



THEMES: Building resilience, MHEWS, social protection, investing in inclusive disaster risk reduction, resilient infrastructure

DATE: September 25, 2024

LOCATION: Virtual

PARTICIPANTS: More than 25 parliamentarians and parliamentary staff from the Caribbean region, and multilateral organizations

ORGANIZING PARTNER: United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, UN Women Multi Country Office - Caribbean, World Food Programme



This activity aligned with SDGs 5, 9, 11, 13, and 17.



Parliamentary Action for Disaster Risk Reduction and Preparedness in the Caribbean

Disaster risk reduction (DRR) and preparedness are priority areas for action in the Caribbean, and emphasis on this agenda is continuing to grow due to the increasing intensity and frequency of natural hazards, spurred by the impacts of climate change. In response to this interest, this meeting enabled parliamentarians to engage with and receive focused guidance from a diverse group of experts specializing in multi-hazard early warning systems, gender-responsive disaster risk reduction, shock-responsive social protection and disaster risk financing, and resilient infrastructure.



AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

Opening remarks:

- The Honourable **Bridgid Annisette-George** (Trinidad and Tobago), Speaker of the House of Representatives and Vice-President of ParlAmericas

Panellists:

- **Jair Torres**, Programme Management Officer, UNDRR
- **Tonni Brodber**, Representative, UN Women Multi-Country Office for the Caribbean
- **Nicholas Gainger**, Programme Policy Officer - Disaster Risk Management, World Food Programme
- **Cristobal Lopez Maciel**, Programme Officer, UNDRR

Moderator:

- Senator The Honourable Dr. **Erecia Hepburn Forbes** (The Bahamas)

Closing remarks:

- Member of the National Assembly **Radjendrekoeemar Debie** (Suriname), Second Vice-President for South America of the ParlAmericas Parliamentary Network on Climate Change and Sustainability

KEY ACTION POINTS FROM THE MEETING:

- Advocate for governments to transition from an event-centered response and recovery approach to a **proactive strategy that reduces the risk of hazards becoming disasters** by, for example, ensuring the country has Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems (MHEWS).
- **Review and amend existing sectoral legislation** to ensure it effectively integrates MHEWS and disaster risk reduction (DRR), incorporating the latest knowledge and remaining adaptable to evolving requirements. Ensure this integration extends to national development, security, and climate adaptation plans to promote comprehensive, multi-sector action.
- Promote an inclusive, all-of-society approach that ensures **citizen engagement in disaster risk policies**, MHEWS, and post-disaster plans, emphasizing multi-sector consultation and coordination that actively consults with women's organizations, National Gender Machineries and civil society groups.
- Support the **allocation of budgets for infrastructure resilience, national social protection systems, and gender-responsive relief efforts** before disasters strike, and monitor and scrutinize government spending during the relief phase, recognizing that investing USD 6 billion annually in DRR can generate risk reduction benefits worth USD 360 billion.
- **Consider how plans will manage the [invisible tolls](#) that a disaster creates**, affecting supply chains, productivity, physical and mental health, safety of women and girls, and education.
- **Improve data management and close data gaps** by investing in and enhancing the collection, analysis, and application of gender-disaggregated disaster impact data. Develop plans to coordinate the sharing of information with other government sectors, national and international agencies, and countries with similar hazard and geographic profiles to inform MHEWS and DRR frameworks and strategies.



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ORGANIZING PARTNERS



UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction



UN Women Multi Country Office - Caribbean



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