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COMMUNITY DISASTER RISK REDUCTION: WINDWARD ISLANDS

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INTRODUCTION

- Economic disaster losses increasing globally (UN/ISDR, 2011).
- The Caribbean, 2nd most hazard-prone region in the world – hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions and others (Collymore, 2011).
- Regional and national institutions have been implementing measures to build capacity in the Caribbean.
- There are significant improvements however, this enhanced capacity has not effectively reduced disaster risks in some communities in the Windward Islands.

AIM OF RESEARCH

To assess the vulnerability and capacity of communities to reduce risks to hazards in the Windward Islands (Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines).

RESULTS: HAZARD, VULNERABILITY, CAPACITY AND RESILIENCE

High level of vulnerability and exposure to hazards

- Communities can be made inaccessible by the impact of certain hazards – landslides, floods.
- Settlements in hazardous locations, e.g. coasts, hillslides.
- Homes in need of repair or reconstruction.
- Low educational achievements – 50% primary education highest.
- High unemployment – 27% participants.

Limited Capacity and Low Resilience

- Insufficient knowledge and training in disaster related areas – 36% trained.
- However, 76% willing to attend training.
- Limitations in risk transfers and micro-credit
- Over 80% have no insurance, Fig 1.
- Lack of finance - main reason for no insurance.
- About 80%, no family emergency plans.
- Preparedness usually random activities for hurricanes.

Fig. 1: Insurance of properties

Limited Capacity and Low Resilience

CONCLUSION

- The Caribbean is prone to multiple hazards which often cause disasters.
- Vulnerability is high, limited resilience and capacity.
- Communities and community groups are usually willing to do more.
- Community capacity can be enhanced to be more effective in building resilience and reducing disaster risks.

REFERENCES


FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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