reduction.

#### **4.2.Updating of institutional contacts**

In order to achieve increased participation from Members in the activities and events of the ACS, have an up to date database, be in permanent contact with Members and explore the possibilities for financing for projects, the DDDR has begun a process of updating and verifying institutional contacts with positive results.

## **ANNEXES**

### **ANNEX I:**

#### **CO-OPERATION WITH THE NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ENTITIES DEDICATED TO DISASTER REDUCTION**

| <b>ENTITY</b>            | <b>LEGAL INSTRUMENT</b>   |
|--------------------------|---|
| FMI                      | Memorandum of Understanding between the ACS and the Finnish Meteorological Institute (FMI) on "Strengthening Hydrometeorological Operations and Services in the Caribbean SIDS" (SHOCS).  |
| IFRC                     | Memorandum of Understanding between the ACS and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (UN-IFRC). February 14, 2004. Panama<br>Letter of Intent between the ACS and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (UN-IFRC) on the Plan of Action for Risk Management in Greater Caribbean countries. August 2, 2011, Colombia |
| CDERA/CDEMA              | Memorandum of Understanding between the ACS and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA). February 14, 2004. Trinidad and Tobago  |
| UN-ISDR                  | Memorandum of Understanding between the ACS and the Inter-Agency Secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN-ISDR). June 24, 2004.   |
| CEPREDENAC               | Memorandum of Understanding between the ACS and the Coordination Centre for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America (CEPREDENAC). July 28, 2005. Panama  |
| White Helmets Commission | Memorandum of Understanding between the ACS and the White Helmets Commission of the Republic of Argentina. May 18, 2007. Trinidad and Tobago  |
| LA RED                   | Memorandum of Understanding between the ACS Secretariat and the Network of Social Studies on Disaster Prevention in Latin America (LA RED). March 19, 2002. Guatemala   |
| CTBTO                    | Agreement between the ACS and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO). March 7, 2005. Trinidad and Tobago  |

### **ANNEX I:**

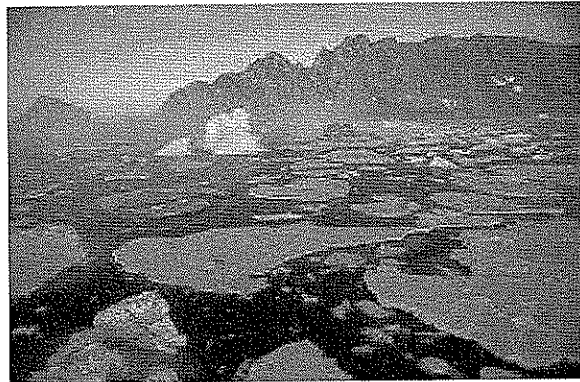
#### **NEW WEB PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECTS IN PROGRESS**

##### **Risk disaster reduction Project: "GREEN RESPONSE"**



## CONTEXT

The reality of climate change and its present and potential impact on our societies is now the subject of international consensus. Because of this awareness, sustainable development and ecological transition are key priorities among the challenges we now face. By causing increasingly serious damage at more frequent intervals, climate change is complicating efforts to reduce poverty in already economically fragile areas.



As a developing region that has been frequently hit by different disasters, the Greater Caribbean is particularly sensitive to the effects of climate change, which has harmful consequences for economic and social development as well as political stability.

In the area of disaster risk reduction and management, the ACS has spearheaded a project, the objective of which is to promote a “green response”, that is, one that is sensitive to the environment during a disaster.

The project entitled “**The green response to disasters**” arose out of the need to take into account sustainable development, including during crisis situations, because in most cases, mobilisation in such situations is focused on the response to immediate needs without seeking to achieve long-term ecological effectiveness. These responses should respect the values and principles which can help minimise the impact of humans on the environment and thus facilitate sustainable development. The long-term objective



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is to promote at all levels, the ecological transition that our planet urgently needs.

## Objectives

### **General objective**

To provide the governments and peoples of the Caribbean with ecologically effective, environment-friendly tools and processes that they can use in response to disasters.

### **Specific objectives**

- Determine which ecological products and processes are likely to be used in emergencies and during rehabilitation following disasters occurring in the Caribbean (building shelters, lighting, heating, food preparation, supplies of food and water for disaster victims),
- Facilitate the production of the above elements through the use of good practices, case studies, product life-cycle analysis, taking into account their ecological footprint,
- Organise the manufacture and bulk sale of the above items,
- Facilitate the shipment of the pre-stocked products mentioned above to neighbouring Caribbean countries,
- Reproduce this model in Central America, South America and other regions of the world,

#### Project description/activities

- Phase 1 : feasibility study
- Phase 2 : development/obtain ecological product prototypes from the Caribbean region.
- Phase 3: pilot testing of these green product prototypes
- Phase 4: in view of the deployment of the products identified and collected during phases 1 and 2, and the results of phase 3, produce these goods for distribution in Caribbean countries in the case of a disaster

#### Schedule and sums required

##### **Schedule: currently being determined**

##### Financing:

- Phase 1 : 50 000 USD per year
- Phases 2 and 3 : to be determined based on the results of phase 1

#### Project partners

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross are project partners.

The IFRC is a key player in emergency response, but its objective is also to reconcile disaster management and sustainable development.

The Federation is the largest humanitarian organisation in the world (187 national member Societies, a Secretariat in Geneva and more than 60 delegations across the globe).



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It is present during relief operations in disasters and crisis situations, and is also involved “pre and post” for long-term development (disaster preparedness, strengthening community resilience and capacity-building in societies, reconstruction and other activities)

The IFRC has broad experience and world-recognised expertise, and is positioned as a service provider to governments in responding to basic needs in the areas of disaster management, health and social issues.

## **SPECIAL FUND**

### **Background**

As stated in Article XIII of the Convention, the Special Fund was established "for the purpose of financing programmes of technical cooperation and related research consistent with the purposes and functions of the Association".

As such the Special Fund has maintained its objective as coordinating efforts to manage the distribution and financing of projects aimed at fostering regional cooperation among ACS Members and consequently facilitating integration in the Greater Caribbean region.

### **Status of the Special Fund since the IV Summit (2006-2008)**

During the period 2006 - 2008, there was an increase in project mobilisation and project activity.

- Since the 4<sup>th</sup> Summit of Panama on 29 July 2005 the Council of National Representatives of the Special Fund, Nicaragua experienced new life and dynamism, in accordance with the directions defined by the Heads of State and Government.
- The Regulation of the Special Fund document was revised and approved in 2006.
- Technical Assistance was received from France and the Regional Council of Martinique, to support the Association's efforts in project management and resource mobilisation.
- A series of Co-operation Agreements was signed between the ACS and the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Turkey and the United Kingdom.
- Modest donations were received from donor organisations and Observer Countries in the amount of approximately US \$0.9 million to finance projects.

### **Status of the Special Fund (2009-2012)**

During the period 2009-2012, the continuity of projects and effective resource mobilization strategies of the CNRSF was hampered by the absence of a project manager to administer the Fund.

- The CNRSF has been the recipient of Funds mainly from the Republic of Turkey and Korea towards various projects as well as the Regional Council of Guadeloupe and the Kingdom of the Netherland Antilles.
- Technical Assistance was received from the Regional Council of Guadeloupe to support the Association's efforts in the development of the new ACS website.

- The first Audit of the Special Fund was executed in 2011 for the period 2009 – 2010.
- The Secretariat received €200,000.00 in 2012 from the French Development Agency towards the execution of various projects.
- In July 2008, ECLAC on the request of the Secretariat produced a very important report on the results and challenges associated with the activities of the Special Fund, highlighting the following:

"Our investigation revealed a number of inefficiencies in the present operational and project management capacity of the Association, including its technical support function for the organisation's resource mobilisation initiative, in the following areas:

- a. Governance arrangements of the SF;
- b. Management of the project cycle
- c. Execution of externally-funded projects; and
- d. Identification of new, non-conventional sources of funding."

### **Proposals**

- 1) The Association's limitations in implementing a feasible resource mobilisation strategy and obtaining adequate extra-budgetary resources over the last 3 years, particularly since 2009, was perhaps one of the greatest obstacles to achieving high impact results, which has negatively affected the political development of the Association's image, resulting in a vicious circle when attempting to attract new resources.
- 2) The 17<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council in Agreement 13/12 agrees to 'To instruct the Secretariat to give consideration to hiring a project manager to take charge of the operations of the Special Fund, in accordance with the budgetary capacity of the organization.'
- 3) It is necessary to source technical and South-South co-operation, whose importance is essential for the development and management of regional co-operation initiatives.