The Role of Disaster Management and Other Stakeholders in Pandemic Preparedness and Response

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Presentation Overview

- Setting the Context
- A Multi-Sectoral/Multi-Tiered Approach
- The CDEMA CU
  - Response Operations in CDEMA Participating States
- NEMOs in the Caribbean Region
- Other Relevant Stakeholders
Setting the Context

• Nature of the pandemic hazard determines the nature of preparedness and response

• Combination of scale (length/span of threat, geographic scope, large number of persons affected) and uniqueness (epidemiological hazard) present some unique difficulties to prepare adequately for this type of threat or deal with its effects
Setting the Context

• Pandemic is a public health emergency of international concern inevitably with national/regional implications/impact

• Event is likely to overwhelm a nation’s infrastructure (health and other essential services) – undermine coping capacity

• Rapidly takes on substantial political, social, and economic dimensions and consequently the status of a national disaster
A Multi-Sectoral/Multi-Tiered Approach

• Pandemic preparedness and response requires integrated response capacities that stretch across sectors and governance levels

• This approach captures the essence of Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) - an integrated and proactive approach to disaster management that involves all sectors and peoples
A Multi-Sectoral/Multi-Tiered Approach

• There is a place and purpose for a multiplicity of actors within this broad spectrum (government agencies, civil society and private sector partners, in addition to those dealing with public health)

• This is a standing model and an approach is required at the national and regional level

• Adequate consideration of roles and responsibilities of the CDEMA CU, NEMOs and other relevant stakeholders is necessary
Overview: The CDEMA CU

- Regional Disaster Management Agency
- Functions:
  - Mobilising and **coordinating** disaster relief
  - **Mitigating or eliminating**, as far as practicable, the immediate consequences of disaster in Participating States
  - Providing **immediate and coordinated response by means of emergency disaster relief** to affected Participating States
Overview: The CDEMA CU

- Securing, coordinating and providing to interested intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations reliable and comprehensive information on disasters affecting any Participating State
- Encouraging the adoption of loss reduction and mitigation policies and practices at the national and regional level
- Cooperative arrangements and mechanisms to facilitate the development of a culture of disaster loss and reduction
- Coordinating the establishment, enhancement and maintenance of adequate emergency response capabilities among the Participating States
CDEMA CU: Preparedness

- Developed regional strategy to address the comprehensive suite of complex and/or trans-boundary threats including Pandemic Influenza
- Mobilized funds for risk mitigation in Participating States
- Worked with regional/international partners to facilitate training for national officials
- Developed toolkits/manuals/templates to guide contingency planning in Participating States
- Organized CDEMA wide exercises
- Established technical support teams for deployment
CDEMA CU: Preparedness

- Identified and trained regional response teams (CDRU, SAR, RNAT). Approaches relevant
- Developed/enhanced pre-existing regional initiatives that could be utilized in times of a pandemic:
  - **CDM Harmonization Council** (coordinating structure with specific mandate to drive multi-sectoral planning and preparedness among the Participating States)
  - **CDM Cluster Lead** (health sector chaired by PAHO)
  - **RRM**: arrangement based on providing mutual assistance for the coordination of disaster response among CDEMA Participating States, Regional and International Agencies
Response Operations in CDEMA Participating States

Primary mechanism used:

• **The Regional Response Mechanism (RRM):**
  – This is an arrangement for the coordination of disaster response among CDEMA Participating States, Regional and International Agencies
  – It seeks to deliver speedy response and effective and efficient use and management of resources
The Regional Response Mechanism: An Overview

- The RRM is:
  - A number of Plans, Procedures & Guidelines
  - A group of Response Units, agencies and organizations
  - A collection of Agreements, Memorandum of Understanding and Protocols

- Executed by the CDEMA Coordinated Unit on behalf of CDEMA Participating States
Components of the Regional Response Mechanism

- The Regional Coordination Centre (RCC)
- The Regional Coordination Plan (RCP)
- The Regional Telecommunications Plan
- Response Teams
  - The CARICOM Disaster Relief Unit CDRU Operations Order
  - The Rapid Needs Assessment Team (RNAT) Operations Order
- The Eastern Caribbean Donor Group (ECDG) Ops Order
- National Disaster Plans, Specialized Plans, etc.
- Regional Warehouses
- MOU, Acts, SOPs
The Regional Response Mechanism

- Regional Coordination Plan
- Regional Warehouses
- Specialized Plans
- National Disaster Plans
- CDRU Operations Order

REGIONAL RESPONSE MECHANISM

- Response Teams
- MOUs
- SOPs
- Agreements
- Acts
**CDEMA CU: Pandemic Response**

- Place the RRM on “stand-by” or activate as appropriate
- Act as a hub for information, consultation and coordination for the region
- Provide Participating States and regional/international partners with a focal point for coordination
- Conduct regional simulation/test with key actors
Overview: NEMOs

- Critical to the planning and implementation of non-pharmaceutical interventions
- Includes the National Disaster Office, the emergency services, as well as, several other public/private Agencies and NGOs in-country that work in accordance with the National Disaster Plan
- NEMO capacities differ throughout the region
- National Pandemic Influenza Plans exist but are at different levels of development
NEMOs: Preparedness

• Engage/sensitise other Government agencies and providers of essential services eg. Emergency Services, Immigration, Customs, Civil aviation, Port Authority, Education, Media

• Engage/sensitise stakeholders in other sectors and private business/organizations

• Develop/update/enhance plans

• Exercise/test plans in collaboration with health sectors (National Health Disaster Coordinators – focal point for disaster management)
NEMOs: Response

- Conduct capacity building activities/training to strengthen contingency planning in various sectors
- Activate National Pandemic Influenza Plan in consultation with health sector
- Activate National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC)
- Prioritise and co-ordinate the national inter-agency responses in accordance with the Plan
- Provide logistical support and services to support the Health-led response
Overview: Other Relevant Stakeholders

- Other relevant stakeholders include civil society and private sector.
- Many of these stakeholders are essential in times of a pandemic eg. private warehouses (transportation, food, equipment and supplies).
- Critical in facilitating community based disaster management linkages.
Other Relevant Stakeholders: Preparedness

- Engage in contingency planning including pandemic planning
- Engage in business continuity planning recognising the potential economic implications
- Participate in NEMO led training and exercises
- Partner with local NEMO to support plan implementation
Benefits of including DRM and Other Stakeholders

• Plans, Procedures and Simulations. DRM provides an approach that can facilitate pandemic management.

• Systems/Mechanisms - DRM offers tried and often tested mechanisms for emergency coordination – familiarity of actors and processes.

• Communications/Interoperability/Interagency coordination are critical in a pandemic and are essential to everyday DRM actions.
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Benefits of including DRM and Other Stakeholders

- A place/nerve center. The EOC is key to DRM and continuity of governance in any emergency.
- DRM experience with civil/military coordination which will be critical in a pandemic.
- Public education – recent studies demonstrate that hurricane preparedness education provide some “goodwill” for individual preparedness for other hazards.
Three Little Pigs – Interpretation of a Modern Tale
Conclusion

• Need to strengthen existing disaster management processes and structures to address non-traditional hazards is clear.
• Institutional/organisational and sectoral roles and responsibilities must be clearly defined.
• Coordination within and among sectors for pandemic preparedness and response must also be strengthened.
THE END!

Thank You!

Any Questions?
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Saint Lucia