



Department of Emergency Management ANNUAL REPORT 2025



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ABBREVIATIONS

ARSB	Amateur Society of Barbados
BCBRA	Barbados Citizens Band Radio Association
BCCI	Barbados Chamber of Commerce and Industry
BDF	Barbados Defence Force
BERRP	Beryl Emergency Response and Recovery Project.
BGIS	Barbados Government Information Service
BMS	Barbados Meteorological Service
BPOA	Barbados Plan of Action
BRCS	Barbados Red Cross Society
CAP	Common Alerting Protocol
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CCF	Contingent Credit Facility
CCRIF	Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility
CDEMA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency
CDF	Country Directed Fund
CDM	Comprehensive Disaster Management
CIMH	Caribbean Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology
CNDRMP	Comprehensive Natural Disaster Risk Management Programme
CTIC	Caribbean Tsunami Information Centre
CREWS	Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems
CU	Coordinating Unit
CWP	Country Work Programme
CZMU	Coastal Zone Management Unit
DEM	Department of Emergency Management
DEO	District Emergency Organization
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EPD	Environmental Protection Department

EMAC	Emergency Management Advisory Council
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
ERF	Emergency Response Functions
EWS	Early Warning System
GoB	Government of Barbados
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
ICG	Intergovernmental Coordination Group
ICT	Information Communications Technologies
IDRR	International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction
IOC	Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IT	Information Technology
JEI	Joint Environment Unit
MP	Member of Parliament
METVT	Ministry of Education, Technological and Vocational Training
MER	Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
MHAI	Ministry of Home Affairs and Information
MHEWS	Multi-Hazard Early Warning System
MHW	Ministry of Health and Wellness
MPS	Ministry of Public Service
MT RSF	Mid Term Review for the Sendai Framework
MTWWR	Ministry of Transport, Works and Water Resources
MYSCD	Ministry of Youth, Sports and Community Development
NCSA	National Council for Substance Abuse

NCRIPP	National Coastal Risk Information Planning Platform
NEMS	National Emergency Management System
NEOC	National Emergency Operations Centre
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHC	National Housing Corporation
NVR	National Voluntary Report
PDC	Pacific Disaster Center
PS	Permanent Secretary
RCP	Regional Coordination Plan
RRM	Regional Response Mechanism
RRT	Roving Response Team
RSS	Regional Security System

SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
SMVSP	Social Media and Visibility Strategy and Plan
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TSCCH	Technical Standing Committee on Coastal Hazards
UN	United Nations
UNDRR	United Nations Disaster Risk Reduction
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USA	United States of America

WHO WE ARE



WHO WE ARE

The Department of Emergency Management (DEM) is the government department mandated with the development, implementation, and evaluation of the Emergency Management Programme in Barbados. This programme, which represents a critical component of Barbados' developmental underpinning, focuses on emergency management initiatives under the Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) Strategy and Framework.

Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) is the management of all hazards, both natural and man-made in origin, through all phases of the disaster management cycle, by all peoples (public and private sectors), all segments of civil society and the general population. It emphasizes taking a holistic, integrated, and participatory approach to addressing disaster risk, with the goal of building resilient, safer societies.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The Department of Emergency Management currently falling under the aegis of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Information is the administrative arm of the National Emergency Management System (NEMS). It derives its power and legitimacy from the Emergency Management Act 1 LRO. 2007, CAP 160A, which in Part II states inter alia.

“There shall be a Department of Government to be known as the Department of Emergency Management headed by a Director, who shall be a public officer and who shall have responsibility of administering this Act; and whose principal objects are to give effect to the general policy of Government with respect to emergency management by facilitating and coordinating the development and implementation of systems in accordance with the Emergency Plan”.

THE DEPARTMENT'S PRIMARY OBJECTIVES

The Department of Emergency Management (DEM) Primary Objectives are centered on strengthening national preparedness, coordinating effective response mechanisms, and reducing vulnerability to hazards and disasters. These objectives guide the Department's efforts to safeguard lives, protect property, and enhance resilience across Barbados are as follows:

1. Educate all citizens about the various elements of Disaster Risk Management

2. Manage and coordinate any response to a national emergency response or disaster.

3. Actively participate in the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) initiatives and to maintain the Central Sub-Regional Disaster Emergency Operational Unit as a result of Barbados being given lead coordinating responsibility.

4. Efficient Functioning of Commitment for Results Systems

5. Improve Responsiveness and Service Delivery

6. Promote the development and maintenance of effective warning, response and recovery plans for all sectors of the society.

7. Promote and institutionalise the practice of appropriate preventative and mitigation, measures for all possible hazards.

8. Create appropriate mechanism to promote and advance Disaster Risk Management activities at all levels of the society.

ANNUAL REPORT STATEMENT

In accordance with the provisions of the Emergency Management Act, Cap. 160A of the Laws of Barbados, the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) hereby presents its Annual Report for the period January to December 2025 for the information of Parliament.

This Report provides a comprehensive overview of the Disaster Risk Management Framework within which the Department operates. It outlines the Department's programmatic alignment with global and regional disaster risk management policy frameworks, while highlighting its integration with national policies and the operations of the National Emergency Management System (NEMS) of Barbados.

The Report further underscores the Department's pivotal role as the national coordinating agency for emergency management mechanisms and activities. It presents a snapshot of major programmes and initiatives undertaken across six (6) priority work programme areas. These include responses to both large- and small-scale events, key accomplishments, measurable progress achieved, and challenges encountered during the reporting period.

Additionally, the Report provides insight into the agency's financial position for 2025 and articulates the Department's strategic goals and forward-looking priorities for the coming years.

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

The Honourable Gregory Nicholls M.P.
Minister of Home Affairs and Information
Ground Floor, Jones Building
Webster Industrial Estate
Wilkey
St. Michael

Dear Minister Nicholls,

The Department of Emergency Management's (DEM) Annual Report for the period January 1st to December 31st, 2025, is a key requirement of the Emergency Management Act, Cap.160A and a key document of the National Emergency Management System (NEMS). The Report provides an overview of the Disaster Risk Management framework in which the Department operates, referencing Work Programmatic alignment to global disaster management policy frameworks and the National Emergency Management System in Barbados. The Report also situates the Department's pivotal role as coordinator of the emergency management mechanism and activities, while outlining in detail the Department's work programme activities, accomplishments, progress and challenges faced during the period.

The main body of the document commences with an Introduction which outlines the mission, vision and role of the organisation. Attention is paid in subsequent sections to highlight the legislative authority of the Department of Emergency Management, its framework alignment and the context for its national disaster risk management agenda, human resources, and the NEMS, with specific reference to its strategic partners and volunteers.

A substantial portion of the document reports on the programmatic activities undertaken by the Department during the 2025 period under the six work programme areas namely: Institutional Strengthening, Emergency Operational Strengthening, Human Resource Development, Public Awareness and Public Information, Community Preparedness and External Relations.

As in previous reports, major challenges facing the Department have been outlined to ensure that the reader is aware of the threats to DEM's ability to deliver results, leverage opportunities and consequently fulfil its mandate. Focus is also placed on 2025 Emergency Response Events, a snapshot of the agency's financial disposition during 2025; and finally, the strategic outlook for the next 3-5 years which alludes to the agency's proposed agenda and pursuits to propel the organisation forward.



**Miss Kerry Hinds, Applied Sc, MSc,
BA Hons.
Director, DEM**

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

It is certainly a pleasure to present to you the Annual Report 2025 for the Department of Emergency Management. This report gives a snapshot of the national disaster risk management mechanism, strategy and framework aptly positioning the Department of Emergency Management and underscoring the department's role as the coordinating and implementing agency for key aspects of the disaster risk management programme. The report provides an overview of the department's organizational structure and the team that supported the implementation of the agency's work programme over the 2025 period.

The opportunity was taken to highlight major activities undertaken by the department during the year, which contributed to six (6) programme areas. In any organization as it pursues its' mandate, challenges arise over time. The report includes a section which outlines such challenges that the department faced. The country did face climatic and other events during the year which required the National Emergency Management System to respond. Notably the November flooding event which affected the northern, eastern and central areas of Barbados unfortunately claiming one life.

Finally, the report gives an in-depth overview of the financial status of the department for the period and provides a strategic outlook for the next period. The DEM will continue to disperse with its mandate for the betterment and increased resilience of the people of Barbados as we navigate the landscape.

**Ms. Kerry Hinds, App Sc., MSc., BA Hons.
Director
Department of Emergency Management**

Our Vision

We will be the Champion for National Disaster Risk Resilience

Our Mission Tenets

1

Developing, promoting & maintaining an effective Comprehensive National Risk Management and Resilient Programme for all sectors of society.

2

Creating and institutionalising appropriate mechanisms to advance Disaster Risk Management and resilience programmes and activities for all hazards across all sectors of the society.

3

Cultivating an environment that promotes & supports volunteerism in Disaster Risk Resilience at the community level, while facilitating existing and potential members of volunteer organisations, at all levels, in pursuing their personal, professional and civic goals

4

Providing coordination, support, advice and communication to relevant Government Ministries, Departments, Agencies, Sectors and NGOs to ensure delivery of timely, accurate information, documentation of policies, procedures & regulations.

5

Facilitating a supportive community that adheres to International Disaster Risk Reduction Standards, training and practices, while establishing and maintaining a participative and conducive environment.

6

Fostering a workplace that is conducive to the development of all employees through a united effort, providing adequate training and resources to meet organisational and personal goals.

7

Establishing and sustaining activities that will ensure best practices in Disaster Risk Management and promoting greater levels of inter-operability through fostering relationships.

8

Promoting and encouraging higher levels of participation within communities to enhance resilience capacity & capability.

CORE VALUES

The Department of Emergency Management reaffirms its unwavering commitment to embodying and demonstrating its six (6) core values in every interaction, both internally and externally. These values form the foundation of the Department's corporate culture and guide the conduct, decision-making, and professional standards of all officers, consultants, contractors, and interns operating under its aegis. Following a comprehensive review, the Department has revised and refined the definitions of these core values to ensure greater clarity, relevance, and alignment with its evolving mandate and strategic direction. These updated definitions reflect the standards to which the organisation holds itself accountable and the principles that underpin its service to the people of Barbados.



Proactivity - Acting in advance of a future situation, rather than just reacting; taking control and making things happen rather than adjusting to a situation or waiting for something to happen.



Consultation - Engaging relevant respective stakeholders in discussions to ensure there is benefit from the widest cross-section of ideas and opinions.



Integrity - Exhibiting honesty and fairness to all; standing up for what is right; acting sincerely and transparently; keeping our word and following through on our promises.



Commitment - Demonstrating unwavering duty and dedication to the cause of ensuring disaster risk resilience for Barbados.



Care - Striving to satisfy the needs of all stakeholders while maintaining the highest standards of performance; always showing willingness to seek the best interest, safety and wellbeing of others.



Innovation - Making changes to improve services & processes that will create value for all stakeholders.

STAFFING

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ORGANISATIONAL CHART

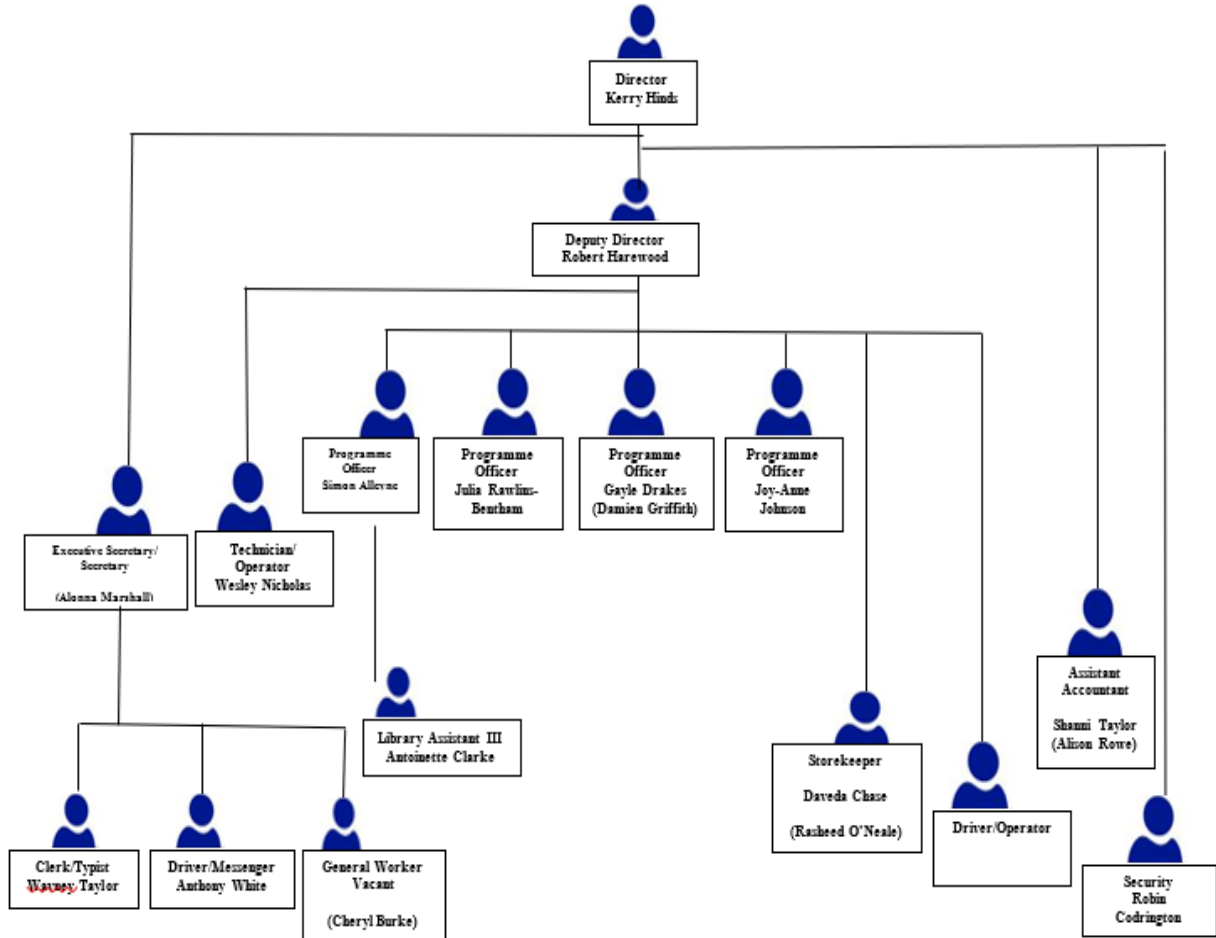


Diagram 1: The Department of Emergency Management Staffing

The human resource allocations for the DEM are reflected in the organisational chart above. The Department's staff complement stood at fifteen (15) during the period. The post of Technician/Operator was filled during the reporting period. The department continues to be understaffed as there is a requirement for posts to be filled and new positions added to improve the department's operations.

PERMANENT APPOINTMENTS

There were no permanent appointments during the period.

REACTIVATION OF POST

The Department of Emergency Management, through the Ministry of Home Affairs and Information, actively pursued with the Ministry of Public Service the reactivation of the technical post of Technician/Operator. This critical position, which supports the overall functioning of the Department and ensures a constant state of departmental and national readiness, was successfully filled by Mr. Wesley Nicholas in October 2025.

ACTING/TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

The following temporary appointments occurred during the review period:

Name	Acting Position	Period of Acting in Position
Ms. Alison Rowe	Assistant Accountant	January 1 – December 31, 2025
Mr. Damien Griffith	Programme Officer	January 1 – December 31, 2025
Mrs. Alonna Marshall	Secretary	January 1 –December 31, 2025
Mr. Wesley Nicholas	Technician Operator	October 1- December 31, 2025
Ms. Cheryl Burke	General Worker	January 1 – December 31, 2025
Mr. Rasheed O'Neale	Storekeeper	January 1 – December 31, 2025
Mrs. Julia Rawlins-Bentham	Programme Officer	January 1 – December 31, 2025

Table 1: Department of Emergency Management Acting and Temporary Positions

INTERNSHIP

The Department of Emergency Management (DEM) hosted eleven (11) students under its Summer Internship Programme for the period May 20 to August 29, 2025. Of the eleven interns, seven were female and four were male. The students were engaged through the Ministry of the Public Service, the Ministry of Home Affairs and Information, the Ashley Lashley Foundation, and the National Give Back Programme.



Picture 1: DEM Interns 2025

During their tenure, the interns provided support across all areas of the DEM's operations, with particular emphasis on assisting with the upgrading of the Department's website.

CONSULTANCIES

During the period January to December 2025, the services of five (5) consultants were engaged to support the implementation of the Department's work programme.

Mr. Selwyn Brooks provided technical and programmatic support within the Community Preparedness programme area, assisting with initiatives aimed at strengthening community resilience and stakeholder engagement.

Mr. Nathan Gibbons and Miss Tonia Blackman supported the Research and Knowledge Management programme area, with specific focus on enhancing the Department's social media presence, public awareness strategies, marketing initiatives, and overall visibility.

Miss Carolyn Brome provided general administrative support services to the Department, contributing to the coordination and execution of special projects and related operational activities.

Miss Chante Saunders served as a Consultant at the Department of Emergency Management (DEM), providing technical support for initiatives related to disaster risk reduction and early warning systems in Barbados. In this role, she supports the strengthening and expansion of the Multi-Hazard Early Warning System through stakeholder engagement, coordination with government agencies, private sector partners, and civil society organizations, and the development of strategic partnerships. Her work includes assisting with the preparation of technical reports, supporting the development of Memoranda of Understanding with partner organizations, contributing to the implementation of the Common Alerting Protocol, and providing logistical and administrative support for training sessions, workshops, and stakeholder consultations. Through these efforts, she contributes to enhancing national preparedness, strengthening early warning communication systems, and building community resilience.

FRAMEWORK ALIGNMENT

GLOBAL FRAMEWORK

Global Disaster Risk Reduction Frameworks are considered as important instruments for raising public and institutional awareness, generating political commitment and focusing and catalysing actions by a wide range of stakeholders at all levels.

The international context for Disaster Risk Reduction is anchored in agreements such as the Johannesburg Declaration and Plan of Implementation, the Barbados Plan of Action (BPOA) and the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation, Agenda 21 and the Millennium Declaration, the Millennium Development Goals and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, which are driving development agendas and international cooperation and development aid priorities worldwide.

The global disaster risk reduction framework document, referred to as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, provides guidance to the current global disaster risk reduction agenda. It encourages actors at the local, state, national, regional and global levels to reflect and forge programmes of action mainstreaming the following four priority areas local, national, regional and global levels in the following four priority areas:

Priority 1: Understanding disaster risk.

Priority 2: Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk.

Priority 3: Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience.

Priority 4: Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction.



Chart of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030

Scope and purpose

The present framework will apply to the risk of small-scale and large-scale, frequent and infrequent, sudden and slow-onset disasters, caused by natural or manmade hazards as well as related environmental, technological and biological hazards and risks.

It aims to guide the multi-hazard management of disaster risk in development at all levels as well as within and across all sectors

Expected outcome

The substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries

Goal

Prevent new and reduce existing disaster risk through the implementation of integrated and inclusive economic, structural, legal, social, health, cultural, educational, environmental, technological, political and institutional measures that prevent and reduce hazard exposure and vulnerability to disaster, increase preparedness for response and recovery, and thus strengthen resilience

Targets

Substantially reduce global disaster mortality by 2030, aiming to lower average per 100,000 global mortality between 2020-2030 compared to 2005-2015	Substantially reduce the number of affected people globally by 2030, aiming to lower the average global figure per 100,000 between 2020-2030 compared to 2005-2015	Reduce direct disaster economic loss in relation to global gross domestic product (GDP) by 2030	Substantially reduce disaster damage to critical infrastructure and disruption of basic services, among them health and educational facilities, including through developing their resilience by 2030	Substantially increase the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020	Substantially enhance international cooperation to developing countries through adequate and sustainable support to complement their national actions for implementation of this framework by 2030	Substantially increase the availability of and access to multi-hazard early warning systems and disaster risk information and assessments to people by 2030
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Priorities for Action

There is a need for focused action within and across sectors by States at local, national, regional and global levels in the following four priority areas.

Priority 1 Understanding disaster risk	Priority 2 Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk	Priority 3 Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience	Priority 4 Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response, and to «Build Back Better» in recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction
Disaster risk management needs to be based on an understanding of disaster risk in all its dimensions of vulnerability, capacity, exposure of persons and assets, hazard characteristics and the environment	Disaster risk governance at the national, regional and global levels is vital to the management of disaster risk reduction in all sectors and ensuring the coherence of national and local frameworks of laws, regulations and public policies that, by defining roles and responsibilities, guide, encourage and incentivize the public and private sectors to take action and address disaster risk	Public and private investment in disaster risk prevention and reduction through structural and non-structural measures are essential to enhance the economic, social, health and cultural resilience of persons, communities, countries and their assets, as well as the environment. These can be drivers of innovation, growth and job creation. Such measures are cost-effective and instrumental to save lives, prevent and reduce losses and ensure effective recovery and rehabilitation	Experience indicates that disaster preparedness needs to be strengthened for more effective response and ensure capacities are in place for effective recovery. Disasters have also demonstrated that the recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction phase, which needs to be prepared ahead of the disaster, is an opportunity to «Build Back Better» through integrating disaster risk reduction measures. Women and persons with disabilities should publicly lead and promote gender-equitable and universally accessible approaches during the response and reconstruction phases

Guiding Principles

Primary responsibility of States to prevent and reduce disaster risk, including through cooperation	Shared responsibility between central Government and national authorities, sectors and stakeholders as appropriate to national circumstances	Protection of persons and their assets while promoting and protecting all human rights including the right to development	Engagement from all of society	Full engagement of all State institutions of an executive and legislative nature at national and local levels	Empowerment of local authorities and communities through resources, incentives and decision-making responsibilities as appropriate	Decision-making to be inclusive and risk-informed while using a multi-hazard approach
Coherence of disaster risk reduction and sustainable development policies, plans, practices and mechanisms, across different sectors	Accounting of local and specific characteristics of disaster risks when determining measures to reduce risk	Addressing underlying risk factors cost-effectively through investment versus relying primarily on post-disaster response and recovery	«Build Back Better» for preventing the creation of, and reducing existing, disaster risk	The quality of global partnership and international cooperation to be effective, meaningful and strong	Support from developed countries and partners to be tailored according to needs and priorities as identified by them	

www.preventionweb.net/go/sdrr
www.unisdr.org
isdr@un.org



Diagram 2: Chart of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015 -2030

REGIONAL FRAMEWORK

Barbados, and by extension the Department of Emergency Management (DEM), is a member of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and subscribes to the concept of Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM). This approach embraces all hazards, addresses all phases of the disaster management cycle including mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery and engages all levels of society.

The ultimate goal of the CDM Strategy and Framework is to achieve a **“Safer, more resilient and sustainable Barbados through Comprehensive Disaster Management.”** This goal is supported by four (4) high-level priority outcomes and sixteen (16) corresponding outputs

The CDM Strategy was officially adopted by the Cabinet of Barbados in August 2003 and was rearticulated in 2022 with Cabinet’s approval for the publication of the Comprehensive Disaster Management Policy. This Policy provides the overarching framework that guides the National Emergency Management Programme in Barbados and strengthens the country’s coordinated, multi-sectoral approach to disaster risk management.

designed to operationalize the strategy. The Strategic Framework further incorporates seven (7) key elements which, when effectively implemented, will collectively advance Barbados toward its desired future state of resilience and sustainability.



THE SEVEN (7) ELEMENTS OF THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

	National institutions with adequate or minimum standards of capacity to deliver the CDM program.
	Knowledge management which is applied for fact-based decision-making.
	Disaster resilience is enhanced within key sectors of the economy.
	Operational Readiness at national, sector and local community levels.
	A clearly established and understood nexus between Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction with programming and governance harmonized.
	Community resilience which has been enhanced for the most vulnerable with gender concerns addressed at all stages and levels.
	Resource allocation which underpins the ability to deliver the strategy.

Diagram 3: The Seven (7) Elements of the Strategic Framework

NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK AND CONTEXT

A significant shift in national disaster risk governance occurred in 2003 when the Government of Barbados (GoB) adopted the Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) mandate. This approach expanded the country's disaster management framework to address all hazards, both natural and human-induced, across every phase of the disaster management cycle, rather than focusing primarily on preparedness and response. The impetus for this paradigm shift was influenced by regional and international disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies developed in 2001 and 2005, respectively, which were catalyzed by the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction.

The overarching aim of CDM is to reduce losses and damages while fostering safer, more resilient societies through the engagement of all people, sectors, and levels of society. In support of establishing the institutional architecture necessary to implement this broadened mandate, the Government proclaimed the Emergency Management Act, Cap. 160A (2006). This legislation facilitated the transition of the Central Emergency Response Organisation (CERO), formerly a relief-focused entity, into the Department of Emergency Management (DEM), with an expanded mandate aligned to the principles of CDM.

Further strategic arrangements were required to concretize Barbados' pathway toward building resilience to disasters and to support the country in meeting its obligations under regional and international DRR and climate-related frameworks

to which it is a signatory. These include the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) CDM Strategy and Results Framework 2014–2024; the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Strategic Plan; the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030); and the Paris Agreement, which seeks to strengthen the global response to climate change. In 2022, Barbados rearticulated the CDM Strategy and Framework through the newly Cabinet-approved Barbados Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) Policy.

The Barbados Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) Policy 2022 establishes a clear strategic direction for safeguarding lives and enhancing community resilience to disaster and climate-related risks and impacts. The Policy provides the governance and accountability arrangements necessary to advance a safer, more resilient, and sustainable Barbados through comprehensive disaster management. It guides the development and mainstreaming of CDM policies and programmes across sectors, ensuring that Barbados meets its regional and international disaster management obligations, while articulating the national vision and goals for comprehensive disaster management in alignment with the objectives of the Emergency Management Act, Cap. 160A (2006).

In addition to anchoring the national disaster risk reduction work programme within the CDM framework and aligning it with the aforementioned global and regional strategies, Barbados’ approach also supports the attainment of the Sustainable

Development Goals within the local context, reinforcing the integration of disaster risk reduction into sustainable national development planning.

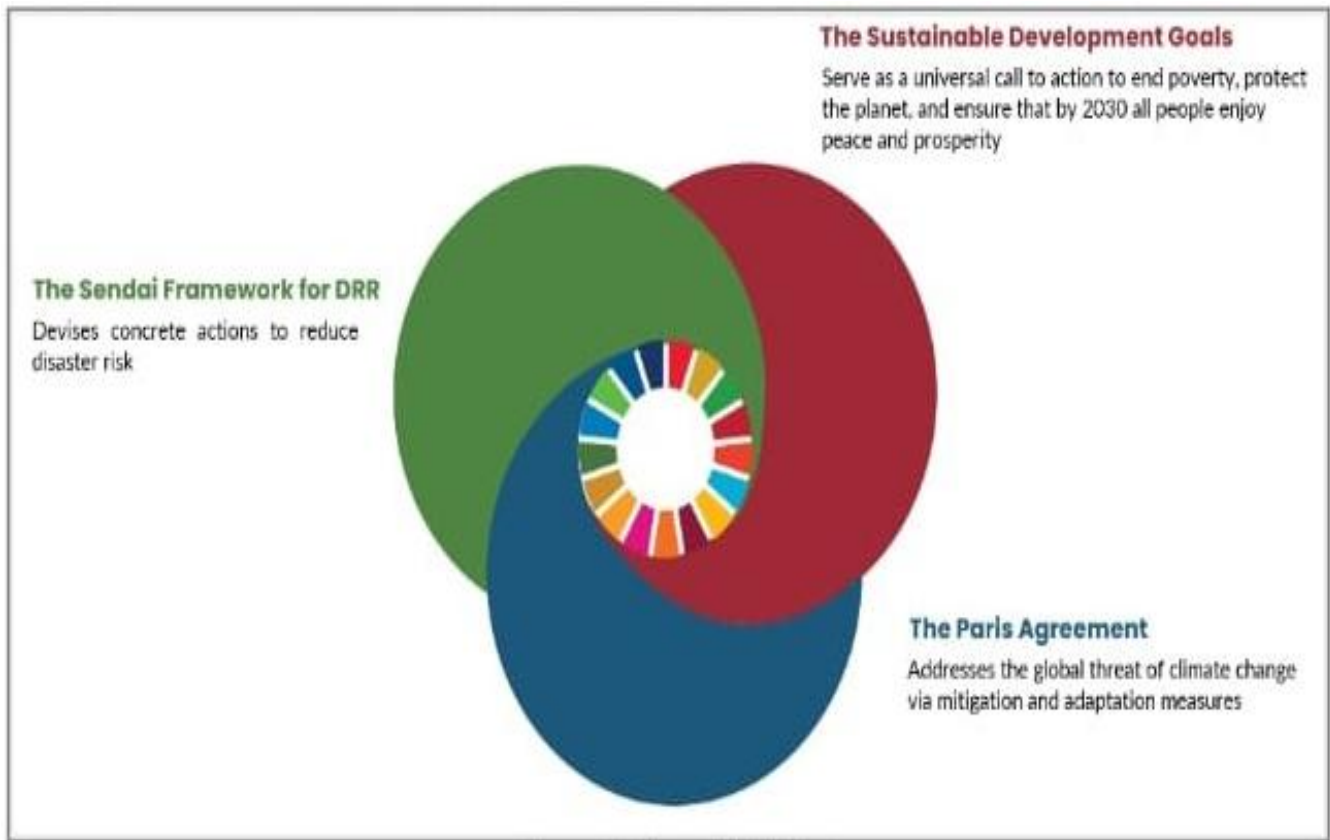


Diagram 4: Integrating Adaptation with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework

AN OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

NEMS is a broad based multi-sectoral stakeholder mechanism coordinated by the Department of Emergency Management (DEM).

It consists of Emergency Management Advisory Council (EMAC) and its eighteen (18) Standing Committees, the national emergency services, local volunteers, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), regional and international partners, and the private sector. Collectively, these entities integrate human resources, technical expertise, and critical assets to ensure a coordinated and effective state of national preparedness and readiness.

The National Emergency Management System (NEMS)



Diagram 5: The National Emergency Management System (NEMS)

THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (EMAC)

The EMAC Council, chaired by the Minister responsible for Disaster Management, comprises representatives of the public and private sector as well as non-governmental organisations. Part III Section 7 (3), of the Emergency Management Act, Cap 160A, outlines the functions of the EMAC to include recommendations of policies, programmes and activities to enhance the emergency management programme and reviewing the work of the Standing Committees with respect to their specialized areas. The representation on the Council is outlined below:

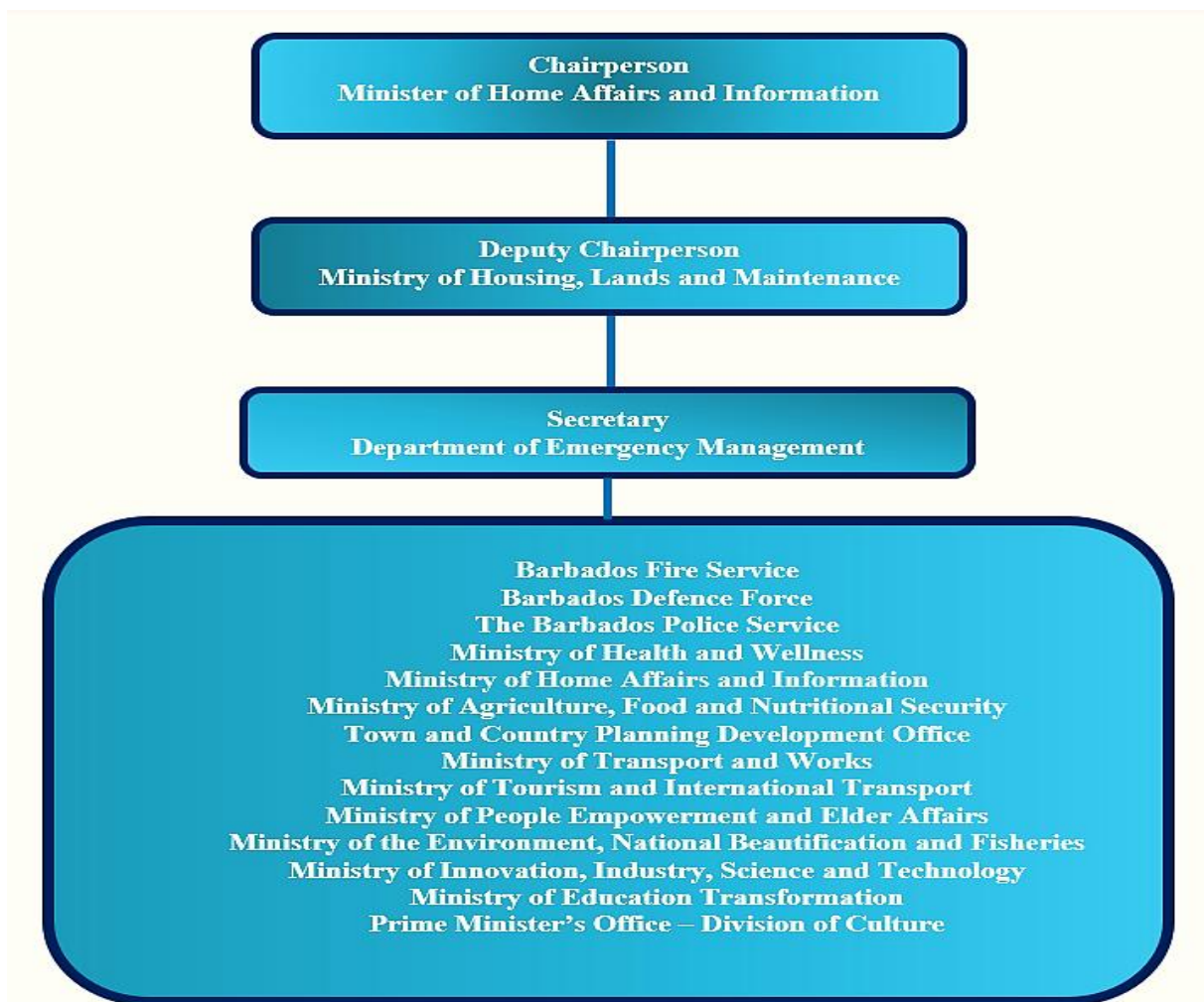


Diagram 6: Structure of the Emergency Management Advisory Council (EMAC)

STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ADVISORY (EMAC)

The First Schedule, Section 7 of the Emergency Management Act, Cap. 160A, provides that the Council shall consist of up to fifteen (15) members, as nominated by the Minister, to represent persons or organisations deemed appropriate by the Minister. These members may volunteer or be mandated by law to perform functions related to the mitigation of, preparedness for, response to, and recovery from emergencies and disasters in Barbados. Council members are responsible for planning and coordinating emergency response functions (ERFs) at both the national and sectoral levels.

Membership is organised according to specific emergency response functions, such as shelter management, emergency telecommunications, public utilities, and damage assessment and needs analysis, among others. The Standing Committees corresponding to these functions are chaired by technical heads of government agencies, each responsible for implementing national disaster management policies and programmes within their area of expertise.

Table 2: Representative Standing Committees of the Emergency Management Advisory Council (EMAC)

NO.	COMMITTEE	CHAIRPERSON
1	Emergency Services * Mass Crowd	Director, Department of Emergency Management
2	Public Information and Education	Chief Information Officer Barbados Government Information Service
3	Damage Assessment and Needs Assessment	Director Barbados Statistical Services
4	Health Services – Medical and Public Health	Chief Medical Officer Ministry of Health and Wellness
5	Food and General Supplies	Chief Agricultural Officer Ministry of Agriculture, Food and National Security
6	Public Utilities	Permanent Secretary Ministry of Energy and Business Development and Commerce
7	Emergency Transport	Chief Technical Officer Ministry of Transport and Works

NO.	COMMITTEE	CHAIRPERSON
8	Shelter Management	Chief Education Officer Ministry of Education Transformation
9	Disaster Social Relief	Permanent Secretary Ministry of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs
10	Road Clearance and Tree Trimming	Chief Technical Officer Ministry of Transport and Works
11	Emergency Telecommunications	Director of Digital Infrastructure Telecommunications Unit
12	Housing and Rehabilitation	Chief Technical Officer National Housing Corporation
13	National Hazard Mitigation	Deputy Chief Town Planner Planning and Development Department
14	Tourism Emergency Management	Permanent Secretary Ministry of Tourism and International Transport
15	Technical Standing Committee on Coastal Hazards	Director, Department of Emergency Management Director, Coastal Zone Management Unit
16	National Oil Spill	Director, Environmental Protection Department
17	The Multi-Hazard Early Warning System Advisory Committee	Director, Department of Emergency Management
18	National Committee on Disaster Risk Management for the Culture Sector	Director, Barbados Museum and Historical Society

** Note the Mass Crowd Committee is a sub-committee of the Emergency Services Committee*

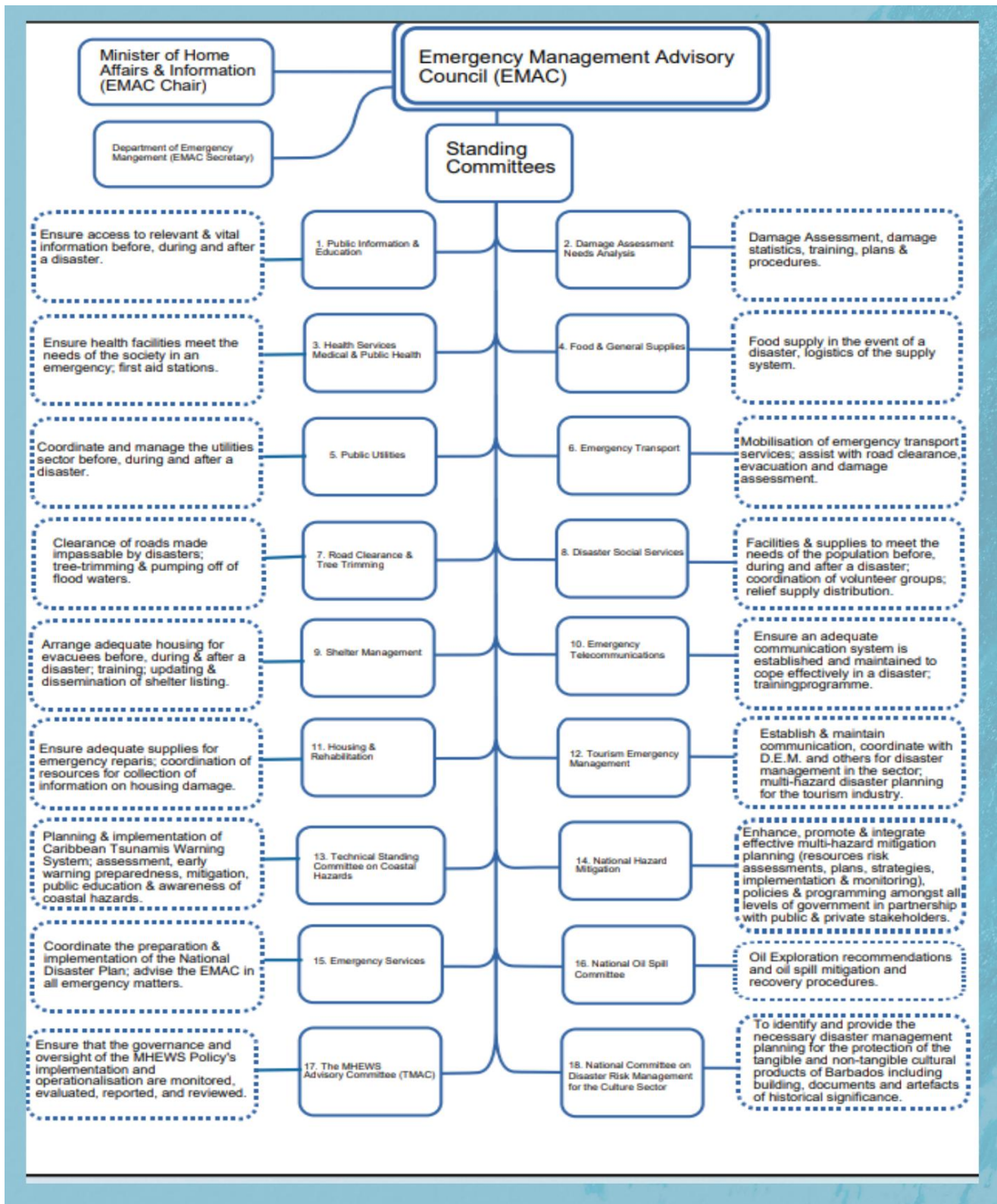


Diagram 7: Schematic Showing the Standing Committees of the Emergency Management Advisory Council

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TEAM

Emergency Management Operations Teams form an integral component of the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC), which coordinates and manages national response operations during crises.

These teams comprise representatives from the public and private sectors, as well as non-governmental organisations, whose technical expertise and operational knowledge are critical to informed decision-making and timely response actions. Their coordinated efforts support both strategic management within the NEOC and the execution of accompanying field operations, thereby ensuring an efficient and effective national response mechanism.

DISTRICT EMERGENCY ORGANISATIONS (DEOS)

District Emergency Organisations (DEOs) serve as the primary vehicle for the execution of the National Community Preparedness Programme and are currently aligned across Barbados' thirty (30) political constituencies. This structured volunteer movement provides members of the public with a meaningful opportunity to actively participate in the national disaster management system.

As the voluntary arm of the Department of Emergency Management (DEM), DEOs are responsible for organising and coordinating community resources to support effective response actions during crises. Membership is drawn directly from the communities they serve,

reinforcing local ownership and grassroots engagement within the national emergency management framework.

DEOs play a critical role in the broader emergency management architecture. Working collaboratively with community members, they develop and mobilise disaster prevention and preparedness programmes aimed at reducing the impact of identified hazards such as flooding, hurricanes, fires, earthquakes, and vehicular accidents.

Each DEO Committee comprises a Chairman, Deputy Chairman, Secretary, Public Relations Officer, and officers responsible for key functional areas including Shelter Management, First Aid, Information and Damage Assessment, Road Clearance, Transportation, Communication, and Clothing and Feeding. General members contribute in areas aligned with their interests, skills, and competencies, thereby strengthening the overall capacity and responsiveness of the organisation at the community level.



Picture 2: District Emergency Organisations (DEO)

The Department's volunteer registry reflects a total of **733** registered volunteers across the 30 constituencies. The volunteers are stewarded by 30 elected Chairpersons listed in the table below:

NUMBER	DISTRICT	NAME OF CHAIRPERSON
1	Christ Church East Central	Mr. Jason Griffith
2	Christ Church East	Mr. Kwame Bradshaw
3	Christ Church South	-
4	Christ Church West Central	Mr. Kemar Saffrey
5	Christ Church West	Mr. Ian Smitten
6	St Andrew	Mr. Andrew Brathwaite
7	St. George North	Mr. Roderick Yard
8	St. George South	Mr. Roger Padmore
9	St. James Central	Mrs. Cheryl Griffith
10	St. James North	Ms. Joyann Forde-Craig
11	St. James South	Mr. John Fleming
12	St. John	Mr. John Haynes - Jan-June 2025 Mr. Winston Millington – Aug – Dec 2025
13	St. Joseph	Mr. Matthew Alleyne
14	St. Lucy	Mrs. Rontae Johnson-Annius
15	St. Michael Central	Ms. Gail Powers-Yard
16	St. Michael East	Mr. Kirt Trotman
17	St. Michael North East	Mr. Michael Carrington
18	St. Michael North West	Ms. Doriel Gill-Skiner
19	St. Michael South Central	Ms. Charone Holder-Parris
20	St. Michael North	-
21	St. Michael South East	Ms. Sophia Greaves-Broome
22	St. Michael South	Ms. Richelle Brathwaite
23	St. Michael West Central	Ms. Quostan Peters
24	St. Michael West	Ms. Kathy Harris
25	City of Bridgetown	Ms. Dorcus Williams
26	St. Peter	Mr. Dave Hurley
27	St. Philip North	Ms. Ermentha King
28	St. Philip South	Ms. Sharon-Rose Gittens
29	St. Philip West	Ms. Natasha Morgan
30	St. Thomas	Mr. Rodney Francis

Table 3: District Emergency Organization Chairpersons 2025

STRATEGIC PARTNERS OFFERING VOLUNTARY SERVICES

Over the years, in addition to the District Emergency Organisations (DEOs), the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) has strategically benefitted from the assistance, support, and sustained cooperation of several voluntary organisations. These include:

- Roving Response Team
- Barbados Citizens Band Radio Association (BCBRA)
- Amateur Radio Society of Barbados (ARSB)
- Barbados Red Cross Society (BRCS)
- Rapid Relief Team (RRT)

These organisations function as critical force multipliers and enablers within the national emergency management system. Their specialised capabilities, particularly in communications, humanitarian assistance, logistics, and rapid response help to fill operational gaps and enhance the capacity of the DEM and other emergency services to achieve comprehensive, island-wide coverage during emergencies and disasters.



MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

The Department of Emergency Management continued to advance its overarching objective of strengthening national preparedness and coordinating effective responses to the range of hazards to which Barbados remains vulnerable.

This section outlines the major activities undertaken and key accomplishments achieved during the review period. These initiatives were organised under the following programme areas:

- ❖ Institutional Strengthening for Comprehensive Disaster Management
- ❖ Preparedness Response and Mitigation Capacity Strengthening
- ❖ Strengthening Community Resilience
- ❖ Research and Knowledge Management
- ❖ Recovery
- ❖ External Relations



INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING FOR COMPREHENSIVE DISASTER MANAGEMENT

We pursue programmes and activities that strengthen the enabling environment for Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) and encourage the construction of resilient critical infrastructure.



INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING FOR COMPREHENSIVE DISASTER MANAGEMENT (CDM)

Country Work Programme (CWP) and Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) Audit Tool 2026–2030

During the reporting period, the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) continued its engagement in activities aimed at strengthening Barbados' Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) framework through the development of the Country Work Programme (CWP) for the period January 2026 to December 2030.

The Barbados CWP reflects a systematic and coordinated approach to addressing disaster risk management (DRM) challenges while promoting climate-smart and sustainable solutions. The programme demonstrates Barbados' commitment to enhancing multi-sectoral collaboration and integrating disaster risk reduction with climate action, sustainable development, human mobility, and risk reduction financing. The successful implementation of the CWP is dependent on continued collaboration between national stakeholders and key regional and international partners to ensure that implementation remains responsive to evolving national priorities and global standards.

The CWP provides:

- an overview of Barbados' national context and the relevant normative and policy frameworks, including a summary of the CDM Audit and identified gaps;
- a description of the methodology utilised in developing the programme, the actors involved, the logical framework, and recommendations for continuous improvement of the CWP process; and
- a systematised Performance Monitoring Framework (PMF), including proposed monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to guide implementation and assess progress throughout the programme period.

The programme outcomes were informed by a comprehensive Gap Analysis conducted using the CDM Audit Tool. The audit process was undertaken through extensive consultations with national stakeholders and aligned with the Regional CDM Strategy and Programming Framework, as well as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. The assessment examined all four phases of disaster management — mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery — identifying both existing strengths and areas requiring further enhancement.

The CDM Audit Tool applies a scoring system ranging from one (1) to three (3), where:

1 represents an unsatisfactory level of compliance;

2 indicates partial compliance; and

3 reflects full compliance.

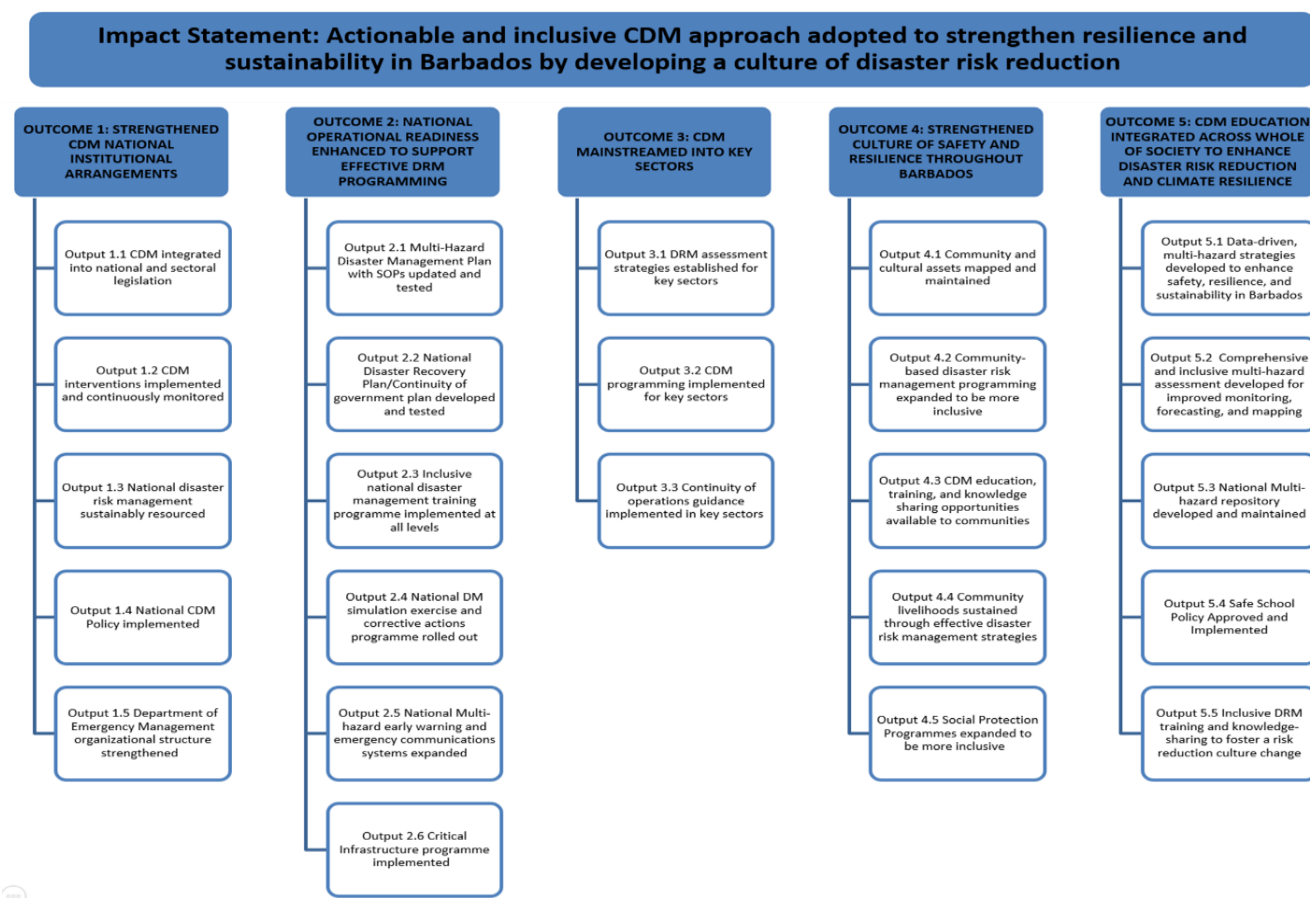
The results of the audit highlighted progress achieved in several priority areas while also identifying opportunities for continued development and institutional strengthening. The findings and recommendations emerging from the consultative process were subsequently translated into five strategic outcome areas designed to address key disaster management and risk reduction challenges within Barbados.

The five (5) outcome areas were as follows:

1. Strengthened CDM national institutional arrangements;
2. National operational readiness enhanced to support effective DRM programming;
3. CDM mainstreamed into key sectors;
4. Strengthened culture of safety and resilience throughout Barbados; and
5. CDM education integrated across the whole of society to enhance disaster risk reduction and climate resilience.

These five outcomes are further divided into twenty-four (24) outputs aimed at achieving the long-term impact of:

“An actionable and inclusive CDM approach adopted to strengthen resilience and sustainability in Barbados through the development of a culture of disaster risk reduction.”



Monitoring and evaluation of the CWP will be guided by key indicators identified through the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) Basket of Indicators, which incorporates both the CDM Strategy and Programming Framework and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. These indicators have been integrated into the Programme's Performance Monitoring Framework (PMF) to support implementation tracking, reporting, and performance assessment.

Additionally, the Emergency Management Advisory Council (EMAC), as the executive arm of Barbados' National Emergency Management System (NEMS), continues to play a pivotal role in guiding national disaster preparedness, coordination, and response efforts, thereby supporting the implementation and oversight of the Country Work Programme.

BARBADOS COMPREHENSIVE DISASTER MANAGEMENT (CDM) COUNTRY WORK PROGRAMME (CWP) 2019-2023

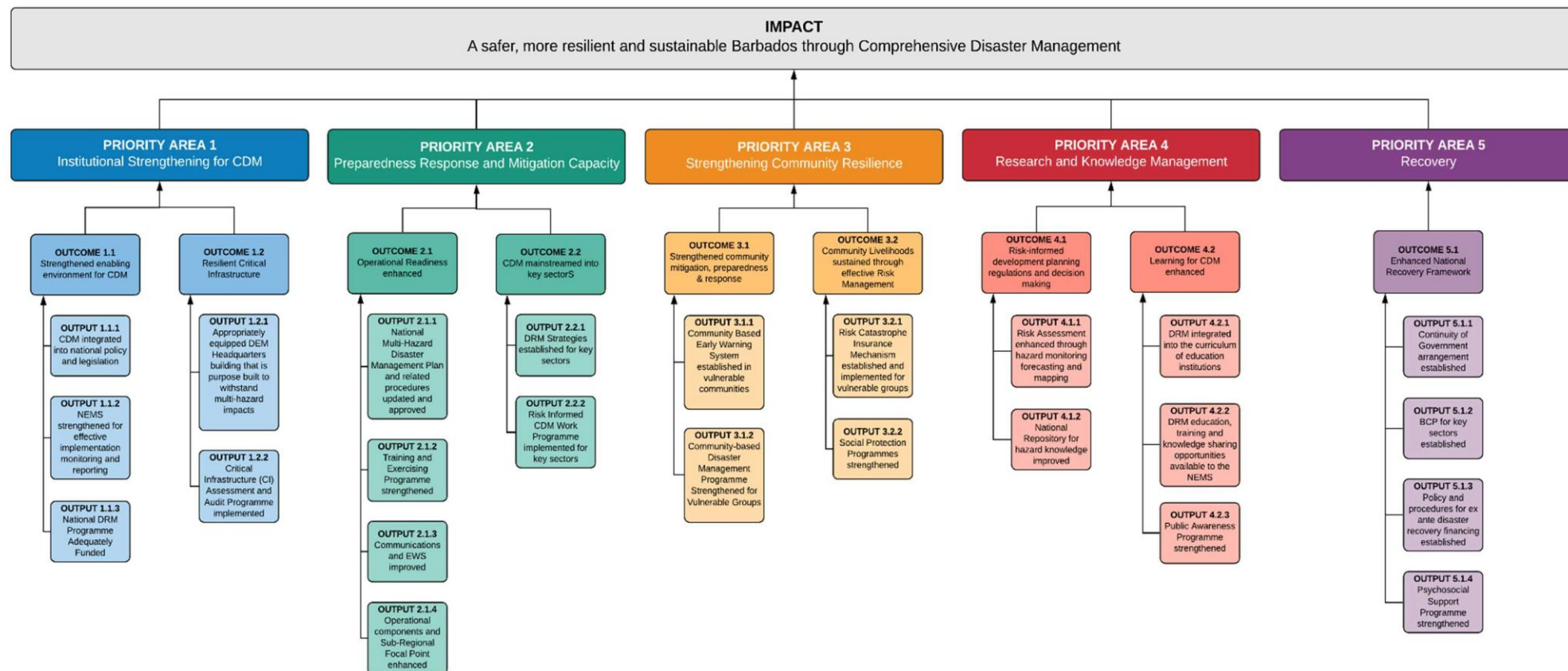


Diagram 8: Logical Framework Analysis for the Barbados CDM CWP 2019-2023

DEM STRATEGIC PLAN 2026 – 2030

During the reporting period, DEM continued the development of the Department's Strategic Plan 2026–2030 through a series of consultations and meetings with stakeholders, DEM staff, consultants and DEM volunteer support agencies. These engagements focused on reviewing the Department's strategic priorities, strengthening institutional objectives, and ensuring alignment with national disaster risk management goals.

As part of the process, a validation workshop was convened in September 2025 to review and validate the draft Strategic Charter for the Department. The workshop provided an opportunity for participants to examine the proposed strategic priorities, goals, and institutional objectives, while also identifying areas for refinement and enhancement. Discussions during the workshop further outlined the next steps required to finalize the Strategic Plan and support its effective implementation over the 2026–2030 period.

The Strategic Charter has been finalised by DEM and is to be signed by the Minister of the Ministry of Home Affairs and Information for onward transmission.

STANDARD RELEVANT REVIEWS 2025

As stipulated by law, the Department presented its 2024 Annual Report to the Emergency Management Advisory Council for endorsement and will forward to the Ministry for onward transmission to the Cabinet of Barbados. The department also conducted a standard review of the Emergency Management Orders 2024 prior to the official start of the hurricane season. This document was forwarded through The Ministry of Home Affairs and Information and The Office of the Attorney General for final cabinet

approval which subsequently will be laying in Parliament.

NATIONAL MULTI-HAZARD EARLY WARNING SYSTEM (MHEWS)

The Department of Emergency Management (DEM) continued to pursue initiatives aimed at strengthening Barbados' national Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS) as part of the broader disaster risk reduction and resilience programme.

The implementation of an effective MHEWS remains critical to enhancing the country's capacity to understand risk, monitor and forecast potential hazard impacts, issue timely warnings to support anticipatory action, and respond effectively to unavoidable events. Barbados continues to face a range of hydro-meteorological hazards, including hurricanes, tropical storms, flooding, drought, and extreme heat. The country also remains vulnerable to geophysical hazards such as earthquakes and tsunamis, as well as the indirect impacts associated with volcanic eruptions.

In response to the evolving hazard landscape, the DEM continued to spearhead the Early Warnings for All programmatic initiative to ensure that national early warning arrangements remain responsive to emerging risks. These efforts contribute significantly to strengthening national disaster resilience, safeguarding lives and livelihoods, and supporting sustainable national development.

During 2025, the DEM advanced several activities to strengthen the national MHEWS. These included convening the second meeting of the Technical Multi-Hazard Advisory Committee, progressing the expansion of the Common Alerting Protocol

through the installation, configuration and testing of emergency alerting equipment at participating broadcast stations, and conducting workshops with broadcasters to support the development of emergency communication protocols.

The Department also collaborated with The University of the West Indies Seismic Research Centre and other national partners to strengthen Barbados' seismic monitoring network. This work included the installation of temporary seismic stations, the assessment of potential permanent monitoring sites and the replacement of the Global Positioning System antenna at The University of the West Indies Cave Hill Campus. Further details on these activities are provided throughout this report.

Enhancing Early Warning Communications for Broadcasters

The Department of Emergency Management (DEM) hosted a one-day workshop on Enhancing Early Warning Communications for Broadcasters on January 28, 2025, at its conference room. The session formed part of DEM's broader efforts to strengthen Barbados' Early Warning System (EWS) through improved coordination and communication with key media partners, particularly radio broadcasters who play a vital role in the rapid dissemination of emergency information.



Picture 3: Enhancing Early Warning Communications for Broadcasters Workshop, January 28, 2025: Representatives from local broadcasting stations met to discuss DASDEC implementation and broadcasting protocols. Participants included station managers, BBC Media Action Consultant Kerry Cox, Bill Robertson of Digital Alert Systems, DEM Director Kerry Hinds, and DEM staff

The workshop brought together representatives from local radio stations, technical personnel, and emergency management stakeholders for a focused and interactive discussion on improving the effectiveness of emergency messaging. Key presentations highlighted the critical role of broadcasters within the national EWS framework, emphasizing the importance of timely, accurate, and consistent communication before, during, and after hazard events. Participants were also introduced to the Common Alerting Protocol (CAP), with practical insights into how CAP integrates with radio transmission systems to support standardized and automated alert dissemination. A significant portion of the session was dedicated to best practices in emergency broadcasting, including message clarity, reducing misinformation, and ensuring accessibility for diverse audiences. Technical discussions also addressed common challenges faced by broadcasters, such as equipment limitations, signal continuity during extreme events, and the need for redundancy systems.

Additionally, the workshop benefitted from the in-person participation of the Digital Alert Systems team Bill Robertson, who engaged broadcasters in a follow-up discussion on the alerting equipment and platform. This provided an opportunity for participants to raise technical queries, clarify operational procedures, and explore ways to enhance system utilization and reliability. Overall, the workshop strengthened collaboration between DEM and broadcast partners, reinforced the importance of standardized alerting mechanisms, and contributed to ongoing capacity building efforts aimed at improving national preparedness and response.



Picture 4 Radio Workshop: Bill Robertson, Vice President of Business Development at Digital Alert Systems, delivers a presentation to representatives of local radio stations, technical personnel, and emergency management stakeholders

WORLD RADIO DAY

In observance of World Radio Day 2025, the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) hosted a follow-up session on February 13, 2025, to advance the development of standardized radio protocols for Early Warning Systems (EWS). Held under the theme “Radio and Climate Change,” the session engaged the Barbados Government Information Service (BGIS) and key stakeholders in strengthening emergency communication practices.

Discussions also addressed technical and operational considerations, including maintaining broadcast continuity and integrating systems such as the Common Alerting Protocol (CAP). Overall, the session marked an important step toward finalizing practical, standardized protocols to enhance the effectiveness of emergency broadcasting in Barbados.

Building on the January workshop, the session focused on defining clear guidance for radio announcers across different hazard scenarios, including hurricanes, flooding, and other emergencies. Participants worked collaboratively to outline what broadcasters should do before, during, and after events, emphasizing timely, accurate, and consistent messaging aligned with official sources.



Picture 5: Discussion amongst broadcasters on World Radio Day

PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE AND MITIGATION CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

We promote enhanced operational readiness through a sustained National Emergency Management System; enhanced first responders' capacities; as well as the mainstreaming and strengthening of CDM Knowledge and capabilities within the entire national system, amongst other capacity enhancement efforts.



PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE AND MITIGATION CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

ANNUAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT POLICY AND OPERATIONAL DISCUSSIONS

The 2025 National State of Preparedness Hurricane Forum was convened on May 19, 2025, at the Lloyd Erskine Sandiford Centre (LESC). The meeting was chaired by The Honourable Mia Amor Mottley, S.C., M.P., Prime Minister of Barbados.

The Forum focused on strengthening the country's readiness for the upcoming hurricane season. Discussions centred on enhancing early warning systems, increasing community engagement in preparedness activities, advancing risk management strategies, and reviewing the roles and responsibilities of government agencies in coordinating response efforts before, during, and after a disaster event.

Emphasis was placed on inter-agency collaboration, proactive planning, and whole-of-society engagement to ensure a coordinated, efficient, and unified national response to natural hazards.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (EMAC) MEETINGS

The Eighteenth (18th) Working Meeting of the EMAC were held on, Wednesday, July 2, 2025. The meetings were chaired by the Honourable Wilfred Abrahams, S.C., M.P., EMAC Chairman and Minister of Home Affairs and Information. The meeting discussed and endorsed various emergency management policies, plans and standard operating procedures which were then forwarded to Cabinet for official approval.

TECHNICAL SERVICES TO THE EMAC TECHNICAL STANDING COMMITTEES AND OTHER NATIONAL LEVEL MULTI-AGENCY COMMITTEES

The Department of Emergency Management (DEM) continued to provide technical and administrative support to the National Emergency Management System's Emergency Management Advisory Council (EMAC) and its eighteen (18) Standing Committees, as well as other multi-agency committees within the national framework.

The technical assistance provided included the review, updating, and validation of plans and procedures governing emergency management functions; the delivery of specialised emergency management training; the facilitation of targeted seminars for committee members; and the development of new policies, plans, and standard operating procedures. These interventions contributed to strengthening institutional coordination, operational readiness, and policy coherence across the system.

REFINEMENT AND APPROVAL OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN COMPONENTS

As part of established protocol, the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) submitted its Emergency Management Plans and Standard Operating Procedures through the Ministry of Home Affairs and Information for onward transmission to the Cabinet of Barbados. This process ensures that all plans and procedures undergo the Cabinet's annual review and receive formal approval maintaining alignment with national policy and statutory requirements.

CARIBE WAVE 2025

The annual Exercise Caribe Wave 2025 was conducted on Thursday, March 20, 2025, as part of the regional tsunami response exercise coordinated by the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and international partners.

The Department of Emergency Management (DEM), through its Technical Standing Committee on Coastal Hazards (TSCCH), utilised Exercise Caribe Wave 2025 as a practical mechanism to test and evaluate several national response functions, including alerting protocols, inter-agency coordination, community notification systems, and evacuation procedures.

Particular focus was placed on communities either actively pursuing or seeking renewal of their Tsunami Ready Recognition (TRR). These included:

- **St. Michael North West**, which is currently working toward attaining Tsunami Ready Recognition; and
- The coastal belt from **Shermans, St. Lucy to Mullins, St. Peter**, which is seeking to renew

its Tsunami Ready Recognition originally received in 2020.

The Caribe Wave 2025 exercise also focused on evacuating St. Lucy District Hospital and sheltering patients at Ignatius Byer Primary School. It tested and improved the emergency operations plans of key stakeholders, including the hospital and the Ministry of Health & Wellness, while strengthening coordination within the National Emergency Management System (NEMS).

The exercise provided an opportunity to assess community-level preparedness, strengthen public awareness, validate evacuation routes and signage, and reinforce collaboration between national authorities and local stakeholders in advancing tsunami readiness standards.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SENSITISATION AND TRAINING

During the review period, the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) conducted and participated in a range of emergency management training and sensitisation sessions. These initiatives were designed to build the knowledge and capacity of the public, as well as stakeholders from local ministries, departments, agencies, the private sector, and international partner organisations.

Over the reporting period, DEM actively engaged in local, national, and international training and sensitisation sessions, thereby strengthening disaster preparedness, response capabilities, and collaborative networks at both the national and regional levels.

MANAGEMENT OF MASS CROWD EVENTS

Mass Crowd Events continued to represent a key component of the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) Work Programme. During the reporting period, the Department was involved in **thirty (30) mass crowd events**, providing essential support in emergency contingency planning and coordinating emergency operations.

These efforts ensured that appropriate risk management measures were in place, safety protocols were implemented, and rapid response capabilities were available to mitigate potential hazards and protect the public during large-scale gatherings.

Some of the major mass crowd events during the reporting period included the following:

- We Gatherin 2025
- NAPSAC 2025
- Carifesta XV
- National Senior Games
- Oistins Fish Festival
- Caribbean Music Festival
- Caribbean Premier League
- Crop Over Festival



STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

We empower communities across Barbados to be more resilient. This includes strengthening community mitigation, preparedness and response, as well as the sustainment of community livelihoods through effective risk management. Focus is placed on capacity building of community volunteers through targeted training and development programmes.



STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

DEM – DISTRICT EMERGENCY ORGANISATIONS (DEOS) INTERFACE

Throughout the reporting period, the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) provided technical support to the District Emergency Organisations (DEOs). This support included plan development and exercise training for selected DEOs, public relations assistance, general awareness and sensitisation sessions, troubleshooting and distribution of telecommunications equipment, technical and resource support to community-led resilience projects, guidance in conducting community meetings as well as the review and enhancement of the volunteer orientation process and programme.

The Annual Meeting of DEO Chairpersons was held on Saturday, 17 May 2025 at Courtyard by Marriott Conference Room. The meeting provided an opportunity for Chairpersons to update DEM management on their progress, challenges, and preparedness for the 2025 Atlantic hurricane season. Community volunteer units continued to maintain a high state of readiness by conducting equipment audits, community profiling, and vulnerability assessments, with particular focus on the most vulnerable members of their communities. DEM also updated the DEO chairpersons on a number of programmes which directly affected the DEOs including the ongoing consultancy aimed at reviewing and updating the Volunteer Orientation and Management process.



Picture 6: Annual DEO Chairpersons Meeting 2025

TRAINING and CAPACITY BUILDING

The DEM spearheaded or supported several activities as part of its Community Preparedness Programming which saw the active participation of several community volunteers during the period under review in the following areas:

FIRE SAFETY: DEO volunteers participated in Fire Safety Training, in collaboration with the Barbados Fire Service, at the Arch Hall Fire Academy.

CHAINSAW TRAINING: The DEOs participated in training sessions in Chainsaw training during the period June – August 2025. These sessions were held at Queen’s College School.

RADIO COMMUNICATION: DEOs participated in training and practice sessions twice monthly on the National DEO Radio Net. DEOs also continued to actively participate in the National Emergency Telecommunications weekly radio net.



DEO CONFERENCE 2025

The integration of communities into disaster management planning is essential, as they possess a wealth of knowledge, skills and resources that can contribute to more efficient and effective disaster management and response efforts. It was with this understanding that the conference “*Elevating Community Resilience through Disaster Risk Reduction*” was envisioned with the following objectives:

To increase the knowledge of DEO members on the vulnerabilities which hinders community resilience.

To collaborate with other stakeholders to develop additional disaster risk reduction strategies to enhance community resilience.

To further develop mechanisms to strengthen community engagement, information sharing and utilization of community resources.

To develop a 3-year Action Plan that will guide the DEOs to allow for greater engagement of the youth and persons with disabilities in building community resilience, ensuring sustainability of the DEOs.

To fulfil its objectives, the conference provided a special focus on engaging the youth and persons with disabilities (PWDs). Thereby, seeking to increase the diversity and inclusivity of the DEOs, ensuring its sustainability and transforming its effectiveness to embrace the changing hazard environment by developing context specific and sustainable disaster risk reduction strategies to build resilience.



Picture 7: DEO Conference

The conference “*Elevating Community Resilience through Disaster Risk Reduction*” aimed to strengthen the effectiveness and coordination of disaster risk management strategies and disaster response efforts across communities in Barbados, particularly in the aftermath of hazards impacts. It sought to achieve this by providing a platform for key groups such as the District Emergency Organisation, the disability community and the youth to share knowledge. Additionally, it offered the opportunity for them to exchange experiences and best practices; and foster collaboration among themselves to cultivate communities that are truly resilient and that can withstand and respond to the impacts of hazards.



Picture 8: Panelist having discussion on elevating Community Resilience through Disaster Risk Reduction

The conference also sought to increase the diversity and inclusivity of the DEO membership by creating avenues to include the youth and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) to incorporate their unique perspectives to bring a more holistic approach to elevating community resilience. It was expressed that youth can drive transformational change within communities as they are agents for change, while Persons with Disabilities (PWD) can inform planning and implementation of initiatives which addresses their specific needs. Therefore, including their perspectives in the discourse allowed for improved risk management and response strategies; thereby, making the process of elevating community resilience both equitable and responsive to diverse needs.

Both youth and Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) are integral parts of the social and neighbourhood systems within communities. Therefore, it is essential that these two vulnerable groups were included within the decision-making process to build resilience within communities. Noting that the resilience of communities should promote those systems that contributes to its well-being; and focus on how its physical infrastructure and social

connectivity unite to withstand and recover from the impact of hazards.



Picture 9: Participants of the DEO Conference

Communities across Barbados comprises of youth and also include a diverse group of peoples with various disabilities. There are 55,000 young people (10-24 years) in Barbados and there is an estimated 12,000 persons with known disabilities; however, this number may be a gross underestimate of the true population of persons with disabilities. Thus, it is essential that persons with disabilities and the youth are involved in activities to build community resilience, as communities can benefit from their unique perspective, skills and experience; thus, making communities more adaptable and resilient to challenges.

TSUNAMI READY RECOGNITION PROGRAMME LUNCH-TIME BUSINESS MEETING – ST. MICHAEL NORTH-WEST DISTRICT EMERGENCY ORGANISATION (DEO)

During 2025, the Department of Emergency Management (DEM), in collaboration with the Coastal Zone Management Unit (CZMU), national and international partners, continued efforts to strengthen tsunami preparedness and coastal resilience in Barbados through the implementation of the UNESCO/Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme.

The initiative formed part of the Caribbean Tsunami Information Centre (CTIC) project, *“Towards a Safer Ocean in the Caribbean through Tsunami Ready Communities (Barbados, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago)”*. The project sought to advance the Tsunami Ready Recognition of the coastal area extending from Batts Rock to Exmouth Gap, St. Michael, by strengthening community preparedness, awareness and response capabilities in relation to tsunami and other coastal hazards.

At the community level, implementation was supported by the St. Michael North-West District Emergency Organisation (DEO), which serves as part of the volunteer network of the Department of Emergency Management. Engagement with residents, businesses and other stakeholders was an important component of the initiative, recognising the critical role of community participation and partnership in building resilience.

As part of the stakeholder engagement process, a lunch-time business meeting was held on 5 November 2025, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., at

Rascals of Barbados Restaurant, Mighty Grynner Highway, Brandon’s Beach, St. Michael. The meeting provided an opportunity to introduce members of the business community to the objectives and requirements of the Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme and to discuss ways in which businesses operating within the project area could actively support its implementation.

Discussions focused on enhancing preparedness, strengthening local response mechanisms, promoting greater awareness of tsunami risk, and encouraging collaboration between businesses, community volunteers and national emergency management agencies. Particular emphasis was placed on the importance of a coordinated approach to emergency readiness within coastal communities.

The engagement represented another important step towards achieving Tsunami Ready Recognition for the Batts Rock to Exmouth Gap project area and demonstrated DEM’s continued commitment to strengthening community resilience through partnerships, public awareness, preparedness and locally driven disaster risk reduction initiatives.



Picture 10: Tsunami Ready Recognition Lunch Time Business Meeting at Rascals of Barbados Restaurant

WORLD TSUNAMI AWARENESS DAY

World Tsunami Awareness Day is observed globally on 5 November to raise awareness about the tsunami hazard and to strengthen the preparedness and response efforts of communities. This year it was celebrated under the global banner “*Be Tsunami Ready: Invest in Tsunami Preparedness*” focusing on turning lessons from the past into preparedness that save lives.

In recognition of this day, the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) in collaboration with the St James Central District Emergency Organisation (DEO) and the Coastal Zone Management Unit (CZMU) hosted a Table-Top Exercise focusing on that stretch of coastal area from Porters, St James to Batts Rock, St Michael.

The exercise was aimed at enhancing readiness and response capabilities among hoteliers, estate agents, police and residents, all of whom have a vested interest in the area. Thus, ensuring that in the event of a tsunami, they are better prepared to respond effectively; thereby, reducing loss of lives, safeguarding property and minimizing economic cost.

In keeping with the global theme, and drawing on lessons learned from the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the table top exercise emphasized the importance of ensuring that unpreparedness and lack of knowledge do not negatively impact these coastal businesses.

Additionally, the exercise allowed business within this coastal area to identify the gaps in their contingency plans and also encouraged them to

invest in strategies that strengthened their preparedness to this natural and destructive hazard.

Thus, the tabletop exercise fulfilled the global mandate and reinforced the need to apply lessons learned to preparedness initiatives that will save lives.

The table-top exercise was held in the Goddard Room of the Sagikor Cave Hill School of Business and Management, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, Campus, St Michael on Wednesday, 5 November 2025.

The scope of the exercise was intended to test the District Emergency Organisation (DEOs) and members of the business community along the Porters, St James to Batts Rock, St Michael coast capacity to respond to a tsunami, evaluate their individual Tsunami Emergency Operations Plans (TEOP) and to identify any perceived gaps and challenges.



Picture 11: Participants of the World Tsunami Awareness Day Table-Top Exercise

RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

We increase and sustain research, knowledge management and learning for comprehensive disaster management (CDM). Priority is placed on the development and expansion of data and information management systems, and visibility throughout various media platforms. The investment are our people as well as mainstreaming of risk knowledge across society.



RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

PUBLIC AWARENESS, INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

Throughout 2025, the programme remained highly active, delivering outreach initiatives both in-person and virtually. These activities supported national resilience by equipping individuals, schools, communities and organisations with practical preparedness knowledge and encouraging a culture of safety and shared responsibility.



Picture 12: Charity Drive Presentation 2025



Picture 13: Essay Competition Winners



Picture 14: DEM Annual Church Service

Under the Public Awareness, Information and Education Programme, the DEM continues to fulfil its mandate to improve public understanding of hazards and strengthen community-based knowledge sharing on priority risks.



Picture 15: Run Tsunami Run/Walk 2025



Public Awareness and Outreach Educational events held during 2025

ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

During 2025, the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) continued to strengthen research, knowledge management and organisational learning in support of Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM). Emphasis was placed on improving the collection, management and accessibility of data, and expanding information management systems that support evidence-based decision-making.

The Department also prioritised enhancing visibility and knowledge sharing across traditional and digital media platforms, ensuring that risk information remains accessible, relevant and timely. Central to this effort is investment in people — both staff and partners — and the ongoing mainstreaming of risk awareness and disaster preparedness throughout all sectors of society.

JANUARY 2025



During the month of January, the DEM shared knowledge and information with the general public at the We Gatherin 2025 and provided the necessary tools to develop an emergency management plan as part of the UNDRR Making Cities Resilience Workshop.

FEBRUARY 2025



Throughout the month of February, the department worked closely with the Cultural Heritage Sector and the Ashley Lashley Foundation to enhance resilience and sensitise various schools about the hazards that can affect them.

MARCH 2025



During March, the general public was educated on the various aspects of coastal hazards through the launch of Coastal Hazards and Earthquake Smart Month, as well as hosting the 5K Walk and Run.

APRIL 2025



During April, the Run Tsunami Run and Walk Charity Drive Presentation, as well as the DEM Movie Night. "Remembering La Soufriere," were held at the DREM Car Park.

MAY 2025



During May, the DEM hosted the DEM Annual Church Service and a Press Conference to launch Hurricane Awareness Month and the DEM Branded Bus.

JUNE 2025



In the month of June, the DEM exposed the Class 4 students of St. Lawrence Primary School to basic radio training, while the Ministry of the Public Service was provided with information on various hazards through a Disaster Preparedness Workshop.

JULY 2025



During July, the DEM hosted an Open Day at the Barbados Defence Force Headquarters, where members of the public were educated on various aspects of hazards through literature and games. Additionally, staff at Sandals Barbados were educated on effective hurricane preparedness procedures.

AUGUST 2025



During August, the DEM educated the public at the Ministry of Home Affairs and Information on various hazards and the importance of being prepared for any of these hazards.

SEPTEMBER 2025



During September, the DEM hosted an Ole Time Bus Excursion and Disaster Expo to better equip and assist seniors in understanding and preparing for various hazards.

OCTOBER 2025



During October, the DEM played an integral role in the participation of a youth climate action summit, where they were given the opportunity to voice their challenges and concerns on the various hazards in their school and community. DEM participated in a youth forum to mark Risk Reduction Day.

NOVEMBER 2025



During November, DEM hosted the St. Michael Northwest Lunchtime meeting to inform the business community of the Tsunami Ready Recognition Programme for the area. Concurrently, a number a school tours were conducted to educate the children on the different aspects of hazards and to view an exhibition hosted by the department.

DECEMBER 2025



During December, the DEM conducted the “Spot the Santa” Multi-Hazard campaign at branded multi-hazard bus shelters throughout the island to increase visibility and public awareness.

HUMAN RESOURCES STRENGTHENING

The DEM capitalized on various opportunities to strengthen its Human Resource capacity by selecting personnel to take part in several training courses, seminars and workshops. These training sessions are broken down as follows:

DISASTER MANAGEMENT RELATED TRAINING:

- ❖ World Food Programme/Deloitte Diagnostic Supply Chain Tool for DRM.
- ❖ Sustainable Energy Investment Programme Workshop – Development of a National Energy Efficiency Policy and Strategic Action Plan.
- ❖ Caribbean Development Bank - Disaster Response Policy Based Operations Initiative.
- ❖ National Infrastructure Assets Registry Training.
- ❖ GAIA/DHL Get Airports Ready for Disaster Training.
- ❖ CDEMA Integrity and Safety in Residential Construction Webinar Series.
- ❖ Climate Resilient National Water Safety Plan Validation Workshop.
- ❖ Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology National Framework or Climate Services Workshop.
- ❖ Digitization for Cultural Heritage
- ❖ Emergency Shelter Facilitators' Workshop.
- ❖ Making Cities Resilience 2030 Workshop – Implementation of the Resilience Scorecard and the MHEWS and Displacement Addendums.
- ❖ Emergency Shelter Workshop facilitated by the Barbados Red Cross
- ❖ Climate Finance Workshop
- ❖ Collaborative Emergency Response within the framework of Urban Search and Rescue.
- ❖ National Emergency Operation Centre Exercise and Training
- ❖ Barbados Association of Office Professionals Training and Capacity Building Session
- ❖ Public Sector Management

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE TRAINING:

RECOVERY



RECOVERY

We pursue programmes and activities that lead to an enhanced national recovery framework. The Recovery Framework seeks to achieve a shared understanding and a common, integrated perspective on Recovery in order to achieve unity of effort and make the most effective use of the country's limited resources. It considers and promotes social, environmental infrastructural and economic recovery. Focus is placed on the development and exercising of Continuity of Government Plans; development and application of Business Continuity Plans; policy and procedures for accessing the disaster risk financing; as well as a strengthened Psychosocial Support Programme.

CONTINGENT CREDIT FACILITY FOR NATURAL DISASTER EMERGENCIES (CCF)

During the year, the DEM participated in several initiatives aimed at bolstering the National Recovery Framework for Disaster Risk Management. Work continued ensuring that the Year Four (4) deliverables were met under the Contingent Credit Facility (CCF) for Natural Disaster Emergencies and articulated Year Five (5) goals, under the five (5) year programme.

The deliverables of the DEM for Year 4 were as follows:

Establishment of the Governance structure for the Multi-Hazard Early Warning System.

The Cabinet of Barbados at its meeting on May 9, 2024, approved the establishment of the Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS) Governance structure inclusive of MHEWS Advisory Committee membership, and terms of reference (TOR). Subsequently the committee was inaugurated on November 1, 2024, at which time committee members participated in the Committee's first working meeting. A second meeting was convened on April 3, 2025.

Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS) Implementation Plan developed.

The Ministry of Home Affairs and Information approved the MHEWS Implementation Plan.

WORLD BANK – BERYL EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND RECOVERY PROJECT DEM SUB-COMPONENT 2.1 ACTIVITIES

The World Bank offered a combination of loan and grant funding to the GoB to assist with the rebuilding efforts in the marine sector and with the enhancing capacity of critical emergency management systems.

Throughout the reporting period the World Bank conducted several missions for the Beryl Emergency Response and Recovery Project in Barbados. The meetings were coordinated by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs, including various ministries, departments, and agencies of government, including DEM. The World Bank conducted a mission to DEM on the 27 February 2025. The objective of the mission was to discuss and plan actions to achieve the following:

- i. Signature of the Loan Agreement
- ii. Recruitment of the PECU staff
- iii. Approval of the Project Operation Manual

The second mission was conducted on 21 -25 July 2025, the main objective of the mission was to:

(i) Build capacity for disaster preparedness, response and financial protection and provide technical recommendations to foster the resilience of Barbados.

The sub-component included the following activities:

- i. Technical Support for the development of Training Programs for Emergency Management Personnel.
- ii. Development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), Contingency Plans and Forecast-based Action Plans.
- iii. Technical Support for Climate Resilient Infrastructure Upgrades for Bridgetown Port and Fisheries Sector.

The third mission was held over the period 10 – 14 November 2025: The focus areas were:

- i. Finalizing the work plan and budget for at least two (2) years, and review and lock in the fisherfolk grant/loan agreement.
- ii. Developing scopes for the Terms of References for the Sub-component 1.3 and
- iii. Advancing the Climate resilient coastal protection work and conducting site visits.

The final mission was held on 9 - 11 December 2025. The main focus was to finalise the components of the project and to share any relevant information as it pertains to the project. The Department shared several key documents with the World Bank in the execution of the project.



PHYSICAL CATASTROPHE FUND COMMITTEE

During the period under review, the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) was represented on the Physical Catastrophe Fund Committee. The Committee played a critical role in assessing claims submitted by individuals affected by catastrophic events and ensuring that financial assistance was fairly and appropriately allocated to those impacted.

HURRICANE STRAP IT PROGRAMME

Through the implementation of the hurricane strap installation “**Operation Strap-It**” Programme, the Department of Emergency Management was mandated to oversee the retrofitting of vulnerable homes with hurricane straps. The programme was designed to strengthen roof-to-wall connections in houses assessed as most susceptible to high-wind impacts, thereby improving structural performance during severe weather events.

By the end of December 2025, a total of **1300 homes** had been successfully retrofitted under the initiative, contributing significantly to enhanced household resilience and reduced potential wind-related damage.



HURRICANE MELISSA RELIEF FROM BARBADOS TO JAMAICA

The Barbados-based Jamaica Relief Initiative Collection Centre was established by the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) for the period 05 November 2025 to 19 January 2026. The initiative was implemented following the passage of Hurricane Melissa, which impacted Jamaica and created the need for humanitarian assistance and relief support.

The primary aim of the Jamaica Relief Initiative Collection Centre was to provide the Barbadian public with a coordinated and structured mechanism through which relief items could be donated, collected, packaged, and prepared for onward transportation to Jamaica.

The collection centre officially commenced operations at 0800 hours on Wednesday 05 November 2025. Prior to the commencement of operations, all necessary administrative arrangements and logistical support systems were established to ensure the efficient functioning of the initiative.

Operations were conducted in accordance with the established administrative instructions. Pelican House, Building No. 14, Harbour, was made available promptly to facilitate the operation and support the storage and organization of donated items.

Personnel from the Barbados Defence Force (BDF) were assigned to assist with the initial set-up of the collection centre and to provide logistical support throughout the operation. Their assistance contributed significantly to the smooth establishment and functionality of the initiative.

The Honourable Wilfred A. Abrahams, S.C., M.P., together with his personal assistant, was present during the initial establishment phase of the initiative. Additionally, the Director of the Department of Emergency Management, along with members of staff, DEO volunteers were present to oversee the set-up and coordinate activities at the location.

Throughout the operational period, there were no significant issues that negatively affected the overall effectiveness or efficiency of the initiative. Although manpower was occasionally limited, this did not result in operational delays, logistical constraints, or inconvenience to members of the public.

The initiative functioned effectively and provided an organized avenue for members of the Barbadian public to contribute humanitarian assistance to the people of Jamaica during their time of need.

The Jamaica Relief Initiative Collection Centre successfully achieved its intended objective of coordinating the collection and preparation of relief supplies for Jamaica following the passage of Hurricane Melissa. Through collaborative efforts between the Department of Emergency Management, the Barbados Defence Force, supporting personnel, and members of the public, the initiative was executed in an efficient and organized manner.

Jamaica received thirteen 20ft containers containing 2419 tarpaulins, 1300 sleeping cots, 50 generators, 4 chainsaws, non-perishable foodstuff, toiletries and hygiene items, as well as linens totalling approximately BDS \$2,011,639.00.

Overall, the operation demonstrated the importance of inter-agency cooperation, timely logistical support, and public participation in humanitarian relief initiatives.



EXTERNAL RELATIONS



EXTERNAL RELATIONS

We actively support cooperation and collaboration between Barbados and external partners, with a view of advancing the national disaster risk management programme. With the Ministry of Foreign Affairs playing a facilitating role in this area, we at the DEM continue to participate in bilateral and multilateral discussions and fora with regional and international partners.

ACCREP ST JOSEPH TOUR

As part of the Advancing Community Climate Resilience Planning in the Caribbean Region (ACC-ReP) Project, the Department of Emergency Management (DEM), in collaboration with The University of the West Indies Disaster Risk Reduction Centre and Northeastern University's Global Resilience Institute, conducted a site visit to St. Joseph in January 2025. The visit formed a key component of ongoing efforts to strengthen community-based resilience planning through direct engagement with local stakeholders.

The site visit was facilitated by the St. Joseph District Emergency Organization (DEO) and featured a comprehensive and thoughtfully coordinated tour led by Ms. Anjelica Catling and Mr. Matthew Alleyne. Their guidance provided valuable local insight into the parish's unique environmental, social, and infrastructural characteristics, as well as the challenges faced by residents. Representatives from DEM and Northeastern University, including Professor Stephen Flynn, were able to engage directly with community representatives and gain a deeper understanding of on-the-ground realities.

The tour included several key locations across the parish, highlighting both areas of cultural and historical significance and sites demonstrating critical resilience concerns. Stops such as Bathsheba and Hackleton's Cliff illustrated the ongoing impacts of coastal erosion and land slippage, while areas like

Blackmans Bridge and the Trainline corridor further emphasized vulnerabilities related to infrastructure and terrain.

Additional locations, including the Parris Hill Mural, Chimborazo, and the Eric Holder Centre, showcased elements of community identity and local assets that can be leveraged in resilience-building efforts. The inclusion of a designated hurricane shelter also provided context for emergency preparedness capacity within the parish.

Overall, the visit served as a valuable knowledge-sharing exercise, strengthening collaboration between national, regional, and community-level stakeholders. It reinforced the importance of integrating local knowledge into resilience planning and provided critical insights to inform the next phase of the ACC-ReP project, particularly in identifying practical, community-driven solutions to address climate and disaster risks in St. Joseph.



Picture 16: Joe's River, St. Joseph: Board members of the St. Joseph District Emergency Organisation lead a tour of the parish as part of an ACC-ReP Project site visit conducted in January 2025 by the Department of Emergency Management, in collaboration with The University of the West Indies Disaster Risk Reduction Centre and Northeastern University's Global Resilience Institute.



Picture 17: Participants and partners of the Community Resilience Forum, hosted by DEM and UWI DRRC from March 26–27, 2025, gather to advance collaboration, knowledge exchange, and inclusive approaches to community-based disaster risk reduction and resilience building.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FORUM

The Department of Emergency Management (DEM), in collaboration with The University of the West Indies Disaster Risk Reduction Centre (UWI DRRC), hosted the Community Resilience Forum from March 26–27, 2025. The forum was convened in partnership with the University of Toronto (UoT) and the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), with support from the Global Institute for Climate-Smart and Resilient Development (GICSRD). This initiative formed part of the “Building Resilience: Creating a Tri-National Network for Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction” project, which seeks to strengthen international collaboration and promote locally driven approaches to resilience in the face of increasing climate and disaster risks.



Picture 18: Parris Hill Mural, St. Joseph, Barbados: Participants visit the Parris Hill mural, created by Barbadian artist Chris Chandler, during a tour of several locations of cultural and historical significance across the parish.

The two-day forum brought together a diverse group of stakeholders, including representatives from government agencies, academia, regional institutions, civil society, and youth organizations. The event served as a platform for knowledge exchange, highlighting best practices in community-based disaster risk reduction and fostering dialogue on innovative, inclusive, and scalable resilience strategies across the Caribbean and beyond.

A key feature of the forum was the plenary session titled “Setting the Stage”, held on March 26. This session set the tone for the discussions that followed by emphasizing the importance of multi-stakeholder engagement and inclusive approaches to resilience building. The session included a focused segment on “Empowering and Engaging Youth to Support Resilience Building,” which underscored the critical role of young people as agents of change in disaster risk reduction and climate action. Presentations and discussions highlighted practical strategies for increasing youth participation, including integrating youth into decision-making processes, strengthening capacity through education and training, and leveraging digital platforms and community networks to amplify youth voices.

Throughout the forum, participants engaged in interactive sessions, group discussions, and networking opportunities, which facilitated the exchange of ideas and strengthened partnerships across institutions and countries. Key themes included community engagement, climate adaptation, risk communication, and the integration of traditional knowledge with scientific approaches to resilience planning.

Overall, the Community Resilience Forum was a highly impactful initiative that reinforced the value of collaboration at local, regional, and international levels. It contributed to advancing the objectives of the tri-national project by building capacity, strengthening networks, and identifying actionable pathways for enhancing community resilience, with a strong emphasis on the inclusion and empowerment of youth.

BARBADOS – CARIBBEAN DISASTER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (CDEMA)



CDEMA is the regional body established to promote Comprehensive Disaster Management inclusive of coordinating the Regional Response Mechanism (RRM). There are twenty (20) Participating States, including Barbados. As a Participating State, Barbados makes an annual contribution to CDEMA and in return benefits from disaster management technical assistance projects, as well as resource mobilisation and support during a hazard impact.

The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) successfully concluded its 16th Meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) in the Turks and Caicos Islands on April 11, 2025.

The meeting was convened from April 7–11, 2025, in collaboration with the Government of the Turks and Caicos Islands and brought together disaster management stakeholders from across CDEMA's 20 Participating States, along with regional and international partners.

Following the official Opening Ceremony on April 8, delegates participated in two days of strategic business sessions aimed at reviewing progress and identifying priority actions to strengthen regional disaster risk management. Discussions focused on advancing coordination, enhancing preparedness, and reinforcing resilience across participating states.

There was no Caribbean Conference on Comprehensive Disaster Management held in 2025, as the conference is a biennial event.

In the absence of the conference, regional engagement in disaster risk management continued through other initiatives, including technical meetings, consultations, and capacity-building activities facilitated by CDEMA and its partners to advance the goals of Comprehensive Disaster Management across participating states.

JOINT CUBA/BARBADOS TASK FORCE

Building on prior engagements between Barbados and Cuba under the Joint Task Force, and agreements stemming from the visit of Miguel Mario Díaz-Canel Bermúdez during the CARICOM-Cuba Summit in December 2022, the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) undertook a technical mission to Cuba from May 5–9, 2025. The mission aimed to strengthen collaboration and examine Cuba’s disaster risk management strategies for potential adaptation in Barbados.

Key focus areas included community disaster management, early warning systems, mass evacuation planning, hurricane preparedness modeling, education and training, emergency response, mitigation programming, flood and tsunami measures, and cultural heritage collaboration. The delegation, led by Hon. Wilfred Abrahams, included representatives from key national agencies and sectors.

The mission successfully met its objectives by providing first-hand insight into Cuba’s disaster management systems, facilitating comparison with Barbados’ frameworks, identifying scalable best practices, and fostering knowledge exchange to enhance community resilience.

Additionally, participation in a CDEMA/Cuba/Barbados Post-Mission Working Group Meeting on October 1, followed by the completion and submission of meeting notes on October 6, further strengthened ongoing collaboration and outlined opportunities for continued bilateral cooperation in climate change adaptation and multi-hazard risk management.



Picture 19: DEM Mission to CUBA 2025

GLOBAL PLATFORM FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION 2025

The Eighth Session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (GP2025) was held from 2–6 June 2025 in Geneva, Switzerland, under the theme “Everyday Counts, Act for Resilience Today.” The meeting reviewed progress in implementing the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and promoted stronger international cooperation, partnerships and investment in disaster risk reduction and resilience. Minister Wilfred Abrahams led the Barbados delegation which included acting Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs and Information Mrs. Wendy Odle, Director Department of Emergency Management Ms. Kerry Hinds and Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs representative Mr. Alton Best.



Picture 20: Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

Barbados participated actively in the Global Platform, including the Global Early Warnings for All Multi-Stakeholder Forum, where DEM Director Ms. Kerry Hinds presented Barbados’ progress in implementing the Early Warnings for All (EW4All)

Initiative. DEM also highlighted Barbados’ progress in advancing the Regional Action Plan for the Sendai Framework.

Key outcomes emphasized accelerating implementation of the Sendai Framework by 2030, strengthening multi-hazard early warning systems, improving disaster-risk data, using emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, increasing investment in prevention, strengthening risk governance, promoting inclusive approaches and enhancing preparedness for resilient recovery and “Build Back Better.”

Barbados’ participation provided opportunities to showcase national achievements, strengthen international and regional partnerships, identify potential sources of technical assistance and financing, and acquire knowledge and tools to inform national disaster management policies and programmes. Follow-up actions include continued engagement on the disaster risk reduction agenda and mobilising resources to implement the National Comprehensive Disaster Management Work Programme 2026–2030 and the EW4All Initiative.



Picture 21: DEM Director Ms. Kerry Hinds presents Barbados’ progress in implementing the Early Warnings for All initiative

MAJOR CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED



MAJOR CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED

The major challenges faced by the department are highlighted below:

HUMAN RESOURCES:

The Department of Emergency Management (DEM) requires a strategic injection of social capital to effectively implement its work programme and deliver quality services to its stakeholders. Strengthened human resource capacity is essential to steward and execute key portfolios, including information technology, public relations, public education, and marketing and one newly proposed early warning programme.

Additionally, there is a pressing need for enhanced middle management and administrative support to improve operational oversight, coordination, and overall organisational efficiency. Addressing these human resource gaps is fundamental to strengthening institutional performance and sustaining the Department's mandate for comprehensive disaster management.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT):

The implementation of several initiatives within the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) work programme continues to be constrained by the absence of modern and appropriate information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure. Limitations in decision-support systems for Emergency Operations Centre personnel, coupled with the absence of designated in-house posts for trained ICT professionals, have impacted operational efficiency and responsiveness.

It is therefore critical that strategic investments be made in upgrading ICT systems, strengthening digital infrastructure, and establishing dedicated technical positions to support the Department's growing technological and operational demands. Enhanced ICT capacity is essential to improving situational awareness, data management, communication flows, and real-time decision-making during emergency response operations.

LIMITED ENGAGEMENT AND TIMELY RESPONSE BY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, MINISTRIES, AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS.

Effective Disaster Risk Management (DRM) requires shared responsibility among Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), the private sector, and civil society. While the National Emergency Management System (NEMS) provides the coordinating framework, its effectiveness depends on active stakeholder engagement. Observed apathy has resulted in a system that remains largely reactive rather than proactive.

Stronger political leadership, senior management advocacy, and institutional commitment are needed to embed disaster risk considerations into planning, budgeting, and operations. Integrating risk reduction strategies into core programmes is essential to fostering disaster-resilient organisations and strengthening national resilience.

SYNOPSIS OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE EVENTS 2025



Flooding at Maycock's Terrace, St. Lucy
Barbados- November 2025



Flooding at Charles Rowe Bridge,
St. George Barbados- November 2025



Mass Casualty Incident Response at
Cane Garden, St. Thomas, Barbados-
October 2025

Emergency events requiring the Department's emergency response and logistical support

SYNOPSIS OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE EVENTS 2025

The year 2025 was marked by unprecedented natural hazard events. During this period, the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) provided coordinated emergency response and logistical support at the national level.

RAINFALL EVENTS:

PASSAGE OF A STRONG TROPICAL WAVE IN JULY

In July, Tropical Disturbance (Invest 94L) saw Barbados as the first island in the Caribbean expected to be impacted by a potentially severe weather system of the 2025 Atlantic hurricane season. The system had a 20–40% chance of developing into a tropical cyclone. However, it encountered less favourable conditions and traversed only as a strong tropical wave, its approach underscored the island’s exposure to early-season tropical activity.

SYNOPSIS OF THE NOVEMBER FLOODING EVENT

This event exposed long-standing vulnerabilities in drainage, land use, and community resilience—issues that have been recurring themes in Barbados’ hazard landscape. Over nine inches (228.6 mm) of rain fell in 24 hours, overwhelming drainage systems and submerging communities across several parishes of which St George and Charles Rowe Bridge area was worst affected. Roads became impassable and one man died after

being swept away in the floodwaters. The Barbados Meteorological Services attributed the event to a surface to low-level trough enhanced by favourable upper-level conditions, creating prolonged heavy rainfall and thunderstorms. It was realised that accelerated flood-mitigation engineering works and a stepped-up campaign against illegal dumping were, among other actions, urgently need.



Picture 22: Flooding at Charles Rowe Bridge

MASS CASUALTY

A Public Service Vehicle (ZR) carrying schoolchildren overturned outside The Lester Vaughan School in October 2025, injuring twenty-five (25) students and the driver. The incident was treated as a mass-casualty event by emergency services. The ZR was reportedly operating off its assigned route at the time and overturned directly outside the school, causing panic among students, parents, and staff.

The incident highlighted the urgent need for public service vehicle (PSV) reform, particularly in relation to safety standards, regulatory oversight, and operator behaviour. Based on the number of casualties and the scale of the emergency response, the event met the threshold of a man-made emergency and qualified as a mass-casualty incident. Fortunately, no lives were lost.



Picture 23: Overturned PSV adjacent to Lester Vaughn School

It is recommended that greater attention be given to broader road-safety concerns, particularly those affecting mass transit systems and PSVs. Longstanding cultural practices within parts of the sector, such as reckless driving, possible substance use, and inconsistent enforcement, continue to

present risks. School transportation remains a particularly vulnerable area within this environment.



Picture 24: Mass Casualty adjacent to Lester Vaughn School

Mass-casualty incidents of this nature also create complex operational challenges, including the simultaneous management of casualty care and crowd control. The psychosocial impact was significant, highlighting the need for immediate counselling and emotional support for students, parents, and teachers. Child-rights advocates also pointed to regulatory gaps, describing the incident as a “turning point” that requires decisive action.

In response, the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) will seek to strengthen joint-agency preparedness for mass-casualty incidents, particularly those involving minors. This includes improvements in triage procedures, multi-agency coordination, traffic-incident stabilization, crisis communication, and the integration of post-incident psychosocial support services.

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The Department operated on a financial budget allocation of **\$5,944,646.00** which included allocations towards personal emoluments, goods and services, and capital with a total expenditure for the period of BDS **\$436,782.00**.

During the year, the department's budget was supplemented by donor funding from regional and international funding sources ascertained through its relationships with these external partners.

FINANCIAL ALLOCATIONS AND EXPENSES FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2025		
1 st Quarter JANUARY - MARCH 2025		
	Budget Release	Actual Expenditure
Personal Emoluments	\$253,805.00	\$235,450.00
Other Charges	\$475,324.00	\$785,064.00
Capital		\$97,587.00
2 nd Quarter APRIL - JUNE 2025		
	Budget Release	Actual Expenditure
Personal Emoluments	\$271,650.00	\$228,886.00
Other Charges	\$1,342,213.00	\$3,284,645.00
Capital		
3 rd Quarter JULY -SEPTEMBER 2025		
	Budget Release	Actual Expenditure
Personal Emoluments	\$271,650.00	\$252,416.00
Other Charges	\$755,951.00	\$481,346.00
Capital	\$165,500.00	
4 th Quarter OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2025		
	Budget Release	Actual Expenditure
Personal Emoluments	\$271,650.00	\$227,614.00
Other Charges	\$560,082.00	\$314,997.00
Capital		\$36,641.00
	\$436,782.50	\$5,944.646.00

IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS AND DONATIONS

During the year, the Department's budget was supplemented by funding from local, regional and international funding sources obtained through relationships with these external partners. Our relationship with the corporate and philanthropic communities in Barbados and abroad continued to thrive and they willingly provided donations when called upon. The DEM expresses its gratitude to all who contributed to the success of its programs throughout the year:



STRATEGIC OUTLOOK

The portfolio for the 2025 reporting period highlights that the Department of Emergency Management is a highly relevant department of the national apparatus in Barbados. We do however, have to accelerate our work programming and address the bottlenecks that we face as an agency and as the coordinator of a disaster risk management system. Taking minute actions when it matters the most is a critical and necessary step as we move forward into the next strategic implementation period. We have identified challenges impeding our delivery service that we need to overcome successfully to accelerate implementation and improve reporting across our operating space.

FOUR AREAS OF STRATEGIC NEAR-FUTURE ATTENTION AND INVESTMENT INCLUDE:

1. Data and Information Management to support evidence-based policy as well as programme and operations delivery. Data is driving the current and future disaster risk management environment. At the organizational level, we must continue to understand the value-add of data and work assiduously to reduce the existing data gaps. Thus, there will be deliberate and concerted efforts to not only prioritize data as a transformative systems-asset but, in so doing, incorporate and practice standard operating procedures to collect, analyze, and visualize as a daily organizational undertaking and workflow.
2. Further integration and application of technology to transform our agency's decision-making for emergency management and improving our internal business processes and capabilities. Over the last implementation period, we have advanced the integration and application of technology as a transformative enabler for achieving our organizational mandate. This needs to continue with adequate investments in customized applications to enable robust and adaptive decision support systems. The importance of having appropriate systems to allow for the mass analysis of data in a short space of time is a key benefit of any system. Equally, it is important that such integration and application support multiagency coordination.
3. Identification and attraction of increased public, private and donor investment in disaster risk management initiatives at the DEM agency, community & national levels. Over the last period, there has been some traction related to attracting investment for the agency's disaster risk management agenda. We expect to continue dialogue with existing and potential new partners to expand our resource base and in so doing increase our implementation footprint in the national disaster risk management space.
4. The attraction, reorganization, and capacity building of human capital to support emergency risk management operations at all phases of the disaster continuum. This includes the expansion of the existing volunteer, statutory and non-statutory human capital base to implement and achieve the goals as outlined in the National Comprehensive Disaster Management Country

Work Programme and the agency's strategic plan. It also requires significant capacity development of the human capital we attract to assist with programme implementation, service delivery and achievement of mandate.

We acknowledge that the Department of Emergency Management operates in a dynamic environment, with underlying risk drivers and influential factors. The challenge is to understand what we need to do to tackle such challenges, understand which aspects of our business and operations model we need to update to meet our outlined targets while being ever cognisant that at any moment we may be required to pivot. There will be policy and

resource shifts that can and will affect implementation, but we must deal with these eventualities frontally.

Importantly, we must aggressively and strategically work with internal and external partners to collectively coordinate efforts to achieve our outlined goals. This requires continued and sustained engagement with the said partners and the need to work towards harmonization of efforts within the agency and across the national spectrum. Taking the organization to the next level, while actualizing innovation and growth are key to a more resilient DEM, a more resilient and coordinated NEMS and a more resilient Barbados.



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“A More Resilient Barbados”