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Emergency Preparedness Activities in the Caribbean Standard Project Report 2018

World Food Programme in Panama, Republic of (PA)

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Project Results

Activities and Operational Partnerships

Hurricanes Maria and Irma caused devastation in a number of countries in the Lesser Antilles in the Caribbean. In Dominica and Barbuda, infrastructure was totally demolished. National and regional first responders lacked logistical assets that could have made recovery more efficient. In 2018, WFP collaborated with the Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and its national counterparts in Barbados (Disaster Emergency Management Office) and Jamaica (Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management) to preposition logistical assets. These assets enhance emergency response in storage, emergency offices, electricity and other preparedness equipment. Barbados and Jamaica are two of four Sub-regional Focal Point (SRFP) countries, which support CDEMA's coordination unit in disaster response. The national disaster offices in these countries act as the SRFP. In Jamaica, the SRFP serves the Bahamas, Belize, Haiti and Turks and Caicos Islands and the SRFP in Barbados serves Dominica, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The logistical assets will be stored at the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management in Jamaica and at CDEMA headquarters in Barbados. WFP provided the Barbados SRFP with a 40-foot-high cube container to store these assets as additional space was required. Emergency telecommunications items such as satellite phones were also purchased and are prepositioned at the WFP office in Barbados and ready to be used in case of emergency in the Caribbean region. Emergency kits to support deployments of both CDEMA and WFP staff were also purchased.

Results

WFP's emergency response in Dominica demonstrated how a deficit of emergency logistics supplies is un conducive to an effective disaster response. After Hurricane Maria, Dominica was totally devastated and emergency response personnel often found themselves without accommodation, electricity and potable water. As a result of this project, WFP now has ten rapid response/survival kits readily available for CDEMA (Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency) personnel in case of a disaster, including 10 flood lights, 2 generators, 2 electrical kits, 1 solar panel, along with other materials and supplies to establish a prefabricated office to enhance emergency response capacities. By prepositioning these assets using CDEMA's sub-regional focal point system, logistical assets can be deployed to neighbouring islands in a timely manner or used in-country prior to or following a disaster.

The project met intended objectives, as emergency equipment and supplies have been propositioned in two of CDEMA's regional focal point countries – Barbados and Jamaica.

Performance Monitoring

An assessment has not yet been carried out for this project. The nature of the intervention suggests that a comprehensive evaluation of its efficiency and effectiveness can only truly be undertaken in response to a disaster or emergency.

The process of procuring the items took approximately four months before reaching CDEMA's storage facility in Barbados and WFP is currently exploring ways in which this timeline can be shortened. There is also a preliminary exploration on how to cut shipping costs, for example, by ordering all consignments in the shipper's own containers (meaning owned by WFP, CDEMA or partner) so that there are no container lease demurrage charges. This approach also means that the containers can be used by the partners as emergency or semi-permanent storage.

The Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management in Jamaica has received the logistics assets and a receipt has confirmed that all components arrived in good order. WFP staff was on site to observe the delivery and unpacking of the logistics assets in Barbados and visited the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management in Jamaica.

Progress Towards Gender Equality

This intervention is part of a wider effort to strengthen emergency response and preparedness in the Caribbean. Access to logistics assets, particularly the provision of response kits, provides an opportunity for greater gender

balance within response teams and greater security for female emergency response professionals. Further to this, guided by WFP's Gender Policy (2015-2020), training on use of logistical assets, as well as other work in end-to-end supply chain management, emergency telecommunications, shock responsive social protection and climate change adaptation all strive to ensure gender equality and women's empowerment are a vital element of capacity strengthening in the region.

With regional and national teams having increased surge capacity to respond to disasters as well as the tools and supporting assets to do their work, it is anticipated that plans and interventions will better address the unique needs of disaster-affected women, men, boys and girls in the Caribbean.

Emergency & Preparedness Response (EPR) Programme for the Caribbean

It is in light of these experiences, coupled with the recognition of increasing risks associated with climate change for small island developing states, that WFP has expanded its presence in the Caribbean by opening an office in Barbados. The office is providing technical assistance and is strengthening capacities of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and its 18 Participating States [1] to better respond to future disasters and meet the needs of their populations. WFP's efforts will focus on four main areas of support: information management and analysis, supply chain management and emergency telecommunications, shock-responsive social protection and climate change adaptation and risk financing.

This emergency and preparedness project contributes to WFP's broader strategy to strengthen emergency response capacities in the Caribbean. The project helped to address a critical gap during the peak of the hurricane season and complemented WFP's capacity strengthening activities with CDEMA and the four sub-regional focal points.

Figures and Indicators

Data Notes

Cover page photo © WFP//Benjamin De Barros.

WFP and partners are offloading the logistics assets in Barbados at CDEMA headquarters.

[1] CDEMA is an inter-regional support network of independent emergency units throughout the Caribbean. Participating States include: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Commonwealth of the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Republic of Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Suriname, Republic of Trinidad & Tobago, Turks & Caicos Islands and the British Virgin Islands.