



Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction of the Americas

Invest in DRR to secure development gains

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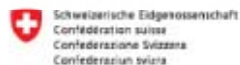
UNISDR

The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

Title of the presentation: **Incorporating Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change into Public Investment Policies**

Name of speaker: **Hon. Mr. Rudranath Indarsingh**
Minister of State

Institution: **Ministry of Finance and the Economy,**
Trinidad and Tobago



Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC







Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change in Trinidad and Tobago



- In order to increase our nation's resiliency, a strategy incorporating disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation into public investment policies has been implemented.
- The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago has undertaken the following measures:
 1. Careful analysis of the vulnerabilities specific to our twin island nation and the dynamic characteristics of the population.





2. Tailoring our programmes and policies to ensure that the most appropriate avenues for protecting the lives and livelihoods of citizens were achieved.

3. Ensuring that every activity geared towards disaster risk reduction has been informed by relevant guiding documents, such as the *Comprehensive Disaster Management Policy Framework* and international mandates, including the *Hyogo Framework for Action* and the *Enhanced Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy*.





Trinidad and Tobago's Exposure to Risks



Trinidad and Tobago is vulnerable to the following risks:

- i. While just outside of the Atlantic hurricane belt, we are not totally immune to the effects of passing cyclones.
- ii. Exposure to significant seismic risks, as a result of the fault lines on which we are located.
- iii. Risks to our population and economy, due to our heavy reliance on industrial activities coupled with a dramatically changing landscape.

‘According to the *Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction 2013*, small island developing states such as Trinidad and Tobago have the world’s highest relative disaster risk.’





Overcoming a Major Challenge



In Trinidad and Tobago, one of the biggest challenges faced is the “God is a Trini” mentality.

‘When emergency warnings are issued, most times, people disregard calls to safeguard their life and property.’

In order to combat this shortcoming, the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (ODPM) introduced its *Communities Organized and Ready for Emergencies* or *CORE* initiative in 2010.





- CORE has allowed for the collection of critical data to identify trends and shifts in the frequency and intensity of hazard impacts, particularly in rural areas.
- CORE has evolved to embody a different theme annually- starting with flooding, then safer building, followed by emergency planning with a particular focus on special needs populations.
- Arising from the CORE initiative, further steps were taken to regularly train skilled persons in communities, as part of a *National Volunteer Programme* and *Community Emergency Response Teams*.





Recent Collaborative Projects with International Support Agencies



1. Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) funded initiative aimed at improving the delivery of comprehensive disaster management in Trinidad and Tobago, through the creation of a profile of disaster risk at the national level.
2. Partnering with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to implement a project to develop capacity for Disaster Risk Management, targeting areas such as critical facilities protection and emergency communications systems.





Recent Collaborative Projects with International Support Agencies



3. The United States Government, through the US Southern Command, has offered to assist the Government to construct five disaster relief warehouses to treat with the distribution of relief items, not only within Trinidad and Tobago but for Guyana, Suriname and Grenada, where Trinidad and Tobago act as a sub regional focal point in times of need.





Combatting Risks – Caribbean Level



- Trinidad and Tobago became a member of the *Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF)*.
 - ❖ The CCRIF is a risk pooling facility, owned, operated and registered in the Caribbean for Caribbean Governments.
 - ❖ The Facility shares the Bretton Woods Institutions' goals of promoting sustainable economic growth and development, ensuring environmental, social and fiscal sustainability and reducing poverty.





- ❖ The CCRIF allowed CARICOM governments to purchase coverage that would provide them with an early cash payment after the occurrence of a major catastrophic event.
- ❖ The Facility allows for the rapid payment of claims to affected countries, since the use of parametric triggers implies that payment is triggered by the intensity of the event, rather than being a function of damage incurred.
- ❖ Trinidad and Tobago, as one of the founding members of the CCRIF since its inception seven years ago, has maintained maximum coverage in the occurrence of adverse natural events such as, tropical cyclones, hurricanes and earthquakes.





❖ Other Caribbean countries having benefitted from this Facility include:

1. Haiti, receiving US\$7.75 million in 2010, after a devastating earthquake hit the nation.
2. Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, receiving US\$8.56 million, US\$3.24 million and US\$1.09 million respectively in 2010, after Tropical Cyclone Tomas swept across the region.





Combatting Risks – Local Level



1. We have embarked on a comprehensive plan to alleviate a perennial problem of flash flooding.
2. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has adopted a *National Climate Change Policy*, which was laid in Parliament in July 2011, in order to encourage the adopting of more energy-efficient technologies and practices.





3. A *Green Government Policy* will be developed to enable the reduction of consumables and energy use, in relation to Government operations.

4. The mobilisation of a consultancy firm to conduct *Vulnerability Risk Assessments*, in order to increase our country's resilience by helping to draft and implement climate change adaptation initiatives.





Examples of Infrastructure Enhancement



Upgrade of Drainage Infrastructure in the Capital City, Port of Spain

- For many years Port of Spain has been plagued with flash flooding during the raining season.
- Coupled with hillside degradation due to forest fires, flooding is a major problem.
- Anticipated increased precipitation intensity from projected climate change for Trinidad and Tobago will exacerbate this already chronic problem.
- The Government, through a loan from the IDB, has embarked on a comprehensive plan to rehabilitate the storm drainage infrastructure in Port of Spain.





Examples of Infrastructure Enhancement



Upgrade of Drainage Infrastructure in the Capital City, Port of Spain

- The project will require a holistic concept for coordination among responsible agencies (e.g. water resources, meteorological services, environmental and social management, disaster prevention forest conservation along hill slopes, garbage collection, sewer management) and the collection and dissemination of stream flow and rainfall data.
- It is expected that this rehabilitation and upgrade will reduce the severity and duration of flooding and minimize the adverse impacts to citizens, businesses, buildings and property; provide institutional capacity to the Drainage Division and spur economic and recreational activities with Port of Spain.





National Climate Change Policy



Reasons for Adoption of Policy

- i. The air temperature in Trinidad and Tobago, and in other Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS), has risen over 1°C.
- ii. During the last 100 years, the relative sea-level of the Caribbean has risen over 20 cm and is expected to continue rising in the coming years.
- iii. Climate change is globally recognized as the single environmental issue of the 21st century that poses unprecedented threats to mankind.





National Climate Change Policy



Context

- Recognition that there is no “one size fits all” approach for countries or sectors.
- Based on a consideration of national circumstances, development aspirations, sectoral characteristics and cross-sectoral interactions.
- Based on achieving sustainable development in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).





National Climate Change Policy



Vision

- In the context of coping with the adverse impacts of climate change, “.....adapting to the adverse impacts of climate change through integration within all sectors of national development in its infrastructural, human and socio-economic systems.....”

Objectives

- Inter alia, “....conserving and building resilience of human and natural systems to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change.....”





National Climate Change Policy



Guiding Principles

- The response to the climate change challenge must be sustainable;
- Will require a consultative and multi-partite approach;
- Must follow the precautionary principle or erring on the side of caution;
- Must be multi-sectoral;
- Must be evidence based and responding to the latest science.





National Climate Change Policy



Provisions for Adaptation and Coping with Impacts

Measures would be integrated into the national development agenda across all sectors, both biophysical and socio-economic, inter alia, by:

- Strengthening existing institutional arrangements for systematic observations, research and climate modelling including through cooperation with academia, NGOs and the private sector.
- Assessing sectoral vulnerability to climate change by conducting vulnerability analyses and formulating adaptation options, including technological application, in biophysical and socio-economic systems.





National Climate Change Policy



Provisions for Adaptation and Coping with Impacts

- Revising sectoral policies to include consideration of climate change impacts derived from vulnerability analyses.
- Revising national development plans to incorporate climate change vulnerability, impacts and adaptation options with a view to climate-proofing new development and retrofitting existing infrastructure.





National Climate Change Policy



Provisions for Adaptation and Coping with Impacts

- Enhancing the resilience of natural biophysical systems so as to maximise ecosystem services, such as the natural coastal defence properties of coral reefs and mangrove systems, through the development of a system of national protected areas.
- Promoting community-based adaptation through expanded use of the Green Fund for capacity building and enhancing resilience.





National Climate Change Policy



Financing Implementation

The implementation of the policy is through government funding but augmented where appropriate; through accessing grants from international organisations; through the preparation of project proposals; and through bilateral and multilateral cooperation.





National Climate Change Policy



Financing Implementation

Opportunities under the Green Fund

The *Green Fund* is the National Environmental Fund of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. The purpose of the Green Fund is to financially assist Organizations and Community Groups that are engaged in activities related to the remediation, reforestation, environmental education and public awareness of environmental issues and conservation of the environment.





National Climate Change Policy



Financing Implementation

The Green Fund

- Capitalised by a 0.1% levy on gross sales or receipts of businesses operating in Trinidad and Tobago

Deposits are utilised for:

- Remediation
- Reforestation
- Environmental education and public awareness of environmental issues, and
- Conservation of the Environment





National Climate Change Policy



Financing Implementation

The Green Fund

- Projects to date include:
 - Sustainable community forestry
 - Water harvesting
 - Restoration of degraded freshwater swamp to increase resilience of communities through livelihoods





National Climate Change Policy



Examples of Initiatives to be Undertaken

- i. The “Greening” of the Priority Bus Route through the conversion of street lights and traffic lights to use solar power and the deployment of electric passenger buses where economically feasible;
- ii. Mainstreaming of the climate policy into the national development policy framework;
- iii. Outfitting of the police surveillance bays along the Churchill Roosevelt Highway with green technology such as solar lighting.





Green Government Policy



- The Green Government Policy would entail:
 - i. Using recycled paper at all Government offices and double sided printing and photocopying where possible;
 - ii. Ensuring that all buildings procured for Government Offices by the Properties and Real Estate Division are equipped with “green” technologies, such as lighting fixtures with energy efficient bulbs; water saving devices on taps and toilets; and air conditioning and fire extinguishing systems that do not use ozone depleting gases.



Thank you

