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# **MODEL INTEGRATED RELIEF POLICY**

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CDERA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency
CDRU	CARICOM Disaster Response Unit
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CU	CDERA Coordination Unit
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
HQ	Headquarters
MIRP	Model Integrated Relief Programme
NDO	National Disaster Organization
NGO	Non-government organization
OGD	Other Government Department/Agency/Ministry
RSS	Regional Security System
RSTS	Relief Supplies Tracking System
SAR	Search and Rescue
SUMA	Supply Management
UN	United Nations

# MODEL INTEGRATED RELIEF POLICY

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 *2004 Hurricane Season*

The 2004 Hurricane Season was one of the most active seasons on record. Between July and September, there were 14 weather systems with winds ranging from 50km/hr to 275km/hr. Seven of these systems were hurricanes (Alex, Charley, Danielle, Frances, Ivan, Jeanne and Karl) which together resulted in the loss of 49 lives and approximately US\$2 billion in damage in Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) Participating States, most notably The Bahamas, Cayman Islands, Grenada and Jamaica. The most intense and damaging system of the Season was Hurricane Ivan which attained Category 5 Status, killing 28 people and damaging 90% of homes in Grenada.

The number, intensity and rapid succession of the extreme weather systems severely tested the coping capacity of national and regional disaster preparedness and response agencies and Governments and exposed the vulnerability of Caribbean countries to natural disasters.

### 1.2 *Relief Management in the Caribbean*

The small islands of the Caribbean are especially vulnerable to the impact of natural hazards. Within the past two decades the region has experienced repeated loss from hurricanes and associated wind, rain and surge storm damage, volcanic eruptions, landslides, flooding and droughts. These events have opened a window of opportunity to foster greater attention to disaster management and response measures; as a result member states, aided by the considerable efforts made by CDERA and its development partners, have been building their disaster preparedness and response capabilities.

Disaster management policies have been adopted in nearly all CDERA Participating States, however, existing disaster management policy framework and contingency plans are limited in scope in that plans only provide guidelines for a response at the national agenda level; few National Plans include contingencies for triggering regional and international emergency response. Where procedures for external assistance have been established, a common organizational structure and control method for the management of personnel, equipment, and supplies is desirable. National plans need to include the roles and responsibilities of international and regional agencies and organizations such as the CDRU, SUMA, NGOs etc. Where the support of such agencies is incorporated in the national plan, the roles and responsibilities of said agencies need to be more clearly defined.

A more integrated and holistic approach is needed to minimise loss and dislocation. There is a need for better interagency coordination at the regional

and international levels. Relief management needs to have regional and national relief policies from which relief plans can be developed. The national relief plans, as part of the overall national disaster plan can then spawn procedures to provide the detail required to conduct efficient and effective relief operations.

### *1.3 Rationale for the Model Integrated Relief Programme*

The 2004 Hurricane Season impact on CDERA Participating States has presented the opportunity to review the current instruments and policies for disaster response and relief coordination. A critical element for review is the relief mechanisms utilized by Participating States immediately after the impact of hazards which can have devastating effects on the normal transport and distribution mechanisms. While some states may have contingency plans for distributing relief supplies most have not elaborated a comprehensive programme for relief management.

At a regional level there already exists the Relief Policy and Donations Management Policy promoted by CDERA which focus on the organization and logistics of accessing relief supplies. Additionally, the warehouse module of the Search and Rescue (SAR) programme addresses some issues regarding storage and maintenance. Finally, there is the Relief and Supplies Tracking System (RSTS) software which was used to electronically track the process from the issuance of requests to victim needs.

To bring cohesion to disaster response and relief coordination, CDERA has undertaken a project to develop the Model Integrated Relief Programme (MIRP) to build on the lessons learned from the 2004 experiences. Through a consultative approach, CDERA plans to develop the MIRP as a foundation for the development of national relief programmes. The development of similar programmes is an important step to integrating disaster response and relief coordination amongst the CDERA member states.

The first step is to gather consensus on a Model Relief Policy among the CDERA Participating States.

## **2.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE MODEL INTEGRATED RELIEF POLICY**

### *2.1 The Guiding Principle*

Given past experience and lessons learned from past events, the development of this policy was guided by three principles. These are:

- The need for a responsive, strengthened and coordinated institutional framework;
- The need for an integrated approach to relief management;
- The need for a mechanism for distributing, monitoring and tracking relief supplies.

## 2.2 *Institutional Framework*

Emergency response requires the coordinated actions of a variety of government and non-governmental agencies. It is vital that these agencies work together in a coordinated fashion such that all efforts are directed at the same end. Roles and responsibilities need to be clearly defined so as to avoid duplication of efforts, and to ensure an efficient, coordinated response to the disaster. This policy envisages a multi-agency response effort led by the National Disaster Organisation (NDO) or lead agency for relief management and supported by all government agencies and representatives and the private and non-governmental sectors. The following section covers the roles and responsibilities of some of the main players in relief operations at the National and Regional levels:

### 2.2.1 Role of the National Disaster Organization

National Disaster Organization (NDO) is the name given to the umbrella network of units and authorities concerned with the various aspects of disaster management in each of the Participating States. Through the Emergency Operations Centre, the NDO acts as the national coordinating and control facility in the event of natural, man-made or impending disaster, or special emergency. The NDO/EOC is also responsible for the coordination of all resources in times of emergency or disaster, and relief requests to or from higher levels of Government, non-governmental, and private entities at the national level. The main functions of the NDO include:

- Providing centralised coordination and control of emergency/disaster response and relief operations;
- Collaborating with local, regional, and international government and non-governmental institutions in ensuring the provision of relief assistance;
- Ensuring the efficient movement of all supplies from the designated port of entry to the disaster site;
- Ensuring the efficient assimilation and dissemination of information from disaster sites to the resource managers, the public at large, and CDERA;
- Entering into memoranda of understanding with the owners and suppliers of critical infrastructure necessary in an emergency.

### 2.2.2 Role of Other Government Departments and Agencies

The following section details the principal actions to be taken by Government agencies in response to a national disaster. Recommendations are made as to which Government organization assumes responsibility for the actions outlined. It is recommended that each Government body be responsible for designing their own emergency response plan according to the specific organization's role as defined in the national disaster response plan.

#### *2.2.2.1 Emergency Services*

- Provide resources for maintaining adequate security during emergencies and disasters;
- Coordinate the evacuation of victims to and from shelters, through the EOC;
- Provide crowd and traffic control services;
- All fire-fighting operations;
- Pumping of flood water;
- Assist with search and rescue operations in association with the NDO;
- Coordinate evacuation activities in association with the NDO;
- Provide support for the CDRU (if deployed).

#### *2.2.2.2 Finance*

- Through the NDO, coordinate initial damage assessment surveys among agencies (including donor agencies and CDRU survey teams) ;
- In consultation with the NDO, estimate amounts of financial and other relief requirements;
- Assist NDO with the coordination of supplies and other assistance received by relief aid organizations;
- Document the distribution of relief supplies and donations;
- Regularly update the NDO on the status of the relief effort.

#### *2.2.2.3 Health*

- Coordinate the distribution of medical supplies to Parish casualty stations and emergency shelters;
- Coordinate the deployment and control of medical personnel;
- Arranging for sanitary inspection of relief food supplies;
- Monitor, assort, store and distribute relief medical supplies;
- Regularly update the NDO on the status of the relief effort.

#### *2.2.2.4 Agriculture*

- Maintenance of adequate food centres throughout the country;
- Assignment of personnel to work in these centres in the event of an emergency;
- Co-ordinating with Transport to arrange adequate transport services for the distribution of food;
- Regularly update the NDO on the status of the relief effort.



#### *2.2.2.5 Foreign Affairs and Trade*

- Act as overseas liaison for the NDO in disaster situations;
- Regularly update the NDO on the status of the relief effort.

#### *2.2.2.6 Works, Public Utilities and Transport*

- Restoration of utilities;
- Road clearance;
- Restoration and maintenance of telecommunication system;
- Allocate transport resources on a priority basis for disaster relief activities;
- Distribution of potable water;
- Restoration and maintenance of electricity services;
- Regularly update the NDO on the status of the relief effort.

#### *2.2.2.7 Ports Authorities, Customs and Excise*

- Efficient management of documents in order to facilitate the incoming flow of relief supplies;
- Collaborate with the NDO in the receipt and storage of relief supplies;
- Regularly update the NDO on the status of the relief effort.

#### *2.2.2.8 Government Information Services*

- In collaboration with the NDO, control the dissemination of information before, during and after a disaster;
- Inform the public of the whereabouts of emergency shelters and first-aid post;
- Regularly update the NDO on the status of the relief effort.

### **2.2.3 Role of CDERA**

CDERA, in its role as a regional inter-governmental agency, is responsible for:

- Disseminating data and information pertaining to the relief response activities to the EOC, NGOs and all other stakeholders;
- Coordinating an immediate response to any event affecting any of the Participating States, once the state requests such assistance;
- Identifying, locating, acquiring, distributing and accounting for services, resources, material, and facilities required to adequately support disaster management activities
- Mobilizing and coordinating international/regional disaster relief from governmental and non-governmental organizations for affected Participating States;

- Deploying the CDRU and sub-regional resources;
- Encouraging the cooperation and consultation of the appropriate public, private and non-governmental entities in ensuring the provision of relief assistance.

#### 2.2.4 Role of the CDRU

The role of the CARICOM Disaster Response Unit (CDRU) is to provide management and logistical support to disaster response operations in CARICOM Member States. The CDRU operates in support of CDERA and the national disaster organization of the affected state. The responsibilities of the CDRU include:

- Conducting a reconnaissance/assessment of the stricken area;
- Managing the receipt, security, and dispatch of the disaster supplies from external sources under the direction of the EOC;
- Providing a communications link to CDERA and the relevant national agencies on received donations;
- Providing a controlling HQ for CARICOM Forces taking part in the humanitarian relief effort;
- Coordinating and collaborating with the SUMA teams in their relief activities.

#### 2.2.5 Role of SUMA

The main responsibilities of SUMA personnel are:

- To assist the disaster-stricken state in managing donated supplies, from the time pledges are made to the actual distribution of these supplies;
- Recording, inspecting and quality control of received relief supplies;
- Coordinating and collaborating with the CDRU in their relief activities;
- To make available to the EOC information on supplies received and/or distributed.

### 2.3 *Role of the Non-Government Sector*

Comprehensive disaster management requires the active participation of community organizations. Government should undertake to support the disaster relief activities of all non-government agencies. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) should undertake emergency response in accordance with the National Relief Policy of the stricken state.

The roles of some regional/international NGO's specific to relief operations are highlighted in the following sub-sections.

### 2.3.1 Eastern Caribbean Donor Group (ECDG)

The role of the ECDG is to facilitate a forum to provide support for the coordination of external emergency assistance to the countries of the Eastern Caribbean in the emergency phase of a major natural and technological disaster. The Eastern Caribbean Donor Group for Disaster Management will be comprised of a core donor group and a response agency group:

#### *2.3.1.1 Core Donor Group*

- a. Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO)
- b. Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)
- c. United States Agency for International Development Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA)
- d. Department for International Development (DFID)
- e. European Union (EU)
- f. Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)
- g. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- h. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- i. The World Bank (WB)
- j. OXFAM
- k. Inter-American Development Bank (IADB)
- l. Organisation of American States (OAS)
- m. Food and Agriculture Organizations (FAO)
- n. International Telecommunications Union (ITU)

#### *2.3.1.2 Response Agencies*

- a. Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA)
- b. Regional Security System (RSS)
- c. Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO)
- d. International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC)

### *2.4 Role of the Private Sector*

Both government and non-governmental organizations should strive to maintain a consultative and collaborative approach with the private sector based on the initiatives shown below:

- Public-private partnerships in the provision of emergency services and supplies; and
- Private sector representation on all national level disaster management related committees or decision making bodies.

## 2.5 An Integrated Approach to Disaster Relief

Coordination, cooperation and communication between the various partners are essential for an effective and efficient emergency response. For disaster and emergency response, there are several layers of cooperation that occur to plan, source, assemble, deliver and return relief to affected areas. Collectively this layer approach is called the Cooperation Framework (see Figure 1, next page).

The top or strategic layer shows the cooperation from government to government or government to international agencies to develop mutual assistance agreements and to garner support and donations when needed. The top layer is supported by the operational layer where national relief organizations coordinate their efforts with regional NGOs/relief agencies, UN representatives and CDERA. Finally at the tactical level, the Emergency Operations Centre coordinates the delivery of relief supplies and services with local NGOs/relief agencies and the CDRU (representing CDERA).

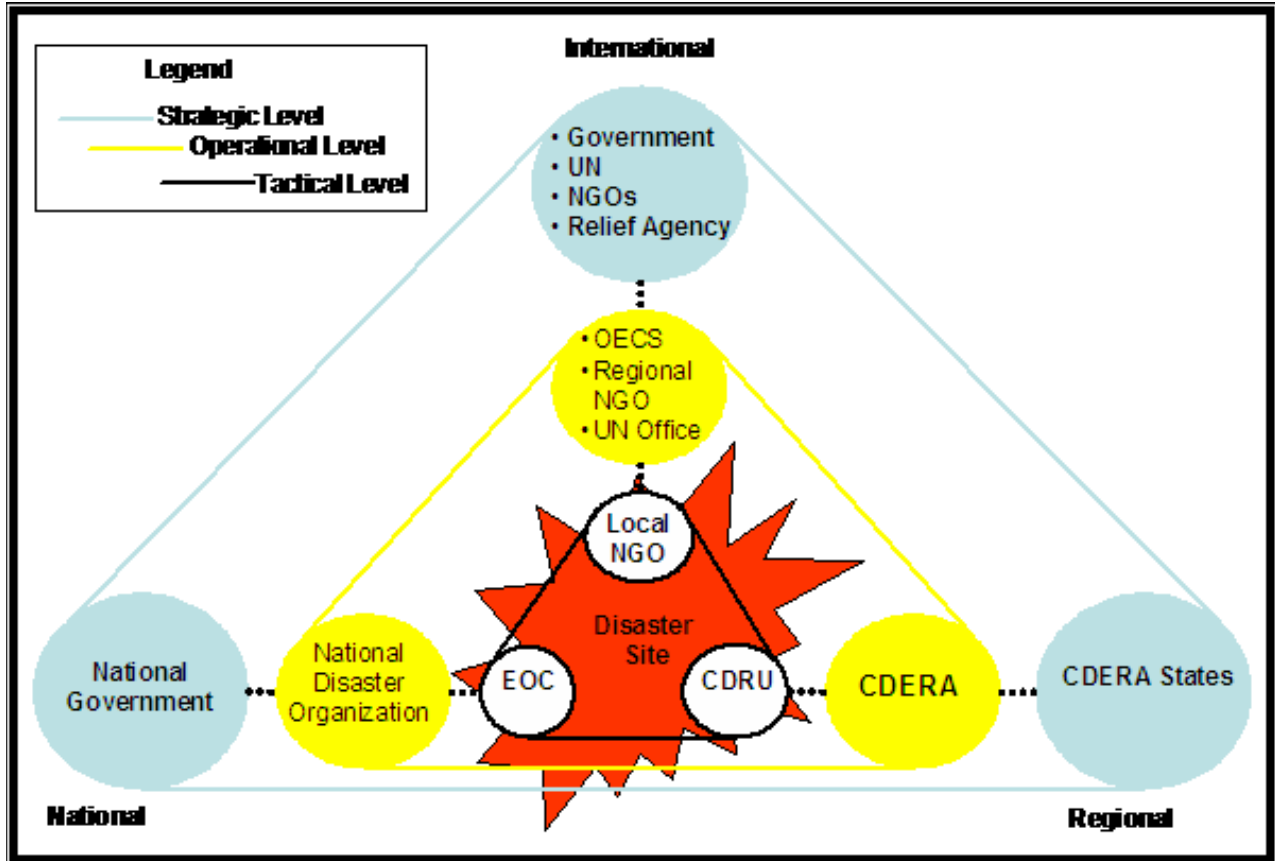
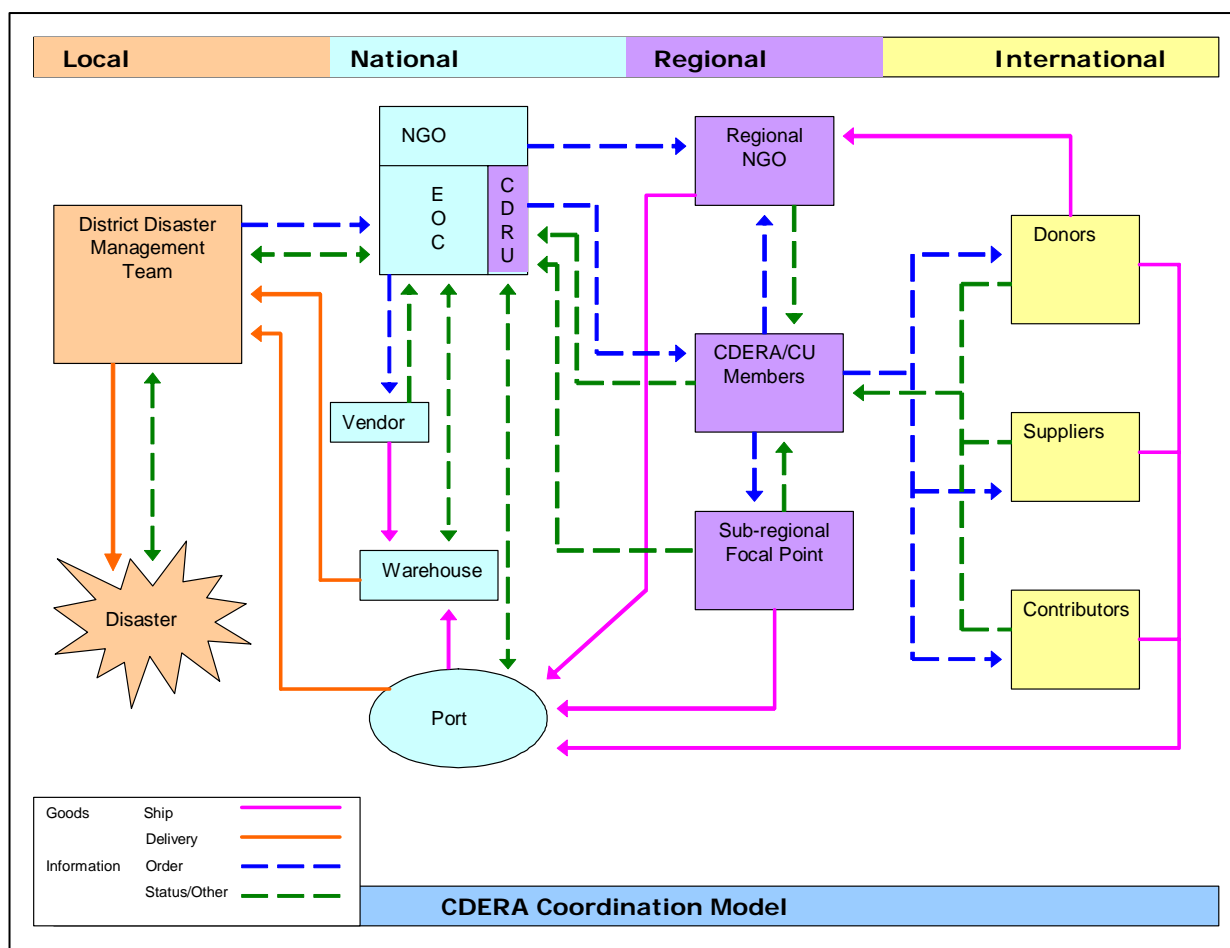


Figure 1: Cooperation Framework

## Service Delivery and the Flow of Information and Supplies



**Figure 2: CDERA Coordination Model**

The triad of the Cooperation Framework means that the National Government has two external sources for support: regional and international. This means that every National Relief programme will have two key service delivery models. The first is the support provided by and through CDERA as a supporting and coordinating organization, linking the stricken Participating State with the regional and international relief network. The second is the effort of the Participating State to solicit and coordinate relief outside of the CDERA network. These two models must work concurrently and cooperatively in order to have a fully integrated relief programme.

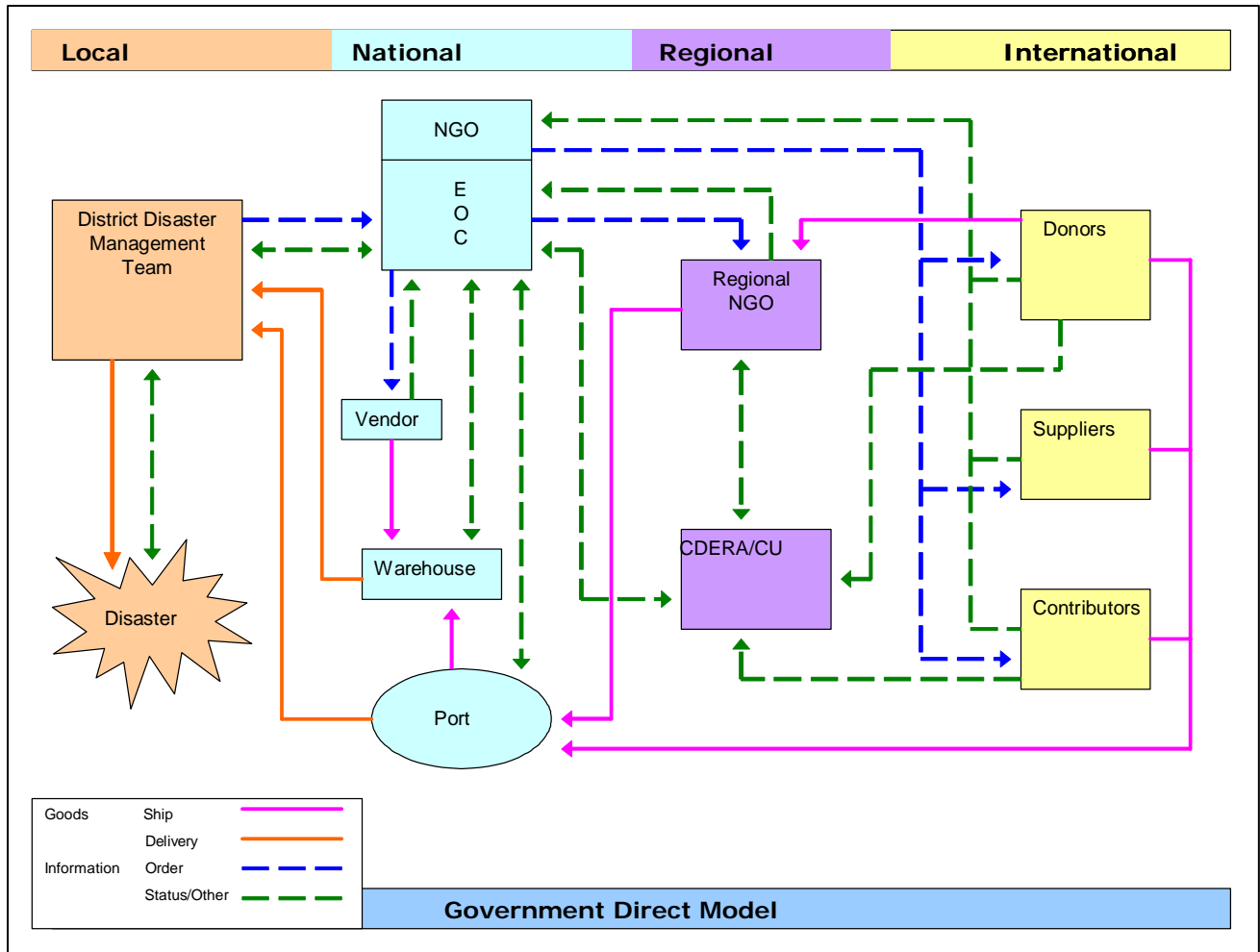
Figure 2 shows the outflow of information from the local disaster site, and the inflow of relief supplies arriving from various national, regional and international organizations involved in the provision of relief. This model focuses on CDERA's involvement as the coordinating agent.

Initial information is passed back and forth between the disaster site and the Emergency Operations Centre. At the national level, all information received will be processed by the EOC. The EOC is responsible for passing this information to national NGOs, the CDRU team, the port authorities and the warehouses.

Requests for external assistance will go from the EOC to CDERA via the CDRU, and to regional NGOs via national NGOs. The Sub-Regional Focal Point will exchange information with both CDERA and the CDRU. CDERA will gather and relate information from the international relief aid network and regional NGOs to the EOC through the CDRU. The integration of information is a critical enabler to all processes within the disaster/emergency supply chain; it is therefore imperative that each stakeholder adhere to the coordination model and relate pertinent information in a timely and accurate manner.

To allow for the effective and efficient management of relief supplies, all donations are to be sent and controlled at the same port of entry, which may be seaports, airports or staging areas for land transport (e.g. cross-border points for Belize and Guyana). From the port, supplies are directed to the warehouse for storage until required, or delivered directly to the local disaster management team or relief operation. The forward shipment of materiel and personnel is controlled by the EOC in conjunction with other disaster response agencies such as other government departments (OGDs) or NGOs.

Figure 3 below depicts the flow of information between the affected State and other governments (contributors), NGO's and vendors. The same steps are followed as in the CDERA model, but much of the responsibility for providing the information link to the regional and international community transfers to the NGO or relief agency local response unit. Also, since support from the Sub-regional focal points is a CDERA led operation, that aspect of support is not found in the Government Direct Model. It is still vital that information be shared with CDERA to coordinate the overall flow of personnel, equipment and materiel into the disaster area. This information is also necessary to the EOC and local relief organizations to plan the forward movement of items and to assess future requirements based on the supply chain flow.



## *2.6 Distribution and Monitoring System*

In order for the two models shown above to complement each other, it is necessary to have a common distribution and monitoring system that manages information and tracks the flow of materiel regardless of how the relief was requested or who is providing it. Without the appropriate planning, and the implementation of a common distribution and monitoring system supplies there is likely to be a backlog of supplies arriving at the port of entry which will seriously impede the timely distribution of these supplies to the people that need them.

In the Model Integrated Relief Programme communication is the backbone of the emergency response operation. It makes no difference what information management system is used – although one supported by technology would be most efficient and effective. The critical factor is to be able to record, track, prioritise and share information in a standardized manner. CDERA is committed in its role as regional inter-governmental agency to provide reliable and timely disaster related information. Information systems will be designed and implemented in order to maximise response capacity and coordination.

## **3.0 LEVELS OF ACTIVATION**

The response to a disaster will be dictated by its type and magnitude and by the Participating State's capacity to respond. For this reason CDERA has identified 3 levels of emergency response.

### *3.1 Level 1*

An incident occurring at a local level in any of the Participating States for which local resources are adequate and available. The NDO informs the CDERA CU of the occurrence of the incident and indicates that no regional response is required. CDERA CU actions in response to the type of incident will include monitoring, and information sharing.

### *3.2 Level 2*

An incident occurring at a local level in any of the Participating States for which local resource and response capacity are limited. The NDO informs CDERA CU of the occurrence of the incident, advises on the scope of the impact and requests focussed specialised regional assistance. A state of emergency/disaster area may or may not be declared. CDERA CU actions may include the provision of technical assistance, specialised equipment, emergency funds and support personnel.

### *3.3 Level 3*

An impact occurring in any of the Participating States which clearly overwhelms the resources and capacity to respond by the local authorities. The NDO informs CDERA CU of the occurrence of the impact and requests that the Regional



Coordination Plan be activated. A state of emergency/national disaster may be declared.

#### **4.0 POLICY STATEMENT**

The pursuit of such a policy has been informed by the recognition that the Government will encourage and support the establishment/development of:

- i. An integrated approach to relief management which incorporates all stakeholders.
- ii. A responsive, strengthened and coordinated institutional framework for relief management which incorporates a mechanism for the acquisition and management of relief supplies
- iii. A National Relief Plan and Standard Operating Procedures which will guide the process by which the provision of relief is effected,
- iv. Public information and education programmes on the relief process,
- v. Partnerships at the National, Regional and International level,
- vi. A national disaster relief fund to support emergency needs,

##### *4.1 Vision Statement*

An integrated and coordinated mechanism for effectively and efficiently providing relief to affected communities through the implementation of complementary and compatible plans and practices amongst national institutions/organisations/agencies in the CDERA Participating States and including regional and international partners.

##### *4.2 Policy Goals*

The main goals of the policy are:

- The promotion of a coordinated and collaborative approach to disaster relief activities at the national, regional and international levels.
- The development of a process for the timely provision of relief to affected populations.
- To guide the development of a National Relief Plan and processes in

- Participating States.

#### 4.3 Policy Objectives

The objectives of this Policy are:

- To promote effective coordinated actions amongst all stakeholders;
- To develop a responsive, strengthened and coordinated institutional framework;
- To establish a mechanism for managing and distributing relief supplies in order to eliminate duplication of effort and waste of resources;
- To ensure dissemination of information to all involved stakeholders;
- To develop a reporting system as part of a continuous improvement process.

#### 4.4 Policy Context

The policy applies to relief operations which span activities from planning and activation of response resources to the establishment of normalcy in the stricken state.

## 5.0 STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS

This section describes the tasks involved in the achievement of the policy objectives. It is necessary that certain actions be performed in order to ensure that the objectives of this policy are achieved. A number of priority areas for action have been identified:

- Development, implementation and enforcement of individual National Relief Policies and Plans
- Disaster preparedness
- Creation of an integrated framework which emphasizes collaboration and coordination amongst all stakeholders
- Recognition of national sovereignty, customs and regulations
- Public information
- Donations management
- The creation of public-private partnerships

The following sections outline the tasks that may be undertaken by each Participating State to meet the above priorities.

#### 5.1 *Development, Implementation and Enforcement of Individual National Relief Policies and Plans*

Define national disaster policies and procedures to include: plans and procedures for an Emergency Operations Centre to coordinate and manage relief activities; definitions of the disaster relief responsibilities of all stakeholders; procedures for triggering the regional response; a framework for damage assessment; a system for the registration and tracking of relief supplies; plans and procedures for the RSS and a mechanism for ensuring the security of relief goods; plans for CDERA,

the CDRU, SUMA and other response donor agencies with which mutual aid agreements have been developed.

#### *5.2 Disaster Preparedness*

Ensure that warehouses have an adequate stock of material available to mount an initial response to any emergency or disaster situation until external assistance arrives. Preparedness also includes ensuring policies are in place to designate or guarantee the relief operations are available and protected when they are needed.

#### *5.3 Creation of an Integrated Framework*

Incorporate the Cooperation Framework into national plans to strengthen the institutional framework and which emphasizes collaboration and coordination amongst all stakeholders at all levels.

Incorporate the CDERA and Government Service Models into the National Relief Policy to ensure a coordinated, and thus more efficient, response to disaster.

#### *5.4 Recognition of National Sovereignty, Customs and Regulations*

The integrated relief policy needs to identify the role that legislation, customs and regulations play in the relief effort and how these regulatory aspects will be applied. The policy should recognise the role of other entities as auxiliary to government in humanitarian relief. The overall planning and coordination of relief efforts is ultimately the responsibility of the government and this should be made clear in the policy. Conversely, governments should adopt policies that facilitate and coordinate the relief operations of NGOs and other donor groups.

#### *5.5 Public Information*

Incorporate into the National Disaster Plan procedures for sensitizing the general public to the disaster situation. Specific policies are required on the dissemination of information gather and use by the disaster/emergency supply chain in the conduct of relief operations.

#### *5.6 Donations Management*

Guided by the Donations Management Policy for the CDERA Participating States, develop a National Donations Management Policy and Plan that defines; procedures for disseminating information on relief needs; procedures for facilitating and coordinating rapid access to disaster victims for NGOs and other donor groups; procedures for soliciting donations; a mechanism to manage the receipt, tracking, storage and distribution of received supplies in order to ensure transparency of the whole process.

Ensure that government's disaster response plans and policies are made available to all involved stakeholders.

Engage in debate with donors on the role of donor groups in the National Emergency Plan. To ensure an effective and efficient response, it should be understood that funding is provided with a guarantee of operational independence. The implementation of relief actions is ultimately the responsibility of the national government of the affected state and will be carried out according to the policies of that state.

#### *5.7 Creation of Public-Private Partnerships*

Encourage the private sector, especially those companies or groups who directly contribute to the welfare of the nation, to actively participate in the planning and execution of relief operations. For example, non-government owned utility companies must understand the priorities for establishing services and work with the government to devote resources and relief operations where they are most needed.

Seek to develop public-private partnership agreements, where a memorandum of understanding or even contracts are created during the planning stage of disaster to ensure that goods and services are available when needed, and that those best equipped to handle the surge are positioned to do so.

## **6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following are some indicative guidelines which describe the working environment that is envisioned between governments of the disaster stricken state, donor governments and organizations and non-governmental organizations.

- Create national policy documents to translate the regional policies to the specific requirements of the Participating State;
- Incorporate the Cooperation Framework into national plans to strengthen the institutional framework at all levels;
- Ensure that national relief plans include sections on the roles, responsibilities and interaction with CDERA and other international agencies/organizations;
- Provide copies of national policies, plans and procedures to the CDERA Coordinating Unit to develop a knowledge base for relief operations.
- Developed realistic and reasonable timelines for conversion of the model policy in to final national documents
- Obtain as much public and governmental consultation as possible to ease the endorsement of the final policy document

## **7.0 RESPONSIBILITIES**

To maximise relief resources and mount an effective response to disaster, each stakeholder is encouraged to ensure that all disaster relief activities are carried out in compliance with national policies; that all staff and volunteers participating in such programmes are aware of the rationale and the content of the policies; and that all relevant governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners are informed of the policies.