

# **Oxfam GB Learning on Urban Disaster Risk in the Caribbean summary of findings**

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# Learning from...

- 4 case studies of DP experiences by Oxfam GB and Intermon Oxfam – by Mark Pelling



- Workshop – August 2010  
70 participants – 19 countries  
48 institutions- organizations  
And in collaboration with the urban risk platform



# Generation of risk in Caribbean cities

- Accumulation (contermpory development gaps + unresolved past challenges)
- Coastal areas
- Concentration of services in a single exposed city

+ visibility of risk

## **Main learning - facilitating factors**

**Un(der) employment can provide opportunities to engage through money or food for work schemes**

**Logistics are easier, both to mobilise people and materials**

**Inter-agency communication is easier**

# **Main learning – hindering factors**

## **Hazard**

- **Often generated outside urban spaces**
- **natural and social hazards overlap**

## **Vulnerabilities**

- **Intense and concentrated populations**
- **Concentrated land use means fewer options for mitigation measures**

## **Main learning – hindering factors (cont.)**

- **Rapid demographic growth exceeds management capacity**
- **Failure to regulate land use and building**
- **Heterogeneous communities generate tensions**
- **In-migrants have no knowledge of local disaster history**
- **Skills, knowledge and social connections lost through out-migration**

## **Main learning – hindering factors (cont.)**

- **Little flexibility and long working-commuting hours in the urban economy limits time for participation**
- **Drugs crime is a barrier especially for youth**
- **Little established solidarity or history of collective action**
- **Volunteers may be available but want-need paiment**
- **Leaders put themselves at personnal – political risk**

## **Main learning – hindering factors (cont.)**

- **City and local government are too busy to take on new policy agendas, even if mandated**
- **Overlapping roles between municipal, regional and national government entities**
- **Few urban social development NGOs that could act as actors - implementers**
- **Need agreement from government for interventions**



## **Main learning – hindering factors (cont.)**

- **Educational system, policy system etc may be oriented towards rural development e.g. restricting access to technical skills like civil engineering**
- **Relocation is difficult and costly**
- **Risk may be seen as only amenable to large scale engineering projects.**

# **Other considerations from the august 2010 workshop**

- **infrastructure-based vs socially-based responses**
- **The importance of scale**
- **climate change key issue in urban context**

# Remaining gaps: for research and assessment

- Root causes and symptoms
- Social difference
- Measuring effectiveness

# Remaining gaps: for policy development

- Decentralisation
- Grassroot framework
- Private sector
- Structure of the system - Local committes function and scope in urban context

**Thank you**  
**Gracias**