

Executive Summary

The project Enhancing Resilience to Reduce Vulnerability in the Caribbean (ERC) has been financed by the Italian Government at a rate of 3.5 million EUR (4,527,813 USD) to enhance regional and national capacities for disaster risk reduction. The United Nations Development Programme in Barbados and the OECS is the recipient of the contribution and the executing agency. UNDP works with CIMH (Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology) and CDEMA (Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency) as implementing agencies and CIMA Research Foundation as the advising and cooperating agency.

The project is highly relevant to the needs of the population in one of the regions of the world that is most exposed to natural hazards. The project is also consistent with regional and sector strategies, starting with the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015 and the Comprehensive Disaster Management strategy of the Caribbean region. Furthermore, the intervention is also highly pertinent to outcome 1 “Improved governance and regulation of environmental and energy issues for more resilient economies by 2016” of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Barbados and the Organization of East Caribbean States (OECS) 2012-2016.

The design of the intervention is articulated in a clear and sound logic, which unfortunately suffers because of the weak elaboration of indicators and targets. ERC aims at improving regional and national capacities in four macro areas of disaster risk reduction through the active collaboration and exchange of best practices between Caribbean organizations and Italian counterparts that have distinguished themselves over the years for the excellent results of their work. The four macro areas (network of real time monitoring stations, volunteerism, increasing capacities of National Emergency Management Offices and promoting awareness of tsunamis and other coastal hazards) although largely independent, together should lead to the overall strengthening of civil protection mechanisms. However, the solid vertical logic of the ERC is not supported by SMART indicators and an adequate baseline.

The implementation strategy differs substantially from the original design introducing an element of pragmatism and pursuing institutional collaborations that altered the original institutional architecture. Volunteerism has been approached from a significantly different angle and with less ambitious goals. The pursuit of collaboration with UNESCO in the tsunami component has increased the potential impact of the limited funds available while exposing the project to some unforeseen risks.

The implementing partners have managed the project with a considerable degree of efficiency. The intervention delivered a substantial number of outputs of good quality while adopting sound management practices. The three main implementing partners were able to respond with flexibility to the numerous obstacles encountered during the implementation. Delays accumulated in the early stages of the project were eventually compensated later on, although with reductions in number and type of outputs. The two-year extension approved by the Italian Government proved to be crucial for the successful implementation of the activities. However, the ERC would have benefitted from a more

solid monitoring and evaluation system and deeper collaboration with other projects, like Youth-IN and R3i.

The analysis of the outcomes of the project shows mixed results in the effectiveness of the three components. In output 1 “network of real time monitoring centres”, we can observe numerous intermediate outcomes, although unevenly distributed across the region. Dewetra is being adopted, but not quite at its full potential. The platform is mainly used for weather monitoring rather than as an impact-monitoring tool. In output 2.1 and 2.2 (“volunteerism” and “NEMOs capacity building” bundled together in the second component), the project has produced outcomes that are fragmented across several countries and areas of intervention, lacking a common denominator. Finally, even though in the third component (output 2.3) “tsunami awareness” among the population was not enhanced through the ERC, the project contributed to the establishment of CTIC (Caribbean Tsunami Information Centre), a key institution in the regional tsunami early warning system.

The outlook on the future sustainability of the results of the ERC is positive, although there are several factors that can undermine the progress made so far. The project has managed to create new institutions (CTIC) and establish a solid relationship between CIMA and CIMH, organizations that have shown the willingness to continue their successful collaboration for the improvement of human security in the region. However, it is still uncertain how CTIC will be able to raise the funds that it needs after 2014. Also, the future sustainability of the results depends on a strong collaboration between CIMH and CDEMA specifically aimed at promoting the adoption of Dewetra. The two organizations have a standing framework agreement, but a more specific document regarding this new area of collaboration has not been formalized nor tested yet. The level of capacities installed is moderately good. The trainings offered by the project were of high quality, but not all countries participated consistently in the events.