

Northumbria Research Link

Citation: Ferdinand, Idelia (2012) Community disaster risk reduction: Windward Islands. In: Northumbria Research Conference, 16 - 17 May 2012, Northumbria University, Newcastle upon Tyne.

URL: <http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/researchandconsultanc...>
<<http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/researchandconsultancy/sa/research2012/?view=Standard>>

This version was downloaded from Northumbria Research Link:
<https://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/id/eprint/7435/>

Northumbria University has developed Northumbria Research Link (NRL) to enable users to access the University's research output. Copyright © and moral rights for items on NRL are retained by the individual author(s) and/or other copyright owners. Single copies of full items can be reproduced, displayed or performed, and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided the authors, title and full bibliographic details are given, as well as a hyperlink and/or URL to the original metadata page. The content must not be changed in any way. Full items must not be sold commercially in any format or medium without formal permission of the copyright holder. The full policy is available online: <http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/policies.html>

This document may differ from the final, published version of the research and has been made available online in accordance with publisher policies. To read and/or cite from the published version of the research, please visit the publisher's website (a subscription may be required.)



**Northumbria
University**
NEWCASTLE



UniversityLibrary

COMMUNITY DISASTER RISK REDUCTION: WINDWARD ISLANDS

Idelia Ferdinand, School of Built and Natural Environment, Northumbria University

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).

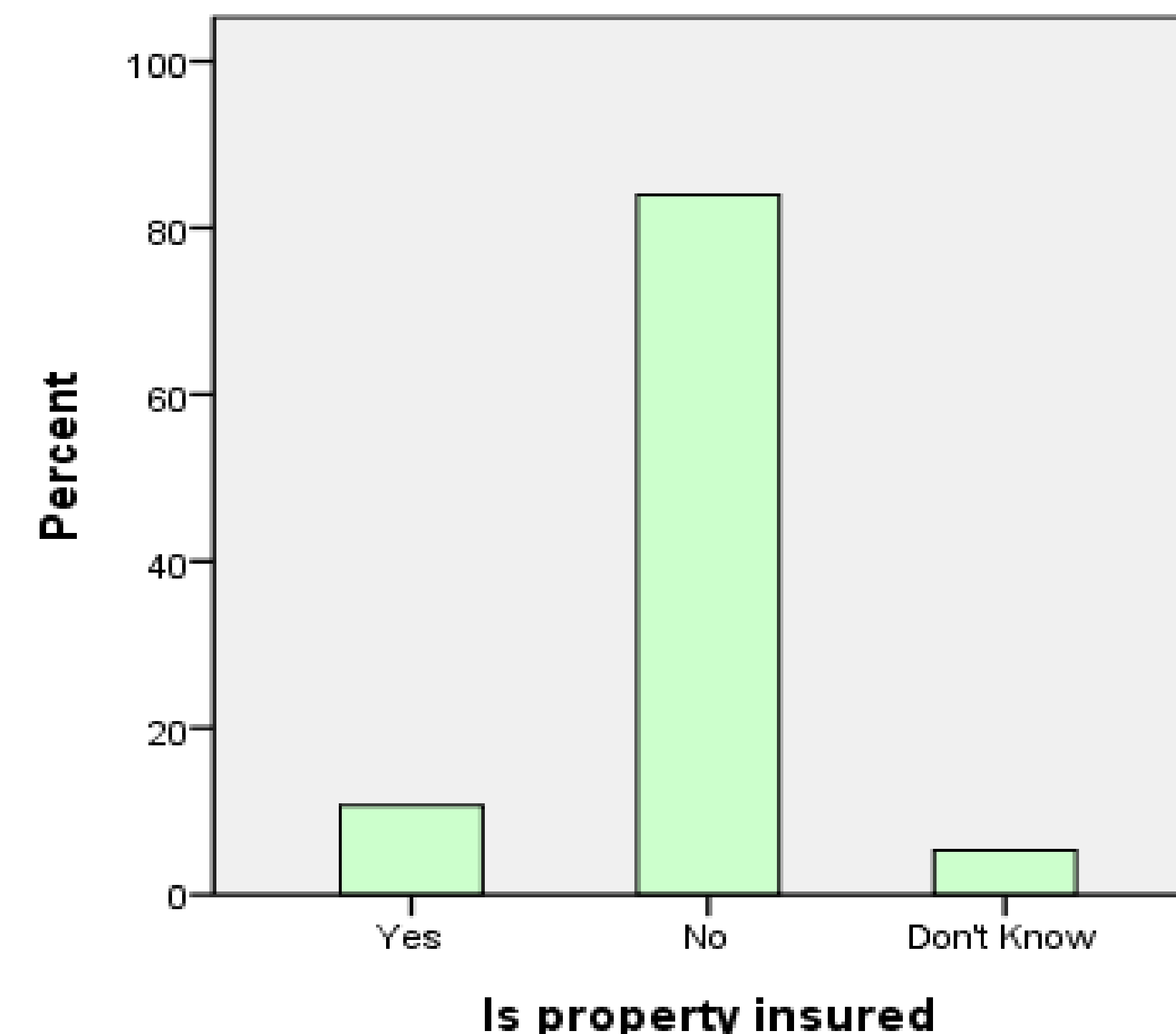


RESULTS : HAZARD, VULNERABILITY , CAPACITY AND RESILIENCE

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, hillsides.
- Homes in need of repair or reconstruction.
- Low educational achievements – 50% primary education highest.
- High unemployment – 27% participants.

Fig. 1: Insurance of properties



Community cohesion and structures

- People feel accepted in their community - 92%.
- In disasters people willing to assist – 80%.
- People are willing to help develop their community – 60%.
- Community groups exist but face many challenges.
- Political interference affects community cohesion.
- “They only give supplies to whoever support their party” Participant.



Limited Capacity and Low Resilience

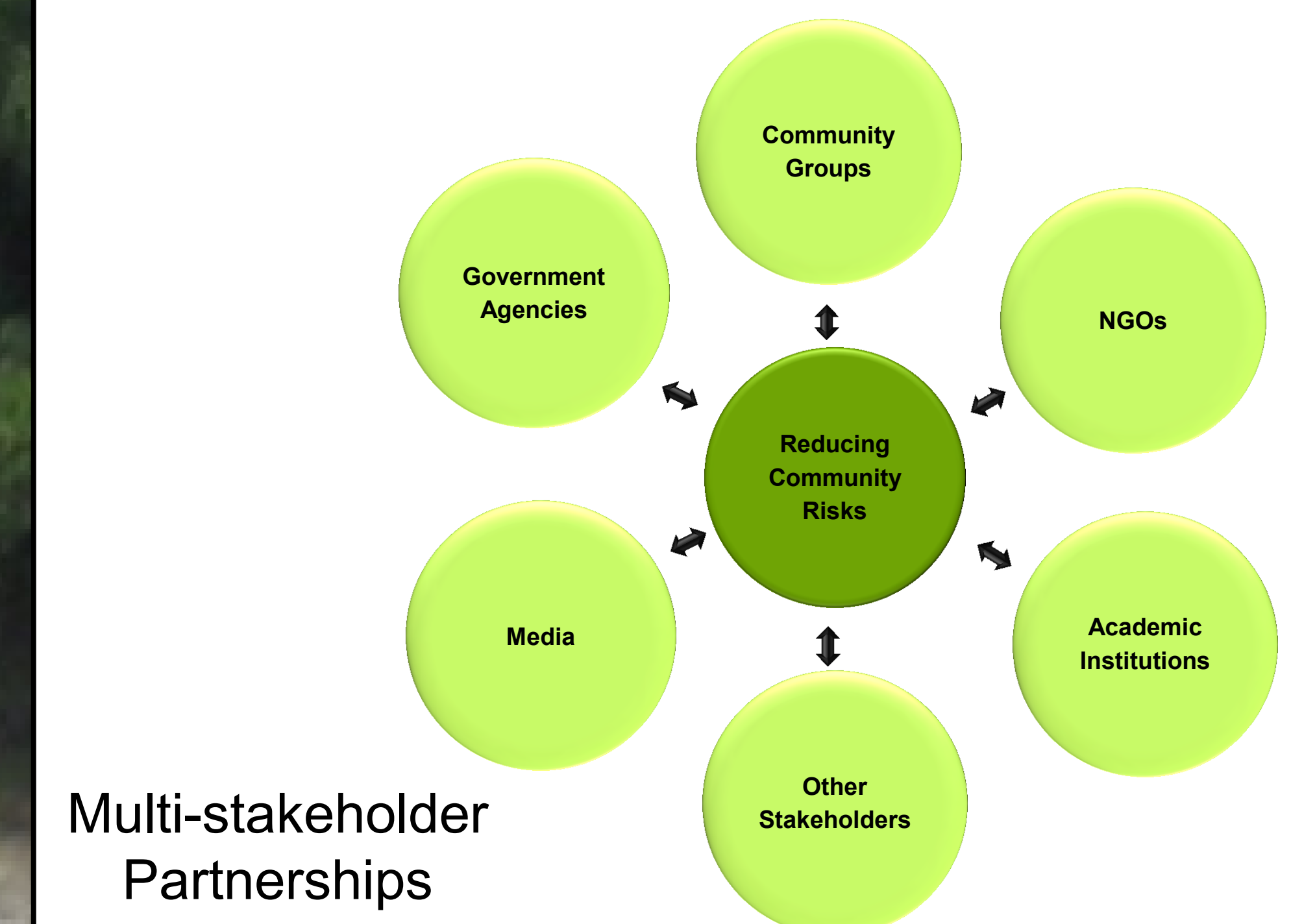
- Insufficient knowledge and training in disaster related areas – 36% trained.
- However, 76% willing to attend training.
- Limitations in risk transfers and micro-credit
- **Over 80% have no insurance, Fig 1.**
- **Lack of finance - main reason for no insurance.**
- About 80%, no family emergency plans.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



BUILDING CAPACITY, REDUCING RISKS

Strengthening Communities Capacity

- Identifying and addressing vulnerability.
- Livelihood security.
- Continuous awareness and education .
- Risk transfer mechanism – affordable
- Disaster preparedness – ongoing.
- Promote prevention and mitigation.



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

Collymore, J. (2011) Disaster management in the Caribbean: Perspectives on institutional capacity reform and development, Environmental Hazards, 10:1, 6-22.

UN/ISDR (2011) Economic disaster losses increasing, threatening all regions, rich and poor countries warn new United Nations Report. Press Release, Geneva: UN/ISDR.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Supervisors: Dr. G. O'Brien, Dr. J. Jayawickrama , Prof. Phil O'Keefe

Student: idelia.ferdinand@northumbria.ac.uk