

OFFICE OF DISASTER MANAGEMENT
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ODM NEWSLETTER

DISASTER FACTS AND TIDBITS

MANAGING DISASTER RISK IN A COVID-19 ENVIRONMENT

The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic has ushered in what is now known as the “new normal”. All sectors of society have been affected by COVID-19 including the Disaster Office. The possibility has always existed of having to manage multiple hazards simultaneously. The pandemic has made this a reality for the disaster mechanism where the management of any other emergency or disaster situation will be against a COVID-19 backdrop. Dominica, of course, is no stranger to multiple hazards given its unique status of being prone to several natural hazards in addition to human induced hazards. The 2020 Atlantic Hurricane Season was like no other as across the region disaster managers were concerned with how to operate effectively simultaneously with COVID-19. New considerations had to

be given to adapting or adjusting the usual practices.

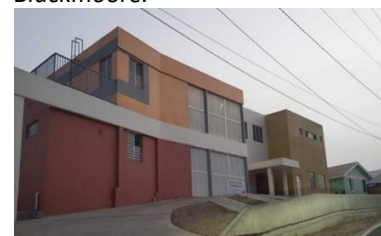
Sheltering during COVID-19

One area of concern was the provision of emergency shelter facilities given that social and physical distancing, which is required for COVID-19 safety, would be somewhat difficult to achieve in public shelters. Approximately 4000 persons indicated that they would be in need of sheltering. The national disaster system rose to the challenge with adequate shelter facilities sourced for Dominica. 118 public emergency shelters were provided on the 2020 shelters list. Shelter capacity was also boosted by the many apartments provided by the national system which means fewer persons would require public shelter as compared to 2018 and 2019. Additionally, the first Regional Emergency / Resource Centre constructed in Layou was

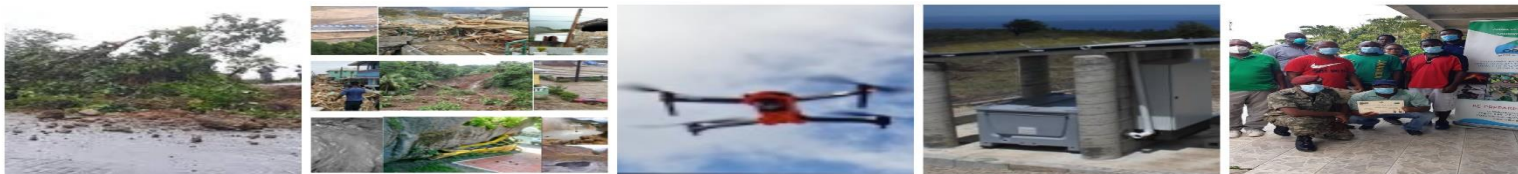
commissioned and is now available to the national shelter system. This facility has a total floor space (ground and first floor) of 740 m² and capacity to accommodate 115 persons.



Commissioning of the Layou Emergency / Resource Centre: Minister for Public Works and the Digital Economy, Senator Cassani Laville handing over keys to Minister responsible for Disaster Management, Honourable Rayburn Blackmoore.



Layou Emergency / Resource Centre



New Resource Demands for COVID-19

The lead on the COVID-19 response is the Health Sector given that it is primarily a medical situation. However, collective action is critical and is quite evident in Dominica's approach where all sectors and the population as a whole continue to do their part to prevent or contain the spread of this pandemic. The ODM has a responsibility to provide assistance which at varying times include logistics, support for monitoring agencies and provision of resources. Through the support of regional and international partners, such as the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and the USSC Civil-Military Assistance Division's Humanitarian Assistance Program, the ODM was able to provide PPE supplies to all levels of society including first responders (Health, Police and Fire and Ambulance Services), other essential workers and the general public.



ODM received COVID-19 supplies through regional partnership with CDEMA, funded by USSC Civil-Military Assistance Division's Humanitarian Assistance Program.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

National Collaborations

It is widely accepted that no one organization can effectively achieve Disaster Risk Reduction without the support of key stakeholders from the public and private sector, communities and NGOs. The impact and ongoing recovery from Hurricane Maria and the battle now being fought to control the COVID-19 pandemic drive home this view strongly. The ODM has sent a clear indication to key partners that collaboration and collective action is a necessity and will be fostered. The ODM continues to forge ties with various departments through the provision of resources to execute their projects. In this issue, the focus is on The Ministry of Environment, Rural Modernization and Kalinago Upliftment and the two Departments: 1) Dominica Solid Waste Management Corporation (DSWMC) and 2) Forestry, Wildlife & Parks Division.

DSWMC: The DSWMC has undertaken a project to remove derelict vehicles in public spaces across the country. The plan is to remove up to 500 derelict vehicles by December 2020. This project falls under the Corporation's disaster preparedness efforts during the hurricane season. The ODM has provided support to this project through the provision of trucks to transport derelicts. Blocked drains and waterways are frequently identified as the cause of some localized flooding especially in urban areas. Large scale dumping of debris including derelict vehicles can exacerbate flooding through damming effect.

Forestry Wildlife & Parks Division: The ODM also supported the Forestry, Wildlife and Parks Division in their Nursery Rehabilitation Project through the provision of trucks to transport plants and other resources. Tree planting is valuable in many ways. Restoring of ground cover helps to reduce flood and landslide impact which affects Dominica annually.



In the long term, reforestation will support climate change adaptation and mitigation activities, which is projected to cause more intense storms, a reality which Dominica and the region as a whole is already dealing with if we recall hurricanes Irma, Maria and Dorian, in recent times. The goal is to act now to reduce the risk later. Remember, we cannot prevent natural hazards from occurring, but their impact can be reduced.



ODM support the DSWMC in derelict removal project

European Union/NAO (Dominica) gives ODM wings!

Emergency management activities at the ODM received a major boost this September with the provision of a drone from the European Union (EU) facilitated by the National Authorising Office (NAO) in Dominica. This drone could not have come at a better time as one week after it was commissioned the ODM was able to provide aerial footage of the Soufriere area in the south of Dominica to the SRC during an investigation of some form of emission at Soufriere. Again, this highlights the importance of collaboration in effective Disaster Risk Reduction. Much appreciation to the Head of NAO, Ms. Carleen Roberts, for seeing the value in this kind of support.



Ms. Carleen Roberts, Head of NAO/Dominica and Mr. Fitzroy Pascal, National Disaster Coordinator - ODM, commissioning the drone (Photos by: Paul Crask).

“we cannot prevent natural hazards from occurring, but their impact can be reduced”



ONGOING PROJECTS

Among the activities of the ODM is to undertake projects aimed at disaster risk reduction and to increase the level of safety of the public. Projects are selected and implemented such that they cover the disaster management spectrum of mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery and importantly apply best practices and lessons learned from previous events. Key projects currently being implemented include:

1. Regional Shelters - Jimmit and Castle Bruce

The Layou centre will not be the only such facility in Dominica as plans are underway to construct two (2) additional Regional Emergency Shelters, one in Jimmit and the other in Castle Bruce. Financing was secured through the European Union in the amount of Euro \$11 million (XCD \$33 Million) towards the construction of these two facilities. Contracts were signed in June to commence construction for a duration of 18 months. The facility in the Jimmit area is intended to accommodate vulnerable people along the West Coast of Dominica from Roseau to Tarreau. The building will have a total floor space of 22,736 Sq. ft. and capacity to accommodate 500 persons. The Castle Bruce Regional Shelter will accommodate approximately 300 vulnerable persons along the East Coast of Dominica to include the communities of Kalinago Territory, Castle Bruce, San Sauveur, Good Hope, Morpo, Tranto, Dis Pax and Petite Soufriere

2. Mini Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) and Warehouse - Castle Bruce

The USSC Civil-Military Assistance Division's Humanitarian Assistance Program will construct a Disaster Relief Warehouse at Castle Bruce. This facility will also be utilized as an Emergency Operations Centre for the east of the island for remote monitoring from the main EOC at Jimmit.

3. Communication System and Mini EOC- Capuchin

This project will establish a Community Emergency Operations Centre at Capuchin and a Communication System linking Capuchin with other communities along the west

coast and the main EOCs facilitated by the Canada Caribbean Disaster Risk Management Fund (CCDRMF). The project seeks to improve emergency communications by enabling communities to communicate with each other and the national EOC before, during and after an event and to greatly improve overall efficiency of operations to save lives.

4. Enhancement of Seismic Monitoring Network

The seismic monitoring network was severely damaged during Hurricane Maria. Local, regional and international partners continue to provide tremendous support to repair and upgrade the network. Efforts are ongoing to have the network restored with the assistance of the Seismic Research Centre (SRC). Equipment was received from the Volcano Disaster Assistance Program (VDAP). The Disaster Vulnerability Reduction Project (DVRP) is currently evaluating bids for additional equipment.



Seismic monitoring station



STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY BASED DISASTER MANAGEMENT

The involvement of the people who are vulnerable to hazards in the various communities is key in formulating and implementing plans for their safety and more so towards building local and national resilience in disaster management. The ODM with the support of Local Government Division and the Climate Resilience Execution Agency of Dominica (CREAD) has redoubled efforts towards forming or strengthening existing Community Disaster Management Committees (CDMC) and District Disaster Management Committees (DDMC), including the rebuilding of the Disaster Committees at Campbell and Good Hope and the formation of the committee in Dos Dane.

Over the past months, the ODM has been actively engaged with committees across the island – providing support, gaining first-hand view of their concerns and suggestions and importantly providing training in areas such as shelter management and emergency radio communication. Communication among the committees as well as with the ODM have improved significantly through the formation of a WhatsApp group. This allows for more frequent communication and provision of updates among all parties.

District Disaster Management Committees are intended to provide the essential link between the National Emergency Planning Organization (NEPO) and the communities which they represent. At the community level, the objective of the Disaster Committees is to strengthen the disaster response capability of the communities and to develop local response mechanisms within the framework of the District Emergency Committees.



TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Provision of training opportunities for key operatives in community based disaster management remains paramount. Trainings were designed to ensure that disaster committee members and their teams from all seven Districts - Portsmouth/North; Marigot/North East; Castle Bruce/East; La Plaine/South East; Grand Bay/South; Roseau/South West; St Joseph/West and the Kalinago Territory would benefit.

1. Emergency Shelter Management

The Office of Disaster Management provided training in Emergency Shelter Management over the period from June 29th to August 25th. Given that we are all operating in a COVID-19 environment, the shelter management training included guidelines for use and management of shelters during the COVID-19 Pandemic both for the shelter team and the shelterers. Ninety-one (91) persons were trained with 63 females and 28 males. Volunteer shelter management trainers were Mrs. Vernanda Raymond, Ms. Lydia LeBlanc, Mr. Lazare Charles, Nurse Fiona Glenville and Mrs. Dernel Dailey Alexander.

2. Basic Emergency Radio Communication

Hurricane Maria highlighted the fact that operations cannot rest solely on conventional communication methods and the need to have in place back-up communication system. Hence 2 way-radio radio communication installation and training are critical towards building resilience in communications and to implement best practices in Disaster Risk Reduction. Basic Emergency radio training and installation were facilitated by Sergeant Joseph Raymond of the Commonwealth of Dominica Police Force from the 2nd July to 27th August. Just over one hundred (100) persons were trained (61 females and 40 males). Emergency Radio Equipment were installed in the Kalinago Territory, Good Hope and La Plaine. Installation will continue over the next few months.

Bellevue Chopin Community Disaster Management Community clean-up day activity



3. Warehouse Management and Relief Supply Distribution Training

The ODM supported the Food and General Supplies Subcommittee to provide training in Warehouse Management and Relief Supply Distribution. This particular training was very critical as this was in response to implementing lessons learned from Hurricane Maria. Volunteer trainers were Ms Brenda Francis, Ms Vanya David, Nurse Priscilla Prevost and Mrs Calma Louis.

Overall, the trainings were well received by the participants with over 200 persons trained for the three subject matters. The ODM wishes to express sincere appreciation to the entire team and all trainers who volunteered to facilitate these sessions and to make them successful and looks forward to your continued support. Let us keep the collaborative and 'collective action' spirit alive as we make disaster management "everybody's business".



Participants Emergency Shelter Management Training – Kalinago Territory



Emergency Shelter Management Training - Good Hope



Participants and instructors in Warehouse and supplies Distribution training.



Participants in Emergency Radio Communication Training - Portsmouth

"collaboration and collective action is a necessity in disaster management"



UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

October 13

International Day for
Disaster Risk Reduction.
#ItsAllAboutGovernance

November 5

World Tsunami Awareness
Day

November 23rd-27th

Seismic Research Centre
(UWI-SRC) / Office of
Disaster Management
Virtual Public Awareness
campaign on volcano and
earthquake hazard and
safety in Dominica

Useful Terms

Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) - the management of all hazards through all phases of the disaster management cycle – prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery and rehabilitation - by all peoples- public and private sectors, all segments of civil society and the general population in hazard prone areas (CDEMA).

Comprehensive Disaster Management BILL – Intended to provide for comprehensive disaster management in Dominica and to provide for the effective management of emergencies in Dominica. Primary purposes of the Bill are:
(a) to develop, promote and implement an approach to disaster management that:
(i) is holistic, comprehensive, integrated, and proactive in lessening the negative socio-economic and environmental impacts of disasters including climate change, and
(ii) focuses on reducing risks, that is to say, reducing the risk of **loss** of life, economic disruption and damage to the environment and property, especially to the sections of the population that are most vulnerable by reason of poverty and a general lack of resources; and

(b) to promote the involvement and participation of all sectors and stakeholders concerned at all levels, especially the local community in disaster management.

Country Work Programme – Roadmap outlining the main activities to be carried out by the disaster management system of Dominica with ODM as central supported by key partners or stakeholders. The CWP is the vehicle for implementing CDM principles at the country level.

Resilience - The ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner.

Volunteerism - action that is carried out voluntarily or of your own free will and not as an obligation stipulated by law, contract or academic requirement, not undertaken primarily for financial reward and is for the common good, benefitting directly or indirectly people outside the family or household, or a cause. Volunteerism lets people and communities participate in their own growth. Through volunteering, citizens build their resilience, enhance their knowledge base and gain a sense of responsibility for their own community.



COMMON VOLCANIC HAZARDS

ASH FALLS

MUDFLOW

LAVA FLOW

PYROCLASTIC FLOWS

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www.odm.gov.dm/hazard
@ODMDominica1
or call 448-7777

COEPA
Caribbean Emergency Preparedness and Response Agency

UN
UNITED NATIONS

EU
EUROPEAN UNION

EC
EUROPEAN COMMISSION

OSCE
ORGANISATION FOR SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN EUROPE

WFP
WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

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HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS

ARE YOU READY?

WHEN A HURRICANE WATCH IS ISSUED YOU HAVE **2 DAYS (48 hours)** BEFORE STRONG WINDS, RAINS AND ROUGH SEAS ARE POSSIBLE. **PREPARE!**

IF YOU ARE UNDER A HURRICANE WARNING, YOU HAVE A **DAY & A HALF (36 hours) OR LESS** BEFORE STRONG WINDS, RAINS AND ROUGH SEAS BEGIN. **TAKE ACTION!**

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WFP
WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

PREPARE with PERRIE PARROT

A GUIDE TO NATURAL HAZARDS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS
COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA

FLOODS

CAN BE DEADLY AND DESTRUCTIVE

ARE YOU READY?

A FLOOD WATCH

means that flooding is possible.

BE PREPARED!

A FLOOD WARNING

is issued when a flood is already occurring or will occur shortly.

TAKE ACTION!

IF YOU ARE UNDER A FLOOD WARNING

- REMAIN ALERT!
- Do not walk, swim, or drive through flood waters. Turn Around, Don't Drown!
- Just six inches of moving water can knock you down
- One foot of moving water can sweep your vehicle away
- Evacuate early if told to do so
- Always keep important documents in a waterproof bag

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EARTHQUAKES

CAN HAPPEN AT ANY TIME

BE PREPARED. BE SAFE

WHEN THE EARTH starts to SHAKE

DROP!

COVER!

HOLD ON!

IN BED

Stay there, hold on, and protect your head with a pillow

OUTSIDE

Stay away from buildings, walls and power poles

DRIVING

Stop where safe, turn on hazard lights and stay in your vehicle

WHEELCHAIR

Put the brakes on in a safe place and protect your head

ANYWHERE

Drop, protect your head and stay there until the shaking stops

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Contact the Office of Disaster Management for public awareness information shown above and much more as well as preparedness support

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