



Revised Draft Relief Management Policy

May 2018

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 2017 Hurricane Season

Irma, the 9th named hurricane of the 2017 Atlantic Hurricane Season, became a Category 5 hurricane in the Eastern Atlantic Ocean on Tuesday September 5, 2017. With maximum sustained winds near 185 mph, Irma impacted the CDEMA Participating States of Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis and Montserrat over Tuesday night into Wednesday evening, September 06, 2017. Irma continued its destructive path and impacted Turks and Caicos Islands and the northern border of Haiti. On Friday September 07, 2017, the southeastern Islands of the Bahamas were affected.

Maria, the 13th named hurricane of the 2017 Atlantic Hurricane Season, became a Category 5 hurricane near the Leeward Islands on Monday September 18th, 2017. Hurricane Maria impacted Dominica on September 18th as an extremely strong hurricane with wind speeds of 155 mph. Maria then impacted St. Kitts and Nevis and Antigua and Barbuda on September 19th, 2017 and the Virgin Islands September 19 – 20, 2017.

Both Irma and Maria left a path of destruction, with more than US \$100 billion in damage and more than 100 deaths¹. The countries most severely impacted at a level 3 were Dominica and British Virgin Islands. The island of Barbuda also suffered severe destruction, which made the impact a level 2 for the country of Antigua and Barbuda.

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 three 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 continue to be the catalyst for greater attention to disaster management and response measures; as a result member states, aided by the considerable efforts made by CDEMA and its development partners, have been building their disaster preparedness and response capabilities.

Disaster management policies have been adopted in nearly all CDEMA 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 triggering of the Regional Response Mechanism (RRM) and the roles and responsibilities of the deployment teams of the RRM such as the CDRU, CDAC, COST and RNAT etc.

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 Jeremy Collymore, UWI Presentation at CDM Conference, RTR Review November 2017

1.3 Model Integrated Relief Programme (2005)

The 2004 Hurricane Season impact on CDERA Participating States presented the opportunity to review the current instruments and policies for disaster response and relief coordination. In this regard the 2004 Model Integrated Relief Programme was developed which included a Model Policy and Plan. However, the adoption and adaptation rate among PSs was not expansive.

Relief Management continues to be a critical element for development. This was evident in the operations for Hurricanes Maria and Irma in 2017², Tropical Storm Erika in 2015³ as well as the December rains in 2013⁴.

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 CDEMA which focus on the organization and logistics of accessing relief supplies. Additionally, the CDEMA Sub Regional Warehousing Guideline 2013 addresses some issues regarding inventory management, financing, transportation and shipping, the virtual warehouse, storage and maintenance among others. 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.

Within this context, the following will present on the approach to relief management to be undertaken at the national and regional levels. .

2.1 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:

- 1) The need for a responsive, strengthened and coordinated institutional framework;

² Comprehensive AAR 2017 Hurricane Season

³ Dominica EOC AAR 2015

⁴ AARs for SLU and SVG 2014

- 2) The need for an integrated approach to relief management;
- 3) 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 CDEMA;

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 in Relief Management

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.

2.2.3 *Police Service*

- 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;
- Coordinate evacuation activities in association with the NDO;
- Provide security support for the CDRU (if deployed).

2.2.4 *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.

2.2.5 *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.

2.2.6 *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.

2.2.7 *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.

2.2.8 *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.

2.2.9 *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.

2.2.10 *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.

2.2.11 Role of CDEMA

CDEMA, 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.

2.2.12 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 CDEMA 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 CDEMA and the relevant national agencies on received donations;
- Providing a controlling HQ for CARICOM Forces taking part in the humanitarian relief effort;

2.2.13 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.

2.2.14 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:

2.2.14.1 Core Donor Group

- a. Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO)
- b. Global Affairs Canada (GAC)
- c. United States Agency for International Development Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA)
- d. UK 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)

2.2.14.6 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)

2.2.15 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.

2.2.16 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 CDEMA. 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 CDEMA).

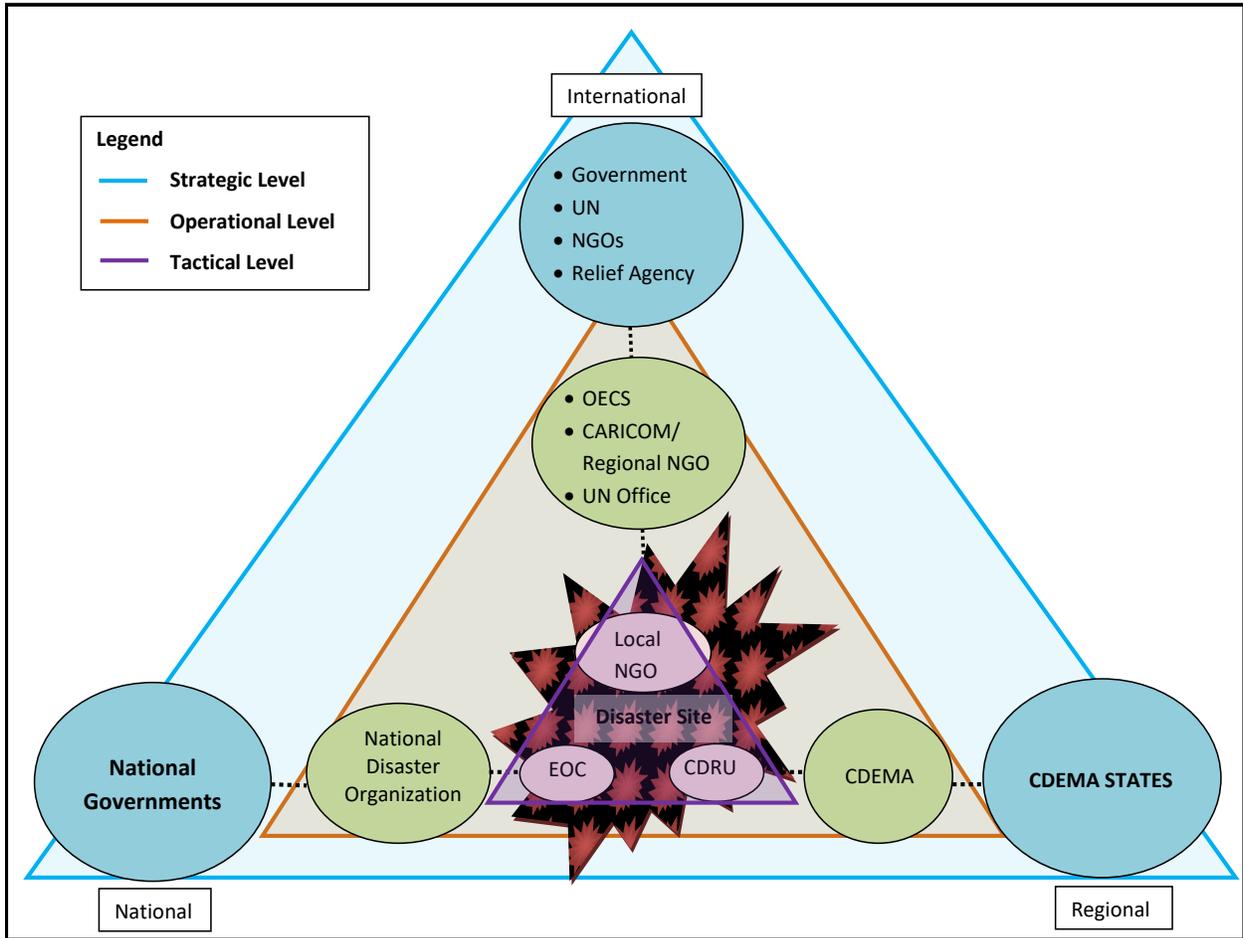


Figure 1: Cooperation Framework

Service Delivery and the Flow of Information and Supplies

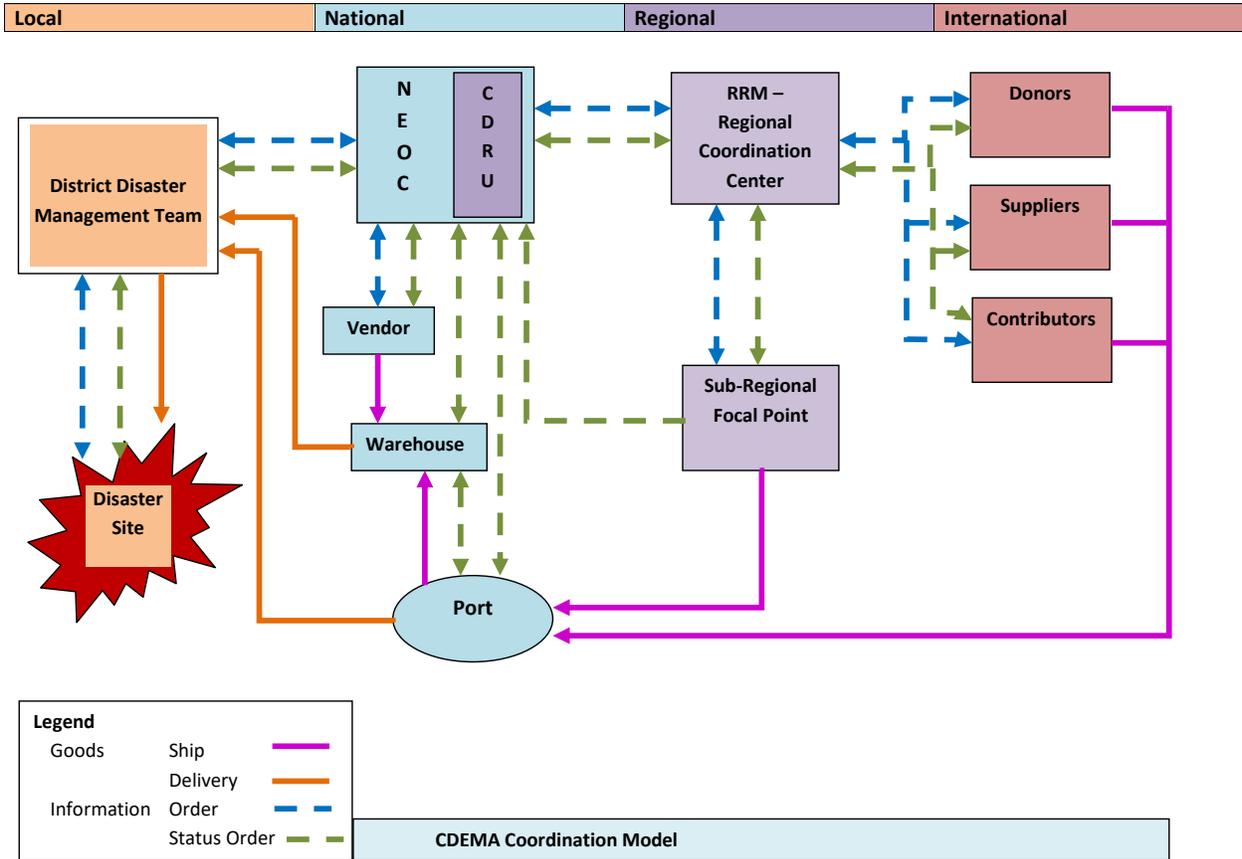


Figure 2: CDEMA Coordination Model

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 CDEMA RCC as a supporting and coordinating hub, 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 CDEMA 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 CDEMA’s RCC involvement as the coordinating hub.

Initial information is passed back and forth between the disaster site and the National Emergency Operations Centre. At the national level, all information received will be processed by the NEOC. The NEOC 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 NEOC to CDEMA RCC and then to regional institutions. The Sub-Regional Focal Point will exchange information with CDEMA RCC and NEOC. CDEMA RCC will gather and relate information from the international relief aid network to the NEOC. 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 NEOC in conjunction with other disaster response agencies such as other government departments.

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

2.3 *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. The critical factor is to be able to record, track, prioritise and share information in a standardized manner. The RSTS software is designed to support the recording tracking and circulation of relief supplies between the key entities.

3 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 CDEMA has identified 3 levels of emergency response.

3.2 *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 CDEMA CU of the occurrence of the incident and indicates that no regional response is required. CDEMA CU actions in response to the type of incident will include monitoring, and information sharing.

3.3 *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 CDEMA 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. CDEMA CU actions may include the provision of technical assistance, specialised equipment, emergency funds and support personnel.

3.4 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 CDEMA 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 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,

4.2 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 CDEMA Participating States and including regional and international partners.

4.3 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.

4.4 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.

4.5 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 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.

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

5.3 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.

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

5.5 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.

5.6 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.

5.7 Donations Management

Guided by the Donations Management Policy for the CDEMA 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.

5.8 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 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 CDEMA and other international agencies/organizations;

Provide copies of national policies, plans and procedures to the CDEMA 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 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.